



召唤者

⑧

井戸正善
illustration: lack

Summoned Slaughter VIII

Summoned Slaughterer

Arc 14: What maturing accomplishes

by Ido Masayoshi

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Chapter 119 – Mess Around

Pursang which declared its independence from Vichy which is a combination of city-states.

Minoson, who became its very first head of state, was constantly driven to the wall since the time the nation was established. Although they became independent, Vichy, he considered to collapse soon, is still going strong and has even begun to interact with Fokalore which should have been hostile to them. On the other hand Pursang, which ought to have a friendly relationship, is far away from Fokalore and thus people and goods come largely delayed. Hifumi, the feudal lord of Fokalore on whom he relied, has even decided to take a long absence from his own territory, to say nothing about keeping up the friendly exchange.

Looking for a plan to break the deadlock of the state of affairs in such circumstances, Minoson did his best to frequently gather new information. Even today one of the messengers, who has been sent in the direction of Fokalore, has come visiting his office.

“... The territorial forces of Fokalore have been deployed at the border between Orsongrande and Vichy, you say?” (Minoson)

Scraping his thoroughly thinned-out cheek, Minoson turned his look at the messenger who brought in the news. The area around his eyes is tinged with a darkish shade.

“To be precise it should be “stationed” I guess? It’s not like they have taken up a position against Vichy. Their objective is to protect the territory in response to the monsters who turned ferocious, I assume.”

The countenance of Minoson’s face is ghastly, but the messenger, who got used to that, reports the intelligence indifferently.

“In reality ferocious human-shaped monsters have been confirmed to linger in said area and there have been victims even at the guilds of the concerned areas. It looks like the current mobilization has happened upon a request from the guild.”

“The guild it is, huh? Usually the guild is requested to deal with monsters which can’t be managed by soldiers, however that’s a complete turn-around.”
(Minoson)

“Haha”, with an awkward laugh Minoson placed the documents of the investigator on his desk.

“Come to think of it, if the other party comprehended such words like “commonly” or “usually”, they wouldn’t plunge Vichy into such a mess, eh...?”
(Minoson)

Entrusting his back to the chair, Minoson lowered his dull eyes towards the floor.

He leaks a sigh.

“... Create a unit of around 50 people and have them join up with Fokalore’s feudal army. Tell them that it’s a cooperation for the sake of protecting the peace of the area and make sure they are taken along even if you use a slightly high-handed manner.” (Minoson)

“Haa...”

Without understanding Minoson’s aim, the messenger gave an unenthusiastic reply.

“Common sense doesn’t apply to the feudal lord of Fokalore. If the other party is someone you don’t know what they will do next, let’s at least make a joint operation in order to be seen as close by Vichy, even if it’s forcibly. It will be fine if Vichy judges Pursang and Fokalore to be friendly with each other.”
(Minoson)

“If they let me at least use them to such an extent”, Minoson muttered in a small voice without addressing anyone in particular.

Seeing his state, the male messenger felt *our head of state has withered away. If it was the time when Pursang was still a city-state, Minoson would probably make more plans while looking at the long term benefits. He would have likely moved in order confine something like Fokalore, that is nothing more than just one district, in his own plans.*

Minoson might have ended up broken by the situation of Fokalore rushing ahead by oppressing and ignoring politics and thus betraying Minoson’s

expectations.

“There’s no time. Depart immediately as soon as the formation has been completed.” (Minoson)

“Then I shall go to convey this to the military authorities.”

“Right...” (Minoson)

“Excuse me.”

Exiting the room, the messenger was deeply in thought while walking towards the building where the army’s headquarters is located.

“Since there’s a world of difference in war potential and practical experience between Pursang and Fokalore, even if we joined up with them, no matter what, it won’t become anything but us being treated as burden or parasites. It gives a nice ring if you speak of it as support for the sake of peace, but will the sly foxes of Vichy really accept that at its head value?”

As result of the circulation of money and good weakening, the cost-of-living had risen and the closed shops, even in the streets of the shopping district, were standing out.

It’s uncertain whether the small voices of the barkers are reaching the ears of the people walking down the streets stirring them up in a coercing manner. The expressions of the people are dispirited. Even their bodies and minds are exhausted by the situation in the country, which doesn’t seem to have a future, to a degree that one wouldn’t believe that we got independent just recently.

“In that case, what about the army? What about the impressions? I’m currently scared of the possibility of the citizens actually starving. Shouldn’t we first do something about this one way or another..?”

The man, who stopped, is lost in his thoughts while looking at the faces of the people.

“... Alright, I decided.”

Beginning to walk once more, the man set out to the army’s headquarters once again.

However, what the man, who finally reached the headquarters before long, told

to the party of the army's top brass was something totally different from what Minoson had told him.

"It's an order from the head of the state. Organising a unit of around 10 soldiers, head towards Orsongrande and request an audience with the queen. I will also accompany them as ambassador."

If you say that it's difficult to deal with a party that doesn't abide to common sense, it's better to negotiate with a party that looks like they understand said common sense. The male messenger boldly decided to try acting as ambassador of Pursang without permission.

"Let's hurry. It's likely that we don't have much time left."

Whether it was the time left until the head of state discovered his lie or whether it was the time left until the collapse of Pursang; the messenger, who declared those words, didn't know himself which of the two situations had no time left.



"Yoo." (Hifumi)

"Eh? Huh...? L-Lord-sama!?"

"Please have the horse take a rest. It will be fine to feed it something delicious since it kept me company on my long trip." (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who suddenly appeared mounted in front of the inspection at the entrance of Fokalore, nimbly jumped off the horse, passed the reins to a baffled soldier and promptly entered the city.

The soldier watched the retreating figure of the feudal lord leaving, then he looked at the expression of the horse snorting and trembling and lastly checked the face of his colleague.

That soldier turned away his face right away though.

"... Eh?"

"Since this place's fine, take the horse along as Lord-sama told you."

"Ah, yes!"

The soldier, who is bewildered with the reins in his hand, walks towards the

stable of the castle while timidly taking along the horse as told by his superior. There's no one who knew what would be done to him if he caused an injury to the horse by some chance.

As result of the horse being tired it was docile and walked slowly together with the soldier while observing the dearly missed view of the city it got used to.

“Good grief, this place has been peaceful for a while. Won't some turmoil occur once again? With Military Director Alyssa being currently absent for the suppression campaign, Lord-sama will take direct command if it comes to a battle, won't he...?”

This soldier, who was successful at the defence of the city, is currently holding the title of platoon leader as one of the longest-serving soldiers who had been picked from the capital as Fokalore's territorial soldier.

Participating in the battle of Arosel, he had been personally present when the enemy was killed and made fun of by Hifumi.

“No, it's different. That wasn't something you'd call commanding or such. It was merely a display of slaughter.”

The only thing I did was to clean up afterwards. The soldiers, who saw the platoon leader making a dry laugh, were puzzled wondering what might be so ridiculous.

Shouts of joy can be heard from the direction where Hifumi went.

It's probably the people of the city expressing their emotions due to the safe return of their feudal lord. As result of the city's population radically increasing the ratio of people knowledgeable of Hifumi's fighting style are very few. The platoon leader also happened to hear the stories which are told in the city's bars with Hifumi as topic, but most of them were glorifications.

“The return of Lord-sama, huh?”

Immediately after thinking of being once again tossed into the middle of that mania and its scary other side, the platoon leader felt a restless emotion welling up within his heart. *Although the invasion of Vichy and the expedition to Horant were difficult, those were definitely fun.*

Currently it's peaceful, however being able to observe those absurd battles from close-by once again is also something I'm looking forward to.

“Well then, I got to do my work diligently, eh?”

I wonder what will happen next, the platoon leader began to rejoice at his expectations.



“Welcome home.” (Caim)

“Ah, please leave me alone since I’m going to rest for a while.” (Hifumi)

“As you wish.” (Caim)

The surrounding staff members stare in wonder at the talk between Caim and Hifumi which is similar to a trivial everyday occurrence.

They were also surprised about the feudal lord returning without prior notice, but likewise they were astonished of Caim who welcomed him as if the feudal lord had simply returned from his daily routine.

With the inside and outside of the lord’s mansion being astir, the explanation of the staff members, who knew about Hifumi taking a rest within the mansion, finished with a minimum of noise, but the people, who came to know of the feudal lord’s return from the city’s soldier in front of the lord’s mansion, expressed their joy.

“It became an uproar.” (Paryu)

“That’s only natural. Even I understand their feeling of wanting to make a fuss.” (Doelgar)

Doelgar replied to the words of Paryu, who looked at the staff members going right and left, while knitting his brows.

Something like coming back after entering the wastelands alone is an unprecedented event. Even if considering Hifumi’s military gains, some of the residents have likely believed that he won’t be able to return safely from the wastelands to some extent. An unknown ratio of the others probably didn’t believe in the story that he had gone to the wastelands in itself.

“Considering all that, you are quite calm, Doelgar-san.” (Paryu)

“... I’m able to cool down myself if my surroundings are restless.” (Doelgar)

“I see.” (Paryu)

Even while those two were talking, the staff members received instructions from Caim to calm down the citizens.

Given that the state of affairs will be made known tomorrow, he is apparently going around telling them so that the feudal lord can peacefully rest today. Moreover, since there will be a grand celebration of the lord's return, he asks them to strive in their work until then.

"I wonder if it's alright for him to selfishly decide such a matter." (Doelgar)

"Isn't it fine? Since we haven't been told who will make the announcement, it will be a good excuse if Caim-san announces it after listening to Lord-sama's story. Not a single word has escaped from the staff members' mouth that Lord-sama will appear at the celebration." (Paryu)

Doelgar smiled at the words of Paryu, who picked up the contents of the staff members' chats while writing something down in the documents, while scratching his head.

"Paryu, you have become quite strong, too." (Doelgar)

"Is that so? Rather than that, please pass on the communication to not be negligent in preparing the goods particularly in regards to luxury grocery items since the city will sink in emergency demands for a while from now on." (Paryu)

"And", Paryu looked up to Doelgar and smiled brightly,

"Manpower is necessary for those preparations, right? Please create post's steadily since there's still much more of fresh influx to come." (Paryu)

"Moreover I haven't sent a letter", Paryu continued.

"Letter?" (Doelgar)

"To his wife-sama, that is." (Paryu)

The wife Paryu is talking about is Origa.

"Why again?" (Doelgar)

"It's because I don't want her to get angry. If I consider what will happen if his wife-sama gets to know that we stayed silent about the return of Lord-sama..." (Paryu)

“Alright, let’s procure men and horses from the army. I will arrange their return so that they can take his wife-sama and come back with speed as maximum priority. I leave the letter to you!” (Doelgar)

Looking at the retreating figure of Doelgar, who left running as if he was escaping from something, Paryu slipped a chuckle.

“It won’t do if I don’t send one to Military Director Alyssa, too.” (Paryu)

“It’s a hectic situation”, Paryu returned to her own office with a light pace.

The news of Hifumi’s return spread within the city in the blink of an eye. Quite the percentage of the people in the continuously increasing population of the city doesn’t know the face of Hifumi. Only stories of him having the appearance of a young man with black pupils and hair, him using a thin sword and him splendidly slaying his enemies are circulating.

The hero’s return is directly connected to the invigoration of the city. Even when it became late at night on that day, the lights within the bars all over the city stayed on.

However, as there was no announcement of the feudal lord’s anticipated statement once it was the next day and then even the day after, an unresting rumour began to spread in the city.

As a matter of fact, it was at that time when Hifumi finally woke up from his long sleep.

Hifumi, who sat on the bed cross-legged, stared at his left hand and scratched his head with his right hand.

“This spells trouble.” (Hifumi)

All of the fingers of his left hand in front of him became stiff down to the second joint.

It’s completely as if they have turned into solid wood.

Chapter 120 – [s]AINT

“Unh~” (Alyssa)

Alyssa groaned while looking at a parchment.

The image of her lying on top of a stack of blankets with her boots taken off, bare-footed to top it off, in the tent which was set up for her sake coupled together with her appearance, that looks childish, doesn't give the impression of someone leading an army at all.

“Did Hifumi-san come back?” (Alyssa)

What was written in the parchment the messenger brought from Fokalore by changing horses was the news of Hifumi's return.

“We still haven't done our job though.” (Alyssa)

In fact they have been encamped in the plains next to the national border for around a week, but except them killing countless monsters by ganging up on them in groups they didn't do anything but just sending back the messenger from Vichy.

Everyday they were rotating the shifts of training, vacation and guarding. Alyssa showed her face sometimes at the training and guarding duties.

Kind of unchanging from what they have done in Fokalore, except being unable to go home, even the soldiers enjoyed the peaceful campaign without a hint of tension.

“What's wrong?” (Miyukare)

Miyukare entered with hot water she boiled at the burning bonfire outside. Observing Miyukare who pours the tea in an accustomed manner, Alyssa, who got up quickly, waves the paper she's holding in her hand.

“It looks like Hifumi-san has returned to Fokalore.” (Alyssa)

“Oh. I wonder where he will rampage around next. It will be fine if it doesn't cost any excessive amount of money again though. Rather than that, I guess he hasn't brought any new residents or slaves along. If the number of people increased any more, it would become quite difficult for Paryu.” (Miyukare)

There are jokes mixed in, but where residents, who were invited by the feudal lord himself, are concerned, it will become necessary to treat them as privileged guests and that will radically increase the workload of Paryu who has the role of dealing with people from outside.

Actually, Paryu felt secretly relieved since Hifumi unexpectedly came back without anyone tagging along.

“I wonder if it’s best for us to return as well, is what I was pondering about.”
(Alyssa)

“Let’s see...” (Miyukare)

Miyukare, who handed a cup filled with tea to Alyssa, held her own share with both hands to warm them up. By gently touching the wood of the cup, the heat within permeated to her hands.

“It will definitely finish with Lord-sama saying “Ah, yea” no matter which choice you pick. The most important point is to do what is good for you, Alyssa-sama.” (Miyukare)

“Ahahaha, that would be just like him to say that.” (Alyssa)

While drinking the still hot tea with little sips after cooling it down with a sour look, Alyssa laughs.

“Then let’s return for now, eh? Everyone likely wants to go back home, too. I also want to meet Hifumi-san.” (Alyssa)

Miyukare acknowledged Alyssa’s decision while showing a somewhat complicated smile.

“Understood. I will tell everyone right away.” (Miyukare)

“Let’s depart tomorrow early morning? We will slowly advance while getting rid of monsters along the way.” (Alyssa)

“Oh?”, Miyukare tilted her head to the side.

“Won’t that cause us to take quite a bit time until getting back to Fokalore?”
(Miyukare)

“It’s fine, to go slowly at it.” (Alyssa)

While looking at the tea that doesn't diminish easily, she blows at it once again.

"I have a feeling that it's slightly dangerous for me to meet with Hifumi-san before Origa-san does." (Alyssa)

"Ah..." (Miyukare)

She was able to consent to that but whether that was a good thing or not was something Miyukare didn't know.

However she has no objection about the time she can spend with Alyssa lengthening.

(I have to enjoy a picnic with her during our return as well.) (Miyukare)

Leaving the tent, Miyukare was smiling cheerfully.



A report identical to that of Alyssa reached Origa's place delayed by one week.

In a room within the castle where she already felt at home thinking of it as her own dwelling, a female soldier, whom she brought along from Fokalore, conveyed the news in a dignified voice while standing up straight in front of Origa.

"Madam, a fast letter has arrived from your territory."

"Fast, huh? Did something happen?" (Origa)

Origa, who was writing in her office, put down her pen considering it as unusual.

"Lord-sama has returned..."

At the moment she started to say that Origa literally leapt at her all of a sudden and snatched the paper from her.

"..."

Looking at Origa who tightly grasped the report to a degree of it being close to getting torn with widely opened eyes, the female soldier sighed within her mind.

(As long as she isn't like this, she is a lovely madam, but...)

While the female soldier is thinking about such things, large tears gather at Origa's eyes.

“Ah, Hifumi-sama... how wonderful for you to be alright...” (Origa)

She tightly embraces the report in her chest while shedding big drops of tears. Of course Origa, just like Alyssa, harboured no anxiety about Hifumi being safe himself. Rather than that, she was worried about him not returning after having found a country more comfortable than this one or him, who was summoned from another world, having returned to his former world at some point of time unknown to her.

Origa is aware that territory and peerage, which he only accepted “for some reason or another”, isn't that much of an attachment to him.

“I cannot stay here like this!” (Origa)

Folding the paper happily and stuffing it into her pocket, Origa returned her look at the female soldier, who stood around in a daze.

“We will return to Fokalore right away.” (Origa)

“Right now?”

“Yes, right now. Since I will go to bid farewell to Her Majesty, the Queen, get the carriage ready in that time. Please prepare a large quantity of light food centred around preserved food as we will cover the whole distance of the highway without resting as much as possible.” (Origa)

“Y-Yes!”

With Origa's eyes throwing daggers at the head of the flustered female soldier while giving her the instructions, the female soldier dashed out of the room.

“Well, then I will get ready as well.” (Origa)

“Is it fine to talk for a little moment before that?”

The face, which peeked in from the door which the soldier had left open, was that of Royal Knight Order Captain Sabnak.

“Isn't it a breach of manners to peep into the room of a lady without even knocking?” (Origa)

“No, no, the door was open after all. I’d like you to overlook this much at least, but...” (Sabnak)

“I don’t particularly mind though.” (Origa)

Putting her hand on her cheek, Origa shakes her head.

“If I tell your wife, Shibyura-san, about you having peeped into the room, Sabnak-sama...” (Origa)

“I’m very sorry!” (Sabnak)

Origa laughed in a pleasant, high-pitched sound due to Sabnak bowing his upper body vigorously to the degree of it being level to the ground.

“It’s a joke. However, I have gone for a tea together with your wife a few times. Since you have such a high position, your wife will worry about you if you aren’t careful.” (Origa)

“I shall take it to heart.” (Sabnak)

“So, what’s your business with me?” (Origa)

“... I heard that Hifumi-san returned from the wastelands alive.” (Sabnak)

“Oh, as expected, news travel fast in the royal capital.” (Origa)

“We are still inferior to the elites of Fokalore”, Sabnak scratched his head.

“I wonder just what the heck Hifumi-san has done this time. I thought maybe you may know about that, Origa-san.” (Sabnak)

Sabnak sat down on the sofa urged on by Origa and tasted the prepared tea. He looks at Origa who is quietly sitting in front of him.

Compared to the time when I met her for the first time, she looks quite mature now, Sabnak judged. Even though it’s not like many years have passed, does a woman change this much once she becomes a wife? He wonders.

“I’m sorry.” (Origa)

Origa lowered her sight to her hands which were resting on top of her knees.

“I haven’t received that much information. However, it’s not important what my husband has accomplished. What’s important is that he did me the favour of coming back home safely. Being able to meet him again is more important

than anything else.” (Origa)

Sabnak was unintentionally captivated by her smile. He senses a dangerous beauty from her that hastens the beating of his heart.

“I-Is that how it is...?” (Sabnak)

“Yes. Even Shibyura-san will be always far more delighted by you returning home safely than you accomplishing a showy deed of arms.” (Origa)

Sabnak looked at Origa, who shows a bright smile, without saying anything in return.

“What’s wrong?” (Origa)

“N-Nothing. I believe that you have become a lot more cheerful compared to the time when I met you first.” (Sabnak)

“Is that so? ... Yes, maybe.” (Origa)

Picking up her own cup with a hand, Origa looked at the tea’s swaying.

“As you might know, I was a slave. Turning from a free adventurer into a slave, I was bought by a dangerous man who killed the king and who isn’t from this world but of some unknown origin. Even though I received training and carried out my revenge, there were still many more worries regarding my future from then on.” (Origa)

“However”, she lifts her face.

“While proceeding in my interactions with Hifumi-sama, I got gradually charmed by the way he does things and obtained the happiness called marriage which I gave up on at the time I became a slave. Being apart from him is saddening, but I believe that he will spoil me as compensation for that time once we meet again.” (Origa)

Sabnak smiled wryly at Origa in front of him who spoke fondly of her spouse while blushing and showing a bashful side of her.

“Well, well, I give up. Hifumi-san is an amazing person after all. ... Because of that I have a single question though.” (Sabnak)

“What is it?” (Origa)

“... What is Hifumi-san’s aim, I wonder? Not only this country, he is even teaching techniques to Vichy and Horant as well. Even at the time he fought against Vichy and Horant as opponents, he didn’t go as far as destroying their countries in the end. Albeit he has the strength to do so.” (Sabnak)

“I know that he isn’t a simple destroyer”, Sabnak faced Origa with a serious gaze.

“Even though he likes fighting, destruction isn’t his goal. Having said that, that doesn’t mean that he’s helping anyone. He doesn’t desire profits and social status either...” (Sabnak)

Having said this much, Sabnak noticed that the emotions within Origa’s look have changed.

Her smile is warm filled with a kindness completely as if she is watching a child, but Origa’s green pupils stood out.

“... I can’t tell you yet. But, at the moment you learn of it, you as well as Her Majesty, the Queen, will definitely feel delighted.” (Origa)

“Delighted...?” (Sabnak)

“Yes, Hifumi-sama is the hero summoned from another world by Her Majesty, the Queen, after all.” (Origa)

For Sabnak it was the first time for him to be scared by a woman’s gentle smile.



There’s a commonly shared water well in the garden of the feudal lord’s mansion.

The water well is an extremely simple vertical construction where one draws water by lowering a bucket which dangles on a pulley. It serves as place to do washing as well as spot for the mansion’s servants to fetch water.

However, missing the calm atmosphere of every day’s life, everyone, who was currently there, kept silent while sending fleeting glances at the man who usually doesn’t visit that place.

“Ouch... for the time to come where I have to experience something like shaving my own hand.” (Hifumi)

The one who mutters “that’s something novel” is Hifumi who is crouching next to the water well.

He, who woke up from his long slumber, stuffed the prepared food into his belly with gusto and turned up at this location while knocking his left hand, which changed into hard wood, with the pommel of his katana.

The servants kneeled in panic due to the person above-the-clouds who suddenly turned up, but once he waved with his right hand while saying 「Don’t mind me」, he drew plenty of water from the well after taking a bucket which was nearby.

And then he sat down with his back turned towards the other people present and began his work.

He began to shave his hand, which turned into a wooden artificial hand, with a small knife.

At the beginning he shaved the exterior of his thumb completely as if peeling the skin of vegetables while saying something like 「It has totally the feel of woodcarving」, but he started to feel pain after having merely carved around one centimetre.

While roughly washing the small knife in the bucket’s water, he looks at the spot he shaved off and discovers a membrane of white mucus in the shaved part and blood seeping out from below that.

“The fingertips are mostly a lost case. The bone surrounding around the palm are safe, huh?” (Hifumi)

He shaves his fingers, the back of his hand and the palm. At the end he even lets the blade slide across an area very close to the wrist.

“It’s the same as with the elven lot, eh? No, the speed of progression is remarkably faster though I don’t know the reason for it.” (Hifumi)

At the beginning he wondered whether the mucus had a pink colour, but once he washed his hand by thrusting it into the bucket, it became pure white.
The skin, flesh, bones and blood are replaced by the mucus and it hardens sooner or later?

If that’s the case, Hifumi cuts a part of his forearm.

“This place looks alright.” (Hifumi)

The thin red line soon gets enlivened by puffed up blood and it turns into one long, red stream.

Once he confirmed that the change was happening from the wrist downwards, Hifumi fixedly stared at his left hand after putting down the small knife.

“It’s also fine to get rid of it by cutting it off, but... even if the hole is closed up by that medicine, it won’t recover the loss.” (Hifumi)

There are still several healing magic potions remaining, however even if they have the effect of closing a wound, it’s not like they can re-grow something that has been lost.

It probably won’t progress as long as I don’t enter the elven forest. I guess it’s fine if it stays in a wooden state, Hifumi scoops out the white mucus, which is similar to thick sap, with his right hand.

“Be that as it may, just what the hell is this stuff?” (Hifumi)

Once he forcefully clasped the white mucus he held in his right hand, he slightly felt a different texture except that of liquid.

Hifumi, who noticed something, turned around vigorously and the shoulders of several people, who faced him by chance, jumped up.

“Please lend me a bit fire.” (Hifumi)

“T-There you go!”

Heading towards the fire prepared to boil some water, Hifumi held out his left hand.

“If it’s just like I thought...” (Hifumi)

While listening to the sound of bursting open by popping firewood, he gazes steadily at his left hand being scorched and blackening.

“Ah, I got it...” (Hifumi)

The white mucus, which was visible from the cut up wound, lost its moisture from being touched by the flames and fell down into Hifumi’s right hand just like dry sand while maintaining its pure white appearance.

That white sand was identical to the one which formed the body of the late demon king Agathion.

Hifumi's lips slanted upwards unintentionally.

Chapter 121 – 99 Problems

“Please, welcome home.” (Caim)

“Yea, it’s been a while.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi answered Caim’s greeting by waving his left hand.

Caim noticed that Hifumi’s left hand had been wrapped up in thin leather gloves, but he pretended to not have done so.

Caim knew that it was Paryu who bought the leather gloves for a part of Hifumi’s left hand as he requested from her after she visited his room, but while he hasn’t heard the reason from Paryu, he believed that there was no reason for him to ask himself.

“Shall I prepare your meal?” (Caim)

“Since I’m going to eat something suitable outside, don’t care about it. Let’s hear the current matters once I return.” (Hifumi)

“As you wish. Take care.” (Caim)

“Ah, right. Let’s have you come with me. You haven’t eaten lunch yet, have you?” (Hifumi)

“... As you wish.” (Caim)

Being seen off by many staff members, Hifumi left the mansion to stroll around while taking Caim along.

“Do you know some good restaurant?” (Hifumi)

“No. I’m always using my own room or the dining hall of the mansion.” (Caim)

“Hmm, I see.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who seems to be bothered by the yet stiff brand new dougi, walks while constantly shifting the area around his armpit by thrusting his hand into his pocket.

Once they arrive at an area where shops are lining up, the attention of many people gathers on Hifumi.

“Lord-sama! Welcome home!”

“Thank you as usual! Please drop by any time!”

The ones who called out to him from the shops were many middle-aged shopkeepers. Since Hifumi buys mainly food after departing to the city and occasionally purchases unusual dougi’s and such on a whim, unlike normal nobles, all of the storekeepers of Fokalore know the face of their feudal lord. There were also some among them who appeared personally in front of Hifumi. It’s the students who have come to Fokalore in order to study.

“Earl-sama, if you don’t mind reading something we stumbled upon...”

Standing at the front, the little girl, who looks to still be in the middle of her teens, showed the documents, she held at her breast, to Hifumi. Those were the transcriptions of the numerical calculations Hifumi had Caim’s group do some time ago. Seeing those, Hifumi almost burst into laughter.

“Fuha, have you always used these problems? ... ah, it was calculations.”
(Hifumi)

What was described there were numerical calculations asking for the volume of things like cylinders and quadrangular pyramids.

Naturally, Hifumi, who was just about to graduate from high school, can solve those while humming a tune.

Receiving a charcoal wrapped in a cloth, which is used as writing tool, Hifumi fluently filled out the calculation methods.

“It’s solved with this, right?” (Hifumi)

“T-Thank you very much!”

Once the blushing girl bowed, the male student with the same age readily came out in front from behind.

Differing from the girl, his expression is somewhat disappointed.

“Earl-sama, I have a question.”

“What is it?” (Hifumi)

“Just a moment...”

The female student tries to stop him, but ignoring her, the male student met

Hifumi's look.

“Tohno-sama, you have now the status of Earl and possess many deeds of arms, but I have heard that you have originally been a commoner.”

Hifumi shows a smirk due to the matter of him having suddenly started to talk about social status. Caim, who is restraining himself diagonally behind him, kept a watchful eye on the situation expressionlessly.

“So?” (Hifumi)

“My family is an Earl household which has the tradition of great men appearing one after the other since times immemorial. I have now come to study in Fokalore following the order of my father, but... how the hell are these calculations useful in any way? Speaking honestly, I don't understand what meaning they have.”

The student, who snorted with a “hmp”, was smug about having finished saying what he wanted to say, but the female student behind him has ended up becoming completely pale.

That female student continues to get even further pale.

“Her home is of a lower rank than mine, but she is an elegant lady of a Viscount household. There are other things than these worthless calculations we should learn!”

Did he believe that it was time to attack? Hifumi listened to all of the statements of the student, who continued in a far more coercing manner than before, without saying a single word.

Once he heard them, he returns, without his smile crumbling,

“If you believe it to be pointless, it's fine for you to stop, isn't it?” (Hifumi)

“Huh?”

The student, who prepared to advocate the necessities frantically, opened his mouth and eyes and showed a blank expression.

The female student has a face full of surprise as well.

“We aren't particularly forcing you to come here. You have to decide by yourself what you should do.” (Hifumi)

“S-So, are you then admitting that this studying is useless?”

“It might be pointless for you.” (Hifumi)

The student looked like he wanted to give his outweighing opinion due to Hifumi’s reply, but he was dumbfounded by the following words,

“In any case, let alone not understanding the significance of what you learned, the problem lies within you not wanting to think about how to use it. It’s fine for you to go to somewhere else if all that you are wishing for are good marks. Even if you learn something stupid, it will just be a waste of time and paper.” (Hifumi)

“Are you insulting me who is the legitimate heir of an Earl household?”

“I haven’t told you anything but the truth.” (Hifumi)

“Besides”, Hifumi continued.

“What kind of charm does your household or her household hold? If you and me fought, do you think that my katana won’t pierce you if your father’s an Earl? If you like, we can test it right here and now though.” (Hifumi)

At the time he placed his hand on the katana at his waist, the male student ran away as fast as he could.

“... What’s that? How boring.” (Hifumi)

“This might be called an insult to the feudal lord. Since I will know him right away from the enrolment list, I will punish him later on.” (Caim)

“No, not necessary. He is still a brat. If he brings along 100 soldiers after whining to his Earl father to aim for my life due to an unjustified resentment with this, I will be able to enjoy it.” (Hifumi)

“As you wish.” (Caim)

The female student, who listened to the exchange between lord and retainer, bowed her head while staggering with a pale face.

“I-I’m very sorry, Earl-sama.”

“Do you also have doubts about the current study contents?” (Hifumi)

“No...”

After making a worn-out face and looking in the direction where the male student left, she shakes her head.

“I learned in this place the ability to control the territory’s administration as well as the army’s operation with numerical figures. I will likely be married to some noble, but I believe that I want at least to be able to grasp the circumstances of the residents living there.”

Once he heard that answer, Hifumi placed his right hand on her shoulder, encouraged her with “well, please do your best at creating a “powerful territory”” and left while taking Caim along.

Powerful territory means literally a stable economy and possessing strong soldiers, I guess, Caim believed, but he followed after Hifumi without saying anything to the female student who saw Hifumi off while blushing.



The power chart in Swordland ended up getting completely rewritten. Humans and beastmen, who were in an overwhelmingly inferior position due to their numbers, lived in the original slums, but with the addition of the elves, their numbers have increased and there’s almost no trace left of a slum once they put the buildings of the city completely in order.

Furthermore, even the idea of “magic by beastmen” proposed by Reni, at last showed progress at the time one week had elapsed after having gathered candidates and started training.

“... I did it!”

Holding a plain wand, a small water current appeared from the cheap, impure crystal, which served as support to manipulate the mana at the wand’s tip. It was only an amount of around a single fist, but it had a force at the level of bending a board which leaned against a wall.

“Amazing! Even beastmen are able to use magic!”

The one frolicking around while holding a wand is the rabbitwoman who lost one ear.

Since she was purchased by Hifumi and had studies driven into her, she always carried out jobs related to accounting in the city, but after hearing about the magic training course, she participated out of interest.

Even so, she succeeded at invoking magic faster than the men who are chewing their fangs in a manner of causing bleeding from their gums while their veins are popping up in their desire to be useful in battle.

The surrounding beastmen had various expressions such as surprise and jealousy, but as they witnessed the moment of establishing proof that beastmen can use magic, they started to concentrate even deeper.

“Oh my, you succeeded at it already?” (Zanga)

Zanga, who sat so that she could watch the beastmen grasping their wands tightly, laughed with a “Hya Hya.”

Even Puuse, who is coaching them, shows a smile.

“The support of a wand is necessary, however I didn’t consider them to be able invoking it this fast. Those suitable for magic might be able to use spells with a lot more power.” (Puuse)

Unknown whether she has heard that chat or not, there’s a little girl grasping her wand desperately while being blended into the group of rough men. It was the sheepgirl Reni.

“Uu~... Fiiiire, fire, appear~” (Reni)

“How about using water or wind?” (Helen)

“That’s no good! I want to produce fire!” (Reni)

Once she answers to Helen’s remark without facing her, she once again strives to focus her mind.

“It’s fine to be diligent, but... as expected, it doesn’t mean that you can use magic just because you are able to study it.” (Helen)

Helen, who is weak at such patient tasks requiring concentration, gave up rather quickly.

When she looks at the woman, who’s a rabbit just like her and is able to produce water and also wind, even she has a feeling that she will be able to do it if she tries, but as nothing happened even after trying for several days, her motivation is gone after all.

“Ununu...” (Reni)

Although I think it's evil towards Reni who is desperately warping her cute face, wouldn't it be better for her to think more about strategies and tools like the ones taught by Hifumi since we will be helpless without a wand even if we can use magic with it? She ponders.

She sighed.

Just then Reni turns around by spinning and smiles at Helen.

“... I know what you are thinking about, but although it will be convenient if we can use magic, it's not like it will be remarkable just because we are able to do so, right? It will be convenient if both can be used. It's indispensable to have various people like those who are strong in magic, those who are strong at making traps and those who are strong at fighting directly.” (Reni)

“Yea, I understand.” (Helen)

“I see.” (Reni)

Watching the the back of Reni who once again concentrated on the spell unbeknownst whether it will come out while clenching her teeth with a “Gugigi”, Helen sighed in different manner from before.

“It's a disaster! R-Reni-san is!?” (Gengu)

Gengu came rushing in, while raising a cloud of dust, at the plaza where they carried out the training course.

“I'm here. Gengu-san, what happened?” (Reni)

“Humans came to take refugee while being chased by humans!” (Gengu)

“... What's this about?” (Helen)

Helen was puzzled with her ears dangling down.

“Ah, sorry 'bout this. I ended up panicking somewhat... in short, it seems like the city's humans are under attack by other humans. A part of them is making a fuss that they wish to enter the slums.” (Gengu)

Reni and Helen looked at each others faces.

“Is it a quarrel between those of the same race? The ones called humans are fond of fighting after all.” (Zanga)

“Anyway, I will go to the entrance of the city.” (Reni)

“Take us along as well, Reni-san.” (Zanga)

“Eh...” (Reni)

Reni, who was stopped by Zanga, had a troubled expression.

“Zanga-san, since it might turn into a battle...” (Reni)

“If that happens, we will be even more useful.” (Zanga)

Puuse, who stood up in order to prop up the getting-up Zanga, and the gathered elves nodded firmly.

“This is already our home as well. Therefore, if we can help protecting this city, I’d like you to let us do so by all means.” (Zanga)

“Elf-san’s...” (Gengu)

Hearing Zanga’s words, Gengu snuffles while shedding big drops of tears. Although Reni hesitated for a little while, she looks at Zanga by lifting her face.

“Please help us, Zanga-san. Let’s protect this city together.” (Reni)

Zanga nodded while clasping the small, held-out hand with her wrinkled hand.

“Well, it’s a good chance to have you properly observe the elven magic.”
(Zanga)



“Please bring a suitable amount of food for two people. Ah, we’d like to use the private room inside.” (Hifumi)

Seeing Hifumi who came entering unexpectedly, the clerk, who guided them to the private room while somehow keeping their calm, sprinted to the kitchen at full speed.

The share for two people mentioned by Hifumi will be similar to four portions. Even without that, since the cooking will be provided to the feudal lord who is an Earl, there’s no way for them to serve something unbecoming by any chance. Once he took a breath in relief, the corners of the lips of the clerk, who reported the details of the situation to the kitchen, raised when he imagined today’s sale.

Hifumi, who brought Caim along, sits at the opposite side of the table. There's no superiority or inferiority. They are facing each other just like friends.

"... Is there something you want to talk about?" (Caim)

"It's fine for you to not worry about stuff like that. There's just something I came up with." (Hifumi)

"Let's eat first", saying that, Hifumi eats the served soup, which had vegetables all over in it, with the spoon held in his right hand. It's a cream-coloured potage soup with a smooth food texture and the sweet carrots and soft potatoes are delicious.

"This place is fairly delicious. You can eat slowly since there are also private rooms. It think it's fine even if you come here to eat with your civil official colleagues." (Hifumi)

"Indeed." (Caim)

At the moment Caim's thoughts took the direction of how it was cooked and what ingredients were used while eating, Hifumi opened his mouth.

"Caim, once Origa and Alyssa have returned in a short while, I will go to the capital once again. I will leave matters to you during that time." (Hifumi)

"As you wish." (Caim)

He doesn't ask about the objective.

And that's fine, both, Hifumi and Caim, judge.

"And, I told you before, but very soon a large battle will start. No, I plan on making sure that it happens." (Hifumi)

Caim nodded silently.

"I wanted to get ready for a bit longer, but this is about mankind. I don't know where and how I will fall over. There's also the possibility that this place will turn into a battlefield during my absence." (Hifumi)

Caim's expression doesn't change due to Hifumi's words.

"What place do you think will move, Caim?" (Hifumi)

"There's no mistake that Vichy had been stirred up by Alyssa-sama's moves.

It's likely that the internal dissension of Vichy will cause a spark by spilling over." (Caim)

"I see." (Hifumi)

Hifumi nodded delightfully.

"I went to play a bit with the beastmen and demons. I'm expecting that one of them or both come this way to drop by." (Hifumi)

After that, Caim reported the state of affairs during his absence to Hifumi and Hifumi talked about political measures he thought of bit-by-bit while they slowly ate for around an hour.

And, different from both's forecast, the first change happened in Horant.

After one week of Hifumi and Caim dinning together, they received a message that the king of Horant, Suprangel, died.

Moreover, without waiting a few days, a part of Orsongrande's nobles gathered and started an invasion into Horant without obtaining approval from Imeraria.

Chapter 122 – Tumbling Dice

“What are they thinking!?” (Imeraria)

Totally unusual of her, Imeraria hit the desk.

Even Sabnak, who came to tell her the news, shows an enraged expression while pursing his lips just like Imeraria.

At the same time as the the information about the death of Suprangel, Horant’s king, reached them, they got a message that an alliance of nobles led by Earl Aspilketa (*T/N: Asupirukueta*) raised an army and was marching towards Horant.

“The war with Horant was over! It was finished with Hifumi-sama defeating the crown prince who started an offensive against our country!” (Imeraria)

Sitting down on her chair violently, she calmed her breath while sipping some black tea.

“They have sent exchange students to Fokalore and there are also soldiers who have gone to Horant from Fokalore to instruct over there. Moreover, right after the king of an allied country passed away...” (Imeraria)

“It’s a big problem.” (Sabnak)

“Please don’t talk as if it’s someone else’s problem, Sabnak-san.” (Imeraria)

“Good grief”, Imeraria faces a paper close at hand and dabbled the pen in the inkwell.

“The households supporting Earl Aspilketa... there’s even eight houses involved...?” (Imeraria)

While looking at the report listing the names of the participating nobles and the amount of soldiers they provided, she adds up the total number of soldiers. *Actually mobilizing military forces of around 500, they have apparently departed towards the border in groups by each group taking a 10th of the total amount as “escorts.”*

Feeling a headache, Imeraria placed her slender finger strongly on her brow and curbed it.

“Haven’t they mobilized almost all of their territorial soldiers with these numbers?” (Imeraria)

“I fear that it’s likely so. Their aim is probably to completely take over Horant. I guess brother-in-law is... no, Earl Biron will confine them, but... likely they will cut their way through due to the numerical difference.” (Sabnak)

“The nightmare of the former Second Knight Order might be re-enacted on a larger scale.” (Sabnak)

Imeraria, who returned a nod towards Sabnak’s prediction, drums on the paper with the pen nib. A black stain spread slowly.

“... It’s different. This time Hifumi-sama won’t be there.” (Imeraria)

“A war will occur. Won’t he come running to participate in it?” (Sabnak)

“Expecting that to some degree, we can’t get too optimistic. Besides, even if it’s settled by relying on that gentleman, something similar will probably occur again.” (Imeraria)

Sabnak felt a doubt due to Imeraria’s words.

“So, you are saying?” (Sabnak)

Since I had a memory about the names lined up in this list, I pondered about it for the whole time, but finally I recalled it.” (Imeraria)

The eyes of Imeraria, who lifted her face from the document, were filled with sadness.

“They are all members of mother’s... the previous queen’s faction. After mother had died, they offered candid advice to me and Hifumi-sama at every opportunity.” (Imeraria)

If one refers to their influence, they were people close to not existing though, Imeraria sighed. Although the most they could do was spouting sarcastic remarks in the assembly hall, that sarcasm was plainly stressful.

“Perhaps,” (Imeraria)

Putting down the pen, Imeraria looked up to the ceiling.

“They are trying to oppose Hfumi-sama. Aren’t they believing that they can

regain their influence if they raise deeds of arms? Since they likely know that I won't stop treating Hifumi-sama the way I do, they think that they will be able to suppress me if they achieve deeds of arms exceeding those of Hifumi-sama.” (Imeraria)

“And they are probably planning to assign a puppet of theirs as my prince consort”, Imeraria says.

“What to say...? With all due respect, I can't call that anything but shallow thinking.” (Sabnak)

“I'm shocked”, Sabnak shook his head.

“That shallow thinking is something that will incite the other nobles as well.” (Imeraria)

“... Thus, how will you deal with it?” (Sabnak)

“Right now I'm revoking the status of Earl Aspilketa and the nobles who dispatched their troops together with him as support. Please arrest all of their family members. I will decide their fate later on. Designate Earl Aspilketa, who is the household's head, and all the other family heads of the participating nobles as our country's public enemy. Notify all noble households that those, who don't abide to the prohibition of sheltering them, will be punished.” (Imeraria)

“Ha! At your command!” (Sabnak)

Imeraria continued to speak to Sabnak who straightened himself with his heels clinking together.

“Sabnak-san, I want you to form a unit including the royal guards to pursuit the rebels and restrain the damage to Horant. Put emphasize on speed. I will convey to the nobles, who are along your way, that I want them to dispatch soldiers.” (Imeraria)

“At your will.” (Sabnak)

“And, I will take command in this pursuit battle.” (Imeraria)

“... Ha?” (Sabnak)

Not minding Sabnak's bewilderment, Imeraria stood up.

“Since I’m not taken seriously considering that I’m a woman, fellows, who do things like that pop up. Let me show them that I’m able to fight as well.”
(Imeraria)

Undoubtedly, the one she wants to show that aren’t the rebelling nobles, Sabnak had a hunch in his mind when he looked at that aspect appropriate of Imeraria’s age and calmed down albeit only a bit. Though, it’s not like he can voice it out either.

“Since there’s nothing like a military uniform for me, let’s see... it will be alright with a riding habit. I will be able to give out commands from atop a horse. We will depart together with the troops once the preparations are in order.” (Imeraria)

Unable to stop the completely motivated Imeraria, Sabnak ended up with quickly organizing guard unit by choosing the elites.

“... Which reminds me...” (Imeraria)

“I have remembered something”, Imeraria muttered a few words.

“Nelgal-san, who is supposed to be the successor of King Suprangel, is studying abroad in Fokalore...” (Imeraria)

Recalling something quite important, Imeraria stopped Sabnak who was about to leave the room.

“Is it possible that the other nobles are aware of Nelgal-san’s whereabouts and situation?” (Imeraria)

“Let’s see... as we haven’t particularly hidden the facts, they might know about it if there are for example nobles who have their relatives study in Fokalore.” (Sabnak)

Upon those words Imeraria lowered her eyes on the list of rebels she had checked previously.

“... I think we have to at least confine those who look like they could become leaders to gather Horant if I cause a disturbance.” (Imeraria)

Due to Sabnak agreeing, Imeraria raised her face and continued,

“Besides, regarding Hifumi-sama, I guess we will keep him away some way or

another. Even so, if it proves impossible to deal with the person himself directly, we will use someone close to him..." (Imeraria)

Imeraria, who came up with those thoughts in a mere few seconds, hit the list laying on the desk.

"Please contact Midas-san. Tell him to immediately head towards Fokalore while leading a mounted unit of 10 knights. If he's able to join up with Origa-san on the way, have him act as her escort, please. If it's Midas-san, he is acquainted with Hifumi-sama as well as Origa-san. As I have heard that he is a knight who is able to deal with them flexibly, he is suitable for the task, I think." (Imeraria)

"Understood." (Sabnak)

Be that as it may, neither of them really considered that Origa would actually get kidnapped or killed. However they were worried about recklessly stirring up matters at parts they didn't want to get overly much provoked.



The last moments of the King of Horant, Suprangel, were gentle although no one took care of him.

Enjoying a wine produced in Orsongrande, which arrived from Nelgal who is studying in Fokalore, during his dinner, he was seen off by the chamberlains as he entered his bedroom with a red face.

Suprangel, who was already at an advanced age, often slept together with one of his favourite mistresses depending on the mood of the moment, but he basically liked to go sleep at ease by himself.

On this day he also fell asleep alone without calling out to one of his several favourite mistresses.

And, he never woke up again.

The next morning an uproar spread in the blinking of an eye due to the scream of the maid who came to wake the king up.

What made the timing bad was the absence of the heir, Nelgal, and for there being no influential person within the castle at that time either. Moreover, the civilian merchants, who were coming and going, heard the maid's scream inside.

Spreading the news of the king's death to the vicinity of the castle without there being anyone stopping it, the coming and going merchants spread it outside the country in a flash.

Going into a frenzy to manoeuvre within the castle to seize the initiative, the people, who engage in the national politics, circulated the rumour of the king's death to the civilians as truth without being stopped by anyone.

Naturally the news are circulated by those who infiltrated from Orsongrande. And, in that situation where no one can do anything, the information of Orsongrande dispatching its troops reached the castle.

“Well then, there's no one else but those of you I called here. There are talks that soldiers are heading to our country from your own country. It's about that.”

In the royal castle, which misses its lord, an old man, who hails from the same generation as Suprangel and who possesses the position of Minister of Government Affairs, began to speak slowly while facing the other party he had called.

“I have thought that our country realised a peaceful, progressive exchange after experiencing a disastrous clash with your country... with you guys' lord.”

Deliberately stressing the close relationship with Hifumi and Fokalore, which is his territory, it turns into a wording aiming to restraint them, but the people themselves haven't noticed.

They don't have that much leeway.

“It's just as you say, Minister-sama.”

In response, a man with the strange name Ma Kalme, who was entrusted with the task of being the captain of the instruction unit which was dispatched to Horant, gave an answer. Being asked whether his family name is Kalme by Hifumi, as commoner, who has no family name, he answered that both of them are his name and that name was memorable right away.

Only wearing a leather breastplate as light armour for a soldier, he ended up handing over his weapons at the time they entered the castle, but usually a large knife and a kusarigama are hanging at his waist while clinking.

Although his appearance gives a rustic impression with the conspicuous

unshaven face, he handles leading a small unit flawlessly even if he is led by someone since he chooses his next action swiftly after properly observing his surroundings one way or the other.

“That’s why our boss... Earl-Tohno-sama dispatched us to this place. ... So, what’s wrong with that?” (Ma)

“Gu...”

Being asked directly, the minister gritted his molars.

If he makes a mistake in his choice here, the instruction unit might change into an aggressive unit just like that.

“L-Let’s talk honestly. I’d like to borrow your strength to avoid a battle by you persuading the soldiers who have been dispatched by your country.”

“Haa. Persuade, you say...” (Ma)

Scratching his shortly cut hair while grumbling, Ma Kalme groaned.

“That lot will likely be held back by Earl Biron at Orsongrande’s national border. No matter how I think about it, it’s probably not an action intended by the princess, oops, Her Majesty, the Queen.” (Ma)

The minister showed a relieved expression due to Ma Kalme’s words. However, Ma Kalme keeps going.

“Well, it’s probably pointless. As long as they don’t raise flashy military gains like our boss, they will be treated as simple idiots. Forcing their way through, they probably won’t pull back until they obtain a certain amount of military gains.” (Ma)

“As there’s likely some way for them to have a chance for winning, they won’t give up until they can realize results with that”, Ma Kalme continued.

“Well then... then, you guys...”

Ma Kalme laughed while stroking his chin roughly due to the minister having a frightened face.

“We won’t be able to persuade them, but we are able to fight them.” (Ma)

Ma Kalme, who took out a single parchment from his pocket, swung it around

after picking it up with his right hand.

“A support demand has arrived from from Earl Biron stating “I request assistance in order to deal with the fellows who are trying to not only cause disadvantages to Biron Earldom but also to Orsongrande” came. Wahaha, if he phrases it like that, we won’t be able to refuse.” (Ma)

“Weelll, I give up, I give up”, he laughed.

“In addition to that.” (Ma)

Although he smiled, his eyes had a sharp glint.

“The soldiers of Horant who we did our best to train aren’t for the sake of fighting such retarded battle with idiots, who got lost in greed and prestige.” (Ma)

“Shit!”, he spit out and his former smile returned.

“We will borrow a location close to the border. Please also get ready in case we get done in by the other group. Well, we will do our best so that it doesn’t happen though.” (Ma)

“I’m itching for a real battle as it’s been a while”, the minister just looked dumbfound at Ma Kalme who left while laughing loudly.



“Hoo, that old man died, huh?” (Hifumi)

“The official report hasn’t arrived yet, but there’s likely no mistake in that. Since there’s no point in simply waiting for the follow-up report, I immediately wanted to return home once...” (Nelgal)

Nelgal, who received the notification of Suprangel’s death, first visited the feudal lord’s mansion where Hifumi is located. He really wants to return to his own country in a hurry, but seeing that he is studying abroad upon a national policy, it won’t do if he leaves the area without notifying the representative of this place either.

“Luckily there are also the guards I have brought along from Horant. And we have horses and a carriage, too. I’m pondering whether I should return quickly first.” (Nelgal)

By all rights, Nelgal, who has the status of succeeding as king, should be someone above Hifumi, who is no more than single noble of Orsongrande, but the attitudes of both are completely reversed.

He was afraid that he would be beaten black and blue by Hifumi himself, but there's also a part of him that admired the material he was able to learn in Fokalore.

“I will do my utmost to not cause you any kind of troubles, but I will be able to lead Horant in a good direction with the things I studied here.” (Nelgal)

Nelgal, who finished his brief farewell, said 「Let's meet once again」 and left Fokalore.

“He is a diligent fellow. Although it's alright for him to return without minding me in particular.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who doesn't quite grasp his own influence, entrusted his back to the sofa and raised his arm with all his might while straightening his back.

“Mmh~... Vichy's side hasn't moved. This might have to wait for a while until they cause an uproar.” (Hifumi)

Washing down the baked sweets with black tea, Hifumi didn't hide his yawn.

“What a boring peacefulness. Having said that, it can't be helped even if I make a move...shall I try going to the workshop of Prufilas for a bit?” (Hifumi)

I won't settle down if I don't move my body, Hifumi, who decided to work hard at weapon development and at the same time to take a stroll, knocked the katana at his waist and left leisurely.

However, on that evening it became noisy in Fokalore.

Alyssa was carried into the feudal lord's mansion while being wounded.

Chapter 123 – Tragedy

The battle began with a surprise attack.

“An attack from behind!”

It was just at the moment when Alyssa, who was in the centre of the long file created by 500 soldiers, finished the maintenance of her wakizashi in the canopied carriage.

The instant she heard the voice, Alyssa stood up soundlessly and turned her look towards the rear.

“Miyukare-san, stay here.” (Alyssa)

“G-Got it!” (Miyukare)

Being inexperienced with battle, Miyukare steps into the carriage while lowering her body in this suddenly strained atmosphere.

At the same time, Alyssa jumped off the carriage.

“Director, it’s this way!”

Being called out by a soldier on the platform wagon which was travelling parallel to the carriage, she nimbly jumps onto the rear side of the wagon.

“Hurry!” (Alyssa)

“Roger!”

The platform wagon of Fokalore’s feudal army, which had experienced one improvement after the other, adopts things like cushion materials to suppress the sounds of the many large wheels rising its appearance and performance remarkably.

Becoming as big to let easily 5 people board one wagon, there’s no problem even with Alyssa herself joining.

The platform wagon advances as it makes an unique sound of *shuru shuru* due to the axles and cushioning, made out of monster hides, rubbing against each other.

Responding swiftly to the previous voice, the soldiers went ahead by separating

from the ranks of the non-combatants and prepared their weapons while facing towards the rear.

“Be cautious of attacks coming from left or right! One third of our numbers will deal with the rear!” (Alyssa)

While giving orders in a loud voice, they arrive at the end of the file.

“A human-shaped monster!?”

One of the soldiers steering the platform wagon screamed.

Alyssa also saw that bizarre figure.

Both its arms and legs are oddly longer than those of a normal human. All of its nails are sharp and thick.

It easily possesses a height of three meters. Its body, which had barely any clothes remaining, was hairy and had an amount of ugly, swelled-up and enlarged muscles.

Only its head had a face strongly tending towards that of a human. Alyssa had memories about that face.

“That is... if I remember correctly, in the capital...” (Alyssa)

It was no one else but the knight Balzephon which Alyssa had provoked in the castle and lured to the dance hall where Hifumi was waiting.

She still recalled his expression of trembling in rage.

“The human-shaped monster... Balzephon, it was him.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa had a bitter expression due to their misfortune of not encountering it while waiting but coming across it while withdrawing.

Once she surveyed the site, she saw several soldiers being injured and shedding blood. Creating a wall by toppling over a few wagons, they shot spears at Balzephon.

“Send the injured to the ranks in front after I attract its attention!” (Alyssa)

Alyssa jumps out using a wagon as foothold while shouting.

“That’s dangerous, director!”

The soldier, who operated a spear thrower in the shadow a wagon, tried to stop her, but she quickly slipped through his hands.

“It’s been a while!” (Alyssa)

Balzephon shifted his focus and opened his hollow eyes widely due to Alyssa’s voice.

It totally doesn’t look like there’s consciousness dwelling in them. It seems like he doesn’t even recognise Alyssa.

Towards an opponent that has merely half the size of himself, Balzephon simply raises his arms overhead to attack.

“Without any particular reaction, eh? In that case.” (Alyssa)

As he swings down his long arms she barely wards off the long nails aiming at her face with her wakizashi. She used the impact on the level of destroying her balance violently towards the momentum of moving forward with a somersault. And yet she didn’t come out of it unhurt. Her cheek was cut deeply and blood was pouring out.

“Gu...”

A heartbreaking cry is raised by the soldier who saw that, but she has no leeway to react to that.

Closing in underfoot of Balzephon while rolling forward, she swung her wakizashi and cut open a calf.

“Gaaaaaaaaa!” (Balzephon)

Two, three spears pierce into his back as he squats down while raising a scream.

“Guuuuu...!”

“Alright!” (Alyssa)

The moment Alyssa, who passed through underfoot, tried to pursue him, she saw something unbelievable.

Although she should have definitely cut up the muscles and caused an injury to the tendon of his ankle, he has already stopped bleeding and the wound is on the verge of being completely closed.

“That’s a lie...” (Alyssa)

Alyssa movements stop albeit only for an instant.

Aiming for that moment, Balzephon drew out a spear, which caused pain to him, and casually threw it at Alyssa.

“Auu!” (Alyssa)

It was good luck for her that the spear had no blade and was only sharpened at its tip to be used by the spear throwers.

Having the collarbone of the hit shoulder broken, even her right arm, which she tried to protect with the wakizashi, got dragged into it and the forearm was fractured by the strike.

Although she somehow managed to switch the wakizashi into her left hand, Alyssa, who ended up collapsing due to the impact, has received damage at the level of making it difficult for her to stand up.

“Director! Everyone, shower it with all the spears we got! We will save the director!”

“”””Yea!””””

Three soldiers risk their lives by leaping in front of Balzephon and at the same time the rear unit makes sure to pursue by firing the spears simultaneously. There are also some among them who throw the spears with their own hands. Covering Alyssa so that the spears won't hit her, the three soldiers thought of only protecting Alyssa even while they were scared to death by occasional spears hitting their armours within this rain of spears that was falling down steadily.

“Aaaaaaaaaa!”

Even Balzephon, who knocked down spears while displaying his own ability, was naturally unable to handle such an amount and took flight away from the highway with several spears pierced into his body.

None of the soldiers try to chase him and they all rush over to Alyssa at once.

“Director! Are you alright!?”

“Uuh...” (Alyssa)

Sweating profoundly, the groaning Alyssa opens her eyes and surveys the vicinity.

Countless soldiers are peering worriedly at her face.

Even the soldiers, who risked their bodies to protect her, two of them get down on their knees getting ready to place her on a stretcher by supporting Alyssa's neck without even wiping their faces which were smeared with dirt.

The remaining soldier is laying at Alyssa's feet while facing upwards without moving with a twitch.

The soldiers, who noticed Alyssa staring dumbfoundedly at the unmoving man, strongly closed their eyes.

"Director..."

"That guy, at the time the monster swung its spear..."

The soldiers report the circumstances with squeezed-out voices.

"... Such a..." (Alyssa)

He has become the first casualty in combat after establishing the Fokalore feudal army trained by Hifumi.

There were also accidents during training and deaths from diseases and afflictions unrelated to the military. It wasn't the first time they bereaved a soldier, but the matter of him abandoning his life in order to protect her, even more so in front of her, in combat, stirred up Alyssa's heart to the extent of making her forget the pain of her own injuries.

"AAaaaaa..." (Alyssa)

"Alyssa-sama!" (Miyukare)

At the time she fell into a frenzy, Miyukare, who made her way through the soldiers, slid in front of Alyssa.

Without minding getting dirty, she kneels down in front of the lying Alyssa and applies a clean cloth on Alyssa's cut cheek.

Showing surprise only for an instant due to the obviously fractured arm, Miyukare, who immediately assessed the situation of the surroundings, gently hugged Alyssa while being cautious of not touching her arm as much as possible.

"Let's get your injuries healed first. That's the job of the person who was protected." (Miyukare)

"Miyukare-san..." (Alyssa)

The soldiers placed Alyssa, who lost consciousness just like that, on a stretcher and carried her to the carriage upon Miyukare's orders.

“Carry the corpse to a carriage or wagon that has space left, too.” (Miyukare)

As they agreed upon the case something happened to Alyssa, the command is transferred to Miyukare.

“Are we close to a nearby city? There's a city close-by in the direction we returned from though.”

While pointing her look at Alyssa, who's being carried, Miyukare thought about the question posed by a soldier leading a platoon with closed eyes.

“... Let's head towards Fokalore as planned. I'm certain she will get treated with magic potions if I request it from Lord-sama.” (Miyukare)

The expression of Miyukare, who saw the soldier nod while saying “I see”, was completely like that of a fierce god.

Becoming bloodstained from her face to her chest at the time she hugged Alyssa, she is overwhelmed by anxiety as well as rage and dons a harsh gaze at the level of being able to kill people with it.

“You will return to Fokalore at full speed. You will move at maximum speed using a platform wagon with 30 people on it, including the director and the corpse. You should arrive within once day if you don't rest.” (Miyukare)

“As you ordered!”

While separating from the soldiers in order to organise things, Miyukare bowed her head facing the soldier who was placed on a stretcher with a cloth covering him.

Even the soldiers, who were in the vicinity of the stretcher, mourn over his death while standing at attention.

“Thank you very much. Because of you risking your life, a precious person for me and everyone was saved. Please watch over us as we will definitely deliver the person you protected with your life to Fokalore.” (Miyukare)

At the time Miyukare voiced out words of thankfulness once again, she could hear sobs leaking from someone with her ears.



“... So?” (Hifumi)

Alyssa, who returned to the feudal lord’s mansion, receives treatment in the medical room and is put to sleep within her own room in the building.

And currently, in front of Hifumi, who is in his office, several soldiers with the rank of platoon leader and Miyukare are standing in a line. They are bowing their backs with an angle of 90°.

It was Miyukare who answered Hifumi’s question.

“After repelling the human-shaped monster, we took Director Alyssa and hurried to return as fast as possible. Please take properly into account that it was the selfish wish of an incompetent person who has no military gains after we suffered losses. Could you please heal the wounds of Director Alyssa with the magic potions you possess, Lord-sama?” (Miyukare)

“Please”, the soldiers matched up their voices following up on Miyukare’s words.

“You know.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi sighed with a “fuu.”

“I don’t particularly care about someone’s military gains or whether there were any losses. I don’t mind in any way to apply the magic potion if it’s Alyssa’s own wish.” (Hifumi)

“Thank you very much.” (Miyukare)

“However, before that I’d like to ask you one thing.” (Hifumi)

Miyukare and the soldiers, who raised their heads, noticed Hifumi smiling. A soldier points at Hifumi’s left hand which was covered by a glove.

“Was that human-shaped monster or whatever strong?” (Hifumi)

One of the soldiers answers as Miyukare hasn’t seen the battle.

“It was strong. It caused such a serious injury with one blow of a spear at the director and it warded off the previous attack of that skilled director, too. Also, we confirmed that its injuries quickly healed even when it was cut and pierced by spears.”

Hifumi is staring at the soldier, who talks with a serious look, while smiling.

“Its wounds were healed? How about the cuts? Were those closed up by bulging flesh? Or was it closed up from the wound’s edges? There are likely various manners of recovery. Besides, how about the healing speed?” (Hifumi)

The soldier explains as many details as he can to Hifumi who is asking in a somewhat excited manner.

Hifumi listened to that with a strange degree of good mood.

“Lord-sama, please give us the chance to have our revenge with a rematch!”

“Nope.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi flatly declines the petition of the soldier who was filled with intense fighting spirit.

“It’s an opponent that has done in the current Alyssa one-sidedly, right? Isn’t that one far more interesting than the troubles in Horant? There’s probably still quite some time left until the demon bunch gets here. I will take care of that fellow. In the first place, can you guys deal with it anyway?” (Hifumi)

“Uuh... Please take care of it.”

The soldier, who hadn’t the confidence to bring it down definitely if speaking honestly, withdrew obediently. The fist, he tightly grasped in frustration, is filled with a strength to cause blood oozing out.

“Don’t be so discouraged. That guy is probably a monster released by the newly crowned demon king. Since there will likely come other underlings of the demon king, it will be fine for you to get your revenge to your heart’s content at that time.” (Hifumi)

“Demon king...” (Miyukare)

Miyukare, who doesn’t believe in that, made a bitter face, but she remained silent as knows Hifumi’s aim. *However, should he really talk about this here?* She had those feelings.

“Ah, I went to check out the state of the demons for a bit at the time when I was in the wastelands, but a new demon king was born. Since the battle with the demons will start sooner or later, you will be able to fully enjoy your

revenge for Alyssa and the guy who died. Train in order to be properly ready for the battle until then.” (Hifumi)

“Ha! At that time, please give us the chance to slaughter the enemies by all means!”

After bowing all together, the soldiers left. Only Miyukare remained in the room.

