

戦司書 虚言者の宴

Tatakau Sisho to Kyogensha no Utage

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 スーパーダッシュ

Tatakau Shisho

vol.7 - Fighting Librarians And The Banquet
Of Liars

by Yamagata Ishio

[Novel Updates](#)

Translation Group: [Tatakau Shisho LN Translation](#)

Epub: [Trollo WN/LN EPUB](#)

Illustrations





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「著作権保護コンテンツ」



Kyasariro
ギヤサリロ

武装司書。能天気な女性。
戦闘力は高い。



Minth
ミンス

元武装司書。カチュアの
後を継ぎ、新たな楽園
管理者となっている。



Yankuu
ヤンクウ

武装司書見習い。泥を操る。
滅びかけた故郷の村を一人で
守っている。

Olivia
オリビア

神溺教団の秘密を知る女性。
武装司書から逃げながら、
反逆を企てている。



「著作権保護コンテンツ」

Minth Former Armed Librarian. Succeeded Kachua to become the new Overseer of Paradise.

Kyasariro Armed Librarian. A carefree woman. Possesses high fighting strength.

Olivia A woman who knows the secret of the Indulging God Cult. She is plotting a rebellion while running away from the Armed Librarians.

Yankuu

An Armed Librarian trainee. Controls mud. Protects his village that is on the edge of ruin.



Mattalast Armed Librarian. Hamyuts's right-hand man. A powerful man with a Prediction ability, his nature is that of a liar.

Hamyuts Acting Director of Bantorra Library. Cruel and extremely aggressive. Controls a sling.

Yuri Armed Librarian. The little sister of the one next in line to become the Acting Director, Yukizona.

Prologue: Heaven Rustles

December 1925

His breath froze and danced in the air. It was much more colder there than during the peak of winter. He was in a dreary cave illuminated by faint blue light.

Armed Librarian Mattalast Ballory was standing in the innermost place of Bantorra Library's Sealed Labyrinth, the Second Sealed Archive.

Originally Armed Librarians other than the Acting Directors were not permitted to enter. But because it was Mattalast, who shared and protected the secret along with Hamyuts, he was allowed to be there. The greatest secret of both the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult existed there.

"...Well then."

A single tree stood in front of him. It was about five meters tall. Its grey trunk and glass-like leaves caught his eyes.

It was an unusual tree that stood in the bottom of the endlessly deep Labyrinth, its roots crushing the solid rock underneath.

Heaven.

The Acting Directors and Overseer of Paradise throughout history have named it so.

At present time, only six people in the world knew of this existence. They were Mattalast who was there as well as Hamyuts Meseta, Yukizona Hamlow, Yuri Hamlow, Photona Bardgamon, and Kachua Beeinhaus. No other people were allowed to know of it.

"...That bastard Kachua didn't fulfill his duty. Heaven's getting noisy."

Mattalast spoke to himself. The leaves of glass were gently rustling in front of him.

The Books of the two True Men that Kachua had raised, Cigal and Ganbanzel, were already offered up to Heaven. However, their happiness was not sufficient

for it.

It was obvious. There was no way Heaven would agree to those miserable losers. What it wished for was a perfect happiness that lacked nothing.

Kachua's duty was to search for the flawless happiness and offer it to Heaven. Since that old man did not fulfill his duty, Mattalast had no choice but to assist him.

"...Will you accept this Book?"

Muttering this, Mattalast took the Book he was holding and offered it to Heaven. It was the Book of a certain wealthy person from about a century ago. He was a person who inherited his relative's assets and lived his entire life without any inconveniences. Mattalast secretly took this Book and brought it to the Second Sealed Archive.

He brought the Book closer to Heaven. A split second afterward, it burst apart. The fragments of the Book became dust and vanished instantly as if they were an illusion. A few seconds later, the tree's leaves and branches stopped swaying.

"That does it."

Mattalast muttered. However, this degree of happiness was not enough. Give it half a year or a year and it will start rustling visibly again. They had to quickly offer it the Book of a True Man.

For that sake as well, they needed to quickly kill the revolting Overseer of Paradise Kachua and appoint a new one.

"Shall I return to the battle?"

Above ground, his fellow Armed Librarians were cornering the Indulging God Cult. It would only be a short time until Kachua's defeat. Mattalast turned on his heels. He was about to return to the surface in order to fight against Kachua.

"..."

However, his feet stopped. He tried thinking about why he did so. He had no reason to stay there. He had plenty of work to do. He had to fight the Indulging God Cult led by Kachua. He had to protect his comrades.

Quickly go back and fight. He thought this, but his feet wouldn't move.

"What for?"

Mattalast muttered. What was he – no, the Armed Librarians – fighting for? There was no need to think of it. It was to crush Kachua's evil intentions and restore peace to the world.

And to create a new Indulging God Cult.

Yes, their purpose was clear. There was nothing to hesitate about.

Nevertheless, Mattalast couldn't leave that place.

"..."

He knew – that the source of everything was Heaven. The Indulging God Cult existed for it, the fight started for it, and his comrades were dying for it.

If Heaven had not existed, this fight wouldn't have happened. No one would have died. Neither Luimon, Feekiee, Vizac, Volken or Mokkaania. Neither the many victims that were used by the Indulging God Cult.

If Heaven had not existed...

"Hey, what's wrong with me? Stop thinking of stupid things."

Mattalast unnaturally raised his voice. He tried smiling to blow away the thoughts coming into his mind.

He smiled for a while. He made great effort in smiling and forgetting.

Don't think of stupid things. I'm only like that because I'm tired. If I go back and rest I'll forget it. I'll eat some delicious food, listen to music and sleep soundly for one night. I'll drink some stinging bitter beer. I'll slowly enjoy its cream-like bubbles.

Rather than some deep classical music, I'll listen to some recent catchy tune. Reading books isn't bad either.

So forget all about it. Stop having stupid thoughts.

Mattalast started walking while thinking of this.

"...!"

The next instant, he tried turning around. He put both hands on his twin pistols. Then, he directed both muzzles to Heaven and was about to pull the trigger.

It happened in a split second. A frighteningly short instant with who knows how many zeroes after the decimal point.

His fingers wouldn't reach the pistols. They would be unable to move even one centimeter.

The first would be his index fingers. Although no one did anything, they would be severed from the bases. Next, his head would fly in air with the hat on it like some joke. Fresh blood would then spurt from his fingers and neck.

His body would collapse like a broken marionette. By some kind of strange power, without any of his clothes scratched by even a millimeter, his body would dismantle into dozens of pieces.

This was what Mattalast had seen using his Prediction ability.

“ ...”

The only thing falling was a single drop of cold sweat. Since he was in the cold Sealed Archive, it froze and rang on the floor before reaching it.

“...Kuku.”

Mattalast started laughing. What stupid things was he thinking about? Thinking that he could destroy that thing... what had gotten into him?

“As I thought I'm tired. Really, that Hammy, throwing so much work on me...”

He shrugged and walked for the Sealed Archive's exit. His doubts were already gone.

His duty was to protect the secret of Heaven and offer it the Books of those who were happy.

That was his mission as well as that of all Armed Librarians. It was a mission they were not allowed to oppose after having succeeded it 2000 years ago.

On the same day and the exact same time...

Olivia Littolet was in the silent dead of night.

She was in a corner of the station at the capital of the Principality of Meliot. She was waiting for the departure of the coal-carrying freight train in front of her eyes.

Two months have passed since she ran away from Hamyuts and regained her memories.

During that time, Olivia continued life on the run by herself. She walked from town to town, hid her name and made small amounts of money.

Before she could feel her pursuers she immediately moved to another town. She lived like this for two months. Since she had no one to rely on and no identification, Olivia had to do her best to live every day.

“...No one’s here, huh.”

Saying this, Olivia opened one of the freight train’s containers. This train would go from Meliot’s capital to the west, enter the northern frontier through Machina Bridge, and reach the Ismo Republic. She snuck into the container.

Long story short, she was a stowaway. She was nearly at her limit in staying at the Principality of Meliot. In order to keep escaping she had no choice but to leave the country. However, Olivia had no passport. She could only do this.

After several tens of minutes, the train started moving. Olivia breathed in relief.

Olivia rubbed her hands inside the shaking container.

Cold. I should’ve brought a heater, but I had no time. I wish I could do it even if it was impossible, she regretted.

“...No one’s looking.”

Olivia muttered. If a driver or engineer found her, she would be thrown out of the train. Being found by them was still fine. If her pursuers were to find her she would be killed.

“...Dammit.”

She couldn’t help but mutter.

Olivia’s life was currently the target of two major powers. One was the

Indulging God Cult. Olivia returned the memories of the Meats, inflicting a heavy blow on the Cult. They would obviously target her.

Next were the Armed Librarians.

In the battle two months ago, Olivia was nearly killed by Hamyuts. The fact that she survived was the result of miracles even she couldn't believe.

Why was she targeted by the Armed Librarians? That requires an explanation.

There was once a girl. Speaking her name was no longer permitted at present. Based on the color of her hair, she was called the Violet Sinner.

The Violet Sinner rebelled against the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult. And she knew of the one and only method to destroy Heaven. She knew of that absolute secret that no one should have known about no matter what.

Due to that sin, she was obliterated by the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult.

Furthermore, the Armed Librarians massacred all those who were connected to her one by one. Then, all Books in which the Violet Sinner was recorded were annihilated from this world.

In order to protect the secret they had to conceal it. Thus the previous Acting Director, Photona, had decided that the Violet Sinner was a secret that must be concealed.

However, a single person escaped from the massacre.

It was the weapon made of lead created from a human, Vend Ruga. He ran away and was soon killed by Hamyuts. During that short while, Vend Ruga met up with Olivia and passed his heart to her.

After ten years, Hamyuts tried to kill that very same Olivia. She was terribly tenacious and cruel.

Whether or not Olivia knew about the Violet Sinner wasn't the issue. Since there was the possibility that she knew Hamyuts attempted to kill her.

A terribly persistent and selfish killer. Olivia kept running away from her evil clutches.

The train pushed its way and advanced through the darkness. Olivia boarded it while hugging her shaking knees.

She was cold and sleepy. Moreover, she was hungry.

If she were to fall asleep, she had no idea if she would even wake up. She grinded her teeth, rubbed her arms and fought against her sleepiness. The Armed Librarians, the Indulging God Cult and the cold. It felt as if the entire world was trying to kill her.

“Dammit.”

Olivia mumbled. She mumbled so she could fight.

She had to stay alive. If she were to die, her fight would end. Right now, her entire fight was to survive.

“I won’t die, I won’t die yet.”

Olivia hit her own cheek with her fist.

“Why am I alive?”

She bit her pinky. Her nail cracked and blood flowed. That made her feel a bit less sleepy.

“Why am I alive? For revenge. I will take revenge against Hamyuts, the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult!”

Olivia shouted.

The fact she was alive right now was due to the death of many people. Her comrades that cooperated with her on the Meats’ ship; the one who guided her, Volken; Charlot, who saved her life; Renas, who surrendered her body; and Vend Ruga.

For their sake Olivia couldn’t die. She had to avenge their deaths. She had to fight against the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult.

She had to destroy the source of all of it, Heaven.

If people had some prescribed destiny, then Olivia survived so she could fight. She lived so she could destroy Heaven.

She seemed to have dozed off for a while. Olivia woke up by the sound of her

head hitting the wall.

“...That was close...”

She rubbed her eyes.

She did not expect to confront the Armed Librarians with her own power. She also didn't think of fighting with the Indulging God Cult. Olivia had no power. She didn't even know how to use a gun or a sword.

However, she did have some weapon. She had the most ineffective yet most important weapon – information. Olivia knew of the only way to destroy Heaven.

The Violet Wish. That was the name of the method to do so. It was the only legacy the Violet Sinner had left in the world. It was passed from her to Vend Ruga, and from him to Olivia.

She could only do small things right now.

To tell someone about the Violet Wish. To give information to those that had the power and will to fight. Connect her legacy to the next person. That was probably the most Olivia could do.

She didn't mind only doing this and exhausting herself.

“Are we still not in Ismo?”

Olivia muttered. When she arrives at Ismo she will start looking. She will search for someone who has power and will. For someone who would inherit her Violet Wish.

That was Olivia's mission. A small step in order to destroy Heaven. That was the mission she imposed on herself.

Those who protect Heaven, and those who seek to destroy it. Two people with two missions. The time for their paths to clash approached. However, it was still far away.

Then, one year has passed.

Chapter 1: That Peace is False

Part 1

Present – December 18, 1926

Past God Bantorra Island's town was enveloped by the hustle and bustle of the evening. Men who finished their jobs pursued their way back home, with the scents of dinners from houses along the way drifting in the air.

In the past, there were two days of hell there when the people of the world had attacked Bantorra Library.

In the year since then the town was rebuilt. People were returning to their daily lives before the rebellion. However, by straining one's eyes, they would be able to notice some scars here and there. There were wheel-tracks of tanks that scraped the ground or bullets and shell fragments stuck to the walls. However, these were all mixed up in the traces of the people's new daily lives and were gradually becoming less visible.

Mattalast's feet hit an empty cartridge that was still not disposed of. It rolled on the ground and fell into a ditch.

"Damn, I mistook the time."

Saying so, he turned at the corner. He found a large building at the center of the shopping district. He opened the heavy oaken door.

Sorry I'm late. Just as he thought of saying this, Mattalast held his tongue.

The interior was dark; all lights were turned off. All of the hundred or so Armed Librarians inside fell to silence without making a single whisper or sound.

Mattalast entered and gently closed the door. He took off his hat and held it to his chest.

"The minute of silence is over."

He heard the voice of a woman from within the darkness. It was familiar to him. She was the Armed Librarian called Kyasariro.

“Our comrades who have died one year ago in the fight against the Indulging God Cult. The citizens who were involved with the Deep Blue Curse and died. We are all here right now because of their sacrifices.

We swear to never repeat this mistake again. We renew in our hearts our absolute duty to protect the peaceful life and quiet death of people around the world.

Let us pledge to dedicate our wisdom, power, and all of our lives for the sake of that duty.”

Even in the darkness it was clear everyone was strongly nodding to her words.

“Well then.”

Kyasariro’s tone of voice, solemn until then, changed.

“Only for today and only in here, let us forget about that vow.”

The next instant all lights turned on at once.

It was a large place that could seat about 200 people. Almost all of the Armed Librarians have gathered there. They all held glasses in one hand and in their other hands were things such as crackers or bottles of champagne.

Even those who usually didn’t care about their appearances tried looking good to some extent. It was quite the sight.

“Ladies and gentlemen!”

Saying so, Kyasariro jumped on one table with a megaphone in one hand.

“This year, while we’ve had some difficulties, pain, difficulties and all sorts of things, we somehow made it through an entire year! You’ve truly done a great work this year, everyone!

Today’s our once-in-a-year great party! This is the only day for you chosen warriors, God’s agents, and protectors of world peace to return being simple idiots! Please enjoy yourself to the fullest!

Let’s have a toast you bastards!”

Along with Kyasariro’s voice, the sounds of glass and applause resounded in the room. Then, the paper ribbons coming from crackers and champagne bottle

corks flew to the air.

“Forget all about your usual work and troubles for today and be as flashy as you can! You must recover from brawls in less than ten days! Make less than a thousand tohora in property damage! Murder, sexual assaults, looting or involving normal people and the like is forbidden! Please remember the above and eat, drink, sing, and party as much as you’d like!”

Saying this, Kyasariro jumped off the table.

The violent people started scattering champagne foam around. There were also those who started singing despite not being drunk yet. In the blink of an eye they all became fools.

They all were at the biggest beer hall in Past God Bantorra Island’s town. Every year on this day the place was reserved for the Armed Librarians. This was the only day of the year the disciplined Armed Librarians were allowed to make a great party.

“Hey now, taking ten days to heal means it will be a serious injury...”

Mattalast shrugged. *Seems like it’s going to be wild today*, he mentally sighed.

Speaking of the Armed Librarians’ party, many people probably thought of it as a luxurious banquet. Even the average Armed Librarian earned enough money to last a lifetime in a decade. By becoming an Acting Director candidate, one would get money comparable to the big tycoons of the Ismo Republic. They would think those Armed Librarians would host a party that could shame even royalty. However, the truth was different.

The meeting place was a simple beer hall. In order to create some empty space inside, the tables were placed in disorder. All those present either took a seat wherever they liked or stood eating.

Even the food was just things like meat dishes or deep fried food with random spices. Because the price of alcohol was reasonable, there was plenty in variance and quantity.

Most of the Armed Librarians came from middle-class families or below that. Since they have spent all of their youth doing nothing but battle training and Magic Deliberation, they didn’t know the taste of high-class cuisine. They also

didn't know how to drink high-class alcohol and had no manners inside their heads. So luxury would be wasted on them.

"It's been a long time since we've had this party."

While saying this, Mattalast immediately drank a glass of champagne.

"Oh, Matt-san. You're late."

Kyasariro spoke to him.

"Sorry. I mistook the time."

"Didn't I tell you already? This year we started an hour earlier than the usual."

"Sorry, sorry."

Mattalast said and shrugged.

Kyasariro Tona was in her mid-twenties. Although she was young compared to normal people, her career as an Armed Librarian was not short.

She was a fairly petite and child-faced woman. Her speech and conduct also seemed vaguely childish.

She wore a disproportionately big hat and had a large amount of pistols equipped to her waist and thighs. It could be said to be wild and carefree, but frankly speaking it was a queer getup.

"You took over the organizer role this year, right?"

"Yeah."

While saying this, Kyasariro jumped onto Mattalast's shoulder. For some reason, she loved jumping on to people's shoulders or tables. Not only her appearance was bizarre.

"Must've been tough. Ireia used to take care of that."

"Yeah. We've lost some precious people."

Kyasariro gently dropped her elbows on Mattalast's head while speaking.

"You can't make such a miserable face today. Save it for tomorrow."

"Right, sorry."

“You have to look like you’re having fun. We haven’t had this party in three years after all.”

Perhaps growing tired of Mattalast’s shoulders, Kyasariro jumped off.

December 28 of the year before the last was a short while after the Allow Bay Assault Incident. They weren’t in any state to hold a party. Finally, last year it was the day when the war of the Deep Blue Curse began.

Thinking of that, he could agree to Kyasariro’s words. Being able to organize the party was extremely fortunate.

Suddenly looking away, he could see an improvised platform at the back of the hall. Mirepoc stood on it while holding a megaphone. Her hair, which was short one year ago, now grew all the way to her chest. Her features also matured, so she seemed more and more like a woman. Mirepoc raised her voice.

“Attention, everyone.”

Mirepoc said, but the Armed Librarians were speaking to each other as they pleased.

“Attention.”

She said again, and finally several Armed Librarians responded.

“Hey, Mirepoc’s trying to say something.”

“Listen to herrr. She’ll get angry at yaaa.”

After these voices echoed, the meeting hall became somewhat quiet.

“Just the other day we held the promotion examinations for Armed Librarians and three trainees have passed it. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce them to you. Come here.”

Three young people came onto the stage after being urged by Mirepoc.

“Please introduce yourselves and make a short speech in order. Starting from the right.”

The first to lower his head was a boy with a smiling face. He had a small stature and a cute face. He looked like some pet dog that grew up without any

inconveniences in life. He started speaking in a cheerful voice.

“Hello everyone, I’m Rizzly. I’m 18 years old. My hobbies are cooking and gardening and my favorite colors are pink and cobalt blue. My specialties are sardine pie and the salmon piccata I’ve learned from Ireia-san. I made it today by my own hands. There’s plenty of it around, so please enjoy eating it, everyone.”

Voices of applause and people calling *it’s delicious!* rose from all around the hall.

“...Just what is your job supposed to be? Next one please.”

The one appearing next was a girl with a bob cut. Her sleepy eyes seemed to be looking at the day after tomorrow. She faced the ceiling for a short while. Finally, she spoke in a small voice.

“I’m the Armed Librarian Tena. The sky-blue birdy whispers to me about tomorrow’s clouds. They’re super fluffy, and although it’s spring, they look like fallen leaves.”

“...What the?”

Kyasariro mumbled.

“That girl’s amusing.”

Mattalast snickered, his shoulders swaying.

“The moon, the kitten and the leafhopper are dancing according to the formula of the quadratic function. So how come the sad clown’s heart doesn’t flutter? All the Books stored at Bantorra Library are snowflakes of night. All of us Armed Librarians are boiled sheep milk. Why does the hexagon of the northern star twinkle for me?”

“I have no idea. Next one.”

Mirepoc said, and the newbie Armed Librarian called Tena got off surprisingly readily.

The third person rose on the platform. He stuck out his right hand and right leg at the same time. He kept silent and stiff. His whole body was shaking bit by bit. Mirepoc then came to the rescue of this new Armed Librarian.

“Since he cannot move if more than seven people are watching him, there will be no greeting. That will be enough.”

Without even naming himself, the new Armed Librarian left as if running away.

“Hey, is that all you’ve got?”

Mirepoc ignored the jeering rising from the assembly hall with a vein bulging on her forehead.

“Next, the Acting Director will address them with a brief speech about preparing to be Armed Librarians.”

Mirepoc spoke towards one corner of the hall. Hamyuts was idly sitting there and eating a salad.

Hamyuts walked to the platform while still chewing. She received the megaphone from Mirepoc and then spoke.

“It’s too much of a bother, so nope.”

Saying only this, she returned to her place. Wrinkling her eyebrows, Mirepoc took the megaphone back.

“...Well then, the greeting ends here. You may continue eating and chatting.”

Leaving those words behind, Mirepoc ran away from the platform.

“Seems like we Armed Librarians get more and more weird guys by the year.”

“You’re one to speak...”

Mattalast said, and Kyasariro raised her eyebrow as if it was completely unthinkable.

At that moment Mirepoc came walking with her shoulders perked in anger.

“Thanks Mirepo.”

“Kyasariro-san, why did you give me that role?”

“Because I knew that no matter whom I’d ask, they’d just say something like ‘it’s too troublesome so give it to Mirepoc’.”

Kyasariro cackled.

“It was good though. I enjoyed it.”

“Hmph.”

She clearly averted her face when Mattalast spoke to her.

“I shouldn’t have come here, jeez...”

She went away from Mattalast and Kyasariro while complaining.

“Good grief, she’s the same as ever.”

“That’s Mirepo’s good point. I don’t mind it.”

Kyasariro smiled and Mattalast nodded in response.

An hour passed since the party started. *I shouldn’t have come.* Mirepoc sat in the hall’s corner while thinking this.

She didn’t like bustling places in the first place. She hated making noise and hated getting drunk even more.

Mirepoc passed her gaze around the hall. Luik and Tsamuro were holding beer barrels and having a drinking game. Lasma and Coyoll started grappling. Bonbo arranged food on a whole table and started stuffing his stomach from one end to another.

Mattalast was playing music she had never heard on the hall’s piano while Kyasariro and Gamo were singing around him.

All of them were usually her respected seniors. Yet now they were all acting like fools.

“What’s up with them...”

Mirepoc muttered.

But perhaps she, who wasn’t able to fool around was the one at the wrong. Sitting bored all by herself made her think of such things.

“...”

Mirepoc suddenly recalled the war a year ago. By touching her hair that now extended to her chest she could feel just how much time had passed. However, it still felt as if it was only yesterday.

The people who've died in the war rose to her mind.

Was it fine having fun like that? A lot of people got mixed up in that incident and died. Noloty and Ireia will never be able to participate in this party.

The new Armed Librarian Tena came in front of her. She handed the glass she was holding to Mirepoc.

"What is it, Tena?"

Tena looked at Mirepoc with eyes that made it impossible to know what she was thinking about.

"Nobody wants to forget. But if you don't forget, the memories will sometimes trip you up and make you unable to move. Since everyone are bad at forgetting, do your best to forget things for today."

Mirepoc received the glass from Tena. It was filled with a diluted amber-colored liquid. *Is she telling me to enjoy myself?*

"Thank you."

Saying this, Mirepoc drank the liquid from the glass. Although it was sweet, she felt it sting her throat. It was her first time to drink this.

"What is this?"

Tena silently pointed at the bar counter. There was a drink with slices of orange floating inside a silver bowl on it.

"It's punch. You pour it into the glass by yourself and drink it."

She explained. It was bad manners to drink that way, but it wasn't bad. She filled another glass and poured it into her. Mysteriously, it smoothly passed through her throat.

"Delicious."

Mirepoc faintly smiled while staring at her glass.

Part 2

February 1926

The Deep Blue Curse Rebellion has ended. In exchange for the great number of victims Bantorra Library was able to barely achieve victory. The enemy's leader, Kachua Beeinhaus, had been defeated at the hands of Enlike. However, this did not mean the fight has ended.

For the Armed Librarians, the month after the rebellion might have been their most difficult time yet. They had to shelter the victims at the Past God Island, reconstruct the destroyed town, and rescue the countries' sailors scattered around their waters. The second war known as lifesaving further exhausted them.

On top of that, their fight against the Indulging God Cult still continued. There was no guarantee the Cult had truly used all of their pawns.

They didn't know if the former Armed Librarian Kachua, who was written about in Noloty's Book, truly was the head of the Indulging God Cult. Even he might have possibly been a mere puppet with the real mastermind lying somewhere behind.

In the first place the scariest thing about the Cult was that it kept living even after being destroyed. The Armed Librarians have defeated the Indulging God Cult five times through history. However, they came back each time.

The Armed Librarians continued fighting with the Indulging God Cult even while concentrating their efforts of reconstruction.

Even though they defeated Kachua, there was not a single person convinced that the Indulging God Cult was destroyed.

Two months passed since the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion. An incident that remained in history occurred then.

The trainees stationed at the Toatt Mines burned the engine of their airplane as they rushed back to Bantorra Library.

"A Book has emerged! A Book, a Book has emerged!"

Only few people could immediately understand what they were talking about after being told just this. That was because they believed that the Books of the followers of the Indulging God Cult were impossible to find.

“Calm down. What’s happened?”

Mirepoc gave some water to the upset trainee. He then shouted while coughing.

“We’ve excavated the Book of a follower of the Cult!”

Being told that, Mirepoc finally realized the importance of this event.

The Book found was that of the follower known as Uspa who was killed at Toatt Mining Town. He was following Arkit, but was confirmed to have been defeated by Noloty. His corpse was also found afterwards.

In addition to Hamyuts, almost all of the Armed Librarians assembled at Bantorra Library and confirmed the Book.

“Why so suddenly?”

They felt half confused and half happy. They still haven’t found out the Indulging God Cult’s method of sealing Books.

Thanks to Mirepoc, they established that the man known as Charl Strite was related to the sealing of the Books. However, it still kept going even after his defeat.

They couldn’t understand why they suddenly found a Book. They were all uniformly puzzled.

“Oh well. We might not know the reason, but we really were able to excavate it. It’s a cause for celebration.”

Hamyuts told the Armed Librarians.

“We’ve made the function that seals Books stop with our fight. I can’t think of anything else.”

Mattalast added.

Another matter that confused the Armed Librarian was one of Uspa’s memories. He was shown a small Book fragment by Kachua.

Uspa was told that it was the Book of a man who saw Heaven.

Until then they only thought of the Indulging God Cult's Heaven as a delusion. But it actually existed.

There certainly was happiness above human understanding in the place called Heaven. Everyone would like to go to such a place were they shown it. It was now clear why people have joined the Indulging God Cult.

Researching the identity of Heaven became of the top priority. They excavated the Books of followers one after another. They were also able to find documents in followers' hideouts. By combining those, they searched for the truth. However, they were hindered by the Indulging God Cult's secretiveness and the investigation barely progressed.

Above all, the truth about Heaven and the identity of Lascall Othello were regarded as the Cult's biggest secrets.

"We can probably only read the truth from Kachua Beeinhaus's Book."

All the Armed Librarians said. However, mysteriously only Kachua's Book was nowhere to be found.

The facts became apparent from a surprising source. The answer was inside Bantorra Library's Sealed Archive.

"Look at this Book."

Saying this, Yukizona held a Book fragment. He said that he found it by chance at a corner of the Third Sealed Archive. According to the records, it had not been viewed for the last 500 years. Since there were no previous records, it might have been a Book that was never read before it was sealed.

"What is this?"

Mirepoc inquired.

"The truth about Heaven is written inside."

The Armed Librarians scrambled to touch the Book.

It was the Book of a Magician from 1800 years ago.

Since about half of it was lost, they couldn't read all of it. However, details

about his Magic were written inside.

Should they call him the Dream User? He could control people's dreams and make them mistake dreams for reality. He served a certain noble in ancient times. He did things like show nightmares to his opponents to break their spirits or show happy dreams to those who were close to him.

“So Yukizona-san... does that mean Heaven is a dream created by this Magician?”

Mirepoc asked and Yukizona nodded.

“...At present, humans have travelled almost all over the world created by the Creator. They haven't been able to find that place known as Heaven anywhere.

Then inevitably it means that it is in some place other than the world.

For example, in a dream.”

“...”

The Armed Librarians were not yet convinced. Wouldn't this long sought-after goal of the Indulging God Cult being a mere dream make a far too trivial of an ending?

Yukizona spoke to Mirepoc and the rest who thought this.

“The following is my hypothesis. Saying it's their imagination probably isn't a too far off. Let me explain the history of the Indulging God Cult as I see it-”

The history of the Indulging God Cult that Yukizona told them went something like this.

One time, someone read the Book of the Magician who dreamt of Heaven. The people who've read the Book didn't know it was part of a dream and came to believe that it had actually existed.

1800 years ago, people only lived in a small territory at the western continent. “There is some unseen place with unlimited happiness” – such a faith was born.

Then, the people who wished to go to Heaven secretly increased.

That was the start of the Indulging God Cult.

People talked among themselves. What was Heaven? After a long discussion,

they came to think of it as a place where people's happiness was gathered in.

That delusion soon became a rumor, the rumor became a legend, and eventually became an undoubted truth. And so the doctrine of the Indulging God Cult was completed.

However, in reality no place such as Heaven exists. In order to conceal this, the fictional being Lascall Othello was created, and Heaven was set up to be an inviolable place.

It was all a fabrication. Humans that couldn't distinguish between reality and delusion, and the numerous doctrines that were painting lies with lies. This was the true state of the Indulging God Cult.

Now they understood why they couldn't destroy the Indulging God Cult. Even if they destroyed it, the legend still kept being passed on secretly somewhere. And people who were unable to distinguish reality and fiction have existed everywhere at any age.

"Like Kachua Beeinhaus for example?"

"Exactly."

Yukizona said and concluded the story.

While it sounded ridiculous, it wasn't that much of a stretch. Delusion begot delusions and brought forth that terrible war. People have died for that delusion.

"But it's just a hypothesis. It sounds convincing, but we can't know yet."

Hamyuts said. Yukizona nodded.

"We still don't know the reason why we couldn't excavate the followers' Books. We'll continue the investigation."

She declared to the Armed Librarians. The investigation about the truth of Heaven continued.

However, even after that they couldn't find the Book of Kachua, and were unable to grasp the truth about Heaven and Lascall Othello. Even if they killed all the remaining followers, none of them knew the truth.

Yukizona's hypothesis gradually came to be treated as fact. Ultimately, his hypothesis was recognized as a conclusion.

Six months after Uspa's Book had been dug out...

Using her Thought Sharing, Mirepoc contacted leaders from all around the world as well as the Present Management Agency to proclaim the destruction of the Indulging God Cult as well announce the truth about them.

With this, the battle against the Indulging God Cult has officially ended.

Afterwards there were discussions with the world leaders, and dealing with everything was left to the Armed Librarians. They decided to forgo telling about the Indulging God Cult to the general populace after thinking of the huge influence that might create.

While nobody felt fully satisfied, the battle between the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult came to a full stop. Their long fight has ended.

Present – December 18, 1926

"...mmm, delicious."

Mirepoc got carried away and scooped out a large amount of punch. The more she drank she felt somewhat better. It truly was a mysterious drink.

Her thoughts about the fight against the Indulging God Cult a while before have sunk. She seemed to have forgotten about it the more she drank.

"Is that really fine?"

Mirepoc muttered.

"It's fine."

Answered Tena, listening from the side.

Mirepoc started thinking. *Perhaps the essence of the Indulging God Cult was not the delusion known as Heaven.*

The Cult brought forth the human heart of people who would do anything to become happy, people like Cigal. People's foolishness to not be ashamed of their greed and pride.

These people assembled, supported the heart of the Indulging God Cult and

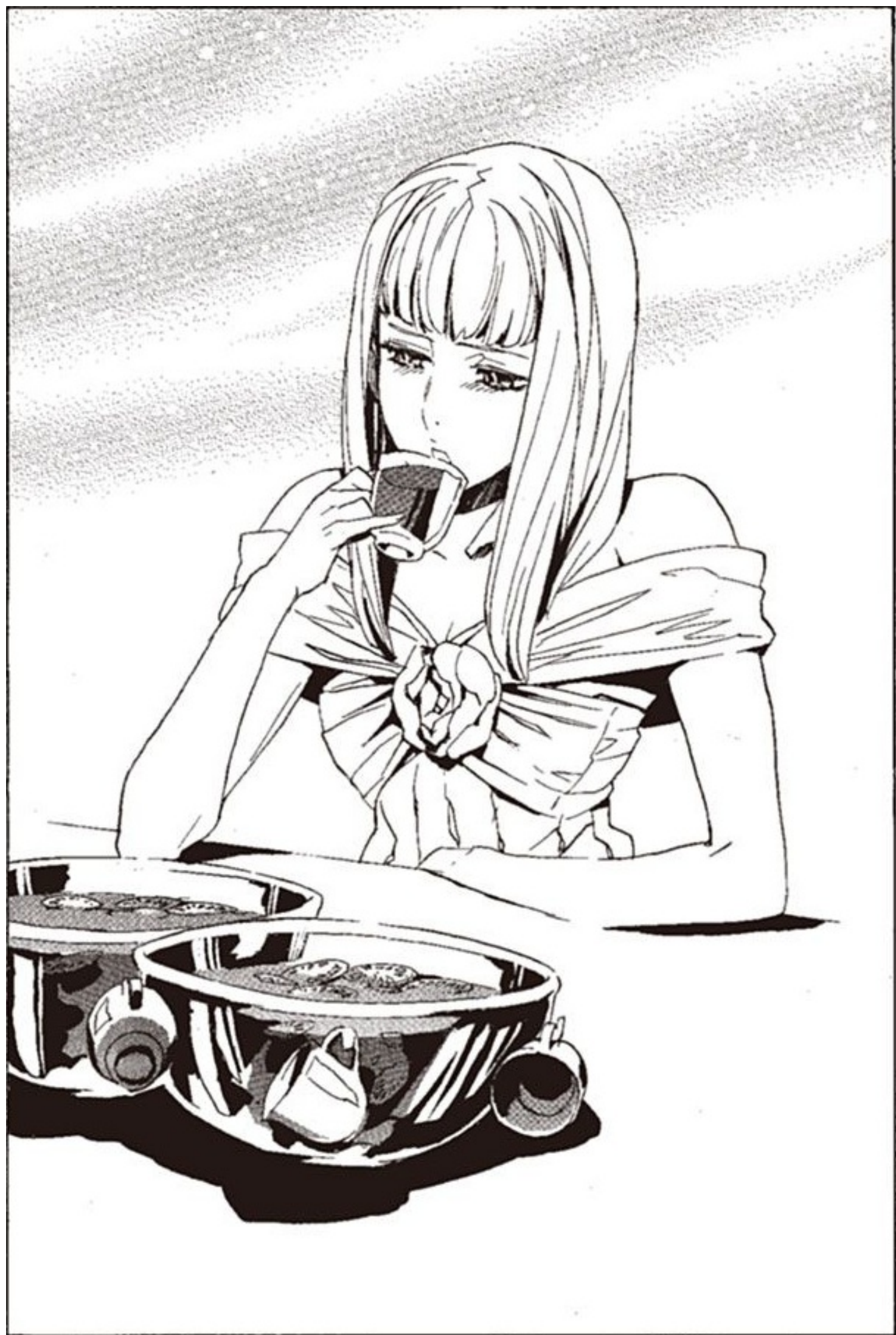
reached that extent of fearsome violence.

The Indulging God Cult was ridiculous. And so was their victory against them.

However, the lives of the people who died along with them were by no means foolish. Noloty, Ireia, Luimon and the rest... their faces floated into Mirepoc's mind and disappeared.

"Sorry, everyone."

Muttering this, Mirepoc took another drink of punch.



“I will enjoy myself. After all, it finally became peaceful.”

At some point, silver balls started falling from the sky. Mirepoc called a trainee and asked them to bring her another drink.

Meanwhile, Armed Librarians were gathering at one spot of the hall. Mattalast was playing the piano. His long fingers nimbly danced on the keys. Just as his performance ended he could hear a great applause.

“‘Saturday Night at Fulbeck City’. Are you satisfied?”

Mattalast spread his arms and smiled at everyone.

“As expected of a slacker. Just how much practice did you have?”

Said Gamo while clapping his hands. He was a veteran the same age as Mattalast. His groomed mustache and classic suit were unlike an Armed Librarian.

“What slacker? This much can be played just by looking at the score sheet.”

“Is that so? Amazing.”

Kyasariro said, and leapt on top of the piano.

“Kyasariro. The iron rule is to never believe Mattalast’s words.”

Gamo laughed.

Mattalast shrugged as if saying *‘good grief’*. It seemed like the label of a slacker had completely stuck to him. Since he barely showed himself in the Library it was perhaps natural for the other Armed Librarians to think so, though.

Mattalast had devoted himself to working behind the scenes this last year. He single-handedly took over a secret mission that he couldn’t tell any of the normal Armed Librarians about.

His mission was to protect the secret of the Indulging God Cult and also to let it continue existing.

Even for him this was no ordinary mission. He had to deceive all of the Armed Librarians after all.

He went through a long, painful year as well. Its result was this peaceful party.

Part 3

January 1926

Kachua had been defeated by the efforts of Enlike and Noloty. Having lost its leader, the Indulging God Cult was in no position to counterattack. Alongside restoration, the Armed Librarian erased the remaining followers as if they were harvesting wheat. They gathered information in an attempt to pursue the truth about the Cult.

Mattalast did not participate in this. That was because he was given a more important mission.

“Erm... I got a headache.”

Mattalast muttered while blowing his pipe like a chimney. He was at a privately owned villa in the Ismo Republic. He used this place as his base of operations.

He was given two missions.

The first was to conceal the truth of the Indulging God Cult from his fellow Armed Librarians; The truth they were originally a branch organization of the Armed Librarians and that Heaven existed in Bantorra Library’s Second Sealed Labyrinth. He had to conceal all of that.

The second mission was to sustain the Indulging God Cult. He had to somehow stop the Armed Librarians from fighting after they got fired up by the defeat of the Indulging God Cult. Furthermore, he had to do so without talking of the connection to the Cult.

Mattalast coughed. His throat was irritated as he drew too much smoke. It’s been a week since he started looking for a good idea inside the smoke.

“You seem to be worried, Mattalast-sama.”

Behind him, a boy dressed in mourning clothes grinned. He was the Memorial Weapon that carried people’s Books, Yor. He was the current incarnation of the alias Lascall Othello.

Dozens of Books were piled inside the villa. All of them were the Books of the Indulging God Cult's followers that Lascall had brought there.

"Oh yeah, I did tell you to gather those. What shall we do?"

"Are you not a natural-born liar, Mattalast-sama? Is this not the chance to show off your skills?"

Lascall smiled.

"Even if you tell me that, it's too much for me."

While saying this, Mattalast made a small cough. The room became enveloped in his pipe's smoke as if it was on fire.

"All Armed Librarians and even the trainees are all in extremely high spirits. What should I do with this?"

"Will it not be fine concealing it all just as you have done until now?"

With the Indulging God Cult of the past, killing all of the followers ended the fight. The truth about the Indulging God Cult had been made vague for months and years.

"I'm worried because I can't do that."

Mattalast dropped his ash onto the ashtray and lit his pipe again.

"As you know, during the last several years some secrets were exposed.

The leader of the Indulging God Cult was the person who brings forth the True Men and manages them, the Overseer of Paradise. The goal of the Indulging God Cult was to reach the place where all happiness exists, known as Heaven. Lascall Othello excavated the followers' Books and took them to Heaven. The important secrets have been leaked.

And all them because of Kachua."

Mattalast grumbled.

Prior to Kachua's appearance, the Indulging God Cult was thought of as a religion with the doctrine of "in order to affirm your desires, do not hesitate on wickedness". They knew neither about the existence of the Overseer of Paradise nor about Heaven.

And so they thought that by simply erasing wicked people and concealing the existence of the Indulging God Cult from the general populace, they destroy it. That was how they settled it.

But now it couldn't work at all.

"That Kachua, how much troubles will he cause me until he's satisfied? I wish I could revive him and kill him again."

The Armed Librarians who didn't know the truth continued the investigation. What was the Heaven sought by the Cult? They searched for why Kachua became the Overseer of Paradise.

They were not incompetent people. The investigation was slow but progressing steadily.

"Gamo's investigating the details of how Kachua became the Overseer of Paradise. He's appealing for a special permission to read the Book of the Acting Director of that time. We can't let him read that sort of thing. We can't let him find out he became the Overseer of Paradise by the Acting Director's orders."

Mattalast scratched his head. He truly was in trouble this time.

If the investigation was to be continued, they might be able to reach the truth. And it was a truth that must be never known.

If the truth were to be revealed, the organization known as the Armed Librarians would collapse. He simply had to find a way to discontinue the investigation.

"How about trying to exert some pressure? Try telling them that you will not allow them to investigate the Indulging God Cult any further."

"If I do that it would be just like shouting that the Armed Librarians and the Cult are connected. You really are surprisingly unreliable."

"Please forgive me. It is because my abilities are lacking."

Lascall smiled happily.

Mattalast looked at a paper on top of the table. His plan for the next scenario was written disorderly on it. "How did the Indulging God Cult come into being?" was the title.

“Do I have no choice but deceive them with this?”

He took one Book out of the pile. It was the Book of the man known as Uspa.

“Lascall. Please go bury this Book at Toatt Mine.”

“Oh my, are you going to let them read a Book of the Indulging God Cult?”

“No other way. I have no choice but to try pushing this scenario.”

February 1926

The Armed Librarians were confused. Uspa’s Book was found at Toatt Mines after Lascall reburied it.

Mattalast did this with not only Uspa’s Book, but also the Books of many other followers.

Many Books would probably be discovered in the future as well. But they were all the Books of people at the bottom who didn’t know any important secrets.

“I wonder if this would be enough to deceive everyone.”

Mattalast and Hamyuts were talking in the Acting Director’s Office.

“Well, it’ll work out somehow. Your scenario is well-made.”

Hamyuts said.

“Next comes using that Book.”

“Right.”

Following Mattalast’s scenario, the Book of the Dream User was revealed. Using it, they managed to deceive everyone about the identity of Heaven. And it has been decided that the Indulging God Cult was destroyed.

“Let’s give Yukizona the Dream User’s Book.”

“To Yukizona? Why not me or you?”

“It’s too much of a bother to me so I don’t want to do it. And since Bonbo’s so stupid he has no credibility. Also, if a liar like you says that you wouldn’t have any credibility either.”

“Certainly.”

Mattalast smiled wryly. In any case the plan to deceive the Armed Librarians moved forward. They would have to be extremely cautious so that the others wouldn't have any suspicions afterward.

“Well, next comes the revival of the Indulging God Cult. I'm lucky we had a candidate.”

While saying this, Mattalast recalled the face of the candidate to become the Overseer of Paradise. Minth perfectly fit the part, but the problem was whether or not he will consent to it.

“Have you told Minth yet?”

“Not yet. You do it.”

“...Me again?”

Hamyuts then spoke with a sour expression.

“Restoring the town, paying consolation money to the bereaved families, negotiating with countries... I'm busy. Yukizona and Bonbo also have their hands full. We have nobody else.”

True. My job is working from behind the scenes in the first place.

“Say, what happens if Minth doesn't accept?”

“Isn't it obvious? You'll become the Overseer of Paradise.”

Give me a break, thought Mattalast and left the room.

April 1926

Minth agreed to become the Overseer of Paradise. Mattalast felt relieved from the bottom of his heart. Even after that, he flew all around the world to support and help create the new Indulging God Cult.

He probably looked as if he was enjoying himself from the side. That was his pretense after all.

As a matter of fact, Mattalast never has had a busier time. As a result of his great efforts, the new Indulging God Cult finally had some form.

At that time, he received a summon from Hamyuts. She also called Yukizona and Yuri as well as Bonbo. All the executives who shared the secret of the

Indulging God Cult gathered in one place.

The meeting place, as designated by Hamyuts, was in the sky above the Library, on the back of Bonbo's whale.

"Heave ho."

He leapt off the roof and onto the whale along with a small voice. Hamyuts decided it would be better just in case her office would be eavesdropped.

"Long time no see, Matt."

Said one of the pillars of the strongest Armed Librarians, the Whale User Bonbo. He was one of the people who knew the secret. Hamyuts revealed it to him at about the same time as Minth.

"It has been a long time, Mattalast-san. It is good to see you in good health."

Standing at his side were the man that could be called the next Acting Director, Yukizona, as well as his little sister and faithful partner, Yuri. The two of them have known the secret since before the battle with the Indulging God Cult started.

Yukizona simply shot a cold gaze without making any greeting. Yuri made a courteous bow.

Finally, Hamyuts made a great leap from the roof of the Library and landed on the whale.

Is this a lineup of the villains who manipulate the world from the shadows? Mattalast thought while looking around at the faces of his comrades.

"Well then, everyone's gathered."

Hamyuts clapped her hands.

"The world's restoration is proceeding all right. The battle with the Indulging God Cult is going to be left unsettled. Minth's Indulging God Cult is also coming up nicely.

You've all done a great work. Thank you."

"...Director. You haven't called us here for useless talk, right?"

Yukizona said with a murmur.

“So impatient. Oh well. It’s about time to settle the problems we’ve shelved.

This is about the one remaining rebel, Olivia Littolet.”

There was also her, thinking about it, recalled Mattalast.

“That woman’s still alive. She’s probably waiting for a chance. We have to do something about her.”

“So what’s our plan?”

“I’ve been searching for her ever since I let her escape. We now have to seriously go and find her.”

As Hamyuts said this, Yukizona turned on his heels heading off the whale.

“Wait, where are you going?”

Yukizona ignored her and jumped off. Yuri, who stayed behind, smiled and spoke.

“With all due respect, she is but a normal woman. I do not believe she is the sort of opponent that requires all of us. Can you not just get rid of her as you find her and just settle it?”

“That’s too careless. Even a small leak can sink a ship. Don’t you think she might be able to cause the collapse of the Armed Librarians from the secret she found?”

“Then can’t we just kill her?”

Yuri’s expression was gentle and yet she uttered cold words unimaginable from that expression. She was a woman who treated people exceedingly coldly if they opposed her even once.

“Well then, excuse us.”

Holding the hem of her skirt, Yuri jumped off the whale.

“What can I say to them?”

“But Director. Is she really a problem? Can’t you just leave her be? A waste of that beauty.”

Bonbo spoke in a carefree manner while munching snacks. *Her being pretty*

has nothing to do with it, thought Mattalast in his heart.

“She is. She knows of Vend Ruga. And if it was only that, there would be no problem.”

Hamyuts paused.

“There’s a chance that she knows of the Violet Wish. It’s a big problem.”

Bonbo threw away the bag of snacks and then asked.

“What’s that Violet Wish? Never heard of it.”

Mattalast cut into the conversation.

“Yeah... it’s something like the only method that can destroy Heaven.”

“Well that’s bad. We have to kill her.”

Bonbo opened his mouth wide and laughed. Mattalast saw a silent, sharp light in his eyes.

“So then, uh, what do we do?”

At that moment, Mattalast drew out his gun. He turned the muzzle to between Bonbo’s brows.

“Huh? Matt, what does this mean?”

“Nah, no way you’re thinking of destroying Heaven.”

Mattalast smiled. It’s been a short time since Bonbo learned of the secret. Perhaps he still didn’t understand it very well.

“...And what if I did?”

Bonbo said while smiling.

“Then we’ll obviously kill you.”

Mattalast and Bonbo smiled at each other. After laughing for a while, Bonbo raised two hands in surrender.

“Got it. I won’t ask. You’re a really scary man.”

“As long as you understand it.”

Saying so, Mattalast put his gun away.

“I actually don’t know either. If I did, I would think of foolish things like destroying Heaven.”

“So, what will we do, Director? Yukizona also said this, but this isn’t something that all of us need to discuss.”

Mattalast nodded as well.

“Yeah. I think the Director somewhat overestimates Olivia.”

Hamyuts was somewhat sullen after being rejected by four of her subordinates.

“I got it. So anyway, killing her when we find her is fine. I’ll entrust it to Mattalast.”

“Me again?”

Mattalast’s shoulders slumped.

“Obviously. Bonbo’s bad at such work and Yukizona already left.”

“Good grief. Understood.”

Hamyuts nodded and jumped off the whale. Bonbo was still laughing for some reason.

“But Matt... Don’t you think it’s horrible? Ganging up on an innocent woman and killing her. It’s just as if we’re some evil boss.”

“Don’t you get it?”

Mattalast answered.

“The Acting Director of Bantorra Library is the incarnation of evil. And we’re her evil subordinates.”

Leaving those words behind, Mattalast jumped off.

Well then, let’s go kill her. Let’s kill the woman that might know the thing that must never be known.

Present – December 28, 1926

Growing a bit tired of playing, Mattalast left the piano. He took a few bottles left on the bar counter and made a shake himself. Cocktail making was also one

of his hobbies.

While tasting the bitter cocktail, Mattalast thought back to what he did during the last year.

It has been quite the stressful year, but the result was mostly good. He concealed the secret from the Armed Librarians and the New Indulging God Cult was being completed.

That's why he could be there tasting his cocktail at his leisure.

Besides, Olivia was the only unforeseen thing.

She was a powerless target that he thought would simply be killed. He could never have imagined it would all turn out like it did. He had to admit that he had been looking down on her. As expected she didn't manage to escape from Hamyuts for nothing.

"Say, Matt-san."

Kyasariro suddenly struck up conversation with him.

"Is that fine?"

Looking at the direction she pointed, he could see Mirepoc standing next to the table with the punch bowl. She poured down the contents of her glass in one gulp. She repeated this a second and third time.

"She's drinking at an outrageous pace. Can she even hold her alcohol in the first place?"

The pair approached Mirepoc.

"Hey Mirepoc, are you fine?"

"What are you talking about?"

Mirepoc's expression was calm. She was also speaking articulately.

"Did you drink alcohol? You've been drinking for a while now."

"I don't drink any alcohol. Aren't you misunderstanding something?"

Kyasariro snatched away Mirepoc's held glass. She sniffed its inside and took a small lick.

“It’s alcoholic.”

“...Hou?”

Mirepoc made a strange noise.

“Wine, orange curacao, lemon juice and maple syrup. And also slices of orange and lime. It’s not very strong, but it is alcoholic.”

Mattalast explained. Mirepoc took her glass back from Kyasariro. She stared at the alcohol inside for a while. Her head started slowly shaking.

“Are you okay, Mirepo?”

Mattalast asked. Mirepoc stared at his face for a while.

“Kyu...”

She squeaked and collapsed to the back. Mattalast and Kyasariro both shrugged.

“What will we do with this kid?”

“Just let her sleep somewhere, she’ll wake up sooner or later.”

“Please, Matt-san.”

“Why me?”

As they were discussing this, someone came from behind them.

“Oh, did she faint?”

Mattalast turned around.

“She’s... Mirepoc, right? I’ll carry her.”

The woman standing behind them said so and smiled. Mattalast was a little surprised she came there as well.

The one standing there was Olivia Littolet.

She was the woman who was once pursued by Hamyuts Meseta and had miraculously escaped. The common enemy to both the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult that had her life targeted by both organizations.

The very same Olivia was there wearing a party dress and holding a

champagne glass.

Chapter 2: The Rebellion Begins

Part 1

Present – December 28, 1926

The party's organizer was Kyasariro.

Originally it was a party meant for Armed Librarians only. However, Kyasariro sent a special invitation to several people with relations to Armed Librarians. Minth Chezine, who quit his job as an Armed Librarian nine months ago, obviously did not come. And the whereabouts of Enlike, the one who did the most for defeating the Indulging God Cult, were unknown.

Another person to receive a written invitation was Olivia Littolet.

“So you came, Olivia-san!”

Kyasariro said and grabbed Olivia's hands excitedly.

“Thank you for calling me. But is it really fine I'm here? I feel so out-of-place.”

“It's fine. If it wasn't I wouldn't have invited you.”

“Oh well. I will try to enjoy myself. But before that...”

Saying so, Olivia tried taking Mirepoc with her.

“You don't have to do that.”

Kyasariro immediately took Mirepoc's body.

“C'mon Matt-san, you take her. You can't let Olivia-san handle it.”

Saying this, she pushed Mirepoc on Mattalast. Being waved about, she made a strange 'kweee' sound.

“You don't have to worry about me. You're gonna have stiff shoulders if you worry too much.”

“Don't say that. You're a guest, Olivia-san. You're much more important than this idiot, this playboy, or that psycho.”

Kyasariro pointed at Mirepoc, Mattalast and Hamyuts in turn.

“That’s saying too much, right, Mattalast?”

Olivia spoke to Mattalast.

“No, what about that?”

Kyasariro kicked Mattalast’s shin.

“Shut up, c’mon now, all of you nuisances go elsewhere.”

“Good grief. But really, that Mirepoc, I hope she won’t throw up on me.”

While grumbling, Mattalast carried Mirepoc’s body and left.

“Olivia-san, this isn’t much of a party but I hope you’ll enjoy it. There’s at least good food and drinks.”

“Yeah, I’ve eaten a bit and it’s quite something. Who made it?”

“Do you know Rizzly? He only got promoted to an Armed Librarian recently, but it’s him.”

“I do. That wicked brat... so he made this, huh.”

Olivia was surprised.

“I’ve gotten hungry, let’s go eat.”

The two of them walked together inside the hall. Kyasariro picked up food and drinks while clinging to Olivia.

They were on good terms. Or rather, Kyasariro one-sided liked Olivia.

Seven months ago, Kyasariro came to know about her in an unimaginable way. Until then, she didn’t even know Olivia was alive, nor the fact that she even existed.

May 1926

Half a year after the war ended, most of the work – the reorganization of the Armed Librarians, the reconstruction of the town, and the annihilation of the Indulging God Cult – has been completed. Even the concern about the truth of the Indulging God Cult has been settled with Yukizona’s hypothesis.

At last the Armed Librarians started having some free time.

A certain suspicion began to be whispered among Kyasariro and others. It spread quietly but surely among the Armed Librarians.

It was about the incident that occurred during September of the last year, the Volken's Rebellion Incident.

After the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion, Noloty's Book had been sent to Bantorra.

From that, the betrayal of Armed Librarian Daltom came to light. He betrayed the Armed Librarians swayed by the bait known as Heaven. He ran from from Minth's eyes and conducted himself as to not raise any suspicions of betrayal. He had secretly leaked information about the Library to Kachua.

Daltom's Book had not been excavated, but Kyasariro thought that she would smash it to pieces if they ever find it.

Also, by finding out about Daltom's betrayal, a certain question had arisen.

What if, during Volken's Rebellion Incident, he wasn't the one to kill Vizac? During that day, the one to tell the Armed Librarians that Vizac had died was Daltom. What if Daltom was not the first one to discover him, but the actual culprit?

Another doubt was raised from that.

Had Volken actually betrayed them?

There were many mysteries surrounding Volken's betrayal. Him stealing the Spinning Doll Ückück, bringing along and killing Renas Fleur, and killing Vizac, were undoubtedly actions of betrayal. However, his goal was unknown. There were too many inexplicable parts in his actions.

From what Hamyuts had revealed, Volken's goal was first the recapture of Ückück. It seemed that the Indulging God Cult embedded it with an important Magic Right. And it seemed that Renas Fleur's original personality was connected to that Magic Right.

Even Hamyuts had no idea whether or not Volken killed Vizac. She said that thinking of the situation, she couldn't help but thinking that he did.

Everyone thought that it was a too vague of an explanation.

And once Daltom's betrayal had been uncovered, their suspicions resurfaced.

So did Volken not actually betray them? They trusted his personality even now. And their trust for Hamyuts was much below that.

Kyasariro spoke to Gamo about this. They have teamed up countless of times in the past. They felt at ease with each other.

The two hid in the shadows of the weapons warehouse behind Bantorra Library and conversed.

"However, the fact that Daltom betrayed us doesn't prove that Volken didn't."

Gamo carefully spoke his opinion.

"It won't be a proof, but a suspicion's a suspicion."

When speaking like that, Kyasariro didn't have any of her usual childish atmosphere. She used a different expression during normal times and abnormal times.

Although she wasn't one of the very strongest, she was still obviously one of the Armed Librarian's big guns. The glint in her eyes became extremely sharp.

"If so, does that mean that everything the Director said was a lie?"

"...Did you hear Volken's speech? He said that he was going to expose the Director's misdeeds."

"In other words, he was silenced?"

Kyasariro nodded.

"Daltom killing Vizac was probably an unexpected thing even for the Director. Because she didn't know of his betrayal at the time.

She then made good use of it to frame Volken as a traitor."

The moment she said so, Kyasariro and Gamo looked around them. They confirmed over and over that they weren't being overheard by Hamyuts's Sensory Threads.

"If that's true, how was Renas Fleur involved? And what about the Spinning Doll?"

“I don’t know. After all, both Volken’s and Renas’s Books haven’t been excavated.”

“Where did Renas Fleur go to, I wonder.”

“I don’t want to think of it, but perhaps the Director...”

The two of them exchanged glances. And they spoke with bated breath.

“Kyasariro. What will you do in the worst case scenario?”

“Can’t you tell without asking? I will fight.”

Kyasariro’s eyes were tinged with the color of a sharp blade.

“Can you do that?”

“I’m not a person who’ll let myself be brought to a trial quietly. So I have no choice.”

“...Seems like it’ll be huge.”

“It’s too much for me alone. I have to gather allies.”

“Don’t be rash. Fighting against the Director is the worst case scenario.”

“No matter what happens, let’s discuss with other people as well.”

Not only Kyasariro and Gamo made such conversations. Plenty of other Armed Librarians had the same suspicions.

And when a disturbing air was beginning to envelop Bantorra Library... Kyasariro and the rest met with someone unbelievable.

When Mattalast suddenly said that he was going to reveal the truth about the incident with Volken, everyone was surprised. Kyasariro and the rest gathered in Bantorra Library’s small conference room and waited for him to come.

“Will he really reveal the truth?”

Said Mirepoc.

“It’s Mattalast-san. We can trust him.”

Luik laughed.

“I wonder, I think that there are also things we cannot trust him on.”

Gamo said with a sharp expression. Kyasariro also nodded.

“Yeah. Truth be told I don’t really understand Master Matt. We’re on quite good terms, but... I have the feeling not all of him is visible.”

Although he was lazy and a slacker, everyone acknowledged his brains and fighting abilities. The one supporting Hamyuts was undoubtedly him. It was hard to trust him just for that. There were also rumors that Mattalast was not slacking off, but working behind the scenes on Hamyuts’s orders.

Mattalast came into the noisy conference room while smoking his pipe. He had his usual aloof expression.

And the very first thing he said...

“Well then everyone, first I must apologize to you. I actually knew the truth about Volken’s Rebellion Incident for a long time. I’m sorry for staying silent about this.”

He spoke in a light tone as if apologizing for cheating a bit. That puzzled Kyasariro and the rest even more.

“What does that mean?!”

Luik stood up.

“I said I’d explain it. Well, rather than me, it’s better for the related party to do so. Come inside.”

Everyone expected Hamyuts to come in. However, when they saw the face of the person who appeared there, everyone rose from their seats.

It was the unforgettable Renas Fleur.

“You’re alive?!”

“Why did you only now...?”

Renas smiled boldly at the Armed Librarians’ voices. She then sat in the seat next to Mattalast.

“Firstly... right now I am not Renas Fleur. I’m this body’s original personality, Olivia Littolet.”

She started her explanation towards Kyasariro and the rest of the confused

people.

“I will explain from the very beginning. It will be a long story, so listen.

I was captured by the Indulging God Cult more than ten years ago in the war of Kuler Region. As you know, my memories were erased by the water of Argax and I was kept at the Cult.

But I wasn't a woman who would yield to them. I had something I had to regain. The memories of the comrades who were on the battlefield with me... The vague memories of my family... And above all, I wanted to regain a human-like heart.”

Olivia continued her explanation. She told them of how she buttered up the Magician known as Charlot and received the Spinning Doll Ückück. She gathered comrades and made a desperate Magic Deliberation. It was discovered and so both her memories and the Spinning Doll were taken away from her.

“And then I was made into Mokkania's mother. You all know what happened after that.”

Kyasariro nodded. Mattalast smoked his pipe happily next to Olivia.

“And then what happened?”

“The Spinning Doll that we have used went into the hands of the Armed Librarians. The Indulging God Cult always feared this. Because if the Meats were to have their memories back, the Cult would receive a heavy blow. It was then that Volken made a move.”

“So he did betray us!”

The excited Luik stood up. *She's in the middle*, Kyasariro muttered and pulled his sleeve to make his seat again.

“Using Volken, the Indulging God Cult stole the Spinning Doll. However, they were still anxious. There was the possibility that the Magic Right could still be activated as long as the Spinning Doll existed.

Around that time, Renas started retrieving my memories. Volken noticed that and took me along. He wanted me to cancel the Magic Right embedded in the Spinning Doll.”

“So that’s how it was...”

“So, he killed Vizac-san and tried threatening me to cancel the Spinning Doll. Hamyuts made it in time and defeated Volken. Then, I activated the power of the Spinning Doll and restored my memories.

After that, it was obvious that the Indulging God Cult would aim for my life. I asked Hamyuts to pretend I have died.

And that’s about it. Did you all get it?”

Olivia, having finished talking without stopping, took a breath. Although she spoke in a detached manner, this alone showed how fierce was the road she went through.

She was quite something. Although she had no power, she deceived the Indulging God Cult and fought them alone to the bitter end. How was she compared to those who relied on power and organization and continued fighting from a safe place?

“Olivia-san, you’re amazing.”

Kyasariro rushed over and grabbed Olivia’s hands.

“We’re ashamed of ourselves. We haven’t helped you even while you were fighting like that.

It’s almost as if you were the one to destroy the Indulging God Cult, Olivia-san.”

“Don’t mind it. The Cult was destroyed because you were here.

But...”

Olivia let go of Kyasariro’s hands.

“I’m somewhat blaming you for overlooking Volken.”

Saying so, Olivia hugged her body.

“He was horrible, just horrible... why didn’t you kill that sort of guy?”

Olivia’s eyes sparkled with faint tears. She hurriedly wiped off her eyes with her sleeve.

“Sorry I showed you my ugly side. I’ve recalled something unpleasant.”

Kyasariro was stunned. She could understand what Volken did from her behavior. Of all things, he...

“My goodness!”

Mirepoc hit her desk and rose. It seemed as if she was on the verge of starting a fight.

“He was such a person... shit, I’m angry at myself for trusting him even once!”

Gamo grinded his teeth.

“Please don’t mind it. I forgot about it. If you make such a big deal of it, it makes me feel bad.”

Olivia made a reassuring smile. *She’s a really strong woman*, felt Kyasariro.

“Well, that’s how it was with Volken. Your suspicions for the Director are probably cleared up, right everyone?”

From now on Olivia-san will be sheltered at the Library as a war refugee. If she ever has any trouble I trust you to help her.

Let us disperse here.”

Preventing Mattalast from wrapping up the conversation, Mirepoc raised a hand.

“Please wait. You should have revealed all of this sooner.”

Olivia made an eye signal to Mattalast. He made a small nod and Olivia started talking.

“I asked Mattalast-san to do this. Because although the Indulging God Cult was destroyed, we couldn’t lower our guard.”

Mirepoc tilted her head.

“Still, it’s been a long time. It’s been five months since the fight with the Cult ended.”

“Yeah, about that...”

Mattalast cut in. At that moment, Olivia snuggled up to his chest. She hit her

index finger against his lips.

“That’s because he didn’t want to let me go.”

An extraordinary awkwardness befell the small conference room. A drop of sweat fell from Mattalast’s forehead.

“Well, since I tried comforting her, we became somewhat deeply involved. ‘I will protect you’, ‘I want you to only be mine’, by saying things like that we’ve slowly dragged on our relationship... Really, what a selfish guy. He just couldn’t let me go.”

“Then... from September of the last year, all this time... how i-indecent...”

Mirepoc opened her mouth agape.

“Ah, hahaha, ahahaha.”

Mattalast tried laughing to dodge the issue. Obviously, none of the Armed Librarians were laughing.

“Since you were never here, we always wondered where you went...”

Gamo stood up and turned to Mattalast’s back.

“I see, so that’s how it was. I get it, Matt-san.”

Kyasariro cracked her neck and fists.

“Death penalty. You really deserve the death penalty.”

Mirepoc also made an unpleasant face while looking at him.

Mattalast stepped back towards the door. However, Gamo came from behind him. He got solidly pinioned from behind.