“... It’s a lie, isn’t it?” (Miyukare)

“The birth of a new demon king is the truth though? I don’t know whether it’s related to the monster.” (Hifumi)

“I’m shocked... isn’t something like the possibility of the demons starting an offensive a big problem? So easily...” (Miyukare)

“It’s fine. Such people think simply.” (Hifumi)

Standing up, Hifumi affixed the katana to his waist.

“Since the enemy will come, we are going to kill them. We will die if we lose. Since I have adjusted it to some degree, we likely won’t be defeated if we go at it with the intention to die.” (Hifumi)

While laughing loudly, Hifumi tells her that he is going to see Alyssa and also leaves.

Being left all alone, Miyukare tilted her head to the side.

“Somehow I feel uneasy...” (Miyukare)

Miyukare felt a sense of discomfort, but she didn’t have the spare time to calmly think about it in this place.

On top of a large number of people returning soon, there was also the first battle casualty. She can’t see anything but a future of being worked to death as civil official in charge of military affairs.

“Let’s get everyone help out.” (Miyukare)

She was worried about Alyssa, but deciding to leave it to Hifumi albeit feeling frustrated, Miyukare headed towards the other civil officials at a quick pace.



Alyssa, who was lying on the bed at the time when Hifumi entered her room, turned her look towards him with her face being wrapped up in bandages. Given that she can't move her fixated shoulder, she can only move her eyes somewhat.

“Ah, Hifumi-san... it's disgraceful, this appearance.” (Alyssa)

While saying “Don't worry about it” due to the feeble laughter of Alyssa, Hifumi brought a fitting chair close and sat down next to her bed.

“I saw you at the time you were far more tattered. It doesn't matter by now.” (Hifumi)

“Good grief... it's different in various ways from that time...” (Alyssa)

Hifumi addressed Alyssa, who pulled up the blanket up to her face with her healthy left hand, in his usual manner.

“It seems you fought against a human-shaped monster. How was it?” (Hifumi)

“Monster... is it? That is probably that knight who escaped from the royal palace's dance hall, I think.” (Alyssa)

“What's this about?” (Hifumi)

Hearing Alyssa explanation, Hifumi pondered about it.

“Well, it's fine either way, I guess? The matter of him being an underling of the demon king if he has a human shape has credibility. If he catches the eyes of the capital or the knights, it will be fine as long he makes them lose face or grills them. ... Oops, will you be able to get over it quickly?” (Hifumi)

“Kya.” (Alyssa)

Having suddenly torn off the blanket, Alyssa's figure being wrapped up in bandages became exposed.

The slender, flexible, trained, small body had currently medicine and alcohol as disinfectant substitute applied to it and she was only wearing thin trousers on the lower party of her body.

“W-Wait a moment...” (Alyssa)

“Stay still. It's not the first time for you anyway.” (Hifumi)

Taking out a magic potion from his darkness storage, Hifumi quickly checked Alyssa's body while removing the lid.

"The injuries are the shoulder and arm as well as the cheek. Is there anything else?" (Hifumi)

"... No, the rest's fine." (Alyssa)

Taking off the bandages and fixations which covered Alyssa's body from her right arm and shoulder up to her breasts, Hifumi casually applied the magic potion on her upper body half with its smooth and insufficient ups and downs. Alyssa stiffened her body for an instant to due to the coldness, but once her wounds heal and her pain decreases, she gradually loses strength.

"Hey, Hifumi-san..." (Alyssa)

"What's up?" (Hifumi)

"A single soldier died in order to protect me..." (Alyssa)

"Yea, that's right." (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who confirmed her body to be healed after using around 70%, put his hand on the bandage on her face.

"Following you, Hifumi-san, I became a director one way or the other, but such a situation is, well, no good, right...?" (Alyssa)

"No, not particularly." (Hifumi)

He gently spills the remaining magic potion on Alyssa's cheek.

"You yourself decide whether something's fine or no good. Among commanders there's likely many who deem it acceptable if there are a lot more casualties among the enemy than among their allies." (Hifumi)

In order to check whether the injury on her cheek had fully healed, Hifumi stroke Alyssa's cheek with his right hand and placed it on top of her head with a *pon*

"I will be troubled if you aren't there. As it's fine to do it your way, please consolidate that passionate lot." (Hifumi)

"Ue..." (Alyssa)

Floating tears with a *sniff*, Alyssa held both her hands due to the right hand which was placed on her head.

Its heat is transmitted to her and an excessive grief fills her chest.

“Hifumi-saaan...” (Alyssa)

Alyssa pushes her face into Hifumi’s belly as her tears begin to overflow and her expression crumples. Placing her arms, including the one which was healed just now, strongly around his back, she hugged him with all her might.

“Uaaaaaaaaaaaaa...!” (Alyssa)

Her mumbled crying voice continued to resound in the room until Alyssa fell asleep after getting worn out from crying.



Chapter 124 – Breakdown Dead Ahead

Departing Orsongrande early in the morning, Origa dashed towards Fokalore at high speed even while having large quantities of souvenirs loaded into the carriage.

“So, what’s your business?” (Origa)

“C-Can’t you at least stop the carriage!?”

“I have to refuse that.” (Origa) Copyrighted by Infinite Translations!

The one galloping next to the carriage on his horse was Knight Midas. Receiving Imeraria’s order, he, who chose ten knights, was able to catch up with Origa the next day, just when she was about to leave a small town where she lodged at, by racing from the capital on horse.

“I have to return to the side of my husband right away. I can’t waste even a second pointlessly to accomplish my duty as his wife.” (Origa)

Origa, who bent herself forward in the coachman seat, indifferently reacts to Midas’ desperate appeal.

“Well, then please listen just like this.” (Midas)

No matter how much she might have been a commoner, he can’t behave too obstinately towards Origa who is now a countess.* *(T/N: Earl and Count have the same kanji in Japanese, so I translated Hifumi’s title as Earl. But with this it should be clear that the author means Count, so will change it from now on from Earl to Count, if I don’t forget)*

Quickly abandoning the hope of establishing a proper place for a conversation, he continues the talk while controlling his horse.

“Horant’s king has died. Hearing that news, a part of our country’s nobles headed in the direction of Horant while leading their armies.” (Midas)

“Is that so? However, Horant is on the opposite side, isn’t it? Are you saying that there’s movement on Vichy’s side as well?” (Imeraria)

“It’s something else”, Midas shakes his head.

“In the current situation there are three worrisome points in total related to Fokalore for Her Majesty, the Queen.” (Midas)

“To our territory?” (Origa)

Origa’s voice carries strangely well among the sounds of the carriage’s wheels rattling across the highway.

“Let’s hear them.” (Origa)

Even so, Origa doesn’t show any inclination to stop the carriage.

Will I arrive in Fokalore like this? That’s fine since it will speed up my linking up with Nelgal who is supposed to be heading in the direction of the capital, Midas persuades himself forcibly. He continues to gallop next to her while worrying about his horse.

“First point is about Nelgal-sama who is studying abroad in Fokalore. Leaving aside within the territory of Fokalore, there is the possibility of the subordinates of the rebellious nobles aiming for him while he’s on the way towards our direction. Second, there are the soldiers of Fokalore who are currently stationed in Horant to carry out tactics teaching. It might be fine to say that they are currently in a critical situation.” (Midas)

“What’s the third point?” (Origa)

“It’s you, Countess.” (Midas)

Midas skilfully keeps his balance on the shaking horse back.

“As the ability of Count Tohno is well-known, they should want to avoid the intervention of the Count as much as possible. According to the prediction of Her Majesty, the Queen, the nobles, who are aiming at Horant, should be targeting to increase their influence by showing their competency to Her Majesty through achieving higher military gains than the Count.” (Midas)

“What a foolish notion. Did her Majesty actually bestow the title after having seen Hifumi-sama’s military gains?” (Origa)

“From their viewpoint it might have looked like that.” (Midas)

“How disgusting”, Origa spat out.

“The prosperity of Fokalore as well as his strong influence on her Majesty, all

of it is because it's Hifumi-sama doing it. I wonder what kind of meaning it would have even if other people did the same." (Midas)

"I believe so as well. Ruling this time's matter as treasonous act, Her Majesty will be able to punish them at a suitable time. But, even so we have to avoid at all costs to injure the heir of Horant's throne within Orsongrande." (Origa)

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This time Midas' mission was to send Nelgal safely off to Horant and to escort Origa although he didn't know whether to do that in one unit or to split up. *Delivering Origa safely to her territory as planned, I will join up with Nelgal and accompany him to the capital. Going from the capital, the guarding will be carried out by far more knights and soldiers.*

"I have understood the state of affairs. However, it's not necessary for you to escort me." (Origa)

"But... if something happens to you, Countess, in the worst case, Count Tohno will..." (Midas)

"Fufufu" (Origa)

Midas tilted his head to the side due to Origa's smile which seems to be saying "I can't bear this ridiculousness."

"Something wrong?" (Midas)

"If I were to be killed, will my husband actually take revenge?" (Origa)

"T-That's only natural..." (Midas)

"It won't happen." (Origa)

"W-What are you..." (Midas)

Suddenly opening her mouth, Origa leaks an ominous laughter from her lightly opened lips.

"If you want to know why, it's because that wouldn't be a "hostility" towards Hifumi-sama. Whether my husband would regard an intentional attack against me as hostile act towards himself, is it? He likely doesn't worry in his mind what

will happen to someone like me. Of course, it will be different if he realizes that it's a powerful opponent. But at the very least, there's no meaning even if they used me as hostage." (Origa)

Midas grasped the reins while being speechless.

"Besides, it would be unpleasant, you know." (Origa)

"Humph", she breathes out as if ridiculing him.

"Didn't I receive training in the basics of fighting from Hifumi-sama at the beginning? Do you think that I will be taken hostage that easily? Even in the unlikely event that I'm caught, I will deal with it myself using all means possible before anyone can touch me except that man." (Origa)

"G-Got it. And, about the unit dispatched to Horant..." (Midas)

"It's pointless to worry about them, too." (Origa)

Gently stroking her iron-ribbed fan, Origa answered without hesitation.

"Although it's not to the extent as with me, they have also properly received Hifumi-sama's coaching. They will neatly eliminate the enemy." (Origa)

Midas even had no time to call out to her as Origa withdrew inside the carriage after saying "Please do as you like if you wish to accompany me since I will take a break for a bit now."

"Just how the hell will they identify those "enemies" ...?" (Midas)

The words, he muttered similar to a monologue, were drowned out by sounds of the wheels and hooves.



The commanding training officer of the Fokalore feudal army Ma Carne took up position at the national border on Orsongrande's side with ten team members. The soldiers of both countries have taken temporary shelter at the fortress' which are the passage of the border.

All of the soldiers of Orsongrande are on standby in the barracks nearby.

Horant's soldiers were busy preparing for the attack of the enemy army.

What Ma Carne's group has deployed are five spear throwers.

And all of them have kusarigama and Japanese-styled single-edged swords

equipped and are wearing plain armours.

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At that place a single messenger came rushing in on his horse.

“Gentlemen of Fokalore, I hold a letter from Count Biron-sama. Where’s the one in charge?”

“It’s me.” (Ma)

Suddenly appearing in front of the messenger who dismounted from his horse, Ma Carme accepted the threefold parchment.

Opening it skilfully with his left hand, his right hand remained on the kusarigama at his waist.

Noticing Ma Carme’s unit already being prepared for war, the messenger was astonished. *As the Fokalore feudal army is already armed at a point of time where the enemy still isn’t visible and moreover with the person receiving the letter not being negligent in his caution even towards a messenger, there are likely no other troops like that in not only Orsongrande but the other countries as well.*

Even though he was suspicious of him, the messenger admired the man with his sloppily grown beard in front of him.

“I see.” (Ma)

Ma Carme put the re-folded paper in his pocket.

“I have received this letter. Pretty much it seems like we are required for the sake of protection.” (Ma)

The front teeth of Ma Carme, who smiled broadly, are lacking.

“It looks like Biron-sama intends to fight a battle with his own troops.” (Ma)

“Yes. There’s also the matter of your unit having too few numbers. It will likely be difficult with the opponent having 500 soldiers...”

“Let’s stop that.” (Ma)

“Ha?”

“No, no”, waving his hands, Ma Carme pouted.

“As the other party has put together 500 soldiers, Biron-sama’s military forces will be below that even if he scrapes up all of them, right?” (Ma)

The messenger confirmed it with a nod.

“Therefore, the end result will likely turn into an unreasonable loss if we met them from the front. Though it would be different if you fought 500 opponents with 5.000.” (Ma)

“However, you are just 11, aren’t you?”

“It ain’t like we will fight fairly from the front, you know? If my subordinates were done in, me, my friends and everyone would get scolded by Military Director Alyssa.” (Ma)

Raising his index finger, Ma Carme began to talk that he has one request.

“What is it?”

“I have one proposal. I’d like to request your cooperation in finishing off the enemy without us suffering any losses and without decreasing Biron-sama’s troops as much as possible.” (Ma)

“Well, then let me inform Count-sama about this.”

Watching the messenger swiftly taking out writing materials, Ma Carme explained the whole strategy to him.

“I see...”

“If it turns out well, it will finish with the least losses. Since the number of opponents is a bit much, I’d like to ask for your assistance.” (Ma)

“Understood. I will directly inform Count Biron of this.”

“I leave it to you.” (Ma)

Firmly shaking their left hands with each other, Ma Carme smiled again with his teeth-less face.

“If we return to Fokalore after being successful with this, I will be able to get praised by Director Alyssa!” (Ma)

“H-Haa...”

Is she such a beauty to rile up a man like him this far? The messenger imagined the appearance of the woman called Alyssa whom he hasn't seen yet. Of course it was totally different from reality as he imagined an adult woman.



“Uwaah!?”

With an arrow suddenly stuck in the horse who pulled the carriage with Origa on board, the female soldier of the Fokalore feudal army, who served as coachman, raised her voice in surprise.

Being dragged in by the horse which fell while neighing due to the excessive pain, the horse, which ran next to it, falls down as well.

Inevitably the balance of the carriage falls apart, too, and the soldier was thrown out on the road.

“Wa wa... to to”

Although receiving a blow to her shoulder, she used ukemi, which she had been forced to train until getting fed up with it, and avoided a fatal wound. Even so she felt intense pain as she apparently fractured her right arm. However, even apart from that, there's something she has to do first.

“E-Enemy attack! Origa-sama, are you alright!?”

“Are you safe!? All hands, surround the carriage!” (Midas)

Jumping off the horse, Midas drew his sword.

Origa's attendants are five female soldiers. Everyone, except the soldier who acted as coachman of Origa's carriage, was staying on the following carriage and barely escaped from a rear-end collision.

Everyone disembarks quickly and rushes to the toppled-over carriage while drawing their swords.

“Origa-sama! Ah!?”

Another arrow came flying and grazed the armour worn by a soldier. Causing a high-pitched metallic sound, it raises the tension of everyone.

“Don't you think you have gone a bit too far?”

“It will be more fun if they die”, a male voice said. Men, who wore armours appeared in groups from the thickets at the road’s sides. Translated by Infinite Novel Translations!

At their lead was a small man who wore a slightly dirty leather armour and grinned broadly.

“You bastards are the subordinates of Count Aspilketa, eh?”

Midas asked for their identity, but ignoring him, the small man surveyed the female soldiers of Fokalore.

“Hoo... there’s only female soldiers, that’s unusual. Even if the noble’s wife dies, there will still be amusement left.”

Sensing gazes as if being licked all over, the female soldiers felt a chill run down their spines with a shiver.

“Uwaah...”

“Uh-oh, don’t move. There’s still arrows left. If you make unnecessary movements, that person...”

“Are you the leader of those filthy men?” (Origa)

The one who obstructed the words of the small man was Origa who came out from the carriage.

As the luggage has become a cushioning, she hasn’t suffered any major injuries.

“Origa-sama!”

“Hehee, that’s you, eh? You are younger than I expected.”

“Answer me. Are you the ringleader of this mess?” (Origa)

Origa pointed at the horse which has already died after receiving an arrow and collapsing.

“So? It’s just as you can see though, right?”

“Then, die.” (Origa)

Once Origa points her right arm towards the small man, a faint sound of wind comes forth and his short neck had a red line drawn on it.

“Ue?”

“Listen just like this.” (Origa)

While slowly approaching the small man, Origa faced him with a dark and muddy look.

“Your crimes are two. First, you broke the porcelain tableware which took me three days to carefully select for the sake of having Hifumi-sama use it. Even only that deserves certain death, but moreover you hindered a wife who is hurrying on the road home to meet with her husband. Even if you might have any kind of reason, it’s impossible for me to pardon this.” (Origa)

With a sharp sound, she thrusts her still closed iron-ribbed fan in front of the small man’s eyes.

“It’s a far too heavy crime. You should die right away.” (Origa)

Once she poked the small man’s forehead with her iron-ribbed fan, the head was cleanly detached from the torso and the round head rolled lightly on the road.

The headless body continues to stand on its short legs.

“Repent in the other world.” (Origa)

Midas, who watched her dumbfoundedly, surveyed the surroundings in panic.

“The arrows will come! All members...” (Midas)

“There’s no need to worry.” (Origa)

Origa says while concealing her mouth with the opened fan.

“I checked the surroundings with wind magic, but there’s no one hidden in the thickets. The 16 men, who have come out, are all of them.” (Origa)

“I-I see...” (Midas)

Rather than the mentioned details, Midas gulped due to the fact of there being magic which is able to grasp that.

It’s the echolocation which Origa developed after receiving a hint from Hifumi previously, but its accuracy is already ignoring some obstacles.

Once they comprehend the situation somehow or other, Midas’ knight unit and the soldiers of Fokalore don’t hold back.

“All hands, arrest them...” (Midas)

“Dispose of them.” (Origa)

“Roger!”

The female soldiers started to run upon Origa’s voice.

The disturbed assailants held their weapons and tried to deal with them with a faint smile as the number of enemies was less than them and they were even women, but that was a mistake.

With a sound as if cutting grass, Origa’s iron-ribbed fan gouges out the throat of one of them.

One more dies due to Origa’s magic and the soldiers also reliably kill them one after the other.

“V-Vice-captain, we...”

Due to the overwhelming scenery unfolded by the female group, whom they regarded as their target of protection, one of the knights sent his look at Midas.

“It can’t be helped. Even if it’s only one, arrest them for interrogation. Hurry or they will end up annihilated.” (Midas)

“R-Roger!” Copyright by Infinite Novel Translations

Finishing the battle within a few minutes, the assailants were completely slaughtered in the end.

“Well then, let’s abandon one carriage here. We will hurry our return with the remaining one.” (Origa)

Due to the words of Origa who made sure that the last one was dead, the soldiers quickly wiped the blood off their weapons and began the transfer of the luggage from the broken carriage.

“... Vice-Captain, if what we do...”

Midas sighed.

“We will continue accompanying the countess and join up with Nelgal-sama in Fokalore.” (Midas)

“What else can we do anyway?” Midas mounted his horse.

It looks like the soldiers of Fokalore will finish their preparations soon.

“One piece was safe!?” (Origa)

Origa, who discovered an undamaged item amongst the porcelain souvenirs, put it carefully back into its box and embraced it in her chest with great care.

“Ah, Hifumi-sama. Origa will be very soon at your side.” (Origa)

The entranced expression looks dreamy to a degree that one wouldn't think of her as the woman who created a tragic, headless corpse not long ago.

She was such a girl, eh? Feeling a pain inside his eyes, Midas curbed his brow with his fingers.

Chapter 125 – Lying From You

In contrast to Horant's national border which suddenly turned lively, the turmoil in Swordland was suppressed quickly.

In the castle, that lacked a person to take the leadership with the king gone, the power struggle continued as ever and unreasonable laws were excessively issued just to be revised without any guiding principle behind it all.

After almost all beastmen had left to the city's part where they lived as community, it has simply turned into a situation of nobles, who held the authority by simply making the common citizens into targets of exploitation and labour force, siphoning off the capital in order to contest over their influence determined on revising their titles.

Understandably it's not like the common citizens are meekly obeying in such circumstances either.

With discontent spreading rapidly there have even those among the soldiers appeared who have abandoned their post.

As for the soldiers; they cannot tolerate to have their salary, resulting from them working earnestly, being cancelled for incomprehensible reason because they are common citizens themselves as well.

Small troubles and conflicts frequently occurred all over the place between soldiers and citizens, among fellow soldiers, soldiers and knights as well as between citizens and knights.

“So, what happened in the end then?” (Helen)

Helen, who was ordered to stay back at home, visited Reni who is prostrating on top of the desk while being completely exhausted.

“Mm~...” (Reni)

Reni suddenly turned her face sideways and slightly opened her sleepy eyes.

“Reaching the people who wanted to come to us, the soldiers, who came attacking, were made to flee with the elves' magic. The end.” (Reni)

“The end you say, you know...” (Helen)

“I mean, I can’t tell you anything besides that. Gengu-san’s followers are grieving that the beastmen lost out to play an active role at this occasion. We were very busy until just a while ago with receiving the new people.” (Reni)

Including Reni no one noticed it, but a part of the beastmen started to secure their places of residence by secretly expanding the area of the former slums at this occasion.

Moreover, with the area of residence for the other races being the former slums and the urban areas of Swordland being their original address, a reversal of the population is developing.

Since neither the beastmen nor the human side had polled their demographics, no one became aware of it though.

“I want to be a magician, too. It was very cool.” (Reni)

“Ah!” (Helen)

“What’s up, Helen?” (Reni)

“It appeared. Wind magic.” (Helen)

Helen, who casually fumbled around with her wand, faced Reni’s head, which was lying on top of the desk just like a furball, and once she imagined that she wants to cause a gentle breeze, it appeared.

“W-Why...?” (Reni)

“I don’t know about that.” (Helen)

“However it appeared somehow”, when Helen targeted the wind towards Reni’s face, the hair of Reni, who grumbled a bit, slowly swayed.

“Unfair, unfair! I want to be a magician as well!” (Reni)

“Uwah! Wai-, stop.” (Helen)

Being assaulted by Reni with a jump and Helen tumbling to the floor was at the time when Zanga entered.

“Oh my! You are lively, aren’t you?” (Zanga)

“Ah, Zanga-san!” (Reni)

Reni, who felt a bit relieved by dishevelled Helen’s hair, faced Zanga with a

smile.

Her own hair has turned into something tragic, too.

“What happened?”

“Well, you know. There’s something to discuss for a bit. It’s not me though.”
(Zanga)

When Zanga ushered them in with “Come in”, the elf, Puuse, the one-eared rabbitwoman and the tigerboy, Malfas, entered.

Due to to the combination that has no coherence at all, the rabbit woman began to speak while looking as if it’s something very difficult to speak about once Reni and Helen had arranged their hair.

“Umm... I’d like to have permission to leave the city...”

“Eh? You don’t particularly need our permission or such, but what for? Won’t it be dangerous if you go out to the wastelands?” (Reni)

Due to Reni tilting her head, the one-eared rabbitwoman lowered her sight while having a red face.

Zanga laughs with a “hya hya.”

“It looks like she wants to meet with Hifumi-san. Well, well, I thought that he was a handsome man, but he is a smooth operator after all.” (Zanga)

With Zanga laughing while saying “how youthful”, the rabbitwoman ended up curling herself up more and more.

Reni and Helen are dumbfounded as they look at each other faces.

“I will accompany her as well. There’s something I want to ask him once I meet Hifumi-san. He also...” (Puuse)

Urged on by Puuse, Malfas nodded.

“I will go, too. I want to try meeting with that human. Since I heard that he is strong without being prejudiced towards beastmen from the rabbit-oneechan, I’d like him to train me. After all it’s extremely unlikely for me to be able to use magic.” (Malfas)

Seeing Hifumi’s image as spoken of by the rabbitwoman apparently leaking through the words of Malfas, Helen quietly muttered 「Aren’t you glorifying him

too much?」.

“I see. That’s somehow nice. What part of Hifumi-san do you like?” (Reni)

Stating her impressions thoughtlessly, Reni wondered *I wonder whether it would be fine to help them although I don’t quite understand the feelings of the rabbitwoman to be honest and with Puuse being scared of Hifumi.*

Thanks to the barrage of questions from Reni and Zanga cheering her on, the rabbitwoman answers bit-by-bit.

As the side of the female group is getting excited, Malfas encourages himself to go on a trip and leave his younger sister behind.

“Although I hate humans, I won’t be able to win ever if things stay as they are...” (Malfas)

The flame of his desire for revenge has never vanished.



“The enemy has arrived! As planned, we will head this way and only carry out replenishment in Münster. The whole army numbers more than 500!”

The messenger, who brought back Ma Carme’s suggestion to Count Biron, returned to the national border of Horant, where they were encamped, while spurring on his horse.

“Thanks for your hard work of returning to Münster quickly. You will need to take a detour to not clash with the enemy.” (Ma)

“No, I have the duty to make sure of the war progress by staying behind here!”

“That sounds like a lot of work.” (Ma)

Ma Carme told his subordinates to get ready for battle and turned around to the messenger.

“Dismount from the horse from here on out and walk to the rear.” (Ma)

“Walk, you say?”

“There are some petty tricks set up.” (Ma)

“I don’t want to boast, but it’s according to the teachings from our Lord-

sama”, Ma Carme cackled and began to help with the installation of the spear throwers together with his men.

“Those are the spear throwers which played a big part in the war with Vichy, aren’t they? I see those for the first time.”

“A big part, eh? In reality that was just Lord-sama rampaging around though.”
(Ma)

“However, will it be alright with just 5 of those?”

Ma Carme simply answered to the messenger who can’t hide his anxiety,

“It won’t be alright. 500 people with 5 spear throwers is impossible.” (Ma)

“Eh, then...”

“These are bait. They will be abandoned once they fired some shots.” (Ma)

Once they were able to finish the preparations, each of them takes a break upon Ma Carme’s order.

“Well then, I wonder what I shall do for lunch?” (Ma)

Plumping down at that place, he munched the bread they bought in a city of Horant and drank water from a flask.

Once the messenger surveys the surroundings, there are only those who take their meals in the same manner and those who are boldly having a nap.

The tension of having a life-waging battle from now on can’t be found at all.

“Everyone is very calm.”

The messenger tied the reins to a suitable rock, sat down as well and took a sip from the flask he carried at his waist.

“It’s Lord-sama’ teachings. I don’t understand it properly, but a battle is something like an extension everyday’s life. He says that he eats and sleeps normally and that it’s natural to kill each other in between those.” (Ma)

“His brain is weird”, Ma Carme laughed, finished eating the bread with butter smeared onto it and lied down.

“However, since he is actually surviving by doing that, we have no other choice but to abide to that. It’s the doctrine of the famous Knight of the Slender

Sword-sama after all.” (Ma)

“I see... Count Tohno and Fokalore’s soldiers fought for the sake of the country like that.”

“Ah, that’s wrong.” (Ma)

“Huh?”

Scratching his belly, Ma Carme shifted his attention to the sitting messenger while laughing frivolously.

“Lord-sama hates “to fight for someone.” Let me see, what did he say?” (Ma)

Ma Carme looked up to the sky.

A few clouds have appeared, but sunlight to the degree of it being hot properly reaches the surface.

“Ah that’s it. It’s a story about whether a fellow, who dies after risking his life for the sake of people, is happy.” (Ma)

“Umm...”

“Is it hard to understand? I’m bad at such explanations. In other words, it’s a story about whether the fellow, whom you protected, will be happy with you dying after you having fought for the sake of someone with your life on the line.” (Ma)

The messenger folded his arms and pondered about Ma Carme words.

“But it’s our job to fight to protect someone. However, certainly, if I consider the possibility of someone dying for my sake...”

“Well, I don’t know the true answer either.” (Ma)

Ma Carme, who turned his face sideways, concluded with self-effacement.

“I thought “Indeed.” If I have to fight anyway, it’s always more sound to fight for my own goals.” (Ma)

“Well then, for what reason are you fighting?”

“I have decided. It’s in order to receive praise from Director Alyssa.” (Ma)

Ma Carme pressed his ear against the ground and closed his eyes.

“They are here.” (Ma)

When Ma Carme shouted so after standing up, the carefree mood became immediately strained.

“The sounds of hooves are approaching. A lot of them.” (Ma)

The messenger gulped down the biggest spit up to date.



“Isn’t it also fine to wait a bit longer?” (Alyssa)

“Well, it doesn’t really matter, right?” (Hifumi)

In a manner of not particularly caring about it while also restraining Alyssa to stay low-key, Hifumi tosses his change of clothes and spare weapon in the darkness storage and goes ahead with his preparations to leave on a journey.

“But don’t you think that Origa-san wants to see you, Hifumi-san?” (Alyssa)

“Please tell her to wait here. I will just head to a short distance away.”
(Hifumi)

“... Got it. I will wait here as well.” (Alyssa)

“I see.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who took his breakfast together with Alyssa in his room, suddenly stated 「I will go visit the human-shaped monster」 once he finished eating and Alyssa, who though *won't Origa break rather than feeling sad?* tried to stop him, but to no avail.

“It’s impossible for me to stay still even though it’s clear that there’s prey”, was just as expected of Hifumi.

“I thought about it all night, but that’s the knight, who was at the castle, after all. Though I don’t understand how he ended up becoming like that.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa’s body was still not at normal condition.
She didn’t tell anyone, but she became a bit scared of fighting.
Once she noticed, the time for training has decreased and the time spent together with Hifumi has increased.
She feels a bit relieved if she’s together with him.

“However, it looked like he didn’t know about me. He might just not remember me, but it was like words weren’t getting through to him.” (Alyssa)

Finishing his usual preparations, Hifumi brews the fake-coffee, he secretly brought back from the city of demons and drinks it.

“I see. It’s a fellow at the level of toying around with you, Alyssa. If he were to be sane, it would be a lot more fun, but... it’s better than a stupid war, isn’t it?” (Hifumi)

While cutely cramming salad in her mouth, Alyssa thought about his question.

“Huh? If it’s you, I wondered whether you would choose war, where there are many to kill, Hifumi-san.” (Alyssa)

“Killing a large amount of people is nice, too. But, to my regret, the opponents would be regular soldiers. If beastmen or demons come attacking all at once, I will still be able to enjoy it though.” (Hifumi)

While enjoying the aroma of the fake-coffee, Hifumi shook his head while looking disappointed.

“What’s that drink?” (Alyssa)

“It’s something like coffee.” (Hifumi)

“Please let me take sip.... ueeh.” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa grimacing due to the bitter taste just as she tasted it from Hifumi’s cup, Hifumi took out something from his darkness storage as he had apparently recalled something.

“You forgot this.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi tossed the wakizashi, he took out with a smooth motion, to Alyssa.

“Ah, my wakizashi.” (Alyssa)

The wakizashi, which hit the chest area of her thin pajama with a *pon*, was repaired with beautiful workmanship.

It’s the painstaking piece of work of Prufas who stuck with it until the end while getting irritated by the minute demands of Hifumi.

“If the weapon becomes useless, it will be difficult to kill people. Maintain it

by yourself from now on.” (Hifumi)

“Ah... yea!” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who tightly hugged the wakizashi with both hands, decided to do her training over properly during Hifumi’s absence.

“Well then, I leave things to you during my absence.” (Hifumi)

“Yea. Take care!” (Alyssa)

Realizing that the role of greeting Origa was discreetly forced upon her 15 minutes later, Alyssa became truly troubled whether she should disappear for a while.

Chapter 126 – Soldiers Of The Wasteland

The one leading the army of 500 soldiers is in name Count Aspilketa. The other eight family head's of the noble households led the soldiers, they brought along from their respective territories, as equal-ranked commanders. However, the one who was in fact placed as general leading the troops is an about 50 years old man called Okshion (*T/N: >> Okushion <<*). The nobles below the rank of count are following in the rear while rebuking the soldiers. Gently caressing his short-cut dark brown hair, the mounted Okshion is at the front of the ranks.

“If we are honest, such battle is pointless.” (Okshion)

“General, that is...”

The aide, who is travelling next to him, surveyed the vicinity without concealing his panic due to Okshion's small mutter.
It looks like it hasn't reached the ears of anyone else.

“Please be careful. It will affect the morale of the troops.”

Okshion snorted due to the aide cautioning him with a self-satisfied look.

“Humph, something like morale isn't necessary. If we storm in with 500 soldiers, the military gains will follow up easily in accordance. If we just endure the magic attacks, the soldiers of Horant won't be that strong.” (Okshion)

“I-Indeed.”

“However. The timing is bad. Why are we moving the soldiers at this time without having even obtained the permission from Her Majesty?” (Okshion)

Okshion was formerly attached to the royal army which is directly commanded by the royal castle, but he possesses a personal history of having been head-hunted as top of Count Aspilketa army. Three years haven't yet passed since his change of assignments and it had been not more than three months since he met his aide, too.

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blog!)

Similarly, with the majority being new recruits, who had been gathered up in a hurry as military forces, each of the feudal army's soldiers have become platoon leaders who are commanding several new recruits. It seems like there are also some who lack in things like leadership.

“I heard it from an acquaintance in the capital, but in the previous war against Horant it was a spectacular victory by Count Tohno who plunged into the centre of Horant by himself and killed the crown prince.”

“That's correct and also the reason why Count Aspilketa is aiming for military gains that are equal or going beyond that and formed the current alliance, I have been told.”

Okshion endured his desire to hit the aide who is talking as if wanting to say “How about that!” *Just how much and why is he pleased with himself? This aide seems to adore Aspilketa.*

“If he thinks that, it would have been fine for him to infiltrate by himself after taking lessons from Count Tohno.” (Okshion)

“Such tomfoolery. The count can't be expected to do such thing. Besides, with him inviting his friends like this, he will make sure to finish it without acting lowly like boasting about just his own achievements. You might say that it will result in a deep prudence.”

“Tomfoolery, eh?” (Okshion)

From my point of view, both actions are bad though, Okshion judged. Okshion didn't encounter the man called Hifumi. With him learning of Hifumi only through the rumours he has heard, he can't imagine him as man of valour like the ones appearing in some hero stories at all. But, although it's hearsay, Hifumi has definitely produced results. The talk, I heard about Hifumi's way of using soldiers, is something very good to be used as reference. The talk is about a man who's less than half my age, but if pushed to say, I can only believe less in the rumours about his age than his military achievements.

When he thought I wonder what kind of fellow he is. I'd like to try speaking with

him once if we meet, a low-ranking soldier whispered something into the ear of the aide.

“General, we will soon arrive at the national border.”

“Well, that’s no good.” (Okshion)

“Ha?”

“It’s not soon. If it’s at this speed, we should see the national border in 15 minutes.” (Okshion)

Mixing in the scolding of “Give precise reports”, Okshion issued instructions to tell the counts in the rear that they are about to get in contact with the enemy, just to be sure.



Hifumi got on a horse and headed by himself towards the vicinity where Alyssa fought with Balzephon.

Hifumi, who departed first thing in the morning in a straight line using the quickest horse, arrived at the actual site before sunset.

Once he surveyed the surroundings he found remains of deep black blood here and there.

“Around here, huh?” (Hifumi)

The area around the highway is covered by dense thickets and even though it’s before sunset, the area is turning dark quickly.

When he smelled the air’s scent, he sensed a faint stench of a beast within the thick fragrance of greenery.

“... I don’t sense its presence, but...” (Hifumi)

Without drawing the katana, Hifumi took out one shuriken from his pocket. It’s a cross shuriken that has been carefully polished so that it pierces deeply. He closes his eyes while holding the shuriken in his right hand.

“... Over there!?” (Hifumi)

Twisting his hips, he throws the shuriken towards the thicket on the left side.

“Aaaaah!”

The one who dodged the shuriken, which flew like a bullet, alongside a yell is Balzephon.

“Oh, oh, you hid that large build nicely.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi drew his katana skilfully while avoiding Balzephon, who comes attacking to crash into him, with a forward somersault.

Balzephon’s long arm came stretching for Hifumi’s back, but in the act of standing up Hifumi jumped up and cut off the wrist in a flash.

“There’s nothing that can’t be cut by a katana, but...” (Hifumi)

Balzephon picked up the fallen wrist while raising a groan.

In front of the watching Hifumi Balzephon presses it on the wound with a wet sound, the bones connect in the blink of an eye and the wound closes just like that.

Balzephon turned his look at the katana and face of Hifumi during that time.

“It’s just as Alyssa said, you are definitely the fellow who was a knight in the castle. Your body has become really huge, but your face hasn’t changed overly much.” (Hifumi)

Once he looked at Hifumi, Balzephon’s eyes suddenly became grim.

“Do you know about me? I valued you highly at that time. You escaped without fail at the time you realized that you wouldn’t win. That was a significant deed.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi points at Balzephon with the left hand which was covered by a glove.

“I don’t know what happened to you and I don’t have any interest in it either.” (Hifumi)

The katana, he grasped in his right hand, was lowered loosely.

“You have fought to the point of ceasing to be a human. This time I will enjoy the fight until the end.” (Hifumi)

“Gaaaaaa!”

At the same time Hifumi finishes his words, Balzephon, whose injury had completely healed, advances on his long legs and approaches right in front of Hifumi’s eyes with just two steps.

Balzephon swings his right hand swiftly with a long sweeping stroke, but it doesn't hit Hifumi.

“Let's cut you all over as test.” (Hifumi)

Slashing at the flank in the process of passing by, Hifumi cuts him open even more after dodging.

“Aaaah!”

Hifumi takes his distance from Balzephon who is wielding his left hand blindly. Balzephon's wounds close up during that time.

Even with the intestines spilling out, Balzephon forcibly stuffs them back in and the wound closes.

“I see. This is troublesome.” (Hifumi)

Balzephon does a sharp roundhouse kick, however although Hifumi's temporal region was aimed at, Hifumi eluded it by moving his neck sideways with a jerk.

Hifumi's earlobe is torn by the sharp nails of Balzephon's foot.

Moreover, using the swung foot as axis, Balzephon approaches to crush Hifumi by falling with his back, but Hifumi avoided by doing a backward somersault.

Balzephon, who fell down and raised a cloud of dust, loses sight of Hifumi's figure for just a few seconds.

That was plenty for Hifumi.

“How about this?” (Hifumi)

The katana brought down by Hifumi from a stance of holding it above his head accurately aimed for the centre of Balzephon's face and and cleanly smashed it into left and right.

Balzephon, who was divided into two just like a flower from the neck to the top, spilled grey matter and had an eyeball plop out due to the impact.

Nevertheless, his gaze caught Hifumi.

“... Pheew.” (Hifumi)

Although he wiped the katana with a paper, Hifumi didn't return it to its scabbard.

“It seems like you still want to play.” (Hifumi)

Both hands of Balzephon were trembling, but he pressed together his split head from left and right with all his strength.

“That’s right. It’s great. You came this far to start a war. If you do your best to such a degree, I will be happy as well.” (Hifumi)

A portion of the spilled-out brain had fallen down and was torn to shreds, but while pressing the two halves together with a squish, he completely re-connected his head.

Treading down on the face, Hifumi pushed in the eyeball which plopped out.

“It’s a great world after all, this one! Hurrah to fantasy! You probably think so, too, don’t you?” (Hifumi)

“But”, Hifumi tilted his head while laughing.

“What to do about this? There’s no martial arts to be found that knows how to defeat something like an immortal opponent.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi pondered about the means to kill him in front of the slowly standing-up Balzephon.



“All hands, release the spears. Drop them in front of you without hitting the enemy.”

“Without hitting them?”

(If you read this anywhere but on infinitenoveltranslations.net, then it’s been stolen!)

Hearing Ma Carme’s order, the messenger of Count Biron, who stayed behind, voiced out his doubts.

“This time it’s not our goal to kill the enemy.” (Ma)

It is foolish to try dealing with 500 people, Ma Carme strokes his beard.

“Withdraw as fast as possible after the second volley.” (Ma)

His subordinates, who precisely followed the order, began to set up the firing of the five spear throwers in pairs.

“There’s still quite the distance left...”

As the shouts and vibrations are slightly audible, they convey the approach of a large army with a rattling.

If it was the common bows and arrows, they wouldn’t be in range yet.

“Fire.” (Ma)

“Huh?”

One spear after the other is fired from the lined-up spear throwers next to the baffled messenger.

The spear, fired off with a *bam* fell precisely down in front of the enemy’s leading group with a *plop*. Two of the five spears have been stabbed into the ground.

“Until such far distance...”

“Get the second charge ready.... Fire!” (Ma)

Even the next five released spears hit the ground in front of the enemy forces and one broke miserably.

Several jeers and loud laughs can be heard from the enemy army.

“Alright, that’s enough. Withdraw! We will abandon the spear throwers, but cut the bowstrings so that we are not hit in the back!” (Ma)

Once Ma Carme began to run in the direction of Horant followed by the messenger, the other unit members cut off the bowstrings installed at the discharge device of the spear throwers with knives and followed afterwards. Once again ridiculing voices can be heard from the enemy army in the rear, but Ma Carme and the other members run without minding it in the least. The messenger ran off the highway as well while taking the horse along. He has been told the route in advance by Ma Carme.

When he ran desperately for about a minute, he reached the national border of Horant.

“Five people set up the spear throwers, the rest gets ready to receive them as planned!” (Ma)

“W-What are you going to do?”

“Well, just watch it.” (Ma)

In front of the border there have been placed thirty high stakes at various places. The unit members are tying a rope between those one after the other. *As it's obvious from their appearance that the stakes and rope are thick and sturdy, they probably won't be torn down even from being kicked by horses.*

“Won't those be seen by the enemy army right away?”

“I guess so.” (Ma)

Once one of his subordinates told him that the preparations are done, Ma Carme told the troops, who were working on that, to help preparing the spear throwers.

(Will they fire the spears after the horses get ensnared by the rope? They will step over that obvious rope...)(Messenger)

The messenger, who is drenched with sweat and stirred up by worries, looked at Ma Carme calmly watching in the direction of the approaching enemy army. The light mood, that had lasted until just now, has vanished and he is moving attentively in order to grasp the entirety of the enemy forces with a serious gaze.

“... They came!” (Ma Carme)

At the same time Ma Carme was convinced of something, screams began to rise in the rear of the enemy army.

“They got here, it's Count Biron's army.” (Ma)

“However, the vanguard is already this close...”

The enemy army, which was attacked in the rear due to its long file of soldiers, approaches with an even further increased speed towards the border where Ma Carme is waiting in order to drive them away.

Several mounted knights, who are affiliated to territories in the provinces, are getting close while holding their spears out in front of them.

“Those kind of fellows, who are in a hurry to obtain achievements, are the easiest to set up.” (Ma)

Once Ma Carme mutters that, the leading horses jump over the obvious rope

and fell down just like that.

Having been thrown off, the knights tumble around while being smeared with dirt.

“What the heck...”

“Our side’s rope is laid out over sand. If you walk normally, it’s no problem, but it will likely give in once the forelegs of horses are thrust into it.” (Ma)

None of the knights, who are falling off their horses one after the other unable to cope with it, are able to get up.

Since they are scared of being stepped on by the following riders, they were crawling frantically, but it was apparently in vain.

Although the knights, who noticed the sandy soil, lowered their speed, they die instantly after being sniped by spears.

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“The cavalry is insufficient. The rest is staying with the nobles in the rear.”
(Ma)

There is also the matter of it being a mish-mash army. There’s likely only few people who can mount a horse, Ma Carne saw through that accurately.

“The rest is a large quantity of infantry, eh?” (Ma)

The infantrymen, who have come running, are approaching with bloodshot eyes due to being pressured from behind without any concerns towards the knights who had been done in.

Stepping over the rope and although there were also some who tripped by having their feet entangled, the vanguard comes walking on the sandy soil after stepping across their fallen comrades. Their movements have become quite slow, but as the pressure of a large army closing in continuously is quite high, even Ma Carne begins to get cold sweat on his back.

“And, will you fire spears at them?”

“Not yet. Look.” (Ma)

A soldier, who placed his foot on solid ground after the sandy soil ended, showed a relieved expression for just an instant, but the second step turns into

hell.

“Gyaah!?”

It's a hole with just a shallow depth, which was hidden by covering a cloth under the sand, but their numbers are plenty. A fistful amount of sharp pointed scrap iron has been prepared in those holes.

If it's the shoes worn by a common soldiers, they will be easily penetrated.

“Ouuuch! W-Wait...”

The soldiers, who crawls with blood flowing from his feet, disappeared in a cloud of dust after being crushed underfoot by those following him.

The soldiers, who stepped into the traps one after the other after that, fall down and their speed of advance become even slower than walking.

“Now's the time. Fire!” (Ma)

One spear after the other is fired off upon Ma Carme's order.

“Aim properly at them! Ignore the collapsed fellows and target the healthy ones behind them!” (Ma)

The spears are pouring down with a force of piercing two people at once. At this point in time the 500 knights and and infantrymen surrender to death or combat inability.

“Gubu!?”

“Agyaah.”

A soldier, who saw his comrade dying by being skewered next to him, was unable to bear it and tried to change his course, but he trampled his comrade, who had fallen while facing upwards, to death due to the strong pressure still coming from behind him.

“Move! I have to escape!”

“Don't spout unreasonable stuff, idiot! From behind. they are steadily...”

“Shut up!”

The dispute turns into a fist fight and there are people appearing who try to get away from the battlefield even if they have to draw their swords against

their comrades.

“Move back! Withdraw!” (Okshion)

General Okshion raised an angry voice from atop his horse.

“You have seen the range of the spears just now, haven’t you!? Hurry up and take some distance!” (Okshion)

His voice, which had shouted at his subordinates for many years, resounded clearly.

Earnestly conveying his verbal message, the madness settles down a bit and stops the flow of advancing. They begin to retreat slowly.

“We were probably attacked by the feudal army of Count Biron in the back. Go and confirm the circumstances of the counts. Once you have calmed down, we will reverse it and attack the enemy from behind. Thus if the counts are safe, tell them to proceed in the direction of the enemy with the allies who have been separated away from the highway.” (Okshion)

“H-Haa!”

The aide, who was stunned by the situation, came back to his senses after being hit on his back by Okshion.

“However, the enemy in front is...” (Read this novel at Infinite Novel Translations!)

“As they set up traps at such vast range, they are not planning to make a move themselves. It’s unnecessary to worry about them.” (Okshion)

Seeing off his aide, who headed towards the rear while pushing his way through the soldiers, Okshion clicked his tongue after gazing at the border of Horant once again.

“I got a bad feeling.” (Okshion)

The numbers are overwhelmingly in our favour, he estimated, but it was absolutely unforeseen for him to be attacked within the territory of his own country by those who should be their allies. It seems the queen is more angry at the actions of Count Aspilketa than I imagined.

“Do we have to give up on the attack against Horant? But, assuming that we

defeated Count Biron's army here, who would become the opponent to boast as achievement?" (Okshion)

However, at this point in time Okshion hadn't realized it yet. The reason why Ma Carme had the first spears drop in front of Okshion and the others. If a telescope had been already invented, Okshion and the others might have seen the appearance of Ma Carme chuckling as he watched them turning around. If he had seen that, Okshion might have reconsidered. But, all of the rebels had turned their backs towards Ma Carme already.

Chapter 127 – Black Dog

“Fire. Aim for that mounted fellow as your target.” (Ma)

At the moment Okshion’s rebelling army decided that they had taken enough distance and turned their backs onto them, Ma Carme calmly gave that order.

“However, it looks they ended up getting away quite a bit...”

Ma Carme told the timidly talking messenger without turning his look towards him,

“Originally the range of the spear throwers is twice that of just now.” (Ma)

“What...?”

Just as declared by Ma Carme, the spears, which were fired one after the other, accurately pierce the enemy who was at a distance where it would be difficult to take proper aim with arrows.

Receiving the unexpected attack from their rear, the enemy army began to escape in total disorder with a vigour that was even higher than at the time they came to attack.

“Was the confusion a bit too much? We ended up causing troubles to Earl Biron who was entrusted with arresting that lot.” (Ma)

Ma Carme smiled wryly while scratching his head with a tough and thick finger.

“Amazing... you sent away an enemy 500 numbers strong with just 10 soldiers.”

“Uh-oh, aren’t you misunderstanding something?” (Ma)

“Tss tss”, Ma Carme shakes his finger.

“If you plan it normally, the difference in numbers will be an essential component connecting to victory or defeat. This time we just had time to prepare due to the early contact and that this lot was a gathering of amateurs who had no familiarity with the atmosphere of battles.” (Ma)

“But, if you look at the outcome, isn’t the size of your achievement something unmeasurable?”

“That’s foolish. With our side just chasing them away, the one who fought them after having sent most of the soldiers is Earl Biron. If it’s about achievements, the most should go to Earl Biron.” (Ma)

“Rather than that”, Ma Carme observed the routed enemy army returning to the highway in order to flee and ordered his soldiers to take a bare minimum of a defensive stance and to retreat to the national border together with the spear throwers.

“If the fellows, who came streaming our way, are gone, it will be the end for now.” (Ma)

“I want to quickly return to Foklore and see Director Alyssa’s face”, Ma Carme complained.

“Shall we try withdrawing temporarily once we finished conveying the situation to the lot from Horant?”

Lining up with the spear throwers, which were transported while placed on the rattling platform wagon, with their backs facing each other, Ma Carme and the messenger headed towards Horant’s border.



At the moment Okshion judged that they had taken enough distance from the enemy in the direction of Horant, their awareness completely shifted to Biron’s army in the back.

“We are already outside the range of the enemy from just before! Annihilate the enemy in the back without minding them!” (Okshion)

It was at the instant he drew his sword and gave the order to attack after changing the direction of his horse.

“Gubuuuh!”

A spear, which was fired upon Ma Carme’s command, penetrated Okshion’s stomach from behind.

The scattered blood pours down on a soldier walking next to him making him

raise a scream.

“G-General!”

His adjutant, who came back from the rear just then, advances his horse towards Okshion who was skewered in front of his eyes.

The surrounding soldiers getting away from Okshion to escape proved to be fortunate and the adjutant was immediately able to get close to Okshion, who fell from his horse. Due to the soldiers, who panicked in fear, not having an ounce of intention to face their fallen general, the adjutant ground his molars.

“General!”

At the time the adjutant took out the spear from the fallen Okshion and lifted him around so that he was facing upwards, the blood was already drained from Okshion’s face and he was opening and closing his bluish-white lips in order to breath in gasps.

When he took out the spear, the bleeding increased even more. Intestines were also mixed in the spilling thick blood.

“Ah... here, at, such place...” (Okshion)

“Please stay firm! I will get you treated in the rear right away!”

While saying that, even the adjutant noticed that Okshion will likely die. *How will I identify where the rear is while being caught between enemies in the front and back in the first place?* He gets angry at his own words.

“R-Run, away... gebuuh!” (Okshion)

Okshion, who gave his final order while his gaze was vacantly staring into empty space unable to focus any longer, violently coughed up blood and passed away.

Even during that time, panicking soldiers, who are pierced by spears, collapse in the surroundings.

There are even some who fainted while being unable to bear the dread and those who try pretending that they have died. It looks like only the enemy is still standing.

“... Everyone, evacuate in the direction of Biron Earldom at full speed! Run until the spears can’t reach you anymore! Get running if you don’t want to die!”

While shouting to no one in particular, the adjutant jumped on his horse once again and retreated from this spear-raining hell. [Owned by Infinite Novel Translations!]

Of course he was well aware that the number of enemies being in that direction was far higher than at Horant's border. *What will I be able to do with this mob that lost its general as we surge into the enemy nation after breaking through with a fraction of our forces? Far from defeating the enemy in their firmly protected stronghold, it will finish with us being worn down and dying even if we escape.*

In that case it will probably be somewhat easier for the feelings of the soldiers to find a means of escape within their own nation, the adjutant judged.

“Even so...”

The adjutant turned a fleeting glance towards the back.

On the other side of his allied soldiers, who are running with a frantic look while spilling tears and nasal mucus, he can slightly see around ten soldiers.

“I heard that the soldiers of Horant are strong at magic, but what the hell happened here?”

Even though he considered it inevitable after thinking about it, a strange, mean mischief was stuck in a corner of his mind.



Balzephon, who stood up in front of Hifumi, caused a vibration, that made the highway tremble, with his irritation which was changed into a war cry.

“Shut up.” (Hifumi)

“Although it was more powerful than the shout of that demon”, Hifumi grasps his katana while laughing frivolously.

“Kill the guy in front of you if you are going to get angry. Get rid of the annoying guy if you can't do as you want. Only a baby is allowed to stay in a state of bawling.” (Hifumi)

“Thus kill me”, Hifumi roars.

“Uuuuuuuuh...” (Balzephon)

“It would probably be easy if you could kill an enemy by just glaring at them. However, that would be boring, wouldn’t it?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi got into a stance of aiming at the eyes while placing his right foot in the direction the the katana’s point.

Balzephon who began to gather his blood and to reconnect the smashed head, glares at Hifumi while letting his long arms dangle loosely.

“I will kill you because I want to. Well then, both of us were able to affirm our justifications. Your injury has probably healed as well. Shall we resume?” (Hifumi)

At the moment he slid his left foot forward by just a half step, Balzephon brought down both his arms from overhead to crush Hifumi.

“Aye, how exciting.” (Hifumi)

Higumi tried to lop off an arm coming downwards, but Balzephon suddenly halted both his arms and Hifumi’s katana stopped at the same time as well.

“Gaaah!” (Hifumi)

Immediately Balzephon’s front kick sinks into Hifumi’s belly like a hammered stake.

Hifumi falls down to the back due to being kicked and half-rises his body while breathing out.

The certain feeling of having broken bones was transmitted to his hand when he strongly drove in the pommel into the lower leg that was in front of his eyes. Unable to keep his balance due to the the broken leg, Balzephon tumbles, but even Hifumi ended up getting sent flying around five meters to the back.

“Gohoo.” (Hifumi)

Fixing his breathing with a cough, Hifumi felt a stabbing pain, but after diagnosing himself that no bones were broken, he corrected the hold of his katana.

Balzephon, who’s foot healed during that time, stands up slowly.

“The structure of your body is basically the same. I realized that from cutting you earlier. Even the intestines, which came out, are no different of those of a person.” (Hifumi)

Balzephon swings his right hand at Hifumi who approaches defencelessly, but lowering himself slightly, Hifumi cuts at empty space from overhead. Once Hifumi kicks away the elbow of the passing-by arm with all his strength, Balzephon spins around and turns his back towards Hifumi.

“Yo.”

He cuts at the neck by slicing it horizontally from behind.

At the moment he reached the point of having cleaved open the neck halfway after severing the muscles swelling on Balzephon’s grown shoulders, Balzephon forcibly grabs the katana with his left hand and stops it.

“Although you ended up in an unnatural stance due to turning around towards the back forcibly, your strong point is your great physical power enabling you to rein in the motion of the katana despite it”, Hifumi became delighted. [Read this at Infinite Novel Translations!]

Because he has grabbed close to the metal collar mounted between the blade and the hand guard where the sharpness is dull, Hifumi is unable to lose the grip by cutting through it alongside the hand.

“Uoh!?”

Although Balzephon tried to snatch the katana first, it didn’t work out and reluctantly pulling out the katana from his body he thrust away Hifumi’s body as if loathing it.

While continuing to glare at each other after picking up some distance, Hifumi noticed something.

“Ooh, that’s right. That is just right to test it out.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, took the katana into just his right hand, bit at the middle finger of the glove covering only his left hand.

He pulls it off his left hand just like that.

“Uuuh...” (Balzephon)

The sun, which started to sink, should have dyed that left hand in red, but as if having been repeatedly been painted in black or as if it was cut out of a frame, Hifumi’s left hand was pitch black.

Does Balzephon realize its bizarreness? He continues to groan lowly while having his gaze stolen by that left hand.

“This seems to still be able to do various things, but I had no opportunity to test it out properly. Be relieved, it’s no poison.” (Hifumi)

Raising a loud laughter, Hifumi took a stance of hiding the katana in his right hand behind his body and stuck out his left hand in front.

Balzephon hesitated for a short while, but once he grasps that no attack is coming, he rushes towards Hifumi by himself once again.

Balzephon, who knew that a largely-swung attack will be avoided, makes use of his nails on both hands and releases a sharp thrust.

“??”

Balzephon’s eyes opened widely and became round due to surprise. His own nails, which should have easily pierced something at the level of a human body, were stopped with a bare hand by the small human in front of him.

“Surprised, right?” (Hifumi)

Smiling impishly, Hifumi struck both hands of Balzephon with his black left hand.

With his fingers becoming mostly mush, Balzephon screamed while rolling around on the ground holding both his hands.

“Gyaaaaaah!” (Balzephon)

Hifumi nodded satisfied while opening and clutching his left hand.

“It’s a shame that I can’t feel the pain of the hitting fist, but there’s no problem with its toughness.” (Hifumi)

“Aaah!” (Balzephon)

Hifumi stabbed the katana into the ground against Balzephon who tries to sink in a kick against Hifumi’s feet while on the floor.

The blade’s edge digs into the approaching right leg.

“Gyaaa!” (Balzephon)

Having his own lower leg being sent flying after being cut from the shin, Balzephon once again ended up tumbling around on the ground in an unsightly manner.

Raising his face while groaning, he searches for his right foot which should have been sent flying, but he can't find it.

“This is what you are looking for, right?” (Hifumi)

The black left hand of Hifumi, who called out to him, is grasping Balzephon's foot.

“It's regrettable, but this is confiscated.” (Hifumi)

The dripping blood of the cut end is completely absorbed into the palm of his left hand and the foot is slowly swallowed up to the toes just like that. Balzephon watched that dumbfoundedly, but placing both hands on the ground after the wounds were healed, he approached Hifumi savagely with both arms and one leg.

“It's the same as storage magic, just so that you know.” (Hifumi)

Stopping a thrust with his left hand again, he breaks the elbow of Balzephon's left arm with the katana's pommel.

He grasps the end of the broken arm with his left hand, however this time it doesn't get absorbed.

“Living things are no good. ... If you don't dismember them, that is.” (Hifumi)

Once he shifted the katana in a smooth, quick motion, Balzephon's left hand was easily cut off. This time it was swallowed by Hifumi's left hand starting with the fingertips while causing conspicuous sounds.

“If it's simple “things” that aren't alive, it goes like this. So, even though I will kill you from here on out, what method do you prefer?” (Hifumi) [Copyright by Infinite Novel Translations!]

Even though he had lost his left hand and right leg, Balzephon, who is looked down upon by Hifumi, wobbly stands up and injures himself with his own nails by grasping his right hand tightly.

“Guuuuu...” (Balzephon)

The blood, which drops down, spread out on the ground.

“Your blood is red, eh? If you look at magic and demi-humans from the standpoint of a normal human who came from somewhere else like me, it looks

like monsters and human aren't that different from each other." (Hifumi)

Returning the katana into its scabbard, Hifumi smacked his lips as his right hand became free as well.

"Although it's amusing, every last of them is crazy." (Hifumi)

"Uaaaaaah!" (Balzephon)

Doing the skilful act of leaping with one leg, the right hand of Balzephon, which was swung down while placing all his body's weight behind it, had its wrist caught by Hifumi in reverse and Balzephon fell victim to him being thrown over Hifumi's shoulder.

While holding onto the thrown arm, Hifumi, who rolled over on top of Balzephon belly, decided to twist the arm and trampled down on Balzephon's chest.

"Since you have this much strength, you might not be knowledgeable of losing to scheming." (Hifumi)

He breaks the joints of the shoulder and elbow without any reservation. Balzephon resisted by flapping his leg, but due to being pressured by Hifumi's foot which was filled with even more strength, the bones of his chest began to creak.

"Having a weapon, a special move or technique is something good. The same applies to magic, your nails and your physical ability, I guess." (Hifumi)

Separating the broken right arm, Hifumi peers into the face of Balzephon whose posture has bent forward even more.

"But you know, since you stopped at that point, you will die here. If they have abilities or tools, you have to frantically come up with plenty of methods to kill a person who uses those." (Hifumi)

Hifumi draws out his katana and thrusts the blade underneath the neck of Balzephon who glares at him while having collapsed looking upwards.

"The method of cutting the neck of a fallen opponent isn't just swinging the katana downwards from above at all." (Hifumi)

Grabbing the head of the groaning Balzephon, Hifumi slid the blade across the

neck of Balzephon while drawing Balzephon towards himself.

“Gii...” (Balzephon)

Switching to a sound of death agony and spouting out foam from his mouth halfway through, his severed body once again fell to the ground.

Even after just the head was left, Balzephon opens and closes his mouth while staring at Hifumi as if cursing him.

“I see, you’ve got quite the life force. It’s extremely regrettable that I can’t kill you, but let me use you gratefully in that case.” (Hifumi) [Owned by Infinite Novel Translations!]

Deploying his darkness storage, Hifumi recovered the headless corpse and faced Balzephon’s head which he carried in one hand.

“Let’s pretend that you were an assassin sent by the new demon king.”
(Hifumi)

Once he nimbly wrapped the head in a suitable amount of cloth from his storage, he looked for the horse which waited at a distance and returned towards Fokalore with a good mood while thinking *I was able to get a nice present.*

Chapter 128 – Hero

Once he confirmed the soldiers in the surroundings scrambling to retreat from the direction of Horant with the person appearing to be the general of the enemy having fallen off the horse, Ma Carme took a deep breath and sighed.

“Haaa. It’s fiiiinally over.” (Ma)

While the messenger let the tension escape from his shoulders in the same way, he noticed that the soldiers around them also showed expressions of relief.

Just because they are more or less accustomed to the battlefield, it doesn’t change the fact that they are afraid of fighting as well.

“Since we will stay here for one hour and stand on guard, each of you, take some rest in turns. Once one hour has passed, we will enter Horant and give our report.” (Ma)

No sooner than he had said that, Ma Carme lied down on the ground.

“Ah, I’m worn-out. I dun’ wanna do somethin’ as scary as war in a place where Lord-sama ain’t present.” (Ma)

The messenger also said down next to Ma Carme who laughed frivolously.

“Is Earl Tohno-sama that powerful?”

“It ain’t at the level of bein’ powerful or such. That man is the same as a military force. If ya see that man on the enemy’s side, I believe it will be the correct choice to leave alone anything and everything to run away.” (Ma)

“It would be completely proper to apply for a transfer request at the national army”, Ma Carme mentions.

“That much...”

“Ya probably also heard about the battle against Vichy, didn’t you? There are likely some parts that were somewhat exaggerated in the circulated rumours, but basically they are true.” (Ma)

“But”, once Ma Carme rose his body and sat cross-legged, he hit the

kusarigama at his waist and burst into laughter.

“At the time I heard a bard singing a tale of a beautiful black-haired knight-sama in a bar of the capital, which I visited en route towards Horant, I couldn’t resist laughing.” (Ma)

Ma Carme, who placed his hand on the messenger’s shoulder with a *pon*, shook his head in disbelief.

“The real killing of other people ain’t somethin’ that pretty.” (Ma)

Leaving the messenger, who couldn’t return any answer, alone, Ma Carme calls out to his soldiers in the surroundings and confirms that there are no injured.

Once an hour passes while doing that, Ma Carme and the others quickly cross Horant’s national border.

“Good grief, if I’m allowed to take a few days off, I will temporarily return to Fokalore. I wanna see Director Alyssa’s face soon.” (Ma)

Accompanied by the messenger, who followed them while making sure to be the last one, Ma Carme and his soldiers passed through the border.

The ones who waited there are completely armed infantrymen of Horant and Horant’s prided magic soldiers.

Seeing several spear throwers, which were brought in by Ma Carme’s group for training purposes, obviously aiming at them, Ma Carme squinted.