“I’ll do it, I hope you don’t mind Olivia-san.”

Kyasariro asked Olivia as she did some bending exercises.

“Well, just do it gently.”

Olivia said, and ran away in a haste.

“Wait, Olivia, this isn’t, part of the plan!”

Kyasariro reached sufficient distance, used the desk as a stepping stone and

jumped up, nearly grazing the ceiling. Then, aligning the shoe soles of both legs, she hit Mattalast's face splendidly.

Seeing Mattalast holding his nose, Olivia chuckled.

After that, Olivia began living in town. She returned to work at the same tailor shop from when she was Renas Fleur. Olivia herself never learned sewing, but Renas's memories still stayed with her.

The Armed Librarians treated Olivia with gratitude and respect. Over the next seven months, she lived at Bantorra Library as a normal citizen with peaceful life.

Part 2

Present – December 28, 1926

Olivia and Kyasariro were talking at the party.

“Oh, so you’re opening a new store?”

Kyasariro spoke while stuffing her cheeks with fried sausages. Because Olivia was opening a second store, she was apparently entrusted to be the manager.

“It still hasn’t been decided. But there’s talk of that.”

“It’s still amazing. I’ll come buy things when I have the time.”

“You’re so hasty. I said nothing’s been decided yet. I lack experience and there are many problems related to funds and such.”

“If you want a loan I have about enough money to buy a castle.”

“I can’t borrow money from friends. We have to make it ourselves.”

Olivia smiled. For Kyasariro she was a truly fascinating woman. She was smart and had the ability and courage to take action. While she spoke brusquely and rudely, at the root she was kind. She seemed to be somewhat lonely. Kyasariro came to like her after just talking a bit to her.

“But being a manager and all that seems fun. My second life seems a bit too good to be true.”

“It’s the balance of life. You’ve had plenty of bad things happen to you until now, Olivia-san. That’s why you’re going to have plenty of good things happen from now on.”

“That makes me happy. Next I have to get a good man.”

“Ohh, seems like master Matt’s about to be absolutely dumped.”

“I already did it a while ago. I was wasted on that idiot.”

As expected, felt Kyasariro. She thinks she’s wasted on such a cool, rich and smart man, huh.

“Then what kind of a man would be good?”

“Hmm, it has to be a sincere man.”

“Sincere, huh. But isn’t that the most difficult thing to find?”

The pair kept chatting without any pause.

Meanwhile, Mattalast was arranging seats in the neighboring lounge. He let the limp Mirepoc sleep on one of them. She will wake up eventually even if he leaves her alone.

Let’s go enjoy some alcohol as well, he thought and returned to the hall. At that moment, one of the new Armed Librarians, Rizzly, spoke to him.

“So Matt-san, Olivia-san came here.”

Rizzly took care of both cooking and serving that day. He did that out of his own volition without anyone asking of him. Even now, he held a plate of a roasted piglet stuffed with herbs on one hand.

“Yeah, she did. What of it?”

“How’re things with her?”

He poked Mattalast’s side with his empty hand.

“Nothing. I have nothing going with her anymore.”

“Ehhh really? I want to hear all about it, all the details!”

Mattalast sighed. While Rizzly was an Armed Librarian, he was extremely fond of gossip as if he was a bored housewife.

“There’s nothing to tell.”

“Really? How boring.”

Rizzly’s shoulders slumped.

“Haah, I’m so bored. All the male Armed Librarians are blockheads and all the women have one loose screw in their heads. There’s no decent love story anywhere. Here, look at that.”

He pointed at the sleeping Mirepoc.

“Even though it’s a chance for a one night stand, nobody’s making a move. Really, what are they all thinking about?”

“It’s because they’re scared of the aftermath.”

Knowing Mirepoc’s personality, Mattalast voiced his frank impression.

“Yeah. No matter what happens they won’t escape bloodshed measured in liters.

So Olivia-san’s probably the only hope for amusement. I wonder if anyone’s brave enough to hit on her.”

Really, that guy’s so carefree. Mattalast smiled wryly in his mind.

He didn’t know that Olivia was a rebel that caused Hamyuts some fear. He also had no idea that Mattalast had almost killed her. If he did, it wouldn’t end at the level of mere gossip.

Mattalast thought back. He recalled how Olivia was able to gain peace without being killed by him. *It was truly strange. There are things in the world one just can’t imagine.*

May 1925

Undertaking the task of erasing Olivia, Mattalast left the Library. He had maintained a private army separate from the Armed Librarians. He reached out to the dark side of society and bought them. They didn’t know that their employer was Mattalast. He had no intention of letting them know either. They were nothing more than disposable pawns he bought with money.

They scattered all over the world and were secretly looking for Olivia.

“Was she in Ismo? Good grief, so that’s why we couldn’t find her in either Kuler or Meliot.”

Mattalast muttered as he looked at the report sent from his soldiers. No matter how much she ran away, she was only a woman with no supporters or special ability. Erasing her was only a matter of time.

Then, a mail separate from the reports of his underlings has arrived. It came from Hamyuts at Bantorra Library. Inside the envelope was another envelope. Apparently a letter addressed to Hamyuts was sent to Mattalast as-is.

He was surprised when he saw the sender. It was from the very person he was currently trying to kill, Olivia Littolet.

“What the...?”

As he looked inside, he was surprised even more. There were only a few words written on the paper with a poor handwriting.

“Please save me”

Below her current hiding place had been written.

He could convey this location to his soldiers and make them kill her. However, Mattalast chose to go there by himself.

But what was she thinking about? What kind of help was she asking from the opponent after her?

Mattalast looked for Olivia’s figure through his car’s window. The designated place was in the area of the station at a certain city in Ismo.

Olivia was there. She hid her face and worked at shoe polishing at the station. She was eagerly polishing the shoes of a suited man who seemed like some salaryman.

He met with Renas countless of times, but this was his first time seeing Olivia. Hamyuts acknowledged her as a strong enemy, but hadn’t she miscalculated? She looked nothing more than a woman who wore herself out in a long time of living as a refugee.

“Hmm, what should I do?”

While muttering this, Mattalast brought out a wrench from the toolbox at his car. He started fiddling with it.

He could nimbly poke his hand out of the car’s window and throw the wrench high to the air. If it were to fall down on Olivia’s head it could easily destroy her spinal cord. This much would be easy for him even without using his Predictive ability.

An unidentified misfortunate woman died from a wrench falling down on her from a building. There will probably be at least five lines about it in tomorrow’s newspaper.

Mattalast hesitated for a while. Should he kill her now or later? Since there wasn’t much difference between both options, it conversely lead him to a new

doubt.

I'll kill her now, he thought, but just as he was about to act Olivia raised her face. Mattalast's hand stopped. He thought that she was looking at him, but he was apparently mistaken. It seemed like she just spoke up to the man whose shoes she was polishing.

"...I don't feel like it."

Once he had failed over some trifle trying it again felt bad. He moved the car and parked next to the shoe polishing Olivia.

"Get on."

He opened the door and spoke to her. Olivia was puzzled for a while. Before long she threw her rag cloth away and got into the car. The man whose shoes she polished looked at her with widened eyes. It was understandable. A shoe-polishing woman suddenly rode a luxury car.

This could be quite the amusing scene for some movie, thought Mattalast.

He brought the car to a deserted suburb. He was looking for a suitable place to kill her in. He saw Olivia sitting next to him at the corner of his eyes. He was trying to imagine how she felt riding a car meant to kill her.

In first place Mattalast didn't like either fighting or killing. And he was even much less inclined to do so to Olivia for whom he held no grudges.

Nevertheless, he couldn't hesitate on killing her. For Mattalast, killing had nothing to do with his feelings. No matter how much he liked his opponent, he would kill them if necessary.

Once he tried concealing the secret of Lascall Othello from Mirepoc. If, at that time, she would have reached the truth, he would have probably killed her without hesitating.

Mattalast was just that kind of man.

"Well then, you've remembered me, right?"

"Yeah. I still have my memories from when I was Renas."

"What kind of person do you think I am?"

“A powerful person who’s part of the top five Armed Librarians. A person exceedingly close to the Acting Director.”

“Yes, and I am also the right hand of the woman who was aiming for you and had killed Volken – Hamyuts. And now I undertook the mission of killing you.”

Olivia didn’t show any kind of agitation at his words.

“Do you understand your own circumstances?”

“I know. I’m a nuisance to the Armed Librarians. Volken, Vend Ruga... I’m someone who knows things that must not be known.”

“It’s great that you make it easier for me.”

The car left town and started running through pasture lands. They would soon reach an area which was completely deserted.

“Won’t you tell me a little? I actually barely know anything about you. Why did you meet with Vend Ruga? Also, what was the deal with the Spinning Doll Ücküç?”

“...Do you guys not know anything?”

“It’s because you ran away without telling us anything. Well, it does seem like Hamyuts tried killing you before talking to you though.”

“...Unbelievable. Were you trying to kill me without knowing my circumstances?”

“And what of it?”

Mattalast said calmly.

“I don’t think it’s a strange decision though. It’s obvious we would kill you. We’ll understand your circumstances after reading your Book.”

“...I thought you were a bit of a better person than Hamyuts.”

“How strange.”

He shrugged while turning the wheel.

“I wonder why’s that... everyone in the world thinks I’m a good person. I myself think I’m at least as much as a villain as Hammy.”

“You’re more wicked than her in a certain sense. Looking like a good person outwardly is the worst.”

Mattalast smiled. The woman called Olivia was quite smart. He had fun talking with someone like that.

“It’s like this, right? The worst people hide in the shadows. People like Hammy who parade their villainy to the world are the weird ones.”

“So does that mean you’re the worst kind of evil?”

“No way. I’m just a lowly underling servant. The truly bad people hide way further in the back. So far behind that no-one knows of their existence.”

Maybe I’ve said too much, Mattalast somewhat regretted.

“So, won’t you tell me more than that? How did you meet Vend Ruga and why did you run away with Volken?”

The car passed the pastures just about when Olivia’s story was over. They were halfway to the neighboring town. The car parked at the middle of some plains no one was frequenting. The pair exited.

“I see, I now understand what you went through. But was it also your power that destroyed the Indulging God Cult? Truly amazing.”

While saying this, Mattalast checked the gun at his waist. *I’ve brought her this far, but I really don’t like killing people.*

“Are you going to kill me?”

“Yeah.”

Mattalast answered. He understood what Olivia was trying to say. She wanted to confess everything and plead for her life.

“Mattalast. Why must I be killed no matter what?”

“Don’t say that. Just give up and die.”

“I don’t know anything about the secret Vend Ruga possessed. I only know how his hand felt.”

If he believed her then perhaps there’s truly no need to kill her.

Olivia knew nothing of the Violet Wish. Seeing she surrendered, she also had no intention of opposing the Armed Librarians.

But it couldn't be helped.

"You certainly don't seem to know the secret. However, you know the fact that it exists."

"...What do you mean?"

"Even the existence of the secret must be kept secret. You know of Vend Ruga. You also know that we kill everyone related to Vend Ruga.

That's enough of a reason to kill you."

"I won't tell anyone. Will you still kill me?"

"There's no guarantee that you won't tell anyone."

"I can be made to forget it. I'll drink the water of Argax. Is that not good either?"

"Killing you is more certain. I don't know what will happen in this world. And above all I don't know what you're going to do."

Olivia clenched her teeth with a desperate look. He thought she was poor, but that's it. Everything will be settled once he kills her. Letting her live would lead to troubles.

"...I'll cooperate with protecting the secret. Is that also not good?"

The moment he heard this, Mattalast's expression slightly changed.

"...Didn't I say so in the letter? I want you to save me. I don't expect you to save me without giving you anything."

"What do you mean?"

"Volken didn't betray you at all... you want to conceal that fact, right? Don't you need me for that?"

Mattalast's hand that was reaching to the gun stopped. He first noticed that way of using Olivia then. If she was there then he would certainly be able to stop Kyasariro and the rest.

The gears in Mattalast's mind began turning. He perfected the scenario in his head in mere seconds.

Not a bad script. If I can get Olivia to cooperate, I would probably be able to fool them.

But the problem was if she would really do so. While she did seem like she wanted to cooperate with Mattalast, perhaps she was planning something.

"How horrible, are you going to betray Volken?"

"Yeah, I will. While inferior to you, I still am a heretic."

Olivia said as she gazed at Mattalast. If he noticed even the slight bit of hesitation in her eyes, he would kill her.

"And are you also fine with forgetting about Vend Ruga? Weren't you fighting for him?"

"Well, that's my suggestion. There's no choice but to drink the water of Argax."

"Really?"

Mattalast pulled out his gun and turned it at her. Olivia took a step backwards.

"Will you throw away the memories you've risked your life to restore? That seems strange to me."

She tried one last thing. While clenching her teeth, Olivia cried.

"Strange? What's strange here. I don't really want to betray Volken. And I definitely hate forgetting about Vend Ruga."

"Then why would you betray them?"

"Because..."

Olivia faltered for about ten seconds. Then, she spoke in an ashamed voice.

"...Because I don't want to die."

"...Is that it?"

"Yeah, something wrong about it?!"

Olivia dropped to her knees and started pounding the ground.

“I didn’t forget. I also don’t want to betray them! But I have no other choice. What else can I do? There’s no other way. Is wanting not to die that strange?!”

“...I’m sorry.”

While saying this, Mattalast lowered his muzzle.

“Since I’ve had many enemies that were prepared to bet their lives in fights and dying for someone, I’ve misunderstood you. I thought you were also like that.”

“Mattalast... am I strange? Am I wrong in doing so?”

“You’re not. Because there’s no correct answer. So even betraying the people important to you in order to live isn’t wrong.”

“But I... Vend Ruga...”

Olivia was crying. *If this is acting, she’s quite the woman. It would be amusing for her to turn to be an actress,* he suddenly thought.

At that moment, she clearly turned from a person he should kill to a person he should use inside his mind. And a person to be used was also one to be protected.

However, this didn’t mean that he trusted Olivia. He had no proof that she really didn’t know the secret, and he had no guarantee that she really wouldn’t fight the Armed Librarians.

Mattalast had decided to test her.

Did she really not intend on opposing the Armed Librarians and did she really not have any information about the secret? Mattalast decided on gathering the Armed Librarians and test her.

Just as Mattalast told her to, Olivia hid Hamyuts’s conspiracy and told them lies. Even looking from the side it was splendid acting. Even Mattalast, a self-proclaimed natural-born liar, was amazed at her performance.

In addition, she gave him the bonus that was Kyasariro’s flying kick.

Part 3

Nevertheless, it didn't mean that Mattalast fully trusted Olivia. He was cautious. He prepared a final test for her. After the incident in the small conference room, he made her stay at home. He didn't restrain her or lock her in a room. If people like Mirepoc or Kyasariro came to visit her she dealt with them normally. He also allowed her going out for short while. But she was practically confined. He couldn't allow her to be free until she erased her memories using Argax.

Three days passed like that.

"Say, how long are you going to keep me here?"

Olivia said. Even Mattalast didn't enjoy living with a woman who wasn't his lover. Having people thinking that they were in a honeymoon was unpleasant too. He was waiting for a certain man. He was in a place far from Bantorra Library, so coming there took him time.

"Be a bit more patient. I'm having a certain man interrogate you. You'll be free afterwards."

"Interrogate?"

Olivia half-rose to her feet.

"Huh, don't worry. There won't be any torture or whatever."

At that moment, there was a violent knocking at the door. *So he finally came*, thought Mattalast.

Without waiting for his response, the door swung open. A giant man entered.

"Took you too long, Overseer of Paradise."

"Don't call me like that."

The one whom Mattalast called was the new Overseer of Paradise, Minth Chezine. Shaking his well-toned body that was yet to decay he sat in front of Olivia.

"Overseer of Paradise? What do you mean?"

“Don’t mind it. You’re gonna forget it anyway.”

Saying so, Minth stared at Olivia’s face. At that moment, his pupils shone with a faint light.

His ability was called Sacred Eyes. That power to view souls could see through one’s nature in a single glance. In addition he was able to see one’s mental state and even minute changes in their mind.

Any kind of swindling became powerless in front of him. Even if one lied with their expression and voice, by looking at the movements of their mind, deceiving him was impossible.

“So, Olivia. Do you hate the Armed Librarians?”

Minth inquired.

“No such thing.”

“You’re lying. I can tell. You want to kill that man next to you.”

Olivia winced.

“It’s fine. That guy’s a villain after all. It would be stranger not to hate him.”

Minth shot a side-glance at Mattalast.

“Next question. Do you know of the Violet Sinner?”

Olivia shook her head to the side. Minth then spoke toward Mattalast.

“That’s no lie. That woman truly has no idea.”

“...Keep going.”

“I’ll ask again. Do you know of the Violet Wish?”

Olivia shook her head again.

“Are you planning to fight the Armed Librarians?”

Olivia once again shook her head.

“Did you speak of Vend Ruga with someone?”

“I did.”

“With whom?”

“Volken.”

“Is that it?”

“Only him.”

“...I see.”

The light disappeared from Minth’s eyes.

“There’s no mistake. This woman knows nothing. She also has no will to fight. She didn’t speak of Vend Ruga with anyone but Volken. Meaning, she’s completely harmless.”

“Wait. I have one final question. Use your Sacred Eyes once more.”

“What is it?”

“Olivia’s hiding something from me.”

Minth looked at Olivia with his faintly glowing eyes. And as expected she shook her head.

“She’s hiding nothing. You’re just overthinking it.”

“Uh huh...”

Minth rose up and left Mattalast’s home. While doing so, he turned around and spoke.

“You’re all overthinking things. Do you really think that woman has the power to battle the Armed Librarians and destroy the Indulging God Cult?”

“Thinking rationally there’s no way she does. I’m just making sure.”

“Tell this to that blockhead Hamyuts.

Don’t be scared of a mere woman. My Indulging God Cult is different from Kachua’s. It will never be destroyed.”

“How reliable. I’ll pass it to her.”

Leaving these words behind, Minth left the room.

“So he’s the new Overseer of Paradise...”

Olivia stared at the door he left through.

“Well, it doesn’t matter. It has nothing to do with you. Also you will forget all about it.”

Saying this, Mattalast took out a cup from his pocket. It was the Memorial Weapon capable of destroying memories, the Fiction Obliterating Cup Argax.

“As promised, you will forget about Vend Ruga, as well as about Volken and the fact you’ve run away from us, all of it.

Once you’ve forgotten all of it, we will no longer try killing you. You will be able to live an uneventful, peaceful life from now on.”

Mattalast took a jug and poured water into the cup. He held it and prayed silently. It trembled slightly and produced the memory-erasing water.

He offered that to Olivia.

“So you’re planning to thoroughly erase all of it? Won’t it mess up my mind?”

“I’ll explain the following after you’ve erased your memories. You’ve went through a horrible experience during the Volken Incident. You’ve seen it in both dreams and even during the day. Unable to just watch you like that, I offered erasing your memories.”

“You’re a horrible person after all.”

Olivia cried.

Until she made her decision, Mattalast stayed silent and waited for fifteen minutes. Opening her eyes and mumbling something, Olivia drank it all in one gulp.

“...”

Olivia glanced at her surroundings in a daze for a while. Her face indicated that she had no idea why she was here and what she was doing. People who drank the water of Argax made such expressions.

“Are you fine? Did it erase your memories properly?”

Mattalast spoke to her. As she saw Argax in her hands, Olivia made a puzzled face.

“Huh? What was I doing?”

“So you forgot it, huh. I had you erase your memories. The Indulging God Cult did horrible things to you. You told me that you wanted to get rid of those memories.”

Olivia tilted her neck.

“Is that so? I seem to not have memories of quite a while. What happened to me?”

“I’ll explain.”

Mattalast explained all that happened until now. He told her the lies that she told in the small conference room three days ago as they were. Since Olivia lost her memories, she readily believed it.

“I see, so that’s what happened...”

She was still puzzled. However, she seemed to be largely convinced.

That does it, Mattalast thought.

The truth was now hidden inside a lie. Olivia will probably live without doubting his lies. As long as she believes it, he will let her live.

From here on, she will probably live peacefully and without any fighting.

Running away from war, being caught by the Indulging God Cult, being targeted by the Armed Librarians... most of Olivia’s life was spent in battle. But now it has finally ended.

As I thought not killing people is much better. Even if I have to deceive them for that.

Present – December 28, 1926

Mattalast caught a glimpse of Olivia in the corner of his eyes. Her face had none of the darkness it possessed during the time she had feared death. There was also none of the thorns she had when she was full of hatred for the Armed Librarians.

Mattalast deceived Olivia. He also did a horrible thing, making her erase the memories of her beloved Vend Ruga. However, she was able to attain her current peaceful life as a result.

He certainly was a villain, but even his villainy was acted with care. He racked his brains in order for as many people as possible around the world to be able to live in peace.

Perhaps that's what makes me evil, he thought.

“Oh, you seem to have an interest in Olivia, are you oozing with regrets, Matt-san? Is this jealousy? The swamp of love?”

An idiot stood next to him. Rizzly poked Mattalast's side.

“Can you not stop talking about love gossip for a minute?”

“I can't. And I don't want to.”

“Don't be so proud of it.”

Mattalast sighed.

“Ooh, I remembered. Thinking about it, there's a rumor that spring came for Luik.”

“...Oh?”

While Mattalast was annoyed, his ears perked up the moment he heard those words. Luik was the biggest giant among the Armed Librarians. If asked whether he was a man or a gorilla he was definitely a man, but if “in between” was added as an options then he was undoubtedly in between. Although he was fearless and reckless in battle, he was pitifully timid when dealing with women.

“That Luik? Who is it?”

“He seems to have fallen in love with Olivia.”

“That's too much. That's too big of a hurdle for a beginner.”

“So you're also curious, huh Matt-san?”

“...Mmm, fine then. More importantly, how did it come to that?”

Speaking in hushed voices, the pair continued their foolish conversation.

It was not only Olivia but also Mattalast that was able to enjoy peace. He had a good time with him not having to kill or fight anyone. He was having fun with alcohol and stupid chats.

At a table in the corner of the hall there were only a bottle of sweet champagne and a small salad plate. For this party of Armed Librarians – people who consumed such things as bears or cows – it was quite modest.

Hamyuts sat alone at this table and absentmindedly poked her salad piece by piece.

She was unexpectedly a light eater. She preferred vegetables to meat and fish and couldn't really hold her liquor. She was quite rare among the Armed Librarians that had many gluttons.

“...You guys sure are noisy.”

Hamyuts muttered in an idle tone.

Just a year ago, the moment she would utter any word everyone around her would grow tense. Even speaking in a low voice oozed out an uncontrollable sense of danger. When she was in a good mood she exuded an atmosphere of a carnivore beast from her entire body.

But none of it could be felt from her current figure. She was like some old tiger that had no fangs or claws.

Not only the air around her had changed. Her way of living everyday was also changing.

Hamyuts was quite diligent in the first place. She took care of governing and managing her organization by herself.

There were many Acting Directors in history that only sat on their chairs when not handling battles. Hamyuts was exceptional among them.

But that also was a thing of the past. She left most of her work to the next Acting Director, Yukizona, or the one who could be called number two, Bonbo. When she came to the Acting Director's Office, she spent her days on her hobby of sewing or on reading.

“...I'm bored.”

Hamyuts muttered. Even at the party hall her the situation stayed the same. If anyone talked to her she would respond appropriately, but one could feel her heart wasn't there.

It was evident to everyone where the change had occurred. It was during the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion and the subsequent destruction of the Indulging God Cult.

Some people said that she was emotionally drained. Hamyuts had no intention of denying it.

Her eyes focused on one point in the hall. It was Olivia who was busy happily chatting with Kyasariro. Since she was with her back to Hamyuts, she couldn't see her expression.

“Olivia... what are you thinking about?”

She mumbled and brought the stale champagne to her lips.

May 1926

Hamyuts came to know of Kachua's plot ten years ago. Ever since then and until the day of the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion Hamyuts had enjoyed waiting. She enjoyed thinking of what kind of traps he would set for her and how she would do against them.

Then, the joys of waiting ended. With Kachua's death, the rebellion had ended. The Indulging God Cult attacked Hamyuts three times, but were unable to take her down.

However, even during those dejected days there was still hope – the existence of Olivia.

Mattalast once told her the following about Olivia.

“No matter how she managed to escape from you, there's no way she can oppose us. You're overthinking this.”

And Yuri said the following.

“It is quite pitiful, but Hamyuts only waits for her demise. After that she only wishes for no one to know of the secret and not have any needless losses.”

Hamyuts was thinking. If she used her common sense, that woman was a trivial enemy. She will be killed by the Armed Librarians and that's it.

However, she managed to run away and she kept living even now. As long as

she was alive, that woman would definitely do something.

Although Hamyuts never even spoke to her, she believed in Olivia. She was the woman who lead the Indulging God Cult to destruction. The woman who managed to run away from her. A woman who kept on living no matter how many times people have tried to kill her.

She would definitely be able to accomplish something.

However, once again Hamyuts's expectations were betrayed.

Olivia surrendered to Mattalast and begged for her life. She never revealed Volken's innocence or spoke about the existence of Vend Ruga. In order to keep living, she became as obedient as a dog to Mattalast.

"Again?"

Hamyuts muttered.

"Have I been betrayed again?"

It was the second day after Olivia had been confined by Mattalast. Hamyuts showed up at Mattalast's house.

He had left in order to meet up with Yukizona. Using that chance, Hamyuts entered the house.

"Nice to meet you, Olivia. We've spoken a couple of times when you were Renas, but this is my first time meeting you."

At the time Olivia was sitting on a couch and reading a book. Seeing Hamyuts, she dropped the book and her body became stiff. It was obvious: there was no way Hamyuts wouldn't frighten her. Still she believed that Olivia would be able to fight even while afraid of her.

"...Y-yeah. What do you want?"

"It's not really that I want anything of you... I just wonder if I should kill you."

She rose from the sofa and stepped back.

"Keep it a secret from Matt. Because if I kill you of my own accord he'll get mad."

She said and approached Olivia. She grabbed both of her shoulders and sat

her on the sofa.

“Why would you kill me? I cooperated with you. I’ve concealed the truth about Volken and about Vend Ruga...”

“Do you think I wanted any of that?”

Just looking at her eyes, Olivia gulped. Hamyuts could feel her shaking in fear from her shoulders.

“You see, I had some expectations that you would do something. I expected that you would challenge me and perhaps be able to kill me.”

“...What do you mean?”

She brought her face closer to Olivia’s. It was much like the distance between lovers.

“I don’t need any subservient people. I’m the Acting Director of Bantorra Library. I’m the representative of a God. There are plenty of people who will obey me.”

“I can’t understand what you’re saying.”

“I want you to rebel. I want you to resist. Will you not do so anymore? Should I make you want to do that?”

Hamyuts poked Olivia’s face with her fingernails.



“I want to be killed by you, Olivia.”

The moment she said this, Olivia’s body suddenly stopped shaking.

“To be killed? ...What? You’re a strange woman, saying you want to be killed...”

Hamyuts felt something abnormal. Olivia started laughing loudly.

“Huh, so you were that kinda woman. I had no idea. We’ve had a deep relationship but when I think about it this is the first time we’ve met.”

“Oh my.”

Hamyuts’s eyes widened.

“Your face’s been too close for a while now. It creeps me out so back off.”

She pushed Hamyuts’s face. Olivia sat on the sofa again and crossed her legs. Hamyuts also sat down on the sofa across her.

“You want me to resist? Then it makes it easy. There’s no need to hide it.”

“So you’re planning to rebel?”

“Naturally.”

Hamyuts couldn’t believe her so suddenly. What could she – currently being confined by Mattalast and about to lose her memories by the water of Argax – plan to do?

“So you doubt me... Don’t make light of me. This is all according to plan.”

“Being caught by Mattalast?”

“Yes. That fool Mattalast’s going to bring me the water of Argax just as planned.”

“What are you planning to do by drinking the water of Argax?”

“No one is stupid enough to reveal their cards to their enemy.”

“Well, but still.”

Hamyuts shrugged.

“Then what will you do, Hamyuts? Are you going to kill the rebel?”

“What should I do, I wonder? This might all be just lip service.”

“I’d be thankful for you to think so.”

Hamyuts and Olivia smiled at each other. It was a bizarre sight.

“So what will you do from now? Do you think you could beat me?”

Olivia replied with a bold smile.

“I can’t reveal my hand. Oh well. I’ll answer a bit in kindness.”

Her index finger was pointed at Hamyuts’s chest.

“First of all, my target isn’t just you. I won’t be satisfied just taking the life of the Acting Director.”

“Seems pretty big.”

“And also. My victory is close by. It’s about 80%... no, 90% decided already.”

Olivia made an even deeper smile.

“This is some wonderful news.”

Hamyuts didn’t have the slightest idea what Olivia was thinking about. Therefore, her victory will not waver. As long as she doesn’t know how Olivia was planning to fight, she should have no chances of victory.

“I’m happy, it’s good I came here. It’s good I didn’t give up to my short temper and killed you.”

“I know right? So go back. If Matt comes back he’ll be angry at you.”

Hamyuts left the apartment. She came across Mirepoc near it.

“Hey, Mirepo. Today’s weather is so good. I feel great.”

Mirepoc tilted her head.

“Is something the matter, Director?”

Seeing Hamyuts so pleased worried her. While Mirepoc was puzzled and looked back countless of times, she entered Mattalast’s apartment.

Present – December 28, 1926

Seven months passed since then.

Hamyuts didn't tell anyone that she had talked to Olivia. Not even to Mattalast. If she did, he would probably kill her. That would be too boring to her. During the last seven months, Hamyuts dedicated herself to watching from the side.

Until the very day she was invited to this party, Hamyuts kept thinking. She was still unable to grasp any clues about Olivia's "already decided victory".

Chapter 3: The Shadow Creeps Ahead

Part 1

Present – December 28, 1926

Young men were working busily in the party hall's kitchen. They were not the hall's workers, but Armed Librarian trainees.

If normal people were involved in the quarrels between Armed Librarians they wouldn't be able to avoid serious injuries. If that happens it would become a serious felony despite it being a party.

Therefore, the trainees, who had less chances of being injured, were forced to work there.

"Heeey you trainees. Doon't slack oooff!"

The new Armed Librarian and head chef Rizzly came to hit the heads of the trainees. None of them were slacking off though, only being pestered.

Rizzly had the worst personality, but he had high-level offensive capabilities. Although the trainees thought he was annoying, they couldn't defy him.

"Shit, this is no work for an Armed Librarian..."

"Even Enlike-san was better than this..."

"I'll pay him back someday!"

The trainees worked while complaining.

There was one exception among them. It was the boy washing dishes in a corner of the kitchen, Yankuu Kuin.

He was noticeably young even among the trainees. He seemed to be around fifteen or even less than that. Although he was slender, his body was lean and well-toned. For some reason he was injured all over his body.

He wore a short shirt that exposed his midriff and both shoulders as well as leather pants. Most of his hair was short except for a part behind his head

which grew long and was tied on his back.

He had gentle features but they seemed somewhat blank for some reason. However, an intelligent light could be seen in his eyes. He was the only one there to not complain at all and simply work in silence.

“Yankuu! If you’re finished with the dishes come peel this potato!”

Rizzly threw a bucket with all of its contents at Yankuu. He caught it expertly without spilling anything.

“Don’t slack off even while I’m not here.”

Saying that, he loaded both hands with large dishes and went back to the hall.

Once he was gone, the trainees started spouting out their discontent.

“He’s like a tyrant, doesn’t it piss you off, Yankuu?”

A trainee spoke to him as he poured some sour sauce. Yankuu answered calmly.

“Nothing to do about it. It’s our fault we’re weak.”

“You’re so mature... ah, my shoulders are stiff.”

The other trainees turned their heads.

“I wonder if we’re always going to be treated like that... if only Noloty was still alive it would’ve been a bit better.”

The moment he said this, he heard someone reprove him with ‘*you idiot*’ in a small voice from behind. The trainee at the back kept talking as if forgetting who was in front of him.

“...You don’t have to mind it too much.”

Yankuu said while pulling out a potato from inside the basket.

“I’ve already accepted what happened to Big Sis Noloty.”

“I see.”

The trainee said with a somewhat uneasy expression. However, he couldn’t help but feel so. Everyone there knew just how much Yankuu had grieved Noloty’s death.

Yankuu Kuin. He came from the same village as Noloty. He was a boy who admired her and wanted to become an Armed Librarian.

January 1926

Yankuu hadn't participated in the fight against the Indulging God Cult even once. Around the Dragon Pneumonia Incident he just reached the age of thirteen and was able to complete his Magic Deliberation. Even if he fought, he would have just been a burden.

Yankuu was happy when he heard of Noloty's activities in his Librarian School in Rona. He hadn't told her he was aiming to become a Librarian. He had the feeling that if he did she would spoil him. Even Noloty would probably be envious of how they took care of him. He didn't like it.

Now he regretted it.

He might have been a burden to Noloty and he might have been completely useless, but even so, he wanted to fight along with her. If possible, he would have liked to die instead of her.

Both after he came to know of Noloty's death, as well as during the Rebellion afterwards, Yankuu could do nothing but stay in the Librarian School lodgings and listen to the radio.

It happened two weeks after the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion. Inside the reading room below Bantorra Library Yankuu read Noloty's Book. Since it was the time for Bantorra Library's Archives to be closed, there were no people around other than Yankuu and Mirepoc. Among this silence, even the sound of putting the Book from the table into a box sounded terribly loud.

"I had no idea... either about you nor of Noloty's village."

Mirepoc said, dropping her gaze.

"Even though I supervised her for a year she hasn't told me anything. She wasn't able to trust me after all..."

"What did you think about Big Sis?"

"...Actually, I thought of her as my rival. An opponent that I couldn't bear losing against. But now she's gone to a place I can't reach."

“...”

“Noloty is the hero of Bantorra Library. They will speak of her name along with Enlike-san for all eternity. It’s already far beyond my reach.”

Yankuu hit the desk with his fist. The sturdy oaken desk crumbled into pieces of wood.

“Why did she have to fall as low as becoming a hero?”

Living for a single day was much more precious than her name being spoken of forever. Noloty was that kind of person. Even the entirety of Bantorra Library couldn’t equal Noloty’s life.

She was that sort of person.

After reading Noloty’s Book, Yankuu returned to the Librarian School. The principal spoke in front of all of the students and told them that they had to fill up the holes created by the Armed Librarians who’ve died in battle. He expected each and one of them to make even more efforts.

Then he called up Yankuu by name and made him stand.

“You above all else have the most outstanding talent this Librarian School has seen since Mokkaia. There is nothing to criticize about your behavior or enthusiasm. All of you, take Yankuu as a model, and train yourselves in readiness to surpass him.

Keep your efforts without priding in your talent, Yankuu, so you could succeed the fallen Armed Librarians.”

Yankuu made a small response and sat down. However, he could understand; while he might have been able to fill up the hole of Ireia or Mokkaia, no one would ever be able to replace Noloty.

No matter how strong one was, they would not be able to fill the hole left behind by her.

March 1926

Just as the principal said, Yankuu used to be an exemplary student. His strength increased dramatically. His conduct and training were perfect.

But that Yankuu has changed. Noloty's hole opened up in his heart.

"Stop!"

The principal stopped Yankuu in the middle of a sparring match between students. He stopped him by shooting. It was such a situation where he wouldn't be able to restrain him with words in time.

Yankuu stopped in place as if frozen, blood spurting from his shoulder. In his hand was a wooden short sword. Its tip was stopped three centimeters away from his opponent's chest.

His opponent was caught by some clay-like substance from his waist down. His eyes were wide open in fear.

"No matter if it's a wooden sword, if you put too much weight into it, that would end badly if it pierces."

"Sorry, I got caught up in the heat of the moment."

He said and jumped aside. Not only his head was in heat. It was also his heart, his breath, and his entire body.

"Free the restraints."

"Yes sir."

Yankuu released his Magic Right. The clay apprehending his opponent's waist melted and disappeared. Not even a speck of dust was left behind.

Yankuu's ability was the control of mud. He could produce and release mud from inside his body. Its nature changed freely with Yankuu's will; He could make it solidify to turn it as hard as rock, or melt it down so it would turn like gum, jelly or even water.

Its lethality was low, but on the other hand its other applications were unprecedented. His ability was still in development, but were he to perfect it he would probably become a warrior on the level of Volken or Vizac.

"Sorry, I overdid it."

Yankuu apologized to his opponent. The principal then spoke to him.

"You were also careless. You didn't have a proper sense of danger just

because your opponent was Yankuu.”

“Y-yes sir.”

“Although you’re training, fight as if it’s the real thing. If you think you would have died then re-discipline yourself. And Yankuu: this isn’t real combat. Go to your room for three days.”

“Yes sir.”

The students watching the course of events muttered among themselves.

“What’s wrong with you, Yankuu?”

He wanted to say “nothing” but stopped himself.

Just like Noloty, Yankuu hated hurting people. He had thought he was a person who couldn’t kill.

However, Yankuu recently started questioning this. Something brutal was being born in him. Or perhaps something was waking up.

November 1926

It was decided that Yankuu had enough of an ability to be promoted to a trainee. In order to receive the formal approval, Yankuu and the Librarian School’s principal were headed to Bantorra Library. It was unlikely for his promotion to be refused after the School approved it. Actually, it had the implication that this will be his debut.

“There weren’t even five people among the Armed Librarians that were promoted to a trainee when they were fifteen. But don’t think of this as an honor. What’s important is not when you become an Armed Librarian but what you do as one.”

The principal said before they passed through Bantorra Library’s gates.

“Yes sir.”

“You have probably already been notified, but your inspector will be Mattalast. Listen well to what he has to say.”

They came together to Mattalast’s desk. He stopped his hand that was writing something and stood up. After he and the principal exchanged greetings briefly,

he extended his hand to Yankuu.

He grabbed it back. It was a soft handshake, but he could still feel Mattalast's frightening strength from it.

"Nice to meet you, I'm Mattalast. This principal forced me to take care of a problem child like you."

He probably expected him to be diplomatic about the whole business. However, Mattalast had been frank.

"A problem child? Me?"

"No honors student would get punished five times in half a year, right? Furthermore all of those punishments were about you overdoing your training battles."

Mattalast hit the documents on his desk. The incidents caused by Yankuu were written on them. During these six months Yankuu's good conduct became a thing of the past. Something violent welled up within him and he couldn't restrain himself.

"Even if the job of an Armed Librarian is fighting, people who can't show the minimum restraint will be punished. Just what happened to you?"

Mattalast made the principal leave and faced Yankuu alone.

"The reason is Noloty, right?"

"Yes."

"She was a good kid. It's natural for you to be dragged along. But a year has passed. I think it's time for you to find some solution."

Yankuu shook his head to the side.

"I've already made up with it. I'm just angry and can't do anything about it."

"At the Indulging God Cult?"

"I don't understand."

Yankuu answered frankly. The Indulging God Cult had been destroyed and so both Kachua and Daltom, the one to kill Noloty, have already died. So there was no need to keep being angry. He understood this, yet his anger was yet to calm

down. He wasn't able to find anyone he could hit.

"Anger with no outlet, huh. Troublesome."

Mattalast held down his hat and picked up the documents from the desk.

"I think it's fine for you to graduate the Librarian School. However, I can't allow you to be promoted to a trainee. I can't let you accept responsibility while you harbor feelings like that."

"Then what'll happen with me?"

"Let's say you'll be under my custody. There's no such system in place, but I'll make the Director overlook this. You won't be promoted until you calm down."

"What do I need to do?"

"Nothing. At any rate, put yourself in order. Because if not..."

Mattalast smiled lightly.

"Well, we'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

Under such circumstances, Yankuu got himself a long time of leisure.

After moving to a dormitory at Past God Bantorra's Island, there was nothing for him to do. He barely knew anyone at the Library. He became estranged from his friends at the Librarian School due to his frequent violent incidents. Yankuu simply loitered around town.

Was there anything good in doing so? Was it fine for him to be supervised by Mattalast? He had nothing but doubts.

Walking around aimlessly, Yankuu approached the gates of Bantorra Library. Just as he thought of turning on his heels and return to the town, he found a side-street.

"...Was there a road here?"

The narrow road seemed to be surrounding the Library. Yankuu entered it.

While walking he was thinking. He thought about the anger with no outlet that was inside him.

Although the Indulging God Cult was destroyed, his rage was yet to calm

down. On the contrary, it seemed to have only grown deeper.

“Why?”

He muttered aloud. Yes, the target for his anger was there.

When people fight each other, someone will die. I know this. But why did it have to be Big Sis Noloty? Why did this killing happen? Why did the Indulging God Cult exist?

Why. The more he pursued this, the more he couldn't stop.

The subject of his anger was much bigger than just the Cult. It was directed at destiny and at the world itself.

He was simply and helplessly angry. As he kept on thinking of this and walking around, a voice called out to him.

“Welcome to the road of hesitation.”

Yankuu stopped and looked at the side of the road. A woman was sitting on a plain wooden bench. She was a beautiful woman with short, flaxen hair and a plain one-piece dress.



“Ah, sorry for calling out to you suddenly. I have no important business so don’t mind me.”

The woman spoke in a rough tone that didn’t suit her features.

“...Road of hesitation?”

“I just decided to call it like that. For some reason, people who hesitate or worry about something always end up encircling this road.

A person called Renas used to stroll here. Before her was also the guy called Mokkaia. According to what I’ve heard, someone named Minth also walked here. Oh right, there was also Volken.”

There were some familiar names among the ones the woman spoke. All of them, maybe.

“But there’s a certain omen. All those who worried while walking around here, vanished from Bantorra Library without a trace. How mysterious.”

The woman said so and smiled. He only now noticed this, but the woman sometimes touched her legs. Was she on the middle of a stroll as well?

“You too?”

“Yeah. You as well, tail-haired boy, right?”

The woman said while looking at Yankuu’s hair.

“What are you worried about? Nothing good would come out of it, but probably nothing bad either.”

She was an unknown woman that he would probably never meet again. Yankuu casually opened his mouth.

“One year ago, a person important to me was killed by the Indulging God Cult. It still haunts me. I can’t move on even after a full year.”

“A year ago is just like yesterday. It’s natural to get caught up on a person’s death if they’re important to you.”

She wasn’t trying to console him, but spoke of her true feelings.

“So what are you worrying about?”

“I want to fight. I’d like to settle that person’s death. But my anger is all just pent up and I have no opponent for it.”

“I see. Because the Indulging God Cult was destroyed.”

Although it was the middle of the conversation, the woman stood up.

“However, your real enemy is still alive.”

“Huh?”

“Your enemy is not just the Indulging God Cult. It’s also the Armed Librarians.”

“Why?”

The woman went on the opposite direction from Yankuu.

“Besides, the Indulging God Cult might have still survived. No, it probably did.”

Leaving those words behind, the woman left. Yankuu tilted his neck and watched her off. Was she just a strange person?

He soon forgot about her. However, her words were left in the back of his head. The Indulging God Cult was alive and his real enemy was the Armed Librarians.

Part 2

December 6th, 1926

There was nothing good about staying at Past God Island, so Yankuu decided to leave it. In any case he was in a vacation. He had only one place to go to. He went back to his hometown, the archipelago at the southern frontier.

He still hasn't learned to pilot an airplane yet, so Yankuu bought a ticket for an ocean liner headed for the island. After a week's journey, he arrived at the port of the southern island.

From there he took a boat and headed for his village.

"...?"

Yankuu saw a small fast boat approaching at him from the horizon. It was directly opposite to Yankuu's boat. It was going in a straight line to the port connecting his village with the town.

"Did they come from my village?"

Yankuu passed a glance with the person boarding the speedboat. It was a woman about thirty years old boarding it alone. He had never seen her.

She also looked at Yankuu. Upon meeting her gaze, Yankuu had a bad premonition.

He came to know the meaning of that premonition a short while later.

He arrived near his village. He walked on the road leading to it.

Suddenly he saw a human figure. He became relieved as he did so. It was a small figure, barely able to reach his chest. She was a girl who wore a red linen cloth on her head. Her name was Mani Rikker. She was Yankuu's younger sister.

"You came back, big brother? Is that really you?"

"Yeah, it's me, your brother!"

Yankuu closed his mouth and spread his lips to show his teeth.

"Eee."

“Eee.”

Mani answered with the same action. It was their greeting. They didn't even forget when they started using it.

Yankuu raised Mani's body high in the air and gently swung her around. In the past she had enjoyed it but now she shrieked. Without paying this any heed, Yankuu kept spinning her around.

“It's scary, big brother.”

“You've gotten heavier, Mani. Also taller.”

He patted her head. *I'm glad I came back*, he thought frankly. The anger stuck in his mind vanished as if it was but a dream.

Mani was six years younger than Yankuu. This year she turned nine years old. They weren't blood-related, but referred to each other as siblings without any problem whatsoever.

“Did you bring anything, big brother?”

“Always with the money... so only your exterior has changed huh?”

Saying this, he brought out the usual nuts snack. You could buy it everywhere by walking around town, but this village had no way to get it.

“Take this in return.”

What Mani took out of her pocket was a small stuffed doll. It was a spherical doll made of folded paper. The kids of the southern frontier played by making their own dolls.

Originally it was made with pretty colorful papers, but the one given by Mani was a crude one made from cutting the paper bags used to wrap wheat. However, he didn't mind at all. After all, Mani made this by herself using her own time and effort.

“Thanks.”

He had several of these dolls in his dormitory at Bantorra Library. However, he didn't think they would burden him no matter how many more he gets.

“Is this fine as the only souvenir? Since your big brother is about to get a

salary he'll be able to buy many things from now on."

"I can play with this enough so I don't need anything else."

She didn't say this out of consideration. She truly thought so.

"You're a good kid."

Said Yankuu. *I'm glad I came back and met with Mani*, he thought. The anger stirring his heart without ever stopping vanished away by him simply looking at Mani's face.

Yeah. My mission is to protect this village. I need to fulfill the mission I inherited from Noloty. My pent-up anger has no meaning. I only need to think about becoming an Armed Librarian and supporting Mani.

After calming down Mani who wanted to play with him, Yankuu returned to his parents' home.

"I'm home, mom. Here you are."

Inside, his mother was weaving linen by herself. Just like with Mani, she wasn't blood-related to him. However, she still raised him as his foster parent.

"Yeah. Welcome back. We've waited for you. Have you met Mani?"

"Yes, a bit earlier. I'm glad she looks to be healthy."

"Only that kid's always in high spirits."

She handed Yankuu a tea brewed with fried beans. It was the nostalgic taste of the drink he had in this village since long ago. He spoke to his mother while drinking.

"Seems like I'll become a trainee soon. I think I'll be able to have some extra money."

"Sorry for causing all of you trouble."

Noloty continuously sent the villagers an during the year that she worked as a trainee. The village was supported using that money. *I'm glad I have talent*, he thought from the bottom of his heart. If he had become a trainee but a year later, the village would have probably become bankrupt.

"But I'm worried. Don't become like Noloty."

“...It’s fine. The fight’s already over. I will also probably be stronger than her.”

“That’s exactly why I’m worried.”

There was something he knew from reading Noloty’s Book a year ago: this person had tried culling off Mani who was a baby at the time. Noloty had acted violent due to this and it ended with her leaving the village.

However, due to Noloty’s actions, that person had changed. She became resolute on raising Mani even through difficulties. Noloty’s existence certainly was leading the village.

Yankuu also had to keep it going.

“By the way mom, what about working away from home?”

He recalled the present state he had been informed about by a letter several months ago. In-between raising Mani she worked in the mines.

“Nothing. I quit.”

“Why?!”

Mom isn’t the type of person to throw away something in the middle. Something must have happened.

“...Our men stole some money from the mine’s people. They said that I was also an accomplice.”

“But you didn’t do it, right mom? So go to the mines. I’m acquainted with the Armed Librarians, so if I find someone reasonable...”

“It’s fine. Don’t do it. The Armed Librarian Kalne understood me. However, none of the other miners or normal librarians believed me.

If he covers up for me, Kalne’s position would also worsen.”

“...I’m going out for a bit.”

He got out of the house and Mani pestered him to play with her. Keeping her waiting, he walked to the edge of the village.

He went to the shack that wasn’t used by goats anymore. Several men sat in a circle and drank alcohol. Mani’s dad was among them. Even the current chief was there.

“What do you want?”

He said while spreading the stink of alcohol.

“Return what you’ve stolen.”

“Ah, that?”

Instead of money, one of the men threw an empty bottle at Yankuu’s feet. Yankuu furiously crushed it underneath his foot.

“We’re feeling good with liquor after a good while, try some too, eh Yankuu?”

Mani’s father raised the bottle.

“...People like mom and aunty Lig are working.”

“Ah?”

“Aren’t you all ashamed?”

A bottle of liquor flew at him. Before it hit his face, Yankuu’s mud knocked it off to the ground.

“This is our choice of what to do so shut up you damn brat!!!”

The men were being gnawed at by their inferiority complex and despair. That also had consequences for the women and children. If Yankuu hadn’t come there, who knows what they would have made the women of the village do? If it comes to money, they would do anything.

“Do you have any complaints?”

“I do. Go and work. Stop drinking.”

Yankuu took one step closer to them. The men provoked him while laughing.

“If you have any complaints come kill us. C’mon, do it.”

“We have no regrets about our life. C’mon, are you gonna?”

Each and every time Yankuu came back to the village they repeated this very same exchange. They said this because they knew Yankuu wouldn’t kill them.

Did they know anything? Did they have any idea how desperate Yankuu was for their sake? Did they have any idea how much of an effort it was for him to not kill them?

“...Shit!”

Yankuu spewed this single word and got out.

He wished to protect the village. He sacrificed his daily life for it. Then why does the very thing he tries to protect crumble?

He wished to become an Armed Librarian for his village. If it didn't exist anymore, he would probably lose his desire to work at Bantorra Library. If that happens, he won't be there anymore.

What will happen to him afterwards?

“...What's wrong, big brother?”

As he returned to the village, Mani snuggled up close to him. *Don't worry*, Yankuu said and smiled at the uneasy-looking girl. He spent the rest of day until night playing with her.

As the night grew late, Yankuu spoke with his mother while in bed.

“Say, Yankuu, are you fine being like that?”

“With what?”

“I believe you don't need to think about this village anymore. Letting you shoulder all of this makes you miserable.”

“Then what'll happen to the village?”

“...Those who can work outside will go there. They will work at the town, send their kids to school and live. That's it.”

That was what Noloty had once said. She once told them that if they couldn't live at the village, they just had to go to the outside world and work there. To prove them it was possible she aimed to become an Armed Librarian.

“...I don't like it.”

Yankuu said. This was the only aspect in which his opinion differed from Noloty's.

“I will protect this village. If I become an Armed Librarian I will also bring money. I'll also cover up the expenses for migrating. I don't want you to scatter until then.”

“...Yankuu.”

“I don’t want Mani to go outside. Don’t you want to stay in the village as well, mom? Besides, I don’t want to have no place to return to.”

“Yankuu, are you planning to shoulder all of this alone? Can you do that all by your own? Give it up already. It can’t be helped.”

Yankuu knew perfectly well that his mother’s words were realistic. Becoming an Armed Librarian and accumulating money will take a long time. Besides he had no guarantee that he could that.

Also, the hearts of the villagers have decayed to the extent they were unrecoverable.

“I don’t think that it can’t be helped. I decided that I would definitely protect this village no matter what.”

“...But...”

“That’s enough for this talk.”

Yankuu said and forcibly cut off the conversation. A breathtaking silence followed. Yankuu looked for another topic.

“By the way, didn’t you have a visitor today?”

He recalled the boat that he saw at sea earlier.

“No, none came.”

“Weird, I passed by one.”

“Was it Laty-san perhaps? It was probably a rich-looking woman with glasses, right?”

He recalled the figure of the woman he glanced.

“Yeah, probably that one.”

His mother got up.

“Perhaps I also need to talk to you about it soon. For the last while, a rich person from the outside came to this village saying that she wants to help us.”

This was the first time he’s heard of it. Yankuu also rose up without thinking.

“Who is she?”

“I don’t know if it’s a person or an organization. But it’s someone from the outside.”

“How weird. Aren’t they just trying to trick us?”

“I don’t know. But there are weird people. I also haven’t heard about it in detail but...

Perhaps they’re trying to help Mani rather than the village itself.”

“Mani?”

The entire thing was becoming increasingly confusing. He had no idea what kind of person from the outside would have business with Mani. Some philanthropist might have wanted to become her foster parent, but helping the entire village was strange.

“Mani talked about this plenty of times but I haven’t asked her anything. So ask her.”

However, Mani was currently sleeping with drool coming out of her mouth. So asking her will have to come tomorrow.

“So what did that Laty-san came here for today?”

“She probably went to the new island. That was probably where she returned from.”

“...I’ll try going there for a bit.”

Yankuu rose up. He could also do it tomorrow, but he was terribly bothered. He left the village and ran to the harbor where his boat was anchored.

The next island, meaning the island once bought by Bantorra Library for the sake of their village. Originally the villagers were supposed to move there and start their new lives.

However, the villagers wasted all of the expenses meant for migrating there and for developing the island. Right now, it should be a deserted island with no one living on it.

Yankuu’s boat reached the island. Getting off the boat and lowering the

lantern, he entered the dark island.

The barbed wire surrounding the island has been removed. Yankuu entered inside.

He used the lantern to illuminate the ground. He then raised his voice in surprise. The island's ground that had had weeds on it was made smooth. Rocks and pebbles have been removed such that the land was in a condition it could be used for farming.

“Who did this?”

Only part of the island had been cultivated. However, it wasn't a small area. Yankuu surveyed the island.

He could see a shack. Tools for construction were stored inside.

He found a well next to it. Trying to drink some water from it, he found out they were of good quality.

“Impossible...”

Yankuu muttered. Who did all this? This wasn't the sort of construction work that could be done by a half-assed investment.

He wondered if it was made by Bantorra Library. But he immediately denied it.

Several months ago, a proposal to once again raise funds for allowing the people of Noloty's village to relocate was issued. Besides Mirepoc, it was made by a few Armed Librarians who were close to Noloty. But it was immediately rejected.

The Armed Librarians issuing this were punished by Yukizona.

Armed Librarians had to treat everyone that weren't their enemies equally. Giving special treatment for a certain area of people was a crime equivalent to homicide. Allowing that would turn the Armed Librarians into a profit-seeking organization.

It couldn't be the Armed Librarians. So who did this?

People who, without revealing their identities, moved large quantities of

money in secret... *Just like the Indulging God Cult*, thought Yankuu.

“ ... ”

The face of the woman he met in the road of hesitation rose to his mind. *No way, that can't be*, Yankuu denied.

The following morning, Yankuu took Mani out of the village. They crossed the hill next to the village and stopped in front of a forest. He took her out to ask her something.

“Why are you doing this?”

Mani asked. He was slightly troubled with answering. He did it to prevent them from being overheard, but even Yankuu didn't know if this was something that shouldn't be heard.

He just had a weird premonition.

“You know, about Laty-san.”

At the moment he said this, Mani interjected with a loud voice.

“I don't know any Laty-san.”

“ ... ”

Yankuu stared at Mani with his eyes widened. He could see on her face that she was lying. He couldn't understand why she did so.

“Why are you hiding it?”

“...Umm, they said to keep it a secret from you, big brother.”

“Laty-san did?”

Mani nodded. It went beyond suspicion and doubt and into fear. That mysterious person Laty crept up beside him in secret. Who was she?

“Who is that Laty?”

“Umm, she's a good person, a really good person. She said they want to support the village.”

“If she's a good person why didn't you tell me?”

“Because Laty-san said it would be better not telling you yet...”

What the heck, thought Yankuu. Was she just or a swindler or something more terrible?

He first wanted to get rid of the worst case scenario. It was absolutely impossible, but the 1-in-10,000 chance rose into his mind. He recalled the words of the woman at the road of hesitation.

“It can’t be that those people are the Indulging God Cult...”

This time it was Mani who was surprised.

“How do you know that?”

He felt as if the ground beneath his feet disappeared. Becoming paralyzed for a second, he put a hand to the ground behind him.

“Did they say they were the Indulging God Cult?”

“Yeah. Only once though.”

Mani nodded in certainty.

“They said they wanted to make this the Indulging God Cult’s village. Oops, I can’t say that...”

He watched Mani hurriedly covered her mouth, stunned.

Mani and the rest, who were normal citizens, haven’t heard about the Cult. Naturally they didn’t know that they were the ones who tried destroying the world a year ago and were responsible for other incidents. They couldn’t be told that.

More importantly, Mani completely believed that person known as Laty. He couldn’t speak to her about the Indulging God Cult.

Part 3

Yankuu brought Mani back to the village. His mother told him that a letter came for him. The sender was the “Margunt Humanity Development Organization”. Below that the words “Director Laty Margunt” were written in small letters. He had no idea how she knew he was in the village that day.

The contents were a formal greeting. Afterwards, there was a suggestion for a meeting. She wanted to consult him with something important about the future of the village and Mani. She also wrote that she would like to meet him by all means.

The term “Indulging God Cult” was not mentioned anywhere in the letter. However, that name was swirling inside his mind as he read it.

“The Indulging God Cult wasn’t destroyed.”

The words of the bizarre woman echoed in his mind again and again.

“What’s wrong, brother?”

Mani inquired with an anxious voice. Her inner turmoil seemed to reflect in her expression. Yankuu hurriedly made a forced smile.

“It’s nothing. Everything’s fine, Mani.”

“...What’s fine?”

She asked back but he couldn’t answer. Was anything fine? After all, the hands of the Indulging God Cult have reached this village.

“It’s fine, it’s fine for now. But since I have something to do I have to go already.”

Yankuu hurriedly informed Mani of his departure and tried leaving the village.

“Big brother, you’ll come back right?”

Mani grabbed the hair on Yankuu’s back. She inquired him anxiously.

“Why do you need to ask? I’ll come back.”

“Really?”

“Did your big brother ever lie to you?”

Mani nodded and let go. Yankuu quickly left the village.

Yankuu decided in his mind. *Yeah, I haven't lied. This village will be fine. And I will definitely live and come back.*

Present – December 28, 1926

While peeling potatoes, Yankuu felt a presence from behind. He rose up from the wooden box he was sitting on as if jumping.

“Wah, you scared me.”

The person behind him was surprised and jumped back.

It was the woman he met a month ago on the road of hesitation – Olivia Littolet. She came into the kitchen for some reason. She was holding an ice pail in her hands.

“Is something the matter, Olivia-san?”

Rizzly spoke to her.

“We're out of ice to put in alcohol. Do you have some?”

“We do. Please wait a bit.”

Rizzly received the ice pail from her and put chunks of shaved ice inside. While he did this, Olivia stared at Yankuu's face for some reason.

“Is something wrong?”

“Say, haven't we met somewhere?”

Olivia said while looking into Yankuu's eyes.

“No.”

“I guess so. With such amusing hair I would've remembered it.”

It seemed like Olivia lost her interest in Yankuu. She received the ice pail from Rizzly back and returned to the party hall. Yankuu made a small sigh and started peeling the potatoes again.

December 15, 1926

The date and meeting place designated by Laty were December 10 at this village. He wrote her a letter so that it would be postponed to the 24th. This was so he could return to Bantorra Library once and make some preparations. He also decided to change the meeting place from the village to the uninhabited island close by.

Yankuu took a week to get back to Bantorra Library by boat.

His vacation continued. He had no particular need to show up in front of Mattalast. Besides, that was out of the question anyway.

He ran around the town and looked for the woman he met on the road of hesitation.

The Indulging God Cult hadn't been destroyed. Hearing that, the first he went to talk to about it was not an Armed Librarian but an unfamiliar woman. It was strange, but he couldn't afford to be too mindful of it.

"There she is!"

He found her at the front of a tailor shop. When he first met her she seemed like some sort of prophet, so it felt unfitting to find her at so mundane of a place.

Yankuu ran inside.

"Welcome. Did you order anything?"

The woman received him with a curt voice. She seemed to have thought of him as a mere customer. Yet she soon recalled who Yankuu was. She also realized that it was something serious.

"I'm closing in half an hour. I'll open up the back of the store then."

She said curtly and pointed outside. Yankuu exited as he was told.

Thirty minutes later, the woman greeted him while operating a sewing machine.

"Sorry for being rude. Regardless of your circumstances I have to work every day."

She introduced herself as Olivia Littolet. He knew that name. He heard that

she was the heroic woman who restored the Meats' memories.

Yankuu also named himself. Olivia didn't know him, but he told her that he was an old friend of Noloty's. Olivia knew of her saving the world.

"So is the Indulging God Cult alive and well?"

Yankuu nodded.

"As I thought. I hoped it wouldn't be, though."

Olivia said sadly. However, he could also feel that somewhere she thought of it as somebody else's problem.

"How do you know that? More importantly, why didn't you tell any of the Armed Librarians about this?"

"...You probably haven't spoken to Matt or Hamyuts either, right? It's pretty serious that the Indulging God Cult hasn't been destroyed. Shouldn't you report it to the allies of justice, to the Armed Librarians?"

Yankuu faltered.

The reason why he hasn't told them was because Olivia had told him that the Armed Librarians were the real enemy. It wasn't just that; they also once announced that the mystery of the Indulging God Cult had been solved and that it was now destroyed. Since Mattalast was one of the higher-ups, he held some distrust towards him.

"Well, your decision was correct. If you spoke to Hamyuts about that you might have been erased. She is supposed to be well aware that the Cult is alive."

"Why do you know that? In the first place just who are..."

Olivia stared outside the window. She thought of something for a while.

"Hamyuts might be listening to this conversation using her Sensory Threads. Well, never mind that. I can't help but be cautious."

"Just who are you?"

Olivia sighed.

"I'm nobody. I'm just a normal citizen. A normal, powerless woman."

That can't be, thought Yankuu. There was no way a normal citizen would know of the Indulging God Cult.

“Speak of your own situation first. Why do you know that the Indulging God Cult was not destroyed?”

Yankuu told her about his village. He told her that the Cult had been approaching them and currying up favor with his little sister Mani.

“I see. It sounds bad, but I can't do anything.”

“So you're not going to help me?”

Olivia shook her head to the side.

“I have nothing. I really can't do anything. Don't expect anything from me.”

“Who are you?”

She stopped operating the sewing machine. For a while she closed her eyes and arranged what she wanted to talk about inside her mind. Then she started speaking.

“You've heard of how I have fought against the Indulging God Cult.”

Yankuu nodded.

“I actually don't remember that time. I remember being on that ship... but I have almost no memories about when I was taken away from Past God Island by Volken or taken back here by Mattalast.

My memories have been erased by Hamyuts and Mattalast.”

“Why?”

“Be silent and listen to the end.

Ever since that time I felt continuous discomfort. I felt that I have forgotten something very important.

I possess a Magic Right, albeit poor; it's the ability to counteract Argax's memory deletion. Using that power for months, I recalled some things. I remembered my very first friend, that stupid Vend Ruga.”

Olivia spoke to him about Vend Ruga. He was a bizarre weapon made of lead

that roamed the battlefield. It was the sad story of a puppet living only so it could be remembered by someone.

Vend Ruga had been created by the Indulging God Cult and killed by Hamyuts.

“But this must never be known. The Armed Librarians have caught me and erased my memories of Vend Ruga.

Do you understand why no one must know of him?”

Olivia cut off her words. Yankuu began thinking. The Indulging God Cult was supposed to be their enemy. Why did they have to conceal the fact that they’ve defeated the enemy? After thinking for a while, he noticed a certain fact.

“How many years ago was that?”

“It seems you understood... It’s been ten years or more than that.”

What does that mean? Olivia kept talking.

“At the very least Hamyuts had already known about the Indulging God Cult ten years ago. She also knew that it survived and that it had been producing weapons.”

“...Why did the Director stay silent? If the Indulging God Cult was destroyed at the time, nobody would have died. Neither Big Sis Noloty, nor our other comrades, other thousands of people, no one would have died...”

“I wonder why. I have no idea. But try thinking about this. Do you think that Hamyuts was the only person to know of the existence of the Cult ten years ago?”

“...”

“What about the Acting Director of the time, Photona? And the one before him? What about Hamyuts’s confidant Mattalast? Or the ones next in line to become Directors, Yukizona and Bonbo?”

“...”

“Have you never felt some discomfort? How did the Indulging God Cult survive for more than a thousand years? How were they so easily destroyed this time?”

“...That’s...”

“The Armed Librarians protect the Cult. They pretend to defeat them and yet keep them going. The battle between them is a fixed game.”

Yankuu felt dizzy. The memory of the single person known as Vend Ruga... It uncovered the fake image of the world that he had thought to be peaceful.

“Hamyuts was Vend Ruga’s enemy. She’s the enemy of half my lifetime, the enemy of my dead comrades. But even though I know this there is nothing I can do. I have no power to fight. Neither do I have comrades who would fight with me. I don’t even have someone to call to avenge me. If I do anything at all I’ll be just killed in no time flat.”

“...”

“Leave. Even if you talk with me, nothing good will come out of it.”

Olivia opened the door and prompted him to leave. Yankuu couldn’t even stand up.

“What am I supposed to do?”

“Take your Mani-chan and escape somewhere. This is about the only thing you can do.”