“... Let me ask for the time being, but what’s the purpose of these?” (Ma)

Once seen, the soldiers, who manned the spear throwers, show a cowering appearance without matching Ma Carme’s line of sight as they are all soldiers who were trained by Ma Carme’s unit.

In contrast to that the magic soldiers prepared their daggers in a state of frenzy in order to release magic at any time.

“Oh my, thanks for your troubles.”

A single, corpulent middle-aged man steps forth from in-between the infantrymen and the magic soldiers while holding his sides with laughter.

“It looks like the strength of those spear throwers is magnificent. By no

means, to have that kind of a large army cave in with just 10 soldiers... We appreciate having received such weapon.”

“It seems you are misunderstanding something, but as those are tools we brought along for the sake of our teaching unit, we have no intention to go home while leaving them here. If you want them, it will be just fine if you make them yourself, won’t it?” (Ma)

“The ones misunderstanding are you bastards.”

The middle-aged man, who cleared his throat unnaturally, puts his arms behind his back with an intention to throw out his chest, however Ma Carme’s group’s sight it can’t be seen as anything but him pushing out his belly no matter how they looked at it.

“Orsongrande’s soldiers came to attack our Horant. As it’s only natural to use what’s usable, it’s just a matter of course to use these here for self-defence, isn’t it? Let’s call this an emulation of a battlefield, shall we?”

Even while feeling irritated due to the gaze as if looking down on them with a “Fufu”, Ma Carme calmly surveys the vicinity.

“I’m called Kuzemu and am serving as prime minister of this country, Horant. It’s unnecessary for you to remember it though.” (Kuzemu)

Affirming that they are literally in a situation of being partially surrounded, he turns a fleeting glance towards his back, but there are no soldiers of Orsongrande who are looking this way. However, there are no soldiers from Horant that will become a nuisance either. It seems they haven’t surrounded them completely out of fear of accidentally shooting each other with magic or the spear throwers.

“Well, I guess it’s a misunderstanding. We held back the lot, who came attacking Horant, at the border. You probably know that as well. There’s no need to take a stance of intercepting anymore either.” (Ma)

The infantry soldiers, who were manning the spear throwers, turned their looks at Kuzemu due to Ma Carme’s words. But, Kuzemu laughed scornfully.

“If it’s about an invasion, it has happened already. Ignoring the sovereignty of

our country, soldiers of Orsongrande have thrown their weights around in Horant's capital while looking as if they owned the place and in addition treated our soldiers completely like their subordinates. And." (Kuzemu)

Kuzemu pointed below Ma Carme's feet.

"Aren't even now soldiers of Orsongrande rudely setting their feet on the soil of our country?" (Kuzemu)

"Wait!" (Ma)

Due to Kuzemu floating a faint smile, one largely built middle-aged man called out while pushing his way through the soldiers.

He has likely a high status, but that can also be perceived from his luxurious attire, which had golden threads inlays. The scary face, which harboured an imposing moustache, exposes his anger as he yells.

"What's this about, Kuzemu-dono!? Moving the soldiers without the permission of the king and moreover threatening the soldiers of Fokalore, who are cooperating with us..."

"The king is absent, therefore I have moved them like this on behalf of our country as prime minister." (Kuzemu)

"The authority to move the soldiers lies with me, the Minister of Military and Naval Affairs!"

"The Minister of Military and Naval Affairs is appointed for the "time when a king's designated." Differing from me who is the prime minister, your title holds no meaning now that the previous king, Suprangel, has passed away." (Kuzemu)

"Then, until there's an order from Nelgal-sama, who is nominated as his successor..."

Due to the former Minister of Military and Naval Affairs being unable to continue his words as he is shocked, Kuzemu finished them for him.

"That's right. Until there's an order from Nelgal-sama who is on his way back, I will work as his representative." (Kuzemu)

"S-Such a thing..."

"That's how the law is." (Kuzemu)

During the time Kuzemu quarrelled with the minister, Ma Carme addressed the messenger in a whisper.

“Once I give you the signal, jump on your horse, pass the border and inform Earl Biron about the state of affairs. Since you likely won’t have the spare time to care-freely chat with the border guards, dash along the highway while ignoring them.” (Ma)

“Eh, t-that is...”

“Don’t say anything unnecessary. Only think about accomplishing your job as messenger.” (Ma)

Once he told him sternly without allowing any opposition from the messenger, Ma Carme made an eye signal to the other unit members. The soldiers nod while smiling.

“Convey our great efforts properly.”

“You have to praise our bravery in front of Director Alyssa.”

There’s no tragic feeling in the words spoken by several.

“Did you hear? You are also an important messenger who will report our virtuous appearance. Once you got Earl Biron’s permission, go to Fokalore. And once you told 「Your subordinates are the best」 to Director Alyssa, it will be fine.” (Ma)

The messenger, who was kicked in the butt with a “go”, jumps on his horse while crying.

“Don’t let him get away!” (Kuzemu)

“Stop him! It will become a big problem!”

Noticing the movements, Kuzemu raised his voice and the minister spoke up even louder.

Only one spear is shot from among the bewildered soldiers and a few spells come flying.

“Oraa!” (Ma)

The single spear was aimed at the back of the messenger, but it dropped

down after being hit by the sickle swung by Ma Carme.

Fokalore's soldiers kicked over the the platform wagon at once turning it into a wall to protect them against the spells.

“Guaah”

“Uooh?”

Even so, two soldiers, who couldn't get behind the protection in time, were cut by wind magic and collapsed while spouting blood.

Moreover, one person, who got away from the wagon which was burned by a fireball, faints being hit by a pellet against his head.

“Come on, attack us without holding back! It ain't to the degree of Lord-sama, even I will show you how stylishly I can fight! It would be the best if it were in front of Director Alyssa but as this place is a battlefield, it can't be helped!”

(Ma)

Ma Carme, who spoke sharply while rotating the weight after setting up the kusarigama, laughed as if completely not noticing them being outnumbered.





“I wonder whether I shall let this decorate the reception at the first floor until the time to use it comes.” (Hifumi)

“No, no, Hifumi-san. That is, a bit...” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who looked at the freshly severed head of Balzephon which continues to spill soundless grudges while flapping its mouth open and shut, searched for words to prevent Hifumi’s suggestion after murmuring an “Ueeh.”

“It continues to move even without any motive power. I think it’s just right for watching it while wasting time waiting on one’s turn, isn’t it?” (Hifumi)

“I don’t think so! Don’t you think that everyone will end up not approaching this place out of fear?” (Alyssa)

The two people, who are talking in front of the freshly severed head at the entrance of the lord’s mansion, were unapproachable in various meanings. One of those is the existence of that suspicious, monster-like freshly severed head, second is the person, who is the top-ranking man in this region hailed as feudal lord, and lastly the posture of Alyssa clinging to an arm of Hifumi.

“Only Origa-san would accept that.” (Alyssa)

“I see. Then it can’t be helped.” (Hifumi)

Since he was apparently unable to store the head away as it was still treated as “living thing” albeit being able to toss the corpse from below the head into the magic storage, Hifumi had grabbed the head and was carrying it around in the open as is. But Alyssa, who closed the argument, called for a staff member and quickly wrapped the head in a cloth.

The staff member in charge of the reception, who accidentally saw their exchange, fiercely vowed to thank Alyssa afterwards.

“Anyway, with this the monster subjugation has finished, too. It looks like there were no significant movements even after coming back. I have to wait around again, huh?” (Hifumi)

“Isn’t that fine? Hifumi-san, you are working too much, thus it’s just right for you to rest a bit at least. Lately there are new sweets stores in the city...”

(Alyssa)

Alyssa, who noticed something just when she was about to continue her words, separates from Hifumi's arm, which she had seized as if embracing it, and took a distance of around one meter.

At the same time, when Hifumi turns his face in the direction of the city due to a presence he knows, a carriage plunges towards the lord's mansion raising a thunderous roar.

"Ah, Origa, eh?" (Hifumi)

"Hifumi-sama!" (Origa)

"Oh, you came back? You took more time than expected." (Hifumi)

After the carriage stopped in front of the lord's mansion while raising a cloud of dust, Origa directly leaped into Hifumi's chest without any hesitation. Hifumi, who caught her and turned around while killing the momentum, turned his gaze towards Midas, who chased after her while making his horse gallop until it was drenched in sweat, without minding the enthusiastic embrace of Origa.

"Oh, it's been a while." (Hifumi)

"I-It has been a while, Earl Tohno." (Midas)

Obviously doing that always in front of a higher-ranking noble, Midas dismounted his horse and gave his greeting with a proper bow. It can't be helped that his shoulders are heaving up and down.

"What, did you act as Origa's escort?" (Hifumi)

"Such things are necessary... no, there's that as well, but I have been appointed to the task of receiving Nelgal-sama as well." (Midas)

"Ah, yea." (Hifumi)

As Hifumi gave a vague answer, he splendidly ignored Origa who was talking about her loneliness and how dull her life without Hifumi in the capital was one after the other while clinging to Hifumi's body.

"And, considering that it could be used by you, Hifumi-sama, I bought beautiful porcelain plates and bowls, but as they were broken by idiots along

the way, there is no more than only one piece remaining...” (Origa)

Burying her face in Hifumi’s dougi while sobbing uncontrollably, Origa confirmed his smell in a casual manner and glared at Alyssa in a way that it couldn’t be seen by Hifumi.

“Uhii!?” (Alyssa)

“Alyssa, we will have a chat later. It looks like it’s necessary for us to slowly talk with each other in my room.” (Origa)

“Ye-Yes...” (Alyssa)

During the time the chat between the women unfolded, Midas started to talk with Hifumi about something he wanted to ask.

“Are you aware that a part of our country’s nobles plot to invade Horant?” (Midas)

“Hmm. That’s the first time I heard about it.” (Hifumi)

“That’s right, isn’t it? As a matter of fact, in order to oppose you, Earl Tohno, they are trying to obtain war achievements by attacking Horant whose king died...” (Midas)

“What’s that about?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who sneered, stares at Midas.

“So you are saying that you want me to take responsibility since there are idiots who are mimicking me.” (Hifumi)

“T-Th-That’s out of the question! Her Majesty, the Queen, won’t approve of any begging towards you, Earl Tohno, for assistance regarding this case. Her Majesty has declared that she will resolve everything on her own.” (Midas)

“That’s only natural. I can’t be bothered about each and every fellow who copies me in appearance only, can I? Rather than that, what kind of scale will that battle have?” (Hifumi)

“It’s very likely that it will be ended by the knight order and the nobles of the queen’s faction, including Earl Biron, before long. The problem is the case if damages spread towards Horant, but...” (Midas)

“Hifumi-san!” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who listened to the talk at his side, grabbed Hifumi’s arm in panic.

“Ma Carme’s unit should be in Horant!” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa’s forehead looking up at Hifumi while asking “What shall I do?”, Hifumi gave her a forehead flick with his left hand which was covered by a glove.

“Ah, ouch?” (Alyssa)

“Is there any need to ask me? If you consider them your enemies, then kill them out of your own will.” (Hifumi)

“That’s how it is, Alyssa.” (Origa)

Far from the gaze similar to threatening her until just now, Origa turned towards Alyssa with an affectionate smile completely similar to the Virgin Mary while placing her hands on the chest of Hifumi.

“You decide your enemy. And once you decided your enemy, it’s about killing them without hesitation. That’s our way of doing things, right?” (Origa)

After looking alternatively at Hifumi and Origa, Alyssa quickly bowed and ran off.

Midas, who doesn’t wish for the battlefield to spread too much, watched that with unpleasant memories, but he had another important matter to settle in front of him.

“Our task is to safely escort Nelgal-sama until Horant while guarding him. I’d like to meet with Nelgal-sama.” (Midas)

“Mmh? Didn’t you meet him along the road?” (Hifumi)

Hearing about Nelgal having already departed Fokalore from Hifumi’s mouth, Midas felt an impatience to a degree he had never experienced.

“But, along the way we checked all the inns above a certain rank...” (Midas)

“That’s very likely the reason.” (Caim)

The one who replied towards Midas’ statement was Caim who left the lord’s mansion after hearing the sound of the carriage.

“Welcome back, Lord-sama, Madam.” (Caim)

“Caim-san, since there are souvenirs for everyone in the carriage, could you distribute them according to the notes attached on them?” (Origa)

“Thank you very much for your concerns.” (Caim)

“Please wait, “that’s the reason”, what the heck do you mean with that?” (Midas)

Correcting his posture, Caim looked at Midas with an expressionless white face.

“As Nelgal-sama prefers a simple lifestyle, he used part of his budget for buying materials for the sake of his studies rather than living in luxury. Even during his stay at this place he avoided the lord’s mansion, which he couldn’t consider as anything but a reward, and chose one of the city’s lodgings.” (Caim)

“Then...” (Midas)

“It’s very likely that he chooses to stay in cheap inns together with all of his guards along the way as well. If you, Midas-sama, checked only the inns which would be selected by nobility and wealthy merchants, it wouldn’t be a miracle even if you ended up missing each other.” (Caim)

I made a mistake, Midas felt a shock as if he was hit against his head. Loosing their calmness, the knights in the surroundings exchange looks with each other as well.

“Luckily it’s no more than a few days since Nelgal-sama departed. As Nelgal-sama isn’t very proficient at riding a horse and since he hasn’t taken a carriage along either, you can catch up with him even still quite a bit before the capital, if you chase after him on horse.” (Caim)

Midas, who was in chaos, suddenly raised his head due to Caim’s words and after thanking Caim and bowing towards Hifumi, he left together with his subordinate knights once they mounted their horses in a hurry.

“What a restless fellow.” (Hifumi)

Once he ascertains Midas galloping away, Hifumi pondered with a “Hmm.”

“Is there something bothering you, dear?” (Origa)

“It’s Horant. I thought that only troublesome things will happen after the old man died, but this is...” (Hifumi)

Observing the face of Hifumi who grins broadly, Origa displays an entranced expression.

“The smell of people killing each other is drifting about.” (Hifumi)

In addition, it the smell of a riot where large quantities of blood will flow, rather than waiting for the demons to make their move, Hifumi considered throwing the state over there into confusion while looking happy.

“I have just the right, great present to take to Imeraria. Let’s try showing my face in the capital after quite a while, huh?” (Hifumi)

Due to those words Caim bowed and Origa was firmly determined to act together with him this time for sure.

Chapter 129 – In The World Like This

It was on the third day after coming back from Fokalore when Midas discovered Nelgal and joined up with him.

“Such things happened?” (Nelgal)

“It’s disgraceful as it apparently exposes the pathetic state of affairs in Orsongrande, but for that reason it’s not allowed for anything to happen to you by any chance, Nelgal-sama, is Queen Imeraria’s thinking.” (Midas)

“That’s appreciated. It’s an ideal that a nation’s inside is a monolith, but I do understand that it’s a complicated matter.” (Nelgal)

“The situation in Horant is even graver”, Nelgal smiles.

Discussing while drinking water in a room of a cheap inn is quite unsuitable for a succeeding king, though not quite yet, and a knight, however there was a certain connotation in the uncouth atmosphere between Nelgal’s plain character and the un-knight-like Midas.

Once Midas explained the particulars of the current situation, Nelgal willingly accepted the escort by the knights.

“As a matter of fact it might not only be the nobles of your country who are aiming for my life.” (Nelgal)

“What do you mean by that?” (Midas)

“There are also people in Horant who don’t approve a moderate like me seizing authority.” (Nelgal)

“That’s what it means”, Nelgal showed a worn-out face.

Even though he braced himself for an assassination during his travel, it wouldn’t do if he didn’t think about his movements after returning to his country.

Originally his plans were to study about the city state system of Vichy after studying abroad in Fokalore, to return home after putting together his very own political measures, to become royalty after preparing plentifully with Suprangel and to get crowned while waiting for stability.

“Really, things never go as planned. Since there’s a testament in the country

and I have been given it for caution's sake as well, I expect that I will be able to get enthroned without any problems though." (Nelgal)

All that won't have any future if Nelgal ends up dying.

Once again Midas had a feeling that his emotions became tense due to the significance of his mission.

"According to Horant's laws, until the successor takes the throne, once the king has died, the one in charge of the army is dismissed temporarily and it will become a matter of everything being handed over to the next king by the prime minister and the civil officials. It's a measurement against the military authorities running wild." (Nelgal)

"Therefore, even if they deal with attacks from outside, they will never invade a foreign country on their own devices", Nelgal tells Midas in order to give him a peace of mind.

However, Midas had a doubt about that system.

(In other words, that means, with Nelgal, who's the next king, being here, the prime minister actually holds the supreme authority until Nelgal returns to Horant and gets crowned. He might indeed not attack a foreign country by himself. But, if Horant is attacked by a foreign country, and if he obtains the justification of acting on behalf of self-defence...?) (Midas)

And currently there's the teaching unit, dispatched from Hifumi's territory, in Horant.

"Nelgal-sama." (Midas)

"Yes. What is it?" (Nelgal)

"... Pardon my rudeness, but is it fine for me to talk hypothetically?" (Midas)

"I don't mind. Go head." (Nelgal)

The guarding Horant soldier, who stood at Nelgal's side, showed that his body was filled with tension, however Midas asked boldly,

"If... you waited with your return without going back to Horant as is, Nelgal-sama, what will happen with the authority of His Excellency, the prime minister?" (Midas)

"With all due respect, what do you intended by asking such question...?"

Nelgal held back the guard, who raised his voice unable to endure it, by raising his right hand.

“In other words, there’s the possibility of the prime minister hindering my return, is what you are saying?” (Nelgal)

“... Or, to announce you missing...” (Midas)

Nelgal looked up to the sky due to Midas’ squeezed out words. *The ceiling boards, which stand out as they are blackened and slightly dirty, appear as if they are representing my own feelings.*

“In order for me to not be found for all my life, you mean? It might be a good method to change it into him seizing authority over my loyal subjects.” (Nelgal)

The soldier from Horant became completely pale. Even if he considered the possibility of being attacked by bandits in Orsongrande, he likely didn’t think of a situation of being aimed at by fellow countrymen.

“Nelgal-sama. Let’s hurry as much as possible. We will further reinforce the personnel in the capital. I will help you return to your country with all my power. Regarding what happens after that, that...” (Midas)

“You have offered more than plenty. As for after my return home, that’s something I have to deal with by myself. Rather than that, is it alright for you to support me that much?” (Nelgal)

Midas shook his head due to Nelgal laughing while asking “aren’t you going a bit too far for a person from another country?”

“Our country, Orsongrande, not to mention Queen Imeraria, doesn’t wish for a battle with anyone happening. ... As you are well aware, there’s a person who is quite capable of threatening even his own country if that leads to starting a war with another country.” (Midas)

“Pu...ahahaha!” (Nelgal)

Nelgal, who raised a laughter while unable to endure it any longer, restrained his voice somehow and apologized with “I’m sorry.”

“Good gracious, although he is the feudal lord of a single province, for even the Queen to worry about his movements... I once again understood the

reason, why His Majesty, Suprangel, sent me to study there, very well. He is a person that can't be imitated at all." (Nelgal)

"If everyone was like that man, the people wouldn't be able to pass their time peacefully." (Midas)

"Oh, I wonder about that?" (Nelgal)

Midas tilts his head to the side due to Nelgal smiling.

"Although he won't show mercy to an opponent that appeared at the actual site of a battle, he has a kind side towards those who are indifferent to fighting from the beginning. As he won't take any soldiers, but those who volunteered, along to a battlefield, that also means that the people won't be greatly anxious as with Horant that turns them into soldiers by drafting." (Nelgal)

Midas listens while staring in wonder.

"It looks like you are an acquaintance of that man as well, thus you probably know about it. Choose yourself whether to fight or not, and once you decided to fight, kill your opponents using any mean possible... that's what he is telling the soldiers in Fokalore." (Nelgal)

Looking at Midas who is dumbfounded, Nelgal once again raised a laughter unable to hold it back.



At daybreak Hifumi took Origa and Alyssa and departed Fokalore on horse. There are no guards. There was no one who raised up words about the necessity of bringing guards along either.

"Was it really alright for me to come with you?" (Alyssa)

Alyssa quietly asked Origa who is galloping next to her.

Being allowed her wish to accompany Hifumi, who at first planned to go to the capital alone, Origa moreover recommended for Alyssa accompanying them as well.

Surprised by the sudden designation, Alyssa, who thought that Origa accompanying him also served as trip for the married couple with no outsiders being present, refused since there's also the command and organization of the

reinforcements, but receiving an invitation under the pretext of having “a talk between women” from Origa that evening, it turned into a travel with three people as she complied to the persuasion.

“It’s fine. Alyssa, you are a friend who travelled with Hifumi-sama as well. Nowadays such opportunities have completely diminished, too. Wasn’t it just the right time?” (Origa)

Alyssa thought *there’s nothing just right about heading towards fighting*, but even so her heart has become happy and restless about travelling with Hifumi and Origa for some reason.

“However, you were finally able to have a trip as married couple.” (Alyssa)

“I was allowed to be together with Hifumi-sama from the day he came to this world. Besides, I had plenty of time to spend together with him after returning to Fokalore.” (Origa)

She smiles while blushing, but Alyssa knows that the “plenty” means her mostly accompanying him in his training. Though she doesn’t know about what happens after they return to their own room in the evening.

Alyssa didn’t have any confidence whether that way of relationship between a man and a woman was correct as she never associated with a man until now, but she thought *probably there’s something wrong about it, isn’t it?*

The fief’s army soldiers are gentle. Although Miyukare pokes her nose into various matters as well, it is a rather fun companionship, if pushed to say.

“Men, huh...?” (Alyssa)

Naturally she turned her look at Hifumi’s back.

“By the way.” (Origa)

Alyssa’s shoulders trembled with a start due to Origa’s voice.

“W-What?” (Alyssa)

“Hifumi-sama’s left hand is all the time covered by a glove, I wonder whether you have heard anything about that.” (Origa)

Alyssa tilted her head to the side with an “Oh?”

“I don’t know, but... Origa-san, didn’t you ask him yourself?” (Alyssa)

“Even when I did, he ended up dodging the matter... I see, Alyssa, you haven’t heard anything about it either.” (Origa)

What Origa showed was an expression of relief and worry.
While feeling relieved that it’s not only her who hasn’t been told anything, she feels that she wants him to tell just her if something’s wrong.
Alyssa realized that vaguely.

“Aren’t you worried about it, Alyssa?” (Origa)

“Although I became mindful of it, he would likely tell me if it was necessary to do so... Yea, if Hifumi-san considered it to be fine like this, I’m fine with as well, I think.” (Alyssa)

Origa showed a smile unintentionally due to the bright and laughing voice of Alyssa.

“I have a feeling and believe that I’m sometimes no match for you. Oh well. If I stay close to Hifumi-sama, he will probably tell me one day. There’s no need to hurry.” (Origa)

Breathing out very deeply, Origa fixed her grip on the reins.

“Alyssa, you have a pleasant smile. I like that smile of yours, too.” (Origa)

During their talk last night, Alyssa also told Origa about the death of her soldiers and her defeat against Balzephon. The smile that Alyssa showed then was an awkward one while conducting herself stout-heartedly.

“G-Geez. That’s somewhat embarrassing.” (Alyssa)

Due to Origa smiling at Alyssa, who waves her hands while becoming red up until her ears, Hifumi called out to them.

“I’m sorry about interrupting your fun time, but I will go ahead.” (Hifumi)

“Yes, it’s about the thieves ahead of us, isn’t it?” (Origa)

Origa smiles sweetly at Hifumi who turned around.
Just a minute ago around 20 people, who are lying in wait ahead of the highway, were caught by Origa’s spell Echolocation.

“You found them, eh? You have practised it properly.” (Hifumi)

“It’s a spell for which you provided the idea, dear. Thus it’s only natural.”
(Origa)

“Well, then I’m off.” (Hifumi)

Without waiting for an answer, Hifumi quickly went ahead. Origa and Alyssa see his back off as he plunges forward while setting up a pole of around 130 cm, he took out before either of them realized, on his right side with a whack.

“Let us hurry as well?” (Origa)

“To help him?” (Alyssa)

Origa smiles while saying “no way” towards Alyssa’s question.

“Even you want to see it, right? How Hifumi-sama kills people stylishly.”
(Origa)

“Ah... yea, that’s true.” (Alyssa)

“Let’s go. I don’t want to miss even a second of it.” (Origa)

Watching Origa who chased Hifumi’s back, Alyssa felt something fall down with a thump in her chest.

“... I see. Origa-san is living with all her might for the sake of her own “love.””
(Alyssa)

I was only preoccupied with Hifumi, but right next to me there was an amazing person, Alyssa became a bit happy.

“Love, eh?” (Alyssa)

Let’s live honestly and straightforwardly while becoming a bit more frank with myself as well, she decided.

First I will chase that back.



“... Is it alright for the ruler of the demons to come out this far?”

“It’s fine. I was pushed by all my subordinates... they left it to me while trusting me.”

“A resignation from your official duties, it is?”

“I’d like you to call it a nurturing of my subordinates.”

As Vepar, who became the ruler of the demons, and the elf Puuse have a quarrel right in the middle of the wastelands, their fellow travellers have taken distance and are glaring at each other.

While crossing the wastelands heading towards Hifumi’s territory, Puuse’s group bumped into Vepar who left after claiming to inspect the situation outside herself which finally allowed her to set out.

Although they don’t know each other’s faces, the elves and demons are well aware of the other’s characteristics.

“Puuse-san, these people are...”

“I have realized it right away by the colour of their skin. They are demons.”

(Puuse)

Even though Puuse exposed her vigilance, Vepar introduced herself, but even so, far from lowering her tension, Puuse glared at Vepar with an even more intense gaze.

“All things considered, it’s unusual. Dog, rabbit and tiger beastmen together and there’s even an elf with them.” (Vepar)

The one Vepar pointed out as dog beastman was Gengu. He has come along in order to meet with Hifumi while at the same time acting as guard. He also serves as sparring partner for the tiger beastman Malfas en route.

“This world has changed while you demons have secluded yourselves.”

(Puuse)

“Wasn’t it you elves who locked us up?” (Vepar)

“The ones who did something to be locked up were the demons, right?”

(Puuse)

The fate between elves and demons has been inherited for generations and is warped at the roots.

Seeing Puuse, who usually has an obedient and calm character, having a quarrel with such naked hostility, Malfas and Gengu stared in wonder. Having mostly no

relations with demons, the beastmen, who don't have a custom of leaving something like a legend from their ancestors behind, don't understand Puuse's emotions.

"Well, it's fine. At any rate, it looks like there was a complete change in the power distribution in the wastelands, too." (Vepar)

"The time for beastmen, elves and humans to meet each other and take each other's hands has come. You should probably understand that it's impossible for the demons to exercise their authority like before." (Puuse)

"Puuse-san, let's drop it."

The one-eared rabbitwoman stops Puuse by placing her hand on Puuse's shoulder.

"Ruler-sama of the demons, we still have a very long travel ahead of us. Please, won't you be able to overlook us in this place?"

Vepar sighed deeply due to the rabbitwoman who lowered her head which had only one ear remaining on it.

"Aren't we completely the villains like this? We don't have any particular intention to travel together with you. I only wanted to check the state outside for just a bit." (Vepar)

"But", Vepar looked at Puuse with a fleeting glance and called out to the rabbitwoman,

"I wonder whether you can tell me what you are planning and where you are headed, rabbit-san?" (Vepar)

"That is, the necessity to tell you is..." (Puuse)

The rabbitwoman stops Puuse, who raised her voice, with a 「Please wait」.

"I fell in love with a human male. Therefore I'm heading towards a human city to meet him."

"Oh my, love that exceeds races, you say? How beautiful. What kind of person is he?" (Vepar)

"Ummm... as gentle person who treats beastmen and humans in the same

manner, he is very powerful even though he doesn't look like he is that strong. He is overbearing but refreshing in some respects..."

Vepar and Puuse, who look at each other's faces, have the same expression towards the rabbitwoman who talks while being bashful. Frowning and troubled expressions.

"Umm, you know.... rabbit-san, what your name?" (Vepar) *(T/N: Finally after like 40 chapters someone asks.....)*

"It's Viine *(T/N: >> Vi—ne <<)*." (Viine)

"Viine-chan. Does that person wear a thin, single-edged sword at his waist and slightly peculiar and frilly clothes while having black hair per chance?" (Vepar)

"That's right! Do you know about master!?" (Viine)

"Master?" (Vepar)

"It seems that Viine-san was originally purchased as slave by that person." (Puuse)

Puuse supplements it as painful matter of the past, but as it doesn't appear to be a especially detestable past for the person concerned, she seems to be excited about meeting a person who says that she knows Hifumi.

"Certainly, I met master in the shape of being bought by him, but he gave me a chance to survive by my own strength, gave me friends and provided learning to me who didn't know anything." (Viine)

Vepar and Puuse look at each other once again due to Viine talking while being somewhat excited. Gengu's group's male party and Vepar's escorts have been completely left out of the loop.

"I won't say anything bad, but give up on that man." (Vepar)

"... Eh?" (Viine)

Once Vepar voiced out her clearly dissuading remark, Viine blinked her eyes in puzzlement.

"That man is a dangerous guy who enjoys stirring up the world. Since you will

definitely become unhappy if you are close to him, look for a better man.”

(Vepar)

“Such, such a thing!” (Viine)

Viine sent a look towards Puuse seeking for timely help, however Puuse lowered her sight.

“Umm... as for calling him a dangerous person, I have to agree as well...”

(Puuse)

Due to Puuse’s remark which was muttered honestly albeit she looked as if it was difficult for her to say, Viine dropped her shoulders in a crestfallen manner and ended up bursting into tears.

“T-The beastmen, at least the city of beastmen, everyone was able to have such livelihood thanks to master. And yet, and yet...” (Viine)

“S-Sorry. I don’t think badly of Hifumi-san either. However, he is a bit, scary if you are close to him, or rather...” (Puuse)

“He is frightening, isn’t he? Isn’t he someone that looks like he’s walking with a drawn sword.” (Vepar)

Upon Vepar’s comment, Viine finally ends up wailing.

“A-Anyway, since we will withdraw from here, you demons, quickly return to your original place and forget about your former glory.” (Puuse)

Puuse glances at Vepar and soothes apologetically Viine by hugging her shoulders while walking into the wastelands once again.

Even Gengu’s group, which was dumbfounded, somehow followed them after bowing towards Vepar.

“... Eh? Is this my bad?” (Vepar)

Surveying the guards who are waiting behind her, it was only female members, whose disposition she knew, as her subordinates who were under her command from the beginning, but all of the girls simultaneously averted their looks from Vepar.

“Jus...”

Even though she complains by saying “though I just said it out of kindness” while pouting, Vepar turned her look towards the opposite direction of where Puuse’s group was heading.

“W-Well, it’s fine. Rather than that, I heard something interesting. Humans, elves and beastmen, huh?” (Vepar)

“It looks like it has become a somewhat enjoyable stroll”, Vepar licked her lips.

Chapter 130 – Greatest Day

“Other than Earl Aspilketa, most of the nobles were arrested. A part of them ended up dying, but...”

“That’s fine. It was during the melee, wasn’t it?”

“That is...”

The city of Münster governed by Earl Biron. The day had already descended into dusk when a messenger of his own army arrived at the place of Biron who had motionlessly closed his eyes, completely as if being asleep, while sitting deeply in the soft chair of his own office.

Biron, who listened to the outcome which should be mostly satisfying, was relieved that the losses of his own army were lower than he expected. Given that the opponents were soldiers from another fief in the kingdom, it might have an effect on the circulation of goods within the country because of the people’s anxiety if the losses were great.

If this was an opponent from another country, there would still be the method of letting off steam though, Biron was delighted because one of his worries had been cleared.

As a messenger is, to the bitter end, a being who relays the state of affairs, they aren’t allowed a personal opinion. Or rather, they don’t have the ability to understand the whole situation.

However, the messenger, who came in front of him, apparently realized something. Such kind of soldiers, who “think by themselves” in various parts, increased after the instruction unit of Fokalore arrived.

“It’s alright. Let me hear your opinion.” (Biron)

Biron, who faced him with a smile, made him sit down at the reception telling him that it will be fine to talk once he has calmed down after drinking some tea and requested a slightly cool tea from a maid.

The messenger, who was nervous and felt sorry at the beginning, took a sip of the tea with its fine aroma and his shoulders lost their tension, albeit only a little.

He wasn't able to match the look of Biron who sat in front of him though.

"After I ascertained that Lord Aspilketa's army, which left first just as planned, would come out at an advantageous spot while making sure of it from behind I told that to my companions and confirmed them leaving the battlefield."

The nobles' allied forces, which were led by Aspilketa who left towards the highway, advanced on the highway in groups. On top of their huge numbers, they were even unversed at marching and thus made only slow progress. Even when the messenger monitored them from a fairly close place, no one discovered him.

"Close to the border to Horant the nobles' allied forces' vanguard came into contact with the enemy. ... No, they tried coming into contact with them."

"What do you mean by that?" (Biron)

"I don't know whether that expression is correct, but it wasn't a situation where you could say that the nobles' allied forces were allowed to approach."

At the point in time when their numbers were decreased greatly by a single unit who set up camp in the direction of Horant deceiving the allied forces with a trap that made it look as if they had been cornered, the messenger returned to his own unit and relayed the state of affairs. Biron's feudal army immediately attacked the rear of the nobles' allied forces.

"I see. The ones who set up their camp near Horant's side was likely the instruction unit sent by Earl Tohno, I guess. As one would expect, such is impossible for others." (Biron)

"That's my opinion, too. Even I, who was taught those techniques, don't have any confidence whether I would be able to act it out that skilfully up to that point."

"Didn't we plan to demand their surrender after our army encircled them partially and aimed at Aspilketa's group from the rear?" (Biron)

"Yes. But..."

Biron easily laughed off the messenger having difficulty to speak.

"Don't worry about it, please tell me the facts. What's necessary is correct

information.” (Biron)

“I believe that I’m not as haughty to think that everything moves as I expect it”, Biron tasted his own tea.

“At the time our army attacked the rear of the enemy... the nobles’ allied forces weren’t in a state to be called an army anymore.”

“Uh huh?” (Biron)

“Most likely the fact of the battle situation at the front not progressing smoothly spread to the soldiers just by the vanguard unit scrambling to run away. The soldiers got scattered and escaped. Without confirming the circumstances the nobles in addition to Earl Aspiketa flooded the place where we set up for encirclement... in the direction of Münster for the sake of fleeing one way or the other.”

This time the Biron feudal army lined up 30 spear throwers, which they began to produce in their own territory after being introduced to them in the Tohno Earldom for the sake of sieges. Although those are devices at the level of being prototypes that still have to be assembled on-site, all of the soldiers know their menacing power.

And, although they didn’t know who was the first, spears were fired by the Biron feudal army one after the other.

“After that it was a picture of Hell if you want to give it a name. Our army successively fired spears out of fear due to the nobles’ troops approaching while running away in a half-crazed manner... Your esteemed order was to arrest them, but actually more than 100 people have died during that period.”

“T-The spear throwers where that strong...?” (Biron)

“There’s that, however more than half of the casualties among the nobles’ allied forces were trampled down by their allies after falling down or were killed for standing in the way of the nobles.”

Biron held his temper while wearing a bitter expression due to the tragedy that was far beyond his imaginations.

“So... how did the gathering work out after that?” (Biron)

“... Being instructed to retreat with a loud voice from the location of the instruction unit from Fokalore, they were stopped in their movements by falling down due to the countless ropes stretching out between us and the nobles’ allied forces. After that we finally began to arrest them with our own hands.”

Once the messenger said “That’s all”, Biron leaned back his body into the sofa.

“In short that means that we were saved by Earl Tohno’s troops.” (Biron)

“My debts only keep increasing”, Biron can’t help but laugh.

“Anyway.” (Biron)

When Biron fixed his seating posture, his look took a sharp glint, different from before.

“Notify the whole army. Treat the nobles and their corpses among those arrested politely and prepare to escort them to the capital. As for the other soldiers, release those who were drafted for this battle and imprison the rest after dividing them properly.” (Biron)

“As you command.”

“A war with Horant was avoided. Let’s be first happy about that, shall we not?” (Biron)

Once Biron smiled, the messenger showed an awkward smile as well.

“Excuse me.”

At the time the messenger stood up while saying “I have to pass on the order”, a maid called out to Biron.

“Going by the looks of the feudal army, it seems that a messenger from Horant has returned.”

“Oh? I wonder what happened?” (Biron)

Once Biron gave permission for him to enter the room, a soldier, who served as platoon leader in this time’s battle, entered while bringing a young messenger along.

“... What’s your business?” (Biron)

Including the messenger who came earlier, the three people stand in a row in an equal manner. They straightened their backs while facing Biron and put their heels together.

“The person, who has left towards Horant as messenger, has returned. As he brought along new information, I asked him to convey it.”

The man, who is called platoon leader, stiffens his sunburned face with its conspicuous wrinkles due to nervousness while saying that in a low voice. Usually that voice is for reprimanding the soldiers.

“By all rights it’s a matter that should be told to my superior, but taking into the account the gravity of its content, we visited you, Sir, after receiving the instruction to tell you directly rather than through the battalion commander.”

“Got it. Let’s hear it.” (Biron)

Once Biron gives his authorization, the platoon leader made an eye signal to the young messenger he brought along.

The young messenger looks directly at Biron with his face, which has traces of tears remaining, and opens his mouth,

“Fokalore’s instruction unit, which entered Horant, Ma Carme-dono and the other 10 members, suffered an attack by Horant’s army.”

“What was that!?” (Biron)

Raising a loud voice which is unusual for him, Biron urges him on to continue after clearing his throat.

“So, what about the instruction unit?” (Biron)

“... For the sake of letting me, who was at the scene, escape, they chose to remain there and fight. Most likely, they are already...”

The messenger burst into tears once again. Without the leeway to call out to him, Biron grasped his fists tightly and groaned.

“How could they do such a thing...” (Biron)



The pole, Hifumi took out while being mounted on a horse, was simply put an **iron pole**.

Hifumi, who ended up breaking the mechanism for releasing the chain of the chigiriki, had Prufas make a simple staff with a length 127 centimetres which is used in **joujutsu**. (T/N: *Joujutsu is the art of martial arts where you use a cane staff*)

“What will you do with a simple pole?” (Prufas)

Due to Prufas being doubtful of that, Hifumi showed various blows against a log, which was in the training area, as opponent. Moreover he showed and performed techniques versus many and throwing techniques against the soldiers who happened to be present there.

No one was able to cope with the whirling staff which moved as if it was alive. In front of Prufas, who felt admiration towards the soldiers who were downed after a few minutes, the scenery of Hifumi laughing loudly spread in the training area.

Of course the bandits shouldn't be able to deal with the iron pole right away either.

“Oi, give me...”

“Heave-ho.”

Among the bandits, who are standing in order to blockade the highway, there was a man who tried to spit out the standard line for demanding money, but before he finished speaking, he died after having his head crushed by the staff.

“Uwaash!?”

“You bastard!”

The bandits didn't expect to be attacked all of a sudden, however as they were apparently a bunch used to seeing blood, they immediately glared at Hifumi while holding badly maintained swords in their hands.

“Oh, oh, you are urging to have a go. The numbers are a bit lacking, but it will be just right as warm-up.” (Hifumi)

Once he jumped off the horse, Hifumi gave it a light spank and let it go ahead.

“It’s possible to look for gaps after you have surrounded me properly. Cooperate with your mates while using your head well.” (Hifumi)

“What the fuck are you saying!?”

When Hifumi began to give a lecture while raising his finger, one of them came slashing at him by swinging his sword from his side.

“That’s no good, is what I’m telling you.” (Hifumi)

Once he launches his opponent’s sword upwards with the staff which hit the sword from below, he thrusts the staff, which he tightly held with both hands, into the defenceless chest of his opponent.

“Guee.”

At the moment the bandit spit out all air from his lungs through his mouth, he was tripped by having his feet entangled by Hifumi’s staff and the man, who received a final stab into his throat, died.

“Are there any fellows who swing their weapons sideways at the time when there are many allies around?” (Hifumi)

Sinking a thrust into an eye of a bandit who approaches once more, he tosses him down with his shoulder.

He breaks the lower leg and then steps on the head.

Stepping over the man who fainted after being hit at the temple of the head, he avoided a man who struck out his prepared knife, circled behind him, caught his neck with the pole, restrained the head and twisted it.

“See? There are many ways to kill, right?” (Hifumi)

“What magnificent technique!” (Origa)

“It’s not only about hitting but also about being able to throw.” (Hifumi)

At the moment they began their conversation, the bandits noticed Origa and Alyssa trailing behind him.

“A-Against a brat who is accompanied by women...”

“I believe the strength of someone doesn’t change due to their company though?” (Hifumi)

The bandits, whose faces blushed when Hifumi answered calmly, came attacking even more violently.

A man, who was pinned down by having his shoulder joint immobilized due to having the staff thrust at the arm which held the sword, suffered a sword attack by his ally and sprayed blood.

“Hey, Alyssa.” (Origa)

“What is it?” (Alyssa)

The two, who are watching the tragedy unfolding from a distance, followed the movements of Hifumi with their eyes.

“What do you like about Hifumi-sama, Alyssa?” (Origa)

“W-Wh-What are you so suddenly...?” (Alyssa)

“It’s fine. The part about Hifumi-sama you like, there is one, right?” (Origa)

“Uuh... After all, it’s his strength, I think...?” (Alyssa)

At that instant Hifumi’s staff kills another bandit by smashing their head. Origa, who cast a fleeting glance at Alyssa, who has become red up to her ears, after ascertaining that the spinal fluid has scattered, harbours a teasing mind.

“Oh my. If it’s a strong person, there are others as well, aren’t there?” (Origa)

“Yea. But, there wasn’t anyone I was able to have a peace of mind getting this close to until now, I think...?” (Alyssa)

“Sense of security, eh? I see.” (Origa)

“I understand”, Origa nods.

In a slightly distant place Hifumi laughs while saying 「It’s the remaining half. It became easier to move, right?」. And once again another person received the staff with their nether region, spouted foam while becoming incontinent and had their throat pierced.

“For me it’s the opposite, I guess?” (Origa)

“Opposite?” (Alyssa)

Origa put her hand on her cheek and said “though I can’t explain it skilfully.”

“If I look at Hifumi-sama’s face and figure, my heart begins to beat fast

somehow. In addition, after spending time together with him, I felt that a world, which I didn't know until then, continued to expand in front of me. To be honest, I wanted to go to the wastelands with him, too." (Origa)

"Hey", while not taking her gaze off Hifumi, Origa placed her hand on Alyssa's shoulder.

"You also heard about Hifumi-sama's goal, right?" (Origa)

"Y-Yea..." (Alyssa)

"What will you do at **that time**?" (Origa)

Alyssa still hasn't decided her position.

Receiving a high status, that is unthinkable with my birthplace, in Fokalore, I'm surrounded by many friends and definitely regard myself as happy, she thinks. However, how is my position towards Hifumi as simple human?

I'm his subordinate. Even if I were to say that I'm his friend, it feels like I would be allowed to do so.

He isn't my lover. He is my lifesaver. If it's something I'm able to do, there's absolutely nothing I would be unwilling to do for the sake of Hifumi.

"It looks like you are still hesitating." (Origa)

"Yea. But." (Alyssa)

Alyssa gently placed her own hand on the hand of Origa which was put on her shoulder.

"I will properly watch Hifumi-san on this trip and then decide. At least what I want to become for Hifumi. I will definitely make up my mind on that." (Alyssa)

"I see." (Origa)

Origa smiled after seeing Alyssa's expression.

"I'm supporting you, okay? It's fine to ponder about it honestly without worrying about me." (Origa)

"But", Origa gives a warning.

"There are many rivals. Especially Imeraria-sama." (Origa)

"Queen-sama is!?" (Alyssa)

At the time Alyssa raised her voice, the last bandit had just his face facing backwards and passed away.

Chapter 131 – Somewhere I Belong

Early afternoon on the highway, ranks of troops are advancing with a luxurious carriage in their midst.

The group, which expressly exceeds a number of 200, is the punitive force against the rebelling nobles led by Orsongrande's queen, Imeraria.

“Your Majesty, we got in touch with a messenger from Earl Biron.”

“Well, then let's meet directly with them. Over here. There's no necessity to stop the advance.” (Imeraria)

A single knight, who was in the vanguard, withdrew with his horse until he was next to the carriage with Imeraria on board.

Imeraria had an appearance of wearing long boots with trousers for the sake of riding a horse, but unable to endure her sore butt on an unfamiliar expedition on the first day of departure, she obediently remained in the carriage, which has plenty of cushions laid out, from the second day onwards.

Not changing her clothes showed her enthusiasm of being able to mount a horse right away if something happens, but the true feelings of all her maids was for her to stay docile and leave the fighting scene to the knights.

Before long the young man, who named himself as messenger from Earl Biron, turned up and lined up his horse alongside the knight.

“Err... i-it's a great honour-to meet you, Your Majesty. E-Excuse my rudeness of addressing you from atop a horse.”

“It doesn't matter. We are a bit too many people to especially stop the advance. Rather than that, what about Earl Biron?” (Imeraria)

As a messenger is originally nothing more than a single common soldier, it doesn't happen often for them to directly exchange words with a queen. However as the current time is regarded as war time by Imeraria, she handled it in the basic way of listening to the information from the related parties to the best of her abilities in order to implement the phrase **Scrutinize information by yourself** which she was previously told by Hifumi.

That has increased the favourable impressions of her by those working in the

castle, but for the desperate Imeraria it's difficult to take matters that far into consideration.

"I have been told by Earl Biron to report the entirety of the current situation to you, Your Majesty."

"Let's hear it. Ah, let's have Sabnak-san listen as well. Won't someone please go call him?" (Imeraria)

Once Sabnak, who was commanding the ranks at the front, arrived, Imeraria urged the young male messenger to talk once again.

Accordingly the messenger explained the details regarding the arrest of the rebelling nobles under Earl Aspilketa as well as the attack of Horant's side and the resulting battle against Ma Carme's instruction unit from Fokalore at Horant's national border.

Since those were details he had already explained several times, his way of reciting had a practised tune, but he still spills tears at the passages about Ma Carme.

"... This, won't it turn into a big problem?" (Sabnak)

Once Sabnak turned his look at Imeraria with a pale face, she nodded while firmly staring at the face of the messenger.

"I understood the situation. Will you return to Earl Biron's place after this?" (Imeraria)

"No... I have a promise with Ma Carme-dono. As I already got Earl-sama's permission as well, I will head towards Fokalore as it is."

"Really?" (Imeraria)

Imeraria smiles gently at the messenger who answered with determined words.

"If I consider the situation of Earl Tohno getting to know such information, it might be that I should confine you for the sake of avoiding problems as stateswoman." (Imeraria)

"T-That will..."

"Be troublesome", the messenger tried to say, but there's no way to say such

a thing to the queen.

“However, I won’t be able to forgive myself for something like preventing you from accomplishing the promise between you and that person. Sabnak-san.”
(Imeraria)

“Ha!” (Sabnak)

“Please give him two guards that will escort him. And also a little bit for his travelling expenses.” (Imeraria)

“T-This much! This is too excessive as it’s my own personal promise!”

Imeraria flatly tells the panicking messenger,

“Then this is something I consider as my private good deed. Besides, the receiver of the verbal message, Alyssa-san, can be called my personal acquaintance. Will you still decline it?” (Imeraria)

“Uuh... I shall accept it thankfully.”

The messenger, who bowed towards Imeraria as she nodded with an “Alright”, while on horse, headed towards the rear with two knights, who turned up, in tow.

“... Imeraria-sama.” (Sabnak)

“I did something selfish.” (Imeraria)

Sabnak bowed his head towards Imeraria who was showing a bitter smile.

“No. Your Majesty’s consideration was admirable.” (Sabnak)

“Thank you very much. Can you give me a bit advice then?” (Imeraria)

“If my shallow thinking will be of use to you.” (Sabnak)

Sabnak bowed his head once again while holding his breath as result of his future prospect that looks like it will be lying much more heavy on his stomach than any association with nobles.



“Doing such a thing! Do you plan to ruin Horant!?”

Facing Prime Minister Kuzemu who is standing next to the throne in the

audience hall with a nonchalant expression, each of the higher ranking people of the castle, including the former ministers, yell their objections with flushed faces.

For Kuzemu, who has already finished the seizure of the castle's soldiers, the important people, who were driven out of their posts, don't feel like any threat although they are nobles.

“Oh dear, I'm a loyal retainer who, so to speak, showed distinguished war service by turning away the enemy nation that came attacking Horant.”
(Kuzemu)

“Don't screw around! How is a bastard like you, who monopolizes the national politics during the absence of Nelgal-sama, a loyal retainer!”

“Oh, did I praise myself too much, I wonder? Nevertheless, did you gather here to expressly state your trivial protests at this time where we are busy with the state funeral of His Majesty?” (Kuzemu)

“You certainly have free time now that you were relieved from your posts”, Kuzemu spits out and gives some order to a soldier who was on the same platform.

“Free time you say, that's a nasty way to phrase it! I don't want to be told that by a fucker, who is messing around by wielding his authority merely for his own sake without even showing a shred of condolences towards His Majesty having passed away, like you bastard!”

“In the first place”, another minister raises his voice.

“I heard you killed the subordinates of t-h-a-t man! Him having invaded the castle just by himself, even the proper crown prince was killed... There will be retribution without a doubt! What the hell are you planning to do about that!?”

The instant he heard those words, Kuzemu, who floated a carefree smile, suddenly furrowed his brows and showed an expression of rage.

“That's it!” (Kuzemu)

The one Kuzemu pointed at was the man who referred to Hifumi's revenge.

“Such loser mentality is no good! After that defeat, Fokalore's soldiers have

remained in this country while acting as if they own the place and have behaved as if they are more superior than our troops before we realized! Do you want to tell me that this is the way it ought to be in a normal country!?” (Kuzemu)

“B-But, as that was for the sake of this country, the late king has...”

“It isn’t all fine to just exist because it’s a country. This country and its people have to stand with their own power and also protect themselves. Where’s the meaning in the state’s existence even if we copied the technology of another country?” (Kuzemu)

Kuzemu, who regained his composure while talking, changes his tone as if humiliating himself quietly.

“However, for actually fighting him from the front, the opponent is...”

“Do you think that I haven’t prepared nothing whatsoever?” (Kuzemu)

And a slight vibration begins to resound during the audience.

“What’s this sound?”

“It looks like they finally arrived. ... Well then, everyone.” (Kuzemu)

While feeling the vibrations which have gradually become larger, Kuzemu spread both his hands.

“Returning to the previous conversation, I wonder if you will understand anything if I am to speak about this country’s fitting way of fighting?” (Kuzemu)

“T-The matter of magic and magic tools?”

“Correct! If you take it even further, there are things like magic potions. That’s our speciality.” (Kuzemu)

The vibrations have become even bigger.

“As a matter of fact, our country’s defence capability had built plenty of foundation at the time of that battle. Losing the research results in the chaos, even the experimental subjects were lost, but the data was left behind.” (Kuzemu)

The ones who turned up from behind were subjects which were restructured with magic tools and potions. They were soldiers possessing bodies which were

changed into gigantic builds with heights surpassing five meters.

Wearing exclusive thick armours, they are grasping very long spears with their fat fingers.

They are resembling Veldore who was killed by Hifumi at this location, but although their eyes are clouded with a pure white, they are obediently listening to Kuzemu's orders.

Such huge soldiers came entering while making a stir with their footsteps, their whole bodies.

“W-What on earth is this...?”

“It's the inheritance of the late crown prince. We finally manage to make them useful, but...” (Kuzemu)

The eyes of Kuzemu, who looks down on them with a glare, shone dangerously.

“At any rate, they still haven't adapted properly as elementary subjects. Their numbers are also too lacking to call them an army corps.” (Kuzemu)

Kuzemu orders the restructured, enhanced soldiers, who surrounded the former ministers.

“Break their limbs so that they can't escape while not killing them and take them to the research institute.” (Kuzemu)

“S-Stop...”

The huge hands easily seize grown men with one hand and break their limbs by twisting them completely as if they are breaking twigs.

Only Kuzemu chuckled among the reverberating screams.

“Well then, I wonder if the weapons of the Knight of the Slender Sword or whatever will be understood by our restructured soldiers?” (Kuzemu)

Once he is surrounded by several restructured soldiers, we will likely be able to torture him to death, he smiles. When that happens, we will be able to brazenly attack Orsongrande in retaliation.

By achieving this much with Horant's technology, the country will certainly be restored, Kuzemu firmly believed in that.



As the provinces disorder was a matter of the central government, Orsongrande's capital was at a height of activity.

The fact that the army made a move was well-known, but there's no pessimistic atmosphere regarding that. If anything, it is taken as funds, which were gathered by the royal castle, flowing into the market and sharp-sighted merchants were wondering whether additional supply request would come in anticipation. The people were eagerly waiting for new tales of heroic deeds. After Hifumi arrived at the capital in such circumstances with the two women in tow, the attention of the populace naturally focusses on them.

Be that as it may, the three people weren't ones to mind such stares this late in the game.

Once they entrusted the horses to the soldiers at the city's entrance, they leisurely stroll the city on foot. The **present**, which concealed Balzephon's head, is carried in Hifumi's right hand.

"I got hungry. If I remember correctly, there was a good set meal restaurant. It's the shop where I ate first after coming here." (Hifumi)

"It's the 『Dancing Cludo Pavillion』, right? This way, Hifumi-sama." (Origa)

"The capital's lively as well, isn't it?" (Alyssa)

"I will get lost", Alyssa grabs the right sleeve of Hifumi's dougi and Origa twines her arms around his left arm.

Although he wears unusual clothes, they aren't gaudy. Since he is showing himself in the capital by walking in the city carefreely, the city's people watch them without too much nervousness.

The nervous ones are the soldiers among the patrols which they saw occasionally. Those hurrying to notify the office of the knight order and the royal castle in panic and those chasing after them indirectly in preparation for troubles. Among them there's also a soldier, who was made to clean up at the time when ten assassins were slaughtered by Hifumi down-town. That person was already in denial and had a poor complexion.

Having finished their meal, they walk through the city while browsing the shops. Because Origa's face is popular in the capital's shopping district, they head

towards the castle while suitably dealing with the overlapping voices from all over.

“... So, what’s your business today?” (Adol)

“I thought that I should give a present to Imeraria.” (Hifumi)

“Aiming to suppress the rebelling nobles who headed towards Horant, Her Majesty is currently proceeding towards battle while leading the troops herself.” (Adol)

Prime Minister Adol, who has been entrusted with the role of house-sitting, greets them with an exhausted expression.

“Hmmm. Then I will borrow the balcony for a bit.” (Hifumi)

“Huh?” (Adol)

“Excuse me.”

“I wonder whether it’s alright...”

Adol hurriedly chased after Hifumi who walks through the castle in a manner of being familiar with it.

While he advances through the hallways unhindered, the civil officials and maids step to the side of the hallways and bow.

“This is Earl Tohno! Please excuse me for not contacting you for a while!”

“Please show us your wonderful skill once again by all means!”

Arriving at the knights, they call out to him with flushed faces.

Hifumi exchanges greetings in a light manner and advances rapidly.

“Ah, Earl Tohno! Teach me various things once again, plea... Hiie!?”

At the moment a female knight called out to him, Origa’s look, which is similar to being shot to death, is turned at her from Hifumi’s back.

Once they walked for a little less than 10 minutes, they arrived at the large balcony which was constructed towards the plaza in front of the castle.

This is the place where Imeraria addressed the populace at the time of her coronation. It’s not rare for the prime minister and the ministers to publicize something here, with the exception of the notice boards at the city’s entrance

and the plaza, if there's something to announce.

If you put it the other way, it's also a place where not many people stop by unless there's such announcement.

"E-Earl Tohno, what the heck are you intending to do?" (Adol)

"Ah, it's a valuable present, therefore I wondered whether I should inform other people as well." (Hifumi)

He roughly tears off the wrapping of Balzephon's head.

"U-Uwawa?" (Adol)

Ignoring the surprised Adol who has fallen on his backside, Hifumi jumped upon the railing of the balcony and called out in a very loud voice.

His targets are the soldiers and knights patrolling the city.

"Soldiers and knights who are protecting the capital! If there are fellows who want to fight, listen as well!" (Hifumi)

There are people who scream as they see the freshly severed head, which was held up very high, while holding their heads.

The called-out soldiers look up at the balcony and concentrated their gazes on the black-haired man whom they remember.

"This guy is the wasteland's souvenir! Look! He is still alive even though he is no more than a head! This is the humans' new enemy, a **demon!**" (Hifumi)

The people look at each other while talking noisily and exchange their opinions regarding the word demon severally.

Most of the population is puzzled, but the majority of the knights and many soldiers knitted their brows. *It doesn't seem like the existence of the demons themselves is generally known very much.*

While feeling slightly disappointed about the shallowness of their reaction, Hifumi continues his words.

"The demons obediently stayed in the wastelands, but they have organized themselves alongside the birth of a new demon king! Even such monsters coming to attack after gathering might be only a matter of time!" (Hifumi)

Even though Alyssa knows about the true identity of the head not being a

demon, she stays silent as she knows Hifumi's aim.

As for Origa, she was unable to take her eyes off Hifumi, who is talking sonorously, while wildly breathing through her nose.

The one who is shaken up the most on the balcony is without a doubt the prime minister.

“Earl Tohno, that story, just what the...” (Adol)

“Therefore!” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who drowned out Adol's voice with his loud voice, smiles while shaking his head.

“If you believe that you want to protect your country and this city, struggle desperately to become stronger!” (Hifumi)

「Yea!」, such voices reach him from all around.

Once Hifumi, who nodded in an exaggerated manner, jumped off the balcony, Adol timidly pointed at Balzephon's head.

“T-That demon head, that is to say...” (Adol)

“This, eh?” (Hifumi)



Once it faced Adol after turning it around, Balzephon opened his mouth in agony.

“Uwaah... eh?” (Adol)

“I guess you remember him. It’s the face of the idiot who caused a rebellion in this castle.” (Hifumi)

“T-Then it’s a lie that the demons will come to attack?” (Adol)

“Who knows.” (Hifumi)

Giving the head to Origa, Hifumi tapped the hilt of his katana while watching her carefully wrapping it up once again.

“It’s the truth that the demons were released from the place, where they were imprisoned, and that there’s a new demon king. Well, whether they will come attacking depends on them.” (Hifumi)

“That is, if possible, I’d like you to refrain from making the people too anxious...” (Adol)

“You know, listen.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi suddenly opens his left eye widely and stares into Adol’s right eye. Adol can’t avert his sight from the black pupil which is at a distance of a breath’s range.

Alyssa ignored Origa’s small-voiced muttering of 「How enviable」.

“That’s no good. **Get ready by training so that you can deal with any enemy, no matter when they attack and who it is** is what I’m telling the bunch of soldiers at my place. From now on they will begin to fight without following such stupidity as 「Now, let’s get ready for combat」 after the enemy is visible.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who talked with dignity, tells Adol to pass the freshly severed head as present to Imeraria and tries to return into the castle from the balcony. Adol called out to him from behind while being unable to stand up due to fear.

“W-Where are you heading from here on?” (Adol)

“Let’s see...” (Hifumi)

Hifumi looks fleetingly at Alyssa.

When he met the sight of Alyssa, who is looking up to him fixedly, Hifumi spilled a laughter with a “Fufufu.”

“Let’s go and see how much the sheltered girl has grown, shall we?” (Hifumi)

“I don’t know if might snatch them away if there’s a nice enemy though”, brushing off the dust on his hakama with a smack of his left hand, Hifumi left the royal castle.

Chapter 132 – Eat You Alive

The messenger, who departed Pursang, which got independent from Vichy, arrived at Fokalore while actually hiding the order **Get in contact with Fokalore feudal army** he had received.

At that point in time not only Hifumi but also 150 soldiers from the feudal army departed in the direction of Horant in order to rescue their friendly troops. However, this was convenient for the messenger from Pursang. His order is to talk with Hifumi, who's the feudal lord, or Alyssa, who's the military's top. If those two headed to the capital of Orsongrande, it would be easier to explain to the king of Pursang, Minoson, if he directly requested help from the queen as well.

Even the news that quite the number of soldiers from Fokalore's feudal army had departed towards Horant, will be advantageous to Pursang. For Minoson, who doesn't want a riot currently occurring and is frantic in stabilizing the country, it's at least good information that the war potential of Fokalore has decreased.

Even so, after overtaking Fokalore's feudal army, which was advancing in a group, what he heard when he arrived at the capital, where he headed in a hurry, was the news of a new enemy called **demons**.

“... What the hell does that...”

The messenger, who got to know about the queen's absence at the royal castle, was unable to exchange brief words with anyone as the person in charge was away and thus decided to gather information in the capital as last resort. Hearing the most recent news from a bar's guest as part of that, the messenger heard the unfamiliar term demons.

“They say that demons are apparently demi-humans living in the wastelands. I ain't getting it quite well either, but having a new demon king, they gathered up because they gonna attack human cities, aren't they?”

“After that has become known, the knights and soldiers are training with a tense atmosphere”, says the drunkard, who calls himself a carpenter, and laughs with a “Hehe.”

“Considering all that, you seem to be quite carefree.”

The drunkard’s mouth, which became plenty talkative after being treated to booze, gushed forth one word after the other once asked briefly by the messenger.

“No matter what kind of opponent it is, that Knight of the Slender Sword-sama will handle it in one way or the other. Anyway, he is an outrageous man who covered the whole wastelands by himself. Moreover, as he brought down one of those demons, it won’t be a great problem.”

“Brought down?”

“Yea, it’s decorating the plaza close to the royal castle. It has a face resembling humans, but since it’s alive even though it’s just a head, it’s really different from a human.”

“Just as head...”

<<—>>

On the next day he tries to find the place he heard about from the drunkard and it’s certainly decorated with a demon’s head.

Having been installed on a high stand so that it doesn’t get touched, the head, which was affixed by a rope on top of it, looks down on the people in a provoking manner and opens its mouth to raise a mute voice.

“This is, amazing... Orsongrande intends to fight such things as well?”

After he mutters to himself, he rethinks with a *it’s different*.

If they come out from the wastelands, Vichy will be dragged into it. Although we are apart from the wastelands, it won’t be limited to them, even if Pursang won’t get involved.

“We don’t have the combat potential and technology to fight such monsters though.”

“The reasons to ask Orsongrande for its cooperation increased”, the messenger clicked his tongue quietly.

“Is it fine to take a little moment of your time?”

When he looked up at the freshly severed head, which can be even called

ominous, there was a man who addressed the messenger.

The young man, who wore an extremely typical linen clothes while looking like a lean person, smiles friendly with his whole face as if it was completely drawn onto his face like that.

“Haa, what is it?”

“Did you come from Vichy’s direction by any chance?”

“... What’s wrong with that?”

The man waves his hands while saying “Nothing, nothing” to the messenger who is suspicious of him.

“Please don’t be on such alertness towards me.”

The man, who brought his face close quietly, says in a voice that can’t be heard by the surroundings,

“You and me have come from the same place.”

“Huh?”

“Or rather, I’m living in this place for a long time already in my role as liaison. If you like, won’t you chat with me for a little while? I want to hear news about my home country.”