“Can I not fight? If I tell this to the Armed Librarians they should fight with me.”

“Telling them that the higher-ups of the Armed Librarians are protecting the Indulging God Cult... You’ll just be shut down. Who would believe such a story in the first place?”

“Is there nothing to be done?”

“Nothing. Or at the very least I can’t think of anything.”

“...Shit!”

While listening to her talk anger was simmering inside of him.

Yankuu hit the wall. Olivia reproved him to not mess up her shop.

The Indulging God Cult killed Noloty and was even trying to bring down his village. And the Armed Librarians were the ones to have approved that.

What did Noloty fight for? What did she die for?

Unforgivable.

I will never forgive them.

The anger welling up inside Yankuu ever since Noloty had died... The anger for this unreasonable fate that he couldn't have done anything about... It now transformed to anger towards the Armed Librarians.

The smoldered fuel burst into flames as if fed oxygen.

“Quit it, boy. Run away. That isn't an opponent you can win against.”

Yankuu spat out his answer.

“Olivia-san, I will fight. It doesn't matter what you tell me. I can't forgive the Armed Librarians.”

“...Boy.”

Olivia sighed while leaning her forehead on her hand. He turned his back to her and walked outside.

“Give up on fighting. Even I'm not a genuine heretic. I can't see you just go by yourself and get yourself killed.”

Yankuu turned around.

“I'll also do it. I have neither claws nor fangs but I can at least chirp. Then I'll do my best at chirping.”

Yankuu and Olivia stared at each other's eyes and made a slight nod.

“I think we'd better cut off contact in the future. Even if I die you should survive. And the opposite as well. Let's both forget about one another and fight by ourselves.”

Yankuu nodded. Then, he left the tailor shop.

The only thing he understood by talking to Olivia was the circumstances. He had to fight against the Indulging God Cult to protect his village, but even the Armed Librarians weren't his allies.

No, more precisely, they were his true enemies.

Although he was planning on struggling and challenging an unwinnable fight, Yankuu had no hesitation in his mind. Far from that, he felt so exalted that he wanted to sing.

His chest throbbed. His face became hot. Anger and murderous intent set his body to dance.

Yankuu smiled. His face was somewhat like that of the boy who had once tried to destroy the Armed Librarians and the world, Arkit Chroma.

December 18, 1926

Yankuu returned to his dormitory room. He cut off all contact with Olivia just as he was told to. He kept thinking inside his room for three days straight.

He had to remain rational. He had to keep his determination warm and cool off his thinking. He was going to protect the village. He was going to fight against the Indulging God Cult and the Armed Librarians all by himself.

He looked at the letter from Laty Margent, the vanguard of the Cult. Before coming here he told her to postpone the date of their meeting.

It was because he needed some time to think of measures against her. That decision had been correct.

There was little time until the meeting. There were things he needed to do beforehand.

“...O mud.”

Yankuu invoked the Magic Deliberation. He released mud from his hands and filled the room's floor. Then, several dozens of hardened clay blades rose from it.

It was enough power to defeat any normal person, but in the end he was a mere trainee. The current Yankuu was probably unable to beat even Mirepoc. Facing Hamyuts or Mattalast wouldn't even count as a fight. Although he was said to have a promising future, two years of Magic Deliberation only brought him this far.

He needed power. He first thought of that.

He hadn't thought of gathering allies in the first place. He had no one to trust.

He decided relying only on himself.

He will oppose the Indulging God Cult all by himself. He needed the power to be able to do so. Furthermore, he needed the power to get it as soon as possible. Yankuu knew that such a convenient thing did exist.

“...But is it possible?”

He racked his brains over this idea. He refined methods that would allow him to gain power.

It would be difficult, but if he were unable to accomplish something on that level then protecting his village would be nothing but a pipedream.

In order to save his village he would have to cross dangerous bridges countless of times. That was only the first of them.

Yankuu rose up.

Part 4

“Hoho, so that’s what Matt-san did.”

The Armed Librarian Kyasariro Totona stood at the Library’s underground at the entrance to the Sealed Labyrinth. Since she had liked Noloty when she was alive she wasn’t a stranger to Yankuu.

He told Kyasariro he had received a punishment from Mattalast.

“Matt-san’s also strange sometimes, huh. You don’t look like a problem child to me at all.”

Kyasariro was frankly sympathetic towards him.

“I did cause many problems, but I have reflected on that. However, Mattalast can’t agree to it yet.”

“Poor you. You probably want to become an Armed Librarian soon as possible too, right?”

Yankuu nodded.

Since the end of the year was approaching, the normal librarians working at Bantorra Library were also sparse. Even the Armed Librarians left the Sealed Labyrinth and wrapped up their work for the year. The only one about to dive into the Labyrinth right now was Kyasariro.

“So what do you need from me?”

“Just as Mattalast told me, I don’t think I can do real battle training yet. So I’d like to look at the Books of past Armed Librarians and learn ways of fighting.”

“Ambitious eh. I’d also like my trainees to be like that. I will bring it as fast as possible, so please wait for about five hours. I’ll bring it along with the next Book shelving.”

Saying so, Kyasariro opened the gate to the Fifth Sealed Labyrinth.

“Will you be back in just five hours?”

Yankuu was surprised.

“Don’t underestimate me.”

Kyasariro smiled.

She went to the Labyrinth with a great amount of luggage. She carried a box full of Books that needed to be shelved.

And that was not everything – she also had a dozen pistols equipped on various parts of her body, as well as about five reserve guns in addition. That wasn’t all, as she pulled around a small cart containing a sphere-shaped drum. This was not an amount that one person could carry alone. It was so heavy that it was doubtful whether even two horses would be able to pull it off.

“Well then, I’ll get going.”

Saying this, all of her guns and the container rose up in the air. They all lined up and followed Kyasariro as if they were baby ducklings.

This was her ability. With her fearsomely precise telekinesis she could control and levitate twelve specially-made guns in the air at the same time. Each one of them was as accurate as a sniper and held enough power to destroy the armor of a tank.

Judging by firepower only, she was easily five times stronger than Mattalast.

While seeing her off, Yankuu chuckled in his own heart. She was the perfect person to be used for his plan.

Five hours later, Yankuu sat in the special reading room, reading Books and letting his pen run on a notebook. He summarized the tactics of past Armed Librarians and found which parts he could incorporate as well.

Obviously this was not his true goal. However, there were no signs of Kyasariro suspecting him. Yankuu was originally a diligent student. He simply had to act as he always did.

“Seems like it’s about time. I’ll go returning the Books.”

After a while, Kyasariro collected the Books scattered on the desk.

“Sorry, which of them do you need?”

“It’s fine, it’s on my way anyway.”

Kyasariro said while carrying a box loaded with tools. Her work after this was to inspect the telegraph facilities in the Third Sealed Labyrinth.

It was the time Yankuu had been waiting for.

He felt tense and a sense of guilt for deceiving Kyasariro rose to his chest. A few minutes after she entered the Labyrinth, he came following in her steps.

He could hear Kyasariro's footsteps from afar. Fortunately she was wearing leather boots with a hard bottom today as well. If he was unable to follow her footsteps he would have lost her.

Yankuu released his own mud ability. Regulating its viscosity, he spread it on the floor. By walking on top of it there were no footsteps.

"...I can do this."

His muttered words were so quiet that one couldn't hear them except by being near Yankuu's mouth. No matter what happened, he had to never let Kyasariro notice he was tailing her.

How much did they walk? During all that time, he kept praying that the Guardian Beasts won't attack him from behind. Kyasariro was walking about 200 meters ahead of him. The sounds of her footsteps echoed loudly.

"...My good luck continues."

Yankuu muttered.

If he were to be found by another Armed Librarian he would undoubtedly get questioned. However, he didn't have to worry about that for only today. There were no Armed Librarians or trainees in the Fifth Sealed Labyrinth. It would only be like this in the time period from the end of the year until the New Year. The Labyrinth was normally a quiet space, but today that stillness felt as if it exerted physical pressure on his ears.

Another part of his good luck was receiving Kyasariro's cooperation.

"...!"

In the next instant...

A thunderous roar resounded all of a sudden; it was Kyasariro's gunshots. It

sounded as if a several dozens of people were engaged in a gunfight, but it was only one person fighting by herself.

He was thankful for that gunfire. Yankuu rushed out and approached a spot from where he could confirm Kyasariro by sight.

Twelve guns floating in the air surrounded the Guardian Beast Cavalryman. She ripped its body to shreds using overwhelming firepower. Yankuu took that opening.

He invoked his Magic Right. He produced enough mud to be grasped by both hands at his feet. It soundlessly slid on the floor of the Sealed Labyrinth and headed to Kyasariro's feet. It jumped on the drum container floating behind her like a living being. It then stuck itself firmly to the bottom of that drum.

“Easy peasy!”

He heard Kyasariro's cheerful voice. Yankuu hid himself so that he wouldn't make any footsteps.

Her footsteps grew farther. She didn't seem to notice the mud stuck to her drum.

That does the trick, thought Yankuu. He passed through the first step.

Before long Kyasariro reached the Fifth Sealed Archive. Yankuu also entered several minutes after she passed.

His goal was ahead: it was the weapon stored in the Fourth Sealed Archive, the one that once cornered Hamyuts, the one that crushed Mokkania – the Ever-Laughing Magic Blade Shlamuffen.

Kyasariro was walking through the Fourth Sealed Labyrinth. Yankuu knew that tailing her any further would be impossible. Once he got past the Fifth Sealed Archive, the number of Guardian Beasts would also rise dramatically. If he were to get attacked from behind while tailing Kyasariro he would be obviously found out by her.

Yankuu wouldn't be able to pass through the Labyrinth by himself. If he were powerful enough to do so he would have been promoted to an actual Armed Librarian.

There was only one way. Yankuu closed his eyes inside the Archive and focused. He let one drop of the mud attached to Kyasariro's mud fall to the ground. Every ten seconds he let another drop fall. He carefully adjusted the viscosity of the mud as to not raise any noise.

The mud that fell to the ground signified the shortest route of the extremely complex Fourth Sealed Labyrinth to him.

Several hours passed. Kyasariro passed the Fourth Sealed Labyrinth and was about to enter the Third Labyrinth.

This was the final barrier. Along with the question of whether it will succeed or not there was also the issue of Yankuu's stamina. He breathed heavily as he produced the maximal amount of mud.

A string was born from the mud that accumulated like a mountain at his feet. The string followed the road like a long, long snake and advanced through the Labyrinth.

"...Kh..."

He started losing control. The long stretching mud was about to become mere soil.

Then, the mud tentacle reached the door to the Fourth Sealed Labyrinth. It opened the door with all of its strength. It snuck through the gap of about five centimeters.

He completely focused on the sensations transmitted to him through the tentacle. It crawled inside the Archive and looked for the figure of a spider. Shlamuffen was supposedly kept in there.

No, that's a Book. Not that either... that's some rescue apparatus someone had left behind. The mud tentacle kept crawling inside the Archive.

And it finally found the spider Magic Blade.

For some reason, the spider moved its own legs and clung to the mud. Yankuu no longer had any power to manipulate his mud. He used his remaining powers to convert it into rubber. Then, he pulled at the mud rope using his own hands.

If any of the Guardian Beasts find and sever the rope it would be the end.

While the Guardian Beasts were made to erase intruders, they would probably not attack the mud rope.

Time passed as he kept pulling. The headache that came from using too much Magic grinded in his head. How much time had passed? The mud rope suddenly stopped. No matter how many times he pulled it, it would move no further.

“Did it get caught in something?”

Yankuu paled. He pulled the rope again and again. Although it didn't seem like it would move if he pulled it weakly, if he were to pull it too strongly it might break.

“What should I do...”

The upset Yankuu hadn't noticed that the sound of the spider bumping against something came from his immediate vicinity for a while.

When he finally noticed, Yankuu opened the door connected to the Fourth Sealed Labyrinth. The spider sword rolled to his feet. His possibility of victory casually fell to the floor.

He picked it up and wore it on his right hand. The spider's legs spread and dug into his hand.

Yankuu ran through the Fifth Sealed Labyrinth while fighting fatigue and dizziness. A murderous smile floated to his face. *First comes the vanguard of the Indulging God Cult, Laty. It's time to give Shlamuffen the first kill.*

Present – December 28, 1926

When Yankuu finished peeling off the potatoes, he moved on to preparing roast chicken. He lightly cooked ten of them and added lard and spice.

Kyasariro never found out that he had stolen Shlamuffen. She didn't even know that he had left the Fifth Sealed Labyrinth and went back to his dormitory. There was also no one to notice anything strange with Yankuu hurriedly moving to the southern frontier.

If he were discovered, there was no way he would have been able to prepare roasted chicken in that sort of place.

Yankuu glanced toward the party hall as he kept coating the chickens in lard.

The Armed Librarians were drinking and chatting there. Almost all of the people whom Yankuu had decided on fighting against were there.

“Hey, Yankuu. Is something wrong?”

A trainee spoke to him.

“It’s nothing.”

Yankuu answered without showing any sign of perturbation.

Hamyuts was bored playing with the champagne glass in her hand without drinking it at all. She suddenly rose up. She started walking while holding the bottle and glass.

Hamyuts passed next to Bonbo who was eating a steak along with the bones. She ignored Mattalast and Rizzly who were getting excited from juicy gossip. She silenced Kalne and Tsamuro, who were completely drunk and hitting each other, by pounding on the wall.

Passing next to Mirepoc who was left on a chair near the exit, Hamyuts left outside.

“So you really are here.”

Hamyuts turned her eyes toward the roof and said. A woman was standing on top of the roof. She wore a long-sleeved dress and white gloves. Her face was covered by a thin veil. She seemed to have heavy burns on her face. In her hand she was holding a single stone blade.

Hamyuts jumped onto the roof.

“So you changed your form again, huh.”

“Indeed. After all, using a child’s body is inconvenient.”

Lascall Othello said in a muffled voice. The Memorial Weapon giving people’s story a continuation, the Passed Stone Blade Yor. It was a sword that moved autonomously by borrowing the body of a dead person.

“What do you want? You won’t be able to excavate any Books here.”

“I have no particular business. I merely came to visit Olivia-sama and you, Hamyuts-sama.”

Lascall replied.

“I see. Do as you please then.”

While saying this, Hamyuts sat down on the roof. She brought a bottle of champagne and a glass from downstairs. She drank while watching the night sky.

“You seem to be feeling unwell; what is the matter?”

“I’m not unwell at all. I’m just doing some thinking.”

“Do you have some concerns?”

“I wonder what Olivia’s thinking about.”

Lascall faintly laughed.

“That woman told me half a year ago... that her victory was already decided. But I don’t understand it at all.”

“I see, so Olivia-sama told you that.”

“Yet I’m alive. Matt’s also drinking and laughing down there. Just what did she mean?”

Lascall was quietly smiling behind Hamyuts who was holding her knees and thinking.

December 19, 1926

Seven months passed since Olivia’s surrender. Meanwhile, Hamyuts stretched her Sensory Threads into her shop from time to time. Mattalast no longer cared about her. Obviously. Besides being checked by the Sensory Threads, she seemed to be living a perfectly normal life.

Still, Hamyuts peeped on Olivia every couple of days. It was because she was sure she was planning something.

When Yankuu visited her place Hamyuts just so happened to see it with her Sensory Threads.

“Jackpot.”

However, she took no action against Yankuu or Olivia. She simply stayed silent

and watched.

Later, Yankuu stole Shlamuffen. *That was quite skillful*, Hamyuts admired. Yankuu seemed to possess a talent different than that of the person he idolized as his big sister.

After that, Yankuu left the island. Hamyuts pursued Kyasariro's movements instead. That was because Olivia had been in contact with her since the day before Yankuu deceived her.

Kyasariro finished her job and came back from the Third Sealed Labyrinth. After eating, taking a bath and a nap, Kyasariro headed to Olivia's shop.

During that time, Hamyuts heard a report from Mirepoc at her office. She feigned to be listening to Mirepoc's words, but almost all of her consciousness was focused on Olivia and Kyasariro.

"What do you mean by revised?"

Olivia appeared to be tense. *Obviously*, thought Hamyuts. No matter how close these two were, she had just unveiled a secret that wasn't trivial at all.

Olivia spoke to her inside the shop. She spoke about Vend Ruga and the relationship between the Indulging God Cult and the Armed Librarians.

Kyasariro listened to her while emitting cold sweat.

"Will you believe me?"

"...I have no doubts about your words, Olivia-san. Besides, this is too big for a lie."

"We have to do something. Both for those who had already died as well the people who will turn to be the sacrifices for the Cult from now on."

"So what will we do?"

"I'd like for you to fight with me. Not just you, Kyasariro, but I'd also like you to gather some people you can trust."

"..."

"Will you do it?"

Kyasariro restrained Olivia.

“Wait. This is too big. Let me think for a bit.”

Olivia nodded. However, she looked anxious.

“Don’t worry, I will never do anything bad to you, Olivia-san. You know this.”

“I got it. I’ll believe in you.”

The two nodded at each other and separated.

Hamyuts’s duty as the Acting Director was probably to erase Olivia, Yankuu and Kyasariro at this point in time. Yet she abandoned it. She didn’t even tell about it to people like Mattalast and Yukizona.

This was clearly a breach of trust, yet she never hesitated. She did so because her long-standing boredom was unbearable.

Present – December 28, 1926

Hamyuts was thinking while gazing at the nightscape of Past God Island on the roof. The battle to destroy the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult has started moving. The revolt quietly hidden in daily life has begun.

However, this was not enough for Olivia and the rest to obtain true victory. Even if they defeat the new Indulging God Cult, even if they defeat Hamyuts, unless they also destroy the cause of everything – Heaven – it will have no meaning.

Without the only way to destroy Heaven – the Violet Wish – their battle will be completely meaningless.

Olivia didn’t tell either Yankuu nor Kyasariro about the Violet Wish. Did she think of some reason to not tell them, or had she actually not known of it?

“Say, Lascall. Did you inspire Olivia somehow?”

Hamyuts spoke towards Lascall who stood at her back.

“You are as sharp as expected, Hamyuts-sama.”

Lascall said unabashedly.

“Because most of these unnecessary things are connected to you. You probably told Olivia about the Violet Wish, right?”

“I have indeed. Vend Ruga-sama never told Olivia-sama of the Violet Wish. His wish was only for someone to remember him.

However, with that the story of the Violet Sinner-sama would end. Because this is contrary to my functions, I have informed Olivia-sama of that wish.”

“Really now, you sure love pointlessly stirring things up.”

Hamyuts lay down on the roof.

“Say, there’s no mistake, right? You have told Olivia of the Violet Wish.”

“Undoubtedly.”

Lascall never lied. However, this only made it harder to understand.

Olivia could never win without the Violet Wish. She also knew that. Despite this, she hadn’t spoken of it with anyone. Was there any necessity to keep it a secret from Kyasariro and Yankuu?

Besides, what about Minth’s interrogation? Didn’t he clearly see with his Sacred Eyes that Olivia knew nothing about the Violet Wish?

Did Minth lie? That was impossible. He was faithful to his duty as the Overseer of Paradise. He wouldn’t leave someone who was harmful to the Cult running about.

Did Olivia know of the Violet Wish or not? What was she doing? She just couldn’t see how Olivia would be able to destroy Heaven and the Armed Librarians.

“You seem to be troubled, Hamyuts-sama.”

“Yeah. I can’t understand it at all and it’s annoying me.”

“I will tell you but one thing. The possibility for Heaven to be destroyed does indeed exist. The story of the Violet Sinner, the story connected to the end of Heaven, did not come to a full stop.”

Lascall started speaking.

“It is a possibility close to the impossible. Much like building a castle atop a spider’s web or breaking a diamond with the feather of a bird. However, as long as there is someone who does not think of it as impossible, this possibility keeps

existing.”

“Are you saying that Olivia or Yankuu might be able to destroy Heaven?”

“Well, who can tell? Future is not my domain, after all. I have no way of knowing whether the wish of the Violet Sinner-sama will come true or if the Armed Librarians obstruct it.”

Saying this, Lascall Othello melted into the roof and disappeared.

“I’m understanding this less and less by the minute. What is she trying to do?”

As Lascall vanished, Hamyuts kept pondering all by herself.

Chapter 4: The Magic Blade Dances

Part 1

The party continued. The Armed Librarians forgot all about their usual strict discipline and had as much fun as they wanted.

“In conclusion... all of today’s Armed Librarians are useless!”

“Yeah!”

Kalne, Tsamuro and the rest of the vigorous youths were shouting. They kicked down the tables and sat in a circle on the floor. It was impossible to guess just how much alcohol they had consumed.

“Why! The next Director is Yukizona! But Yukizona’s also no good!”

“Yeah, we can’t let Yukizona do it!”

They all cried and hit the floor with their fists. No one raised the subject of why Yukizona was no good. They probably all had their own ideas.

“But we have no one but Yukizona! Matt-san will soon retire! Bonbo’s not a First Class Armed Librarian! Kyasariro and Malfa are lacking in power!”

“Yeah!”

“So in conclusion, all of today’s Armed Librarians are useless!”

They have been repeating almost the same conversation from about half an hour ago. It will probably continue until they all drink themselves unconscious.

In the kitchen, Rizzly and Bonbo were shouting at each other. Slices of pickled salmons have mostly disappeared from their bowl.

“Ahhh you’ve eaten all of it, what’re you doing Bonbo-san?!”

“It’ll all end up in my stomach anyway so it doesn’t matter.”

Bonbo said nonchalantly while stuffing his cheeks with parsley that was supposed to be used as garnish.

“You’re the worst! Just what do you think cooking is?! What about the efforts

of the chef looking for the best taste?!”

“Tonight I’m the appetite monster. You can only stop me by killing me.”

Rizzly’s anger was on the verge of activating his Magic Right. But if he were to pick a fight with Bonbo the whole town would be destroyed. Bonbo was the person least able to hold himself back on people among the Armed Librarians.

The trainees all had a gloomy face as they knew Rizzly would vent out his anger on them.

Meanwhile, Mattalast gave Luik some life counseling. He was two meters tall and weighed more than 150 kilograms, yet he shrunk like a little puppy.

“I actually thought Renas is nice since long ago.”

“I see I see, I know how you feel, she’s a wonderful woman.”

“But since I’m like this, I can’t even speak to her. She will probably be too scared of me to speak and run away.”

Luik began sobbing.

“I’m happy that Olivia-san’s alive. Because it means that Renas is alive too. I’m happy, so happy, but she’s kinda scary.”

“I know. You’re right. She’s dangerous.”

Mattalast nodded again and again.

“But whenever I look at Olivia-san, I always recall Renas-san, because they’re the same person after all...”

“Drink. Drink and forget it all.”

Luik twisted open a bottle of whiskey with his bare hands. He drank nearly all of it in one gulp.

“Just what am I supposed to do?”

“Forget all about it. Nothing ever happened.”

Meanwhile, several woman Armed Librarians gathered around Kyasariro and Olivia who were chatting.

“Well then, and now to the main topic... how did I seduce that fatty?”

Kyasariro gulped.

“So as I thought it’s always about the bed with you...”

Olivia, who was also slightly drunk, spoke about her relationship with Charlot accompanying it with hand gestures. It was quite indecent, and so Kyasariro and the rest weren’t able to follow the conversation.

“Olivia-san, p-please consider your words a bit.”

“What’re you saying. Entering the bed is what it’s all about. That’s no place for scared women.”

The women listening to them all became immensely curious.

“...All of them sure are festive.”

Yankuu walked through the gaps between all the Armed Librarians. He cleared up the dishes and placed the broken table in the corner. None of those carefree Armed Librarians knew that just a few days ago there was a battle capable of shaking the very foundation of their organization.

Nor the fact that that Yankuu had decided that on this day and place he would massacre the Armed Librarians.

December 24, 1926

Yankuu left Bantorra Library and came to the southern frontier in a hurry.

He did so to attend the meeting with the vanguard of the Indulging God Cult, Laty Margent. He was the one to designate the location – an uninhabited island about ten kilometers away from his village on sea.

People never lived on that island since ancient times. Ninety percent of it was a forest made of huge trees more than fifty meters tall. The small amount of land open to the sea was covered in scraggy rocks.

He had chosen a place suitable for battle in advance. Such an island filled with obstacles was perfect for Yankuu to ambush several enemies. It was quite wide and had plenty of hiding places. He was aiming to crush each and every one of them individually as they ran around.

“...I’m tired of waiting.”

Yankuu muttered. There were still a few hours until their meeting time. In the meanwhile he checked Shlamuffen and prepared for battle. It wasn't easy spending several hours like that with all his tension. This was also part of Yankuu's inexperience.

When an hour was left until their meeting, he could see the silhouette of a ship in the horizon. It was the same fast boat that he had seen about twenty days ago.

Only one person rode on it. It was the same woman that he had seen at the time. She was undoubtedly Laty Margent.

Yankuu equipped the Ever-Laughing Magic Blade Shlamuffen on his hand. He went into the forest, hid himself and observed the woman.

Laty brought her fast boat to the rocky beach. She wasn't skilled; From her movements he could conjecture that she had had no fighting abilities. If she had mastered bodily reinforcement Magic she should have jumped on to the cliff after fixating her boat. However, he also couldn't deny the possibility of her just trying to make Yankuu be careless.

He removed Shlamuffen that dug into his hand and concealed it in his pocket. He decided to first see how his opponent would act for the time being.

"Am I early?"

Laty looked around. Yankuu revealed himself from behind a tree and spoke to her.

"Come here."

Although puzzled at Yankuu's conduct, Laty stepped into the forest.

Yankuu observed her as she did. She was a blonde woman of about thirty years old. Her attire wasn't bad at all. Both her menswear suit, black-rimmed glasses and leather bag were not top-class but still of a good quality.

She had an ordinary physique with no signs of any training her body. She had an intelligent appearance and he couldn't feel any weakness from her. His first impression of her as an elite of the business world was probably not far off from reality.

The distance between the two was about ten meters. It was a distance where they could converse without any problem and also left him with enough space to respond to any attack.

“Good to meet you, Yankuu Quinn-san. I am the Director of the Margent Humanity Progress Organization, Laty Margent.

I apologize that my greeting to you was so delayed due to various circumstances.”

It was a passable, proper greeting. Yankuu immediately cut into the chase.

“You’re the Indulging God Cult, right?”

“How do you...”

Laty faltered for a moment, but soon pulled herself together.

“I see, Mani-san told you. Such a problematic child.”

Laty continued talking without letting her firm demeanor crumble.

“Now I understand why you were wary of me for a while. But do not worry. I have no intention of causing you any harm. You have probably already also realized that I do not have the ability to do so anyway.”

Laty had no fighting ability. It was almost confirmed judging by her demeanor.

“I think it will be hard for you to believe me, but there is first something that I would like for you to understand. The Indulging God Cult no longer has any intention of fighting against you Armed Librarians. The war between us is already over.”

“Even if you say so, destroying the Indulging God Cult is the Armed Librarians’ mission.”

“Please look at this.”

Laty produced a document from within her bag. Yankuu signaled her to throw it to him. She folded it and tossed it toward him.

“This woman is a member of the Indulging God Cult, but she’s not our enemy. I guarantee it.

Mattalast Ballory”

It certainly was Mattalast's signature. It was not a counterfeit.

"Are you surprised? But this is true. Originally the Indulging God Cult and the Armed Librarians were not opposed to each other. That war was also a mistake for the Cult."

"..."

Yankuu was not particularly surprised. However, the fact that the Indulging God Cult and the Armed Librarians were actually related was indeed shocking to an extent. As was the fact that not only Hamyuts but also Mattalast was involved in the conspiracy.

"Do you understand now? I also do not want to be killed by you. I want you to calm down and listen to me."

"..."

Killing her would be simple. But rather than that it would probably be better listening to her story. Information will become his weapon. Especially when it was revealed by his enemy. He would be able to kill her whenever he wanted.

"Before we move on to business, I must first reveal to you the truth about the Indulging God Cult. It will be a long story, so please listen."

"Won't you tell me about yourself first? If I don't know who you are I'm not sure if I should listen to you."

"I see. My name is Laty Margent. Outwardly I'm an investor from Ismo. At the same time I serve as the board of directors' spokesperson of the charitable institution named the Margent Humanity Progress Foundation.

Also, I am the head chief of the False Men of the Indulging God Cult."

Speaking this far, Laty shook her head as if she recalled something.

"Excuse me. We no longer use the term False Man. At present we only refer to them as members. That is the policy of the current Overseer of Paradise. Not that it is a big deal."

"Can you go into more details? Or can you not tell me?"

Laty averted her gaze as if hard to say.

“Understood. I also have to reveal our past follies in order to gain your trust. I was originally picked up by Kachua and joined the Cult. At the time I did not doubt the doctrine of the Cult.”

Yankuu listened to the details of Laty’s story with great interest. Until now he thought of the Indulging God Cult as nothing but enemies that need to be killed. He now learned for the first time that there were actual people there.

Originally she served Parney Parlmanta. Parney was a wonderful actress and a great mistress. Laty spent all of her energy on ensuring the success of her acting passion. She did not have any doubts about doing this for her every day.

Later Parney died. With the death of her mistress, who was also her friend, she started harboring doubts about the teachings of the Indulging God Cult.

Then, when she met Cigal Crekessa, she decided to defect.

Pursuing happiness was wonderful. However, there was something clearly wrong with that man. That’s what she felt.

Laty was not a slave to her religion. She left Ismo, hid her assets, changed her name and ran away from the Indulging God Cult. She had no connection to the fight between the Armed Librarians and the Cult that happened later.

There were many other people like her who ran away from Kachua. There were also those who weighed their conscience against their belief and let the former win.

“Then, I met with the current Overseer of Paradise, Minth. After sympathizing with his ideals and gaining his trust, I joined the Cult again.”

“Minth Chezine is the Overseer of Paradise?”

Yankuu had never met him but knew about him from Noloty’s Book. Why did that proud Armed Librarian join the Indulging God Cult? Why did he become the Overseer of Paradise, the one who practices wickedness and sacrifices everything for the happiness of True Men?

It was something no human could understand after all. Even with those who seemed to be good people, one couldn’t really tell what they were thinking on the inside.

Just as he thought the decision to fight alone was not mistaken. He couldn't trust any of the other Armed Librarians.

"Is that enough for my story? After all I am a mere assistant."

She probably told him no lies. But because of this he couldn't trust this woman. Because the Cult was the Cult.

"Then let us get into the main topic: the real relationship between the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult. And about Heaven."

Yankuu nodded.

"You know about the birth and the truth behind the Indulging God Cult."

"Yeah. It was supposedly born due to some stupid delusion."

"That was all lies. That story was nothing more than Mattalast's fabrication. Heaven is real. There is no doubt of that."

"Just what is Heaven? Where is it?"

Yankuu recalled a certain fact. *Thinking of it, Noloty asked Kachua the same question.*

"I'm very sorry, but I also do not know its location. Neither where it is or what it is. The only ones to know are the Acting Director, her close associates and the Overseer of Paradise.

I only know two things: that Heaven desires the Book of fortunate people, and that the Armed Librarians are burdened with the duty to provide it with them. That is all."

"The Armed Librarians? Not the Indulging God Cult?"

Laty shook her head.

"It is the mission of the Armed Librarians. The Indulging God Cult is an organization that receives orders from them and created the Books of happy people. They are nothing more than a branch organization tasked with part of their duty."

"This is quite different from what I've heard. Isn't the Cult's doctrine to allow any sort of desire?"

“That is nothing more than one way to create happy Books. This is merely a front so we could gather believers, make them work for the True Men and make the desires of those True Men come true.”

Yankuu laughed from the back of his throat.

“I see. So you’re making them believe a false doctrine for the sake of the duty of the Armed Librarians. Even the Cult members were being used.”

There would probably not be many people willing to work if told to create Books of happy people. Rather than that, using the bait known as Heaven and inducing a fake doctrine would make it easier for them to listen to orders.

“That’s right. The past generations of Overseers of Paradise deceived their followers. Everything was for this mission of bringing Books to Heaven.”

“...Why do they have to fulfill this mission?”

“The reason isn’t told to us. Because there is no reason to ask. I have sworn my loyalty to Minth-sama and to the Indulging God Cult. If I ask why I have to obey it, it will be no loyalty.”

Laty took a step toward Yankuu.

“Let us enter the main topic. Yankuu Quinn-san, I would like to invite you to become a member of the Indulging God Cult. No, not only you, but all people of your village as well.”

“Why?”

“We want to welcome Mani-san as a True Man. For Heaven and for our duty, we want to bring that virtuous girl the greatest happiness.

If you consent, we will promise you peace and prosperity of your village.”

Laty looked at Yankuu with a serious expression. Yankuu started laughing without thinking as he received that gaze.

“You’re truly one to say such things, Indulging God Cult. Using your believers and causing misfortune to innocent, unrelated people, all for your duty.

You’ve killed Big Sis Noloty for this.”

“It was Kachua’s foolishness that killed Noloty. It was because that man went

against the Armed Librarians.”

“No, if the Indulging God Cult hadn’t existed, Big Sis wouldn’t have been killed. If you hadn’t existed she wouldn’t have been killed. Am I wrong?”

Laty became speechless and took a step backwards.

“Die, Indulging God Cult, for you’ve killed Big Sis Noloty.”

Yankuu invoked his Magic Right. Mud was created at his feet and slid towards Laty.

“Don’t think it will end with this. Your life isn’t even worth one thousandth of compensation. I will reap all of your comrades one by one.”

Laty turned around and tried running away. But after all she was a normal person. She couldn’t resist at all.

The mud clung to Laty’s legs. She couldn’t even fall.

“Please wait Yankuu-san. Calm down. We will never hurt Mani-san. We are her faithful allies.”

“...Allies? You’re just using her.”

“That...”

Laty mumbled.

“This is my village. The village Big Sis Noloty tried to protect. It’s not there for you to take advantage of!”

“That’s wrong! We would never...”

He couldn’t hear her talking anymore. The mud covered Laty’s entire body. The moment he tried to engulf her face, Yankuu felt pain at his ear. A slight bit later, a gunshot echoed.

“You cannot be this emotional, Yankuu.”

Yankuu’s mud stopped just short of killing Laty. It returned to his feet, hardened and assumed a battle position.

He looked back. *Was I too careless?* Thought Yankuu. He was relieved that Laty came there alone. They probably landed at the other side of the island

during their conversation.

The other person was standing lightly atop a branch of cedar tree. Yankuu then called her name.

“Yuri Hamlow...”

She wore a white coat on her slender, tall body. Her long, black hair waving around would look better on a movie screen than it did on the background of the deep forest. Due to her elegant demeanor, the huge gun she held with one hand was the more conspicuous.

“I am not impressed with you dropping the honorific. Even though I am nothing compared to my older brother, I am still an Armed Librarian.”

Laty was running away. Yankuu ignored her. This wasn't the time to be concerned by some small errand runner.

“Since you're an Armed Librarian you shouldn't mind it. Is there any fool who would respect their enemy?”

Yuri chuckled.

“So you really were a problem child. Calling an Armed Librarian your enemy...”

“You are though, right? Aren't the ones who created the Indulging God Cult and used them my enemies?”

“Please cease this dangerous talk. Did Laty-san or I ever call you an enemy? We have opened our hearts to you, came to you in good faith, and asked you to become our ally.”

“I refused. So you're my enemies.”

Yuri made a small sigh. It was the same expression as someone looking at a disobedient child.

“A kid who surprisingly doesn't understand anything, huh. If you really want to rebel, then I have no choice but erasing you...”

Her gun's muzzle moved faintly.

“Since my older brother is a generous person, he told me not to kill you. If I kill you he will become terribly angry at me. I would like for you to not rebel

against us.”

She's too careless. Yankuu was convinced judging from her tone: she had no idea that Yankuu possessed Shlamuffen.

How fortunate, he snickered in his mind. If Mattalast or Hamyuts were his enemies he would have had no chance of winning. However, he could win against Yuri.

“Yankuu-san, do you absolutely must do this? If you die Mani-san would be saddened. She is the Cult's precious True Man. We cannot make her sad.”

He felt irritated at her way of saying this. She spoke as if she was raising some high-class cattle.

I will kill this woman. Thus Yankuu decided.

Part 2

December 21, 1926

Three days before facing Yankuu, Yuri went along with Yukizona and Bonbo who were attending a conference where all the military leaders of the world gathered. She sat inside the national assembly hall on the premises of Bantorra Library.

During the last year, Yukizona attended meeting with various countries in place of Hamyuts. It was natural that he would become the next Acting Director. From now on, he would be judged not only based on his fighting abilities, but also on his political skills.

Bonbo was also better at this than what his looks or usual behavior would indicate. Otherwise he wouldn't have been able to monitor the ceasefire.

Both of them had little to do with the job of managing Books. They also had no contact with the Indulging God Cult. Their working place was not the battlefield but the stage of diplomacy and politics. Their job was to bring peace and stability to the world.

The meeting was over at evening.

"Good work, big brother."

Yuri stroked her brother's chest in the waiting room. During the cold winter, the illness in his lungs became worse. She also feared that the long meeting would have a negative influence on him.

"I'm also tired. Please heal me as well."

Ignoring Bonbo's joke, Yuri invoked her Magic Right. An orange light cured her brother's disease.

"Still, it really dragged on today. It doesn't seem like we're about to reach some big conclusion, so should we not finish it quickly?"

Bonbo complained while hitting his stiff shoulders.

Today's meeting had the same flow as always. Each military's nation wanted

to strengthen their own authority and lessen the military intervention of the Armed Librarians. Yukizona and the rest rejected it based on the mission given to them by the Past Overseer.

When raising the question of responsibility about the Deep Blue Curse Rebellion, the countries complained about the Armed Librarians' incompetence. They objected to that by stating that the various governments of the world had no measures against the spread of the Curse. It was an unproductive argument.

"It cannot be helped, Bonbo-san, that it the job of those gentlemen."

"It's convenient. When Kachua was there they relied on us. Once he's gone, they want to reduce our authority. Let's just kill 'em."

Bonbo grumbled.

For each country's military, the Armed Librarians were nothing but an obstacle. They only eliminated their influence.

When people held political authority, they ended up wanting to exercise it. They sought war so that they could show off their power. They wished for an unproductive game so that they could expand their influence.

It wasn't just the military. The sparks of war were also spreading to antigovernment organizations and terrorists all around the world. Even if the Indulging God Cult stopped fighting, there were plenty of other people who would continue disturbing peace.

"Don't be so short-tempered. In order to protect world peace there is no choice but to keep our steady negotiations day after day. It's impossible for peace to be born from hasty behavior."

Yukizona said.

"I know that. You don't understand jokes, Yukizona. What are you, Photona-san?"

Yuri finished Yukizona's treatment and removed her hand.

"Also, Yuri. You don't have to come to the meeting in the day after tomorrow. There's another job for you."

"What is it, big brother?"

“A request came from Laty of the Indulging God Cult. I’ll leave it you, Yuri.”

Yukizona said and handed her a letter.

“The Cult, huh? I wonder what they want from me.”

Yuri said while scanning the letter. Yukizona and Yuri were not involved much with the Indulging God Cult. It was because they left Mattalast with most of the work about it.

“She needs an escort to the meeting with Yankuu-san. They want you to come to an island in the southern frontier in three days. Mattalast-san and Minth-san should have taken care of this, though...”

“We can’t leave it to them. Protecting the Indulging God Cult is a serious business.”

Yukizona rebuked the grumbling Yuri.

“Yankuu is an intelligent boy, but he’s still young. There was also the matter with Noloty. Prevent a diffusion and restore the situation to its proper course.”

“Understood, big brother.”

Three days later, Yuri left Bantorra Library in a flying boat. The negotiations between the military and Yukizona’s group continued in the Library.

I do not really have the time to deal with a single boy. Let us wrap it up efficiently and return to the Library, Yuri thought.

She arrived to the island. Yuri heard the conversation of two people from behind Yankuu. Things have progressed just as Laty had feared: Yankuu was overtaken by fury and attacked her. Yuri stopped him by turning her muzzle to him.

“Yankuu-san, do you absolutely must do this? If you die Mani-san would be saddened. She is the Cult’s precious True Man. We cannot make her sad.”

Yuri repeated words meant to somehow quell Yankuu’s anger. However, Yankuu was too stubborn. He kept his eyes, full of ever more rage, pointed at her.

So, what should I do? I am bad with kids.

“Will you kill me?”

“Yes. It is already decided for Mani-san to become a True Man. I will eliminate anyone who might become an obstacle with my full power.

What about you, Yankuu-san? Do you fully intent on fighting to the death with us Armed Librarians?”

At this point in time, Yuri made a single misunderstanding. Opposing the Armed Librarians would lead to death and obeying them was advantageous... She was trying to persuade Yankuu using these interests.

The world of politics moved less by emotion and more by interests. Yuri, who had lived in this world for long, was already dyed by this sort of thinking.

Yuri had forgotten... that there were people in the world who abandoned their interests.

“Yuri. I have one question. Why did the Armed Librarians create the Indulging God Cult?”

Yankuu said.

“Did Laty-sama not tell you? We have the mission to bring Heaven the Books of happy people.”

“That’s not what I meant. Why are the Armed Librarians not doing this work themselves? Why did they entrust it to the Cult?”

Yuri misunderstood that her persuasion had been successful. She thought that if she were to explain the reason to Yankuu he would agree.

“There are two reasons. True Men, when they pursue their happiness too much, tend to run wild. A good example is Wyzaf, who manipulated Shiron. At the time, the power to kill the True Man and stop her wrongdoings was needed. It is better for the Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult to be separate organizations for containing such cases.”

Yankuu did not nod. He only listened quietly.

“Another reason is for the Armed Librarians to be the allies of justice.

What supports us is, in the end, the trust of people all around the world. We

will always be fair and protect peace and justice. Because our subordinates expend themselves on this mission, and the people of the world believe this, the Armed Librarians can continue existing.

So we Armed Librarians cannot dirty our own hands, right?”

Yankuu laughed from his throat.

“I’m quite amazed. I’m amazed at how you can deceive the followers of the Cult, deceive the Armed Librarians, deceive the people of the world and pretend to be allies of justice. From the bottom of my heart, you lot are beyond saving.”

Yuri already noticed that the conversation was not heading in a good direction.

“We have no choice. That is what the Armed Librarians are all about.”

“Big Sis believed in you. She believed that you were allies of justice. You’ve deceived her, used her, and killed her.”

“We have said this many times, but the one to kill Noloty-san was Kachua. Please do not confuse us with him.”

“No, the biggest villains are you guys. You, the liars.”

So the persuasion has failed, judged Yuri. It is a pity but I will have to kill him then.

Yuri lifted up her gun’s firing hammer. Brother and Mattalast will probably be angry at me. We will have to deceive Mani skillfully. But I simply had no other choice. Traitors must die.

“I must thank Olivia for that.”

As he said these strange words, Yuri’s fingers on the trigger stopped in place. By Olivia, does he mean that Olivia Littolet? What connection does Yankuu have with her?

“If I hadn’t met that person, I would have died here.”

The thing Yankuu pulled out of his pocket... At the moment she saw it, she reflexively pulled the trigger. The bullet was chopped into pieces midair and fell

to the ground.



Yuri dodged and jumped from the branch. The trunk of the tree she had been standing on an instant ago was immediately cut down and collapsed.

“Shlamuffen?! Why do you...?!”

There was no reply. And she couldn't afford to inquiry it. Right now she had to escape.

Without any hesitation, Yuri ran toward the other side of the island. Using the branches of cedar trees as her footing, she ran in a straight line. The flying boat Yuri came in to there was anchored to the creek.

Yuri was faster on her feet. She grew farther from Yankuu.

She kicked a branch, flew above the rocks on the shore, and ran into the flying boat's cockpit. She pulled the engine's lever.

“...!”

She was impatient. She pulled it too hard so the engine did not move. She pulled it again. It was once again useless.

“How disgraceful!”

Yuri jumped away and abandoned the flying boat. She ran away using the rocks floating on the sea a foothold. In the next instant, the flying boat was divided into five or six parts and sank.

Yankuu came out of the forest. While running on the sea, Yuri shot all of her bullets at him. They were all cut and so she threw her gun away.

Bullets would not work against the Ever-Laughing Magic Blade Shlamuffen. Since the sentient magic blade possessed an automatic defense function, it shot all of them down.

“I have made a blunder, big brother. It appears I am about to perish first.”

Muttering so, Yuri kept running around the island.

Ever since they usurped Shlamuffen from True Man Cigal, the Armed Librarians had researched it. It was thought to be invincible when Hamyuts was cornered by it, but they have already confirmed that it also had plenty of weaknesses.

One of its drawbacks was that its destructive power was proportionate to its wielder's wickedness. If Hamyuts or Cigal use it they could unleash its full power, but when Mirepoc used it, it only had enough power to destroy a single car. Noloty at best could cut a cabbage to shreds.

“Seems like Yankuu-san is quite naughty.”

Yankuu mastered Shlamuffen. It could not be said to be its maximum output, but it was about the same power that it had when Shiron had used it.

“Kh...”

Yankuu caught up to her. Yuri leapt into the sea to get away. She heard the sounds of the rocks on the sea's surface being destroyed.

Yuri swam to the bottom of the sea to escape Shlamuffen's range.

The fact that it had a range of about 50 meters at most was also one of its weak points. It was possible for someone of Yuri's caliber to run away from it.

Even the automatic defense that invalidated almost all attacks was not invincible. It couldn't defend against something that cannot be cut, and they also knew that there was a time lag between attacking and defending.

However, Yuri was not powerful enough to take advantage of that.

She jumped up from the sea and landed on the shore. Measuring with her eyes, the distance from Yankuu was 45 meters. He swung Shlamuffen.

She would not be able to avoid it in time. Yuri instantaneously invoked the power that was given to her.

Around her body, in a sphere of about a meter, she was covered by something that looked like a black mirage. Shlamuffen's slashing attack, that could slice unconditionally through anything, assaulted it.

The black mirage vanished. Yuri, who was inside of it, was unhurt.

“That's...!”

Yankuu shouted. That was probably the first time he had seen it with his eyes. It was the power of Yukizona's Magic Right, Decay Wave.

That black wave was the power to destroy the function of anything it

touched. Living beings would become aged, machinery and tools would break, and all moving objects would become stationary. It was the power to turn anything into useless trash with no exceptions. It invalidated even Shlamuffen's slashing attack that had no corporeal form.

"So you can also use it, Yuri... I underestimated you."

Yankuu reset Shlamuffen. Yuri smiled to make it seem like she was calm.

That ability had been transferred to her from her brother Yukizona. After using this defense five more times, the received power will run out.

However, she had no choice but to fight with this limited power.

Liberally chopping down the giant trees that were thousands of years old, the battle continued. Yuri ran away and Yankuu was pursuing her.

"It won't work for me like it did for the Director."

Yuri muttered while kicking off a branch. Fighting while running was hard. She was also limited by her hasty knowledge of how to imitate Hamyuts.

She wrapped the Decay Wave around her fingertips and shot it toward Yankuu. The mass of waves, flying like a bullet, was intercepted by Yankuu's mud. If she fires it again she might hit. However, she was about to enter his range of fifty meters. Yuri had no choice but to dodge and escape.

The slashing attacks grazed Yuri's body countless of times. Blood spurted on her white skin.

"Wait, Yankuu. What are you trying to accomplish here?!"

"Worry about your own neck!"

Yuri kept running away.

"Will anything change if you defeat me? It will not. There are also my big brother, the Director, and Mattalast-san!"

"Then I'll kill them all. If all of them are Big Sis's enemies, I'll kill them all. Obviously."

"Would Noloty-san have wanted that?"

As she said this, Yankuu's movements stopped.

“She would not have wanted that probably.”

Yuri was relieved only slightly. She stopped her escape.

“Then this foolish battle...”

At the next moment, she reflexively activated her Decay Wave. She unknowingly stepped into his range. She barely defended against Shlamuffen’s slash.

With this, she used more than half of the transferred power.

“You don’t get it. I’ll never forgive you. No matter what Big Sis thinks, your sins are sins. You’ve used her, let her die, and now you’re using my village. I won’t forgive that!”

Yuri approached him slowly. She had completely given up persuasion.

“Die!”

Yuri hit her bloody hand against a nearby tree. Its trunk was stained in red. At the same time, she jumped sideways.

Yuri’s movements changed. Until now, she thought of only running away. But now she dodged attacks so that he wouldn’t move from the place he should be at.

“...Have you not noticed?”

Yuri muttered. The blood-stained tree was a landmark. The masses of Decay Wave from her fingertips floated around the area. There were seven of them. They surrounded the trees.

She couldn’t win by fighting from the front, so she had no choice but to set a trap. When Yankuu approaches the marked tree, she will move the Decay Wave that she had placed there.

The wave mass was a small thing. It couldn’t even kill people. Her goal was part of Yankuu’s cerebellum at the back of his head. If her Decay Wave hits that spot, it will cause a condition like terminal brain tumor.

If the cerebellum is destroyed, a person would become unable to walk or even stand up straight. He would collapse on the spot and die slowly while

soiling himself.

It was extremely cruel, but she couldn't choose her methods.

She had been running for a long time. Her feet also gradually got tired. The Decay Wave she was using to defend herself was also running out.

Just as she was about to give up, Yankuu came near the marked tree. He stopped there, defenseless.

“Now!”

She should have noticed. She should have doubted Yankuu's defenselessness. People who were cornered clung to a small hope. Even more for someone like Yuri, who couldn't be called a veteran.

Mud wrapped Yankuu's body. The Decay Wave struck the mud and lost its effectiveness. Her desperate trap simply shaved the defensive mud a bit.

The next moment, Yuri's feet shook. Looking down, she could see the ground squirming like a living creature.

The instant she realized she had been outsmarted, Yuri's body sank down. She was buried in the ground up to her knees. And it changed to be as hard as rubber.

“...So I have lost.”

Yankuu approached slowly while holding Shlamuffen. He then spoke quietly.

“...I do not believe I can fully protect my village. I do not think that I can win all by myself.”

“Please cease this. It is still possible to turn back.”

Yankuu lent no ears to Yuri's words.

“But I have to do it. I can only keep fighting until I die. I inherited this from Big Sis. I have to protect the village.”

Yankuu's right hand moved. Shlamuffen started laughing.

Present – 28 December, 1926

Yankuu heard someone speaking at the meeting hall.

“Thinking about it, Yuri and Yukizona aren’t here, huh.”

Turning around, he saw that it was Bonbo who said this. He called to the organizer, Kyasariro, and asked her.

“I don’t really get it either. I certainly did tell them to come though.”

“When did you last hear from them?”

“I don’t really remember. Maybe about a week ago.”

Yankuu turned his back to them and continued tidying the place.

That happened was four days ago. When Yankuu cornered Yuri, he thought about what he would do after killing her.

After killing Yuri, the Armed Librarians would probably come to kill him with all of their power. It would be impossible to stand up to them. Yankuu would have to take the initiative.

After Yuri’s death is exposed, he wouldn’t be able to challenge them. He would have to attack within several days after killing her.

After thinking this far, Yankuu considered his next move. There was only one time where he could land a heavy blow to the mighty Armed Librarians – a once-in-a-year opportunity.

The Armed Librarians were completely careless in this party. He would challenge them only then. He will go on a rampage with Shlamuffen’s full power.

How many opponents would he be able to kill? Hamyuts, Mattalast, Yukizona, Bonbo. What would he even be able to do against these people who possessed more power than ten thousand soldiers? He never questioned this either.

He abandoned victory in the first place. He also gave up on surviving. He simply decided to fight.

The party continued peacefully. Yankuu was quietly walking around.

Part 3

Hamyuts sat alone on top of the roof. As always, Lascall was finally so kind as to say something profound and then disappeared. *As selfish as ever*, she resented.

But she had no idea. She kept thinking about Olivia.

She already knew that Olivia inherited the Violet Wish according to Lascall's words. How was she planning to make it come true?

"My victory is 90% decided."

Olivia had said. In that case, it should be possible to estimate her means of doing so.

How was Olivia planning to make the Violet Wish come true? And how were Yankuu and Kyasariro connected to that? Was there any secret of reversal somewhere in these peaceful days?

She had no idea.

"Ahhh I'm so confused!"

Hamyuts scratched her head.

"I don't get it, I just don't get it at all!"

Hamyuts was lying on the roof and gazed up the starry sky. The wintry sky was clear, and the stars' twinkling was much brighter than during autumn.

While looking at this starry sky, Hamyuts recalled a matter from about a week ago.

December 21, 1926

On that day as well Hamyuts received a boring report from Mirepoc. Mirepoc spoke to the unmotivated Hamyuts.

"Tomorrow's our day off, so please be patient and listen."

She spoke in the way that a tutor would scold his students with bad grades.

The tips of Hamyuts's Sensory Threads were tied to Olivia. She was doing her

tailor work today as usual.

Yuri apparently received orders from Yukizona and so has flown to the southern frontier. She was said to be escorting Laty from the Indulging God Cult.

It didn't seem like they noticed Yankuu stole Shlamuffen.

I wonder if she'll live and get back, Hamyuts thought as if it was none of her business.

Hamyuts spent her days watching the island from her office.

“Are you listening, Director?”

“I am. Keep going.”

Mirepoc continued her report with a disappointed expression.

A person approached Olivia's tailor shop. It was Kyasariro. That usually bright and carefree girl now had a bitter expression on her face. She came at the back door, beckoning at Olivia to come out.

“It's a bit hard to talk inside. Will you come with me, Olivia-san?”

Olivia left her store with a tense face and followed Kyasariro. They both entered the promenade that Olivia had called the road of hesitation.

They sat on a bench. There was no one around. Kyasariro started speaking with a somewhat tired voice.

“So I've thought about what we've discussed.”

Olivia nodded. She seemed to be trusting Kyasariro. If she were betrayed by her, that would probably mean that she had no allies in the world.

“So what will you do?”

“I believe that what you told me is true, Olivia-san. The Armed Librarians and the Indulging God Cult are connected. And that's not all. The ones to create the Cult were the Armed Librarians. Meaning what destroyed the Cult was them fighting against the Armed Librarians.”

Olivia was surprised.

“You did well to understand that.”

“Because I’m an Armed Librarian. I have various ways with which to gather information.”

“I see, you’re quite amazing.”

Kyasariro sighed.

“Say, Olivia-san, are you going to fight the Armed Librarians no matter what?”

Olivia widened her eyes and looked at Kyasariro.

“Why are you asking me this?”

“Fighting us is outrageous thing to do. It’s not the problem of the Director or Matt-san being strong or whatever. The Armed Librarians are the people who protect this world. This isn’t just the Indulging God Cult; they also fight against other bad and selfish people around the world. They prevent wars, fight against terrorists and such, and did this sort of thing for the last 2000 years.

If the Armed Librarians were to disappear, the world will become messed up. Even if the Indulging God Cult is defeated, other bad guys will be acting as they please.”

“...Kyasariro. Are you scared?”

“I’m talking about you now, Olivia-san. I know you have the resolution to fight even if you die. But that’s not enough. Do you have the resolution to mess up the world?”

Kyasariro looked Olivia in the eyes.

“I see. So if I don’t have this resolution, you won’t come with me.”

Olivia thought.

“It’s fine. I’m ready for it.”

“How can you?”

“Because it’s my duty.”

Kyasariro looked puzzled.

“Kyasariro. I’m alive now due to the death of many people. Vend Ruga... My

friends on the ship... Charlot... Renas Fleur. Probably also Volken. Since they all died I am alive now. I'm carrying an incredible amount of lives on my shoulders."

"...Yeah."

"They're all crying inside my heart. Why did we die? Why did we have to be killed? My heart is full of their deaths."

"..."

"To tell the truth, I'm already sick of fighting. I also don't want to destroy the Armed Librarians and mess up the world. But I can't exist without fighting. They're all living inside me. I have to fight for them, otherwise I don't know why I even survived."

"...Olivia-san."

"Kyasariro. I know this is a selfish request. I think it cannot be helped even if I'm resented by you. Even knowing this, I still ask you.

Destroy the Indulging God Cult. Expose the secrets of the Armed Librarians."

Kyasariro covered her face using both hands. She stayed silent like this for a while.

"Olivia-san."

She spoke with her hands still covering her face.

"...Sorry. I've spoken about you with Master Matt."

Olivia looked up at the sky. There was no sorrow or anger in her expression. It was a quiet expression that Hamyuts couldn't have read even by stroking her with her Sensory Threads.

"It's all too big for me. I'm just a fool. I never shouldered anything and I can't do so. I like myself more than justice or other people's lives. I'm a simple gal who enjoys life. I'm too scared to do something like destroying the Armed Librarians."

Kyasariro covered her face. She wasn't crying. The one who should have been crying was Olivia.

“I’m scared that the current peace will be broken. I’m too scared to fight. I can’t bet on my life like you, Olivia-san.”

“...But was there a need to talk with Mattalast that bastard?”

Olivia said while smiling. She could probably not come to hate Kyasariro.

“As you are you will be killed, Olivia-san. I don’t want that. So I consulted him. I asked him how to settle this without killing you.”

“I don’t want that. He’ll take my memories again. I never want to forget Vend Ruga again. Even if I forget I will recall him again.”

“Yeah. I know that. Because that’s the kind of person you are, Olivia-san. That’s why Master Matt used his wisdom.”

Kyasariro brought Argax out.

“Matt told me this. Olivia-san, you are probably fighting in order to avenge Vend Ruga. Then you just need to have your revenge.”

“What do you mean?”

“The Director’s the one who killed Vend Ruga. We’ll erase that memory.”

“...”

“There’s this technique studied by this Bada guy, a researcher from the Indulging God Cult. After erasing one’s memories with Argax, fake memories can be inserted.

The Indulging God Cult was the one who killed Vend Ruga. Neither the Director nor the Armed Librarians had anything to do with it.

Both the fact that the Director had known of the Indulging God Cult ten years ago, as well as the fact they are still alive – forget it all. The Cult did everything wrong, and the Armed Librarians did nothing wrong.

It all just needs to become that.”

Olivia listened to her explanation expressionlessly.

“What a horrible man, fiddling with people’s minds like that.”

“But if we do this, we can settle this without you being killed, Olivia-san.”

Olivia sank into silence for a while. Before long she smiled in silence. Kyasariro quietly stood behind her and struck the back of her head with her palm. Olivia lost her consciousness and collapsed.

Kyasariro held Olivia up. Then she poured water inside Argax and activated it. She used mouth to mouth feeding to make the unconscious Olivia drink the memory-erasing water.

A bit later, she let down the unconscious Olivia and called out.

“Come out, Matt-san. It’s over.”

Mattalast jumped over the fence from inside the premises of Bantorra Library.

“I’m leaving Olivia-san to you. Please keep your promise.”

Mattalast nodded and grabbed the unconscious Olivia.

“I keep my promises. When she wakes up, Olivia will cleanly forget all about revenge.”

“I see. Thanks.”

Kyasariro turned her back to Mattalast and said her half-hearted thanks. Mattalast once again jumped above the wall and vanished.

“...Director. You’re probably listening.”

Kyasariro said.

“Oh my, how sharp.”

Hamyuts mouthed without thinking. Mirepoc started wondering which part of her report was sharp.

“Please don’t kill Olivia-san. She’s not the kind of person to fight against you. Let her live in peace.”

Hamyuts stood up. Mirepoc asked her where she was going.

“To the restroom. Please wait here.”

Saying so, Hamyuts opened the office’s window and got onto the roof. Mirepoc widened her eyes.

“Director... it can’t be that she became senile while so young, right...?”

Hamyuts ignored Mirepoc and took out her sling. She wrote letter on the stone meant for communication and threw it.

‘Fine.’

Kyasariro picked up the stone that struck her head and read it. She grinned, a relieved expression on her face.

Hamyuts returned to the office from the roof.

“Director, the toilet’s not there.”

“What’re you saying, stupid? That’s obvious.”

Kyasariro sat absentmindedly on the bench for a while afterwards. Then, she poured water into Argax with which she was playing in her hands.

“...I’m really sorry, Olivia-san.”

Saying this, she took a drink. Her face, filled with sorrow, was instantly changed into that of the normal Kyasariro.

“Mm, why am I holding Argax?”

She stared mysteriously at Argax in her hands.

“Did I break someone’s heart? It can’t be Mirepo, right?”

She tilted her neck while saying so.

Present – December 28, 1926

Kyasariro and Olivia were speaking amicably in the party.

Hamyuts hung down her Sensory Threads from the roof and checked their state.

It seemed like their indecent talk that kept going for a while had already ended. The mood of the circle of female Armed Librarians surrounding Olivia became somewhat serious.

“So what happened to that person?”

Kyasariro said.

“He died. When I came to him, he was already in his last breaths.”

Olivia said while tilting her glass.

“Even the lead weapon Vend Ruga became like that and it was over. He understood me and died.”

Olivia told them about Vend Ruga. Kyasariro and the rest listened to her with great interest.

“Who was he killed by?”

“Isn't it obvious? The Indulging God Cult. The destiny of a traitor was to be erased.”

“...How poor.”

Tena was being moved to tears.

“I wonder why he betrayed the Indulging God Cult. I have no idea already. I barely knew anything about him. I can't remember anything other than his hand was warm.”

“...How moving.”

“But it's fine. I'll never forget this for the rest of my life. Even just remembering his hand's warmth is enough.”

Olivia said and concluded the story.

Once, the name of Vend Ruga had been completely sealed as something that must not be spoken of. However, Mattalast decided there was no longer any need to keep it a secret.

Olivia's memories have been altered. There was no need to worry any secrets being leaked from his existence. The fact that Hamyuts had known the Indulging God Cult ten years ago was also in the dark. All threads leading to the Violet Sinner have also been severed.

There was no longer any need to keep it a secret.

“The best way to conceal a secret is by not letting anyone know of its existence.”

Mattalast once said. This time he also used this method.

“The Armed Librarians’ secret which could shake the world is now a simple sob story. Admirable, Mattalast.”

The natural liar Mattalast. I have quite the outrageous man as my subordinate, thought Hamyuts.

“Will this be Olivia’s end, I wonder?”

Hamyuts muttered while looking up at the sky.

It probably will. No matter how she thought of it, there will probably not be any more disturbances from Olivia. Since she believed Vend Ruga had already been avenged, she lost her will to fight.

Meaning, the only remaining possibility was with Yankuu. What will he do?

Hamyuts wrapped her Sensory Threads around him. She started intently observing his every move.

Chapter 5: The Liars Smile

Part 1

Present – December 28, 1926

On the same day as the party, far away from Bantorra Library, something was happening at the Ismo Republic.

The Overseer of Paradise Minth Chezine was snoring during daytime. He had taken off his shoes and was lying on an old sofa.

“Advisor. Please wake up, Advisor.”

A female voice came from overhead. Minth opened his eyes. The old lady hired to serve him tea stood up with a pout.

“What is it, I had a good nap. Just shut up.”

Minth said while rubbing his eyes.

“There are visitors from the bank. Please don’t sleep in the parlor.”

“I have no choice then.”

The room referred to as the parlor was a small room that had two sofas and a table in it. The furniture seemed to be high-class in a glance, but was actually made of cheap items.

Minth left the room and started strolling around.

It has been nine months since he left Bantorra Library. His body that used to be muscular had somewhat withered. His rigid face also lost some of its edge.

Ever since he assumed office as the Overseer of Paradise, Minth spent his days doing nothing related to battle.

The Advisor to the charitable organization “Margent Humanity Progress Foundation”. This was Minth’s official, public title.

“Even advisors unexpectedly have no work to do.”

While muttering this, Minth looked out of the window.

This was the outskirts of the Republic's capital, Morarl City. He was in a room in an old building built almost thirty years ago. Outside the window, as if leaving the traces of the so-called pioneering area, spread a dusty-looking townscape.

From this four-story building, Minth bought the third and second floor out of his own pocket. He used the second floor as the Foundation's offices and the third floor as his apartment.

The first floor was the office of a certain lawyer. On the fourth floor was a small trading company that imported soap and other cosmetics from the Principality of Rona. Both of them had no relation to the Indulging God Cult.

A simple room in a building. This was the headquarters of the New Indulging God Cult created by Minth.

For those who remembered the old Cult, this would only seem to be one of its secret bases. They would suspect that the real headquarters were at a different place and that this was nothing more than camouflage.

But it was not true. This was unmistakably the headquarters and there were no other bases anywhere.

It was far too small and populous when compared to Kachua's era. In the past the Indulging God Cult caught the big shots of the financial and political world and controlled the world from the shadows. Yet now it was crammed into such a small building.

"Shall I take a break?"

Minth lit a cigarette. He stopped smoking during the time he was an Armed Librarian, but recently got back to it.

To stave off his boredom, he started leafing through the documents on his desk. It was a summary of the planned activities of the organization Minth served as an advisor to.

Officially, the Margent Humanity Progress Foundation worked to support various activities related to the development of mankind. To put it in a better way, they were an organization that worked freely with ideas. To put it in a worse way, he had no idea what they were doing.

For the normal world, this was something like a hobby project that was created using his wealth after he retired as an Armed Librarian a rich person.

Their activities were various. They cooperated with maintenance of public order in certain districts, donated funds for the education of poor children, aided the funding of scientists' research, all sorts of these worthless things.