“I see. Given that I want to know about Orsongrande’s circumstances as well, if possible, it will be helpful to me instead.”

<<—>>

Entering a restaurant which is his favourite one according to the man’s words, they take a private room.

“If it’s this place, we will be able to talk at ease. As the employees are tight-lipped as well, we can talk without worry.”

“That saves troubles.”

“So, how’s the country’s situation?”

Once he ordered simple meals and drinks, he breeched the topic at once. The messenger, who drank a mouthful of diluted wine, talks to explain the circumstances at the time he left Pursang.

“Pursang itself is heading towards stability. Representative.... King Minoson has said that it’s still not a situation where one can feel relieved. If we can tie friendly relationships with not only Orsongrande but Fokalore as well for the present, that will turn into a restraint for Vichy, he said.”

“I see. That means you came to this city as his envoy.”

“Well, that’s how it is.”

By no means can he say that he came to this place after ignoring his orders.

“Well then, it’s about Orsongrande’s situation, but that side seems to be heading towards a war with Horant. A part of the nobles plotted to invade Horant and it looks like the queen headed out to suppress them while leading the troops herself.”

“Furthermore”, while swinging the steamed potato, which he stabbed with his two-forked fork, in front of his face, the man says,

“It seems that Earl Tohno is preceding towards Horant with his close aides while the army’s main unit is trailing after him.”

“Yea, if it’s about that, I know that. On the way of getting here I passed Fokalore’s troops as well.”

“I see, then...”

The messenger frowned due to the man casting a shadow on his face all of a sudden.

“Is there something bothering you?”

“It’s about the demon we have seen not long ago.”

Downing the cup of wine in one go, he place it on the table with a *clonk*.

“If those ((demon)) troops came invading towards the direction of Fokalore or Vichy, it might be possible to oppose them to some degree with Earl Tohno absent. Even without that, I wonder whether Fokalore or Orsongrande would make a move with their leaders absent, if Vichy started an offensive against our Pursang?”

“Uuh... however, Vichy has no intention to take an aggressive stance against

Fokalore.”

“Wasn’t it inconceivable that Horant would make such a move either?”

“If someone thought that they might have the prospects for victory, that assumption would likely crumble easily”, the man shakes his head.

“T-Then...”

“As a matter of fact I called out to you because I want you to deliver certain objects to our home country. Originally, someone like me, who is expected to stay hidden, won’t get in touch with others willingly.”

“Certain objects?”

The man gently smiles at the messenger who asked with a feeling like grasping at straws.

“It’s magic tools that strengthen soldiers which I obtained from Horant. If it’s this, it might at least be possible to not get easily crushed by Vichy.”

“There’s such a thing?”

“Although it’s something I got my hands on by chance, I was at a loss without a partner whom I can trust to transport it as the objects are what they are. It’s disappointing that you couldn’t get in touch with the queen, but won’t it be a sufficient accomplishment with this? Since I have it at hand right here, I’d like to request it from you by all means, if possible.”

The smile of the man at that time was slight different from some time ago, but the messenger was unable to notice that.

<<—>>

Once he saw off the messenger who vanished into the city while thanking him many times over and pulling a cart with all the magic tools and potions placed on it, the man erased the smile from his face.

“... It seems to have gone smoothly.”

A middle-aged man, who carried the dishes and called himself clerk, called out to him.

“Humph. It would have been even better if he was related to the central

committee of Vichy, but well, I guess it turned out well. Even though you didn't mention the city's name with a single word from your side, it saved us trouble that he flapped his mouth on his own accord. It was an easy job."

The men, who returned to the store's interior, enter an empty resting room for employees inside, pull the chairs to themselves with familiar motions and sit down on them with a *flump*.

"The seed has been sown. Tell that to Prime Minister Kuzemu. With this we can put out undivided attention on the fight with Orsongrande without having to worry about Vichy meddling. His Excellency, the Prime Minister, is a person quite attentive of the small details, too."

Pouring wine into a cup by himself, he gulps down around half in one go.

"Let's see, if it's later possible to kill the Knight of the Slender Sword-sama according to the predictions of His Excellency, even I will get promoted once I return to the country. What do you think?"

"If it goes smoothly, certainly."

"That would be nice."



Hifumi stays composed even if it's about telling a suitable lie, but since he basically doesn't do it with the reason that it's troublesome to falsify one's social status if one doesn't hide their face as well, the messenger had no difficulty to recognise the black-haired person, who turns up while mounted on horse from the front close to the capital, as being Earl Tohno. The messenger, who intended to go as far as Fokalore, ends up flustered due to seeing an important person in an unexpected place. As Hifumi ended up making no progress due to failing in handling his horse, the messenger was somehow successful at calling out to him.

"A-Are you Earl Tohno-sama?"

"Who are you?" (Hifumi)

Hifumi returned with an amazed expression to the young messenger, who came talking to him, while frantically soothing the horse which shook its head.

After hearing the giggling voice of Origa, who was behind Hifumi, the messenger becomes red up to his ears out of embarrassment.

“I-It’s sudden, but excuse me!”

Jumping off the horse, the messenger kneeled down on one knee while holding the reins.

“I was dispatched as messenger from Biron Earldom. I’m called Ose. I came to tell you the war progress in Horant’s direction... and about the final moments of Ma Carme-sama.” (Ose)

“I see. Thanks for your troubles. Alyssa, listen to it as well.” (Hifumi)

“Y-Yea. Ma Carme’s final moment, you say, you don’t mean...” (Alyssa)

Looking at Alyssa, who stepped forward while mounted on horse, the messenger stiffens.

“What’s wrong?” (Origa)

“N-Nothing. That is... because Military Director Alyssa-sama...” (Ose)

“Me?” (Alyssa)

Due to Ose being lost for words, Alyssa tilted her head to the side, but Origa turned a sharp gaze at him.

“You are Ose-san, aren’t you?” (Origa)

“Y-Yes!” (Ose)

Ose, who held an impression of her being a peerlessly beautiful woman from Ma Carme’s stories, was confused seeing Alyssa’s appearance one might still call that of a little girl, although he thinks that she’s cute, but he came to his senses thanks to the voice of Origa who put pressure on him.

“The position Alyssa currently has is naturally related to my husband as well, but she solely owes everything to her efforts and abilities. Acting like you are harbouring strange suspicions is...” (Origa)

“Far from it!” (Ose)

Alyssa said “I see” in understanding due to Ose bowing his head with a force as if he was prostrating himself on the ground.

“Certainly, if compared to those at the same age, Alyssa is small.” (Hifumi)

“How cruel of you, Hifumi-san!” (Alyssa)

Looking at Origa, who released a charm appropriate for a woman who suddenly got married, Alyssa secretly sighed at her own appearance.

“Leaving that aside, please hurry up and talk. Did Ma Carme die?” (Hifumi)

“If that’s the case, let’s hear the circumstances”, Hifumi said.

“I don’t know whether he really lost his life, but going by the situation, it was hopeless, I guess...?” (Ose)

Hifumi listened with his arms folded on top of his horse about the gallant figure of Ma Carme told by Ose who was in tears.

Alyssa is weeping while clinging to Origa.

“He did it, didn’t he?” (Hifumi)

“... Ha?” (Ose)

Hifumi’s smile was reflected in the eyes of Ose who raised his face.

“Ma Carme performed quite well, too. Although I didn’t expect him to get done in by Horant, the developments so far aren’t bad. He was able to kill as many as possible with low numbers.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi strokes the mane of his horse in a good mood.

“The lot from Horant is great, too. It’s a reliable method to surround low numbers with many while using spear throwers and magic. Letting you get away was a mistake, but they are able to execute ((such strategy)) due to properly preparing for the sake of fighting.” (Hifumi)

What the hell is he talking about, Ose is confused and Origa says with an one-octave-higher voice,

“This is also the result of Hifumi-sama’s esteemed guidance. How magnificent.” (Origa)

“Eh...?” (Ose)

Ose thought that the news, he brought back, were sad ones, however the hero in front of him is smiling.

Unable to comprehend that, he turned his look towards Alyssa, who should be crying, to look for some assistance.

What he found was a girl who sheds tears with an expression filled with rage.

“Hifumi-san.” (Alyssa)

“Yea, what’s up?” (Hifumi)

“I have a request.” (Alyssa)

Once Alyssa dismounted and handed the horse’s reins over to Origa, she bowed very deeply in front of Hifumi.

“The battle with Horant changed into... became a return match. This will also be my revenge.” (Alyssa)

Hifumi, who looks down on her from atop his horse, doesn’t eradicate his thin smile.

“That’s right. If you want to get revenge for Ma Carme and the others, this will be a return match. It’s no one else’s either. It your revenge.” (Hifumi)

“That’s why I will do it. Please let me do so. As Origa accomplished her revenge, please give me a chance for that as well.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa didn’t know whether this wish would be approved. *If one considers Hifumi’s character, the possibility was high for him to go ahead by himself to fight. It wouldn’t be funny either if he plans to snatch away my enemies.* However, Alyssa is still far from precisely understanding Hifumi’s character. In contrast to Alyssa, who is shrouded in anxiety, Origa was smiling.

“How interesting!” (Hifumi)

The sound of Hifumi clapping both his hands together reverberates on the highway.

The armies of Horant and Fokalore have grown up properly. At this rate they will likely become quite the struggle for Imeraria’s forces as well. Alyssa.” (Hifumi)

“Y-Yes!” (Alyssa)

“What will successfully conclude your revenge?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi's and Alyssa's gazes cross each other.

"... Killing those, who ordered the death of Ma Carme and the others, and those, who actually killed them..." (Alyssa)

"There, there. That's fine. It's good with that." (Hifumi)

Stretching out his arm, Hifumi, who gently caressed Alyssa's hair, smiles in a good mood.

"I will leave it to you. It's fine to use the army to your heart's content. It will be a contest with Imeraria. So, don't lose, okay?" (Hifumi)

"Yea!" (Alyssa)

"I will watch from behind." (Hifumi)

"Yea! Thank you, Hifumi-san!" (Alyssa)

"Then, next." (Hifumi)

Ose, who was completely treated as an outsider, unintentionally trembled with his shoulders when Hifumi's gaze suddenly turned on him.

"There's something I want to request from you." (Hifumi)

"W-What is it!?" (Ose)

"Please go in the direction of Fokalore and convey the conversation just now to the Fokalore feudal army." (Hifumi)

"That's your reward", retrieving one wakizashi from his darkness storage, Hifumi handed it over by tossing it to Ose.

"T-This is?" (Ose)

"It's a wakizashi with the same ornament as Alyssa, the one Ma Carme wished for. If they see that, those guys from the army will likely realize that it's a request from me." (Hifumi)

"Such precious item..." (Ose)

"Take it. The fellow to get it died. If Ma Carme is still alive, it's fine for you to palm it off by overcharging him plentifully. Because it's this, he will probably fork over all of his money." (Hifumi)

Ose strained his voice and said 「I have gratefully received it」 to Hifumi, who is laughing loudly, while hoisting the wakizashi above his head. Although he didn't see it properly as his sight was swaying, Alyssa and Origa appeared to be sobbing in Ose's field of vision.

Chapter 133 – Putting In Holes Happiness

Imeraria and Sabnak were in the office of Biron at the time a situation report about Horant's soldiers having already reinforced the border's vicinity arrived from the soldiers of Biron Earldom, who are observing the circumstances from afar as there are no messages from the soldiers serving as border security against Horant.

After finishing listening to the report, Biron turned around to Imeraria and bowed his head very deeply.

“Your Majesty. As retainer possessing a territory at the border, I fully realize that the losses at this occasion have been brought about by my lack of virtue. The responsibility for having uselessly lost Your Majesty's soldiers lies with this Biron.” (Biron)

“No, that's wrong, Earl Biron.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria, who prompted him to lift his face, declared that there's no kind of mistake from Biron's side.

“All of it is due to Aspilketa, the group who cooperated with him and Horant. Earl Biron, you obtained the achievement of having captured Aspilketa's group with your own soldiers and there's nothing for which you should take responsibility.” (Imeraria)

“... I feel very thankful.” (Biron)

“What we should currently do is to deal with Horant. Earl Biron, please lend us your assistance.” (Imeraria)

“At your will.” (Biron)

For the sake of carrying out further careful investigations of the situation report, the mansion of Earl Biron was assigned as command post, where Imeraria will be temporarily staying, and the royal army was billeted in buildings located in Münster.

And, the very day they opened a war council in regards to coping with Horant, the one who opened his mouth first was Sabnak.

“First there’s something I’m worried about. Horant received severe damage by the previous attack of Earl Tohno. Knowing that man’s power better than anyone, they couldn’t oppose him because of their still few numbers and they should be also aware of the fighting strength of the feudal army that man possesses.” (Sabnak)

“Why did they attack Orsongrande’s guards and the instruction unit from Fokalore, is what you are asking?” (Biron)

Agreeing with Sabnak’s doubts, Earl Biron nodded and said “Certainly.”

“As justification it can be described as “we suffered an attack from Orsongrande?”

“Or it’s also possible to consider the situation as them treating the instruction unit of Fokalore as “invaders.” Since it’s not like it was witnessed by our side, Horant’s side can phrase it either way. It’s likely that they were able to prepare something enabling them to oppose Hifumi-san... Earl Tohno.” (Sabnak)

The ones present at the site of the war council prepared by Biron are Imeraria, Sabnak and Biron. A single maid is on standby in order to provide beverage, but all of the other guards are waiting for orders in another room. Imeraria tilted her head to the side due to Sabnak who drank a black tea.

“Something that’s capable of opposing him, that means something such as powerful magic or weapons?” (Imeraria)

“Excuse me for leaving the argument unfinished, but if we are speaking of Horant, it’s likely magic. Or it might be that they were able to develop some magic tool.” (Sabnak)

Of course, as they are unable to find effective countermeasures in this state where there’s no definite data, they are just spending their time while exchanging words about this or that.

At the moment Imeraria stated, “Let’s review the current situation since we haven’t made any progress after around one hour passed”, Sabnak raised his hand.

“May I?” (Sabnak)

“Did you come up with something?” (Imeraria)

“If we don’t understand the circumstances, let’s go have a look.” (Sabnak)

Imeraria and Biron stare blankly due to Sabnak’s remark.

“Umm... Sabnak-san, go and have a look means?” (Imeraria)

“It means just what I said, Your Majesty. If one lacks information, it’s easiest to go and have a look at the actual site. This is a second-hand opinion from Hifumi-san, but we won’t reach an answer even if we ponder about one thing or another. If you don’t comprehend, then go there. That’s the fastest and most accurate ((solution)).” (Sabnak)

“That’s easy to say.” (Biron)

Biron says while curbing his brows,

“Who will do it? If it’s an individually strong person like Earl Tohno, they are likely capable of going anywhere without fearing anything.” (Biron)

“Of course I will go.” (Sabnak)

“Having proposed it, it’s my duty”, Sabnak stands up.

“As you might know, I’m familiar with investigations as ((former)) member of the Third Knight Order. There are several originating from the Third Knight Order among those we brought along. I have also been taught a bit by Hifumi-san. I will just go to check ((the situation)) with my own eyes from a little distance.” (Sabnak)

Seeing Sabnak smiling while saying “thus it will be alright”, Imeraria stands up. Wearing clothes that fit perfectly for horse riding, her slender figure, where you can’t experience any unevenness even if she throws out her chest, is the same as usual, but even so Biron was able to feel something like matured self-confidence in some respects.

(She reached the point that she can make such a face, huh?) (Biron)

Biron, who saw Imeraria several times in the royal castle since her birth, remembered her at the time she was still much smaller. She gave the impression of being a child that was spinning her wheels in impatience if she couldn’t earnestly do something for the people in her surroundings.

Now she has become a queen who is responsible for a country and she is taking action no longer for the sake of someone but to accomplish something by

changing the country.

However, even Biron was at his wit's end due to Imeraria statement.

"I will go as well." (Imeraria)

"Wai..." (Biron)

"It's important for me myself to personally confirm the situation. Or are you telling me to send the soldiers to their death while not knowing anything?"
(Imeraria)

"I-It's dangerous, Your Majesty!" (Sabnak)

"Oh?" (Imeraria)

Smoothly wiping away the hair which shifted in front of her face, Imeraria smiles daringly.

"It's just confirmation from a distance, right? Though I feel sorry for requesting guards, it probably won't be any problem if we withdraw by horse after checking. Sabnak-san, please select the personnel. We will depart tomorrow morning to check the state of affairs at the national border."
(Imeraria)

Having stated it as an order, Sabnak is unable to object any further. After ending the war council as is, Sabnak quickly exits the room to prepare.

"Your Majesty Imeraria." (Biron)

"What is it, Earl Biron?" (Imeraria)

"I'm against Your Majesty heading out for reconnaissance." (Biron)

Imeraria, who received the objection face to face, stiffens while staring in wonder at Biron's face and sat down unable to give an answer. After looking at each other's face for a little while, Biron turned back to his usual, gentle smile.

"However, if Your Majesty tells me that you want to do so anyway, I will carry out my role as retainer by supporting you in that. Because I will accompany you tomorrow as well, it will be fine for you to observe the enemy's movement's until you are satisfied." (Biron)

Due to Imeraria showing an expression of relief, Biron orders the maid to prepare warm black tea with sugar.

“Your Majesty. It’s about the situation I’ve been told by the messenger I sent out, but how did he do?” (Biron)

“I understand that he has a promise with a person from Fokalore’s instruction unit or such. Once those news reach Fokalore, Hifumi-sama and Alyssa will probably come here.” (Imeraria)

Cooling down her black tea by blowing with a “fuu~”, she enjoys the black tea’s fragrant aroma.

“Before that happens, with my power... or better said, although it’s based on the knowledge that I will receive the assistance of everyone, we have to produce results under my command with my way of doing thing.” (Imeraria)

“I don’t understand. What’s making you hurry that much? If it’s cleaning up after Earl Tohno, someone like me believes that’s fine as well.” (Biron)

“There are two reasons.” (Imeraria)

Putting down the cup, Imeraria put one small baked sweet in her mouth in a graceful manner.

“First, it’s in order to avoid the military gains concentrating on just Hifumi-sama. At the current point in time he is far too quick in his rising of peerage. If he gathers too much of the populace’s popularity, the internal balance of the kingdom will end up thrown into disarray.” (Imeraria)

“I see.” (Biron)

Although he is nodding while saying that, even Biron can imagine at least this much.

“The second reason is a private one.” (Imeraria)

“It’s not possible to tell me?” (Biron)

Slipping a chuckle, Imeraria placed her lips, which had a thin layer of lipstick applied, on the cup and wetted them with the fragrant black tea.

“Probing too much into the secrets of a lady isn’t very well-received, Earl

Biron.” (Imeraria)

“My, my, I’m very sorry.” (Biron)

“Let’s see... it’s for the sake of demonstrating him that I can become a fully-fledged enemy for him.” (Imeraria)

“Enemy, it is...?” (Biron)

Biron stood up and saw Imeraria, who exited the room after thanking for the tea, off.

“It might be better to talk about this once...” (Biron)

The are things I should ask Hifumi who is likely coming here sooner or later, Biron stared in the direction of the capital.

“Good grief, is being a popular man a crime?” (Biron)



“I’m bored.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi muttered a few words while sitting on a bed in a room of an inn. He is in a city which has a distance from Münster, which is at the upper part of Biron Earldom, where one will arrive after one more day, but Hifumi, Origa and Alyssa intended to join up with Fokalore’s feudal army at this place.

Origa and Alyssa have left to talk with the city’s governor to secure a camp-ground for the soldiers.

Originally he wanted to quickly enter Horant by himself, stir up the situation and go around killing people if there’s a chance for that, but as he ended up telling Alyssa that he’s leaving it to her, he wasn’t able to do even that.

“If I properly think it over, books aren’t circulating either. That means that there’s no special amusement. I didn’t realize how enjoyable it is to kill people.” (Hifumi)

Dropping his shoulders while realizing too late that he messed up, Hifumi takes out the katana, while saying “it can’t helped”, and unties the hilt’s string. Performing maintenance of the katana which he hasn’t done for a while now, he pondered whether they would go eat something once Origa and Alyssa came back.

“For some reason it looks like you calmed down completely.”

“Shinigami, huh? What’s your business?” (Hifumi)

Even when he was addressed all of a sudden, Hifumi works on extracting the rivet on the katana’s hilt without being agitated one bit.

“No, no, as it seems like your plan is going well, I wanted to give you a little greeting.”

“Going well... if you say so, then it has to be. Thanks to that, I have to stay in an inn like this though.” (Hifumi)

“In order to obtain a large fruit, it’s necessary to wait for it to grow.”

“So”, Hifumi hits the lower stopper to release the sword blade with familiar movements.

“Did you come to give me, who has free time, a sermon? You are a guy with a lot spare time then.” (Hifumi)

“Being forced to work, that’s certainly not the case, right?”

Laughing while shaking with his whole body, which had restored completely, the shinigami arranged the collar of his tailcoat by picking it up with his fingers and sat down in a chair on the opposite of Hifumi.

“It appears that the demons plan to extend their hegemony to the wastelands as soon as they complete their preparations. The new demon king apparently hasn’t yet decided whether to fight against the humans. It looks like she is currently pondering what to do about Swordland.”

“Vepar, huh...? It will be troublesome if they are won over by choosing a weird safety. The beastmen lot will likely win. Even against the elves. There’s more or less the possibility that they will be dragged into harmonious political measures like they are enacted around Reni, but that probably depends on them.” (Hifumi)

“But, you know”, while Hifumi wrecks his brain, he carefully examines the katana which had its lower stopper removed. Although it’s natural, the beautiful blade, which has not a single chip, bewitchingly shone by reflecting the light coming through a small window.

“The situation is that the beastmen are groping for a peaceful resolution and the humans are fighting amongst each other. Because everyone despises demi-humans, it’s ironic and funny if you look at it like this.”

Hifumi takes no notice of the shinigami who has a softly warped smile on his skinny face.

“However, if that is the case for you, do you wish for more conflict to occur? For me it would be better if they killed each other as well, except for the humans.”

“Is that so?” (Hifumi)

“Yes.”

Smearing a thin layer of oil on the blade, he reattaches the hilt once again.

“In that case there’s a nice method.” (Hifumi)

“Let’s hear it.”

“Go to Vepar’s place, name yourself as god of the demons and it will be fine if you hand down various wisdom to them. It’s probably your forte to use people with such words anyway.” (Hifumi)

“Please phrase it as me using my intellect.”

Hitting the rivet on the katana’s hilt, he carefully affixes the hilt’s string.

“Reputation and such is decided by others. Don’t expect that you can act as you like.” (Hifumi)

“Even though things may appear this way, I’m a god though.”

“That’s probably the same even for gods. Even if you are referred as good god in certain places, you will be treated as cursed god in other places.” (Hifumi)

Lightly swinging the katana with his right hand after he finished the maintenance, he sheathes it in the scabbard once he confirms that it isn’t loose anywhere.

“It doesn’t particularly matter even if Swordland is crushed. It will be great if they fight against the humans by cooperating.” (Hifumi)

Once he tosses the tools into his storage, he stands up and affixes the katana

to his waist.

“Anyway, it’s about increasing the guys who earnestly use their heads in battles. Without that, I won’t be able to greedily devour them to my heart’s content at the time of harvesting you talked about. Even if there’s a lot of it, there’s no meaning in it if the taste’s bad.” (Hifumi)

“Oh dear, what a gourmet. Well then, I shall act according to your esteemed suggestion.”

At the same time as the shinigami vanishes, the sound of knocking resounded and Origa came entering while showing a full-faced smile.

“Are you alright, dear?” (Origa)

“Did you finish your task?” (Hifumi)

“Yes, it seems like Alyssa will do the rest. So, umm...” (Origa)

Entangling the fingers of both hands while having difficulties to voice it out and fidgeting while blushing, Origa glances repeatedly at Hifumi’s face.

“I went peeking into the city’s guild, however it looks like there’s a dwelling of a thieves group nearby. So, if you are alright with that, umm, together...” (Origa)

Swallowing down her saliva with a gulp, Origa clenched her fists.

“Will you go together with me to kill the thieves tonight?” (Origa)

“What do you think I am?” (Hifumi)

With these words, Hifumi placed a hand on the doorknob in the blink of an eye.

“I will go to ask about the scale of the thieves group and their exact location. Please guide me to the guild.” (Hifumi)

“Of course”, Origa nodded in great joy.

Chapter 134 – Hurricane

At the time Imeraria, who was accompanied by fifteen knights including Sabnak and the same number of guards led by Earl Biron, arrived at a spot from where the border could be seen, the morning sun already guaranteed a clear visibility.

Even while inhaling the fresh, chilly morning air within the thickets off the highway, Imeraria dons an expression of dissatisfaction.

“Why would it be wrong if I didn’t wear this thing?” (Imeraria)



Wrapped up in a cloth that had grass and leaves attached to it, Imeraria, who is facing the front while pinching the cloth with her thin fingers, turned a criticizing look towards Sabnak who is next to her in the same attire.

“Please endure it. These are for the sake of making it difficult for our opponents to find us. Rather than that, please look at that.” (Sabnak)

Ahead, where Sabnak pointed at, there were soldiers walking around busily in the vicinity of Orsongrande’s military station and barracks in front of the border and there were also citizens, who were carrying out some task while mingling with the soldiers, visible there.

“I wonder what they are doing?” (Imeraria)

“I fear that it’s likely that after confiscating the facilities on our side, they are having carpenters and such remodel them.” (Biron)

Biron answers calmly.

It’s a world where such things such as lenses don’t exist as the civilization is inexperienced in processing glass, but there’s the method of easily looking at a distant place with a plain pipe. Even the one Biron is using was a plain pipe made out of wood, however it was still better than having nothing.

Imeraria, who peered into the pipe she was handed, confirms the equipment of the soldiers located in the area of the barracks and judges that there aren’t any magicians.

“It doesn’t seem like they are boasting a considerable amount of people. If it’s just the soldiers, there’s around 20 of them, isn’t there?” (Imeraria)

“Yes, that’s right if you just count those on this side ((of the border)).” (Sabnak)

Sabnak, who is peering through both his hands which he has arranged in a tubular shape, said “the problem are the soldiers on the other side.”

“The parts which can be seen from here; they don’t seem to be unusual devices. Possibly they might construct them from now on though. If they are remodelling like mentioned by Brother-in-law... Earl Biron, there’s also the possibility of them bringing in some devices.” (Sabnak)

“If it’s a large-scale magic device to the degree of using an entire building, it

will become a big problem. Among the ancient magic, which hasn't been classified yet, there are also spells for large-scaled annihilation, I've heard. If Horant has discovered and developed something identical..." (Biron)

Imeraria ponders while fixedly staring at the border.

I wonder what Hifumi would do in such situation?

(I have a feeling that he would attack them from the front...) (Imeraria)

While smiling wryly within her mind, she remembers something she was told before.

"Sabnak-san, Earl Biron, please set up a system of continuous observation of the vicinity of the border by cooperating with each other. Inform me at once if there are any changes. And..." (Imeraria)

She hesitated whether to give them the order or not, however, since she understood that she had to do so, she squeezed out her voice by putting strength into her stomach ((persuading herself)) that it was her task to obtain results by moving people.

"Please carry out reconnaissance by closing in on the border as far as possible during the night. If possible, confirm even the soldiers on the other side ((of the border))." (Imeraria)

This being a dangerous mission, their lives won't be guaranteed if they are found.

Even so, it's still better than putting the country at risk.

It will be unbearable if I don't think about it in such way.

"Your Majesty." (Biron)

Biron smiled while showing his white teeth through a gap in the cloth covering him.

"The soldiers have been training for the sake of not bringing your determination to naught." (Biron)

"That's right. If you think that it's necessary, you should do it steadily. Even I believe that that order is to be expected. Rather, it was an order that should be given by me." (Sabnak)

"Please leave everything to us", being told that from both sides, Imeraria's

heart became lighter albeit only a bit.

Retreating slowly, Sabnak and Biron issue instructions to their respective soldiers.

Taking off the cloth used for camouflage that covered her, Imeraria brushed off the grasses which clung to her riding habit.

“By the way, this slightly, well... unique attire is whose idea?” (Imeraria)

The soldiers exchanged glances due to the question of Imeraria who returned the cloth to a soldier. They apparently didn't want to believe that Imeraria isn't aware at all.

“Umm... it was taught to us by the soldiers from Earl Tohno's territory. Since it's easy to observe while being difficult to be spotted from a distance, they said.”

“... Is that so?” (Imeraria)

Even while wavering whether she should be scared or delighted due to Hifumi's education being thorough beyond her imagination, Imeraria had reached the point of being able to consider it quite calmly.

“Now I'm curious. Were you taught something else by Hifumi-sama's soldiers?” (Imeraria)

“Yes. From individual to group combat, attacking an encampment and in reverse, the methods of defending one, also...”

The soldier, who received a direct question from his queen, eagerly recalls the training and lists its contents even while being stiff due to nervousness. Among those there was something that bothers Imeraria.

“... Have those methods been taught in each territory by other instruction units?” (Imeraria)

“It's likely just as you said? There existed something like a textbook.”

“I see. Thank you.” (Imeraria)

“N-No! I'm sorry!”

The soldier, who was thanked personally by the queen, retreated holding the cloth, he received, dearly while being ridiculed by his comrades for his stiff,

overly ceremonious movements.

“That means that it’s very likely for Horant’s side to also know the same methods...” (Imeraria)

“Troublesome seeds have been sown”, Imeraria grieved.

There was also the notion of asking Hifumi for help in the composed part of her mind, but she wasn’t able to consider that as being correct no matter what.



“... What shall we do?” (Puuse)

“I didn’t consider it this far ahead, but... is it pointless to start a conversation?” (Viine)

Seeing the figure of the worried Puuse, the one-eared rabbit, Viine, answered frankly.

The girls, who left the wastelands after experiencing a number of long days, hesitated how to get in contact in front of the entrance to the highway leading to the city of humans that could be seen at last.

The girls didn’t know, but they were right next to a small town located en route the highway and positioned around the half point between Fokalore and Arosel.

“It’s because we are of the beastmen race. Just showing our faces, it wouldn’t be odd for us getting attacked either ~ssu.” (Gengu)

“This isn’t a situation to laugh about.” (Malfas)

Due to Gengu scratching his head while say “Well, I give up”, Malfas shakes his head.

“Puuse-san, let’s go to have a talk at least. Even if we consider various things in this place, it won’t change anything.” (Viine)

“... That’s so, isn’t it? Got it.” (Puuse)

While teasing her with a “Maidens in love are powerful”, Puuse told Gengu and the others to run away immediately since she herself and Viine will restraint ((the attackers)) with magic if push comes to shove.

“Understood ~ssu. Say, let’s try having a talk with them at least just like always said by Reni-san.” (Gengu)

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“B-Beastmen!?”

“Moreover, that’s not a human but an elf? It’s the first time I’ve seen one!”

The guarding soldiers became agitated due to the group of beastmen and elves appearing all of a sudden.

Originally it’s a situation where they should call for reinforcements in a hurry, but the soldiers, who ended up forgetting even that due to the overly unexpected circumstances, didn’t do anything but staring at the beastmen who were steadily getting closer.

“Umm... is it alright?” (Puuse)

The one who addressed them is Puuse.

It was decided for her to talk first as her appearance, except the ears, is the closest to humans.

“Y-Yes!”

The soldier, who was addressed, gives an answer with an unintentionally excited voice due to her well-featured appearance unique to elves once he sees her from close-by.

“We came from a city that is located on the other side of the wastelands. As it’s the first time for us to have come here after all, I’d like you to instruct us.”
(Puuse)

Puuse, who timidly talks to the soldier, who is taller than her, with upturned eyes, might be regarded as cute ojou-sama from somewhere if met for the first time.

“Umm...”

Even while the soldier’s heartbeat accelerates with a throbbing sound, he looks at the beastmen waiting behind Puuse.

The dog beastman is scary as he seems to be really strong, but the others are a rabbitwoman, who has no more than one ear for some reason, and a tiger beastman, though that one can’t be seen as anything but a child.

“They are my companions. We are travelling in order to meet a certain

person.” (Puuse)

“A certain person, you say?”

“It will be a help if you know him”, she says as preface.

“It’s a man called Hifumi-san. He has black hair and is a bit unusual.” (Puuse)

She doesn’t mention what’s unusual.

“Hifumi? Hifumi... aah!” *(T/N: name is written in katakana)*

Once he looks at his colleague next to him after raising his voice, that one’s eyes are likewise opened widely and form a perfect circle.

“I-Isn’t that Lord-sama!?”

“There’s no mistake... what to do... a-anyway, have them come to the guard office.”

“Moron!”

The guard office, they are using, isn’t prepared for something like visitors at all as you can’t say that they are attentive to cleaning by any standard, just like it’s the case with many all-male households. To a certain extent there is a small table and chairs for the sake of listening to the story of the suspicious people they brought in.

The soldier, who raised an angry voice, tells Puuse 「Please wait for a minute」 with a frivolous smile and moves to a slightly separate place while pulling an arm of his colleague.

“Why is it no good?”

“Think properly. There’s such a pretty woman. Perhaps Lord-sama might have found her in the wastelands.”

“Huh?”

Due to the soldiers rising his pinky while saying that, the face of his colleague became pale.

“Try imagining Lord-sama ((finding out)) us having her enter such cramped guard office. We will be literally changed into being just heads.”

“T-Then, what shall we do...?”

“At any rate, have them wait. I will hurry to notify the captain.”

Saying that, he dashes away with all his strength and once the soldier delivers the report to the person in charge, even the person, who was informed, stands up unintentionally and isn't able to do anything, at least in his own position. Or rather, he doesn't want to make such decision either.

“Escort them to Fokalore swiftly... no, politely, pay attention to being courteous, escort them while paying meticulous attention!”

His order was already close to being a scream.



Hifumi suddenly pondered while killing the bandits.

“A large-scaled war; practically there hasn't been one in this world, has there?” (Hifumi)

“Gyaaaaa... r-release me!”

The voice of a bandit, who is lying face down while his wrists are immobilized under Hifumi's feet, is audible.

“Talking about large-scale, I wonder what's the extent?” (Origa)

While hitting the head of another bandit with her iron-ribbed fan, Origa turned a smile towards Hifumi.

“Let's see. For example military forces of 100.000 or 200.000 clashing against each other. It's a battle where several 10.000 of people will be killed.” (Hifumi)

The bandit, whose shoulder joints were disconnected by the momentum of Hifumi turning around, had his neck stepped on and broken at the time he raised a loud scream.

“There wasn't such thing? Even if you assemble all military forces of Orsongrande, it likely won't go past 50.000.” (Origa)

“I see. The general battle was in the form of the troops clashing with each other on a plain. Even if you consider the practical use, that is the limit, huh?” (Hifumi)

“That's right. There's the method of managing it by deciding the soldier's

roles and organization accurately, but that didn't exist before your esteemed suggestion, Hifumi-sama. At most they classified ((the troops)) by magicians or infantry." (Origa)

"Hmmm." (Hifumi)

Avoiding the sword swung down by the next bandit, Hifumi hits them lightly with his fist and breaks their nose.

"Bugyaa!"

The left hand, which the bandit raised to hold his nose, was caught by Hifumi, its wrist was twisted and then broken.

"That's all? (Hifumi)

"What is?" (Origa)

Origa's wind magic severs the head of a bandit, who tried to escape, from behind.

"Even at the time of the war with Vichy and when we did sham battles with others, there were many fellows who would leap into enemy territory without any kind of hesitation."

Origa slipped a chuckle due to his statement which was completely blind to his own shortcomings in the situation he was currently in.

"It will be fine if everyone is as strong as you, Hifumi-sama, but... I was also like that before, but everyone has the opinion that the power of their physical strength and weapons is the most important." (Origa)

"However, this will change in the future", Origa killed yet another with wind magic.

During that time Hifumi broke the necks of two bandits.

"Tools will be introduced by wars. Even magic won't be simply for attacking but will be used for magic tools and magic potions, too. Traps will become popular, defences will also vanish since the soldiers will go out to fight. There's many, many ways. For the attacking side as well as the defending side the necessity to consider it plentifully will appear." (Hifumi)

With all the bandits besides them dead, the two are standing together in front of the cave which has been made into their hiding place by the bandits. Origa affixes her iron-ribbed fan to her waist and searches the inside for people with magic.

“It’s fine if we can observe that in the battle with the current Horant.”

“At least Alyssa will do it properly.”

“The problems are Horant and Imeraria, huh?”

Origa, who finished the investigation of the interior, takes the iron-ribbed fan into her hand once again.

“It seems Imeraria-sama is accompanied by Sabnak-san. Horant was also sufficiently trained by your soldiers, Hifumi-sama. Besides, Horant also has magic and magic tools. ... There’s 16 people inside. Three among them can’t move. They appear to be women. They still seem to be breathing.” (Origa)

“I see.” (Hifumi)

She didn’t say anything further as both of them understand why those women are within a cave where there’s bandits.

“There’s isn’t any particular sensation of something unusual.” (Origa)

“Then, shall we go? I leave the women to you.” (Hifumi)

“Understood.” (Origa)

Origa follows behind Hifumi, who steadily enters unarmed with his katana affixed to his waist, while preparing her iron-ribbed fan.

“If.” (Hifumi)

Origa doesn’t fail to hear Hifumi muttering a single word.

“If the world was involved by fighting all at once.” (Hifumi)

“Yes.” (Origa)

“Geographically the capital might turn into the main battlefield. If it turns into a war of humans versus demi-humans, let’s see... the place with the highest probability ((to become the main battlefield)) is my territory, huh?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who crushed both eyes of a bandit with the thumbs of both his hands in passing, killed him by slapping the bandit's back of the head against the wall of rock just like that.

“The demons will come to kill me. If she proceeds matters cleverly, Imeraria will likely do that as well. I wonder how about the beastmen. They might try to not get involved overly much. If I'm in a state of being surrounded, even Vichy's neighbourhood might come attacking again.” (Hifumi)

“My goodness, that's an enjoyable future outlook.” (Origa)

“Isn't it?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who kicked away the corpse into a corner of the passage, mutters “Be that as it may.”

“The feudal army still hasn't arrived?” (Hifumi)

“They are also your soldiers, Hifumi-sama. Undoubtedly they will catch up right away.” (Origa)

Two days later Fokalore's territorial soldiers caught up with an abnormal quickness for the marching speed of an army, but at that time the bandits and ferocious monsters, which were in the vicinity of the city, had been completely disposed of.

Chapter 135 – Don't Stand So Close To Me

If you describe a shinigami in a few words, it gains its power of existence by being feared and it's recognised as god-like damned being which gathers its energy from "people dying."

As such the shinigami appeared in the room, where Reni and Helen are living, before going to Vepar's place as told by Hifumi.

"That means for Hifumi-san you beastmen are completely managing this city and I believe that he wants you to take defensive measures within all of Swordland, including the humans as well."

"I see."

"Is that true, I wonder...?"

Reni and Helen were cautious of the shinigami, who suddenly appeared out of thin air, in the beginning, but once Hifumi's name is mentioned, they agree groundlessly while thinking *isn't it weird that he even has such acquaintance?* Thus the two listened to the shinigami's explanation while rubbing their sleepy eyes, but what came out of the shinigami's mouth were flowery words towards Reni and Helen, how Hifumi is evaluating them, to gain total control of the remaining human area by demonstrating their intelligence and that they should make their own country in its true meaning.

"You say that easily, but there are still many humans. Don't ask for something impossible while even our own livelihood hasn't yet stabilized."

"What are you talking about. Haven't you increased your manpower with the joining of the elves and moreover haven't there appeared even people who can use magic among the beastmen?"

"Even so, that doesn't mean we will be able to win if we fight the humans immediately, right? Inviting our mothers isn't working out well either..."

It's her own statement, but Helen inadvertently ended up hanging her head in shame.

The beastmen, who are living in the old slums have tried to invite their old

beastmen friends, but there are many who avoid to be even close to the city of man. Although Reni and Helen dispatched messengers, it was difficult to summon their family who were on guard. “If we find an opportunity, sooner or later, it won’t do if we don’t persuade them by ourselves”, the two discussed before going to bed tonight.

“Let’s consider it the other way around. If the threat of humans vanishes, won’t you be able to brazenly go meet the other beastmen? Even the people on the slums’ side are mostly separated from their fellow relatives, right?”

“That is, true, however...”

“Therefore, if you create a peaceful city by trying your best here, the rest will work out as well. The establishing of a tight defence system now that the comeback of the demons is rumoured is also part of your both’s task as representatives of this city, isn’t it?”

Helen ended up silent without returning any remarks due to the smooth stream of words.

The more she listens to it the more she can believe the point of this skinny man, who calls himself a shinigami, to be correct. However, in Helen’s mind there was a sense of impending danger of some unknown nature that rebelled against it.

Suddenly Helen noticed that Reni hadn’t uttered a single word since some time ago.

“Reni, what do you...” (Helen)

“Ku~” (Reni)

Once Helen looked at Reni, she was sleeping completely like a log while hugging her pillow and loosely sitting on the bed.

When she lightly hits her head, Reni opens her eyes in surprise.

“Oww!?” (Reni)

“Don’t go sleeping carefreely.” (Helen)

Helen sighed towards Reni who was somehow awakening while rubbing her eyes.

“What do you think?” (Helen)

“Mm~... shinigami-san, is Hifumi-san well?” (Reni)

“Huh? Yes, he doing very well. He is currently extremely lively due to the matter of causing disputes amongst fellow humans.”

Due to the question which suddenly came flying from out of the field, the shinigami opened its eyes widely for an instant but then answers with a smile.

“Humans, they usually do nothing but fighting each other, don’t they? And yet they are able to retain such large numbers well.”

“So, why are you here, shinigami-san?” (Reni)

“As I said, receiving a request from Hifumi-san, I came to give the two of you some advices.”

“I se~~e.”

Releasing a big yawn, Reni muttered that she understood.

“If Hifumi-san has said so, I will try doing my best.” (Reni)

“Reni... is that fine?” (Helen)

Reni returned a limp smile towards the uneasy Helen.

“Splendid! I’m also looking forward to your great efforts, you two!”

“Well then”, leaving those words behind, the shinigami completely disappeared like smoke.

“Reni...” (Helen)

“Let’s sleep, Helen? Tomorrow will be busy again.” (Reni)

“To prepare for fighting the humans?” (Helen)

“Why?” (Reni)

“Why... you say, didn’t we talk about that just now.” (Helen)

“What we said was stuff about **If Hifumi-san has said so?** If it is only that shinigami-san saying it, I have no particular intention to follow it?” (Reni)

“Eeh?” (Helen)

Reni, who put down the pillow and created a depression by hitting its centre with a *tap-tap*, looked at Helen's face with drowsy eyes.

"After all it doesn't mean that Hifumi-san has said something **I'd like you to do it like this** to us. Until now he had us only do what we wanted to do ourselves. Besides, did he ever order anything?" (Reni)

"Now that you mention it..." (Helen)

"Therefore."

Playing her head on the pillow, Reni once again covered herself with the thin futon.

"Isn't it alright if we try to do things as we like with everyone? Ah, I'm slightly worried about what he said in regards to the demons." (Reni)

"Let's consult with the elves tomorrow", Reni says with a yawn blended in.

"We have to make plans." (Helen)

"That's right. We have to investigate what demon-san's are eating." (Reni)

"The preparation of the welcome will be difficult, won't it?" Just like that Reni fell asleep in the blink of an eye.

"That's the part worrying you? Good grief..." (Helen)

Helen, who ended up completely wide awake, stands up to get some water to drink.

"Even though you are intelligent, you are quite carefree." (Helen)

Watching Reni who's already sleeping peacefully, Helen renewed her intention to do her best together with Reni. She wants to support her important friend.



It was about night after they went to observe the enemy's movements when it resulted in a defence encampment being set up between Münster and the border due to the order of Imeraria who heard the story from a soldier. After receiving that order, Sabnak, who wrote down orders to draft up the construction of the encampment at night spurring on his body, which hasn't

recovered from the fatigue of the travel, sighed from the bottom of his heart that it was agreeable for him to not turn up the next day and to play hooky. Immediately following the construction of the encampment which took two full days, the invasion from Horant began.

“Great... you can’t say that, but should I say that it’s wonderful that Her Majesty’s decision was quick?”

“... Captain, you are very composed.”

The young knight, who took off his helmet and wiped away the sweat, looked at Sabnak with a gaze filled with respect.

“Even if I were to be impatient, it can’t be helped anyway. We finished all possible preparations.” (Sabnak)

The report from the soldiers who continuously monitored the border stated that their opponent has only around 200 infantrymen. Although the figures of magicians and anyone else can’t be seen, it has been confirmed that they are pulling several spear throwers.

The encampment, which was laid out by Sabnak against those, has shallow holes to stop horses, nets which were spread all over to hinder the infantry, groups of 100 permanently stationed infantrymen and thirty spear throwers of which the production partially started in the Biron Earldom.

“I believe he did well to prepare this many. While being your brother-in-law, he is a great person.”

“It was a unit we formed up in a hurry and moreover it wasn’t supposed to be used against anyone but the nobles as opponents. It saved me trouble.” (Sabnak)

“He’s proud that he can make the Captain of the Royal Knights at the the peak of his popularity say so.” (Biron)

Biron called out to Sabnak’s group, which is talking while staring in the direction from where the enemy is supposed to come, from behind.

“B-Brother-in-law-san? It’s planned for you to stay behind in Münster...” (Sabnak)

“That was the plan. Because Her Majesty will clearly see her retainers’ manner of fighting at the front, it’s wrong for me, who is her retainer, to stay behind in the territory.” (Biron)

“Eh? Her Majesty is...” (Sabnak)

Once Sabnak turns around his head with a motion like a rusted mechanical doll, he saw the figure of Imeraria, who is looking in the direction of the border on horse, over Biron’s shoulder.

“Y-Your Majesty! Please, retire to the rear!” (Sabnak)

“No. There’s no way I can have peace despite everyone fighting desperately. Besides, there’s something I noticed in this time’s case.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria, who returned the pipe for seeing at a distance to the pouch at her waist, looks at Sabnak from atop the horse.

Her expression was virile and imposing to a degree one would expect from a teenager.

“Only watching Hifumi-sama, I wasn’t even aware what kind of effort everyone from the knights and soldiers invested or how much you can fight. That’s why I was looking at a person like Aspilketa lightly.” (Imeraria)

“T-That sort of thing is...” (Sabnak)

Imeraria, who held back the flustered Sabnak by raising one hand, surveyed the encampment from the horse’s back.

A fulcrum is set up there according to the instructions of a knight and a large net has been affixed to it.

“What’s that?” (Imeraria)

Looking in the direction she pointed at, Sabnak replies,

“That’s a curtain to stop the spears of spear throwers, Your Majesty.” (Sabnak)

“... Is it alright although it looks like a net? Besides, it looks like it’s dangling a bit without being tightened.” (Imeraria)

Seeing the look of the uneasy Imeraria, Sabnak remembered that he had the same reaction when he saw it for the first time.

“It’s very likely to be torn if it’s not a net. If it’s stretched out too firmly, it’s also very probably that it will be pierced by the spears... It seems.” (Sabnak)

It completely sounds like I came up with it myself, the words of Sabnak, who thought so while talking, became anticlimactic at the end.

“In other words, this is also a suggestion from Hifumi-sama, you are saying?” (Imeraria)

“... Indeed, Your Majesty.” (Sabnak)

Imeraria, who sighed deeply, muttered “It can’t be helped, I guess.”

“Let’s consider it good luck that both sides have that knowledge and not only the enemy’s side and that our side is somewhat ahead in regards to that.”

(Imeraria)

Given that she surveys the rest by herself, Imeraria advanced with her horse while telling them to hasten their preparations.

“Brother-in-law... Earl Biron.” (Sabnak)

“What is it?” (Biron)

“Once the battle starts, please withdraw to the rear while taking Her Majesty along even if it’s by force.” (Sabnak)

“I will handle it carefully.” (Biron)

The wryly smiling Biron and Sabnak shrug their shoulders while facing each other.

The battle began with an exchange of fire between the spear throwers, just as expected by Sabnak, in the afternoon of that day.



It was about evening and the battle had finished its first stage when Hifumi’s group and Fokalore’s territorial soldiers arrived in Münster.

Due to the somewhat restless air swirling about within the city, Hifumi, who walks while pulling the reins, closes his eyes partly.

“It seems like the fighting has already begun.” (Hifumi)

Once many soldiers enter the city after getting permission from the guards,

the residents face them with looks filled with a mix of expectations and anxieties.

Reinforcements are a help. But, they cannot welcome an expansion of the front line.

“Well then, Alyssa.” (Hifumi)

“Yea.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who looked up at Hifumi’s face directly from the front, gently caressed the wakizashi located in the back on her waist.

“It’s fine to do as you like. I will watch.” (Hifumi)

“Got it.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa made changes to the ranks of the soldiers with a single order and headed towards the direction of the border by running fast.

The army, which advances while raising clouds of dust, leaves the city without lowering its pace while pulling many tools.

The residents, who saw their figures off in blank amazement, understand after seeing the black-haired young man calmly following from behind while mounted on a horse. The army of that Earl Tohno came rushing as reinforcement.

The populace was filled with hope due to the army of Fokalore which arrived right after the royal army in spite of originating from the opposite side of the country.

“Is that alright?” (Origa)

“What is?” (Hifumi)

Due to the question of Origa, who lined up her horse next to him, Hifumi turned only his look at her.

“Don’t you want to fight as well, dear?” (Origa)

Hifumi raised his voice in laughter at Origa who watches him with an uneasy look.

“Ahaha! You were worried about such stuff?” (Hifumi)

“P-Please don’t laugh. You are concer...” (Origa)

While stroking Origa's head with his left hand, which was covered by a glove, after bringing his horse close, Hifumi skilfully fixed the position of the katana which shifted slightly due to the vibrations of the horse.

"Let's see. I will talk about my real intentions to you." (Hifumi)

Due to Hifumi's remark, Origa gulps and stares at Hifumi's face.

"I think, if I can go around killing each and every living person, I want to do that. If I can simply kill those in front of me without having to care about anything, I wonder how happy I will be." (Hifumi)

"But", Hifumi returned his sight to the front.

"In that case there will be no future. Of course it will end if I die, but if I ended up killing everyone, what will happen afterwards?" (Hifumi)

"That is..." (Origa)

"You know, I will be a loner." (Hifumi)

The city, where the sun began to sink, is dyed in madder red.

"Therefore, by rapidly increasing those who can fight, I want an enjoyable waging of lives. Without that I'm not actually feeling alive." (Hifumi)

"I-I am!" (Origa)

Hifumi stopped his horse due to Origa suddenly raising her voice.

"I will be right next to you until the very end, Hifumi-sama! By all means, please fight with me at the time when all enemies to be killed have vanished. I became strong. I will put in great efforts to get even stronger. Therefore..." (Origa)

"I see." (Hifumi)

While making the horse advance again, Hifumi gently stroke Origa's cheek.

"Well, then I will leave it to you at that time. Please become an enemy that's worth to be killed." (Hifumi)

"Please leave it to me. E-Even I, at the end by your hand... ufufu..." (Origa)

Due to Origa spontaneously breaking into a smile thanks to the warmth of the

caressed cheek, Hifumi continued his words.

“Besides, as I likely won’t fight this time, it’s unnecessary to worry about me.”
(Hifumi)

“How about if Her Majesty the Queen and Alyssa lose to Horant?” (Origa)

“Ah.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi hit the scabbard with a sound of a whack.

“Well, half of it is no more than anticipation, but maybe it will happen.”
(Hifumi)

“I see. That’s good.” (Origa)

The two leisurely advance through the city at twilight.
Their figures might appear as intimate pair of lovers if seen from the side. Even if the place they are heading for is a battlefield.

Chapter 136 – Want You Bad

At the end of defending against the attacks from Horant without suffering any particular damage, the enemies disappeared from Münster's defensive encampment.

The soldiers are taking turns between resting and maintaining as well as checking the tools used for defending. Imeraria has withdrawn to the rear together with Biron and they are taking a break in their respective tents. Inside one of those, Sabnak, who is the one in charge on-site, busily gave orders.

“Inform me about the situation.” (Alyssa)

Once Sabnak, who was suddenly addressed, looked over his shoulders, he wondered for just an instant whether there was no one there, but when he lowered his line of sight, he discovered Alyssa looking up at him.

“Ah, Alyssa-... san.” (Sabnak)

Receiving a mysterious pressure from the soldiers of Fokalore, who are behind her, once he uses her name without an honorific, he adds a “-san” to her name in panic.

“Reinforcements from Fokalore, huh...? That's welcome.” (Sabnak)

Surprised by their fast arrival that exceeded the expectations in his mind, he thought that he'd like them to not ransack the battlefield as much as possible, but he produced a smile even while his face was twitching.

“So, Hifumi-san and the others are...” (Sabnak)

“They will be here very soon. Origa is with him as well.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa immediately answers the question which had a thread of hope put into it.

Reality is abnormally harsh, Sabnak wanted to cry, but since he owns a title he has to keep it together at this place.

“We were attacked in this defensive encampment only once by Horant, but

we were able to repel them. I can't predict how the other side will move, however the surroundings of the national border have been completely occupied by Horant." (Sabnak)

Sabnak, who told her the information he received from the observing soldiers, mentioned that he wanted to ascertain the state of affairs now anyway.

"I see... is it fine for us to borrow a corner in the encampment?" (Alyssa)

"I don't mind, of course... what do you plan to do once Hifumi-san arrives?" (Sabnak)

Alyssa shook her head saying "it's different" towards Sabnak's question.

"Since my subordinates suffered losses by Horant in this time's case, I will go rescue them as the one responsible for them. Hifumi-san will just watch." (Alyssa)

"... Eh? That Hifumi-san will just watch without participating in the battle?" (Sabnak)

Due to Sabnak muttering "no way", Alyssa got angry and puffed up her cheeks.

"It's the truth! This is my revenge, so I will be the one to execute it!" (Alyssa)

Sabnak smiled foolishly, but his face became dark at the mention of the word "revenge."

"Revenge... it is?" (Sabnak)

Sabnak hasn't forgotten the time when he met Hifumi for the first time in Arosel. At that time Hifumi helped Origa and Kasha, who were still slaves, to accomplish their revenge going even as far as lending them his own weapons.

"So that means, you... no, the Fokalore feudal army will invade Horant?" (Sabnak)

"Of course." (Alyssa)

"P-Please wait a moment! Currently I'm the one giving the orders in this place, but this encampment and military operation is under the command of Her Majesty Imeraria! Even though it's already a difficult situation even at the

best of times, it will be troublesome if you invade without permission.”

(Sabnak)

“However, Hifumi-san has said it’s fine.” (Alyssa)

“That’s before thinking it over properly!” (Sabnak)

Placing his hand on her shoulder to plead to Alyssa while bending his back, Sabnak shows a face that looks like he is sobbing.

“Her Majesty the Queen and an Earl, both of them are people in high positions. You can’t decide something on your own accord without getting the permission from such people in high positions regarding such important matter, right?” (Sabnak)

“... I guess so?” (Alyssa)

“That’s how it is. ... It would be great if you didn’t display high-handed absurdity like that couple, Alyssa-san. For starters, let’s discuss it with Her Majesty and Earl Biron. Come on, let’s just do that.” (Sabnak)

Seeing the state of Alyssa who seems to be agreeing with him at least partially, Sabnak sighed in relief.

If Alyssa went out for an unreasonable offensive, it would be also possible for this encampment to be broken through when it received a large-scaled counter-attack from Horant.

Sabnak, who thinks *I’d like them to calm down somewhat and cooperate with us by just pushing back them back to the national border if possible*, lifts his head.

“Yo. You became quite the big boy after climbing the ranks.” (Hifumi)

“Sabnak-san’s evaluation of us seems to be such.” (Origa)

With their horses lined up, Origa, who glares at Sabnak, and a smiling Hifumi were there.



“Please stop, Midas-san.” (Vaiya)

“... Vaiya, huh? What’s this about?” (Midas)

The one who stood before Midas, who was about to enter the capital

together with Nelgal's group, weren't the underlings of the rebelling nobles or thieves, but the Vice-Captain of the Royal Knight Order, Vaiya, Midas realized after squinting.

"It has been decided that I'm the one in charge during the absence of Her Majesty and Captain Sabnak." (Vaiya)

"That's not what I want to hear. What I want to know is why it's necessary for you to stand in our way." (Midas)

The two of them are acquaintances despite having different affiliations. Vaiya is superior as he has a rank of nobility, but Midas is his senpai*. Being in different units, namely the Royal Knight Order and the ordinary knight order, they possess the same ranks as Vice-Captains. *(T/N: Hard to localize as it contains different meanings in the Japanese language and the word "senior" wouldn't be enough to explain those)*

"It's because of the carriage over there." (Vaiya)

The one Vaiya pointed at is the one with Nelgal on board. As the coachman and the soldiers, who are securing the vicinity of the carriage, belong to Horant, they are grasping the scabbards of their swords with tensed expressions due to the sudden situation.

"Is His Highness, the next king of Horant, boarding it?" (Vaiya)

"What will you do, if that is the case? What you are doing is equivalent to a grave, diplomatic affront." (Midas)

"It's an order by Her Majesty. I was told to welcome His Highness, Nelgal, and have him wait in the capital until the situation has settled down." (Vaiya)

The decree, which Vaiya took out after saying "the circumstances have changed", was definitely signed by Imeraria.

Midas hesitated while fixedly staring at the decree without returning any words either.

There's the possibility of Vaiya having become a puppet of Horant or the rebelling nobles, but basically he is known for his high evaluation as being a trustable person.

The one who broke the silence was a soldier from Horant.

“Are you betraying us at this point after regarding us like allies!?”

“N-No...” (Midas)

Facing the flustered Midas, the enraged soldier of Horant at last took a sword in his hand.

Tension travels across Midas’ group and Vaiya’s group, which is lining up right in front of them. If they draw their swords here, there won’t be any choice but to cut them down without questions asked.

“Please wait.” (Nelgal)

The one who stopped the soldier from Horant was Nelgal who disembarked from the carriage.

At the moment he, who looks somewhat thin due to his anxiety, came close, Midas dismounted.

“Midas-san, is the decree, he possesses, the real thing?” (Nelgal)

“... There’s probably no mistake in that.” (Sabnak)

Hearing Midas’ reply, a grieving voice is raised by the soldiers of Horant, but after having calmed them down, Nelgal faced Vaiya.

“For such a decree to appear means that something happened in our country, right?” (Nelgal)

“That’s right, Your Highness, Nelgal.” (Vaiya)

“Please stop with the “Your Highness.” Although I have been designated as heir, I’m still a child in the middle of studying. I’m a youngster who merely has a distant, distant blood relation with His Majesty, Suprangel.” (Nelgal)

Vaiya, who has sweat gathering on the forehead of his stiff face due to the shy Nelgal, carefully folds the decree.

“We have observed an act of aggression towards Orsongrande by your country, Horant.” (Vaiya)

The soldiers from Horant became speechless due to that and same applied to Midas’ group.

“Aggression... could you inform me of the situation please?” (Nelgal)

Vaiya nods towards Nelgal who continued his question while having a pale face.

“The enemies from your country, who plotted an invasion into Orsongrande, have been held back by the troops of Earl Biron, who is governing the area of Münster, a city close to the national border and Fokalore’s territorial troops of Tohno Earldom, which have been stationed in Horant. They prevented the invasion by Horant.” (Vaiya)

“However”, once Vaiya straightens himself by spreading his feet lightly, the chain of the kusarigama, which hung at his waist, makes a sound.

“The soldiers of Fokalore’s feudal army, which protected your country, were killed by the troops of your country. The area of the national border has been at present occupied by soldiers from Horant.” (Vaiya)

One of the soldiers from Horant gulps.
Even if the authenticity of those details are a different matter, it’s currently clear that soldiers affiliated to Orsongrande were killed by soldiers from Horant, is what they have been told. At this point in time it’s similar as to ((both countries)) having returned to being fellow enemy nations.

“H-However, those aren’t Nelgal-sama’s instructions! You know that, right!?”

A single soldier raised his voice, but Nelgal stopped him by raising his hand.

“Even if it might not be my order, I can’t escape from taking responsibility for it seeing as I’m the country’s representative... is what you are saying, right?”
(Nelgal)

Due to Nelgal’s remark, Vaiya, who paused while closing his eyes, breathes in.

“The people, who were in the instruction unit from Fokalore and who are assumed to be dead, use the same weapon as me. Although it’s been only for a short while, they are people with whom I trained while sweating together.”
(Vaiya)

Grasping the chain tightly, Vaiya repeatedly took deep breaths and released his hand.

“Although I’m aware that I’m venting my anger, I want to beat down the

power of your Horant, if I voice out my real feelings.” (Vaiya)

Vaiya took out yet another parchment and showed it to Nelgal after opening it.

“... However, on top of not having yet finished the coronation, as Nelgal-sama himself said before, it’s not like he is the son of the deceased King Suprangel.”

What was unfolded was a postscript to the previous decree.

“There is nothing I can do about having you stay in the capital, but I have received an order to welcome you politely and to make sure that you can rest there without any inconveniences. It’s the same for your guards as well. Please, I’d like you to accept the request from our country’s queen.” (Vaiya)

“It’s not something I can say carelessly, but I will keep it in mind.” (Nelgal)

Nelgal replied with a sad expression to the bowing Vaiya.

“I shall entrust myself to your country. Please take my escorting soldiers into your consideration as much as possible, too.” (Nelgal)

“I shall promise you that.” (Vaiya)

“Great. Furthermore, if possible, I’d like to have the privilege of sending a letter to Her Majesty, Imeraria.” (Nelgal)

Vaiya, who lifted his head, was puzzled.

“Letter, you say? I don’t mind, but... may I confirm what kind of content it’s about?” (Vaiya)

“No problem. It’s a petition for clemency.” (Nelgal)

“H-Her Majesty, Imeraria, will never consider something like executing you, Nelgal-dono.” (Midas)

Nelgal unintentionally spilled a smile due to the flustering Midas.

“It’s not for me. I’m merely feeling that I want her to spare the lives of the people, who are working in the castle, and the soldiers of my country if at all possible. What I’m afraid of is that those, who will apparently rampage in my birthplace, will be Her Majesty’s, Imeraria’s, confidants. Do not provoke the wrath of a superior? It’s just that.” (Nelgal)

The soldiers of Horant, who aren't quite aware of Hifumi, looked at each other, but Midas, Vaiya and their men had a cold sweat different from the one before.



“Well then, today's agenda is about the treatment of the girls, but...”

“Before that, please tell us who those girls are. I grasp that they are elves and beastmen. But what I want to know is why they have come to Fokalore.”

In a room within the feudal lord's mansion. Doelgar threw that question at Caim who tried to literally start a meeting in the room that has been used by the civil officials for meetings.

Once Caim surveys the civil officials that gathered, there are Miyukare and Brokra, who are nodding in agreement, besides Paryu, who has become the mediator of Puuse's group who arrived in Fokalore.

“Well then, let's have Paryu explain.” (Caim)

After nominating her indifferently, Caim sat down while being expressionless and quickly finished his preparations to take notes.

“Eh, me?” (Paryu)

Paryu, who is the youngest, conveyed more or less what she had been told by Puuse's group to everyone even while being tense due being pierced by the gazes of the other four.

“Umm, the elven woman is Puuse-san. The rabbit beastman is Viine-san, the dog beastman is Gengu-san and the tiger beastboy is Malfas-kun.” (Paryu)

The group, which had been sheltered in a city facing the wastelands, has been put on a platform wagon and has been transported until Fokalore yesterday around this time. Currently they are staying in an inn which is close-by.

The arrangement of an inn and such were Caim's instructions, but as they were able to confirm that they have no hostility and that there are women among them too, Paryu, who was available to help, had temporarily taken over the duty of looking after them.

It was due to the judgement of Caim, who knew that they came to meet Hifumi, that there weren't entrusted to other staff members.

“Located on the other side of the wastelands there’s a city where beastmen, humans and elves live together in a county called Swordland. It seems they came from there.” (Paryu)

“I see.” (Caim)

The one who obediently nodded while agreeing is only Caim.

“A country on the other side of the wastelands, huh? I knew of the rumours, but it really existed, eh?”

“It’s the first time I’ve seen an elf or such. That’s also a surprise.”

“I can’t imagine something like beastmen and elves living in the same city.”

Caim listened to the chats between Miyukare and the others, who exchanged their opinions, for a while, but once he judged that there won’t be anything similar to a conclusion, he turned his look towards Paryu.

“Paryu, I heard that their objective is to meet with Lord-sama, but did you learn the full details?” (Caim)

“Ah, yes.” (Paryu)

Paryu, who was once again exposed to their looks after they suddenly stopped their chatting, earnestly reads out the memo in her hand.

“It seems that the rabbit beastman Viine-san is a slave bought by Lord-sama. I was told that she was immediately set free after studying for a while, but... she is similar to us.” (Paryu)

“Though we aren’t completely free at all, are we?”

Due to Doelgar leaking “We are about to die due to work”, Miyukare glared at him and said 「It’s still better than going on campaigns」. The one who participated in the mobilisation of the all-male military forces was apparently quite stressed despite having been together with Alyssa.

Once the two become silent after being glared at by Caim, Paryu continues.

“That Viine-san is, umm....” (Paryu)

“Is it something difficult to mention?” (Brokra)

Noticing that Paryu was blushing, Brokra took the memo.

“Oh... The rabbit beastman called Viine-san apparently came here to be together with Lord-sama. The other people are her escort. Only the tiger beastboy apparently has the wish to become Lord-sama’s pupil.” (Brokra)

“Oh my, oh my, how lovely. She’s honestly in love.”

“Miyukare, you are too sly, right? Paryu, you are already 16 years old, aren’t you? Don’t get bashful over this much.”

“B-But...” (Paryu)

Being somewhat embarrassed, Paryu held her cheeks with both hands. Ignoring all of that chatting, Caim flatly said,

“Well then, please tell me your real opinion.” (Caim)

Everyone tilts their heads to the side.

“Don’t you understand that a very huge problem cropped up? She came here in order to get close to Lord-sama. In other words, it’s about a rival in love for the madam having appeared.” (Caim)

“So, what will we do?” Caim said while looking at the faces of everyone present one after the other, but none of them met his gaze.

Chapter 137 – The Warrior Inside

“Ekwuse me fo disturpin.” (Sabnak)

“... What happened, with that face?” (Imeraria)

A soldier announced the arrival of Sabnak who entered from outside, but Imeraria understood the reason for the soldier looking strangely baffled after seeing Sabnak who came in. Both his cheeks are swelling in bright red. If they were in the middle of receiving an attack, she might have misunderstood this as sign that they permitted an enemy invasion.

“Nyo, thiw is...” (Sabnak)

“He was scolded by Origa.” (Hifumi)

“The cause of his misfortune lies with his own mouth.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa and Hifumi showed their faces from behind Sabnak who faltered to talk about it.

“Was she able to get here?”

Origa is together with the troops so that she can take a rest together with the soldiers.

“You were quite fast.” (Imeraria)

Urging them to a simple table set which was prepared inside the tent, Imeraria orders the maid to brew some black tea.

“To begin with we were heading to the capital with the intention of bringing you a souvenir, Imeraria. But, we heard the story about soldiers of Fokalore having been done in from Biron’s messenger.” (Hifumi)

“It’s alright to go see the souvenir later since it arrived in the capital”, Hifumi smiles, but there’s something that worries Imeraria more than what the souvenir is about.

“... Do you intend to take revenge against Horant?” (Imeraria)

Without wiping away the sweat which is streaming down her cheeks, Imeraria

watches Hifumi making sure to look up at him with upturned eyes.

Alyssa waits silently for Hifumi who accepts her gaze with a smile as Imeraria is seriously waiting for a reply.

“Ah, ouwch, t-therz’s a wuund in my mouwh... ah.” (Sabnak)

Tasting the black tea which was poured in, Sabnak, who muttered that with teary eyes, realized that the looks of everyone are focussed on him.

“Haa... Sabnak-san, since you have to communicate later on, please go now to receive medical treatment.” (Imeraria)

“G-Gwot eet...” (Sabnak)

Seeing off Sabnak who leaves in low spirits, Hifumi grins broadly.

“As usual he is an amusing guy. That man will probably be manipulated by women for the rest of his life.” (Hifumi)

“Which reminds me, even his elder sister who was married to Earl Biron... no, for now such talk is sufficient. Hifumi-sama, after I go to check the situation for a bit now, I plan to advance negotiations with Nelgal-dono once we have recovered the occupied ground up to the national border.” (Imeraria)

“Don’t become a hindrance, is what you want to say?” (Hifumi)

Having a daunting gaze turned at her, Imeraria just doesn’t avert her gaze although she ended up unintentionally making a sound with her throat.

“... It’s as you say. This place is a battlefield under my command.” (Imeraria)

“Fufu... ahahaha!” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who burst into laughter unable to stand it any longer, tapped the head of Alyssa who is sitting next to him.

“Alyssa, Her Majesty the Queen has made a statement like this. But, what will you do?” (Alyssa)

“Mmmmmh...” (Alyssa)

Although she looks like she is troubled by that while folding her arms, the low height of Alyssa and the pieces of baked sweets clinging to her mouth cause the feeling of tension to be zero.

“What’s this about?” (Imeraria)

“Ah, I entrusted this time’s case to Alyssa. I’m acting as, let’s see, guardian. I will simply watch from behind. As planned, that is.” (Hifumi)

“Then...” (Imeraria)

“I decided!” (Alyssa)

At the moment Imeraria started to say something, Alyssa raised her voice.

“Princess-sama. Let’s compete.” (Alyssa)

“C-Compete? And, I’m not a princess-sama...” (Imeraria)

“For starters it will be about who will be able to retake the border first! So, how about it?” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa selfishly advancing the conversation, Imeraria asked for help from Hifumi with her eyes, but he grinned broadly.

“I told you that I won’t get involved, right? Discuss it among each other.” (Hifumi)

“Gu... Alyssa-san! Listen to my part of the story!” (Imeraria)

With Alyssa tilting her head to the side, Imeraria applies pressure into her gaze to her best ability.

“There’s no way that we will be able to have something like a competition.” (Imeraria)

“Eh? Then we will just do it with the two of us.” (Alyssa)

“I can’t allow that.” (Imeraria)

Although Imeraria declared it without hesitation, Alyssa looks like she’s unable to comprehend.

“...? Since we will just do it with the two of us, we won’t receive any particular help or such?” (Alyssa)

“Hifumi-sama, please ((do something about this)) one way or the other.” (Imeraria)

As Alyssa didn’t understand coercion or dignity, Imeraria requested help from

Hifumi after becoming more and more teary eyed.

“I don’t care.” (Hifumi)

“I will depart tomorrow morning before the sun rises. If it’s now, I might be able to still save Ma Calme’s unit. Princess-sama, as that’s my revenge, don’t stop me.” (Alyssa)

“Revenge... Hifumi-sama, you are...” (Imeraria)

Hifumi proudly snorted at Imeraria who is shocked.

“She has grown up properly, right?” (Hifumi)

“How to call it...?” (Imeraria)

Imeraria, who curbed her brows, ponders about the best move even while groaning.

It’s probably difficult to stop Fokalore’s feudal army led by Alyssa. Even while he says that he won’t get involved, it’s clear that the one essentially pushing her is Hifumi. It doesn’t look like I will be able to prevent it physically or logically.

Then, what shall I do about it?

There’s also the option of advancing the ceasefire negotiations in the style of getting on with Alyssa raising some military gains after leaving.

However, Imeraria looked at Hifumi’s face with half-open eyes.

“... Got it. Then, Alyssa, I will join the retake of the border by leading my soldiers tomorrow early in the morning.” (Imeraria)

“Huh? Princess-sama as well?” (Alyssa)

“It’s queen-sama!” (Imeraria)

While being embarrassed by the matter of having raised her voice against her better judgement, Imeraria clears her throat with a “ahem” and stands up. Imeraria took a hard and long look at Alyssa’s face while making sure to not put Hifumi, who is rolling about in laughter after seeing that, in her field of vision as much as possible.

It’s a face that’s more childish and naive than mine. Until now she has acted together with Hifumi. I can’t even imagine just how many people she murdered, but it’s likely not one or two, Imeraria guesses.

“Let’s not have a competition but a cooperation. That way even the rescue might go smoothly.” (Imeraria)

“That’s true. Thank you.” (Alyssa)

Why is this person able to smile in such situation? Imeraria wanted to ask that, but expecting that Hifumi’s name will appear there without fail, she decided to drop the matter.

“Then, let’s talk about the concrete method. Someone, please call Earl Biron and Sabnak-san.” (Imeraria)

Thus the meeting, where Imeraria and Alyssa played a central part, regarding “the method to retake the border without relying on Hifumi” continued until very late.



“In other words, with the power of just the demons it might be very difficult to defeat that Hifumi-san, is what I wanted to say. You demons are quite strong at magic. Even your physical strength is excelling to the level of beastmen.”

“However”, the shinigami continues while smiling.

“Your numbers are low. And you aren’t acquainted with the world. The world has changed since you have been locked up. Even those, who have returned from outside, didn’t possess anything but limited information. So, you want to wage war by making all of the many races into your enemies?”

If you consider how he suddenly appeared in front of Vepar, who was absorbed in thoughts by herself in the deserted audience hall, the shinigami continued to talk endlessly after giving a hurried greeting. Vepar, who listened to his talk while sitting on the throne, had her eyes closed.

Without minding the state of Vepar, words continue to overflow from within the shinigami’s mouth.

“Therefore, you can’t just crush the wasteland’s powers but you have to absorb them. If it turns into a large power, Hifumi-san won’t be able to ignore it either. He will be unable to simply crush the demons and beastmen. However, you should absorb the beastmen and elves in the shape of ruling them. If you ended up associating with them on equal terms, you wouldn’t be able to create

strategies like sacrificing some of your power. Since that Hifumi-san will be your opponent, it will likely be necessary to make some of the races into sacrificial pawns.”

In the explanation up to this point, the shinigami has avoided talking about being hostile towards Reni of Swordland. He thought it to be fine for both sides to clash with each other in a state of being equally prepared as it will become a muddy battle then.

“... You gave me a long explanation, but in the end you are telling us to conquer the wastelands, aren't you?” (Vepar)

Listening to Vepar's remark which is mixed with sighs, the shinigami happily nods with an “Uh huh.”

“It's a big help for the talking to be quick.”

“I know about the threat of the man called Hifumi. I remember him well after seeing him in front of myself. However, is it even necessary for us to stand in front of him going as far as especially resolving ourselves for sacrifices? Obtaining the wastelands is a pre-scripted route. If we don't do that, it will likely be impossible to dispel the demons' depression. The investigations and preparations for that have already begun.” (Vepar)

“Therefore”, Vepar fixes her crossed legs and glares at the shinigami.

“I can't hear anything from you but telling us to merely plunge into danger. While it may be true that we will obtain the wastelands, I don't feel any necessity to confront the humans. I would think ((it to be different)) if the humans were a lot weaker and less. However, the other side has an outrageous ace. And even without that, our side has far too few numbers against their superiority in numbers, right?” (Vepar)

“The humans are fighting amongst fellow countries?”

“It's also possible that they will set up a collaboration at the time when a common enemy appears. Rather, they will jump the queue at that time to just fight with us. The words of opposing another race as “mankind” will probably raise their morale quite a bit.” (Vepar)

There's the threat of numbers and moreover there's little information as us

demons were locked in for a long time, Vepar understood that very well.

“The one-eared rabbit child I met some time ago understands the world far better than us. She knows of elves and humans even while being a beastman. She probably understood more or less about the demons in the recent events as well. In contrast to that, many of the demons, including me, don’t know about other races. There are legends based on the hate towards the elves. Beastmen are seen as low ranked ((existences)). As for humans, even I don’t have seen more than one.” (Vepar)

“If I’m honest, I’m scared”, Vepar says.

“Then you don’t have any intention to take an aggressive stance towards humans, you say?”

Vepar broadly grinned at the shinigami who shook his head in an exaggerated manner while looking really disappointed.

“No, once all the conditions are met, I will do as you say.” (Vepar)

“Conditions... you say?”

“If you call yourself my god, you have according power for that, right?” (Vepar)

The shinigami opened one of his eyes widely due to Vepar’s question.

“Well, I’m pretty much well versed in dark magic. I’m a god who holds power related to death.”

“Strictly speaking, I’m not a god of this world”, he spills so that it can’t be heard.

“There are two conditions. Intelligence about the powers who are hostile towards us. And...” (Vepar)

Vepar’s slender index finger pointed at the shinigami.

“Lend your power to me. If you ask for something, you have to hand over something. That’s called a deal.” (Vepar)

The shinigami was taken aback for an instant. His mouth flapped open and closed, but once he arranged his hair and cleared his throat, he bowed

courteously.

“Let me offer it to you with pleasure.”



Without waiting for sunrise, the two armies approach the border. Fokalore’s feudal army led by Alyssa left a reserve unit of 100 soldiers behind. Orsongrande’s royal army led by Imeraria and Sabnak did the same.

“There’s no strategy-like strategy. They will do a concentrated attack with spear throwers from long distance. After that they will retake the border by charging... is it? I’m describing it like that, but it’s nothing sophisticated or anything like that.” (Origa)

“Well, even if they decide upon finer details with mixed military forces, they won’t be able to control those, right? Around this much is suitable and just right.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi and Origa follow on their respective horses behind the two advancing armies. Hifumi is completely a curious onlooker. Origa follows because Hifumi is going.

“... It’s soon, isn’t it?” (Origa)

The armies’ advance slowed down and the the border became visible in the distance.

The leading group has already begun to set up the spear throwers. As expected of Fokalore’s feudal army, they are quite dexterous.

“Well, then let’s have them show us this country’s battle.” (Hifumi)

“Ah, I put black tea into a canteen. I brought along Caim-san’s baked sweets as well.” (Origa)

Receiving the black tea which was still steaming after it was poured into a wooden cup, Hifumi tossed the baked sweets into his mouth. Once he brushes away the crumbs, which fell into the horse’s mane, with his hand, the horse shakes its head seeming to be ticklish.

“Oh, it started.” (Hifumi)

The soldiers, which spread out at the front-line at the moment he had black

tea in his mouth, began the firing after matching it with the voices of Imeraria and Alyssa.

And, at the same time, Alyssa, leading around 10 cavalry units, approaches the flank of the border while taking a large detour.

Horant's soldiers, which became restless due to the sudden attack, aren't able to cope with it at all. They were mowed down nicely by Alyssa's group which swooped down on the side where the spear rain calmed down.

It looked like Imeraria attempted to do a similar attack as well, but being frantically stopped by Sabnak as expected, Hifumi saw her observing from the rear.

"It has gone smoothly up to this point. Well, it will be boring if it finishes with Horant being crushed like that, but... hmm?" (Hifumi)

The mouth of Hifumi, who discovered something in the far distance, curves like a crescent moon.

While watching Hifumi's happy face, Origa secretly drank her own black tea in the cup returned by him.

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"... They are surprisingly brittle. Once more... Ah, that's..."

While breaking through without further ado after heading towards the enemy line, Alyssa, who lowered her body and got rid of five soldiers of Horant by tearing the enemy's neck skilfully with her wakizashi, faced about towards the enemy line, which has taken some distance, and confirmed that there were no casualties among her allies.

By the way, since the other soldiers are unable to act this skilfully, they are breaking through the enemy lines while wielding long swords.

Discovering that something was lowered from the rooftop of the border fortress while being suspended, Alyssa affirmed that the enemy was still in chaos and gazed steadily at the rooftop.

"Such a..." (Alyssa)

What was shown to be hanging completely like some flag by Horant's side are the corpses of ten people which had a rope around their necks.

Without a single one of them being in a flawless state, they lacked some of their

limbs and some among them had their heads smashed in. However, Alyssa didn't care about such a thing at all.

“Ma Calme-san...”

“Holy shit, what have they done!”

Even the soldiers of Fokalore, who are around the speechless Alyssa, are revealing their anger by baring their teeth while looking up to the corpses.

“A-Anyway, somehow...”

It was the moment when the confused Alyssa returned her sight to the enemy line.

What was there once Alyssa, who wondered whether some cloud appeared after manifesting alongside an earth tremor, raised her eyes was a giant which might be five meters in height.

“Wh-...” (Alyssa)

Together with the soldiers around her, Alyssa was knocked off the horse visibly being flicked off by the swing of the giant's arm.

Alyssa, who rolls over while raising a cloud of dust, stood up and quickly fixed her stance.

“Huh?” (Alyssa)

However, with her body not listening to her, she falls on her backside. Her body is alright in the simple armour, but her right foot was bent to an extent that makes it easy to grasp that it's completely broken just by looking. The soldiers in the surroundings raised groans. Five soldiers, who were fine, got up and stood in front of the giant to protect Alyssa.

“N-No... no! Everyone, run away!” (Alyssa)

Raising a roaring sound that seems to drown out Alyssa's voice, the giant grabbed the very long spear, which he carried on his back, with his hand.

Chapter 138 – My Hero

What Imeraria has seen from Orsongrande's encampment, where she is currently staying, is a giant taking a detour from the border's fortress and overtaking the soldiers. Alyssa's group having their attention attracted by something that's hanging from the roof of the fortress, she understood that they haven't even noticed the giant.

"Sabnak-san!" (Imeraria)

"The spear throwers will volley fire at the giant! The cavalry will follow me! We will attract the giant's attention by detouring from the right! Fokalore's soldiers will circle around from the right and rescue her unit!" (Sabnak)

Raising his voice, Sabnak jumped on his horse without even listening to the answer of Fokalore troops.

Thanking Sabnak, who chose to become a decoy without hesitation, a platform wagon is swiftly dispatched by the soldiers of Fokalore.

The moment the cavalry breaks into a gallop, Orsongrande's soldiers fire the spears.

With several spears piercing him, the giant, who has approached Alyssa who had fallen in a dire situation due to the beating, is beyond agony.

Under the cover of the chaos, Imeraria jumps on a horse and heads towards Alyssa's location together with the soldiers of Fokalore and not Sabnak.

She heard the warning voices of her guards, but Imeraria can't see anything but Alyssa being caught in a dilemma.

A feeling of uneasiness is stirred up within her due to Alyssa, who was flicked off the horse, being approached by the giant again.

"No! Everyone, get away!" (Alyssa)

"Alyssa-san!" (Imeraria)

Alyssa, who calls out to her colleagues even though having fallen off the horse, doesn't notice Imeraria's group approaching from behind.



“Alyssa-san! Your hand!” (Imeraria)

“... Eh?” (Alyssa)

Alyssa turned around due to the yell. At that instant, spears are simultaneously fired by the soldiers of Fokalore who came to rescue her. The giant dropped the spear he was grasping. Even as the figure of Imeraria, who extended her hand towards her from atop a horse, came into her sight, she didn't comprehend for some moments.

“P-Princess-sama?” (Alyssa)

“I'm a queen! Quick, your hand!” (Imeraria)

Imeraria firmly grasped Alyssa's right hand, which she held out as told while being dumbfounded, but different from a properly trained soldier, the other party hasn't the arm strength to pull up an armed human even if it's a girl.

“Kyaa!” (Imeraria)

“Uwaah!” (Alyssa)

Imeraria falls off the horse while grasping Alyssa's hand
Even during that time, the soldiers of Fokalore are collecting their colleagues on the platform wagon.

“Now! Everyone get on the platform wagon! Director, you hurry as well!”

“Y-Yea!” (Alyssa)

Carrying the fainted Imeraria, Alyssa stepped firmly on her healthy left foot while dragging her right knee.

On the other side of the giant, who is thrashing around after receiving further spears, the knights of Orsongrande, led by Sabnak, are confronting Horant's soldiers. However, thanks to that no other enemy forces besides the giant are coming this way.

At the moment the platform wagon came next to her, Alyssa, who entrusted Imeraria to a soldier first, stands up on one leg while bearing the pain and sits down next to Imeraria who was lain down.

“Go, go!” (Alyssa)

“Then... watch out!”

As the soldier shouts, she looks ahead of his line of sight.

While recklessly swinging his big arms, the rampaging giant approached the direction of Alyssa and the others.

The giant, who turned into a hedgehog after being pierced by spears all over his body, hasn't seen anything but is simply raging around. However, with each of his arm-swing, a human is sent flying.

And, the large build, which advances two meters with one step, had already approached to a distance where he can look down on Alyssa.

“Uuh!”

Alyssa, who judged that there's no time to escape, leaned forward to cover Imeraria's slender body in order to at least her protect if not anyone else.

“... Hifumi-san!” (Alyssa)

Even while believing it to be pathetic, the name of the most reliable person rushed out from within her.

She didn't think about wanting to be saved. She merely felt regretful. Even

while declaring that she will rescue her friends, she wasn't in time and moreover the soldiers, who followed her, have also been violated by the enemy's hands. Even her own life is about to be lost now.

If there was something she could tell Hifumi, there was one thing she wanted to convey to him.

"Excuse me, Hifumi-san!" (Alyssa)

"That's right. Reflect deeper than the ocean." (Hifumi)

"... Uee?" (Alyssa)

She hears an earth tremor alongside a voice that shouldn't be here.

"By just bending the foot, which stepped forward, a bit like this, a human's body will easily collapse." (Hifumi)

"I see, that's educational, Hifumi-sama." (Origa)

Once Alyssa lifted her face, the one who has toppled sideways over there is the giant who is suffering due to being deeply pierced by spears. And in front of that giant was the figure of Hifumi who was carelessly giving a lecture to Origa.

"The balance of humans, who are standing on two legs, is fundamentally bad. By just disturbing the centre of gravity between the two legs, they will easily fall over." (Hifumi)

"Hi-Hifumi-san!?" (Alyssa)

"Shut up. Come back this way quickly. For the time being, this time your command and conduct is a failure. ... It's the same for the idiot who has fainted in an easygoing manner over there." (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who pointed at Imeraria, drew his katana and turned around to the giant.

Standing next to him, Origa falls back merely three steps and stares at Hifumi.

"Uuh..." (Alyssa)

The rescue scene should have been deeply emotional, but Alyssa dropped her shoulders while on the verge of tears after being called a failure together in one lump with Imeraria.

“A-Anyway, director, let’s withdraw to the encampment leaving this place to Lord-sama.”

“Yea, please...” (Alyssa)

The soldiers of Fokalore, including the wounded, leave towards the encampment while riding on the platform wagon.

Seeing the situation, Sabnak’s group started retreating as well.

“Hey, stand up. You are still alive, aren’t you?” (Hifumi)

What’s audible through the roaring sounds from the platform wagon’s wheels is Hifumi coldly addressing the giant while kicking him flying. Finally the actual feeling of having been rescued, erupted within Alyssa.

At the same time she has become depressed and is thinking back upon this time’s disgrace.

“H-He got angry...” (Alyssa)

As she wonders what kind of punishment is waiting for her, Alyssa’s body trembles more than at the time she confronted the giant.



The one who started talking about “let’s send the elf and beastmen to the capital” was no one else but Caim.

As for the reasons explained to the other civil officials, who were puzzled, by Caim; they don’t know when Hifumi, who’s the feudal lord, will return even if they stay in Fokalore as is. Not knowing how to handle the guests of unknown status, he is worried about the stress of the staff piling up. Because there’s no rule in Orsongrande itself how to treat elves and beastmen, who aren’t enemies, it’s a judgement that has to be made directly by the queen in the capital as fast as possible.

The last argument couldn’t be interpreted as anything but sophistry, but the opinion of forcing the entire matter onto the lot of the capital was approved with everyone raising their hands.

Moreover, to make doubly sure,

“At the time it turns into a fight between the madam and that rabbit beastman, the damage reaching the territory is what we want to avoid, I

believe.” (Caim)

Saying that, Caim calmly voiced out the words everyone was afraid to mention.

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Once they make a decision, the movements of the staff members of Fokalore’s feudal lord mansion are quick.

Caim put together a budget of this and that, the travel preparations were prepared by Brokra and Miyukare chose the escorting soldiers. The preparations were completed and they left on their travel two days later. Puuse’s group, who was in a carriage on the morning of the third day, can’t catch up with the excessive speed of development in their brains.

“... Umm, where are we heading to, they said?” (Puuse)

“If I remember correctly... the “capital” or something like that...” (Viine)

Once the rabbit beastman, Viine, dug up her faint memories due to Puuse’s question, the civil official, Paryu, who sat with them in the carriage, said 「That’s right」.

“The “royal capital” is written as capital where the sovereign resides. It’s the centre of this country. The sovereign is also in that city. Even Hifumi-sama, who is our Lord-sama, is staying or has passed through that place.” (Paryu)

“Are there also many people living like in Fokalore?” (Gengu)

“The population there is at present higher than Fokalore.” (Paryu)

Gengu looked at Paryu while roughly rustling the hair of Malfas, who had a complicated expression that is possibly caused by fright or curiosity and who opened his mouth with a “Whoa” due to the unimaginable number of humans.

“You are saying, umm, sovereign-sama is more powerful than Hifumi-san?” (Gengu)

Paryu was baffled due to Gengu admiring that with a “That’s amazin’.”

“The current sovereign-sama is a woman who is at around the same age as me. I haven’t met her myself yet, but... there’s no way for her to be stronger than Lord-sama, probably.” (Paryu)

“Hoo. That means, that female sovereign-sama is about having more wisdom than Hifumi-san ~yasu. So there exists such a person.” (Gengu)

That’s probably not it either, Paryu thought, but since it became troublesome to correct each and every little thing, she let it stand as is.

“Why did master-sama go to the capital?” (Viine)

“Let me see...” (Paryu)

Paryu hesitated how far she should explain towards Viine’s question. Since she herself isn’t that well-informed about it either, she goes for a harmless and inoffensive explanation.

“Since we were attacked by a neighbouring country, ((he went)) as reinforcement to a city at the border...” (Paryu)

“Reinforcement?” (Puuse)

The beastmen and Puuse exchange looks and are bewildered.

“You are saying that, but for that Hifumi-san to go reinforcing someone, I can’t quite imagine that to happen.” (Gengu)

“Yea, that sort of...”

Paryu, who understood from Gengu’s words that Hifumi acted as usual even in the wastelands, decided to correct herself.

“If you change the way of describing it, he went because there’s a battle is to be found.” (Paryu)

“I see. That’s how it is.” (Puuse)

Puuse nods and the other beastmen also have an expression of comprehension.

“Umm, it’s odd to say that after departing, but is it fine for us to receive such good treatment?”

For them, who travelled on foot with their prided leg strength as beastmen even on their journey through the wastelands, the vehicle called carriage was comfortable and pleasant.

Even Puuse who is an elf has confidence in her leg strength as she walked

through the forest. Although she cured her exhaustion with magic secretly, there's nothing better than finishing it without having to walk.

For Viine, her inner nature made her wonder whether being able to enjoy such comfort isn't only for those of high social standing.

"It's alright. You are guests of Earl Hifumi Tohno who is our feudal lord. You don't have to worry about anything as a matter of this level is only natural."
(Paryu)

"Hifumi-san, he is an amazing person." (Malfas)

Paryu added in her heart (in various meanings) to Malfa's honest praise and hid her cold sweat with a smile.

"Anyway, it will still take several days until we reach the capital. Please spend your time at ease since you are probably worn-out from going through the wastelands." (Paryu)

"Thank you very much."

While harbouring the hope that she might be able to meet with Hifumi at last after thanking her, Viine stared at the stone paving of the highway flowing by backwards and recalled the face of her master within her mind.



How many times have I fought with this giant, I wonder? Hifumi pondered while looking at the spear-pierced feet approaching from the side. While slipping through a roundhouse kick by bending down, he stepped with all his might on the pivot legs thumb which is exposed by wearing sandals. The nail breaks and blood overflows, but the giant tramples down at him next without caring about it at all.

"Hmm, is his sense of pain numbed after all?" (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who avoided being trampled by turning his body around completely, hit a spear, which is piercing through the top of the foot, with all his might from above.

The spear, which penetrated the foot with a dull sound, fixates the giant's left foot by sticking into the ground.

Ignoring even that, the giant raised his right foot.

“Good grief.” (Hifumi)

Facing the approaching, huge foot, Hifumi swings his katana while shifting his body to the right.

The foot, which advanced, had all of its toes cut off and the giant collapsed with the momentum of trampling down.

“One won’t be able to brace their legs if they don’t have toes, no matter whether they feel pain or not.” (Hifumi)

Stabbing the katana from the giant’s ear until his medulla oblongata as is, he cleaves it open.

Once the entire body convulsed with a short twitch, the giant stopped moving for eternity.

“He’s only big, isn’t he.” (Hifumi)

Once they turn their faces at Hifumi while he wipes the katana with a paper, the soldiers of Horant, who were surprised by the giant having been defeated, retreat to the other side of the border while dragging along the bodies of the soldiers who were done in by Sabnak’s and Alyssa’s units.

Once he looked up, there were the corpses of Ma Carme and his unit swaying in the wind.

“It seems the revenge by Alyssa to show you guys respect and affection will take a bit more time.” (Hifumi)

“... Hifumi-sama, thank you for your hard work.” (Origa)

Hifumi turned towards Origa, who came next to him, while sheathing the katana into its scabbard. On the other side of her small body, he saw the platform wagon coming around once again.

“Let Ma Carme and the others down. It’s fine if they are put on the platform wagon.” (Hifumi)

“As you wish.” (Origa)

The shurikens, which were thrown by Origa, cut the ropes and the ten corpses fall to the ground.

The platform wagon, which passed by at the side of Hifumi who is returning to

the encampment, advances with rattling sounds in order to recover the corpses.

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“Well then.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who returned to the encampment, surveyed all present while tossing a small bottle of recovery medicine to Alyssa.

Imeraria has regained her consciousness and is sitting with dropped shoulders while on the verge of crying.

“Every one of you gave me trouble. Ah?” (Hifumi)

Once Sabnak, who finished arranging the forces, finally arrives, Hifumi orders him to sit down as well.

“There are things I want to say to you as well, Sabnak. For the time being, sit down.” (Hifumi)

“Huh...? Ah, yes.” (Sabnak)

Hifumi, who cleared his throat, took out a parchment from his pocket.

“From now on it’s a meeting for reviewing based on how your battle appeared from behind.” (Hifumi)

The scolding storm with the name “meeting for reviewing” continued until Hifumi felt hungry when it became noon.

Chapter 139 – Poker Face

The ones, who were ridiculed at the reviewing meeting were Alyssa, Imeraria and Sabnak.

“Alyssa, you should have left the safety zone to confirm the situation. If you had done that, you would likely have noticed that big one appearing as well. Sabnak, it was good of you to rush in after having the spears fired, but leaving behind the infantry in your desire for speed was a mistake. You should have applied frontal pressure over there with everyone.” (Hifumi)

Those were the general outlines. He explained while drawing lines on the ground and giving examples.

Matters regarding Imeraria were last.

“Move after you have grasped what you can and cannot do yourself.” (Hifumi)

Being told only that, there was no further advice for her.



After the dissolution of the meeting, when Hifumi, who finished his lunch, lied down at a suitable space, Alyssa came while bringing along the soldiers from Fokalore.

Origa looks at the situation silently while having Hifumi rest his head on her lap.

“What’s up?” (Hifumi)

“T-Tonight I plan to enter Horant... please, give me your permission.” (Alyssa)

Once Alyssa bowed her head, the soldiers, who were lined up behind her, also raised their voices with a 「Please!」 all at once.

“Alyssa, even though you have failed to that extent...” (Origa)

“Well, wait a moment.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi held back Origa, who tried to warn her with a voice trembling with anger, while raising his left hand which was covered by a glove.

Hifumi, who lifted his own body all of a sudden, looks at Alyssa while sitting.

“What’s your plan?” (Hifumi)

“We will silently infiltrate by passing the border in darkness and burn the enemies’ facilities. On this occasion we will confirm whether there are others of those huge enemies, the total number of enemies and how many weapons they possess.” (Alyssa)

“Only that?” (Hifumi)

Alyssa nodded at Hifumi’s words without showing any hesitation.

“Even if we fight as is, we won’t know what’s beneficial and what’s no good. First we have to gather intelligence, I believe.” (Alyssa)

Originally, at the time when the armed forces of Fokalore were founded by Hifumi, Alyssa had been entrusted with an unit for the sake of reconnaissance. She had also received training with that in mind. As result of that, she succeeded in operations such as luring in Balzephon at the royal castle. While being scolded by Hifumi for around 3 hours, she has pondered how to accomplish her revenge. Hearing the words told to Imeraria, that she ought to do the things she can do, from the side, she put stress on grasping the opponent first. If it was infiltration operations, Fokalore’s feudal army had done those many times at the time of breaking into Vichy.

“So, why set fire then?” (Hifumi)

“Uumm, it’s in order to make sure that they won’t realize that documents and such have disappeared and to decrease the number of the enemies’ weapons a bit. Afterwards I want to confirm the contents ((of those documents)), such as their number of people, by smoking them out with a fire.” (Alyssa)

Hifumi gently smiles at Alyssa who explained while counting the points on her fingers.

“I see. In that case it’s fine for you to do as you like. However, this time I won’t come to rescue you.” (Hifumi)

“Alright! I will do it properly!” (Alyssa)

“Be that as it may”, Hifumi, who stood up, surveys the lined-up soldiers.

“You lot had a pale face thinking that it’s unfair to infiltrate or attack during

the night at the assault on Arosel, right?” (Hifumi)

Especially the senior soldiers among the men are showing a bitter smile due to Hifumi’s words.

“Lord-sama, please forgive us for those days.”

“After coming here with director and my friends, I changed my thinking completely. I don’t want to die in vain. Above all... I won’t die until I have avenged my friends no matter what method I have to use!”

“Right?”, once he appeals to his colleagues, all of them simultaneously replied in throaty voices.

“Besides, some time ago even director went through danger. I will never forgive them for that!”

The contents, mentioned by several soldiers, were in the beginning about the revenge for Ma Calme’s unit, but gradually their anger towards revenge for injuring Alyssa is increasing.

They eyes of Origa, who listened behind Hifumi, became completely freezing.

“Well, it’s fine if you have the backbone to actually go for the kill. So, what do you intend to do if that big one appears again? Hitting in revenge and being trampled down by that revenge?” (Hifumi)

“Uh-oh, Lord-sama, we ain’t idiots. We have decided on reliable countermeasures. We intend to go borrowing just a little tool though.”

What the soldier, who grinned broadly, pointed at was something the soldiers of Orsongrande had built in a corner of the defence encampment.

“I see.” (Hifumi)

Even Hifumi gave his permission while floating a similar grin.



“The way things are going it’s hopeless!” (Imeraria)

Lifting her face, which had traces of tears remaining, from the cushion she clung to, it was Imeraria, who raised a loud voice, after two hours had passed which were used by her to recover from being scolded by Hifumi.

“Y-Your Majesty, that... blunt way of talking...”

The maid, who was waiting on her at the side, calls out to Imeraria while being startled.

“Ah, s-sorry. Did I surprise you, I wonder?” (Imeraria)

“No, rather than that, let’s fix your make-up. And, lunch has been prepared.”

Imeraria, who thought *now that she mentions it, I have become hungry as noon as has passed as well*, recalled the event of her crying and blushed as that probably completely messed up the make-up which had been applied on her properly albeit only thinly.

“Then, please, go ahead. Sorry for showing you my disgraceful side.”
(Imeraria)

Standing up from the the collapsible-style couch, which was placed in the tent, Imeraria left behind the cushion. The one who gave her an answer wasn’t the maid in front of her but a woman who entered while bringing a tray with a meal on it.

“As I was able to see the tear-stained face of Her Majesty, that’s plenty for me.”

“... Shibyura-san. Why are you here?” (Imeraria)

The one who pours tea from a pot for the bewildered Imeraria after placing the tray on the table in an aloof manner is Shibyura who is the daughter of Prime Minister Adol and Sabnak’s wife. Her appearance of being clad in an apron dress indicates her working in the castle as maid without change.

“I came to deliver a bento to my husband.” (Shibyura)

“Expressly to a battlefield, you mean?” (Imeraria)

Wiping the traces of her tears with a clean handkerchief she received from the maid, Imeraria sat down with a stunned expression.

“Yes, at the same time it’s for the sake of checking whether my husband is unfaithful. I met him just now, but I’m satisfied after seeing his depressed look after a long time. Did you know? The time when my husband is downhearted after failing is when his face is the cutest.” (Shibyura) (T/N: She is a S, yep, no

doubt)

“You are saying something heartless with a serious look... Besides, Sabnak isn't the kind of man to be unfaithful.” (Imeraria)

This being a place called battlefield, Imeraria's meals were simple as well. This is also something she has instructed to be handled in this way. Even so, compared to the soldiers, her meals were quite decent.

Biting off a mouthful of bread with roasted meat in-between, she chews it slowly and gulps it down.

“So, you came here as you have some kind of business, didn't you?”
(Imeraria)

“Since I heard by chance that Hifumi-sama made Your Majesty cry, I have visited for a chat while wondering whether you are troubled by your unrequited love.” (Shibyura)

“If you don't put an end to it, I will assign a second wife to Sabnak-san.”
(Imeraria)

“I brought a handwritten letter.” (Shibyura)

Being given the letter which appeared from within a pocket of her skirt, Imeraria had a headache.

“That's not how you treat a handwritten letter, now is it...? In the first place, isn't this the sort of thing that is delivered by some knight?” (Imeraria)

“Since Vaiya-san was incidentally searching for a knight to deliver this at the time I was cleaning the workplace of my husband, I threa... asked him to have the privilege to keep it in my custody as it will turn into a great excuse. Father prepared the fastest carriage for me.” (Shibyura)

“A handwritten letter in such way... let's cut Vaiya-san's pay.” (Imeraria)

“Oh my, how pitiable.” (Shibyura)

While thinking *who do you think is the reason for that*, Imeraria opened the handwritten letter while eating even though she was aware of that being bad manners.

“... It looks like Nelgal-sama's sheltering was a success. A petition... it is? This

isn't for me but something that should be handed over to Hifumi-sama and Alyssa-san." (Imeraria)

"Oh my, it's not a love letter then." (Shibyura)

"What are you talking about...?" (Imeraria)

Imeraria sighed deeply while drinking black tea.

"I guess so. After all Your Majesty's heart belongs to Earl Tohno. Strange interference is strictly forbidden." (Shibyura)

Imeraria's arms tremble shaking the black tea, which decreased to around half of the cup.

"F-From where did you hear s-such completely u-untrue story..." (Imeraria)

"Oh my, it's being rumoured among the maids of the royal castle as being plausible." (Shibyura)

"It's a famous story that you left to the front planning to show your good side to Earl Tohno", Shibyura nonchalantly explains.

"W-Who ((spreads)) such a story...?" (Imeraria)

"Of course that's me." (Shibyura)

"Bufu!"

The maid unintentionally spouted out due to Shibyura who declared that. Imeraria, who barely placed the cup on top of the table without spilling any black tea with her trembling hands, glared at Shibyura in front of her.

"T-That's truly unpleasant. At any rate, if you already finished your business here, return to the capital at once. This place is a battlefield. Stories of love affairs and such are unnecessary." (Imeraria)

"Your Majesty, there's no necessity for being in the same arena as the gentleman. Rather, the things the gentleman, you aim for, can't do will stand out. Being attracted by the opposite gender, who possesses something the gentleman himself doesn't have, such kind of story is..." (Shibyura)

"Leave!" (Imeraria)

"Well then, I will go back after teasing my husband for a bit longer", Shibyura

calmly said and left the tent.

“... Somehow I got very tired all of a sudden.” (Imeraria)

After that, at the time when she was pondering about the future steps, a message from Alyssa, which stated that she would do a night attack, arrived and Imeraria showed an even more worn-out expression.



Horant's side of the border is in quite the chaotic state even as the day comes to an end. Is that the impact of this morning's defeat? Hifumi carelessly looks down on the situation from atop a roof of a building located on Horant's side. Several sentries are coming and going even on top of the roof at the lodging house for the border guard of Horant's side, but it doesn't look like they notice Hifumi who is hiding in a shadow created with the practical application of darkness magic in a dark corner.

(I came a bit too fast here. I'm bored.) (Hifumi)

While eating a sandwich with some grilled meat and vegetables in-between he was made to bring along by Origa, he simply waits for Alyssa's group to come attacking.



The night attack, which was reported by Alyssa, was at first rejected by Sabnak and Imeraria.

There's also the possibility that a powerful weapon existing on Horant's side with whom they battled during the morning. Just because it's a night attack, that doesn't mean that they will be able to launch a surprise attack successfully. However, on top of Alyssa having already decided to do so, she didn't yield while stating that it's an operation for the sake of investigating that “possibility.”

In the end Imeraria eventually gave her permission.

The conditions were that the objectives would be purely investigation and disturbance, that they wouldn't invade deeply into Horant and that they would share all of the information with Imeraria and Sabnak.

“It might be considered to be cowardice, but please ((stick to those conditions)). In all honesty, we want information as well. Originally we would

want to choose a safer method though.” (Imeraria)

“Seeing that I can’t even provide an alternate plan, I’m not able to oppose yours too strongly either”, Imeraria spilled.

“I will ponder about the things I can do myself. Right now I can’t formulate anything concrete, but it will be plenty with the things we can comprehend from your information, Alyssa-san. Although it’s strange for me, who failed, to say so, but please return safely.” (Imeraria)

Once Imeraria grasped Alyssa’s hand and shook it firmly, she saw off Alyssa leaving the tent and going away to prepare the soldiers, she will take along, in succession.

Sabnak quietly approached Hifumi who silently watched that situation.

“Hifumi-san, Alyssa is in quite the high spirits somehow, but did something happen?” (Sabnak)

“Despite appearances that person is desperate, I guess. She couldn’t even return aany of the pain inflicted to her colleagues.” (Hifumi)

“Rather than that,” Hifumi glared at Sabnak.

“Your wife told Origa something, so what did you whisper into her ears?” (Hifumi)

“Eh? Shibyura did?” (Sabnak)

Sabnak, who sweated heavily with a shocked* face, says that he doesn’t know anything. *(T/N: Author uses a SFX here that can mean various things like despair, disbelief, shocked on an emotional level)*

“N-No sooner than her coming to such place all of a sudden, I was thoroughly ridiculed for today’s blunder... Did Origa-san say anything?” (Sabnak)

“Don’t know. She strangely follows me about while saying *Oh dear, the food was made by me, Let me mend your dougi* or *Don’t you have stiff shoulders?*” (Hifumi)

“What are those enviable... no, isn’t it fine in that case then?” (Sabnak)

“No, as expected it’s irritating. Leaving that aside, I will borrow a tent since I’m going to sleep in preparation for the night.” (Hifumi)

Sabnak smiled at Hifumi who headed to the place where the materials are stored while waving his hand lightly.

“Will you accompany Alyssa-san?” (Sabnak)

“No, I’m just going to watch.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who even turned around once again, showed a smile, but it contained a different meaning from Sabnak’s smile.

“She is a fellow I tried to train after picking her up. I want to confirm whether she has turned into a success or a failure.” (Hifumi)

“Whether the battle from now on becomes enjoyable; I intend to judge that by watching the execution of Alyssa’s operation”, Hifumi goes away.

“Hifumi-san...” (Sabnak)

There’s something Sabnak can imagine vaguely. It’s the expectation that Hifumi likely wants to watch whether the thing, he created himself, is broken flashily.

I wonder what will be broken at that time? Fokalore’s soldiers, this country or this world?

How far has the destruction to spread for Hifumi to be satisfied?

What will Hifumi do after he ended up breaking it?

“Even if I ponder about it, it’s something inevitable, but...” (Sabnak)

Sabnak’s thinking arbitrarily producing only frightening imaginations made himself anxious.

Chapter 140 – Nuclear Family

The revenge match silently opens its curtains.



The number of soldiers from Fokalore who invaded Horant together with Alyssa is 11. They split up in groups of two with Alyssa and the rest in 3 men cells and are going to carry out infiltration and subversive activities. They climb the wall on the side of the fortress on Orsongrande’s side using a rope with the help of their colleagues. Alyssa, who discovered the cut end of the ropes, which suspended the corpses of Ma Calme and the others, and the shuriken, which severed those very ropes, sticking in the wall, pulled out five shuriken from the wall after pondering for a bit and put them into her pocket.

“From here on we will act separately.” (Alyssa)

“As you command. Good fortunes of war.”

Upon Alyssa’s signal, the soldiers soundlessly drop ropes from the fortress and climb down.

From the small sounds audible at times, one can approximately realize about them skilfully killing the patrols from Horant’s side.

“Go.” (Alyssa)

“Ha.”

Once Alyssa confirmed the bottom of the fortress, she jumped down speedily and without delay.

She lands while rolling over nimbly on the ground, where grass was growing, carries the rucksack, she was holding in her hands, on her back and swiftly draws the wakizashi.

Her accompanying soldiers moved in the same way. Each of them held tools for committing arson.

Once Alyssa checked the surroundings, she saw two of Horant’s soldiers, who were apparently dealt with by the soldiers who descended first, having collapsed nearby. Except those, there’s no enemy presence in the vicinity.

Alyssa, who concluded that the soldiers, who went first, were already heading towards their target locations which were set during the day, searches for the building they are in charge of.

They head towards the target building while moving quietly.

They don't turn on a light. While making sure to not get lost by staying in touch with each other, they walk while relying on just the moonlight.

“...We are here.” (Alyssa)

What was in front of Alyssa's eyes was a large building appearing to have four stories which had an imposing presence within the darkness of the night.

The seemingly hastily made windows had a slightly simple form, but apart from the door for people coming and going normally, there was a huge gate which had a height of several meters.

Being bothered by the large front gate, that released a strange aura, and the size of this building, she secretly observed from atop the fortress' rooftop during the day, Alyssa believed that something important... or rather, Horant's giant soldiers themselves or something related to them was hidden in this place.

If there were still giant soldiers, she wanted to dispose of them with a surprise attack. *It would be great if there are some documents which reveal some kind of weak point*, Alyssa hopes.

Two soldiers of Horant, who are holding lights which seem to be magic tools, are walking side-by-side on the outer circumference of the building.

“I will get rid of them.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who went ahead swiftly without waiting for a reply, closed in from behind the soldiers and stabbed the wakizashi, she held in her right hand, into the nape of the neck of one soldier from behind while blocking the mouth of the other one with her left hand.

Once the soldier dropped the light, he held, while being confused due to suddenly having his mouth blocked, he had his throat cut open while screaming soundlessly as he realizes his colleague collapsing while shedding blood.

Imitating Hifumi, Alyssa wiped her wakizashi with a paper and picked up the fallen magic tool. As she looked around for a little while, she handed the magic tool over to a colleague who came as support.

“I’m sorry, I don’t know how to turn it off.” (Alyssa)

“Ueeh...?”

The soldier, who was suddenly given the magic tool, turned around the illuminated tool, but since he didn’t find the place of the switch in the end, he decided to swiftly cover it up.

Once they confirmed that no light was leaking out after covering it with soil, Alyssa’s group breathed a small sigh.

Circling the building and finding a window that looks like it allows entering, she hooks the wakizashi into it and opens it slowly.

The inside was pitch dark, but Alyssa and the other two, who judged that there are no people inside, entered the building one after the other while watching the surroundings.

Alyssa didn’t notice it at all, however Hifumi overlooked their movements up to there from the rooftop of the barracks which were next to that building.

“Well, it might be a valid decision.” (Hifumi)

At the point in time he confirmed Alyssa’s figure, he had killed all of the soldiers of Horant who had come to the barracks’ rooftop.

There’s also a group responsible for the barracks among the infiltration unit from Fokalore, but as they just trespassed from the first floor, they are apparently moving while investigating the interior and are very unlikely to reach the rooftop for much more time to come.

“Well then, shall I try to observe them properly as their guardian?” (Hifumi)

Heading to the edge of the building, he runs fiercely towards the building Alyssa invaded.

The distance to his target is around 10 meters. It’s further away than the world record. The distance for the approach run is short as well.

“Huff.” (Hifumi)

Stepping down on the rim of the rooftop, he jumps up while cutting through the wind.

The chilly air of the night hits his face.

The hakama made a fluttering sound, got filled with air and served as break.

“Uoooh?” (Hifumi)

Outside his assumption, Hifumi, who suddenly lost momentum unable to gain distance, takes out the kusarigama and throws the side with the sickle. With a dry sound the sickle stabs onto the target rooftop. While grasping the chain, he kills the sound by pressing his feet against the wall part of the third floor.

“Phew... that was a bit unreasonable, huh?” (Hifumi)

Scaling the chain, he heads towards the rooftop.

“The boredom of simply waiting...” (Hifumi)

Hifumi was pondering while folding his arms, but before long he descended to the third floor leisurely while while being unarmed.



Imeraria, who temporarily returned to Münster from the location where they set up the defence encampment, immersed herself in her thoughts while secluding herself in the room prepared by Earl Biron even after she finished dinner.

“A failure is a failure. I will reflect on it, but there won’t be any progress even if I drag it out forever.” (Imeraria)

A pen stained with ink is made to travel across a paper casually “Defense”, “Night Attack”, “Rescue Failure” and “Giant Enemy.” Once she sorted it out, they were even able to recover the area around the border, which was lost temporarily, without having large losses except the soldiers, who served as border security, and the instruction unit from Fokalore. *If it proceeds as planned, Alyssa’s group has infiltrated Horant around this time and they have probably started to work on their subversive activities and investigation.*

Once she considers it like this, a faint impatience is born within Imeraria.

“Even I, even I...” (Imeraria)

After murmuring that, she recovers her serenity once she takes a deep breath.

“Reflection”, “Horant”, “Nelgal” and “Ceasefire.”

While recalling the long, gloomy sermon, she continues to write down words attentively.

“Possible things” and “Impossible things.”

“I don’t seem to have the ability to depart for battle...” (Imeraria)

She already has no choice but to acknowledge that.

Regarding the defence, it was a success and safe with Sabnak’s leadership. I wasn’t able to find a place where I could play an active role at the battle in the morning.

“Things I’m capable of, things I’m capable of...” (Imeraria)

I haven’t forgotten my duty as queen. It’s wrong if I don’t make sure to not neglect other things by single-mindedly concentrating on just Horant. However, if I just end up leaving the conclusion with Horant here to Alyssa and Hifumi, it will likely become more and more impossible for Horant and Vichy to escape being influenced by Fokalore’s territory.

“But, when it comes to settling a battle, military force becomes indispensable.” (Imeraria)

At the present there is Orsongrande’s royal army led by Sabnak and the feudal army of Earl Biron who is cooperating with us.

However, if one considers the matter of directly taking an aggressive stance against a whole country, that’s insufficient. Practically spoken in regards to the battle, Horant’s side will be declared the winner if they end up overtaking Fokalore’s territorial soldiers, Imeraria grasped.

“Decisive battle, conclusion, negotiations, ceasefire...” (Imeraria)

“Seeing that there’s no deciding war potential, we are compelled to rely on Hifumi for the sake of a ceasefire, I guess?” While writing down the words she leaked with her voice, she suddenly realized a sense of discomfort.

There’s a X between “Decisive battle” and “Conclusion.”

Imeraria, who gently returned the pen to its holder, stares fixedly at the X mark with her blue eyes.

“Things I can do... if it’s this!” (Imeraria)

As Imeraria stood up with a force about to knock over the chair and once she called out whether there's anyone around, the door opened quietly.

“You have called, Your Majesty?” (Shibyura)

“... Shibyura-san, you were still here...?” (Imeraria)

Watching Shibyura curtsying while respectfully pinching the skirt of her servant's attire, Imeraria once again weakly slumped down on the chair.

“Since one of the servants, who joined the campaign, developed a fever, I have offered my help.” (Shibyura)

Imeraria, who considered that she's probably trustable if you put aside her character even while being half in doubt of the details Shibyura told nonchalantly, smoothly filled out a paper at hand, signed it, applied sealing wax and pressed the ring, she took off, onto the wax.

“Please deliver this to Vaiya-san in the capital. As fast as possible.” (Imeraria)

Shibyura, who received the letter held out by Imeraria, carefully wrapped it with a handkerchief and gently held it at her chest.

“As you wish. I shall deliver it by myself. There's just now a carriage available. They were able to rest plentifully.” (Shibyura)

“Isn't it alright if you entrust it to some knight?” (Imeraria)

“No”, Shibyura shakes her head.

“It's something with content that was able to remove Your Majesty's distress. This much is no trouble at all.” (Shibyura)

Imeraria had a cramped expression in contrast to Shibyura who was smiling sweetly.

“Why... do you know that I was troubled?” (Imeraria)

“Since a mere hour ago I took a little rest by leaning on the door of this room due to feeling slightly dizzy. Because I accidentally pressed an ear against the door, I ended up listening to Your Majesty's talk once I heard Your Majesty's monologue.” (Shibyura)

Due to Shibyura talking without being shy while only averting her gaze to the

side, Imeraria didn't have the spare energy to get angry anymore either.

"It's already fine, thus I request it of you sincerely." (Imeraria)

"Please leave it to me while being at ease." (Shibyura)

Once Shibyura, who bowed in an exaggerated manner, left, Imeraria, who thought about the countermeasure of stretching her shoulders and elbows until some time ago, felt fatigue suddenly descending upon her and went to bed after changing her clothes quickly.



"Hoe~."

Once they proceed into the city through the entrance of the capital on the carriage which finished the formalities, the street continues as if breaking through towards the royal castle as the most flourishing street.

Watching the street where buildings, with three and four stories, made out of stone are put together in a row and where multicoloured goods are lined up at various stores, Puuse unintentionally raised her voice.

"This place is Orsongrande's capital city. It hasn't an especially set name. It seems only this city used to be called Orsongrande originally." (Paryu)

While the beastmen were intently listening to Paryu, who was sorting the documents inside the carriage, explaining, they looked like they had very deep interest in the things being sold along the road, especially the food.

"So, where are we heading to?"

"First we shall visit the royal castle. There isn't a rule, which was especially decided by Lord-sama, for places to stay at. There are cases where he stays in the castle and he also stays at down-town inns whimsically..." (Paryu)

"Paryu, I think that he is the most difficult to contact among the nobles", once laughing feebly, Viine smiled while agreeing as well. Even in the slums it was apparently difficult for her to create an opportunity to see his face readily even if she wanted to meet him as his sleeping hours were scattered and he often wasn't in his bed.

"However, there will be a ruler if we go to the castle, right? Will we be

allowed to enter such place?”

“I wonder. Won’t we at least get a hint where Lord-sama might be? Which reminds me, I also happened to lodge in the royal castle... I did nothing but studying though.” (Paryu)

“The castle, is that?” (Malfas)

What Malfas pointed at ahead was definitely the royal castle Orsongrande was proud of.

The royal castle, where countless spires tower, was visible in the direction of their travel with its impressive presence.

“Yes, that’s it.” (Paryu)

“Haa~... this is amazing. It’s the first I have seen such huge building.” (Malfas)

Gengu shakes his head with an “uh huh” while licking his nose with his tongue.



Before long the carriage finally arrives in front of the royal castle. A soldier, who boarded a platform wagon as guard, has come following as well. Smoothly conveying the story of Paryu being a civil official of Tohno Earldom, there were some among the knights, who were on duty, who remembered Paryu’s face and saw to it that the formalities went ahead without delay.

“B-Beastmen, huh...?”

“In that case it’s a story from Earl Tohno’s place”, Midas, who was called in, said.

Finishing the Nelgal escort mission, Midas, who spent time with his family during a two-days holiday, was at his wit’s end with a gloomy feeling while thinking *this the day after a holiday?*

No matter how much they are friends of Hifumi, who is popular amongst the populace, it will likely be complicated to have a normally operating inn in the city take them in, Midas judged.

While complaining in his heart that it would be fine if they place them in a mansion they maintain in the capital, he judges that it won’t be good for them to stand out, accepts them into the royal castle for the moment and decides to

consult with the prime minister.

While watching the beastmen who walk while looking around restlessly indoors as they aren't used to stuff like a ceiling, which had minute carvings added, and a floor which was completely polished, Paryu remembered that she had such emotions as well at the time she was brought along as slave. She can't remember how it was for Caim, but she believes that it was the same for everyone else.

“Midas-sama, where's Earl Tohno-sama currently?” (Paryu)

“... Soldiers were dispatched from Fokalore towards Horant, weren't they? Following them, or rather going ahead, or rather... well, there's no doubt that he headed towards Horant.” (Midas)

“Horant you say, where is that?” (Gengu)

Due to Gengu addressing him while stretching his neck with a jerk, Midas flinched for an instant, but glossed it over by clearing his throat.

“How to explain it? Let's see... it's a different country which is located on the opposite side with approximately the same ((distance)) from Fokalore to here.” (Midas)

“Hahaa~. Hifumi-san has gone on a trip to such distant place.” (Gengu)

“Then, then if we go until there, I will be able to meet master?” (Viine)

“M-Master?” (Midas)

With Viine bending herself forward this time, Midas searched for assistance with a look towards Paryu.

“It's Earl Tohno. It looks like he made friends and “purchased” the girls in a human city located on the other side of the wastelands, apparently he did various things there...” (Paryu)

“Ah, I see...” (Midas)

If I probe further, it will just get long, I guess, thinking that, Midas shakes his head towards Viine.

“Though it might be so, currently it's dangerous there. Therefore, ((stay)) obediently in the castle...” (Midas)

Midas manoeuvred so that they wouldn't cause trouble as much as possible, but that ended in vain when a single knight came calling out to them.

“Yoo, isn't that Paryu-san? It's been a while!” (Vaiya)

“Vaiya-san, are you doing well?” (Paryu)

“Yes, thanks to you. Thank you very much for letting me learn various things in Fokalore! Your companions are... this is amazing, they are beastmen...? By chance, is this person an elf!? As usual, you can find anything in Fokalore!” (Vaiya)

Due to Vaiya talking happily, his acquaintance, Paryu, gets excited chatting about various things as well. Having talked several times during Vaiya's stay in Fokalore, he received lectures regarding the population management such as family registers together with his wife Phyrinion.

“So, for you to deliberately show up at the royal castle means that something happened?” (Vaiya)

“These people harbour the wish of wanting to meet with Lord-sama... Earl Tohno-sama.” (Paryu)

“If it's that, you are just right! We planned to depart in the direction of Horant from this time forward. This time it's a corps of 1000 soldiers, thus there's no problem even if it's increased by several people.” (Vaiya)

Once Vaiya promised that without due consideration, the beastmen looked at each other delightfully. They are approaching Hifumi's location with large strides.

“Id...!” (Midas)

The one who was flustered by that was Midas. Once they take some distance after Midas pulls Vaiya's arm, he lowers his voice so that it's not audible.

“W-What's wrong, Midas-san?” (Vaiya)

“Why is there a need for you to go to Horant? Moreover while taking along 1000 soldiers.” (Midas)

“It's an order by Her Majesty. Come to Münster while bringing along Nelgal-

sama after bolstering the numbers urgently, she said.” (Vaiya)

Midas, who opened his eyes widely and was dumbfounded for a while, asks after recovering his mind,

“Wait, wait, Fokalore’s feudal army and Biron’s feudal army are there as well, aren’t they? Why is it necessary to reinforce them?” (Midas)

“I don’t know. That much wasn’t mentioned in Her Majesty’s decree. Besides, since the decree was an important document to the extent of it being personally kept by Captain Sabnak’s wife, even I have no leeway to harbour doubts.” (Vaiya)

Vaiya decided to conceal the matter of the letter from Nelgal being extorted by Shibyura on behalf of his honour.

“Guh guh... got it. That way it might be even easier than me ((going there)). It will be better if they accomplished their objective once they went to meet with Earl Tohno. Vaiya, may I leave it to you?” (Midas)

“Acknowledged. Also, there’s a request from me as well...” (Vaiya)

“I have a bad premonition. Oy...” (Midas)

Once Vaiya shook Midas’ hand after forcibly grasping it, he bowed very deeply.

“Since everyone below vice-captain of the royal guards will be absent with this time’s dispatch, I leave the command inside the castle to you.” (Vaiya)

“Please pardon me from that...” (Midas)

Once the dispute with Horant ends, I will apply for a long vacation and go out to play while taking along the children, Midas firmly vowed.

Chapter 141 – Wild World

As the room, which Alyssa entered, was apparently a storage, it was simple to leave outside the storage as it wasn't locked either.

“... Huh?” (Alyssa)

At the time when she looked from the outside she thought that the building had four floors, but outside the cramped storage with its piles of wooden boxes the ceiling has become high as if it was the hall of a castle. She was barely able to perceive that with the faint light existing inside the room.

“Judging by the impression from outside, it has at least one more floor on top.”

One of the soldiers mutters and Alyssa nods.

“That means... uwah...”

Once they move while carefully checking the situation in the vicinity of the storage, they discovered a huge cage.

Iron bars with a thickness at the level of Alyssa's waist are forming a grid. Inside, where light mostly doesn't reach, a giant soldier, who is sleeping while leaning his back against the wall, is dimly visible.

There are two cages. *The one who likely lived in the empty counterpart was the giant soldier who was killed by Hifumi this morning, Alyssa guessed.*

Alyssa is troubled at this point.

If we get rid of the giant soldier here and now, it will probably become quite easy even if we proceed towards the capital city of Horant from here on.

However, even though we have done preparations to deal with them, it's not definitely certain that we can win against a giant soldier with 3 people.

“Umumu...” (Alyssa)

A change takes place while she is groaning.

“It's a fire! Everyone, wake up!”

It's from the neighbouring building, I guess? A panicked voice can be heard in

a distance.

Did he hear that voice? The sleeping giant soldier was stirring restlessly.

“Let’s hide for the moment!” (Alyssa)

Upon Alyssa’s decision, they return to in front of the storage, disappear in the darkness and watch the state of affairs.

It seems like the other 3 units have set fire quickly. There are angry roars and sounds of a crowd of people coming and going outside the building. The sound of wood burning with a cackling was audible.

Once she looks in the direction of the cage, the giant soldier, who appears to be completely awake now, stretches his tall figure, which gives the impression of being about to reach the ceiling, and surveys his surroundings while looking displeased.

At this moment, two people, appearing to be magicians of Horant, rush into the place while panting (were they on the floor above?).

“Let’s release the reinforced soldier!”

“No, controlling him with just us two is...”

“If he is burnt to death due to the spread of fire, it will be our responsibility, won’t it!? Moreover, this is an enemy attack! I will open the lock!”

The man, who rebuked his colleague’s indecisive attitude in one go, yells 「Stay obedient!」 towards the giant soldier while opening a part of the iron bars with a magic tool-like key.