Their real goal was, of course, creating the Books of happy people they could bring to Heaven. However, their actual work was no different than one of a charity organization.

“Not bad.”

Minth returned the documents to the file.

At present they were a small, populous Indulging God Cult. This wasn't the result of failure nor was the Cult in the middle of expanding. This was the new Cult Minth had been aiming for.

He didn't want to create happiness while controlling the world from the shadows. Even without money, even without political authority, even without military power, he could create Books of happy people.

Thus Minth believed. And he was putting it into practice.

“Hmm?”

He found an unfamiliar envelope on the messy desk. When he saw its sender he remembered. It was an invitation to the customary Armed Librarians' party.

“I have some free time, so should have I gone?”

Minth muttered while looking at the envelope. Thinking of it, the party was that very same day. He had forgotten about it since he didn't feel like going.

“Ah well. Seeing Matt and Hamyuts would just make me angry.”

He threw the envelope on top of the desk. Pressing his cigarette against the ashtray, Minth suddenly thought back on what happened during the last year. He thought of the new Indulging God Cult he had built as the Overseer of Paradise.

March 1926

Minth, having been appointed to be the new Overseer of Paradise, had some doubts.

He was about to continue the wicked, repulsive Indulging God Cult by his own hands. He was going to become the leader of the very opponent that they had worked so hard on crushing. Any decent person would have doubts.

However, Minth knew the truth about Heaven. He also knew that they could not oppose the mission to produce the Books of happy people. He could not run away.

Therefore, he decided to change his way of thinking.

Until now, the Indulging God Cult was an evil organization. So all Minth had to do was create a good organization.

It was certainly possible. And that was the job handed to Minth. Gradually he threw his doubts away, and began devoting himself to his job as the Overseer of Paradise.

When he was an Armed Librarian, Minth used his Sacred Eyes to seek out and eliminate the followers of the Cult.

His eyes were able to differentiate between bad and good people. Most of the followers were people who indulged in their desires and lost their conscience.

But not all of them were like that. There were some people who have rebelled against Kachua's ideology and escaped the Indulging God Cult. He kept those a secret from people like Hamyuts and Ireia and let them get away.

After assuming office as the Overseer of Paradise, Minth searched and assembled these people. He revealed the true mission of the Cult that was concealed by Kachua and made them swear to devote themselves for it. Leading only several dozens of these people, Minth founded the New Indulging God Cult.

The only one to possess any fighting ability was Minth. They had neither a gun nor a sword. But that was not a problem. The New Cult had no need for fighting power.

What he looked for next were True Men.

The thing required to be a True Man was a certain kind of pure heart. They had to have no doubts about granting their desires or their way of living. Unless people were like that, they would not be able to achieve true happiness from the bottom of their heart.

People like Cigal were certainly pure. Because they were pure, they were able to act brutally without any hesitation. There were plenty of people like Cigal among the True Men of the past.

Minth had no intention of welcoming such people as True Men. They had to be people with both a pure heart and a conscience.

Finding such people was hard. People who were truly good were even more precious than 100-carat gems. Throughout his entire life, the only person like that Minth had known was Noloty.

But no matter how rare and precious they were, he had to look for them. Because it was his job.

Wandering around the world, Minth began finding such people.

December 15, 1926

Minth left his office in Ismo and boarded a private plane. It was so he could see how his newly found True Men were doing.

In nine months he found three True Men. It was not too fast of a pace.

He went to the mountain district of the Kuler Region. Minth found one of the True Men at the foot of the towering mountain.

He was a man with a suntanned skin colored dark brown and a robust body. He was dressed in heavy, durable climbing gear. His name was Garlze.

“Yo, I came to see you off.”

“Ah, so you’ve come, Overseer of Paradise.”

Garlze said while looking at the top of the mountain. Minth also looked up to the heavens.

The upper part of the mountain was covered in clouds and could not be seen.

In front of their eyes was not a slope but rather a wall. The high atmosphere was dreadfully cold and dry. Garlze was going to challenge this sort of place all by himself.

“Looking at it again, it seems outrageous. Are you really fine?”

Minth said while looking at the sky.

“Who knows. Well, even if I fail it will not be a big deal. Just some fool dying at the mountain.”

Garlze said while smiling.

His usual occupation was a banker at Guinbex. Using his spare time, he went around the world to challenge wintry mountains.

Garlze was a normal person who couldn't use Magic. The hardships in facing the severe mountains were unimaginable for ordinary people.

Even when he climbs, he isn't honored by any money. However, he still bet his life even when nothing came out of it. It seemed he was regarded as a queer person with strange tastes by his surroundings.

“I am grateful to you, Overseer of Paradise. My dream was to challenge this wall. This is probably the hardest one in the world.”

Garlze hit the first ice axe into the bedrock. He carefully checked the feel of the rock.

“It's because it's our job. Don't mind it.”

Minth said. The area around them had been occupied for a long time by an armed group that turned from an independent army to simple brigands. For climbers to set foot here was nothing but a pipedream.

Minth eliminated the brigands and donated a large amount of money to a policing organization from the area. The pretense was preserving the life of the citizens around, but the real reason was in order to let Garlze climb this mountain.

However, thought Minth. Why does Garlze want to challenge mountains?

In order to get up to the summit, you only need to ride an airplane and jump

out with a parachute. Or one can just use Magic Deliberation to enhance one's body and become easily able to climb up. That way would be much safer.

He will not get any money after climbing. And yet, he earnestly climbed.

Minth activated his ability and looked at Garlze's soul. He could see something like a fog or a light around him.

What he could see was the nature of a terribly lonely, awkward soul. His emotions just before climbing were anxiety and a spotted pattern of courage he tried to force down his anxiety with.

Yet inside flickered something much like diamond. It was the beautiful color of happiness that Minth had never seen in anyone before.

"Is climbing that enjoyable?"

"I wonder. When I climb everything is difficult."

Garlze put his hands to the rock.

"So is it not enjoyable?"

"It's not. Other people walk their dogs, water their flower gardens, or love their wives, so why am I wandering in the boundary of life and death? I always think about that."

"Then why do you climb?"

"Who knows. But when I stand on the summit, and think about going back to town, I end up thinking of all the difficulties of climbing and it somehow become enjoyable to me."

Garlze headed to the summit while saying this. Looking at his back, Minth could clearly see the happiness he was aiming for.

His next stop was a wooden house located in the countryside of the Ismo Republic. It was so worn-out that even dropping a single cigarette would end up making it catch fire in no time. Minth smothered out the cigarette he held in his mouth with his bare hands.

A cow from a neighboring farm looked at Minth as if he was something rare. Minth knocked on the door.

“Huh? Why if it isn’t the Overseer of Paradise. What business do you have?”

Coming out was a man in his twenties. With his thick glasses and dusty white coat, one could easily imagine what kind of a person he was. He was a youth called Kwane. He was the first True Man found out by Minth.

“I came to see how you’re doing. How’s your research progressing?”

Minth entered. There was a mountain of iron scraps inside the wooden house. The old dog lying on its summit was Kwane’s only family member.

“You’ve come at a good time. Look at this. I completed unit no.1.”

Kwane showed him an object far from the mountain of scraps.

“I call it “Pina-chan’s thighs”. Are you surprised?!”

The object he pointed to was a small machine that looked like a failed toy. It was called a rocket. It seemed that by spouting out adjusted petroleum fuel from its rear, that reaction could be used to make it fly in the sky. Incidentally, Pina was the daughter of the farmer who lived next door.

“How small.”

Minth mouthed his honest impressions. Without minding any of it, Kwane excitedly carried the rocket. His dream seemed to be to take this machine called a rocket and somehow go into outer space.

He used to be praised as an elite genius in the Science Agency. However, no one could understand his far too wild dream of going into space and so he had lost his job.

Frankly, even Minth was dubious about whether or not one could go into space. Wouldn’t going outside the world that was made by the Creator was beyond what people could do?

However, Kwane continued his research with no doubts or hesitation. Although he was living from hand to mouth, he never thought that he had fallen down in any corner of his mind.

Minth found a certain shape of happiness lying within.

“Let’s go!”

Kwane lighted the fuse. A small sound, too miserable to be called an explosive roar, echoed as the rocket rose into the air. It flew for about fifty meters and then fell down with a flop. *This would be about the distance Hamyuts could jump*, Minth thought.

“Yes, amazing! It’s just perfect!”

Minth couldn’t understand it, but it seemed to be a success. It was one step towards space. Was he a genius or a fool? Perhaps there was no great difference between the two.

At that moment, a loud voice came from nearby and a man came running. He held a pitchfork in one hand.

“Aah Kwane! How many times do I have to say this! If you frighten the cows they won’t give any milk!”

Minth knew him. He was the farmer who lived next door. Kwane hurriedly escaped into his house.

“Wait you idiot! How many times have I told you to stop your stupid research and go to work! Hey now, don’t run away!”

The farmer started kicking the door to Kwane’s house. He locked it firmly from the inside. This kind of scene occurred every time Minth came there.

“Oh boy... Kwane’s acting stupid again, huh.”

A girl kicked the rocket lying on the ground. She was the farmer’s only girl that the rocket had been named after. She spoke to Minth.

“You’re Kwane’s friend, right? I heard it from him.”

“Yes, but what of it?”

“Nothing much.”

Saying this, Minth and the farmer’s daughter looked at the shouting farmer.

“Say, is that ‘space’ he’s aiming for the place where there are stars and such, right?”

She suddenly spoke to him.

“Apparently. I don’t know much science.”

“Can one really go into space?”

Minth shrugged.

“I dunno. What do you think?”

“I have no idea, but well, if it’s possible, it would be amazing.”

The girl flapped her hand. She seemed to be flustered.

“Oh no, saying that acknowledges Kwane... I’m different from him, because I’m an honest woman.”

Angry for some reason, she returned home. The farmer dragged out Kwane and beat his head.

Minth also thought about evacuating the entire farm for Kwane’s research. Or perhaps he could have used his connection from his Armed Librarian days so that he could reinstate him to his job at the Science Agency. However, he soon gave up on both of them. He knew that this farm and all of the noise were also a part of Kwane’s happiness. It seemed that he came to know and love these stubborn and simple people.

Minth left the beaten Kwane alone. He hurriedly left the place before he would face the farmer’s rage as well.

Part 2

He stayed in Kwane's house for the night. His only supper was corn cereal. He put inside of it milk received from the farmer's daughter.

You're a True Man, so eat something better, thought Minth. They provided plentiful funds to Kwane, but he used everything on his research.

"By the way, Minth. What about the third True Man?"

Kwane asked while moving his spoon.

"It doesn't have anything to do with you. Just complete your rocket."

"Are things not going well?"

"Fool. I'm simply leaving it to Laty. She will make it work."

Minth became sullen. He hasn't worked much on the third True Man, Mani. He left it all to Laty.

"Why? Give it your best. You're the Overseer of Paradise after all, Minth."

"Mani will be scared of me since I look like this."

"Can't be. I believe it'll be fine. Or is there another reason you can't go there?"

He's stupid but strangely sharp sometimes.

"...Doesn't have anything to do with you."

Minth mumbled.

When he looked at Mani he would end up being reminded of Noloty. The fact that Noloty had tried to protect her village passed through his mind.

There was no need to be nervous. Minth was going to protect Mani's village. He was proud of his work as the Overseer of Paradise now. However, he couldn't help but be conscious of the fact that he was the successor to the Overseer of Paradise who had killed Noloty.

Perhaps Laty also sympathized with him. She didn't ask Minth for an escort even when she went to meet with Yankuu.

“Go and do it, Overseer of Paradise. I believe that the Indulging God Cult needs you.”

“...Yeah.”

The next day, Minth flew to the southern frontier. Strangely, the day he arrived was the same as the meeting between Laty and Yankuu. Minth wondered whether to show up at the meeting or go to Mani’s village.

In the end he chose neither, and went to the new land. The preparation for their migration began a few months ago.

As he landed there, he saw a familiar face.

“Huh, is that you, Director?”

Minth was somewhat surprised. Why was Hamyuts there? She was loitering around the island.

“Oh, Minth. What’s wrong?”

“That’s my line. What about work?”

“Since it’s the year’s end there’s not much work left. I have some free time.”

Saying this, Hamyuts walked around the island. For the time being Minth also followed her. It seemed like she came to see the current situation of the island’s development.

“Unexpectedly it didn’t progress much. Never mind the time, it seems like more money is needed.”

Hamyuts said.

“The Indulging God Cult will put more money.”

“We don’t really need it. We’ll just have everyone give it.”

Hamyuts said.

The Indulging God Cult was not the one to carry the development of this island. The ones to put out funds and to carry the commands were the Armed Librarians.

These are not orders officially made by Bantorra Library. People who were

close to Noloty, such as Mirepoc and Kyasariro, started it all out of their own pocket.

All Armed Librarians were grateful to Noloty. They all acted with the wish to repay her fight and her death if even only a little bit. In this plan, even villains like Mattalast and Bonbo have cooperated with only the best of intentions.

“Sorry. Thanks for your help.”

“This isn’t done for your sake. It’s for Noloty and Mani-chan.”

Hamyuts said.

Suddenly, they saw a rowing boat approaching from the horizon. It took a long time to come near the island.

Mani and her mother were on board. Arriving on the island, the mother lowered her head many times in front of Hamyuts.

“Why did you come here, is something wrong?”

“Once she heard the Director was here, this child wanted to meet you no matter what.”

The mother said and urged Mani.

“Hello, Overseer of Paradise-san and Hamyuts-san.”

“Hello, Mani-chan. What’s the matter?”

“I made this, so please accept it.”

Saying so, she presented a handmade doll made of paper. Hamyuts received it with a somewhat troubled face.

“Oh, but I didn’t bring one for the Overseer of Paradise-san...”

Hamyuts then spoke while smiling.

“It’s fine. Minth will come by again, so you can give it to him then.”

“Okay. Sorry, Overseer of Paradise-san. Please come again.”

“...Ah, well, yeah.”

Minth couldn’t look Mani in the eyes. He wasn’t good with kids.

Minth, Hamyuts and Mani talked while walking around the island. Speaking about their memories of Noloty or the new life after the migration... only such idle chats.

When he had first seen Mani's soul using his Sacred Eyes, Minth was surprised.

Mani was unselfish to a surprising extent. She had a wild animal-like soul that was satisfied with just food and warm air.

Her one and only wish was to be able to live together with Yankuu, her mom and the other villagers. She wished for nothing other than everyone living in peace without fighting and quarreling.

The moment he met her Minth had decided to welcome her as a True Man. Mani had no interest in how the Indulging God Cult could grant any and all of her wishes. She simply was happy at the fact that if she joined it, the lost peace of her village could be restored.

Minth could do nothing for her as the Overseer of Paradise except a single thing. Just letting the villagers migrate to a new ground and live normal lives. A *truly easy True Man*, he admired.

"...Oh, what's wrong, Mani?"

Suddenly Mani seemed to be mumbling something.

"I have a certain worry, Hamyuts-san, Overseer of Paradise-san."

They both urged her to speak.

"Big Brother Yankuu seems to be worried about something lately. But he won't tell me about it."

"Oh my, what a naughty kid he is."

"Big Bro's a good person."

Mani strongly denied Hamyuts's words. Hamyuts hurriedly apologized.

Minth was also concerned about Yankuu. Would he approve of her becoming a True Man? Yankuu would probably never forget Noloty's death for his entire life. Would he even forgive the Indulging God Cult that had killed her?

“He seems to be worried about the Indulging God Cult. I don’t get why.”

“...I see.”

“He seems to be angry for some reason. But I don’t know why. He probably feels that the Indulging God Cult are bad people. I want you to discuss this with him, Overseer of Paradise-san.”

“Me?”

“I’ve sent a letter to a great Armed Librarian to consult with, but I still haven’t received any reply. Maybe it hasn’t been delivered.”

Minth patted Mani’s head.

“Mani. There’s no need to worry. There are many things in the grown-up world.”

“...Overseer of Paradise-san, are the Indulging God Cult bad people?”

Minth should tell her that was wrong. However, there was no answer to that problem inside him yet. He still hasn’t forgotten the battle from a year ago. He also knew well about happenings such as the Shiron incident and the Seven Kings Rebellion. He wondered just how much tragedy they had produced.

He didn’t want to lie to Mani. So he answered honestly.

“Mani. What’s wrong and what right is a truly difficult matter. The more you become an adult the less you know. Even I don’t know if the Indulging God Cult is in the right.”

“...?”

Mani didn’t really understand. It was a difficult subject to discuss with children.

“Even if they don’t understand, people have to move. If they stop in place just because they don’t understand something, they would end up dying without doing anything.”

Minth did not yet throw away all of his doubts. He still hasn’t fully devoted himself to his mission of bringing Books to Heaven.

However, he had no hesitation only when it came to bringing happiness to

Garlze, Kwane and Mani. He would never think of their pure, awkward happiness as something mistaken.

This feeling was probably the most important thing to have as an Overseer of Paradise.

If he simply devoted himself to creating Books, he would stray off the proper path like Kachua. He would end up piling sacrifices for the sake of the True Men's happiness. The important thing was to have a heart able to be glad of other people's happiness. Mattalast probably found that inside of him.

"I don't know myself. Therefore I do what I want. I will fulfill my duty as the Overseer of Paradise, making you a True Man, and revive your village. That's it."

"...I don't really understand."

"Ah. If you don't then that's fine. When Yankuu comes back, try asking him."

"Yeah. Because what Big Brother says will definitely be correct."

"Well, then asking him should be fine."

Minth thought of Yankuu who was at the other side of the sea.

He will probably be mad about the survival of the Cult. If he were to know the truth, he would also turn that anger towards the Armed Librarians. With his reckless personality he might also consider fighting the Armed Librarians all by himself. He would worry too much, throw his life away and killed by them.

However, Yankuu's true intention was to protect Mani and their village. Even if it would be painful to accept, he would probably understand it. Thus Minth believed.

The power of the Indulging God Cult was not enough to keep the village alive. There were also people who could reshape and guide the decaying hearts of the villagers. It needed a human with a righteous heart and a sense of justice.

There was no one but Yankuu for that role.

"Laty, Yuri, please talk to him well. Don't do anything stupid."

Minth muttered this towards the sea.

During the same time, on an uninhabited island several tens of kilometers

away from where Minth and the rest were, Yankuu and Yuri were engaged in mortal combat. Yankuu was able to see through Yuri's trap and conversely cornered her.

The distance between them was thirty meters. This was within Shlamuffen's range. Yankuu swung the Magic Blade with enough vigor to cut through the defense of the Decay Wave.

However, the causality-destroying invisible blade was not created. Yuri used that opening to escape from the mud. Yankuu missed his chance for a decisive blow.

Why wasn't the blade formed just now? Shlamuffen is supposed to respond to its wielder's will and attack.

It can't be... did I hesitate?

Yuri's Decay Wave assaulted him. He intercepted it with mud.

While cornering the running Yuri, Yankuu was thinking. Why had he hesitated? He should have already been determined to kill the Armed Librarians. He needed to avenge Noloty. His determination was supposed to be genuine.

"..."

He knew why. Both Laty and Yuri were not willing to hurt Mani. They said they wanted to protect her and the village.

So what? Yankuu scolded himself. He would be the one to protect Mani, not the Indulging God Cult. No matter what they said, no matter what they planned, they were his enemies. The Armed Librarians who were controlling them were his enemies as well.

While running, Yankuu reached the edge of the island. He ran after Yuri through the coastline.

"I won't let you escape again!"

He once again swung Shlamuffen. Yuri was exhausted. He should be able to kill her.

But the next moment...

Yankuu heard something tearing through the air. It was the sound of a bullet flying from far away. Shlamuffen's automatic defense was activated and tore the bullet apart.

Yankuu looked around to see where it had been shot from. Yuri was as surprised as he was.

"...Who is it?"

Another flying boat passed overhead and a black figure jumped down from it. Although the flying boat lost its pilot, it kept going forward and splendidly landed on the water surface. The black figure even went so far as to calculate its path after jumping out of it.

Yuri muttered to herself as she looked at the man standing atop the rocks.

"Mattalast-san, why...?"

The hat that flew off of him as he jumped out was carried by the wind and fell down. Mattalast Ballory caught it and wore it on his head again.

"It's not cool to ask the hero that while he makes his entrance."

Mattalast joked. Yankuu readied Shlamuffen again.

"By the way, the answer is that I've heard about this from Yukizona. When I looked for Yankuu, he told me that you were also here."

"Why did he know...?"

Yankuu asked, followed by Mattalast's answer.

"The truth is I received a letter from a girl known as Mani. She asked me about what's going on with you."

Saying this, Mattalast pulled out a letter made from straw paper from his pocket. That letter was written by Mani with the letters she could remember.

When he had come back to the village, Yankuu told Mani about Mattalast. He said that he was his supervisor and a reliable person.

At the time he knew nothing about the Armed Librarians' conspiracy. *What a blunder*, Yankuu gritted his teeth.

Mattalast took one step closer to him. He returned the letter to his pocket

with great care.

“Yankuu. Mani’s your important little sister, right? You can’t let her worry like this.”

Yankuu was angered at his words and invoked Shlamuffen without thinking. Mattalast easily evaded it.

“Hey now. Have you forgotten your discipline? You mustn’t be violent.”

“I have nothing to discuss with you!”

“You can’t do that, Yankuu. Words are important. Words are for living in peace without using any violence.

By using words you can speak of the truth... as well as make lies.”

Even while evading Shlamuffen’s attacks Mattalast kept speaking normally. In order to evade its attacks even Hamyuts had to run with all of her power. Yet Mattalast accomplished it as if he was merely playing around.

Yankuu then recalled: Mattalast’s Predictive ability was the one most suitable against Shlamuffen among all of the Armed Librarians.

He belatedly understood his desperate situation. The opponent standing in front of him was the worst one he could imagine.

“Now, Yankuu. We’ve fought a bit, but let me ask you again.”

Mattalast drew his gun with his left hand. He assumed the fighting position of his twin pistols style.

“You’ve probably spoken to Yuri and Laty-san already. We’re not going to do anything bad to your village. Our goal is to bring peace to it.

Will you still fight in spite of that? If you will, what are you fighting for?”

Without replying, Yankuu sank into silence for a while. Mattalast kept talking.

“You should be able to actually understand this. Joining the Indulging God Cult and devoting yourself to Mani’s happiness is the best path for you. Since you know that, why are you fighting?”

Yankuu couldn’t think up a good answer, and so he simply spoke up his mind as is.

“Because Big Sis Noloty died. That’s why.”

Mattalast laughed. It was a scornful laugh. One you would make when you saw someone completely beyond any help.

“So there’s no choice, huh. Shall we fight?”

Mattalast threw both of his guns to Yuri who was watching silently from the side.

“Mattalast-san, even if you give me those...”

Yuri was confused. Even if she used guns she wouldn’t be able to pass through Shlamuffen.

“I’m not telling to use those. Just hold on to them for a while.”

“Why?”

“I’ll fight him unarmed. Because if I don’t do so, it wouldn’t be a fair fight. Right, Yankuu?”

Mattalast twisted his lips and smiled. Yuri had no idea that there was a man who could smile like that.

“This isn’t enough of a handicap like that... so I’ll add another one.”

While saying this, he pointed at his hat.

“If this hat falls off, it will be your win. I’ll give you my neck along with it.”

“Wha...”

Yankuu became speechless.

“How greedy. Are there not enough handicaps already?”

“Don’t underestimate me!”

Yankuu swung Shlamuffen. At the same time he produced mud and assaulted Mattalast.

“Who of us is underestimating the other, I wonder?”

Mattalast moved. His speed right now was completely incomparable with his movements from before.

Part 3

Fifteen minutes passed.

During that time the battle was completely one-sided.

The Magic Blade, able to surpass cause and effect, that was created by the Past God... it wasn't even able to make the hat of a single man fall down.

Mattalast drew near. Yankuu was able to follow only the movements of his body. He wasn't able to notice his fists until they hit him.

Shlamuffen invoked its automatic defenses. Just before the invisible blade cut his right arm, Mattalast drew back his fist. Kicking the ground and turning, he went around and cut in Yankuu's side, at the same time attacking behind his head with a back blow.

Even Hamyuts and Yukizona would find it difficult to ascertain the slight opening in Shlamuffen's defenses. However, for Mattalast, who could accurately predict the next two seconds, it was a piece of cake. He was able to hit him since he could foresee that moment.

"Guh!"

Yankuu's body was blown away spinning. He hit a tree trunk and fell down. Even during that Shlamuffen attacked. However, Mattalast calmly moved away to avoid the attack.

Using one feint, he poked through the opening created by the automatic defense to add a real attack. He kept repeating this throughout the whole fifteen minutes. No matter how strong it was, Shlamuffen was a sword. Because it had no intelligence, it couldn't improve its own fighting style.

Any countermeasures had to be found by its wielder. Yet Yankuu had to devote most of his efforts to following Mattalast's movements.

"Shit!"

When he didn't defend he could only attack. But Mattalast aimed for the moment he would start the offensive and only then take action. Yankuu simply

fell behind.

At the moment he tried charging, Mattalast picked up a twig at his feet and threw it as if he was playing darts. He aimed precisely at Yankuu's eyeballs. Shlamuffen judged it as an attack that it couldn't ignore, and so it intercepted the twig and cut it to shreds.

During that opening Mattalast leapt ahead. Just as he was about to pass above Yankuu he rotated and drove his toes into Yankuu's back.

"Whoops, that was close."

Mattalast's hat shifted position. When he landed he hurriedly fixed it.

Yankuu groaned as he lay on his face. He couldn't stand up. His backbone was destroyed and his lower half body was paralyzed.

Was there really such a gap between them? Yankuu couldn't believe his present situation. Although he was an apprentice, he was supposed to be a talented warrior. Shlamuffen was one of the Memorial Weapons. How come this battle was one-sided to that extent?

Mattalast took his distance from Yankuu who was trying to stand up and looked at him.

The gap in their fighting capabilities was not originally that large. Mattalast's victory would not be shaken even if he fought with bare hands, but it wasn't to the extent that he couldn't drop his hat.

Mattalast simply knew Yankuu well. As his supervisor, he fully analyzed his strengths and weaknesses. Shlamuffen had also been analyzed ever since the Dragon Pneumonia Incident. This was also the first time that Yankuu had seen Mattalast fighting. That also resulted in the gap between the two.

"Yankuu, won't you stop already?"

Mattalast said to Yankuu who was unable to stand up.

"Even if you defeat me it won't bring Noloty back. It would not even count as avenging her. No matter what had transpired in the past, I was her ally."

Mattalast waited for a reply. Yankuu stayed silent.

“Join the Indulging God Cult. Support Mani and your village. That shouldn’t be against Noloty’s intention.”

“Don’t speak Big Sis Noloty’s name!”

Yankuu stood up while withstanding the shaking of his legs.

“I refuse. Noloty was our friend. No matter what you think, I believe myself to be her friend.”

“Shut up!”

Swinging Shlamuffen, he charged at Mattalast. Mattalast clenched his fist and intercepted him.

Yankuu started thinking. *Don’t call Big Sis your friend. You’ve deceived and used her. I won’t acknowledge you as her friends.*

If I end up joining the Indulging God Cult, it would make me the same as those bastards who’ve tricked her. I would become the worst kind of person just like Mattalast.

I lived while admiring Big Sis and wishing to become like her. It would up rejecting my life from the very root. Big Sis would disappear inside of me.

I absolutely won’t stand for it. That is the only thing I will absolutely not stand for.

“I will fight!”

Mattalast’s eyes were like that of a person looking at a worthless object. Yankuu kept being tormented the same as he was before.

Ten minutes passed since. Yankuu spent more time collapsed than he did standing. Mattalast patiently waited for him to stand up, and when he did he knocked him down again.

“Mattalast-san, this should be enough...”

Yuri said while holding his guns.

“Are you telling me to finish him off?”

“That... well...”

Yuri mumbled. Meanwhile Yankuu stood up. He understood why he was able to: it was because Mattalast was taking it easy on him. He had attacked with his full power but missed all of his vitals.

Still, he needed to muster all of his power just to stand up.

“Since Yuri’s also saying it, I wonder if I should just get it over with.”

Saying so, Mattalast started running. Yankuu readied his sword in an attempt to intercept him.

The next moment, Mattalast threw his hat up high. Yankuu’s eyes followed the airborne hat.

If I cut that hat, I will win. He attempted to attack it in an instant.

He lost as soon as he thought of this. Mattalast now stood in front of him.

Does he attack the hat, does he attack Mattalast, or does he defend? He couldn’t choose any of the three options. Mattalast slashed with his hand aiming at Yankuu’s right hand that held Shlamuffen.

The spider blade eating into his hand was blown away. Following that, he used his fists to strike Yankuu’s abdomen and chest.

The moment he collapsed forward, Mattalast used his fists to make him stand again. He further swept Yankuu off his feet, and while midair he drove into him with a rotating kick.

Yankuu’s body was blown twenty meters away. Shlamuffen fell far from him. Yankuu writhed in pain, holding his stomach with labored breathing.

After hitting with the kick, Mattalast moved to the back. He lightly extended his hand to catch the hat that flew with the wind.

“Are you still alive?”

Wearing his hat again, Mattalast spoke as he watched the writhing Yankuu. He kicked away the fallen Shlamuffen.

“Pick it up. We’re not done yet.”



Shlamuffen stopped about a meter away from Yankuu. He couldn't even reach to it with his hand. His body rejected the very notion of fighting. His fighting spirit had been exhausted.

"If you don't pick it up, I'll kill you here."

Mattalast slowly approached.

At that moment, he heard the voice of another woman. He could hear the sound of her walking hurriedly from the forest.

"Please wait, Mattalast-san."

"Laty-san, were you still here?"

Mattalast said with a shocked face.

"You cannot kill Yankuu-san. He is a necessary person for both Mani and the Indulging God Cult."

"Give up on that. He was more determined than I thought. There's no other choice but to kill him already."

"You cannot. It will sadden Mani-san. The scars in her heart will never disappear. She might also end up losing her qualifications as a True Man."

"That won't happen. She'll be sad, but forget in no time. People are like that."

Mattalast kept walking. Laty spoke back.

"What do you even know about Mani-san? Do you even know how Yankuu-san is important to her?"

Mattalast did not stop.

"Being sad is unavoidable. Look for another True Man. Yuri, give me my guns back."

Yankuu became convinced he was about to die. His head, foggy due to his difficulty breathing, had no regrets or fear in it.

What happened to Olivia? Will she find comrades and keep fighting? Or had she already been killed?

What will happen to the village? What will happen to Mani? She will probably

live under the Indulging God Cult. Or will they be thrown away and destroyed?

“...”

Just what has he done? Thinking of it, it was all in vain. He was going to perish while protecting nothing, accomplishing nothing and leaving nothing behind. It was all over.

“...Mani.”

Yankuu muttered. He recalled the final words they had exchanged.

“You’ll come back, right?”

She said to him. And what did he answer then?

“I’ll come back. Did your big brother ever lie to you?”

Mattalast stood at his side. It seemed like he wouldn’t be able to fulfill that promise. He had lied to Mani for the first time since he was born.

Sorry, Mani. But I couldn’t do anything. I could only act like this.

“You have no time to settle your mind.”

Yuri threw the two pistols. *One would’ve been enough*, Mattalast mumbled as he caught them. After he confirmed there were bullets inside, he removed the safety device.

Yankuu was thinking while he was collapsed. *I didn’t have a choice, Mani. Since the Indulging God Cult and the Armed Librarians are bad guys, I will never forgive them.*

And since I won’t, I will fight. Since I will fight, I will be killed. I had no choice.

The moment he thought of this, he heard someone’s voice. It was his own.

“Don’t think there was no choice. I decided on protecting the village no matter what happens.”

“Goodbye, Yankuu.”

Mattalast’s muzzle was pointed at Yankuu’s forehead. Slowly, slowly, his fingers squeezed the trigger.

“...oin.”

Unable to breathe, Yankuu squeezed out the air from his lungs.

“Did you say something?”

Mattalast asked back. Yankuu spoke as if his lungs were bleeding out.

“...I’ll join.”

The index finger on the muzzle stopped. Mattalast peeked at Yankuu’s face.

“I’ll join the Indulging God Cult. I’ll live, and protect, Mani.”

Right. He decided on protecting his village no matter what. However, he never thought of betraying Noloty to protect his village.

“Say that again.”

“I’ll join the Indulging God Cult. I will not... fight the Armed Librarians anymore.”

Tears were silently spilled from Yankuu’s eyes. He betrayed an important thing to protect an important thing. There was no doubt he was betraying Noloty right now.

But why? He had two important things, so why did he have to choose one of them? Yankuu had no idea. Was this reality? Could this kind of situation be real?