While having stood up sluggishly, the giant looks down on Horant’s magicians with blank eyes which held no emotions.

Seeing that situation, Alyssa turned around to her comrades.

“It will be bad if that one’s released, right? Let’s go.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who jumped out with a force similar to being flicked away without waiting for an answer, headed towards the man who tried to stop her and stabbed him with the wakizashi just as she rammed into him.

“Nnggh?”

Once Alyssa, who confirmed his death as his voice leaks out from his throat, turns her gaze towards the other man. She saw the figure of the magician

struggling while being held in an eagle grip by the giant soldier in front of her perplexed comrades.

He was apparently caught just as he opened the cage.

“R-Release me, this...”

The magician, who was drenched in sweat due to pain and fear, frantically tries to make the giant soldier stop, but the giant soldier sluggishly tries to bend himself forward from the cage while grabbing the magician.

“Both of you, take some distance and prepare for combat! Get that ready!”
(Alyssa)

While issuing instructions to her comrades, Alyssa intentionally used a loud voice to attract the attention of the giant soldier.

Verifying that the giant soldier’s gaze slowly turned her way, she stands in a conspicuous place where the light shines and prepares the wakizashi in her right hand.

Cold sweat traces down her cheeks.

Her body was still made to tremble by the scariness of the time when she was knocked down from atop her horse, but the shivering calmed down with only the strong sensation of holding her wakizashi in her right hand.

“Come and get me!” (Alyssa)

Just as her image of the time when Hifumi provoked his opponents, she displayed a smile while mimicking him.

Did he get angry due to that? The giant soldier threw the magician of Horant, he held, towards Alyssa.

“Bubehh.”

Being slapped against the wall, the magician, who leaked a voice similar to a frog, smashed down the wooden wall and left by rolling outside.

Alyssa doesn’t take her eyes off the giant soldier even while dodging the rolling magician sideways.

In the middle of the confrontation Alyssa heard the voices of her comrades.

“We will use a net!”

In the next instant a large net fell upon the giant soldier.

“Alright!”

Alyssa dashes while carrying her wakizashi towards the giant soldier who raises groans in irritation as he pulls at the net which got entwined by him struggling.

They had Sabnak concede a share of the net which was spread out as spear protection in the defence encampment. It is a net used for fishing with weights attached at its edges and small eyes.

“If I remember correctly, at the time when Hifumi-san killed it...” (Alyssa)

What Alyssa is aiming for are the feet of the giant soldier who is visible from below the net. The bare toes, which aren't protected by armour, are slightly dirty. Thick nails have grown just like a beast.

With the wakizashi, she firmly held in both hands, she completely cut off the toes from their root at the side of the little toe.

Only the big toe was saved by the obstruction of the bone, but just as his toes were scattered about while the stumps shed blood, the giant soldier fell on his backside.

“... Muu.” (Alyssa)

Taking distance while slipping through the log-like arm which the giant soldier swung precisely even as he was writhing and getting entangled by the net, Alyssa grind her teeth.

“This didn't get through.” (Alyssa)

She glares at the giant soldier who is moving around restlessly while sitting. Her comrades, who cast the net, have drawn their weapons and are slashing at the giant soldier, but the giant soldier doesn't look like he is faltering either. Imitating Hifumi, Alyssa planned to aim for the head or neck after the giant was made to fall down, but even in the state of sitting, the giant's head is twice as high as Alyssa's height.

While watching as the net is gradually becoming worn-out due to the giant's superhuman strength, Alyssa wonders whether there isn't anything they can do and searches her pocket and the interior of her rucksack with her free left hand. There she found the shuriken.

“It's something I almost never used, but if I remember correctly, it goes with

such feeling.” (Alyssa)

Mimicking Origa, she sheathes the wakizashi, prepares the shuriken in her right hand and throws them while making sure to stretch her arm in front. The largely off shuriken pierces the wall on the opposite side while making a sound of *clonk*.

“Mumuu!” (Alyssa)

While groaning she throws the second one. This one stabs into the face of the giant soldier. He approaches Alyssa by slouching while seeming to be very unhappy.

“Once more!” (Alyssa)

This time she throws it with a large swing using all her strength. The shuriken moved quickly and stabbed into the giant soldier’s left eye with a force of getting deeply buried into it. Having all of a sudden lost half of his visual field, the giant soldier wriggles in a confused state while holding down his face.

“Director!”

“Aim for the arms!” (Alyssa)

Grasping the wakizashi once again, Alyssa gives directions to her comrades. The two soldier of Fokalore, who responded to it swiftly, respectively cut at the wrist of both arms, with which the giant soldier holds his face, using their swords.

Even without feeling pain, it’s probably irritating. The giant soldier, who collapsed facing upwards, swung his arms and Alyssa leapt in as substitute for the soldiers who were warded off.

“This is the end!” (lyssa)

She drove her wakizashi very deeply targeting the eye which had been crushed by the shuriken. Being pushed by the wakizashi’s tip, the shuriken reached the brain. With the remaining right eye being widely opened, the giant soldier stopped moving.

“... Phew.” (Alyssa)

“Director, you did it!”

Alyssa, who wiped off her sweat and turned towards her cheering comrades with a smile, already saw flames rising from the hole in the wall, where the magician was thrown at, once she lifted her face wondering whether they should go to look for the documents on the floor above.

“It’s terrible. Everyone, let’s give up on the documents and escape! We might get surrounded by the fire if we went upstairs!” (Alyssa)

“U-Understood!”

Horant’s soldiers are moving about in confusion in the vicinity of the buildings which are still burning brightly outside.

Alyssa, who decided to escape by taking advantage of that chaos, took a glance at the fallen and dead giant soldier and left the building behind.



“Well, a passing mark, I guess?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who observed the combat style of Alyssa from the stairway continuing to the upper floor, suddenly lifted the edges of his mouth and smiled.

Setting aside her physical ability, it’s unacceptable for her to miss with the shuriken, but she created a method to kill her enemy, gave proper instructions and was even able to deal with irregularities. In case of a battle in this world up until now, there was no way to cope with an opponent, who excelled in physical ability, if there was no magic, I guess.

Choosing his “weak point,” Alyssa used it effectively.

Also, watching Hifumi’s way of doing things, she picked up the parts she can do herself and implemented them. This was also something he valued highly.

“Well then, shall I go to the next target location as well?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi sends a fleeting glance behind.

Five corpses of soldiers from Horant were scattered around on the second floor. Having been killed with a single stroke, all of them wore a confused expression due to not understanding what happened to them.

Hifumi clicks his tongue once.

“Although it’s for the sake of confirming the results, my stress keeps piling up...” (Hifumi)

When he was venting complaints while tapping the guard of his katana with a finger, several soldiers of Horant rushed into the lower floor after Alyssa withdrew from there.

“This is... the reinforced soldier has been done in?”

“The fellow outside is dead as well. Anyway, this place will be abandoned! If he’s already dead, it cannot be helped!”

Hifumi jumps down towards the soldiers who are discussing the circumstances.

“Ugeeh!”

A single soldier is flattened after having Hifumi’s knee being driven on top of his shoulder. Since Hifumi grabbed the soldier’s head while at it, he broke the neck by twisting it backwards and the soldier instantly died after being thrown onto the ground while Hifumi made sure to crush his upper body including the collarbone.

“Wha-, W-Who are you?”

“Ah~... let’s see. A suspicious person, that’s about it.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who stood up slowly, places his back against the iron bars while staying idle.

“This!”

Avoiding the sword which was swung down from an overhead position, he delivers a kick from the side and with the sword being stuck in-between the bars, the soldier fell over while being unarmed.

“You have to fight after properly examining your surroundings.” (Hifumi)

Once he tramples down with his entire foot on top of the breast armour with a *bam*, the soldier vomits blood and dies.

Hifumi lightly swings the jitte, which he took out from his pocket, towards the sword which was pushed forth by another soldier.

The sword, which got hooked with only that, left the hands of the soldier.

Once the soldier was dumbfounded by having suddenly snatched away his sword from his palm, his own sword was thrown aiming for his throat.

“Eat this!”

Was there a magician mixed in? A fireball approaches Hifumi who threw the sword.

However, Hifumi stared at the conflagration with cold eyes and knocked down the fireball with his left hand which had a glove.

“Yo.”

“W-What’s this...?”

Hifumi slowly got close to the shocked magician and hit the face of his opponent with his palm in the same manner as he knocked down the fireball just now.

“You know.”

“Hii!”

Standing right next to the head of the magician who collapsed due to the impact, Hifumi looks down at him.

“Something like a fireball that merely comes flying in a straight line can be dealt with completely even if you hurl 100 of them at me.” (Hifumi)

“Therefore”, Hifumi points at the magician with his left hand.

“What you are doing isn’t any different from throwing with stones. Not to mention that you even release a yell. The way of suddenly throwing a Molotov cocktail in silence is a lot harder to deal with. Do you understand the meaning of what I’m saying?” (Hifumi)

“Uuh... Uaah...”

Looking at the magician who is simply trembling without even moving a single finger as if his hands and feet are completely bound, even when being questioned, Hifumi sighed very deeply.

“Tsk.” (Hifumi)

Striking the eyes of the magician with the jitte in irritation, Hifumi, who lost

interest in the other party who is convulsing and heading towards death, turned around towards the remaining soldiers of Horant.

The soldiers, who had that gaze turned on them, step back instinctively.

The fire has completely spread. The flame, which is slowly creeping up the wall while burning, is brighter than the original light.



“For what reason do you think I deliberately dispatched Ma Carne’s unit to this country? It’s so that you lot can fight a lot better, isn’t it? You guys as well.”
(Hifumi)

When he pointed at the soldiers holding their swords, Hifumi didn’t try to hide his expression of anger anymore.

“Are you only going to wield your swords like idiots? Your half-assed way makes me angry. Do you understand how much patience it took to choose to teach you without killing you? Teaching you the way how to fight isn’t just for popularizing it. I had hoped that the guys, who try to train while possessing a sense of danger, will increase if the number of strong people grows. I anticipated ingenious scheming how to to fight, the appearance of new spells and weapons and the start of conflicts where lives are at risk.” (Hifumi)

With his tone getting gradually stronger, the soldiers of Horant are trembling while listening.

“Wasn’t there enough time? Weren’t you able to prepare for fighting yet? Then, why did you attack? Why don’t you try to run away?” (Hifumi)

He draws the katana from his waist.

The flames are flickering, but the katana’s blade is shining dangerously.

“Don’t mess around, really. Just what the hell were you doing in this world that is blessed by killing this many people? Are there still not enough people? Or, do you not understand unless someone dies between your eyes?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who breathed out intensely and excitedly, pointed at the corpse of the giant soldier with the katana’s tip.

“Those are great. Those are likely the result of researching magic in Horant. Alyssa wrecked her brain how to defeat those. Using tools and learning the necessary technique, she was able to kill him. At first even I had quite the hard time. But, is that all?” (Hifumi)

The katana’s tip is turned towards the soldiers.

“By any chance, did you start a war while relying on no more than that? Did you even think that the conclusion of the killing will be reached that easily?”
(Hifumi)

Sucking in breath through his nose, he breathes it out through his mouth.

“Choose. Will you fight with me to prove that you trained? Or will you escape and convey my words to your boss?” (Hifumi)

“Hurry up”, at the moment made a single step forward, all of the remaining soldiers of Horant turned their back on him and ran away.

Watching their figures, Hifumi sighed deeply.

“Good grief...” (Hifumi)

Sheathing his katana, Hifumi, who put his breathing in order and erased his presence, started to quietly tail behind the soldiers who were running away frantically.

Chapter 142 – Mind Trip

Imeraria's aim was hidden, even from Sabnak let alone Alyssa. Even in the decree given to Vaiya through Shibyura, there wasn't anything written but merely to organize the troops and dispatch them as reinforcements as quickly as possible.

That was unexpected. Although they weren't informed about anything, there was no reason for the army's upper military stratum around Sabnak to object if it's for the sake of opposing the military forces of Horant.

When Imeraria revealed to the opened war council after Alyssa came back, that she had ordered for reinforcements to be dispatched, Sabnak and Biron looked at each other's faces, but because neither considered it to be a bad move, there wasn't anything in particular to refute.

“That's all from me. Alyssa-san, I appreciate your efforts last night. I'm sorry for doing this at a time when you are tired, but may I ask for your report?”
(Imeraria)

Though Imeraria said it like that, it is evening already. Alyssa and the soldier from Fokalore, who returned after finishing the night attack had slept properly.

“Yea. Um...” (Alyssa)

Lowering her eyes to the documents gathered in her hands, Alyssa explains the details which she had read in the material recovered by her comrades. It was recorded that the giant soldiers are referred to as “reinforced soldiers” in the documents which were collected, and that there are apparently still several bodies remaining in a military installation in the capital city.

She regarded the containment of the reinforced soldier with the casting net, implemented as countermeasure as satisfactory.

Generally there isn't anything special that might become a threat except the reinforced soldiers. The spear throwers, the reinforced soldiers and the thick layer of magicians, which is Horant's original forte. Those three elements have to be dealt with.

And with the number of magicians being low, it might be considered as very likely that some of them are concentrating on creating magic potions and

adjusting the reinforced soldiers in the capital city.

Everyone listened to Alyssa who was talking even while stuttering, silently and attentively.

“For the time being, this is the extent we learned.” (Alyssa)

“How is the situation on the other side of the national border currently?”
(Sabnak)

Alyssa starts off with 「It's at the time of today morning」 towards Sabnak's question.

“Most of the buildings have been burnt down, one building is still okay and that's where the soldiers and magicians are gathered as well. I think there aren't more than 30 of them either.” (Alyssa)

“That means there's also the option of suppressing them on the other side of the border for now.” (Biron)

Imeraria listens to Biron's words with her eyes closed.

“If they lose their base, they won't be able to move a large number of troops in a hurry. Since it's probably necessary to prepare even if they are based in a nearby town, it will naturally become difficult for them to invade our side.”
(Biron)

“I see. If the other side has around 30 people, it's likely not that hard to occupy an enclosed position even with their current military forces.” (Sabnak)

Sabnak agrees to Biron's opinion.

“Alyssa-san.” (Imeraria)

“What is it?” (Alyssa)

Having opened her eyes, Imeraria faces Alyssa.

“It seems you haven't seen Hifumi-sama, but where did he go?” (Imeraria)

“I don't know?” (Alyssa)

An extremely simple answer is returned.

“... Then, how about Origa-san?” (Imeraria)

“Saying something like how about eating a cold and delicious menu or such, she apparently went to Münster this morning.” (Alyssa)

“... Is that so?” (Imeraria)

Setting Origa aside, Imeraria was worried in various meanings what Hifumi is doing, but as it is no use minding it too much, she decided to push it into a corner of her mind.

However, she suddenly realized.

“Sabnak-san, if I remember correctly, we were told that Hifumi-sama will observe Alyssa-san’s battle, weren’t we?” (Imeraria)

“Y-Yes, I heard something along those lines.” (Sabnak)

“Alyssa-san, did you encounter Hifumi-sama after entering Horant?” (Imeraria)

Alyssa tilted her head to the side.

“I haven’t seen him? I didn’t meet him at the time when I went to other side of the border either. Though I think that he probably watched from somewhere, I didn’t know about it.” (Alyssa)

“That means...” (Imeraria)

Imeraria was at her wits’ end.

“There is the possibility that Hifumi-sama went into the heart of Horant by himself.” (Biron)

“Eh, w-what for...?” (Sabnak)

Sabnak is surprised. Even though Biron opened his eyes widely, he pondered while stroking her chin. His beard has grown during the hectic coming and going in his territory and encampment.

“A preliminary inspection... I think?” (Biron)

Everyone’s gazes focussed on Biron who mutter this brief comment.

“In the matter this time, Earl Tohno talked about leaving it to Alyssa-san, right? Since that’s the case, didn’t he head to observe the deeper parts of the enemy’s movements as the battle with Horant will take a new step next?”

(Biron)

“Do you really believe that?” (Imeraria)

Imeraria’s eyes are filled with doubts.

“No, not at all, ha ha ha... honestly said, I don’t understand it well either. There probably isn’t anyone among the people here apart from Alyssa-san who has the possibility of properly understanding the thoughts and nature of that man?” (Biron)

Those words pierced Imeraria’s heard like a stinging needle. That’s because she was apparently told that she probably still doesn’t understand Hifumi.

“Even if he came back two or three days later while holding the heads of Horant’s leaders, I wouldn’t consider that to be odd though.” (Biron)

“I don’t think that will happen.” (Alyssa)

While writing something at the bottom of the report with charcoal with a scratching sound, Alyssa denied Biron’s prediction.

“Seeing that Hifumi-san “himself said” that he will leave it to me, I don’t believe he will do something like helping me as long as I don’t make a blunder like yesterday morning.” (Alyssa)

“H-However, if it’s Hifumi-san, won’t he try to kill the magicians and reinforced soldiers by raiding the royal castle in Horant like he did previously?” (Sabnak)

Alyssa, who lifted her face, shakes her head side to side while facing Sabnak.

“That shouldn’t be so.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa muttered while scrubbing her right hand, which ended up becoming black due to the charcoal, with the sleeve of her left hand.

“That’s because what Hifumi-san wants to achieve is for the “war to continue endlessly.” I don’t expect him to do something like ending it.” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa frowning as her hand won’t become clean though her sleeve was turning pitch black, a maid who was unable to just watch, gave her a wet dish cloth.

As Alyssa thoughtlessly wipes her hand, all present are dumbfounded.

“Then, where do you think Hifumi-sama has gone?” (Imeraria)

“Mmh~... I believe there’s no mistake that he has probably gone to the castle in Horant or such. Doesn’t he intend to do the same as he did to the beastmen of the wastelands there?” (Alyssa)

While saying that, Alyssa returned the dish cloth to the maid.

“He is certainly telling them “work harder” or such.”

“That’s why we have to attack while doing our best as well”, she says and pushes a filled paper into the centre of the table.

On it are the positions of Horant’s buildings Alyssa checked out before withdrawing, and the attack details noted down.

“We have to to fight with Horant while going for it, okay?” (Alyssa)

“Y-Your Majesty...” (Sabnak)

While comparing the particulars described on the submitted paper and the expression on Alyssa’s face, Sabnak whose expression shows that he doesn’t know what’s best to do next, called out to Imeraria with a miserable voice. Imeraria, who showed a dazed expression for a short while, shook her head and stood up slowly.

“I guess it’s fine. I thought that it wouldn’t do unless I just showed something that can surprise Hifumi-sama. Yesterday my way of doing things ended up being wrong, however... we will hasten the preparations right away. Alyssa-san.” (Imeraria)

“What?” (Alyssa)

“I want to borrow you and your soldier’s power. Won’t you please cooperate with me in order to startle Hifumi-san? ... Mostly like Hifumi-san’s evaluation of you, Alyssa-san, will climb higher if we succeed.” (Imeraria)

“What do you want to do?” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa latching on in an instant, Imeraria almost revealed an evil smile.

“Let’s end the war with our hands. Let’s finish the dispute perfectly by

stealing a march on Hifumi-sama. I have decided on the means for that.”
(Imeraria)

When Imeraria talked about her plan after the reinforcements have arrived, Sabnak and Biron were against it, but Alyssa raised her voice with a 「I fully agree!」 and Imeraria pushed her own way through with that.

When the war council finished, the soldiers gazed in a strange manner at Sabnak and Biron, who appeared from the tent with pale faces and Imeraria and Alyssa who came out side-by-side while chatting with smiles.



Paryu, who had escorted Viine’s group to the capital, was relieved of that burden once she entrusted the beastmen to the knight order. Since there was also the matter of her being an official in a territory, she decided to take advantage of the situation by having Vaiya take care of their transfer to Hifumi. Although they used a highly efficient carriage, which was created by Prufas’ team who are the dwarves of Fokalore, it doesn’t change the fact that it was quite the forced travel. At the moment she saw off Viine’s group together with Vaiya at their departure, although there were also soldiers of Fokalore attached to her as guards, Paryu felt the accumulated fatigue in both her shoulders. She tells her escort that the whole day will be a holiday and decides to depart tomorrow at noon.

Watching the soldiers vanish into the city while looking happy due to the unexpected holiday, Paryu returns downtown through the gate and heads towards the highway.

Given that she was born in a village that is located one day by foot from the capital, she visited the capital many times to purchase daily necessities and to transport the harvest.

Her parents died due a widely spread endemic disease. The only child Paryu came to the capital with the villagers, who have scattered but she, who didn’t have any particular education besides being able to read and write the letters and who had no one to take care of her either, visited the Ular Shop by herself after eating to the limits of her stomach with the little money she had on hand and became a slave.

She believed that she would get a relatively good treatment even as slave as

she was a young woman who was able to read and write, however by no means did she expect to become a civil official after being bought by a noble afterwards.

Even the meal she savoured after careful selection in a restaurant as her final meal before becoming a slave was as delicious as the kind of food that appears in the dining hall of the lord's mansion in Fokalore.

When she walks along the flourishing shops while remembering the events at that time, she has a feeling like that's a remote past from a distant time already.

"Ah yea, I guess I should buy everyone souvenirs?" (Paryu)

Accessories for Brokra and Miyukare who are women like me. I think alcohol is excellent for Doelgar? Settling on that, she walks through the city.

"Caim-san is..." (Paryu)

Since she didn't hit upon an idea, she decided to make a choice while looking at the store.

And then let's return after eating various dishes, Paryu resolved herself.

After all there probably won't be any things that can be eaten anymore once Lord-sama achieves his target.



Viine's wastelands group heads towards Horant together with 10 knights who had gone one day ahead of the main army as an advance unit of reinforcements alongside Vaiya.

Each of the knights is riding a horse. The carriage with Viine and the others on board, the chamberlains of the Knights, and the wagons where materials such as food and similar are loaded, are lined up.

Since no one of Viine's group can steer a carriage, the coachman is a male servant from the castle.

"We ended up coming quite the long way." (Puuse)

Even though Puuse lets her feelings show fully, Gengu nods while smiling.

"That's right, ain't it? But, we once we return can boast to our friends . Certainly it's only us who have come to such place among the beastmen. As for the elves, it's only you, Puuse-san, right?" (Gengu)

“That’s probably true.” (Viine)

Malfas opened his mouth with a 「But」 towards the smiling Viine.

“Hasn’t someone come this way from the wastelands together with the person called Hifumi-san, I wonder?” (Malfas)

Everyone within the carriage freezes.

However, Malfas doesn’t notice that.

“Viine-nee, you have been properly saved from slavery by that Hifumi-san, right? In that case, even at other places...” (Malfas)

“Malfas-kun.” (Puuse)

The one who interrupted Malfas’ speech in panic was Puuse.

After sending a fleeting glance at Viine who makes a gloomy face, she points her index finger at Malfas.

“Umm, even if you looked at the city’s people, there were many people who had seen elves and beastmen for the first time, right? There shouldn’t be any others besides us who met with Hifumi-san. Okay?” (Puuse)

“I see.” (Malfas)

Malfas agreed obediently and Viine had a relieved expression as well.

“At any rate, even humankind is engaging in turf wars, aren’t they? The guys in the wastelands are like that as well though. I guess it’s something that doesn’t change much in regards to humans and beastmen?” (Gengu)

Apparently trying to change the topic, Gengu leaked a sigh through his nose while staring at the Knights in Armour who were visible behind the carriage.

“I guess so. But, since it’s a “similar place” like this, won’t it be possible to cooperate as there will be people who build cities together with everyone like Reni-san?”

“I see.” (Gengu)

“Yea yea”, Gengu nods and hands the baton to Viine.

“That means if you are successful at becoming a “couple” with Hifumi-san, Viine-san, that will become the very first step towards the goal Reni-san is

aiming for. ~ssu” (Gengu)

Viine’s face becomes bright red as Gengu laughs.

“S-So-Something like a couple... anyway, if I can be close to master...” (Viine)

“Oh well. Things start from there, don’t they? It looks like Hifumi-san is heading towards the battlefield currently, thus that will likely have to wait, right?”

Due to Puuse’s argument, Viine said that she doesn’t want to do that.

“If Hifumi-san is fighting, I will help as well. That’s why I have practised magic. I couldn’t bear to just wait without having any kind of role.” (Gengu)

“At such time I will help, too! If it’s an opportunity to return the favour, that’s also what I’m aiming for!” (Malfas)

Due to Gengu declaring that in excitement, Malfas is enthusiastic about joining in as well.

Watching their state, Puuse wondered whether there might possibly be a chance to tie a relationship of friendship between humans and elves.

One might say that this would certainly be a wonderful future.

However, from the point of view of the elves’ ancestors, who fought while shedding blood, this might become a betrayal. No, won’t they welcome it if it results in peace after all that fighting?

While watching the highway beyond the coachman on the carriage that shook more violently than the one they boarded together with Paryu when they headed to the capital, she considered trying to ask Hifumi about the story of the demons.

Chapter 143 – The Monster

The soldiers of Horant, who escaped without even a single one experiencing Hifumi's threat, headed in the direction of the capital city to run away from the border where the mayhem continues while dawn hasn't broken.

More or less they have entrusted the message "it's for the sake of informing the capital' for their superiors to another soldier so that it isn't considered as fleeing, but since they haven't received an order, they will likely be treated as deserters, strictly speaking.

However, that much doesn't seem to be apparent to those running away themselves.

They took advantage of the chaos, procured a carriage by giving the same reason from before and vigorously rushed out towards the highway.

Hifumi, who made sure of that up to that point, seizes a warhorse, which was set free from the stable temporarily due to the fire, and follows the carriage at a distance where he can't be confirmed by sight.

Although there isn't any harness attached, he skilfully keeps balance with a half-lotus position where he placed the top of his right foot on his left knee.

"They are slow." (Hifumi)

In the long run the speed between a carriage and a single rider will be different.

Hifumi, who felt troubled by having to regulate so that he doesn't suddenly overtake them, ended up going too far while the carriage's soldiers made camp. Because it was a route he remembered, he decides to go ahead while expecting them to head in the direction of the capital city.

"If I'm going to have a chat anyway, I guess the guys at the top are better."
(Hifumi)

Though it was a horse he chose by intuition, it was apparently a winner. Exhibiting its splendid leg strength of a swift, fawn-coloured horse, he reached a location where he could see the capital city after three days.

Hifumi, who approached a village in the vicinity, decides to give the horse into custody to a farmer, who was there, after handing him some money.

Lying down after borrowing a shed the farmer uses, he waited for the night.



The capital city of Horant, Adolameruk.

Although it's a country that currently has no legitimate ruler, the confusion of Prime Minister Kuzemu grasping the power within the castle has no effect on the populace and lower soldiers. The city was relatively calm.

Of course the confrontation with Orsongrande has raised unease amongst the people. There's also the matter of Kuzemu deliberately announcing that the successor, Nelgal, "is deemed to be taken prisoner by Orsongrande." It has reached the point that many soldiers can be seen controlling and guarding the city and the security at the entrance to the city has become strict as well.

However, compared to what they felt to be strict, it was in a word, 「weak」, in Hifumi's case.

With the number of soldiers, who are standing absent-mindedly in front of the closed gate while holding their spears, being 10, are they careless because they are far from the border? Several sentries, who are lazily walking around without any motivation, are visible.

Without there being even a single of them who realized Hifumi's figure closing in while taking advantage of the night's blackness, there was no one questioning him even when he invaded by scaling the wall smoothly.

Hifumi, who got angry once again, continuing after the soldiers at the national border, due to there being no more than this level of surveillance even in the capital city, heads silently to the castle while killing his footsteps nevertheless.

"I did go around killing the soldiers the last time I came here, didn't I? That was fun. Setting aside the crown prince's way of doing things, they fought while doing their best. However, even if I just did the same thing, it would be boring."
(Hifumi)

While muttering under his breath, the figure of Hifumi blended with the buildings' shades and he vanished as if melting away and went towards the castle.



When Vaiya's vanguard unit, which took Viine and the others along, arrived at

the defence encampment where Imeraria waits it was just the time of Hifumi leaving the horse in the village with the capital city right in front of his eyes. The sun is starting to sink, there are heavy clouds, which are thinly sticking to the sky, and a light rain is falling.

“The Knight Vaiya has arrived just now.” (Vaiya)

Seeing Vaiya, who visited the tent with Imeraria in it to report his arrival, being wet due to the rain, a maid quietly handed him a towel.

“Vaiya-san, I’m sorry for having you come here in hurry.” (Imeraria)

“It’s for Your esteemed Majesty. I feel that I want to receive your appreciation and praises after I obtained military results.” (Vaiya)

Vaiya showing a feeling of being obliged in an exaggerated manner to a degree that it can be regarded as ridiculous is for the sake of him easing his own tension of having entered the battlefield, is something Imeraria understands. Unintentionally chuckling, she urges him towards the reception sofa.

“Although he was the type who wears clothes as too serious person since the time when he was still in the Second Knight Order, his character mellowed out after the training in Fokalore and getting married”, she recalls Sabnak having mentioned that at some time.

Once she looks casually, Vaiya is still in the state of standing without sitting down.

“What’s wrong?” (Imeraria)

“As a matter of fact, there are people accompanying me...” (Vaiya)

“Accompanying, you say?” (Imeraria)

“Yes, as they named themselves as acquaintances of Earl Tohno, they told me that they want to meet with him. They have joined me after I took over from Fokalore’s civil official, Paryu-san. Those fellow travellers are unique. It’s my humble wish to have them introduced to Your Majesty on this occasion.”

(Vaiya)

Imeraria pondered, but Vaiya shouldn’t have brought along anyone suspicious either.

“Where are those people?” (Imeraria)

“Currently they are in the middle of talking with Captain Sabnak.” (Vaiya)

It will probably be alright if Sabnak judges them as being no problem, Imeraria made a maid go contact Sabnak so that they will enter the tent together with him.

“How’s the situation in the capital?” (Imeraria)

“There haven’t been any particular problems. Even as for the public order, since I requested Midas-san to handle it, there won’t be any issues, I think? There don’t seem to be any particular moves in Vichy’s direction either.” (Vaiya)

Intentionally mentioning it as in the “direction” of Vichy includes Fokalore as well.

“Your Majesty, for you to reinforce our war potential at this time, were there some movements by Horant?” (Vaiya)

Due to Vaiya talking uneasily, Imeraria smiles calmly.

“The ones moving will be our side. The full details will be explained at the next war council.” (Imeraria)

“It’s Sabnak. Umm, I brought the, guests?” (Sabnak)

Sabnak’s voice was audible from outside the tent, but Imeraria knitted her eyebrows due to his evasive manner of speech.

“Please enter.” (Imeraria)

“Excuse me.” (Sabnak)

The one who entered the tent first was Sabnak. And, seeing the four who followed after him, Imeraria became speechless.

“Your Majesty, these are the gentlemen and ladies from the wastelands who crossed a great distance to meet with Earl Tohno.” (Sabnak)

“I’m the elf Puuse.”

“I’m Viine.”

“I’m called Gengu ~ssu.”

“I-I am, M-Malfas!”

“... Your Majesty?”

“... Ha!” (Imeraria)

Imeraria was in a state of having her mouth opened while looking at the beastmen, but recovering due to Sabnak’s call, she elegantly wipes the edges of her mouth with a handkerchief.

“I’m the queen of Orsongrande Kingdom, Imeraria. It looks like it was a long trip from the wastelands. It’s the first time for me to encounter elves and beastmen, but... do you understand my words?” (Imeraria)

Looking at each other’s faces, Puuse takes one step forward.

“Queen-sama, we are using the same language. I think a conversation won’t be a problem?” (Puuse)

“So, about the matter of having come to meet with Hifumi-sama...” (Imeraria)

After asking several questions, Imeraria arranged for Puuse’s group to be allowed using separate tents for men and women out of consideration that they can wait for Hifumi in the encampment.

Once Puuse and the others, who are grateful for the warm reception, left while being led by maids, Imeraria sank her back into the sofa while curbing her brows.

“... What did Hifumi-sama do in the wastelands? Really, something like a beastwoman chasing him up to here.” (Imeraria)

Alongside a deep sigh, she drinks her cold black tea.

“Anyway, it was a saving grace that Origa-san wasn’t here. Sabnak-san, I leave it to you that they and Origa-san don’t run into each other until Hifumi-sama returns.” (Imeraria)

“Aren’t you imagining too much there? They are people who have likewise fallen in love with Hifumi-san, so if they get along well...” (Sabnak)

“Sabnak-san, you are naive.” (Imeraria)

She stabs Sabnak with an unusually sharp gaze.

“The rabbit beastman-san just now... Viine-san came here while saying an admirable thing like she just wants to be at his side, however do you believe that Origa-san will allow that?” (Imeraria)

“Uuh...” (Sabnak)

“And, the moment a quarrel occurs between them, will you be able to remonstrate them to be nice to each other, Sabnak-san?” (Imeraria)

“I-Isn’t that a task that exceeds my abilities...?” (Sabnak)

Imeraria’s gaze switches from Sabnak to Vaiya.

“Even for me, to barge in on such situation is a bit...” (Vaiya)

Hearing the timid answers of the two adults, Imeraria sighed deeply.

“We will be able to form a relationship with the elves, who are said to wield powerful magic, and the beastmen who were our former enemy. That in itself is something great. The matter of creating a friendship with them will likely be of benefit for Orsongrande.” (Imeraria)

“For that reason”, Imeraria made a short pause.

“We should avoid unnecessary troubles to the best of our abilities. Even Origa-san will be obedient in front of Hifumi-sama. I will also request Alyssa-san to lay the groundwork thoroughly.” (Imeraria)

“”Acknowledged.”” (Sabnak & Vaiya)

Imeraria informed the two, who matched their voices, about another matter.

“I will explain the strategy, I drew up, before the arrival of the main force. Let’s have dinner together. You two and Alyssa-san. And let’s invite those beastmen from before as well. I will have them decide whether they want to stay at Münster temporarily or remain here after explaining the current state.” (Imeraria)

It looks like it will take a full two days for the main force of the reinforcements to arrive even if they are quick. It will also be necessary to explain things to Nelgal who will arrive together with the main army, but I will push this strategy forth even if I have to basically threaten him, was her intention.

All of it is for the sake of her squaring off against Hifumi while keeping her pride

as queen.



“Bast-...”

Before the guarding soldier finished speaking, Hifumi cut his windpipe just slightly with the tip of his katana in one go and the body, which had lost its soul, collapsed alongside a sound of air leaking out.

“It’s this. I came here to complain about this.” (Hifumi)

While lowering the drawn katana, Hifumi stands in front of Horant’s prime minister who was sitting at his desk.

“W-Who are you bastard...?” (Kuzemu)

“The lord of Fokalore, Hifumi. The man who killed this place’s crown prince.” (Hifumi)

“What...” (Kuzemu)

Kuzemu, who has become pale while drenched in sweat, carefully examines the man standing in front of him from top to bottom.

Kuzemu himself never saw Hifumi, but he was aware about the person called Hifumi and about the uproar within the castle.

“How foolish. To reach this place all by yourself...” (Kuzemu)

“That’s it. That.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi points at the corpse of the soldier he killed himself a moment ago.

“It’s the same for this guy as well, but you are far too careless. Entering the country, entering the city and entering the castle, all of it was at a level of being extremely easy to degree of making me yawn. Your men are just walking around leisurely and don’t have any kind of vigilance in addition to that either. Isn’t that as if you are telling me to break in?” (Hifumi)

“For example”, Hifumi retrieved a light magic tool from his darkness storage.

“I can’t use anything but darkness magic, but research in magic has advanced in Horant, right? I heard that even this lamp was created in Horant. In that case, noticing an intruder, sounding a general alert once someone discovered an

enemy or doing various things is possible, isn't it?" (Hifumi)

"Uuh, but such things, except for those intended for battle, are developed by private merchants... buh!?" (Kuzemu)

Just as he began to line up excuses, Hifumi slapped Kuzemu's cheek with his palm after stabbing the katana into the floor.

Is his field of vision flickering? Hifumi brings his face close to Kuzemu who is repeatedly blinking.

"You, don't you think that a method for attacking means it is intended for battle?" (Hifumi)

Picking up the katana, he holds it out in front of Kuzemu's eyes so that he can see its hamon.

Hifumi, who turns the blade towards below and shifts the handle into his left hand, intended to show it, but Kuzemu was unable to consider it as anything else but threatening. He feels uneasy whether the ominously shining blade will cut his own throat in the same manner as the guard's.

"A weapon is fine as weapon. If it's polished up as item that steals a person's life, it is beautifully sublimed." (Hifumi)

Drawing back the katana, he returns it into its scabbard.

"But you know, while it may be strong at attacking that doesn't mean that one can win. It isn't just a mutual competition and confrontation. Now matter how strong a weapon might be, it will be meaningless if you aren't able to find a gap to use it." (Hifumi)

What Hifumi pointed at was the sword which hung at the waist of the corpse. Recognising him as intruder, the soldier tried to call out and yet he didn't even touch the hilt.

"W-What do you want to tell me?" (Kuzemu)

"You don't understand?" (Hifumi)

Going away from in front of Kuzemu, Hifumi removed the katana from his waist and sat down on a sofa with a flump.

"You are able to use magic. You were born into this world at great pains. If

you are able to use earth magic, you will probably be able to camouflage a trap perfectly. If you can use wind magic, it's possible to survey a somewhat wide range. If it's fire magic, one can light a signal fire without using tools. Even by thinking about it for a bit, there are this many possible applications." (Hifumi)

"Are you asshole telling me that Orsongrande's military has advanced this far?" (Kuzemu)

"No?" (Hifumi)

Kuzemu looked at Hifumi, who shook his head as he smiled, while wiping away the sweat.

"I wonder whether I gave Orsongrande a bit too much of an advantage. Although it looks like you created a slightly big toy in Horant, those are no good. Even the techniques taught to you by the instruction unit sent by me have parts similar to imitating just the upper surface." (Hifumi)

"Therefore", Hifumi tapped the scabbard of his katana.

"I decided to give you various hints regarding magic which is the distinctive characteristic of Horant." (Hifumi)

"Isn't that an act that serves the interests of your enemy!? What are you planning!?" (Kuzemu)

"What a foolish thing to say. The current you doesn't even amount to being an enemy for me. Thus it isn't an act that serves the interests of my enemy." (Hifumi)

"That's sophistry!" (Kuzemu)

"Even if it's sophistry, that's fine. Do you know? A weakling uses sophistry to gloss over, but the strong one uses it while persisting with their egoism." (Hifumi)

"So, what are you telling me to do?" (Kuzemu)

Finding it already difficult to bring it to a close with words in this situation, Kuzemu asks Hifumi that.

"Since the border probably has already broken down due to the attacks of Orsongrande's side, I shall instruct you magic techniques I came up with in

order for you to retake the border or to defend. I have only the darkness attribute, thus it will just be the theory though. Hey! Hurry up and summon the magicians in charge or the researchers. I don't have the time to idle around here. The evil hand of Orsongrande might be reaching for this place soon."

(Hifumi)

While saying that, Hifumi rung the bell on top of a low table which is located in front of the sofa.

A maid immediately enters the room.

"You cal-... hii!?"

The maid, who entered while looking down, screamed when she discovered the soldier's corpse.

"Black tea, please. Also, I'd like something I can take out." (Hifumi)

Hifumi tells the frightened maid his order.

Due to the words of an unknown person, the maid looked at Kuzemu in her search for help.

"... Prepare it as you were told. And, can you call someone of the castle's magic researchers?" (Kuzemu)

"C-Certainly!"

Once the maid leaves the room as if running away, Hifumi looks into Kuzemu's eyes.

Joy is clearly visible on his face.

"Do your best. Imeraria is an amateur, but Fokalore's soldiers are considerably powerful. I don't care what you want to do in the end, but you have to persist here for the sake of achieving your dreams." (Hifumi)

Standing up, Hifumi hit Kuzemu's shoulder.

"Let's have a real war with a properly large number of people dying. Okay?" (Hifumi)

Kuzemu was unable to reply as he was merely trembling.

Chapter 144 – Psychosocial

From time to time a person's actions are incapable of being in line with the aspirations and imaginations of another person. What should or should not happen in the end goes no further than being disconnected from someone's wishes.

It's the same with many things. Imeraria's order (or wish) also ended up being futile and in vain.

"It became somewhat noisy. Did something happen, Sabnak-san?" (Imeraria)

"Uuh, Origa-san..." (Sabnak)

Sabnak served as host of Viine and the others instead of Vaiya who was busy with the preparations for the planned arrival of the reinforcement's main forces from behind.

On the way leading them to the tents for visitors, which were prepared from the spares, they ended up suddenly coming across Origa who carried baggage she bought in Münster.

Viine's group, who doesn't know about Origa, turns their looks towards Sabnak in search of an explanation as no one understands the beautiful girl who appeared in front of their eyes. However, Sabnak isn't in a situation where he can respond to that.

"U-Umm..."

"Did you decide on some strategy? And, the people over there are... well, beastmen and an elf? It's the first time I'm seeing either, but what's wrong?" (Origa)

Sabnak had not come up with even a bit of explanation in the case that Origa got in touch with the beastmen. Since he had wanted to ponder on it slowly later on, he had yet to determine if he will try to bounce opinions off of Imeraria to obtain a fine-tuned integrated whole. Being abandoned by Sabnak who became pale while dripping sweat, Viine's group bowed.

“Nice to meet you. I’m the rabbit beastman Viine. I came from the slums of Swordland on the other side of the wastelands.”

“Oh, how very polite. I’m the wife of Fokalore’s feudal lord Earl Tohno, Origa.”

“Ah, you are master’s madam! Wanting to go to master’s place, I came to this place!” (Viine)

“Eh?” (Origa)

“Eh?” (Viine)

Watching Origa and Viine staring at each other, Sabnak looked up to the distant sky while thinking *if it was the period when I was a low-ranking knight, I would have likely run away long ago already.*

The person himself didn’t realize that his own right foot had started escaping by one step.



“I see, you were bought by my husband in the wastelands?” (Origa)

“Yes, I was immediately released after that, in addition to that I received education and an environment where I could live safely... wanting to return this favour somehow, I thought that I should meet with master.” (Viine)

Inside a guest tent a conversation began in a harmonious atmosphere by the guests receiving black tea personally served by Origa, and Caim’s special baked sweets.

The males of the beastmen admire Hifumi’s wife, Origa, as a beauty. Puuse and Viine talk about the events up till now. Sabnak pondered whether he should go inform Imeraria, but decided to confirm the outcome of this conversation first. *During the flow of these talks I might have to protect the beastmen by risking my own well-being.*

(This is another battlefield, I guess? Though it’s also a strange matter to interfere with the love affairs of others. Ah, if Shibyura was here, I could have consulted with her. I want to go home soon.) (Sabnak)

He takes a sip of black tea while feeling like crying. Just as said by Origa, who discovered the fine tea leaves in Münster, it has a refreshing sweetness.

“S-So, I accompanied Viine-san to make it possible for her to meet with

Hifumi-san. There's something I want to talk about as well."

"I believe that I want to serve at master's side, if possible. I also reached the point of being able to use magic after keeping at it. I will take care of him and even use this body as a shield in an emergency." (Viine)

"Really?" (Origa)

Origa, who emptied the cup slowly in order to make sure of the black tea's flavour, watched Viine pleading desperately and smiled sweetly.

"If you are saying that you will be able to serve as maid of my husband, of Hifumi-sama, I will welcome that. However, there's one thing you should know. And that's a condition I want you to honour." (Origa)

"W-What might that be?" (Viine)

"What you should know is what Hifumi-sama is aiming for. ... You, do you have the resolve to kill someone else for Hifumi-sama?" (Origa)

Whispering that while still smiling, it's said in a light tune completely as if asking someone about their hobby while bearing a weight similar to a final trial.

"Kil-..." (Puuse)

That mood. The mood of not hesitating even a little about stealing life, lightly and easily as if fluttering in the wind.

Puuse, who sensed in Origa once more what she had felt in Hifumi, became speechless.

However, Viine's resolve is firm.

"There's no problem. I decided to practise for that reason." (Viine)

"Is that so?" (Origa)

Feeling that the pressure from Origa has calmed down somewhat, even the male group, who was tense, dropped their shoulders.

"Umm, What's this one other condition?" (Viine)

"That's simple. Viine-san, you just said that you will take care of Hifumi-sama by even sacrificing your body, didn't you?" (Origa)

"Yes, of course." (Viine)

“That’s my duty. Please do so once my life has been extinguished for the sake of Hifumi-sama, if you are going to do it.” (Origa)

With Origa showing any signs of listening to a reply, she faced Sabnak once she finished declaring that.

“Sabnak-san.” (Origa)

“Y-Yes!” (Sabnak)

“So, can I have you tell me the reason why this encampment has become this noisy?” (Origa)

“Uuh... I got it...” (Sabnak)

After that, the beastmen, who finished meeting with Alyssa as well, were taken charge of by a person from Fokalore and not from Imeraria’s side.



“The matter, which is most important above all, is **knowing** faster than your enemy does”, Hifumi explains.

The one who listens attentively is a magic researcher of Horant, a young man called Gaap. Having been summoned to the room of Horant’s Prime Minister Kuzemu, he listens to the conversation in the prime ministers office alongside assistants he brought along.

“How and where will the opponent enter? Did they get close? What equipment are they using? You probably understand that it’s advantageous even if you only know those things in advance.” (Hifumi)

“Yes. However, there are sentries and patrols for that reason. They are guarding while checking the vicinity with a magic light tool.” (Gaap)

“Then that means it will be over once they are done in. Just like the current situation.” (Hifumi)

“That is... something called individual ability. There won’t be any problem if the sentries are stronger or if the assailant is a lot weaker.” (Gaap)

“You idiot.” (Hifumi)

Due to the voice of Hifumi, who interrupted Gaap’s words, even Kuzemu, who

is working at a separate desk, trembled.

“You have to consider it from much higher level than individual strength. Basically think of it as “something even an idiot can do” in case of the masses.”
(Hifumi)

“For example”, he pulls out a suitable parchment from Kuzemu’s desk and flips it over.

Drawing two circles, he flicked it with a finger.

“There were magic tools where one is broken if its counterpart is destroyed, right? Making it more fragile and preparing two of them, You install one of them at the front of the body of the guy on duty. By doing that, even if the wearer got defeated by something before sending a signal, those inside the building would be informed of the abnormality by the counterpart breaking.”
(Hifumi)

Drawing a diagonal line through one of the circles, he added an X-mark to the other one.

“I-Indeed.” (Gaap)

“It’s the same with physical defence. If it’s the walls of this castle, I can climb them barehanded.” (Hifumi)

“Normally that’s impossible.” (Gaap)

“But, aren’t you able to accomplish that easily if magic is used?” (Hifumi)

“Nevertheless, if it’s disrupted, a loud sound will...” (Gaap)

“It’s something else. Is there anyone amongst you who can use earth magic?”
(Hifumi)

One of the assistants raises their hand due to Hifumi’s question. Facing that man, Hifumi made a gap of around 40 cm with his hands and showed him.

“Then, how long will it take for a soldier to create a hand-sized stone of this size?” (Hifumi)

“I-If it’s one per soldier, as much as 30 seconds.”

“In that case, at least the soldiers of this place will be able to have them on hand if they have several minutes of time, right?” (Hifumi)

Due to the words he finished saying, the assistants whisper amongst themselves.

“However, to hold one of that level, for me that’s very...”

“Who told you guys to go up there yourselves? It will be fine if that’s done by the soldiers, won’t it?” (Hifumi)

“Ah”, due to Gaap having such expression, Hifumi was seriously troubled.

“Do you really don’t think about such things as application or amplification of utility?” (Hifumi)

From then on Hifumi extends his explanation to things like magic application for long distance communication with wind magic and excavation with water currents, on top of that physical communication methods inside a building which used speaking tubes and the general concept of sensors.

Although it was sudden, Gaap and his assistants asked many questions while trying to comprehend the very interesting theories and techniques. They stared with high concentration at the scribbles drawn with by Hifumi.

“Umm... I know it’s kind of late for that, but why is it acceptable for you to teach us these things?” (Gaap)

At the moment the lecture, which had continued until late at night, reached a point where they could take a pause, Gaap asked that timidly.

“Ah, so, in a few days, Orsongrande’s army will probably come here. If aren’t prepared, it will be one-sided, I guess. Then it won’t very interesting.” (Hifumi)

“Huh?” (Gaap)

Just like a rust-eaten machine, Gaap turned around and Kuzemu nodded as if having given up.



And then, a few hours later, a messenger letting them know about the situation at the border arrives. Adolameruk rushes into all-night defence preparations.

While many people were driven into preparing under Gaap's instructions, Hifumi vanished before they realized.



“Nelgal-sama, I will make use of you as a shield in the operation this time.”
(Imeraria)

Imeraria, Nelgal, Sabnak, Biron, Vaiya, Alyssa, Origa and the beastmen came together at the war council's location. Origa and of course the beastmen as well weren't originally scheduled to participate, but since Origa declared 「I will come along, too」 and seeing that she is Alyssa's superior, the reason for not having the rest join vanished. It was beyond their power to tell anyone to take their leave as Origa brought them along.

Due to them becoming irregular council members, it turned into a wait-and-see situation while everyone greeted and mingled with each other for a while, however due to the declaration of Imeraria who suddenly got down to business everyone was surprised.

“... I'd like to be told about Your Majesty's intention in detail.” (Nelgal)

Stopping a guard, who stood in the back trying to file a protest, Nelgal asks Imeraria.

“On the occasion of the current invasion of Horant, we will advance the troops towards the capital city Adolameruk in one go. We will have them take only a minimum amount of breaks and on top of that take the largest war potential we can currently move.” (Imeraria)

“Won't it turn into serious damage for your and my country in that case? If I enter Horant, it will possible to use me as a restraint against the soldiers. Won't it be possible to solve the situation with only that much?” (Nelgal)

Sabnak and the others expressed their thoughts of approval by nodding towards Nelgal's opinion.

However, Origa stays silent and Alyssa follows her in that as well.

“And what will we do if you went missing on the way towards the capital, Nelgal-sama?” (Imeraria)

“Hmm...” (Nelgal)

“I’m not well-informed about the person who is steering the current Horant, but is your return beneficial for that person, Nelgal-sama? Even if you returned to the royal castle for argument’s sake, he will be able to seize the power just like they have now by just acting as if you haven’t returned yet and spreading “he has gone missing” before many people become aware of your arrival.”
(Imeraria)

Listening to Imeraria’s argument’s Nelgal muttered “I give up.”

“It’s just as said by Her Majesty. While it’s disgraceful, the current man in power within the military of my country... is very likely Prime Minister Kuzemu. I don’t know whether there are spies who were slipped in by him.” (Nelgal)

“Therefore this is also a method to widely spread the news to the masses that you returned before reaching the capital, Nelgal-sama. Being informed boldly and flashily about your return is also a means to hinder assassins who dislike public attention. That’s also the reason for taking many defensive forces along.”
(Imeraria)

“A large army for standing out and not as war potential... you say? Though that’s what you are saying, it can be considered as daring strategy that doesn’t suit its appearance.”

“... It’s just a young girl being desperate to recover her lost points.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria’s murmuring wasn’t even heard by anyone, but there was no one who would react to that either.

“However it’s also an extremely dangerous plan, too.” (Biron)

Biron opened his mouth.

“The enemy side... although they would be the ones doing it, we have to also consider the possibility of them coming to crush us with force while deliberately ignoring Nelgal-sama being on our side.” (Biron)

“Besides, is it necessary to hurry this much?”

Agreeing with Biron, Sabnak proposed a conservative theory, but Imeraria doesn’t nod her head stubbornly.

“It’s indispensable to make haste. For one the person, who is pulling the

strings in Horant, will be allowed some margin accordingly if we drag it out. And then there are Hifumi-sama's movements." (Imeraria)

She sends a fleeting glance at Origa, however she shows a smile without reacting in any way whatsoever.

Although it's no more than that, there are parts which worry Imeraria in reverse though.

"The probability for that gentleman to be in Horant is very high. If that man makes a move, the sacrifices, which usually would finish with one, will end up turning into 10 or 100."

"... However, aren't those victims on our Horant's side?" (Nelgal)

"It's not something Your Majesty has to mind", Nelgal says uneasily.

"I have to disappoint you though." (Imeraria)

Imeraria shook her head towards Nelgal's anxiety.

"I'm unable to regard it this optimistically." (Imeraria)

"Such foolishness", Nelgal searched for approval in the surroundings, but Sabnak, Vaiya, Biron and no one else denies the "possibility of victims appearing on Orsongrande's side due to Hifumi."

"Isn't Origa-sama, who is Earl Tohno's wife, here as well?" (Nelgal)

"Oh my, thank you for worrying about me." (Origa)

Being addressed by Nelgal, Origa replied with a smile.

"However, I'm afraid to tell you that from the beginning of my husband's generosity and support I haven't accepted anything except being a target for elimination as apparently expected. I believe my husband harbours the same thoughts as well. In that aspect Her Majesty's thinking is splendid. It's a method that is beneficial towards both, offence and defence. And she will be able to lead the files and ranks heroically by herself as well, right?" (Origa)

"Eeh?"

"Of course. A person who relaxes in a safe place by herself while exposing Nelgal-sama's life to danger, shouldn't be able to become an opponent as

desired by Hifumi-sama either.” (Imeraria)

Dissenting opinions appeared one after the other, but Imeraria shut up her opponents.

“How about it, Nelgal-sama?” (Imeraria)

“... It can't be helped that I'm against it. The current me is nothing, but in the current matter I shall give you my highest gratitude once things settled down.” (Nelgal)

Due to Nelgal bowing respectfully after standing up, Imeraria nodded generously.

Sabnak, who regarded this as correct behaviour of a ruler, naturally bows after standing up as well.

“And, Origa-san and Alyssa-san, I'd like to ask you for the cooperation of Fokalore's soldiers.” (Imeraria)

“You are jesting. Haven't many of the royal army's forces been gathered here? What kind of role do you plan to assign to us who are no more than a small army force?” (Origa)

Imeraria returns a smile, without retreating even a bit, towards Origa who looks at her coldly and says that while laughing scornfully.

“It's no joke. This is also something I was taught by Hifumi-sama. Origa-san and Alyss-san, you, who understand Hifumi-sama well, and the soldiers of Fokalore who are able to deal with situation after being coached by Hifumi-sama as soldiers. It's not about numbers. I want to borrow your knowledge. The things you know. How important that is, I was taught **personally** by Hifumi-sama.” (Imeraria)

“I-Is that something to oppose Hifumi-san?” (Puuse)

When Puuse asked with a trembling voice, Imeraria clearly denied that with a 「No」.

“This is the “homework” I risked my life to obtain. Even if cut down the lives of other, I have to prove it. That's my answer.” (Imeraria)

“I will go as well!” (Viine)

Once Viine declares that after standing up, Gengu and Malfas agree with her, too.

Due to those words, Imeraria looks at Origa without answering. That's because she has entrusted the decisions about them to Fokalore.

“If it's about this, I will have all of you beastmen promise to help Her Majesty to the best of your abilities. You are amateurs at war, but I'd like you to show me how much you are able to do nearby.” (Origa)

“However, as sovereign, I will conversely teach you that you can not end a war just by killing.” (Imeraria)

In the middle of the tingling mood, only Alyssa said “Buu buu” while pouting.

“I'm the one in charge of the forces though.” (Alyssa)

After deciding that the departure would be the next day, the battle, which will be the first directly led by a queen in Orsongrande's history, was triggered by obstinacy of the queen herself.

Chapter 145 – Lionsong

As first part of the plan Imeraria emphasized her staying in the vanguard together with Nelgal in an open-topped carriage, but receiving vehement opposition from Biron and Sabnak based on the concerns of her guarding, she reluctantly gave up on that.

In the end it was decided that seats would be installed on the large platform wagon for transporting goods brought along by Fokalore and Imeraria and Nelgal would board that wagon together with their guards. The reason is that it's easy to guard and that it has speed albeit being large.

The knight unit led by Vaiya will serve as vanguard. Behind them will be the guarding knight unit including Imeraria and Sabnak. And after them it continues with Fokalore's soldiers and then the main forces of Orsongrande's royal army including the feudal army of Earl Biron.

Fokalore's soldiers will be led by Alyssa. Origa will take along the beastmen and stay on the platform wagon together with Imeraria.

“Report the current state.” (Imeraria)

“Yes. it seems there are still several parties of soldiers remaining on Horant's side of the national border, but it looks like their numbers don't exceed 50.”
(Sabnak)

Once Sabnak answered fluently, Imeraria nodded lordly.

“Well then, following the first part of the plan, Origa-san, please go ahead.”
(Imeraria)

“Understood.” (Origa)

Origa held an iron wire while smiling.

“Then, commence the march.” (Imeraria)

“Advance!” (Sabnak)

Following Imeraria's order, Sabnak raises his voice and Vaiya, who is visible at the head, raises one hand in response. The large army starts to go forward slowly.



Horant's soldiers, who confirmed the army possessing more than 20 times their own force's numbers after they arrived in front of the border, were in a state of agitation.

Above them being border guards, they had the duty to deal with the soldiers of the enemy nation who advanced up to the border, but the person in charge thought *there are impossible situations at times* without voicing it out.

"All members are to stay here. Send a messenger to contact the capital right away. Tell the capital **Orsongrande attacked the border with a large army**. Wake up those sleeping as well. It will end with us being crushed underfoot if we can't muster all our strength!"

While giving such directions, he silently glared at the advancing army of Orsongrande and thought *Even if we give it our best, will be probably crushed underfoot though*.

Suddenly a voice reached his ears.

『Can you hear this voice?』

"... What?"

Once he looks around, it seems that the other soldiers have heard that voice as well. All of them are turning around their heads while looking at the surroundings restlessly.

『My name is Imeraria Torie Orsongrande. I'm the queen of Orsongrande. I'm calling out to you, all of Horant's soldiers at the border, with magic.』 (Imeraria)

That was Origa's spell.

She amplifies the voice with wind magic and yet makes it sustain a directionality. It was a spell possible to only Origa who received Hifumi's guidance regarding sound waves.

"Her voice is delivered by magic, she says? Such a stupid..."

As the soldiers get flustered, the calling out to them continues further.

『Since I'm unfortunately unable to pick up your voices, I will make an one-sided announcement. Currently the next king of Horant, Nelgal-sama, is with us.

I believe you can see him if your eyes are good enough.』 (Imeraria)

Once the knights, who were in front of Imeraria, part to the left and right, Imeraria, who is on top of a platform wagon, and Nelgal, who is sitting next to her, are visible.

As there are also several people among Horant's guards who know Nelgal's face, several of them state "There's no mistake about it."

『We don't have come to invade Horant. We came for the sake of delivering Nelgal-sama safely to the capital. But.』 (Imeraria)

The knights once again blocked the way in front of Imeraria and drew their weapons.

The knights' weapons are originally spears and swords, but in addition there are also those who are wielding kusarigama's and swords similar to katana's.

『If you become an obstacle, please resolve yourselves suitably.』 (Imeraria)

As the queen's proclamation finishes, the army begins to advance slowly once again.

The border guards of Horant had already no intention to fight.



"The number of soldiers is more than 1000, you say? Haven't you made some kind of mistake?" (Kuzemu)

The messenger, who brought the information from the border with a feeling of desperation, was shouted at with an angry voice by Kuzemu just as he finished his report.

"H-However, I did confirm with these eyes that a large army has actually drawn near the national border!"

As if being vexed by getting doubted, the messenger raises his voice.

"With that kind of large army entering our country..." (Kuzemu)

"That's why I told you, didn't I?" (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who hung around Kuzemu's office as usual, laughs.

"It's odd to believe in them not coming to attack out of fear just because

those useless things made their appearance.” (Hifumi)

“Are you saying that there are countermeasures?” (Gaap)

Hifumi shakes his head towards the question of Gaap who visited this place frequently in order to listen to Hifumi.

“It won’t be fun, if I told you that, right? If you might get defeated once you simply show yourself in front of the enemy, consider the way of showing yourself.” (Hifumi)

“I-I see.” (Gaap)

Even that exchange makes Kuzemu irritated.

The state of them begging for instructions while bowing their heads towards Hifumi, who should be their enemy, is continuing endlessly in front of his eyes. Even the messenger, who doesn’t understand the circumstances, knows that Kuzemu has become displeased in the blink of an eye.

“Well then, it’s the crucial moment!” (Hifumi)

When Hifumi stands up all of a sudden, the looks of everyone inside the room gather on him.

“It was faster than expected, but if it goes according to my prediction, Imeraria and the others are probably aiming to come here directly. If that woman possesses the intelligence to lower her head for the sake of her goal, she will head here in one stretch by getting Fokalore’s help.” (Hifumi)

“It’s what I would have done”, Hifumi grinned at Kuzemu.

“T-Then, won’t their march stop once you come forth? Since we are currently in the process of building a friendship... right, a friendly relationship...”

“What madness are you talking about? I told you, didn’t I? Go to war, I said.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi draws his katana while stepping in front of Kuzemu.

Due to his far too natural motion, the people in the surroundings were completely unable to react until the katana’s point was thrust before Kuzemu’s left eye.

“If you don’t have any intention to do so, you will die here. That Gaap still has

promise, but..." (Hifumi)

"I got it! Please take away the weapon, I understood!" (Kuzemu)

Once Kuzemu raised his voice into something similar to a scream, he, who sweated like a waterfall, repeatedly breathed hard after the katana vanished.

"Gaap! I leave the defence of the castle to you bastard!" (Kuzemu)

"As you order." (Gaap)

Kuzemu, who issued reckless instructions, stood up while being unsteady on his feet and left the office.

Without there being anyone who follows him, Gaap, who got worked up, feigned ignorance at the state of Kuzemu, bowed towards Hifumi and left for the sake of preparing the interception.

"Hey." (Hifumi)

"Ah, yes."

Hifumi called out to the messenger who was left behind.

"This place is the capital city, right? I thought that there will be a large number of soldiers and such if they are scraped up together, but it looks like there are strangely few. Did something happen?" (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who held the impression that there were also quite a few soldiers outside the castle after he marched in by himself previously and even squared off against Suprangel, felt like asking while selfishly walking around inside the castle during daytime.

"Well, previously a large amount of soldiers were assembled by conscripting from the common populace, but since mercenaries were abolished by the late king, there isn't even a third left in comparison to before."

One can say there are many people remaining from before since the treatment of things like salary got improved, however the difference in numbers can readily be called a sharp decrease. Seeing the soldiers of Fokalore, Suprangel apparently believed 「It's useless even if there's a large number of riff-raff」. Around the time when the instruction unit arrived after being dispatched from Fokalore, he tried to circulate the planned budget into

treatment and equipment by decreasing the numbers rapidly.

“I see. So around how many soldiers are currently available to defend this capital?” (Hifumi)

“I don’t know the precise number, but it’s around 3000, I guess?”

“Hmm.” (Hifumi)

If the defending side has three times the numbers of the attacking side, it will likely be quite harsh, he thought, but Hifumi, who was bothered how Imeraria intends to fight with only that many soldiers, can’t suppress a broad grin. As the messenger was crept out, he opened the door to get away and that’s when Hifumi called out to him from behind.

“Ah, that’s right. Don’t flap your mouth too much about the true state of affairs.” (Hifumi)

The messenger, who had a bright red face out of embarrassment for having his blunder pointed out and anger showing 「The one who asked was you, wasn’t it?」 on his expression, left without saying a single word.

“... Well, it’s several days ahead ((of schedule))?” (Hifumi)

Muttering that, Hifumi threw himself on the reception sofa.

“I wonder how Alyssa will perform? I’m itching to do something, but I have to stay patient, must stay patient.” (Hifumi)

“Come to think of it, I left Origa behind”, he remembered this late in the game, but *she isn’t someone I have to particularly worry about, now is she?* he shut his eyes.



After Horant’s border guards divided to the left and right as if cleaved open by a wave, Vaiya’s group boldly advanced through their middle. Apparently feeling quite tense after all by going forward between the enemy, the knights had uniformly stiff expression and that also included the guards who came after them.

“It isn’t such a bold move once you actually have a go at it either.” (Nelgal)

Imeraria doesn't respond to Nelgal's mumbling. Once she turned her look to him after considering it odd, what she could see was him being nervous with his teeth chattering while having a serious look. When the platform wagon with Nelgal enters the space between the soldiers, he quickly stands up.

"I'm Nelgal who will become the king of this country, Horant. I don't know what kind of idiot considered something like attacking Orsongrande, but fortunately I acquired the help of Her Majesty, Imeraria, the queen of Orsongrande. Those, who are listening to what I'm saying now in this place, convey my words to the people and your colleagues!" (Nelgal)

Surprised showed on Imeraria's face for an instant due to the sudden speech, but her expression reverted to a serious one right away as she knows his aim. It's easy to tell that it's an unexpected action going by Nelgal's guards being surprised as well. Sabnak being startled showed on his face and his eyes kept being widely open.

Imeraria realizes that it's impossible for Sabnak to express himself without words and gestures.

"Orsongrande is powerful!" (Nelgal)

Nelgal declared in a loud voice.

"All of you are probably aware of the skills of the instruction unit dispatched by Fokalore! If you ask, haven't they even defeated a giant soldier who used magic tools which were supposed to be lost technology!? How do you all intend to oppose such Orsongrande!?" (Nelgal)

Although the soldiers of Horant are dumbfounded, dissatisfaction gradually appears on their faces.

Even they know of the strength of Orsongrande's soldiers. There is no one who doesn't know about them having easily invaded the royal castle and all of them witnessed a skill that advanced in a different direction of magic.

Though they don't raise their voices, displeasure is commonly shared by them. Bringing it up again at this point in time, they wonder what to do after having their own army being looked down upon.

"So, what will you do?" (Nelgal)

Nelgal reveals a smile.

“It’s fine for you to become our comrades. If it’s together with Orsongrande, just as the late king Suprangel planned, those skills will prove successful to protect ourselves from those killing us. Who was it that thrust you into a dangerous position now!? Besides, is there any reason to obey? If that’s not the case, isn’t overthrowing that someone together with us what you should do now? To bring down that fool!” (Nelgal)

The astonishment, felt by the soldiers, spreads just like a wave and gradually turns into voices praising Nelgal.

Nelgal, who surveyed the vicinity calmly, apologizes to Imeraria with a 「Sorry for acting on my own」 while sitting down.

“No, it was a good speech. Just as you said now, **while we are allies** my Orsongrande will be a good neighbour of Horant.” (Imeraria)

“... Thanks for your consideration. Let’s leave a deep impression.” (Nelgal)

“Well then, Sabnak-san, let’s go ahead. The destination is still far away.” (Imeraria)

The army advances.

More than half of Horant’s guards followed their march.

(It’s going well. ... Seeing that Fokalore’s army is on our side, Hifumi-sama himself probably won’t stand in our way, but I wonder when the enemy will show up. Along the route? Or will they lie in wait at the capital?) (Imeraria)

Imeraria stole a fleeting glance at Origa who sits diagonally behind her.

Imeraria has the intention to genuinely hasten the preparations of the sealing magic formulae in regards to Hifumi once the problem with Horant is put in order.

(For that reason, although I feel sorry about it, Origa-san, I will make the best use out of you.) (Imeraria)

There was something no one realised, even not Imeraria herself. Even though everyone pondered about restraining Hifumi, they don’t consider killing him. If you call this the naivety of the people of this world, including Imeraria, it ends here, but Imeraria still didn’t realize about there being an emotion inside herself that has changed into something that is not “hate” towards Hifumi.

Chapter 146 – Magic

Kuzemu, who left the room to perform his official duties, entered his private room located in the castle just like that.

It's a room for the sake of taking a nap in cases such as when he has no time to return to his principal residence. It's a room that can be obtained and granted only to high-ranking staff members who work in the castle. Because it's a temporary accommodation to the bitter end, it's only provided with a single bed, storage and equipment at the level of being able to prepare tea.

Kuzemu, who opened the closet and quickly changed into travelling clothes by putting on a coat, visited the office of the general who commands the soldiers without returning to his own office.

“It's me. I'm coming in.” (Kuzemu)

A maid ran out of the room next to Kuzemu, who entered the room in a familiar manner after giving just a short notice, while fixing her dishevelled dress in a hurry.

“Oh, how surprising, Your Excellency, the Prime Minister.”

Even though his manner of speech is polite, the young man is shy while slowly putting his shirt, which had more than half its buttons undone, in order.

“Tannin, you bastard became the general who is in charge of this country's army. Think about your reputation a bit.” (Kuzemu)

“No, no, being wooed by the other side, there's no reason to refuse it either. So, what's wrong for you to have such appearance?” (Tannin)

Without even a fraction of timidity, the man called Tannin asks while smoothing down the beard at the tip of his chin with a hand.

The appearance of Tannin, who is said to be in the first half of his thirties, is that of a soldier promoted after Kuzemu adjusted the current system. As noble of Horant, he was born into an Earl family as second son. For Kuzemu he is a man that is related to him as nephew.

Although he has the ability, his philandering is bad. He had to serve at remote

regions many times thanks to his character which wasn't liked by his superiors, but alongside Kuzemu seizing the power, he was summoned and raised to the top of the army after the ministers were disposed of.

It was a personnel affair with the reasoning that it would be easier to control the army with a blood relative, but seeing that Tannin's sticky fingers were far worse than expected, Kuzemu regretted it a bit.

"A large force of 1000 soldiers from Orsongrande is moving towards this place. Get ready to intercept them immediately. I will come with you as well."
(Kuzemu)

"Oh dear, if seen from a military viewpoint, we should tightly solidify the entrances of the capital for a defence. What we should do following that is to counter-attack after waiting for the enemy to tire out. That way we will certainly win while our side will have little losses as well." (Tannin)

"Moreover it's fine to take it easy as there's no necessity to go to a distant place", Tannin smiles.

Kuzemu was hesitating whether to tell him or not with a bitter expression, but *it won't do if I can't move at least the man in front of me as ally*, he made his resolve.

"... In the worst case there's the possibility that Nelgal is accompanying Orsongrande's troops. Being supported by guards who are accompanying him as well, countrymen will likely not recognise him even if they were able to see his face, but for him to come to the capital is bad." (Kuzemu)

On top of the army's organization, the people, who know about the castle's internal affairs, are mostly those working in the capital or its neighbourhood, some among those stationed in provincial cities and villages and there are also people who haven't entered the castle even once in their life.

"In other words, before Nelgal arrives at the capital, we want him to go missing, is what you mean?" (Tannin)

"Right. That's why it's necessary to leave here and strike them at once. Currently there are at least 2000 soldiers who can be moved." (Kuzemu)

"What about the capital's defence?" (Tannin)

“It’s fine to forget about it. We will take the reinforced soldiers with us as well. There are around five bodies that can be used, but they will likely serve their role.” (Kuzemu)

“It can’t be helped. After all it’s no one other but His Excellency the Prime Minister requesting so.” (Tannin)

Once he put on a jacket, that had gorgeous decorations, and straightened the neck of his shirt, a strange dignity could be seen which was usually hidden by his non-serious nature.

“By the way, what about the aforementioned visitor?” (Tannin)

“If it’s that man, Gaap is sticking to him. I have entrusted the protection of the castle to Gaap, but it probably won’t be a problem.” (Kuzemu)

“Well, that guy’s research field lies especially in magic soldiers. As it’s different from the actual working forces we take along, it will be alright. Rather than that, there’s something I’m bothered with...” (Tannin)

Kuzemu knitted his eyebrows due to Tannin dropping his voice’s tone with a serious expression.

“What is it?” (Kuzemu)

“Somehow it appears that a reasonable number among the maids feel inclined towards our visitor. Is this the appearance of a rival, they ask.” (Tannin)

Once Tannin, who smiled at Kuzemu whose face was blushing, clapped his hands, the maid, who ran out not long ago, entered while looking downward in embarrassment.

Tannin stands up as well and when they face each other in the middle of the room, he quickly hugs Levy’s waist.

“Ah, my precious Levy. I must head to the battlefield from now on. Please, I’d like you to forgive this crime of leaving you behind, my beloved.” (Tannin)

“Tannin-sama...” (Levy)

Stealing the lips of the maid who opened her mouth to mutter words, Tannin, who entangled his tongue with hers up to the point that Kuzemu was on the verge of shouting, put strength into the arm hugging her waist and pressed

Levy's thin body against his waist.

"I will definitely come back to you. Won't you please keep this room tidy until then? I intend to receive my reward for victory here." (Tannin)

The maid nods lightly while leaking a hot sigh due to his large hand stroking her from the waist to below while saying that.

"Uncle, no Your Excellency, the Prime Minister, I'd like to request a house for the sake of welcoming her at the dawn of victory, please." (Tannin)

Kuzemu sighed deeply as Tannin demanded that while looking over his shoulder. *For the maid called Levy it's probably her own home, but for Tannin will be a house where he keeps a mistress.*

"... Got it. However, I rely on you to definitely make sure about the matter just now. I will ascertain it myself as well." (Kuzemu)

"Leave it to me. Well then, I entrust the rest to you, Levy." (Tannin)

Seeing off Tannin, who leaves the room after giving her a light kiss, Kuzemu begins to prepare for taking out the reinforced soldiers while remembering his anxieties.

"They came up to here. No one is allowed to be a hindrance... That's right, let's use those as well. It's not a situation anymore where I should be holding back on releasing those." (Kuzemu)

The scenario for after the repelling of Orsongrande. In short, I have to ponder about Hifumi's treatment as well, Kuzemu pushes his way through the castle at a fast pace while releasing groans.



"They have gone out to strike at them? The populace, eh? There's probably things they don't want to show to the people of the castle. Ah~... Nelgal, huh? Even without that, their foundation will get unsteady if it comes to an attack on the capital."

"It seems we are to watch home. For caution's sake, it also serves as experiment of the methods we learned from professor. The castle's defence has been strengthened, but it doesn't seem like there will be any chance to test it."

Looking at the sight of a large number of people lining up in the square, which was established in the castle, while standing next to Hifumi, Gaap showed a bitter smile.

“It looks like they will take 2500 soldiers. 2000 infantrymen, 300 magic soldiers... if it was a defensive battle, there would be a chance for us to have a turn as well, but this time that’s unlikely.” (Gaap)

“Mmh...” (Hifumi)

While he gives a half-hearted answer, the intermediate soldiers, who received Tannin’s orders, form up in units. Generally speaking, the infantry is placed in front and behind the magic soldiers. When push comes to shove, the infantry will part left and right so that the magic soldiers are able to go to the front. The reinforced soldiers arrived while being tied with chains that appear to be magic tools.

All of the five reinforced soldiers will apparently walk in the front row.

“It looks like the big ones aren’t used as anything but a wall anymore.”
(Hifumi)

That’s a wise move, Hifumi judged.

Weapons, which have the measures to oppose them revealed, are worthless as hidden aces. Capitalizing on their pointless sturdiness, they will likely serve as bulwark against the spear throwers which Orsongrande will probably use.

Meanwhile the departure started beginning with the front row. A weird carriage follows behind the ranks and files. Five horses slowly pull the large carriage which is similar to a prefab hut with wheels attached to it.

“What’s that about?” (Hifumi)

“Oh, those are...” (Gaap)

Starting to explain, Gaap cast down his eyes after raising his voice with an 「Ah」.

“I-I’m sorry. To tell you the details about those...” (Gaap)

“Are those strong?” (Hifumi)

“... Stronger than the reinforced soldiers. It’s something that was later on

further developed by me. Please forgive me, but any more than that ((is impossible)).” (Gaap)

Hifumi, who judged that it’s apparently something fun going by his look, got excited by the existence of a secret weapon even he doesn’t know about and due to the general of Horant appearing to not be an idiot.

“Yea, that’s just right.” (Hifumi)

“Huh?” (Gaap)

“If you don’t have something at this level, you won’t be interesting as study case for Alyssa and Imeraria. Isn’t that fine?” (Hifumi)

Gaap doesn’t comprehend the role of the man in front of his eyes.

“H-However, although you say that, I was told that it might be harsh even with more than twice the military force if one takes on those weapons...”
(Gaap)

Doesn’t he notice that he is praising himself by saying such a thing? Even while keeping the details of those weapons ambiguous, Gaap talks about their threat.

However, all of that was ignored by Hifumi with a smile.

“It’s fine. If they die with just this much, that’s all there is to them. Will they try to hit someone collectively towards the direction of winning? That will only increase the numbers to be hit.” (Hifumi)

Due to Hifumi smoothly saying “The beastmen and such are easy prey as well”, Gaap realized.

Hifumi doesn’t take enemies or allies into consideration. His level of perception of them is just the colour difference of game pieces clashing against each other. He turns his sight at the box-shaped carriage with the weapons on it.

(If this swaying Horant wins, it will result in us fighting the beastmen which would be brought along by this Hifumi-san next. And, if we won against them as well, next...) (Gaap)

Barrenness has a limit, too, Gaap felt a headache. If we lose, it will be the end, but even if we won, the next battle would come. As long as this man exists, Horant will be engulfed in endless battles.

“Hifumi-sama, the preparations for your meal are finished.”

“Lunch has been made by us. We will be happy if it suits your taste.”

Three maids approached as they held down their skirts which fluttered in the wind on the rooftop while facing Hifumi with fleeting glances of upturned eyes.

“Ah, really? Thanks.” (Hifumi)

Once Hifumi thanks them, the maids drag him to the dining hall by pulling Hifumi’s hands while looking happy.

The soldiers, who are on guard duty on the rooftop, looking at that enviously made Gaap uneasy as he watched.

“Dangerous guys might appear to be attractive. I can’t understand.” (Gaap)

Those are egoistic thoughts, but above being taught skills, I’d like to have Hifumi go back home as soon as possible, Gaap assessed.

Due to Hifumi secretly slipping out and his whereabouts becoming unknown on that night, a part of the maids grieved while Gaap felt relieved.



“Noo, I give up, I surrender.” (Tannin)

“Tannin! Is this a situation where you can laugh around care-freely!?”
(Kuzemu)

Tanning and Kuzemu, who were together on a carriage at around the middle of the ranks, tried to cope with coming into contact with the enemy faster than they imagined, but they suffered fierce attacks from Orsongrande’s side at their vanguard.

It’s the second day after departing from the capital. It’s the period when the sun is at the zenith.

If it was like war until now, both armies, once they knew about nearing the enemy, would have representatives hold a conference and meanwhile take up positions. Clashing against each other was formerly the basics, but Orsongrande, which confirmed Horant’s reinforced soldiers according to the news from the front row, began to fire spears already after having observed them for several seconds.

“I also know about the power of those spears. But, if it’s the reinforced soldiers who don’t feel any pain, it’s irrelevant, isn’t it?” (Tannin)

“That is...” (Kuzemu)

According to what the soldier, who came to relay information, said, Orsongrande’s spears, which were shot precisely, destroyed the feet and knees of the reinforced soldiers in a flash and on top of restricting their movement, the spears were focussed at their heads.

“Before I head over here, two heads were destroyed and they became incapable of acting.”

“H-Have the magic soldiers attack! After all there are no remarkable magicians in Orsongrande!”

Due to the shouting Kuzemu, Tannin had their magicians step forward and ordered them to attack from a distance.

“During that time, please take the aforementioned gross ((things)) in the rear along. Let’s have this finished by using those.” (Tannin)

“I-Is that alright?”

The soldier and Kuzemu opened their eyes widely due to Tannin mentioning to use their treasured weapons even though the battle started just now.

“It’s fine. We will look like idiots if we lose due to being unwilling to deploy them, right? These things will end up routing them if they aren’t completely blocked by the enemy side bundling its strength. Hey, hurry up!” (Tannin)

Seeing off the runner who dashes away, Tannin grumbled.

“Well, if we make a bit of a comeback with magic, our chance of winning probably won’t be shaken as we outweigh them by numbers.” (Tannin)

Due to that remark, Kuzemu released the tension which entered his shoulders.

“If we don’t finish it quickly, the castle’s beauties might get stolen by our guest.” (Tannin)

While talking about something ridiculous, Tannin stood up and took his

beloved sword which was sheathed in a flashy scabbard that had jewels embedded within.

“Where are you going?” (Kuzemu)

“I’m off to the front line for a bit. At these times something called “morale” is important.” (Tannin)

Accepting the reins of his favourite horse, which was made to run along the carriage, from a soldier, he easily jumps on top of the saddle.

“Well then, Your Excellency, the Prime Minister. See you later.” (Tannin)



The ones being surprised by the sudden enemy contact wasn’t just Kuzemu’s army.

“Aren’t we uncivilized to shoot spears all of a sudden!?” (Imeraria)

“What stupid stuff are you talking about? It’s obvious that it’s the enemy if those reinforced soldiers are there. You should praise Fokalore’s soldiers, who splendidly knocked them down after taking the initiative, and the kingdom’s soldiers who are doing their best in protecting them.” (Origa)

“Ugununu...” (Imeraria)

Nelgal revealed a wry smile at Imeraria and Origa quarrelling thanks to the fact that there won’t be any help after watching his surroundings.

Alyssa has quickly gone to the front where the soldiers of Fokalore are and hands out commands for the sake of assigning targets. Sabnak was driven away to confirm information and Vaiya was at the front line to begin with.

For not only Fokalore but Orsongrande’s royal army to shoot their spear throwers in alignment is probably Vaiya’s decision.

A knight, who came running from the front line, shouts towards Sabnak.

“It looks like we were successful in making the reinforced soldiers mostly powerless! I don’t know the total number of enemies, but we were able to confirm that their files and ranks are continuing equal to our numbers or above them!”

“How about the enemy’s movements?” (Sabnak)

Sabnak hands over a cup filled with water while asking.

“Thank you very much. The enemy is recovering from the temporary confusion, the infantrymen, who were behind the reinforced soldiers, are showing movements towards spreading out left and right.”

“I see...” (Sabnak)

“Sabnak-san, isn't there any chance to tell them our side of the story?”
(Imeraria)

Sabnak answered Imeraria's question with a 「Though it's regrettable, but no」.

“At least until the long distance battle ends, it will probably be difficult. Seeing that it's very probable for magic soldiers being over there, I won't allow it as Your Majesty will be defenceless.” (Sabnak)

“And if it turns into a rally with our side's magic soldiers?” (Imeraria)

“That might be hard.” (Sabnak)

The number of Orsongrande's magic soldiers is, to say it frankly, **meagre**. Their skill levels are low as well. If someone at Origa's joined the army, they would probably climb to the top of the magic soldiers in the twinkling of an eye.

“Since their numbers are low, it will take the shape of waiting until the opponent's side runs out of mana by using a platform wagon as shield for a while, if it turns into a rally of magic. In that case, it means that we will be pinned down after leaving from here...” (Sabnak)

Going by past measurements versus magicians, enduring with large shields was considered to be an established tactic, but they weren't able to disregard human losses either. *This time we will make use of the usual trick of Fokalore to change the solid platform wagons into shields by knocking them over*, Sabnak decided before their departure.

“Umm...” (Puuse)

Once everyone turns their sight towards the fragile voice, there was the elf Puuse who raised her small hand.

“Can't you use a magic barrier?” (Puuse)

“What’s that?”

Due to Sabnak plainly asking by reflex, Puuse is surprised and explains it briefly.

To put it simply, it’s a magic bulwark against magic, but there are many elves who have become strong at it because of the long sealing. Puuse can use it as well.

However, because only magic as means of attack was advanced in research among humans, that type of skill ended up being lost.

“If you like, I can help you with the barrier, I think.” (Puuse)

“Err...” (Sabnak)

It was a welcome offer but, Sabnak feels reluctant to have her, who is just a guest to the bitter end, participate in the battle.

Even for Imeraria it’s the same. She had the drive of wanting to observe it as person who researches magic, but she restrained herself with *This place is ((a battlefield))*.

The only one not restraining herself is Origa.

“That’s wonderful. Please show us by all means. I will accompany you to the front line, too.” (Origa)

“Ah, yes.” (Puuse)

Even a platform wagon got taken.

“Please wait.” (Imeraria)

“Good grief”, Imeraria, who shook her head, gives the instruction 「We will advance to the front line together with this platform wagon」.

“It’s probably better if you take command at the front as well, Sabnak-san. At any rate, Nelgal-sama and me don’t want to miss an opportunity to make a speech. If they are able to deploy a barrier, there will likely be little danger, too.” (Imeraria)

“A-As you have ordered.” (Sabnak)

Once Sabnak gives a signal to the soldier steering the platform wagon, the soldiers begin to advance to the front by pushing their way through.

When Puuse starts to chant, Origa's and Imeraria's gazes focus on her.

(That's not easy to do...)

While being stared at with serious eyes, Puuse, who chose the timing on her own discretion, deploys her mana and a faintly translucent wall extends by seemingly boiling up from the ground.

Immediately following that, magic attacks started from Horant's side, but fireballs, rocks, wind and water, all of it scatters at the moment it comes in contact with the barrier.

"This is amazing."

"I see, it's the materialization of mana that holds no attribute..."

Within the mix of praising and analysing voices, Puuse blushed while concentrating her consciousness on the preservation of the barrier.

(It's because I'm good at healing and barriers though.) (Puuse)

Puuse decided to stay silent about her being utterly useless in regards to offensive magic.

"Aah!" (Origa)

Suddenly Origa stood up and raised her voice.

"Hifumi-sama is watching." (Origa)

"Eh? From where?"

Although it's unknown how she sensed him, just as Origa says, Hifumi was care-freely observing from a place separated from the highway.

Even the rabbit beastwoman Viine, who heard Hifumi's name, shifted her ears and head in hurry, but she wasn't able to find him.

"I can't stay like this. If we are observed by Hifumi-sama, I will fight as well... ouch!"

What hit the head of Origa, who stood up while grasping her wand in a hurry, with a clunk was a small stone wrapped in a parchment.

Only 「Stay silent and watch」 in Hifumi's poor handwriting is written on it.

"Now that he mentions it, this is Alyssa's trial..." (Origa)

Behind Origa, who sat down once again while being downhearted, the

tigerboy Malfas, who was nervous due to the atmosphere of a battlefield, whiffed, looked in the direction from where the stone came flying, opened his mouth and became stiff.

The figure of Hifumi, which Malfas discovered, was that of the man who destroyed his village.

Chapter 147 – Breathe Easy

“Oh, what did the tiger cub see?”

Malfas ran off towards Hifumi in silence.

On the other side of Malfas, who fully demonstrated the physical prowess of beastmen with an expression of rage, the figure of Gengu, who chased after him in a hurry, appeared in the field of vision of Hifumi who is leisurely lying in wait.

“You are aaaahh!” (Malfas)

Despite there still being distance left between them, he leaps up while revealing the sharp claws on both his paws.

There’s also the difference in physique, but more than anything, something like an attack that was sent in a straight line to the degree of being stupid can be dodged by Hifumi with closed eyes.

Hifumi, who avoided it by tilting his head slightly, delivered a frontal kick into Malfas’ soft belly.

“Gyan!” (Malfas)

While watching Malfas who is rolling around while holding his belly, Gengu stood out-of-breath in front of Hifumi and bowed.

“Sorry for not contacting you ~ssu. I brought this tigerboy along as he said that he wants to receive training from you, Hifumi-san, but...” (Gengu)

“Oh, is that so?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi nods lightly while apparently having forgotten about being attacked. Hifumi, who stood in front of Malfas who has fainted and is smeared with dirt, looked down on him with the hands in his sleeves*. *(T/N: says pockets here but I don’t remember hakama’s having any outer pockets like western jackets or such)*

“Hey, tiger child.” (Hifumi)

The best Malfas can do is glaring at Hifumi who starts to ask a question.

“You are far too weak. Let alone you having not changed at all from before, you got even weaker? I told you that I would kill you the next time we met, but this won’t do. I don’t have even any motivation to kill you.” (Hifumi)

“Hifumi-sama.” (Origa)

Origa, who approached from behind Hifumi without making even a single sound, addressed him in a low voice. The iron-ribbed fan is in her hand and she is gripping it tightly to a degree that blood is spilling.

“Did you finish your talk? If you don’t mind, I want to get rid of this rude fellow with my own hands.” (Origa)

Her cold gaze seizes Malfas.

He was also surprised about her having approached him, who is a beastman, without getting noticed, but rather than that, it was a shock for the beauty, that looked at him with a smile until not long ago, to request permission to kill him.

“W-Why...?” (Malfas)

Tears due to a mix of pain and sadness overflow.

Trying to cut in there, Gengu kneels in a way of protecting Malfas.

“M-Madam! Can’t you please show some leniency!? This fellow is misunderstanding something as well, I think...?” (Gengu)

“How bothersome.” (Hifumi)

Muttering a brief complaint, Hifumi decided to explain it briefly at this place. It’s about Malfas being one of the two children he overlooked at the time of crushing the village of tiger beastmen in the wastelands.

And about having told him to get strong the next time they met each other. He didn’t tell his name though.

“... Then, without abiding to what he was told by you, Hifumi-sama, he is still as weak as he was. After all he is a brat who is stubbornly difficult to save. Well, even if I didn’t know, it was my mistake to have brought a guy like this in front of you, Hifumi-sama. Please punish us, including this dog as well, for being responsible. It’s the same sin for the elf and rabbit as well.” (Gengu)

Hifumi’s hand grasped Origa’s right hand which was raised overhead.

“Won’t you wait...? Hey, why do I have to stop you? Even though I’m enduring for the sake of Alyssa and that stupid queen, you...” (Hifumi)

While feeling the pain of her wrist being tightened to the limit, Origa gulped with a 「Ha」.

Shouldn't I be the one knowing better than anyone that Hifumi is constantly thinking about wanting to kill others more than anyone else? Once she recalled, Origa, who noticed that he got angry at the time when she killed Ayperos, the younger brother of Imeraria, as well, felt as if it was Hifumi’s kindness to scold her, also including the pain of her wrist being constricted with a force similar to a vise.

“E-Excuse me. G-Grasp it tighter, punishment for me, more...” (Origa)

“Idiot.” (Hifumi)

“Ah.” (Origa)

Flinging Origa away by releasing her wrist with a “phooey”, Hifumi brings his face close to Malfas who is squatting down.

“So, what will you do? I will kill you now if you give up. However, right... Gengu.” (Hifumi)

“Aye!” (Gengu)

“How is Reni’s group doing?” (Hifumi)

Gengu, who was beffuddled for just an instant due to the abrupt question, swallowed his spit and began to talk.

“Having reached the point that many are living in the human city, the slums have grown rapidly ~ssu. There are also quarrels with the human part of the city, Reni-san and Helen-san are protecting the city by doing their best now... ~ssu.” (Gengu)

“There’s plenty of beastmen and humans. On top of that the elves are living together with them. If it goes on like this, the power will reverse in regards to the human-only city”, Gengu explained earnestly.

“Moreover, it’s been discovered that beastmen can use magic, too. Look there, the rabbitwoman Viine-san who is over there, she has learned magic with

her whole heart in her wish for being helpful to you, Hifumi-san. Because of that she was able to come here to meet you ~ssu.” (Gengu)

“Hmm... then let’s do it like this.” (Hifumi)

Grabbing Malfas head, Hifumi forcibly matched his line of sight with Malfas’.

“You, go back to the wastelands. And then show me a part of your power by making good use of what you possess and destroy a human city. Once you are able to do that, I will be once again your opponent.” (Hifumi)

“A human city...” (Malfas)

Hifumi asks the shocked Malfas 「You can’t?」.

“Ah, how regrettable. Though you probably thought that even I won’t be able to win if you were able to unify the beastmen. Rather, a tiger has to refine a tiger-like group combat.” (Hifumi)

While making fun of him in a strange tone, Hifumi separates obviously having lost any interest in him.

By the way, it’s Hifumi’s misunderstanding, but tigers originally hunt individually and not in groups.

“At any rate, don’t disturb me as I’m currently observing.” (Hifumi)

While Hifumi sees them off with a wave of his hand, Malfas stands up after being helped by Gengu. Tears were glittering in his eyes, but his look has become completely that of a beast.

“You are called Malfas, right?” (Origa)

When called out by Origa, Gengu’s and Malfas’ shoulders quivered with a jolt.

“Work hard this time for sure to not make Hifumi-sama disappointed.” (Origa)

Gengu receives the paper, Origa quietly held out, in place of Malfas.

“It’s probably good for you to return to the wastelands by going back to Fokalore now since they can give you several soldiers to guard and guide you. Train for a while in Fokalore before you head into the wastelands. Show this paper to a staff member of Fokalore. It should serve you well.” (Origa)

“It’s a welcome offer, but why...?” (Gengu)

“Don’t you understand?” (Origa)

Although she’s smiling, she’s scary.

“Realizing Hifumi-sama’s desires are my goal of life now. If it’s for that cause, I will do anything. I will kill anyone.” (Origa)

While caressing her right wrist preciously, Origa looks up to the sky.

“Fight. Fight by involving all those who can fight. And kill Hifumi-sama with all of them.” (Origa)

“However”, Origa glared once again.

“If you are unable to do anything but lukewarm attacks like the one just now, your life and the lives of the ones in your surroundings will simply vanish. Engrave that into your heart.” (Origa)



“For there to be such magic...” (Tannin)

Was it a mistake to have deployed the magic soldiers in one go in order to win easily? Tannin grind his teeth in vexation, but it couldn’t be seen on his expression.

“It’s already fine to pull back the magic soldiers. We will reform the ranks by bringing the infantry to the forefront while screening with suitable spear fire.” (Tannin)

Tannin reviews the current state while listening to the soldier, who received the instructions, relaying them in a loud voice.

The advantage in numbers superiority shouldn’t have been overturned yet, he believed. For our side’s attacks mostly not reaching is painful, but on the other hand our own army’s losses are few as well.

“We will be forced back against our will by infantry as is, huh? Although it’s lacking in smartness, what’s certain is...” (Tannin)

The problem: Is Nelgal on Orsongrande’s side? Assuming he is, it’s very likely that it will turn into a melee once both infantries clash despite us having concluded where he is. Once that happens, it will be troublesome to search for a single person.

However, that ended up being a needless worry.

The person, they are looking for, made an appearance on the other side.

“Tannin-sama! Nelgal-sama... or a person calling himself like that has appeared!”

“... Oh?” (Tannin)

Tannin stared in wonder and grinned broadly after a few blinks towards the yelled words of the soldier who came running and was panting.

“Inform everyone, that’s an imposter. And tell them that the scoundrel, who impersonates to be the crown prince, must be eliminated by our hands.”

(Tannin)



At the time Nelgal left for the front line, his appearance looked impressive like a high-ranking person, who wore an extravagant robe, and his horse, which possessed a magnificent stature, was equipped with a sparkling saddle that had jewels embedded within. It was somehow boastful.

(I thought such kind of acts will happen after the coronation though.) (Nelgal)

Once he proceeded at walking pace while smiling wryly, Orsongrande’s soldiers made a path for him and he was able to pass through the crowd of people until in front of the barrier.

With Horant’s magic attacks having ended, he can see that movement of the ranks has started while spears are fired sporadically.

“My dear soldiers of Horant!” (Nelgal)

Nelgal raises his voice which is getting gradually hoarse as he uses a volume he isn’t used to.

With him being apparently audible to Horant’s side’s front line as well, he pretty much realized that several gazes were facing his way.

“I’m the next king, Nelgal! Thanks to the kindness of Imeraria-dono, the ruler of Orsongrande, I arrived at this place. I will return to Adolamelk and hold a memorial service for His Majesty, the great Suprangel! I don’t know who is commanding the army, but open a path!” (Nelgal)

Due to him having boldly declared that, Horant’s soldiers were astir, but even

that came to an end right away and the changes in the ranks continued even while he tilted his head to the side ((in confusion)).

“It seems that they decided for Your Majesty to be an imposter.” (Vaiya)

Once Vaiya, who approached casually from behind Nelgal, mutters that, Nelgal shakes his head and says 「How disappointing」.

“And, as I’m still not crowned, it isn’t “Your Majesty.” ... As planned, please go ahead.” (Nelgal)

“Nelgal-sama... that might be difficult, but...” (Vaiya)

“Vaiya-dono” (Nelgal)

Turning around, Nelgal shows a cheerful expression.

“Originally that was something I had to do since a lot earlier. While receiving so much support, I won’t act as if reproaching your country. Besides, in a sense it’s good this way, is what I think.” (Nelgal)

“I-It’s good?” (Vaiya)

“Yes, it’s a good opportunity. If nothing had happened and if I had returned to the castle after finishing my studying, I might have been crowned. ... But, with just being nominated, I still wouldn’t have any kind of achievements either.” (Nelgal)

Vaiya lacked the words to retaliate.

He is more or less a blood-relative of the former king, but it’s a quite distant relation. Of course there would likely be many complaints, too, Vaiya was able to imagine that easily. Even the former king Suprangel, who decided his studying abroad in Fokalore and not within the country, might have taken such measure in apprehension of those circumstances.

“It’s an excellent chance. If I triumphantly return to the castle after displaying my commanding as king in this place, it will probably make my voice and face known to the people of my nation. I’d like to have your country help for a bit longer, but accordingly I will stride across the battlefield majestically just like Her Majesty, Imeraria.” (Nelgal)

“That is...” (Vaiya)

Though a large part of that is due to Imeraria bearing a heart of rivalry towards Hifumi while she hides her fear. Even so that might be said by me since I'm aware of it, Vaiya felt.

“Those are promising words. Well then, just as planned, good fortunes of war.”

“Thank you.”

Once finishing the conversation, Vaiya, who tightened his expression, faces to the front.

“Elites of Horant! Have you still not heard my voice!?” (Nelgal)

While Nelgal was shouting in a thunderous voice, Vaiya quietly left from behind Nelgal.



“Your Majesty, Imeraria, there are no movements from Horant. It looks like they are a bit shaken by Nelgal-sama’s words, but beyond that...” (Vaiya)

“Is that so? ... Then, please proceed as planned.” (Imeraria)

“As you command!” (Vaiya)

Vaiya, who bowed atop his horse, shifted his look to behind Queen Imeraria, who was on the platform wagon without change, even after Nelgal mounted a horse.

There he saw Hifumi who was indulging in pastry of the royal purveyor, drinking black tea and sitting on the floor of a platform wagon while ignoring the rabbitwoman who was continuing to tell him how much she wanted to meet him again with a flushed face as she approached him to a distance of being about to embrace Hifumi.

Moreover, next to them there’s Origa who seems to be thoroughly enquiring Sabnak about the rules and treatment of noble’s concubines and marriages in the kingdom. Sabnak has limited knowledge regarding the customs of nobles. As he isn’t well-informed about the law, except those regarding troubles on the streets, he is sweating with a miserable expression while being glared at for being hard pressed to answer.

“Umm, that is...” (Vaiya)

“Don’t mind it. Let’s hurry up for the sake of Nelgal-sama and Horant for now?” (Imeraria)

“Yes, as you wish!” (Vaiya)

Due to Imeraria’s words, which made her irritation clear as day, Vaiya makes his horse gallop to the rear in hurry.

“Good grief... Sabnak-san!” (Imeraria)

“Y-Yes!” (Sabnak)

Sabnak stood up with a smile. He thought it was a lifeboat from Imeraria.

“What’s this as Captain of the Royal Knight Order, this predicament!? Don’t you think that you are lacking self-awareness as person who protects the royal court?” (Imeraria)

Sabnak is confused due to what he believed to be a reinforcement being in fact a pincer attack .

“Eh? No, but...” (Sabnak)

“It isn’t something overly nice, but the problem of men and women is an indispensable part in the noble’s society. Isn’t it also necessary to sometimes resolve a quarrel between fellow nobles by forcing your way through?” (Imeraria)

Ahead of Imeraria’s gaze, on the other side of the prostrating Sabnak, the nodding Origa is visible. And also the figure of Hifumi who is heartily tossing the sweets, she looked forward to herself, into his mouth while being served by a beautiful rabbitwoman. Imeraria, who got excessively angry due to that spectacle, snorted with a “Humph.”

“As there are also people who feel insecure about their position with the mistresses increasing by about one or two, please study it properly.” (Imeraria)

“... If you have any complaints, I will listen to them directly, Your Majesty.” (Origa)

“Oh my, I haven’t talked about you, Origa-san... or do you feel uneasy?”

(Imeraria)

Due to Imeraria calmly fixing her sitting posture after turning her sight towards Hifumi and leaking a forced “Ufufu,” Origa tightly grasps her iron-ribbed fan with both hands and is on the verge of breaking it.

“Gugigi...”

“O-Origa-san, calm down.” (Sabnak)

Ignoring Sabnak who tries to soothe her, Origa sat down next to Hifumi and gently placed a hand on his shoulder.

Hifumi holds the black tea in his mouth without showing any particular reaction.

“Madam, are you alright...?” (Viine)

Almost glaring at Viine who calls out to her in worry, Origa relaxed her brows with her fingers.

“I-I’m alright. A-After all I won’t lose to a situation of this degree as legal wife...” (Origa)



The soldiers, who received Vaiya’s message, in the vicinity of the platform wagons with their lively and carefree atmosphere advance to the front. They are the soldiers of Horant, who joined Orsongrande’s side after accepting Nelgal’s persuasion along the way. Currently they are an unit directly commanded by Nelgal.

Their numbers are 2.000.

They advance orderly aiming for Nelgal, who is their supreme commander, in a long procession. They will escort the real king to his throne. The soldiers, who understood it as opportunity to achieve the highest of all honours, were filled to the brim ((with pride)) in mind and body.

Chapter 148 – Thriller

Behind the mounted Nelgal the soldiers of Orsongrande were replaced by those of Horant before anyone really noticed. They, including many magic soldiers as well, are firmly staring at their fellow countrymen in front. Ahead of their gazes was also the figure of Tannin who was was waiting and watching the situation on horseback.

“I give up, that’s too much.” (Tannin)

Tannin smiled bitterly at himself having miscalculated.

Nelgal was probably given a permit to depart the country signed by the former king Suprangel as something that proves his identity, but I didn’t think that a person, who opposes Kuzemu with only that much, will be able to rally such numbers.

“Good grief, I expected that uncle has aspects where he lacks in popularity, but... should I praise Nelgal’s side on top of that? He brought along a considerable number of soldiers.” (Tannin)

Although he is playing the fool, the sweat doesn’t stop flowing down his cheeks.

According to Tannin’s analysis, the soldiers directly commanded by Nelgal, who are currently confronting the 3.000 soldiers strong side of Kuzemu, are exceeding 2.000 in numbers. The rest of the soldiers, who were at the border, and most of the military forces lent by almost all nobles of Horant, who swore their allegiance to Nelgal, along the road to the capital.

The nobles’ thoughts are simple. Nelgal, who has a friendly relation to Orsongrande, is superior due to his economical future prospects. Of course, that also includes the meaning that they don’t want to fight with Orsongrande. Naturally they haven’t explained it as anything but a simple battle for justice to the soldiers.

“If you are intelligent soldiers of Horant, you will be able to judge which side is just! You would know about me and you would choose to fight together with me! Me being here is proof of this. It’s evidence of me standing here as legal

successor!” (Nelgal)

Nelgal’s voice can be even heard by Tannin.

Of course that speech is also heard by those in the surroundings. Their looks, which are from time to time examining each other uneasily, are gloomy.

“This will be harsh.” (Tannin)

Tannin’s small mutter wasn’t heard by anyone, for good or bad.

“I will look at the situation for a bit. Once I give the signal, ((send)) those gross ((things)) to the front line... no, release them behind the front row.” (Tannin)

The soldier, who heard the order, gives his opinion to Tannin in panic.

“Please wait. In that case the soldiers in the front row will end up getting dragged into it.”

“It’s what I decided.” (Tannin)

“However...”

“Those are uncontrollable things anyway. Besides, the lot in the front row will betray us no matter what.” (Tannin)

“Well, watch it”, while glaring at the state of the soldiers who are in his and Nelgal’s surroundings, Tannin snorted atop the horseback.



With people appearing in front of their eyes whom they obviously know as they are soldiers from the same country, the soldiers of Tannin’s side, and especially the group in the front row, were confused.

“Those are, without a doubt, soldiers from Horant, aren’t they?”

“But, the order is...”

“The king is higher ranked than the prime minister, right!?”

“Ain’t it different since he still ain’t the king?”

With several of them exchanging words and letting their opinions freely adrift, they wait for an answer by someone. They are excellent soldiers thus they won’t make a judgement by themselves.

“As someone who will become king.” (Nelgal)

Nelgal’s words incite them.

“If you open the way, I shall treat you as my people. However, if you fall as low as being underlings of someone who monopolizes our state, there’s no way I can forgive you.” (Nelgal)

However, by no means is it easy.

“Though I don’t wish for battle, I will never hesitate to fight for the sake of guiding Horant towards being a righteous country!” (Nelgal)

The spears from Tannin’s side stopped and the magic barrier was released. When Nelgal slowly advances his horse, his military forces advance as well. The soldiers, who are bewildered and puzzled, retreated while breaking the ranks due to his pressure.



The things, which Tannin “transported” from the capital, were creatures which stopped being human.

They were even hidden from Suprangel. Kuzemu took over the research, which was ordered by the dead Crown Prince Veldore, and brought them even to a state where they can be used albeit being incomplete.

Apparently Veldore planned to apply this to all regular soldiers in the event this research was successful.

That research was called “Immortal Soldiers Project” at the time when Veldore was still alive.

“It’s Tannin-sama’s order. Prepare their release.”

“... Is that really alright?”

A soldier of the carriage, which transports... no, quarantines the immortal soldiers, knows about the carriage’s contents and therefore asks in return with a frightened expression.

“You are still better off. You know the timing to run away. But...”

The soldier, who conveyed the order, made a twisted face while watching his allies who are confused at the close vicinity of the front line. He was easily able

to imagine the outcome once the immortal soldiers were released.

“It’s still only an order to prepare them. That doesn’t mean it was decided to release them at all.”

“That’s mere consolation”, anyone could comprehend that.



“I-I will stop! Do you know where I should go!?”

A single soldier, unable to endure Nelgal’s pressure, discarded his weapon.

“I-In that case I will quit as well!”

Once they lost all restraints, weapons are tossed away one after the other by the soldiers at the front.

“Wait! Deserting is a heavy crime!”

Once people, who leave the ranks towards outside the highway, start appearing one after another, the commanding officer orders all soldiers to return in panic, but even if there are those who are perplexed by his voice, there’s only few who abide.

“It’s much better than treason!”

When someone yells that, the surroundings agree to it and approving voices spread like a ripple on the water.

By now even Nelgal has stopped his advance and is watching the situation.

“... Even if they don’t become our allies, it will be fine as long as ((their ranks)) collapse like this.” (Nelgal)

At the preparatory meeting with Imeraria, she approved of Nelgal’s speech and consented to the soldiers accompanying him. They would head for the capital by passing through while being thoroughly cautious as long as they don’t become hindrances by not obeying.

If it seemed that a part of them would attack, it would deliver a considerable shock.

The attacks of Fokalore soldiers, who came into contact with the enemy first, were completely irregular, but Nelgal feels relieved in his mind as he was able to develop the situation according to his hypothesis.

Even now the chaos is lasting, but with the state of files and ranks apparently already gone, the soldiers, who escape, are gradually increasing. If it goes on like that, the front line will lose its function as army. Once that happens, any general, if they are decent, will likely return to the capital to retreat for a moment.

However, Nelgal saw a single matter that bothered him. On the other side of the enemy's front line, which began to crumble, there was a strange, square carriage.

Nelgal has no recollections of a carriage that had such a shape. He pondered whether it might be a box-shaped carriage which was made for someone in the higher governmental service, but considering that no window can be found, even not a small one to degree of being pitiful.

It's a critical moment, Nelgal was overly concerned. However, even so he won't understand something he can't see. He won't see the box' contents unless he doesn't try to open it.



“Huh?”

Mingling with Nelgal's soldiers who have fortified the front line, several soldiers of Fokalore have taken up position in a part of the ranks and Alyssa was there as their commander as well. It turned into such situation once they ended up being pushed out at the time when suddenly a great number of allied soldiers of Horant headed to the front.

At the preparatory meeting it was originally decided that Fokalore's and Orsongrande's soldiers would yield their spot once Horant's soldiers head to the front, but Alyssa and only around 20 soldiers have remained in order to grasp the state of affairs.

“Did you see anything, Director?”

The soldier, who gave Alyssa, who said that she can't see well as there are many adults, a shoulder ride, asks with a smile while being watched with resentful eyes by his colleagues in the vicinity.

“The other side has been mixed up, but there's some large carriage.” (Alyssa)

“Carriage? Has the son of a noble come here?”

“It’s not that gaudy. How to call it? It looks just like a big box.” (Alyssa)

While watching the other side through a pipe made with both hands, once Alyssa tilted her head to the side, the door attached to that box was opened.

“Ueh...” (Alyssa)

Seeing the things that came out, Alyssa grimaced while extending her tongue out.

With far-sightedness soldiers, who wore a simple armour, could be seen at first. They weren’t tall or muscular but rather thin.

Their bizarreness was visible on their faces which could be observed beneath their smooth helmets.

“What, are those...?” (Alyssa)

The nose bridges are low as if they were chipped off, the eyelids dangled and drool was constantly spilling from in-between the violet lips. Though it’s insane on a first glance, their faces have violet and darkish specks all over. Alyssa didn’t know but, it was the post-mortem lividity of people who died by poison and similar.

Their expressions are flat as if caved in and they are merely absent-minded.

“I have seen those somewhere... ah!” (Alyssa)

What Alyssa recalled was the large number of corpses she saw in the town of Vichy called Rhone. Corpses of those who were killed while being expressionless and corpses which had decayed slowly.

Hitting the head of the soldier in front of her eyes with a *tap tap*, Alyssa descended from atop his shoulders in a hurry and grandly vomited right at the spot.

“D-Director?”

“Are you alright? Water, here you go!”

The soldiers, who have surrounded Alyssa in panic, offer towels and water bottles to her but Alyssa refuses while spiting out.

“Peh, peh... I-I’m fine. Rather than that...” (Alyssa)



“Gyaaah!”

“S-Stop it!”



The instant Alyssa tried to give some instructions, screams came from the enemy's side.

The immortal soldiers began to attack the soldiers on Kuzemu's side, which were nearby, first and not their enemy.

Don't they possess swords? Recklessly swinging blades which were installed at the gauntlets on both their hands, they are biting and clinging at those who were close to them.

In order to save their captured comrades, the other soldiers cut at the arms and backs of the immortal soldiers, but let alone separating them, the immortal soldiers didn't even react.

“Aah...”

Once a soldier, who lost a great amount of blood after being bitten into the neck, used up all his strength, the immortal soldiers' target shifted to another soldier who is still standing or walking.



“What are those...?”

Due to the tragedy being unfolded in front of their eyes, Nelgal's surroundings were simply having their breath taken away while not knowing how to deal with the situation. Alyssa arrived there after pushing her way through, or rather jumping over the soldiers guarding Nelgal.

“A-Alyssa-san?” (Nelgal)

“Pull back the soldiers right away! Those are dangerous!” (Alyssa)

Without waiting for his reply, Alyssa grabbed the bit of the horse with Nelgal on it and skilfully changed its direction. Jumping on the horse behind Nelgal, she began to make the horse gallop by lightly striking its rear.

“What has happened? It looked to me as if the soldiers on the other side are killing each other...” (Nelgal)

“Though it’s simple to explain since not much time has passed, it’s Horant’s drugs or magic tools? I saw people who didn’t know pain or fear. And it’s the same with them.” (Alyssa)

Once they arrived in front of the platform wagon with Imeraria on it, Alyssa jumped off the horse and Nelgal stopped the horse by pulling its reins in panic.

“What happened? It looks like the other side is in an uproar, but...” (Imeraria)

“Ask Nelgal for an explanation!” (Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa running away towards the location, where Fokalore’s soldiers have gathered, while saying that over her shoulder, Orsongrande’s soldier turned angry looks at her, but Imeraria herself doesn’t care about that at the moment.

“Oh. Horant’s hidden ace made its appearance, didn’t it?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who heard the conversation, runs off as if being fired off by the platform wagon the minute he stands up and Origa chases after him in silence. Even while Viine was perplexed by the sudden event, she started to pursue Hifumi after sending a fleeting glance to Puuse.

“Err...” (Puuse)

“I believe it will be fine if you take a rest here. Won’t you drink some tea as well?” (Imeraria)

Imeraria smiled at the wavering Puuse.

“Princess-sama, you are quite calm about it.” (Puuse)

“I got used to it already.” (Imeraria)

Ordering for black tea to be prepared, Imeraria turned her look towards the front line once again.

“Besides, now is still not the time for me to make my move.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria smiled while offering sweets.

“Let’s leave the fighting scenes to those liking them. What a lady flourishes at is a suitable scene that uses more wit.” (Imeraria)

“I see.” (Puuse)

Due to Imeraria's way of talking like an upper class lady, Puuse opened her mouth in admiration. Going by appearance, she has a sweet, obedient character, but her lifestyle in the wilderness of basically spending time with gathering within the forest is close to that of beastmen.

"... Huh? But, the other day you mounted a horse and flew towards the battlefield..." (Sabnak)

"Sabnak-san." (Imeraria)

Glaring at Sabnak who has remembered something unnecessary, Imeraria steps down her heel with a *clonk*

"Don't you believe it's weird that our army doesn't react in any way just because I'm not moving?" (Imeraria)

"I will have them deal with it right away! Vaiya, where did you go!? Vaiya!" (Sabnak)

Seeing off Sabnak who jumped off the platform wagon as if running away, Imeraria grumbled 「Geez」.

"Your Majesty, Imeraria... it's really difficult for me to tell you, but they are likely putting to use the soldiers who took a magic potion which was developed in Horant." (Nelgal)

"What kind of drug is that?" (Imeraria)

"To the bitter end it's a speculation, but", giving that preface, Nelgal explains.

"Among the things which were researched by the Crown Prince who was subjugated by Earl Tohno... and died, there were some making it possible to dull a human's fear and sense of pain. On the other hand there were also items which amplify the feeling of anger. It's for a short period, but, looking at the situation, wasn't it successful as it produced "soldiers who don't feel any pain while being aggressive" ...?" (Nelgal)

"I see. Those large soldiers seemed to be very slow as well. Those work with the size of a regular soldier, you say. But, won't they be weaker than the large soldiers in that case?" (Imeraria)

"What meaning does it have to change them into the same size as a normal

soldier?” Imeraria asks.

“The reinforced soldiers have difficulties to make use of their size. Their equipment is custom-made as well.” (Nelgal)

If they had the the size of common soldiers, they would be able to use the equipment of other soldiers as well and on top of that it would work out once they are crammed into cages like slaves. Even if they were given items looted from the dead, they wouldn't complain either.

“In other words...” (Imeraria)

“If you use a large amount of immortal soldiers all at once, it's possible to crush an enemy with soldiers who will come attacking even after getting cut or stabbed. That's what it means.” (Nelgal)

“A considerably troublesome drug was developed there.” (Imeraria)

Nelgal tilted his head to the side due towards Imeraria who tasted the black tea after blowing on it with a “Hapheew.”

“A considerably, that is... you seem to have taken it quite calmly though...” (Nelgal)

“Nelgal-sama, for the people of Fokalore it cannot be helped that they do as they please in such way. Even my knights have some too indiscriminate aspects due to their influence.” (Imeraria)

Putting down the cup with the black tea in it, she smiles alongside a hot sigh.

“Only regarding their strength, I can trust in them.” (Imeraria)

“... That's admirable. Well then I will return to the front line and fight together with your country and my soldiers... even for me it should be possible to become a ruler who is able to trust his people like you do.” (Nelgal)

Due to Nelgal returning to his horse in a hurry, Imeraria thought *how enviable*.

“If I were a man, I would probably be allowed to run around a battlefield like this as well.” (Imeraria)

“Since the elves mostly fight with magic, it has no relation to man or woman,

but are humans different?" (Puuse)

Imeraria answered Puuse question with a bitter smile.

"There are also things called oppressive social rank, but it's because I failed."
(Imeraria)

"Although I'm good at magic, I'm utterly bad with offensive spells", once she jokes about it and displays it, even Puuse unintentionally smiled and replied that it's the same for her as well.

"Even though children, who were strong at wind magic and such, played an active role by going to the front at the time of exterminating monsters, I was always kept indoors or cast healing from behind... although I can use binding magic more or less, it didn't work overly well against monsters that move around..." (Puuse)

Once she hears the clonking sound of low-heeled shoes, Puuse lifts her face. Imeraria had stood up and was pointing a serious look at Puuse.

"Puuse-san, won't you allow me to hear further details about this?" (Imeraria)

Imeraria wanted a lecture in magic from Puuse.

While the surroundings were headed towards battle in hurry, Imeraria decided to bring Puuse over to her side.

Chapter 149 – Getting Away With Murder

Horant's soldiers on Kuzemu's side could be seen gradually caving in at the front, but since they started to escape towards the side of Nelgal who was right in front of their eyes, it turned into a melee that swallowed up both sides. As the immortal soldiers began to attack without making any distinction whether enemy or ally, Horant's soldiers corresponded with swords and spears as well as spells such as fireballs at times, however the immortal soldiers wouldn't stop moving even if their bodies were covered by flames, not to say anything about them being cut by edged weapons. On the contrary there are even immortal soldier who are clinging to soldiers while being aflame.

“Stop! Release me! Please let go!”

“Aaaah...”

There is a group barging into the mix of screams and angry roars.

“Nets! Restrain them with the nets we brought for the big guys!” (Alyssa)

“Roger!”

Fokalore's soldiers led by Alyssa have forcibly come through in front of Nelgal's subordinates, who are in chaos due to the attacks of the immortal soldiers, with a platform wagon.

While involving many of the soldiers of Horant, Fokalore's soldiers cast one net after the other while crushing the immortal soldiers.

“Alyssa-san!” (Nelgal)

“Spears!” (Alyssa)

Due to the voice of Nelgal who finally came back to the front line, Alyssa yells shortly.

Understanding with that single word, Nelgal faced the soldiers in the vicinity and hurled instructions at them.

“Simultaneously attack the enemy soldiers with the spear throwers! Those who have free hands, throw the spears!” (Nelgal)

A rain of spears was released at the immortal soldiers, who are struggling while being entangled by the nets, from the side.

“H-Help!”

There were also some soldiers from Horant who were caught in the nets together with the immortal soldiers while struggling with one another, but the spears, which poured down despite the madness, mercilessly pierced them as well.

“Even if it’s only this one case, I will be burdened with a considerable sin.”
(Nelgal)

The soldiers who should be my subordinates once I become king.
Nelgal muttered with a strained expression while watching them die with agonizing cries as they were mingled together with the immortal soldiers.

“However, with this...”

“Everyone, get away! Retreat! Retreat!”

Several of Fokalore’s soldiers spearheaded by Alyssa, who came out on the front left side of Nelgal’s group, return while shouting for retreat. Due to their expressions, which can’t hide their impatience, Nelgal observed the front very carefully and especially looked at the dead soldiers of Horant who were pierced by spears. However, the immortal soldiers had begun to slip out by crawling after cutting the nets with their weapons. Even though they are in a state similar to a hedgehog after being struck by spears, they indifferently tear up the nets, which are hindering them, with serious looks.

“What to say... we will retreat. While the spear throwers are turned towards the front, everyone, retreat until I give you a sign! Don’t be careless and don’t let the ranks fall apart!” (Nelgal)

Nelgal shifts his attention to the opposite side of the immortal soldiers who are trying to slip out from below the nets. At that place were the figures of soldiers from Horant who had been killed one after the other by the immortal soldiers unable to cope with them just like his side.

“What is the commander over there doing!? If it goes on as is...” (Nelgal)

Currently they might be enemies, but Nelgal, who had the intention to ask for their cooperation through persuasion, cursed his own powerlessness as he had to retreat while grinding his teeth due to the figures of this country’s soldiers having been overrun.

“If I had strength like Hifumi-san...” (Nelgal)

I wonder how many people pondered about the same thing in this world?



“How persistent!”

The heads of the immortal soldiers, who clung to the platform wagon, are sent flying by the wakizashi swung by Alyssa.

As expected, they seem to not move if they have no head, the bodies of the immortal soldiers, which slipped off, fell below the platform wagon and were smashed by the wheels.

“Director! At this rate...”

“At least get some distance! Let’s leave the rest to Horant!” (Alyssa)

We can’t get unnecessarily exhausted in this place for the sake of Horant, Alyssa decided. *I think it’s inexcusable as we are abandoning them, but I don’t want this to become a scene of throwing away the lives of my subordinates either.*

It would be a different story if the true identity of the opponents was clear and if they knew about countermeasures as with the giant soldiers, but as she sees those immortal soldiers for the first time, choosing a melee with an opponent, that is really hard to deal with, Alyssa isn’t the type to like such recklessness.

“However, if we just escape, that’s no good either, right...? What shall we do...?” (Alyssa)

Although she has been telling herself to stay calm, the audible screams and the tumult of her own army’s side, which started hostilities once again, increases her panic.

However, at the moment when Alyssa was doing her best to gather herself, her

boss wasn't calm at all.

“Don't fuck around with me!” (Hifumi)

“... Eh?” (Alyssa)

The one who jumped over Alyssa and planted his feet on the platform wagon was no one else but Hifumi himself.

While skilfully running through the nets which are still on the ground, he hit the head of the immortal soldier, who was the closest, with a sideways sweep. In addition, he bisected one more immortal soldier into left and right parts and even stabbed his katana into a groaning soldier of Horant who had fallen nearby.

“Hi-Hifumi-san?” (Alyssa)

“Alyssa.” (Origa)

“Uwah.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who blinked her eyes due to Hifumi's sudden appearance, got surprised with her shoulders jumping up after being called by Origa from behind,

“I just greeted you. Excuse me.” (Origa)

“E-Excuse me. Ah, it's the rabbit person. Hello.” (Alyssa)

“Eh? H-Hello.” (Viine)

Having somehow kept up with Origa, Viine replied while being bewildered by being greeted friendly by Alyssa.

“Alyssa, from here on out Hifumi-sama will start the extermination. Given that I will deal with those being left over, take care to not be a hindrance.” (Origa)

“I will head out as well!”

Even Viine, who put her breathing in order somehow, grasps the short wand, which was visible at her waist, and announces her participation.

Origa looks into Viine's eyes and gives her consent by nodding.

“Ah, then I will join, too. The rest of you obey Princess-sama suitably. Best regards.” (Alyssa)

Chasing after Origa and Viine who were pursuing Hifumi who jumped off the platform wagon, Alyssa, who gave her subordinates a far too irresponsible order, also got off the platform wagon with her wakizashi in her hand.

“... What shall we do?”

“What, you ask... Lord-sama made his appearance. We likely won't get a turn anymore.”

The soldiers of Fokalore, who affirmed that with a “Right, that's right,” retreated to the location of Imeraria for the time being to report the news to her.



“Oh shit! What's that?” (Tannin)

While observing the chaotic state of the front line due to the immortal soldiers, Tannin measured the time for a retreat.

He was flustered due to the scene visible from atop his horse.

The man, he recalls having seen in Kuzemu's office, is brandishing a thin sword while chopping up immortal soldiers and Horant soldiers without any distinction.

Currently it's an event taking place at the front line, but it's probably a matter of time for him to reach this place.

Once he looks properly, three women are attacking the surrounding soldiers in order to support him.

“That guy, was this strong...?” (Tannin)

“Tannin-sama! The immortal soldiers will be defeated!”

Tanning couldn't immediately reply to the question “What shall we do?” When he looked back, he could fleetingly see that Kuzemu was still around the centre of the forces without moving the carriage he boarded.

“There's one more unit of immortal soldiers, right? Transport them to the front line and release them there. I will go to the prime minister's location to inform him.” (Tannin)

“Roger!”

Seeing off his subordinate who headed to the place of the carriage with the immortal soldiers on it, Tannin changed the direction of his horse. However, his destination isn't Kuzemu's location.

"Our magic was blocked and the immortal soldiers are useless as well. If we can't overwhelm them with numbers either, there's no possibility of us winning, I guess." (Tannin)

Once he said that as if spitting out the words, he left the ranks of the soldiers and escaped by pretending to head to the rear.



"Out of the way, you undead!" (Hifumi)

Cutting off an immortal soldier's feet, he crushes its head underfoot. The immortal soldier, that spasmed with a twitch, got never up again.

"U-Uwaaah!"

There's also a soldier from Horant who slashes at Hifumi while being confused.

"Yo!" (Hifumi)

Hifumi, who hit the sword to the side with his left hand, pats the shoulder of the soldier, whose stance was thrown off balance after being pulled by the sword, pulls him down face-up and pierces his throat with the katana.

"... So, are there still any blockheads?" (Hifumi)

Due to Hifumi approaching by inching forward, the soldiers from Horant are frozen in fear and only the immortal soldiers attack while drooling.

"Humph!" (Hifumi)

Smashing the head of an immortal soldier, who came in front of his eyes, with the pommel, he repels its body, which has fallen over thanks to it having too much momentum, with a front-kick.

"Why? Why did it turn out like this?" (Hifumi)

Hifumi pointed at Horant's soldiers in front of him.

"Something like fighting without thinking is meaningless no matter how many

times you do it. Ma Carme's group told you that, didn't they? You should have known that even the reinforced soldiers, the guy I crushed easily before used, were useless as well. And yet..." (Hifumi)

The immortal soldiers were attacking the talking Hifumi without caring about it, but being sent flying by kicks and having their heads cut off, they become unable to move one after the other.

"Once again you have created such garbage soldiers. Slowly I'm reaching the limit of my patience. I will destroy all of you. I have preached it to that prime minister. I will kill him if he becomes a nuisance. Even if he stays in a place where he is a hindrance, I will kill him. My katana will reach you guys at the chosen time." (Hifumi)

The immortal soldiers don't understand his talk. They are heading towards Hifumi and Origa's group, but one, two soldiers of Horant throw away their weapons and run away.

Among them there were also some who prepared their weapons, but the majority was in a confused state unable to make a decision.

"Look! It's the beginning!"

He makes one full rotation. Slicing and sending the heads of the immortal soldiers, which are swarming the vicinity, flying without missing a single one of them, Hifumi started to fiercely run towards Horant's army on Kuzemu's side.



"Bad! That's bad!" (Nelgal)

Nelgal was in the highest panic since this battle started. It wasn't in regards to the movements of Kuzemu's side but towards Hifumi's conduct.

"As it is now Horant's soldiers will end up diminishing completely! Hurry and remove the nets! As soon as that's finished, advance!" (Nelgal)

Upon Nelgal's yell, the soldiers head out to collect the nets which were scattered by Fokalore's soldiers, but on top of them having been spread out widely, they are entangled by corpses of immortal soldiers, which are torn to pieces, all over the place.