Yankuu kept crying without a sound.

“...Good grief.”

Mattalast averted his eyes from Yankuu. Then, he took his finger off the muzzle and returned it to his waist. He turned his back to Yankuu and spoke briefly.

“...Good grief.”

This was Mattalast’s favorite phrase. Watching him, Yuri spoke with an astonished voice.

“What a cruel person. You probably had no intention of killing him in the first place, right?”

Mattalast turned to Yuri and spoke in a jesting tone.

“That’s not true.”

“I cannot believe you. You are a liar after all.”

“Sometimes I tell the truth. Sometimes.”

Yankuu listened to their conversation while still lying on the ground. He understood it. Mattalast had been truly trying to kill him. He had simply given him a slight extension.

Two hours later, Yankuu rode on the airplane piloted by Mattalast. Since the flying boat Yuri took there had been destroyed, she rode with Laty back to Bantorra Library.

Mattalast seemed to be defenseless, almost as if he forgot the two of them had been fighting to the death earlier.

“Oh, we’re here.”

Mattalast made the airship descend. They found the figures of Mani and Minth on the new island. Landing in water, they came to land.

“Oh, wasn’t Hammy supposed to be here, though?”

Mattalast asked Minth. Before coming to fight Yankuu, he dropped by on this island.

“Mirepo shouted at her so she’s gone back.”

“Oh well, she is a slacker after all.”

“She would’ve probably said the same thing about you.”

“What’re you saying? I seriously have it tough.”

Minth and Mattalast were talking. Meanwhile, Yankuu rushed to Mani and caused her to completely pale. He had bruises and fresh wounds all over his body.

“Big Bro, you’re hurt...”

“It’s fine, since I’m well-trained it’ll heal up in a week.”

He wasn’t bluffing. Full recovery would take three months for a normal person, but Yankuu would really take only a week.

“Why? Who did this?”

“Mani, it’s fine, don’t worry.”

Yankuu said, yet Mani found the perpetrator in an instant. While Mattalast was talking, she kicked behind his knees.

“Wah!”

Whether he was kicked by purpose or not, Mattalast fell on his rear. Mani then further hit his head with her open hands. His hat flew off and fell on the ground.

“You...!”

“W-what is this?”

Mani pounded Mattalast’s head.

“What did you do to my brother! You... you!”

“Hey, Mani. It’s not like I hit Yankuu because I hate him, hey, listen to me!”

Mattalast made excuses while holding his head. Mani didn’t lend him her ears.

“Mani. He’s a bad person. Crush him.”

Minth irresponsibly encouraged her. Mattalast picked up his hat in a hurry.

“Oh boy. Looks like I have to run for it.”

Saying this, Mattalast actually escaped. Mani blew a raspberry at his running figure.

“I hate that guy.”

Yankuu then spoke to the resenting Mani.

“Mani. I’ve spoken with someone from the Indulging God Cult.”

When he said this, Mani’s face lightened up.

“How was it?”

“We were able to talk. I will...”

He couldn’t stop his words there. He couldn’t allow her to see his true mind.

While thinking this, he kept talking.

“I decided to join the Cult. From now on the Cult, along with me, will protect our village.”

“Yes!”

Mani smiled. But even that smile could not clear his heart. He had lost. He still hadn't had enough time to sort out his feelings.

“Say, Big Brother.”

She asked him.

“The Indulging God Cult aren't bad guys, right?”

Yankuu was speechless. He hesitated on his reply for an instant that seemed much longer. He ended up averting his gaze from the face of Mani who completely believed in him.

“Yeah, they're not bad guys.”

I probably spoke well, thought Yankuu. Minth looked sad, lowering his eyes with an apologetic expression.

“The Indulging God Cult are not bad guys. They're good guys.”

This was the first time that Yankuu had ever lied to Mani. He didn't know whether doing so was the right thing or not. And he would probably never know for the rest of his life.

And thus Yankuu gave up on avenging Noloty. He gave up on fighting and of not telling any lies.

It was probably much too frustrating for a teenager. And he also had to carry the fate of overcoming that frustration.

Present – December 28, 1926

Having finished all of his work, Mattalast was drinking. The party was still ongoing, and the real fun was about to begin.

“Sorry for coming late, Mattalast-san.”

While he was making cocktails at the bar counter, Yuri came to talk to him.

Yukizona was also behind her. He hasn't seen them, but apparently they have finally arrived at the party.

"What's wrong, you made us worry."

Yukizona answered sullenly.

"I started coughing before we came here, so Yuri was horrified. I said I don't mind, but she wanted to have my illness checked."

"We just had to, big brother."

Yuri smiled. Yukizona had a disappointed face under his mask.

"...You have been too overprotective recently."

"Not at all. Your body is important, big brother."

"I know that."

"Oh well, just take care of yourself."

I don't feel like taking part in this sibling flirting. Matt shook his hand to drive them away.

The two of them quickly took a glass and started enjoying good wine.

"Heey, Rizzly."

Mattalast called the kitchen.

"Yes, what is it?"

"The kitchen should be calm by now. Let the trainees eat some good food as well."

"Huh? I want to bully them some more."

"Rejected. Their work is over."

Rizzly returned to the kitchen disappointed. Apron-wearing trainees came out and joined the clamor around.

"..."

Coming out last, Yankuu looked at Mattalast with somewhat meaningful eyes. He soon averted his gaze.

“Well, I’ll leave him alone.”

Although he had agreed to join the Cult, sorting out his mind would probably be difficult. He just had to leave him alone for now. It was impossible that he would leak the secret and rebel against the Armed Librarians at this late stage. He was determined to protect Mani, after all.

His probation was absolved yesterday and he officially became a trainee. In the future he will also aim to become an Armed Librarian and lead the people of his village. Simply put, nothing inside him had changed at all.

Then why did they even need that fight in order to reach just that? It might have been enough for him to speak out his heart properly.

I’ll let him have time to reflect on his bad plans.

The second rebel, Olivia Littolet, was conversing normally. The women seemed to be rating the men around them this time.

There was also no need to think about the chances of her rebelling. He was certainly anxious at her having an ability that could counter the power of Argax, but she had been impressed with fake memories about Vend Ruga. She will not bother going to the trouble of digging up her true memories.

Kyasariro had erased her own memories. There was no need to worry beyond Yankuu and Olivia.

“But really, it was tough.”

Mattalast muttered while pouring himself a cocktail from the shaker.

Killing traitors and erasing the secret was simple. However, he threw that idea away as a poor plan. Mattalast only thought of nipping the buds of rebellion without killing anyone.

When he kills people, resentment will be born. If he had killed Olivia it would have been Kyasariro and if he had killed Yankuu it would have been Mani. They would start bearing grudges against the Armed Librarians, and a fight would soon be born. That fight would also breed more hate and continue the chain.

If possible Mattalast wouldn’t kill people. He would avoid bad deeds as much as possible. He would not incur the grudge of other people as much as he could.

That was the trick to let a villain like him live forever.

Mattalast tilted his glass while thinking of this.

“...I’ve done a good job.”

Cocktail-making was one of his hobbies. He was confident that he was as skilled as a pro.

“Truly a work well done.”

Mattalast muttered again.

Almost all of the people – the many Armed Librarians in the hall as well as other people – believed that the Indulging God Cult had been destroyed and that peace had been protected. The few others were lying about the world having peace.

Obviously, those who protect a false peace would be liars.

And those who didn’t know that peace was false were also liars. Those who were unable to see through the lies, and fully believed everything to be true, were also some kind of liars.

“...Ha.”

For some reason, a small laugh escaped from Mattalast’s mouth. He hurriedly covered it.

Victory, peace and everything was all lies. There were those who did not know of that, and those who did and deceived the others. No matter where he looked around in the hall, there was not even a single, honest person.

The banquet of liars, the false peace. It was quite strange, pleasant and ridiculous.

However, this was what Mattalast had protected over the last year. His duty was to safeguard this falsehood.

He kept laughing at this amusing state of affairs. He secretly sneered at both this worthless peace as well as his own worthless self.

He could never become the hero, but was also unable to be a villain from the bottom of his heart. The only thing Mattalast could do was ridicule himself.

Night has not passed yet. The fun was not yet over. The false peace kept going under Mattalast's protection.

Chapter 6: Everything is Told on the Roof

Part 1

Present – December 29, 1926

A short time after the date has changed, the long party was over.

A single man observed the small groups of Armed Librarians who were returning home.

Mattalast, Bonbo, Yukizona and Yuri, followed by Kyasariro, were all walking with satisfied faces. Only Yankuu went back with a somewhat long face.

The man intently observed all of the Armed Librarians as if he didn't want to miss any of their expressions. No one there had noticed his gaze. No one there could see his true intentions.

Who was he? Where was he looking at the Armed Librarians from? The time to speak of that has yet to come.

“...”

The only ones left were Hamyuts Meseta atop the roof, as well as Olivia Littolet who came out late. The man watched those two.

“...So nothing's happened.”

The party was over and Hamyuts swung around her empty glass her champagne while muttering this.

She had been watching Olivia for seven months. She had developed many thoughts and expectations as to what Olivia was planning and how she was going to destroy the Armed Librarians.

So were my expectations betrayed again? Olivia claiming that she would destroy the Armed Librarian was just a bluff. Although Lascall had transmitted the Violet to her, it vanished along with her memories.

Looking at the present situation, Hamyuts could only think this.

However, she simply couldn't accept it. No way she was done with Olivia so easily.

Was this her premonition or just her desire? Even she wasn't able to tell.

Suddenly, she looked down the roof. She found Olivia coming out of the party hall.

Olivia left the party hall. She had had fun. She had her doubts about coming there when receiving the invitation from Kyasariro, but she hadn't imagined it would end up being so enjoyable.

Even the Armed Librarians, who she thought were all scary, turned out to be good people when she tried speaking with them. There were also some that she met for the first time today and got along just fine with. It will probably be fun again starting tomorrow.

"Lately I've been feeling bad for some reason."

Olivia muttered. For the last two or three days her head felt fuzzy. She felt as if she was forgetting something.

But that discomfort disappeared the more she spoke with the Armed Librarians today. It was probably not a big deal.

Olivia set on her way home while humming to herself.

Three days ago, Kyasariro had deprived her of her memories and Mattalast had planted new ones inside of her. That also made Olivia's personality change. The Olivia who was extremely doubtful, cautious, and possessed a persistent will to fight was nowhere to be found.

She now turned into a woman who was cheerful, sociable, liked to make fun of people, a bit lonely but an ordinary woman. Perhaps this had been her original personality.

"...Hmm?"

At that time, Olivia noticed someone's gaze on her. She looked around.

"Here."

She heard a voice coming from above. She was quite surprised to find

Hamyuts overhead.

“Olivia. Are you going home?”

Hamyuts asked. Olivia answered without thinking.

“What’re you doing?”

“Well, just some thinking.”

Thinking of it, Olivia realized she hadn’t seen her this whole time. She thought that she just went back, but was she there all along?

“Why there?”

“Idiots and smoke like high place.”

Saying this, Hamyuts threw something off the roof.

“Come here for a bit. You don’t have any other plans, right?”

Olivia looked at the thrown object. It was the string of a sling. Even if she told her to come there, what should she do?

She grasped the string for now. It then wrapped around Olivia’s wrist as if it was a snake.

Olivia’s body was gently lifted. She was placed on the roof.

“You’ve surprised me, but it felt somewhat good.”

“Well, sit somewhere around.”

Walking fearfully on the roof, she sat at the most high place.

“So what did you want to talk about?”

“There’s a case that I just can’t seem to crack. I’m so interested in it that I can’t concentrate on anything else. There’s something that I just can’t seem to understand no matter how much I think about it.

I thought that I may not have any other choice but to ask some great detective.”

“Wouldn’t someone like Mattalast be enough? He looks the part.”

“Nah, he’s no good. He’s simply useless.”

Hamyuts promptly denied. It seemed that she wanted to consult with Olivia.

However, would she really be able to understand something that eludes even Hamyuts and Mattalast? Olivia was puzzled.

“Oh well. So, what is it?”

“Ah, so will you listen to me, miss great detective?”

“An impromptu detective though. Well, spit it out.”

“I’ll be counting on you.”

Olivia and Hamyuts smiled at each other and Hamyuts began speaking.

“So, I have some enemy right now. Let’s keep the identity of that person a secret. But it seems like they want to defeat me no matter what.”

“Have you done anything bad?”

Olivia asked just in case. She didn’t know Hamyuts well, but she didn’t look like a good person.

“...It’s complicated. I mainly did some bad stuff, but they’re not really a good person either.”

“Something like that, huh. So, what about that person?”

“That person knows of a way to defeat me. It would be hard to put in practice, but they know of it.”

“And?”

“They’ve said that they have already defeated me. This is the important part. They didn’t say they will definitely defeat me. They didn’t say they can beat me either. They’ve said that my loss was already determined.”

“Hmm. So that means you’re in a big pinch.”

Hamyuts nodded.

“Supposedly. But that person hasn’t done anything. Here I am lounging on the roof. What does this mean, I wonder.”

Olivia started thinking.

“Aren’t they preparing for your defeat?”

“They should be, but they’re not doing anything. To the extent that I’m truly surprised. What the heck is going on?”

Olivia crossed her arms and thought. She never even considered the possibility this was talking about her.

Hamyuts was asking for the reasoning of the great detective and trying to make the culprit confess at the same time. It was a strange situation, but Olivia knew nothing about it.

Hamyuts and Olivia were conversing on top of the roof. Even the man, while observing them, could not completely hear them.

That’s bad, he became stressed. Was Olivia’s plan exposed? Or was it about to be exposed?

He was sure she had completely deceived Mattalast. But it seemed like Hamyuts has yet to throw away her doubts. As they thought, Hamyuts was the most frightening one of the lot.

The man’s body stiffened with tension. Until now Olivia’s plan was perfect. Will there be a setback just at the very end?

He observed them, still tense.

Only Olivia could understand her own plan. Hamyuts spoke to Olivia because she thought this way. However, Olivia showed her hand as if saying she had given up.

“It’s useless. I have too little information. No matter what I think I just have no idea.”

Hamyuts was slightly disappointed.

“So try thinking like this. If you were in their position, what would you have done? You wanted to defeat me and knew a way of doing so. At that time, what would Olivia Littolet have done?”

“If I were in their shoes, huh. And know of a way to beat you...”

It was a strange sight: Olivia tried thinking in Olivia’s shoes.

“Anyway, if it were me I would tell it to someone. To someone who wants to

beat you. They probably have a grudge against you. Is there anyone like that?"

Hamyuts had also thought this far. Olivia had no way to fight, so she should have passed the Violet Wish to someone else.

In fact, she had tried instigating Yankuu and Kyasariro to rebel against the Armed Librarians.

"I see. And, other than that, what would you have done?"

She wanted to ask Olivia about what came afterwards. The culprit-detective crossed her arms and thought.

"Other than that... But I think that would be about everything I can do..."

After thinking for a while, Olivia clapped her hands.

"I know. I would've concealed the identity of the person I'd told about your weakness to. No, that's wrong... I would've concealed the very fact that I'd done so."

"...What do you mean?"

"Well, it's more advantageous this way. You wouldn't know who you were being targeted by. You wouldn't even know someone was targeting you in the first place.

Wouldn't even someone like you be in danger if that happens?"

Hamyuts realized her own carelessness. She should have understood this by thinking a little. Hamyuts was too strong, so she couldn't even imagine how a powerless person would fight.

She started thinking based on the hints given to her by Olivia.

Her aim was to tell someone of the Violet Wish. That person was neither Yankuu nor Kyasariro.

Then when and where had she done it? Hamyuts thought back on Olivia's behavior ever since she came to Past God Bantorra's Island. She shouldn't have had such a chance.

"...No."

Hamyuts was an idiot. Olivia's goal was to tell about the Violet Wish in a place

Hamyuts wouldn't know of. She wouldn't have done in the Past God Island which was under her supervision.

She had a chance. It was before coming to the Past God Island. Before she had been caught by Mattalast.

“...I see, I think I got it.”

Olivia curiously looked at Hamyuts who suddenly changed her expression as she started thinking.

Seven months ago, just before Olivia had been caught by Mattalast, he had met her in the Ismo Republic.

He aimed to fight against the Indulging God Cult and destroy Heaven. For him, meeting up with Olivia was the kind of luck that would come only once in a lifetime.

He came to know of the sole method to destroy Heaven, the Violet Wish. His fight, that seemed hopeless, now had a sliver of hope.

However, at the same time, a serious crisis had also arrived.

At the time, no one knew of his existence. Neither Hamyuts, Mattalast, nor the dead Kachua. Since no one knew of his rebellion, he was able to continue living.

However, after he had met with Olivia he lost that advantage. She was being chased by the Armed Librarians, and will probably not be able to avoid being caught by them for long. If that happens, Hamyuts and the rest would also come to know of that man's existence.

As he was deep in thought, Olivia suggested a plan to him.

Part 2

Hamyuts kept thinking.

Olivia had told someone of the Violet Wish before she was caught by Mattalast. That was almost undoubtedly true.

But there were problems with that.

After she had been caught she was questioned by Minth using his Sacred Eyes. And he was able to know perfectly that she neither knew of the Violet Wish nor told anyone else about it.

It was impossible to deceive Minth's Sacred Eyes. It was also impossible that Minth had lied to Mattalast.

Then how did Olivia slip through his eyes?

She could only rely on Olivia herself. Hamyuts asked her further.

"Then, how would you have concealed the fact you've told someone?"

"I would have run away."

"I'll be able to catch you."

"I would have stayed silent even if caught!"

"I'll torture you and stuff like that."

Olivia was shocked at the kind of woman Hamyuts was.

"Then I would have just killed myself."

"I'm the Acting Director of Bantorra Library. I could just read your Book and find it out, right?"

"Right..."

Olivia kept thinking.

"There's that thing. I forgot its name. Ar-something, Obliterating something."

"Fiction Obliterating Cup Argax."

"Yeah, that. I could just use that water to make myself forget I've told it to someone. If I forgot about it, it wouldn't go out even in torture right?"

"...I see."

However, when had Olivia used Argax? Currently, both the Argax used by the Armed Librarians and the one used by the Indulging God Cult were in the Sealed Labyrinth.

After Mattalast had caught her there was only a short time until she was questioned by Minth. How could she have drank the water of Argax under his

supervision?

It seemed impossible, but was not so. Olivia actually accomplished it.

During the same time, Mirepoc Finedell was tottering on the road.

After drinking punch as if it was water and collapsing, Mirepoc woke about two hours later. After that, Mattalast muttered something about sobering her up and brought a glass. When Mirepoc tried drinking it, it was also liquor. Was he trying to kill her?

Alcohol is scary. I'll never drink it again. While thinking this, Mirepoc headed for her home.

“Mattalast... I'll have my revenge... That man's definitely a sadistic criminal...”

Mirepoc found something strange while walking: she saw human figures on top of the roof. They were Hamyuts and Olivia.

“What are they doing, I wonder...”

Mirepoc was about to try calling them using her Thought Sharing. However, her head felt dizzy so she stopped.

She suddenly recalled the past. It was something that happened a few days after everyone had heard the truth about the Volken incident from Olivia.

May 1926

“Say, Mirepoc, I have a favor to ask...”

Olivia stayed at Mattalast's house for a while. All Armed Librarians have visited her there to voice their gratitude.

When Mirepoc found some time between her work, Olivia spoke to her.

“What is it?”

“It's a bit hard to ask, but I will lower my head and ask you... because that would require you to break regulations.”

“...It depends on what you want, but please tell me.”

Olivia started talking.

“To tell the truth, I want to erase my memories of Volken. You have some

memory-erasing tool, right?”

“That...”

I can't just take that out, she wanted to say but stopped herself. After all she had once used it against regulations herself.

Besides, Olivia had probably been assaulted by Volken. She could understand wanting to get rid of those memories as a woman.

“...I can't ask Mattalast for that. Since Hamyuts is the Acting Director she will not approve it either. I can only ask you.”

“...Understood.”

Normally she would have rejected her saying that she sympathized with her but couldn't do it. However, even the stuffy formal Mirepoc had recently began to change.

She had agreed. Since she was being asked that, she thought of trying her best.

Bringing Argax wouldn't be too difficult. The problem was doing it so that Mattalast and Hamyuts wouldn't notice. Mirepoc activated her Thought Sharing as she stood in front of the apartment Olivia was in.

‘...Mattalast-san, where are you right now?’

‘In the middle of shopping.’

She thought he was inside but was wrong. However, she needed some insurance that he wouldn't come back.

‘Yukizona-san would like to consult with you about work.’

Mattalast replied to her in his thoughts.

‘Is tomorrow no good? I'd like to return home as quickly as possible.’

When he returns home, what will he do to Olivia? Mirepoc thought of needless things.

‘He told me that if possible he would like you to hurry. Do you mind?’

‘...Hmm, got it, I'll go.’

Yukizona wanting to consult him was true; however, he was actually in no hurry. Mattalast would probably be heading back to Bantorra Library just like she wanted.

Mirepoc entered the apartment. At that moment, she happened to pass by Hamyuts. It was unexpected. Since it was her free day, she was supposed to be at home enjoying her hobby of sewing.

“Hey, Mirepo.”

Mirepoc faltered for a second wondering if she was busted.

“Today’s weather is so good. I feel great.”

At the time Hamyuts was in a strangely good mood. Did something happen?

“Is something the matter, Director?”

Even when Mirepoc called to her there was no reply. Hamyuts walked down the stairs enjoyably.

Mirepoc knocked on the door with her head tilted. Hearing Olivia’s reply, she came inside.

“Olivia-san, I’ve brought what you asked for.”

“...Ah, right, thank you.”

For some reason Olivia was pale. Had she spoken to Hamyuts? *I’d better not pry into other people’s business too deeply*, thought Mirepoc.

“If you pour water into this and think of the memories you’d like to erase, when you drink the water they will be gone.”

“Oh, it’s fairly simple.”

Saying so, Olivia took a jug and poured from it into Argax. At that moment, Mirepoc saw Olivia faintly smiling. Since these were painful memories she wanted to erase, she felt a strange uneasiness.

Olivia muttered something and drank the water of Argax.

“...Hmm? What is this?”

After drinking, Olivia looked around her. She looked at the object she held in

her hands mysteriously.

“Seems like you’ve forgotten. You’ve erased your own memories using Argax.”

“...Really? My memories? ...What does this mean?”

Olivia was confused. Mirepoc calmly admonished her.

“It’s because you have erased memories that you don’t need to remember. You have nothing to worry about.”

Although still puzzled, Olivia nodded.

Mirepoc hurried out of the apartment before Mattalast came back. She entered the Sealed Labyrinth again and returned Argax to its previous location.

Present – December 29, 1926

Oh yeah, that happened, Mirepoc thought while looking at Olivia on the roof.

Olivia had acted somewhat strange during that time, but there was probably no need to worry. Both after then as well as now she lived comfortably.

More importantly I should go. Mirepoc turned on her heels and hurried on the road back home.

Did her actions have any meaning? She had no idea why Olivia had smiled and why Hamyuts had a good mood. She never came to know the reason for it throughout her whole life.

Hamyuts thought for a while and then hit upon something. Olivia had used one of the Armed Librarians so she could get Argax. Telling the other Armed Librarians about what happened with Volken was probably both to gain their trust as well as another part of her plan.

She had read Mattalast’s actions and used one of the Armed Librarians. What an elaborate plan.

While Olivia was staring ahead, Hamyuts kept thinking.

Olivia had erased her memories of the Violet Wish in advanced before getting questioned by Minth. She did so in order to protect the person who’d succeeded the Violet Wish.

Hamyuts understood this far, but still some questions remained.

Why had she instigated Yankuu and Kyasariro to revolt? There was plenty of a possibility she would have been killed during that rebellion. If she were then her Book would have been excavated. If that happened, all of her plans would have crumbled away.

It was a contradiction. Why had she taken actions contrary to her previous plans?

“...Oh right, she forgot.”

Hamyuts immediately had a flash. There was no contradiction after all.

Olivia had erased her memories pertaining the Violet Wish. She forgot the very fact she had known about it, to whom she passed it along, and even the fact that she entrusted her will of rebellion to that person.

Olivia forgot about her own strategy. That was why she began a reckless revenge against her original purpose.

It was possible that her instigation of Yankuu and Kyasariro was something that even she was not able to anticipate.

“I’ve read through everything.”

Hamyuts muttered. The puzzled Olivia stared at her from the side.



“You’ve sank into deep thought in the middle of our conversation though. Did you understand something?”

“I got it all. Anything and everything. You’re amazing. A true great detective.”

Olivia tilted her head at seeing Hamyuts’s joy.

“I haven’t said anything really impressive.”

“That’s not true. You should give up being a tailor and become a detective. It’s a waste of your talent.”

“Don’t say something so strange. It’s too much of a compliment.”

“It’s not too much, you really are amazing.”

Olivia furrowed her brows. She seemed to feel as if Hamyuts was mocking her.

“Well, I’m glad if I have been of use. More importantly, I should go back. It’s cold here.”

“Yeah. Thank you and sorry for taking your time.”

Saying so, Hamyuts wrapped the string of her sling around Olivia’s wrist. Controlling it, she gently lowered her to the ground.

“See ya. Don’t catch a cold.”

Olivia waved her hand and went back.

“...Well then.”

Hamyuts watched her back from atop the roof.

With this, she read through the entirety of Olivia’s plan. There was only one question left. Just who had she left the Violet Wish for?

She would probably never know it no matter how much she thought of it. Olivia used such a preposterous plan in order to hide it after all.

“...”

There was only one way to know:

Killing Olivia and reading her Book.

Hamyuts loaded a pebble into her sling and started slowly rotating it around. Olivia had her back turned to Hamyuts and went down the road defenselessly.

“Nah.”

Hamyuts threw the pebble into the sky.

She once again lost to Olivia. Hamyuts wasn't able to deduce even one part of her plan. Only by asking Olivia herself, which was much like cheating, she finally came to know everything.

Losing the battle of minds and settling everything with violence instead... she didn't want to be as lame as that.

“...You're amazing.”

This will probably be her last time to be involved with Olivia. She muttered this while looking at Olivia's back that she saw less and less of.

Olivia, a completely powerless human, had taken a part in the overthrow of Kachua. She had crossed paths with Hamyuts and escaped. And she had even created the opportunity for the outrageous battle of destroying Heaven.

While overcoming all these battles, and achieving victory in all of them, she was even able to obtain a peaceful life of all things.

“I won't kill you. This is your victory. Your utter and complete victory.”

While feeling a slight bit of regret as well as happiness, she spoke toward Olivia's back.

Hamyuts once again lied on the roof.

It was still too early to despair of this world. The seeds of disturbance were spreading.

If she were to wait there will definitely be something fun happening.

Making sure of Hamyuts and Olivia's parting, the man also left the spot heading back home.

Hamyuts had probably seen through Olivia's plan. Moreover, she purposely turned a blind eye to it.

What was Hamyuts thinking about? He couldn't understand her. Rather than

thinking of her as an enemy, she was more of an uncertain and incomprehensible element.

“...And now comes my own battle.”

He muttered. Olivia fulfilled enough of her duty. She had passed the Violet Wish to him and concealed his existence. Hereafter comes his own duty to carry it out. He will definitely fulfill this wish that he had inherited from Olivia.

Because Olivia had trusted him, she entrusted everything to him. He had to answer that trust.

He understood well enough that it would be a difficult path. He had to challenge Heaven – the being that no person throughout all of history managed to inflict a single wound to. He will also have to fight people such as Mattalast and Yukizona when the time comes.

But he did not fear. He abandoned such feelings long ago.

He will simply advance and destroy Heaven. He walked with determination in his heart.

“Goodbye, Olivia Littolet. I pray for your happiness.”

He turned around one last time, and looking at Olivia’s back, muttered a small farewell.

Who was he? Why was he fighting and how was he living? The time to speak of this will come before long.

Fragment: The Man’s Name is Ruruta

September 1925

The battle between Hamyuts and Olivia has ended. She had activated the Spinning Doll Ückück and restored the Meats’ memories. She was transferred to a faraway field using Charlot’s Magic.

A few hours passed after that.

Olivia met with Lascall Othello at a desolate station.

“...Unbelievable.”

Olivia muttered without thinking. She just heard the truth about the Indulging God Cult from Lascall.

“I know that the Armed Librarians are unbelievable because they were trying to kill me just now.

But thinking that they were in cahoots with the Indulging God Cult...”

“It is quite the unbelievable story. However, it is also the truth.”

Lascall said while smiling.

It truly was an unbelievable story.

The Indulging God Cult had been created by the Armed Librarians. It was founded in order to fulfill the mission of supplying Heaven with the Books of happy people. The higher-ups of the Armed Librarians and the Overseer of Paradise have protected this secret.

Defeating the Indulging God Cult and destroying the Armed Librarians would be meaningless. True victory could only be achieved by destroying Heaven. Olivia heard all about that.

“I believe it. If I were told this by a normal person I would end up laughing. But you don’t seem to be an ordinary person.”

“I am happy to hear you believe it.”

Lascall forcedly lowered his head.

“But it’s still hard to swallow. What’s that Heaven in the first place? Why are the Armed Librarians so desperate to obey their orders?”

Olivia mouthed some natural doubts. But Lascall rejected them, smiling.

“That is something you should investigate using your own powers. If you cannot even understand something of this level, defeating Heaven will be nothing but a pipedream.

So there is no need for me to tell you.”

“You sure are a selfish guy.”

Olivia sagged her shoulders.

“Well then, let us enter the main topic. I will convey unto you the sole method to destroy the mighty Heaven: the Violet Wish.”

Olivia nodded.

“Ten years ago there was a single girl. She fell in love with a certain individual. Speaking her name is no longer permitted. She is only known as the Violet Sinner.

But even the poor Violet Sinner lost her life due to the schemes of the Indulging God Cult.

Even those who have served under her were killed by Hamyuts-sama and Photona-sama. Even the one you had connected with – Vend Ruga-sama – was killed for this purpose.”

“...So Vend Ruga was killed.”

“Why did the Violet Sinner had to be killed? That was because fulfilling her love meant the destruction of Heaven.”

“What do you mean?”

“The destruction of Heaven... it is impossible to grant with the use of simple power. Even if there ten thousands of Hamyuts-sama they would be unable to inflict nary a single wound upon Heaven.

The sole method of destroying it would be rescuing a single man from the depths of sorrow and despair.”

“I don’t get it. What’s that supposed to mean?”

“That man was the beloved of the Violet Sinner. That girl’s wish to save that man is the sole way of destroying Heaven.

His name is Ruruta Coozancoona.

Please do remember it by all possible means.”

“I don’t understand. Who’s that man called Ruruta? Why would saving him destroy Heaven?”

“This would be about everything I can tell you. Finding any further information, as well as destroying Heaven is now your own story.”

Olivia raised her voice in confusion.

“Wait, Lascall. What will I do after hearing only that? Just what is Heaven? Where’s that Ruruta guy!

No, in the first place, how can I keep living from now on!”

“I beg your pardon, but this is not what I am meant to know. My work is simply conveying the Violet Wish to you.”

“But...”

Olivia became lost for words. Lascall sank his body into the ground, leaving only these words behind.

“Even if you die without doing anything, and even if you do manage to create the path of destroying Heaven, I am not meant to know it. After all, the future should not be part of my knowledge.”

Lascall added some final words just before disappearing.

“Oh right, I will tell you one last thing.

Who is Ruruta Coozancoona? I will speak briefly about this individual.”

He cut off his meaningful words there.

“This long story of fighting librarians...

Ruruta Coozancoona is, so to speak, its protagonist.”

“Protagonist?”

“Yes. He had started this tale, and he will end it. That is Ruruta Coozancoona.”

“...I don’t get it.”

“I wish from the bottom of my heart that you will be able to bring an end to Ruruta-sama’s long, long tale.”

Leaving the stunned Olivia behind, Lascall vanished into the ground.

Afterword

Hello everyone. This is Yamagata Ishio. How was the seventh installment of

the Tatakau Shisho series, “Tatakau Shisho to Kyougensha no Utage”? I’ll be happy if you have enjoyed it.

The other day I had a dream. I dreamt about a mansion that was on fire. I ran around with a bucket in one hand, desperately trying to extinguish it. Just when I thought I was lucky it was only a small fire and managed to save the mansion, I woke up. I went to check up on it in a dream fortune-telling site, and it said “a dream about a fire – good omen: you will obtain tremendous fortune”.

No particular good fortune came afterwards. I feel like I had a great loss.

This time as well I will use this opportunity to thank Maeshima Shigeki-sama, who drew the wonderful illustrations, and everyone involved who cooperated with me. Let us work together again.

Well then, readers, let us meet again in my next work.

Yamagata Ishio