“There’s no time! Take a large detour by leaving the highway! Half of the soldiers and the carriages, which can’t leave the highway, are to stay behind...”
(Nelgal)

“Please wait!” (Sabnak)

Sabnak came galloping on a horse towards Nelgal’s location.

“Excuse me for staying mounted on my horse.” (Sabnak)

“S-Sabnak-san...?” (Nelgal)

“We will remove the majority of the nets by pulling them with our platform wagon. Even if you advance after that, it won’t be too late, I think.” (Sabnak)

“However, if it goes on like this, Horant’s troops will...” (Nelgal)

“We will hurry. But, please consider this as being a good opportunity.”
(Sabnak)

“Good opportunity, you say?” (Nelgal)

Nelgal was disappointed due to Sabnak’s suggestion.

“Don’t misunderstand. All of it is a proposal by Her Majesty the Queen for the sake of you, Nelgal-sama, sitting on the throne.” (Sabnak)

“It’s Imeraria-sama’s idea? Let me hear it.” (Nelgal)

“I shall tell you briefly”, Sabnak opens his mouth with that preface.

“Due to the report by Fokalore’s soldiers, Her Majesty, who was aware of Hifumi-san’s group charging at Horant’s side, will rush to the location of the soldiers of Horant who will be thrown into disarray at this rate. Following her, Orsongrande’s army will also penetrate the centre of the enemy army through the spot opened up by Hifumi-san.” (Sabnak)

“P-Penetrate? She will forcibly pass through the middle?” (Nelgal)

Sabnak nods at the surprised Nelgal.

“That’s right. It won’t do unless we fight against them as they are in “front” of us. If they are in our “back,” we will be able to head for the capital while ignoring them. That will also avoid producing unnecessary victims on both sides.” (Sabnak)

“However, even if you say that you will forcefully break through, that’s unreasonable, isn’t it?” (Nelgal)

“It’s possible because it’s now.” (Sabnak)

Sabnak cut through and dumped Nelgal’s worries.

“The enemy started an operation involving their own forces. The morale of the common soldiers is already at the lowest level. To make matters worse, even the chain of command has been thrown into disorder thanks to Hifumi-san. I don’t think that they want to stand in front of a large army while risking their lives if there isn’t anyone giving instructions.” (Sabnak)

“However”, Sabnak completely switched from a serious expression to revealing a gentle smile.

“Nelgal-sama, you have to call out to them though. “The king of Horant is passing through. Open a path.” is what you have to say.” (Sabnak)

Watching Hifumi’s back getting rapidly smaller, Nelgal conveyed his acceptance.



“So, why is Hifumi-san actually this angry?” (Alyssa)

While sending an immortal soldier’s head flying with her wakizashi, Alyssa got close to Viine and asked.

“Eh? I don’t understand it well either, but after seeing these weird soldiers, he became sullen all of a sudden... Ei!” (Viine)

Hitting the face of a soldier of Horant with a lump of water, the soldier rolls around while scattering water from his nose and mouth.

“Ah~... somehow I get it. Rather than that, you can use magic! That’s amazing!” (Alyssa)

“No, umm, I can’t use anything but water magic, so...” (Viine)

Alyssa violently kicked an immortal soldier who approached the ashamed Viine.

“As I have no suitability at all, I wouldn’t be able to use any magic.” (Alyssa)

While saying “how regrettable, how regrettable”, she thrusts her wakizashi into an eye of the immortal soldier which fell over and destroys its brain.

“If you are this powerful, I feel like that’s not overly relevant...” (Viine)

Due to Alyssa doing things that might be also called cruel, Viine immediately lost confidence in her own skills.

“Powerful, it is? That’s because my role model gives such impression.”
(Alyssa)

While making her body shift as if dancing, Alyssa’s gaze rested on the figure of Hifumi who is bisecting an immortal soldier.

“I’m still unable to quite master that long katana, you know. The length of my arms is insufficient.” (Alyssa)

“Master is strong as well, but even his wife...” (Viine)

Ahead of where Viine is looking was Origa standing and swinging her iron-ribbed fan after having taken a bit of distance from Hifumi. Watching Hifumi’s manner of doing, she apparently judged that it’s fine to sever the heads for the time being. She beheads the close-by soldiers with her iron-ribbed fan and those, who are too far even from Hifumi and Alyssa, with wind magic.

There’s no hesitation or confusion ((in her actions)).

She removed the heads of immortal soldiers and soldiers of Horant altogether without any differentiation.

“Origa-san has practised very intensely. She has her work as well, but it looks like she has been at it every day.” (Alyssa)

“Really...?” (Viine)

Watching Origa who is capable of attacking directly and with magic, she considered her amazing, but above that she thought of her as frightening.

“The madam...” (Viine)

“I think it’s best if you don’t say any more.” (Alyssa)

“Yes, thank you very much.” (Viine)

Feeling as if Origa sent a fleeting glance her way at the moment she was about to say something, Viine held her tongue.

Chapter 150 – Come Out And Play

“What the hell is happening? What happened to Tannin!?” (Kuzemu)

Kuzemu, who confirmed the disorder at the front from his carriage, shouts at the surrounding soldiers.

However, those, who indulged in the safety of being in the centre of the ranks, had no means to know about the sudden changes at the front line.

If Kuzemu himself ordered them to check the situation and report to him at this point, the outcome might have been quite different. However, it was likely necessary for the soldier with the duty of checking to be “exceedingly” excellent for that to happen.

In any case, there wasn’t anyone at Kuzemu’s side who was able to explain the chaos at the front line.



“Gyaah!!”

Even the soldier, who was in the vicinity of the carriage transporting the immortal soldiers that were deployed to the front, has been killed by Hifumi’s party before being allowed to choose the option of running away.

With the majority of immortal soldiers lost, the rest is handled by Origa and the other girls.

Half of the soldiers engages Hifumi, who applies pressure on them by attacking after plunging deeply into the centre of Kuzemu’s army, to finish him off while the other half escapes.

Excluding those who unluckily headed in the direction of Origa’s group, the escapees hid themselves by taking refuge in a nearby cities and prolonged their lives by surrendering to the troops of the nobles governing those cities.

The ones who saw hell were the soldiers who chose to stand in Hifumi’s way.

“Stop him! Stop that guy!”

“Call the magic soldiers!”

Even during the commanding officers’ yells, the losses amongst their

subordinates continued to spread.

Precisely stabbing eyes and throats, which aren't protected by the helmets, with the sharp point of the katana, the brains and arteries are destroyed.

Among them, a small number of those, who received Ma Calme's unit's teaching, are apparently able to move properly.

Three soldiers use the opportunity to close in on Hifumi when he squats down to avoid swords thrown by soldiers from Horant who have jumped up to strike from left and right.

Two swords aim at his feet and waist by sweeping sideways and one sword is swung downwards from an overhead stance. Moreover they are approaching from three different directions.

“Hou?” (Hifumi)

While releasing a voice similar to admiration, Hifumi grabbed the arm of the soldier, who came to attack his waist, and changed the location of the soldier by vigorously turning his own body around.

“Uwaah!”

The soldier, who stumbled a step or two forward due to being dragged into Hifumi's rotation, suddenly appeared in front of the slashing attack of his ally.

“Wai....!”

Receiving the heavy long sword on his head, the soldier faints. Hifumi, who evaded the slash by switching with his enemy, cut down the remaining two while in the process of turning around due to the momentum of that.

Noticing that the soldier, who was at the very bottom of the three piled-up bodies, is still breathing, Hifumi stands in front of his eyes.

“Where's your guys' ringleader?” (Hifumi)

“... Further behind, is, I think...”

“What his name?” (Hifumi)

“... Tannin...”

Hifumi delivered the final blow to the soldier, who answered while gasping,

with a *pierce*.

Watching Hifumi who easily dealt with the simultaneous attack by three soldiers, the surrounding soldiers take a distance and form a circle around him.

“... Over there, huh?” (Hifumi)

Ignoring the mob, he confirms the carriage visible ahead of the enemy army. Different from Orsongrande that absorbed Fokalore’s way of organizing a military supply unit to transport goods, something like a carriage stands out on Horant’s side as they are still using the system of everyone carrying their own supplies.

“Move it! Clear the way!” (Hifumi)

The soldiers retreat in fright from in front of Hifumi who began to run towards the distinct carriage.

However, they are too slow.

A soldier, who turned his back on him, stares with an expression of surprise due to the katana’s point protruding out from his throat after it has been stabbed into the back of his neck.

“Did you think that you would have the time to retreat? The time for that has already passed. Do your best while fighting or strive to escape. If you retreat while simply showing your back, that will settle your death, won’t it?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi pulls out his katana with a short *slurp* and wipes it with a paper. While the paper, which was tossed away, dances in the wind, the remaining soldiers have already lost the willpower to fight and are gradually backing away.



The moment when Kuzemu grasped the state of affairs was the time when he saw Hifumi’s face.

When Hifumi entered the carriage by smashing the carriage’s door with a kick as if bursting it open, Kuzemu’s face was about to have its jaw dislocated due to surprise and he wore a miserable expression with his mouth open.

“Y-You are...” (Kuzemu)

“Let me ask one thing? What are those puppets? They disqualify as toys as they break far too easily for a present which was carried after carefully packing

it into a box.” (Hifumi)

While tapping the katana at his waist, he glares at Kuzemu.

“You thought it will go well if there’s a large amount of them? Having the scariness of numbers on your side means an increase in the number of moves and choices of possible reactions. Even if you had gathered countless of those dolls that turn up one after the other, there wouldn’t be any kind of meaning to it.”

“You know, I”, Hifumi draws his katana and thrusts it in front of Kuzemu’s eyes.

“don’t want to see a puppet show. I’m sure I told you. **Let’s have a war where plenty of people die** is what I said.” (Hifumi)

Unable to take his eyes off the gradually approaching tip of the katana, Kuzemu started to quiver.

“I-Isn’t there anyone...?” (Kuzemu)

It doesn’t seem likely that his small, trembling voice reached the noisy outside of the carriage.

Besides, currently there are the three members of Origa’s group around the carriage.

Far from getting close, everyone has started to back off from the carriage due to the shuriken and spells which are hurled at them even as they leave.

“Even though I gave you teaching advices after expressly coming to your place, you are in this situation. I wonder how I’m supposed to release this seething anger?” (Hifumi)

“E-Even if you tell me, nothing...” (Kuzemu)

“Really? I see.” (Hifumi)

He withdrew the katana and sheathed it into its scabbard. Seeing that, Kuzemu took deep breaths making his shoulders go up and down as if he was finally able to breathe. However, it was also a momentary relief.

“Like this!” (Hifumi)

He seizes Kuzemu's throat with the right hand that separated from the hilt. With his carotid artery being pressured by Hifumi's thumb and index finger, Kuzemu ended up fainting quickly after a short interval of struggling. Throwing down Kuzemu on the ground of the carriage, Hifumi leaves. Countless corpses are piled up outside and the stench of blood drifted about.

"Thanks for your hard work, Hifumi-sama." (Origa)

The one who approached him directly was Origa.

"I will go to Horant's capital next. Since I will be using this carriage to go there..." (Hifumi)

"I shall accompany you." (Origa)

When Origa replied in a flash, Hifumi gave his permission by muttering 「Well, it's fine I guess」.

"Umm, I will follow you as well!" (Viine)

She probably hung on frantically. Viine, who was gasping for breath, decided to follow them, too.

"Then me as well." (Alyssa)

"You are not allowed." (Hifumi)

"Why!?" (Alyssa)

Alyssa had hoped to accompany them, but was quickly rejected.

"This is your's and Imeraria's assignment, isn't it? Since we will go to the castle in advance, quickly return to your soldiers and command them." (Hifumi)

"Eh~..." (Alyssa)

Leaving Alyssa who has become sullen, he entrusts the carriage to Origa and Viine and stands in front of the remaining soldiers while they are moving about in confusion due to still being unable to grasp the situation.

"Alright, I caught your guys' leader. Do your best to get him back." (Hifumi)

The soldiers are astir due to Hifumi who drew his katana. Since they aren't aware of the situation, they can't understand him boarding the carriage with a few and moreover having them approach him with a great number even if they

understand that the man in front of them is their enemy.

“B-Beat them up! We have to rescue His Excellency Kuzemu!”

Hifumi smiled once someone who might be a commanding officer raised his voice.

“Yes, it will be fine like that... Origa! Follow with the carriage!” (Hifumi)

No sooner than shouting that, Hifumi caused a sound similar to an explosion. The soldier, who was right in front of him, received a thrust to his throat and died in an instant.

Hifumi wards off a spear, which was unleashed from his side without a moment's delay, with the scabbard by twisting his waist and cuts off both of the the soldier's arms letting them fall.

“Aah!!”

The soldier, who screamed something inarticulate, died by having the katana stabbed into his mouth.



“Viine-san, please be the driver.” (Origa)

“Yes, understood.” (Viine)

As Viine grasps the reins and begins to spur on the horse in order to chase after Hifumi's back, Origa climbs the roof of the carriage and makes a daunting pose.

“Your gentlemen' superior is on this carriage. Attack it if you don't mind dying after getting involved.” (Origa)

While concealing her mouth with the iron-ribbed fan which was opened with an unfolding sound, she smiles gently.

“But then again, if you are that high-spirited, can you **enjoy yourselves** by heading towards my husband who is currently fighting in front?” (Origa)

During the time she was talking, the head of a soldier, who sidled up to the carriage, dropped to the ground.

It had been removed by the knife, which serves her as medium for magic, in

Origa's right hand.

"That's right. It's been long-awaited thus I shall announce it to you all from Horant who are strong at magic." (Origa)

She closes the iron-ribbed fan making a hard clanking resound.

"My magic can be released freely even without me pointing the knife at my target." (Origa)

A wind-cutting sound reached the ears of some soldiers and in the next instant blood overflowed from their napes and their heads fell.



Thanks to Sabnak's orders, the nets and corpses were mostly removed, but at that time the figures of Hifumi's group had already vanished far ahead.

"Their pace is faster than expected..." (Nelgal)

Once Nelgal ordered to shelter the soldiers who escaped from Kuzemu's side while at the same time announcing to forcibly break through the spot where Hifumi cut through, he advanced his horse while calling out to Kuzemu's side in a loud voice.

Nelgal, who joined in on Imeraria's plan he was told about by Sabnak, looks at the location where Hifumi apparently went ahead to.

There are far more corpses scattered around there than at the place which was cleaned just now. Several soldiers, who escaped away from the highway, are observing the situation with frightened expressions.

"Join us! You aren't my enemies. You are soldiers of Horant! Accomplish your original duty by coming to our side!" (Nelgal)

It's not just corpses of immortal soldiers but also a large number of corpses of common soldiers.

50 have died according to what's just reflected in his line of sight.

"How awful..." (Nelgal)

Was it really necessary to go this far? Nelgal harbours such doubt towards Hifumi, but currently he hasn't the leeway to use his head to think about this. While moving the corpses to the sides, the large army advances.

The leading group consists of soldiers from Horant, but right behind them the soldiers of Orsongrande are following while being led by Imeraria.



At the moment when the nets and corpses were cleared away to a certain extent, Alyssa came back with heavy feet.

“Huh? Alyssa-san?” (Nelgal)

Alyssa replied to Nelgal, who called out to her from atop his horse, by waving her hand.

“Being told to do my job, I ended up returning. What should I do from now on?” (Alyssa)

“You were able to dispose of the nets, weren’t you?” She mentions carefreely, but Alyssa is also someone who rushed into the enemy’s camp alongside Hifumi. She is covered by a large amount of blood spurts. Nelgal can feel something heavy hanging in the air around her that doesn’t suit the lightness of her tone.

“We will pass through the hole opened by Hifumi-san. We will even recover the capital. Can you help us with that?” (Nelgal)

“Mmh, got it.” (Alyssa)

Nelgal called out to Alyssa, who heads to the rear while trudging once again after nodding as if it’s a trifling matter, in a panic.

“What will Hifumi-san do?” (Nelgal)

“I will go to the capital, he said.” (Alyssa)

While seeing off Alyssa who begins to walk again after answering without hesitation, Nelgal was spurred on by the uneasiness *Anyway, if I don’t hurry...*



“What is that gentleman planning...?” (Imeraria)

The greatly perplexed Imeraria was caught by Puuse, who was next to her, after she slid off the chair due to an excessive drain of strength.

The army, which was prepared by Kuzemu, lost its leaders thanks to Tannin’s

absences and Kuzemu's abduction. Because of the losses they suffered from Hifumi including the annihilation of the immortal soldiers, the matter of having them join was more successful and simple than expected by Nelgal as they had already diverted from maintaining a structure as organization.

Running swiftly along the highway without taking a break, the allied forces of Horant and Orsongrande, which forcibly broke through the capital's gates and the centre, set up camp making use of the plaza in front of the castle.

No, deciding to set up camp, they couldn't avoid stopping for a moment to do so.

"P-Please save meee!"

The tied-up Kuzemu was suspended from the balcony, which faced the plaza that continued into the main street, with a single long rope.

"Someone! Anyoneee!" (Kuzemu)

At the moment when Nelgal reflexively gave the order to stop after being shown the far too pitiful view, Hifumi suddenly showed up on the balcony. Gaap is visible next to him.



「やつと来たか」
一二三の声は良く通る。
ネルガルやイメタリアの耳にも届いた。
「イメタリア、アリツサ! さっきはこの阿呆が
残念兵器でガッカリさせてくれたからな。
代わりにお遊びを用意した。
命はかかっているが、楽しむと良い」

Text in illustration follows below.

“You finally came?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi’s voice carried well. It reached even Nelgal’s and Imeraria’s ears.

“Imeraria, Alyssa! Some time ago you were let down by the disappointing weapons of this fool. Instead of those, I prepared a game. Although you will be betting your lives, it’s fine to have some fun.” (Hifumi)

Once he said that much, he quickly withdrew.

It seems like the remaining Gaap has been told something by Hifumi, but it’s not audible for Imeraria’s group who is watching from below.

“Umm... that means, everyone, please do your best to rescue His Excellency Kuzemu.” (Gaap)

Originally the voice of Gaap while reading from a memo shouldn’t be audible, but Imeraria, Nelgal and the others could hear it well.

“This is... Origa-san’s magic, isn’t it?” (Imeraria)

Sabnak heard what Imeraria grumbled, but when he looked all over the castle, he didn’t find Origa.

Gaap’s explanation continued.

“Please feel relieved as we made all non-combatants leave the castle. Instead, many traps and immortal soldiers will stand in your way. The time limit is until sunset. At the same time as the sun goes down, the rope, which holds His Excellency Kuzemu, will be severed. Also, given that we have released immortal soldiers inside the city, please do your best to capture them... I guess it’s fine with this.” (Gaap)

At the moment the last murmuring could be heard, the spell was apparently cancelled. Gaap’s voice didn’t reach them any longer.

And, once the front gate slowly opened, around thirty soldiers rushed out as if escaping.

Once they discovered the figures of their colleagues and Nelgal, they prostrated themselves by sliding in front of Nelgal.

“N-Nelgal-sama! Please forgive us! The castle has, the castle has...!”

After looking at Nelgal who is soothing them with a troubled expression, Sabnak, who once again lifted his gaze, mutters,

“If the one who has been captured is a middle-aged man and not a beautiful girl, that’s a person who won’t trigger any motivation. Well, I understand plentifully why the world’s hero stories tell about saving princesses.” (Sabnak)

Due to his objection by playing a fool, Imeraria stood up and spanked his butt with a whip used for horse riding.



Chapter 151 – Girlfriend

“Ouch, ouch!” (Sabnak)

Ignoring Sabnak who rolls around on top of the platform wagon due to the pain caused by the lash, Imeraria sent for the nearby Alyssa.

“What is it?” (Alyssa)

“It seems like you don’t have any longer intention to learn polite speech... well, I guess that’s fine. Have you heard anything from Hifumi-sama?”
(Imeraria)

“No, nothing.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa shakes her head.

It appears that she was just left behind at the time of Kuzemu’s abduction and sent back here.

“... Then, what does Hifumi-sama want us to do?” (Imeraria)

“He explained that clearly, didn’t he? He told us to do our best since he prepared a location which we have to capture while risking our lives, right?”
(Alyssa)

Due to Alyssa tilting her head and asking “What are you talking about?”, Imeraria, who grasped the lash tightly to a degree that it changed into the shape of the character U, corrected her sitting on the chair.

“Let me change the question. What do you think will happen inside that castle?” (Imeraria)

“Who knows. I think we will understand once we go there, but... let’s send someone as scout?” (Alyssa)

When Imeraria shifted her look to Nelgal who is nearby, she could see Nelgal shaking his head with a sigh mixed in.

“... Please, I leave it to you.” (Nelgal)

Originally it should probably be Horant’s side’s task to send scouts, but those,

who possess such skills, currently don't exist anywhere but Fokalore.

If Origa was here, it might have been possible to investigate with echolocation, but an user, who can use such particular magic except Origa, doesn't exist.

“Two people, follow me!” (Alyssa)

Alyssa, who jumped off the platform wagon, took two soldiers, who jumped up as if it was first come, first served, along and quickly disappeared from in front of the castle. It seems that she plans to observe the castle from another platform wagon.

“As expected, she acts promptly.” (Nelgal)

Imeraria was greatly perplexed at Nelgal who admires Alyssa.

“Her excellence is nice, but... her not necessarily being our ally is not so advantageous...” (Imeraria)

Nelgal looked up at the castle once again while answering with nothing more but a groan.

Kuzemu is still hanging there just as before, but it seems that he has already no strength left to scream. As if hanging his head, his head is lowered in a crestfallen manner.

“Let's have a preparatory meeting until Alyssa-san returns. This place is Horant. What kind of plans do you have, Nelgal-sama?” (Imeraria)

Imeraria, who confirmed that Sabnak stood up unsteadily on his feet, asks while staring at Nelgal.

Nelgal gulped. It might be called a question regarding “the current situation” if only examined superficially, but in his ears it sounded like a demand to clarify their standpoint as “nation.”

(What is she thinking about...?) (Nelgal)

It might be a keen viewpoint, but Nelgal felt a tension he couldn't erase.

Imeraria is asking how I plan to deal with Orsongrande which has intervened in Horant's internal affairs, Nelgal believed.

Unable to conceal his hesitation, Nelgal, who brooded over it for a short while, clearly stated,

“Please, let me continue the cooperation with your country. After my

coronation, I will have the privilege to express my gratitude without fail. ... I don't possess the authority to talk at equal rank with Your Majesty the Queen at the current point in time. All shall follow Your Majesty's heart's desires."
(Nelgal)

"You heard him, didn't you, Sabnak?" (Imeraria)

"Yes, Your Majesty." (Sabnak)

Imeraria gave instructions to Sabnak, who bowed his head respectfully, in a flat voice.

"Arrange for spear throwers and soldiers who are strong at long distance attacks. I don't mind if you borrow Fokalore's help either. That man called Kuzemu or such is a nuisance. Let's get rid of him." (Imeraria)

Nelgal attempted to say something, but gulped it down at once.



"We found that box on the other side of the castle's gate where the soldiers enter. We didn't realize it until we got inside the building."

Just when they were able to prepare the spear throwers, Alyssa's group returned.

Though we don't know how once we step through the castle gate, which is still open after the soldiers within the castle ran away, won't immortal soldiers jump out from that box?

"Do you know the whereabouts of Hifumi-sama, Origa-san and rabbitwoman-san?" (Imeraria)

"Not at all. They were in a place where they can't be seen inside the building."
(Alyssa)

"I see. Got it." (Imeraria)

Imeraria stands up quietly and places her right hand on Alyssa's shoulder.

"From now on it's necessary to resolve this situation under mine and Alyssa's orders. If we are able to do that, Hifumi-sama might become a bit more obedient as well." (Imeraria)

“That might be the case.” (Alyssa)

Alyssa added *it probably won't be the end though* in her mind.

“Well, then will we gain control of the castle by having everyone charge?”

“Yes, we will show them something like that.” (Imeraria)

Due to Alyssa not understanding well, Imeraria muttered “it will be alright” to her.

“Without a doubt certain people are inside the castle. Fortunately there are people here who are knowledgeable about this castle, too. There's absolutely no necessity for us to move according to Hifumi-sama's plans either.” (Imeraria)

The explanation of the details seems to have finished. Neither Nelgal nor Sabnak are interrupting her speech.

“Alyssa-san, you will act as guide together with the two soldiers of Horant and Nelgal-sama and I will come along as observer. Sabnak-san and Vaiya-san will serve as my guards. We will infiltrate the castle with these six people.” (Imeraria)

“Won't we be discovered by Hifumi-san?” (Alyssa)

“That doesn't matter.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria laughs with a “Fufu.”

“Even if we are discovered by Hifumi-sama, he probably won't come to interfere with us. To begin with, that gentleman shouldn't make a move. If he did something like that, it would end with Hifumi-sama's victory in the blink of an eye.” (Imeraria)

“In the same way it's hard to believe that Origa will come to meddle with us”, Imeraria guesses. After finishing the preparations of the ordeal, they are expected to watch how Imeraria and Alyssa deal with it.

“I will explain the strategy.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria got worked up and said “This time we will definitely cause Hifumi to be surprised.”

At the time when the uproar in the castle began, Tannin came back to the capital city in secret.

“Good grief, they rushed until this place in the twinkling of an eye, didn’t they? See, it was correct to run away.” (Tannin)

Hiding his horse close to the entrance of the city, he approaches his own mansion, which is located close to the castle, while making sure to avoid public attention.

Originally there are many soldiers patrolling the area with its many noble mansions, but influenced by the turmoil at the castle, they have apparently been mobilized to keep away the neighbourhood’s residents.

“The servants ran away, too...? Though that’s fine since it’s convenient.” (Tannin)

While thinking *gathering the luggage by myself is troublesome*, he enters through the back-door and not the front-door.

“... Is there no one here?” (Tannin)

“Tannin-sama.”

“Uwaah!?” (Tannin)

Being suddenly greeted, Tannin released a jumpy voice.

“Ah, y-you are... Levi, aren’t you?” (Tannin)

“Excuse me for surprising you.” (Levi)

The one who spoke to him was the maid who was seduced by him inside the castle.

She wore the same clothes as the time when she was in the castle. While he wonders from where she entered, she slowly walks up to him from inside the building.

“I have awaited you. I feel happy that you came back safely.” (Levi)

“Ah, yea. Thank you. That’s great, but why are you here?” (Tannin)

“All the servants were ordered to evacuate from the castle... I’m also prohibited to enter the castle until tomorrow.” (Levi)

Due to Levi lowering her look, Tannin is struck by her usual impression of frailty that she might be easily broken. However, he noticed that there was something else besides that.

“You did well to come here.” (Tannin)

“Yes, I was able to come here after being told about the circumstances.” (Levi)

“Circumstances?” (Tannin)

Levi talks with a smile.

“Given that that there was talk about me being received by you, Tannin-sama, that matter is...” (Levi)

“T-That is...” (Tannin)

For Tannin it was no more than a feeling at the level of being caught by one of his lovers, if said diplomatically, but Levi understood it as him wishing her to be his wife.

Rather, it's Tannin's bad habit to obtain women by causing a misunderstanding like that. She is merely yet another one who was deceived by him.

“However, it's cruel. I was called a “pitiful child who was tricked” by the female servant who was house-sitting.” (Levi)

Levi's smile doesn't falter. No, her laughter becomes louder.

“It's different, isn't it? There was even the talk of preparing a home for me. Thus, thinking that it's a good opportunity to gather the luggage of this mansion to some extent, I came here.” (Levi)

Tannin, who by no means did expect her to be able to come to his home, placed his hands on both her shoulders and brought his face close.

“Listen, our relationship didn't advance this far yet, did it? We will go at it much slower...” (Tannin)

“Such a! Didn't you tell me that you would come to pick me up once the battle ended?” (Levi)

“The battle hasn't ended yet. That's why you were told to leave the castle, right?” (Tannin)

“Then, why are you here, Tannin-sama?” (Levi)

There was no way for Tannin to tell her that he ran away and thus he hesitated to speak.

“Umm... look, it’s that. There’s that bad guy called Hifumi or such in the castle, right? He hates me who draws the attention of others. Therefore it was decided that I will wait for orders here for caution’s sake.” (Tannin)

While even he feels that it’s a lame excuse, he talks as if it spills out from his mouth.

In reality it’s Tannin who hates Hifumi. From Hifumi’s point of view, Tannin’s level of treatment is that Hifumi can’t even remember his face.

“Really...?” (Levi)

“Yea, it’s a really deplorable matter, but I can’t be negligent until this battle ends. At least, once he leaves the castle, it will become a bit better. I will likely be able to welcome you with open arms.” (Tannin)

Tannin speaks to Levi, who showed a response of apparently believing his skilful persuasion, as if showering her with promises and presses a kiss on Levi’s lips.

“You poor Levi. Can’t you endure for just a bit longer? He might target this place here even if it’s cowardly. I’d like you to hide yourself for a little while. It’s also for the sake of your beautiful face and wonderful body not getting injured.” (Tannin)

“Tannin-sama... to go that far for me...” (Levi)

Seeing her entranced expression, Tannin judged that the immediate danger passed.

“I will give you some funds for the time being then.” (Tannin)

He slips one gold coin he has on hand into Levi’s white, small hand and firmly grasps her hand with both his hands.

“Let’s meet in the castle again once the surroundings settle down. It would be the greatest if I received a passionate kiss from you at that time.” (Tannin)

Tannin, who hugged Levi’s shoulder and kissed her once more, guided her to

the back-door, which he used himself before, and bid her farewell there.

“See you soon.” (Tannin)

Seeing off Levi who leaves with a light stride, Tannin entered the mansion and became shocked after seeing the spectacle at the entrance.

“What’s this, about...?” (Tannin)

The senior maid, who has been cut, had collapsed with an expression of anguish and was bleeding from her abdomen.



“If it comes to a castle defence battle, it’s actually the theory to close the gates and pour boiling oil and stones from above.”

Hifumi, Origa and Viine chased out the servants, who were inside Horant’s castle, and gave the instruction to Gaap to prepare for attacking the enemy by using all of the soldiers.

Given that it was an “examination” to the bitter end for Hifumi, just as Imeraria expected, he has no intention to do a real castle defence battle. However, he prepared traps of the level that they will likely die if they are careless.

Hifumi, who did the proclamation to Imeraria and the others, decided to carefreely eat a meal in the dining hall while being accompanied by Gaap.

Currently Origa and Viine are displaying their talents in the kitchen while using the ingredients in the castle as Hifumi eagerly waits for his meal.

“Boiling oil, you say...?” (Gaap)

“The advantage of liquid is that it will enter any gap no matter what armour or clothes the attackers wear. If it directly hits the nerves, they will likely be unable to endure the pain. Since it won’t be an instant death even if they swallow it, for example, they will die after fainting in agony or going mad. Or they will survive while suffering after-effects.” (Hifumi)

“But then again, even if they don’t die, this world offers the chance to heal it as long as they have money”, Hifumi drank from the cup with black tea while smiling.

Even Gaap, who listens while having a pale face, understands the advantages of that. He himself didn’t seem to be capable of giving the order to actually

implement that since it's scary for him though.

"In case the enemy entered the castle, you can enact surprise attacks from hidden rooms or... ah, that's right, it's something that was done in the castle of the demons: there's also the method of dropping the ceiling." (Hifumi)

"The ceiling?" (Gaap)

"I don't understand the mechanism too well, but there was a similar trap at the time I was there. Luring me into a room, they dropped the stone ceiling of that room. If you skilfully block the escape routes, the enemy will be crushed flat in one go." (Hifumi)

He hits the table with his palm with a *clap* to imitate the ceiling.

"Eh? That... was done, you say?" (Gaap)

"I got caught in that trap. I never expected them to set up such a trick. That time was fun." (Hifumi)

When he happily talked about the demons' king being powerful and there being some among the demons who come up with various things, Origa and Viine turned up while carrying the dishes.

"Sorry for having kept you waiting." (Origa)

"Yea, thank you." (Hifumi)

Viine stared at Origa, who blushed after being thanked by Hifumi, with pleasant eyes.

Dishes with some grilled meat, a soup with shellfish all over, a pile of salad and bread, which was heated in an oven, with cheese and butter in-between are lined up on the table and a nice aroma spreads.

"Well then, let's eat?"

Origa and Viine sit down on both sides of Hifumi. Gaap sits in front of Hifumi. Gaap felt envious, but he was somewhat nervous due to the force emitted by the two women.

"So, Hifumi-san, what will we do from now on?"

"It's decided." (Hifumi)

Stabbing the thick meat with a fork, he looked delightful due to the overflowing meat juice.

“The preparations are finished. The rest is them being troubled one way or the other while we watch as unconcerned spectators.” (Hifumi)

The spices influence the meat, he chewed, nicely and the deliciousness of the fat, which seems to start melting, spreads inside his mouth.

“This meat is great. Let’s take some for our return home.” (Hifumi)

“That will be troublesome”, those words were on the tip of Gaap’s tongue, but he swallowed them down together with the bread.

Chapter 152 – Don't Stop The Party

“Set the spears, which were soaked with oil, on fire and launch them.”

“The targets are the immortal soldiers! Do it with the intention to burn them to nothing before they can crawl out from the box!”

Imeraria's and Nelgal's instructions are flying around. Brightly burning spears and of course fire arrows are shot towards the castle one after the other by the allied forces of Orsongrande and Horant.

Is it an amusement for the present soldiers that sometimes the main body of a spear thrower ends up catching fire?

“... That, is that fine? To set fire to the castle...” (Puuse)

Puuse, who was assigned the overly ambiguous position of temporary advisor, addressed Imeraria while showing an unsettled expression that doesn't fit her post.

“No problem. Originally something like a castle is made out of stone which makes setting it on fire basically difficult. Not placing burnable things in the vicinity of the outer walls is the standard. Given that Nelgal-sama confirmed it as well, the surrounding pens and such will probably get burned, but there's no problem for the castle itself.” (Imeraria)

“I-Is that so? You are quite knowledgeable.” (Puuse)

It was inevitable that Puuse's thoughts were funny for Imeraria.

“*chuckles* I was born and raised as First Princess of Orsongrande. A castle was my home.” (Imeraria)

“Ah.” (Puuse)

Seeing the person she is talking with in a new light, Puuse blushes.

“It's fine. Please ask me anything as I shall teach you if there's something you don't understand. Besides, I believe that there are various things you want to hear from me as well.” (Imeraria)

Once Imeraria returns her sight ((to the castle)), flames are rising on the other

side of the castle gate and the groans, which rose successively, are vanishing.

“The disabling of the immortal soldiers seems to be going well. If we fire for a bit longer, they will probably be immobilized completely.” (Nelgal)

Imeraria, who nodded at Nelgal’s words, shifts her look towards Sabnak. Meeting her eyes, Sabnak nodded silently.

“Well then, Nelgal-sama, just as planned.” (Imeraria)

“Got it. Start the operation!” (Nelgal)

Alongside Nelgal’s order, several spears, which haven’t been ignited, were shot by Horant’s soldiers.

The aim of the spears is Prime Minister Kuzemu who was suspended by a rope outside the castle just like a pilloried criminal exposed to public view.

“Eeh!?”

His voice can’t be heard, but Kuzemu, who watched the brightly burning front yard in a daze, began to squirm again after witnessing a spear hitting the wall right next to him and stone splinters hurling about.

However, his body, which was completely bound by a rope, had less flexibility to move than a caterpillar.

The rope came apart quite a bit when several spears pierced it, but at that time Kuzemu had already died to blood loss.

One spear severed the rope with the tragic corpses hanging onto it by chance. The corpse, which bumped about as it hit the protuberances on the outer wall, fell into the burning front yard.

“His fall has been confirmed. He is likely not alive anymore.”

“Yea, I saw.”

The conversation of the officers accompanying Nelgal was drowned out by the noise.

The soldiers are able to fully savour a sense of accomplishment for punishing a treacherous retainer who tried to manipulate them for his own selfish desires. They were grateful towards Orsongrande’s side for conceding them the opportunity for that.

However, the thoughts of a part of the generals are different.

“... Does that mean that we’ve been told to get rid of him by ourselves in order to not leave behind records that a high official of Horant was killed by the hands of Orsongrande? I don’t know whether it was according to the counsel of that elf, but if you take her lightly because she (*T/N: Imeraria*) is a little girl, it won’t be strange to have even the name of our country changed before we realize.”

“Sorry, I didn’t hear you properly.”

The scandalous words were lost in the noise.

When the soldier, who was next to him, asked again feeling that he failed to hear an order, he corrected himself after clearing his throat.

“Nelgal-sama’s instruction is to charge as soon as the fire abates. Time is valuable, too. Begin extinguishing the fire with the magic soldiers who can use water magic. Have the infantry check the situation and act as guards of the magic soldiers. We will limit the fire’s range to the still remaining immortal soldiers.”

“Acknowledged.”

The magic soldiers, who moved back to the rear and were on standby, slowly advance towards the burning castle after receiving the order. With the water magic users in front, the other magic soldiers are made to follow as well just for caution’s sake.

“Orsongrande’s forces will storm in from the sides and our Horant forces from the front, huh? However, what is the plan? There are no gates at the sides, but...”

There’s no point in me worrying, a single general shakes off his idle thoughts.

“Attack as soon as the fire fighting has finished! We came this far! We will show our true strength to the soldiers of Orsongrande.”

The general showed a smile to the soldiers who answered with an uniform voice.

No matter what, I won’t tell them that everything of this is just a decoy, he smiled wryly.



Inside the castle there were around 50 soldiers of Horant's Kuzemu camp left besides the immortal soldiers.

Their duty is to carry out miscellaneous chores like setting up traps under the instructions of Gaap, who received training from Hifumi, or checking the situation of the opponents and traps after the enemy storms in, but that doesn't mean that they are combat personnel.

They are familiar with the structure of the castle as soldiers originally defending inside the castle.

"Will it be alright if it burns this much?"

The room on the second floor, which was made into a break room, was crowded. The brightly burning front yard was visible from that room which is located on the west side of the castle.

"Probably it's no problem. The castle's main part hasn't caught fire and something like the fire spreading won't happen either, I guess."

"And the immortal soldiers? They were finished off easily."

Having received a standby order, except for those who left on patrol, they are bored and put their energy into chatting. For them this was also an important communication for the sake of distracting themselves from their worries.

"The defence at the front was done in. Won't the first floor be stormed any time now?"

"Yea, if I remember correctly five people have to check the state of the traps on the first floor."

Five people, whose role had been decided beforehand, get up, take their tools and walk towards the corridor leading to the first floor.

"If it goes smoothly, they might be able to kill a commanding officer or such."

"From where are you getting such confidence...?"

Staying on standby while talking, they see off those leaving the room and the remaining soldiers stand up as well.

"Well then, shall we prepare for the time when the enemy will reach the second floor after breaking through?"

“... Hey, isn't it fine if we don't do it after all?”

Looking at the arranged tools, one of the soldiers mutters.

“Just give it up already. We have no other choice but to do what we were told to do.”

A soldier, who carried the same tool, said “This is our fate.”



“For real...?”

A soldier of Orsongrande, who looked up the wall towering high over the surroundings on the east side of the castle dumbfoundedly, respected the soldiers of Fokalore who were climbing the four-meter-high wall swiftly while hanging onto kusarigama's with long ropes attached.

A soldier of Fokalore who stood on top of the wall, looks down on the 20 chosen soldier of Orsongrande below.

“Leave the kusarigama as it is. It looks like they have already started to put out the fire. Let's hurry.”

Once he told them without delay, he jumped off the wall on the other side. All of the 10 present soldiers of Fokalore climb up the same rope and jump down towards the other side one after the other.

From there on it was this battle's worst scene of carnage for the soldiers of Orsongrande.

Different from the soldiers of Fokalore, who were at the most equipped with leather breastplate as lightweight armour, many of Orsongrande's soldiers are wearing metal armours and helmets. It goes without saying, but those are slightly different in weight.

“What a trifle!”

There are also those who cling to the rope, but the majority falls without even holding on for half a minute.

Giving up and removing their equipment, they arrive on top of the wall.

Furthermore it took a full 20 minutes until all of them mustered the courage to jump down from that height.



Horant's infantrymen, who rushed into the first floor after the fire fighting finished, entered an entrance hall where nothing has been placed apart from spaciousness.

"Ouch! What the hell is this?"

"Uwawa!?"

While complaining about the pain, the soldiers fall over one after the other and faint in agony.

Once the commanding officer, who entered late, looked properly, the surface of the entrance hall's floor was covered by fish hooks with strings attached. It's difficult to see the small fish hooks even in the bright entrance hall. A soldier, who wore a type of sandal footwear, sat down due to the pain of the hooks. Once he rolls around the one following behind tumbled after getting caught in that and suffered from the small hooks on his whole body.

"Calm down! If you don't collect yourself... Ack!"

The commanding officer, who stepped over those rolling around on the ground, was hit by a small earthenware jar and a liquid got onto his shoulder. He staggered unintentionally.

"W-What?"

Once he looks on his shoulder, a liquid with an indescribable colour sticks to it.

Ascertaining that it's not an attack that will cause an injury, he feels slightly relieved and breathes in.

"It stinks!"

An irritating stench, similar to rotten eggs, assaults the commanding officer. The commanding officer, who inhaled it with all his might at point-blank range, writhes while on the verge of fainting. The surrounding soldiers also try to get away from him.

However, the liquid which was successively thrown at the soldiers, and not only the commanding officer who stopped moving, changed the entrance into a hell of rotten smell in an instant.

Getting entangled by the strings and hooks, they are enveloped by a stench to the degree of provoking their noses' insides even if they stop breathing while receiving small injuries on their entire bodies. Quite a lot of soldiers are vomiting.

“We’ve been told that this is training, thus it’s fine as their lives won’t be stolen!”

That voice, which slowly mumbled this, was that of a guard who stood on top of a large stairway leading from the entrance hall to the second floor. The guard, who finished throwing the jars on hand, removes the cloth which he wore like a mask on his face, as it’s difficult to use his voice.

“You suffered attacks after getting caught by traps! I won’t attack you any further since you are fellow countrymen, r-retreat, buueeeehhhhhh...”

The guard, who threw jars together with him, looked at his condition and knit his eyebrows.

“Why did you remove the cloth...?”

The guard averted his eyes from his colleague, who acted recklessly, in a state similar to becoming teary eyed across his mask. It was apparently because he would be lured in if he looked directly at him.

“We lost, eh...?”

The commanding officer muttered while frantically suppressing the feeling of something welling up.

“However, a defeat in this place is not a particular problem.”

They are no more than a diversion to the bitter end. Gaining control of the castle is a fake objective. It’s nothing but causing the illusion that the soldiers of Horant and Orsongrande invaded the castle.

Of course, if he talked about his true feelings, he wanted to get some kind of military gains though.

“Nelgal-sama, may the fortune of war...”

Spinning words of a prayer, the commanding officer quietly closed his eyes and barfed.



“This way is the entrance to a hidden passage. Originally it has been decided that it can only be used by royalty and their chamberlains and only in a state of emergency, but...” (Nelgal)

Nelgal was at a stone monument located inside thickly growing trees just behind the castle where the hidden passage, connecting inside the castle, lies. Standing in front of the stone monument, Nelgal turns around and confirms his fellow party members.

Two guarding soldiers of Horant, Imeraria, Sabnak, Vaiya, Alyssa and Puuse are accompanying him.

“For people from another country to pass through here... and moreover for an elf to be able to come to our castle, that’s a first.” (Nelgal)

Imeraria nods towards Nelgal who talks in order to gloss over his tension.

“It’s a honour. ... Nelgal-sama, let’s hurry. We don’t have overly much time.” (Imeraria)

From far away, on the other side of the castle, the war cries of Horant’s soldiers charging in can be heard.

Conversely, not a single voice can be heard from the soldiers of Orsongrande who should be invading from the east side.

“Alyssa-san, I left the means of invasion to you who went scouting, but is it really alright?” (Imeraria)

“It’s fine, it’s fine. I told them to do it in a simple manner.” (Alyssa)

Imeraria was uneasy about Alyssa who urged on with “Rather than that, let’s go quickly,” but she switched her feelings with *there’s something I have to do now*.

“Then let’s go.” (Imeraria)

“Yes, I want to put an end to it before victims appear among the soldiers.” (Nelgal)

Once he knocked down a small stone part which was lodged into the stone monument like a wedge, Nelgal pressed against the stone monument’s main

body with his shoulder putting quite a bit of strength into it.
Doing that, the stone monument slowly slides on top of its pedestal.
And a stairway became exposed.

“There are no special traps in this passage. It’s a straight path. Please be careful since it has a width allowing at most two people passing through it side by side.” (Nelgal)

The soldiers of Horant head in first and Nelgal follows them.

“Let’s enter then.” (Imeraria)

After Vaiya, Imeraria and Puuse went in, then Sabnak and after him Alyssa. The inside is dark. The two in the lead and the two knights rely on the light of the magic tools made by Horant which they are holding. The passage, which continues endlessly ahead without even any decorations on the stone floor, walls and ceiling, stirs up one’s anxiety. However, the ascending stairs, which are faintly visible on the other side of the lights, were able to bestow hope albeit just a bit.

“It’s a bit dark...”

“Nelgal-sama.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria called out to Nelgal who walked slowly.

“How may I help you?” (Nelgal)

“Let’s run. Time is precious.” (Imeraria)

“However, to make you run, Imeraria-sama...”

“It’s unrelated what person I might be.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria in her rider’s suit grasps the lash which she brought along after being trouble with leaving it in her house-room.

“Hifumi-sama told our country’s knights. *Social status and race might be different, but all people are equal.* I don’t want to become a fool who ignores our objective using the excuse of gender and social status at a time when we should run.” (Imeraria)

“... Got it, you two, let’s raise the pace. It’s fine to not care about the rear

since it's a straight path." (Nelgal)

"Ha!"

The soldiers of Horant begin to run and everyone follows.

"Ha! Ha! I will, definitely, surprise Hifumi, thu-!?" (Imeraria)

"If you talk while running, you will end up biting your tongue, you know?"
(Alyssa)

Imeraria, who runs while being out of breath, apparently ended up biting her tongue with all her strength.

Alyssa calls out to Imeraria, who is breathing through her nose with a *fuufuu* while holding her mouth, with a calm face.

Even Imeraria is well aware that their basic stamina values are completely different, but she still gets very angry.

She wanted to make just one complaint, but as her tongue hurt more than she imagined, she couldn't use her voice.

"Pupupu..." (Sabnak)

Seeing Imeraria glaring at Alyssa with teary eyes, Sabnak spontaneously bursts into laughter.

Let's hit him with the lash once more once we get out of the passage, Imeraria firmly swore.

Chapter 153 – I Want To Party

The soldiers of Orsongrande, who were guided by Fokalore's soldiers, ended up scaling the castle's walls and tasted now the hell of getting down. Since Horant's soldiers have rushed into the first floor, they are directly invading the second floor.

For the soldiers of Fokalore, who repeatedly practised storming in with a feeling of an athletic event, climbing up to the second floor is a piece of cake. Climbing while relying on the few protuberances, the soldier, who is the vanguard, sneaks a view from a window.

“Ah.”

“Eh?”

His eyes met with the ones of a patrolling soldier from Kuzemu's camp who is on the other side of the window in a corridor on the second floor.

The soldier from Fokalore, who propped up his body with both his hands, is unable to correspond right away and the soldier of Horant turns his back and runs away.

“We were discovered. Storm in immediately since he ran away.”

While saying that, he leaps inside from the window.

Creating a space for his colleagues, the Fokalore soldier, who stood while making sure to cling to the corner of the corridor, swiftly checks the structure.

“Offices are lined up in the corridor, a stairway in the centre... the structure is as we were taught.”

From the stairs in the middle there are doors of rooms, which are used by high-ranking civil officials who possess an own office in the castle, lining up side-by-side in the long, spacious corridor. On the other side of the stairway there are large room for the sake of meetings and such lined up.

“There's no one here, huh?”

While waiting for his fellow soldiers of Fokalore jumping into the corridor one after the other, he cautiously watched out, but it didn't seem like anyone would

come.

From the vicinity of the stairway, likely from below, the screams of many humans can be heard.

“How does it look?”

“Somehow, going by the smell... it seems to be a tough battle on the first floor. The second floor is... they came!”

Groups of soldiers from Horant are appearing from one of the doors that's beyond the stairway. Each of them holds something like a bucket in their hands and the way of them coming out leisurely gives it all an eerie feeling.

“What are those?”

As the soldier of Fokalore observes the spectacle in front of him while being bewildered, the soldiers of Horant swing the buckets in their hands and plaster the corridor with a liquid.

The large quantity of liquid, which was distributed in succession, streamed down the corridor while creating a wave in the blink of an eye and flowed up to the feet of the soldiers from Fokalore.

“Uh-oh.”

Once each of them took shelter on top of an opened door or a window frame, one of the soldiers of Horant, who watched as the fluid spread out, shouts loudly while looking at a scrap of paper,

“Ah. We are the guards who protect this castle. As our position as guards requires, we have to remove trespassers. For that reason, allow us to hinder you.”

Finishing to read the memo, the soldier of Horant folded it carefully. Stepping without hesitation on the floor, where the liquid has spread out, with a crunching sound with his feet being wrapped in something, he stands still while looking satisfied, but doesn't do anything beyond that.

“... So?”

Due to the Fokalore soldier who calls out to him reflexively, the soldier of Horant nods while keeping his daunting pose.

“That’s all. It’s fine for you to keep clinging like small insects, but if you bastards have any pride as soldiers, you may come at us.”

“What was that!?”

One of Fokalore’s soldiers is enraged, but got stopped by his friends in the vicinity. Being surrounded by a liquid of unknown identity, they judged that it would be best to not move.

However, they were taught the answer by Horant’s side.

Once a large amount of the fluid streams down to the first floor, panicked voices are audible.

“Wai-, the oil has spread until here!?”

“Ah, I have forgotten about the anti-skid measurements... aah!”

There are sounds of screams alongside someone tumbling down from the vicinity of the stairway.

“Oil, eh...?”

Once the soldier of Fokalore looked at the soldier of Horant who had read out the declaration previously, the other party turned away their look.

“... E-Even if you knew that it was oil, there’s no way to deal with it.”

Watching the soldier of Horant who pretends to be tough while blushing, the soldiers of Fokalore exchanged glances with each other.

“There’s no other option but to do it. Any source of ignition is banned, even sparks will be dreadful. Blades are prohibited. Let’s give them a beating.”

“Roger.”

Descending to the floor with a sound of *splash*, all of them fell over.

The soldier of Fokalore, who were in a fit of anger at the soldiers of Horant who burst into laughter, attack Horant’s soldiers while falling and stumbling. An extremely gruesome fist fight begins.

Even the soldiers of Horant who covered their feet with a dried, thorny weed as unique anti-skid measure of this country, are thrown into the same conditions once the thorns end up crushed underfoot by them moving around.

Among them there were also some who tumbled down to the first floor with its

rotten smell drifting about while struggling with one another.

“... There was plenty of oil spread on the stairway leading to the third floor as well. We will stop you lot here.”

A soldier of Fokalore returns a sneer to the soldier of Horant who grins broadly in the middle of showing and pushing.

“Our objective ain’t breaking through.”

While driving a palm heel into his chin, the soldier of Fokalore laughs while falling over due to the oil.

“If we continue to compete like this, the mission is a success, I guess? We will leave the rest to the director.”



“... It’s noisy below, isn’t it?” (Origa)

In one office intended for high-ranking civil officials on the third floor, Origa, who sieved through the documents in Kuzemu’s room, mutters.

Rummaging through documents in the same room, Viine turned around to Origa while making her one ear move with a twitch.

“The uproar on the first and second floor... it looks like there are many screams on the first floor, however it seems there’s plenty of people there. Doesn’t it look like they have invaded from outside?” (Viine)

Origa lowered her sight on the documents with a serious look as Viine expresses her uneasiness with “Then it would be best if we escaped.”

“It’s unnecessary to worry. The ones who are attacking are the soldiers of Horant and Orsongrande. Even if they came attacking us as a joke, they won’t pass through the mob. Rather than that, did you find anything?” (Origa)

The reason for them being here was to learn of Kuzemu’s objective. Making the risky large soldiers move, namely the giant soldiers and the immortal soldiers, should have had an according reason, is what Hifumi thinks and had Origa take over as his own assistant. Viine was dragged into that.

“I still haven’t got used to reading the characters... ah.” (Viine)

Viine put one document, which was placed on a shelf, in front of Origa.

“This, it’s a report from someone, isn’t it? “The magic tool to create immortal soldiers was handed over to a messenger of Pearsan which went independent from Vichy” is written there.” (Origa)

Dropping her line of sight on the document which was presented to her, Origa squinted.

“Pearsan... that’s the city-state which went independent with the intention to get close to Hifumi-sama. Them having a connection with Horant... oh.” (Viine)

Sensing that the air around Origa has become freezing, Viine steps back.

“Ufu.” (Origa)

A laughter like a breath leaking out.

“Ufu, ufufufu....” (Origa)

“M-Madam?” (Viine)

“You did well to find this. With this I will be able to offer a new enemy to Hifumi-sama. And a new battlefield will be born.” (Origa)

“I will confiscate this document”, Origa put it into her pocket after folding it three times and then started to walk towards the hallway with Viine in tow while leaving the unfolded documents as is.

“... Something stinks.” (Viine)

Origa couldn’t sense any more than a faint whiff of it, but Viine’s nose is better than the one of humans. She held down her nose with teary eyes.

“It looks like it has risen up from below.” (Origa)

“Let’s go to the top quickly then. We have to inform Hifumi-sama.” (Viine)

Viine, who still pinches her nose, follows Origa who walks with her head held high while a sound of *clonk clonk** resounds from the shoe soles of her boots. She seemed to completely fit the image of a new OL hire accompanying her career woman superior. Viine paid fleeting attention at Origa who walks without any hesitation.

“Viine-san.” (Origa)

“Y-Yes!” (Viine)

“You have your physical ability as beastman and can also use magic... it seems that you will be able able to fight accordingly, however I’m still uneasy about you following Hifumi-sama beyond this point. Since there has been a plan established, it might be best if you train once we return to Fokalore. ... You are.” (Origa)

Starting to say it, she hesitated a bit.

Origa made a short pause and then turned around to Viine behind her.

“Watching Hifumi-sama fight, seeing him giving an ordeal to his allies, are you still able to declare that you like Hifumi-sama?” (Origa)

Due to the sudden question, Viine was confused and her ear stood up tensely. She didn’t comprehend Origa’s intention, but it didn’t change her answer.

“Of course. The affection, which I experienced at the time of being bestowed the beauty of survival, is the level of master’s charm... no, even if master turns all beastmen into his enemy for example, I won’t disappear from his side.” (Viine)

Hearing Viine’s reply, Origa turned around and started to walk while facing downwards.

“If that’s how it is, you might be able to even endure relentless training. I will teach you the things I was taught by Hifumi-sama.” (Origa)

“T-Thank you very much!” (Viine)

Due to Viine thanking her while being all smiles, Origa says 「However」 without ceasing to walk.

“I should make one correction. Hifumi-sama’s charm lies in the aspect of him laughing while making enemies out of not only the beastmen but also humans, demons and all living creatures including monsters.” (Origa)

When Viine didn’t mutter even a single word as she didn’t know how it would be best to answer, Origa continued with a gentle tone.

“There’s no need to worry. If you serve close to Hifumi-sama, you will understand it before long.” (Origa)

Climbing a stairway, she pushes open the especially massive door of the fourth floor.

There's the room for the king. Different from the audience hall, where Hifumi fought with the crown prince, located on the first floor, it isn't that spacious. However, with magnificent furnishings lining up, the throne, which was installed inside, was a work of art that applied a yet different design from the one in the audience hall.

And, currently Hifumi was sitting on it.

"I wonder why the back of the king's chair is vertical. One won't calm down on it." (Hifumi)

Ignoring Gaap, who has a pale face while asking 「I wonder if that's alright?」 from the side, Origa directly approaches Hifumi, who is trying to search for the most comfortable seating posture, and kneels.

Once Viine tried to imitate her in a hurry, Hifumi made her stop by waving his hand.

"Stop, stop. I don't want to play being a king or such. If you have some business, talk to me while properly looking at me." (Hifumi)

"Excuse me." (Origa)

Slipping out a chuckle, Origa got even closer to Hifumi, took out the previous document from her pocket and explained its contents.

Hearing her talk, Hifumi grabs the katana, which was placed next to him, and stands up all of a sudden.

"The next battlefield is over there, huh? Good grief, that's terrible." (Hifumi)

Even while saying so, only a smile is showing on his face.

Affixing the katana to his waist, Hifumi fluently wrote down something on two sheets of parchments which he took out from his storage and asks Origa as well as Viine,

"After returning to Fokalore once, I will go to Vichy from there. What will you two do?" (Hifumi)

Carefree words as if he is inviting them on a walk.

Origa smiles gently.

“Of course we will follow you. We will be able to leave immediately since the food has been prepared to be taken out. We will even make a bento. I will prepare it together with Viine.” (Origa)

“I see. That will be great.” (Hifumi)

With a backward glance towards Gaap who is perplexed due to being forced to take the papers and being told that the rest is left to him, the three left the room while chatting about hot springs and local specialities in the cities along the way.



“Very soon, the exit.” (Nelgal)

Nelgal fills his voice while it's intermingled with his rough breathing. Imeraria runs up the stairs in a line.

The hidden escape path changed into stairs once they entered the castle's grounds and rose towards the castle's back.

“How many floors will we ascend?” (Alyssa)

While checking the height from a small window with the task of providing skylight, Alyssa asks Nelgal. Only her breathing rate hasn't increased much. The soldiers of Horant turned their looks at her as if seeing something they can't believe, but once their eyes met with the ones of Alyssa, they hurriedly averted theirs. For them, who also saw the battle with the immortal soldiers, Alyssa isn't a little girl anymore but a target of fright.

“It's, the fourth floor. The pathway, is connected, to behind the, throne, there.” (Nelgal)

“Hmm. Then it's close.” (Alyssa)

In contrast, the one who has the least leeway is Imeraria. Even Sabnak, who practised as knight more or less, breathed heavily while cursing the weight of his armour, but even though his breathing was painful, it was still better than the queen's. Vaiya, who has a lot jobs on-site, has even more surplus than Sabnak. No one tried to call out to Imeraria who made her feet move by sheer will power while having her eyes widely open.



When they arrived at their destination was the time when all soldiers of Horant, who stormed the first floor, had fainted and when more than half the number of the soldiers of Fokalore and Horant, who fought on the second floor, couldn't move anymore due to fatigue.

By the way, of the soldiers of Orsongrande, who did their best to invade the second floor, only five people joined the battle after climbing the wall. The rest is groaning due to injuries they suffered at the time of dropping down.

“Zeha... ze, zee, ze!” (Imeraia)

Imeraria, who entered the vast room from the narrow pathway, turned her sight towards Nelgal as she eagerly absorbed oxygen while holding her heart which is pounding to an extent she has never experienced.

“Haa, haa... this, place is, our destination.” (Nelgal)

The instant Imeraria sank down to the floor after hearing those words, Alyssa goes in front as if repelling something.

“Hii!?”

“Who are you?” (Alyssa)

Having a wakizashi pressed at his throat, the one who screamed was Gaap. After Hifumi left, he stayed dumbfoundedly in the room without doing anything, but due to being surprised by the suddenly appearance of Nelgal, he was caught by Alyssa.

“A-Aren't you Gaap-san?” (Nelgal)

“Your Majesty...” (Gaap)

“I will listen to your story later. Currently there's something I should do first.” (Nelgal)

Without paying attention to the frightened Gaap, Nelgal pushed the wall next to the escape route behind the throne.

A part of the wall shifts with a lighter sound of sliding than assumable by its appearance and a small metal door gets exposed.

“Your Highness, Imeraria, we will perform the coronation from now on.

Please act as witness.” (Nelgal)

“Pheew~... Yes, of course I don’t mind.” (Imeraria)

“Thank you very much.” (Nelgal)

Once Nelgal pushes his ring against a small cavity which is located on the door, the door opens just a bit with a small sound.

Being opened slowly, there’s a crown with gorgeous jewels embedded, a golden craftsmanship that represented a dagger in the centre and with a large diamond inserted.

“This is this country’s crown.” (Nelgal)

Having passed the crown into Imeraria’s hands. Nelgal kneels in front of her.

“If you can approve of me as king who will govern Horant, bestow that crown upon me. If that’s not the case...” (Nelgal)

“Anything further is not necessary.” (Imeraria)

Imeraria moves the crown with its heavy sense of dignity above the head of Nelgal with her slender arms.

“Become a good king. A splendid king who rises according to the faith of his people.” (Imeraria)

“I swear. It’s all for the sake of supporting their lives by protecting my people.” (Nelgal)

Sitting down on the throne, the soldiers of Horant, who followed him as guards, were at the ready on both his sides.

Imeraria, Sabnak and Vaiya stand while avoiding being in front of Nelgal.

Before Nelgal, who became king, Gaap kneels while having the wakizashi thrust at him by Alyssa.

“Well then, let’s hear your story, Gaap?” (Nelgal)



The two sheets of paper, which were entrusted to Gaap, were respectively addressed to Imeraria and Nelgal.

“Good grief... for my first decree after the enthronement to be cleaning...”

(Nelgal)

Finishing to read the paper which explained the details of the traps and told him “Do your best at cleaning up,” Nelgal showed a bitter smile. Nelgal, who heard even from Gaap that it was something like an experiment and at the same time training with the battle in general being gentle, maintained his posture by spurring on his body which suffered from exhaustion. Sentencing a penitence for Gaap and ordering a stop of all combat to the soldiers within the castle, he calls back the servants who were evacuated. And their work starts from cleaning the castle’s interior of the oil and the rotten smell.

“Well, if I consider that we were able to raise the level of the guards due to being able to practise, it might also be less objectionable. We were also able to punish a treacherous subject. Rather than me...” (Nelgal)

Once he looks to the side of the room, there’s the unconscious Imeraria who is carried by Sabnak.

Imeraria, who looked on the paper that had only written “A prize for doing your best” and “I’m off to Vichy,” collapsed unexpectedly as if her soul had been sucked out.

“Umm, Your Majesty, King Nelgal, I’m terribly sorry, but since there are circumstances I have to attend to...” (Vaiya)

Once being called out by Vaiya apologetically, Nelgal answered with a stiff smile.

“I shall prepare a room inside the castle... no, in a close-by inn. Once Her Majesty Imeraria awakens, I’d like to have the privilege of having a talk with her once, but for now let her please rest comfortably. I will also arrange for a location for your nation’s soldiers to lodge.” (Nelgal)

“That’s a very kind offer. I will definitely inform Queen Imeraria about it.” (Vaiya)

Nelgal, who saw off Sabnak’s group, including Alyssa, leaving the room, exhaled while saying “Soon I will hit my limit.”

“The next is Vichy? That’s far, but even if I won’t get dragged into it, it’s not

limited to that. If I don't make arrangements... at any rate, it's too vertical as back of a chair, this." (Nelgal)

Nelgal had no self-awareness while starting to escape reality in his thoughts with *if it's possible to set it down to the back a bit, it will be even more comfortable.*