

# 盾の勇者の成り上がり

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# Zeltbur

As I leave Rat's lab, I notice the Slave Dealer's carriage parked nearby.

"If it isn't the Hero of the Shield!" (Slave Dealer)  
I've been seeing him a lot lately.

But I've given him the important duty of finding this village's former villagers, so I guess there's no helping it.

I don't really like dealing with him, though.

"Did you find more slaves or something?" (Naofumi)

"No! I haven't done anything of the sort. Yes." (Slave Dealer) "Why are you here!? Go home!" (Naofumi)

Should I throw salt at him?

If he says that he came here to eat, then I'll smack him.

By the way, salt isn't particularly valuable here, as we're right next to the ocean.

"Can I not stop by without a reason? Your treatment makes my heart race."  
(Slave Dealer) "You seem to have the intention of making me into your chef."  
(Naofumi) "Ah, by the way that was a joke. Yes." (Slave Dealer) "Are you picking a fight?" (Naofumi)

"No, no. I came here to ask something of the Hero of the Shield." (Slave Dealer) "... Ask something?" (Naofumi)

The Slave dealer is raising his voice. He's trying to make it out as a big deal.

I bet he's up to no good again.

"I need you to go to Zeltbur to buy slaves." (Slave Dealer) "Buy slaves..." (Naofumi)

"My relative has voiced a desire to sell some of his finest slaves to you." (Slave Dealer) "At a discount, right?" (Naofumi)

"He's offering you the best of the best." (Slave Dealer) "That sounds expensive." (Naofumi)

It's not like I'm interested in purchasing expensive slaves.

My main priority is to gather Raphtalia's friends.

From what I've seen so far, this village's villagers are going for quite cheap.

As they're children, their base levels were quite low. And in terms of stats, they were well below those desired for manual labor.

"We will make sure that they are within a price range even you can afford." (Slave Dealer) "Well, I do have some spare change..." (Naofumi)

I'm earning a bit from selling the Bioplant fruit and monster materials that Kiel and the others are collecting while hunting. Right now, the village has little financial difficulty.

It's almost time for me to stop by the Old Man to stock up on weapons.

The village has also improved greatly over time.

I think things will work out even if I'm absent for a bit.

Even if I stop cooking for a while...

...the only reason I have to cook now is because everyone makes a commotion if I don't.

“How long will the trip take?” (Naofumi)

“Let’s see... Normally a boat would be fastest, but on your prided Filo Rial’s legs, it should be around 3 days.” (Slave Dealer)

3 Days, even on Firo. It must be quite far.

Well, it’s another country so I guess that goes without saying.

I think I heard the other heroes say that the weapons from Zeltbur were quite potent, or something.

So those guys have been there already.

Is that why their levels were so high?

They had obtained excellent weapons?

There are plenty of weapons in their possession that I know nothing about.

Like the Flashing sword, the Thunder Shooter, and the Portal Spear I have no idea what weapons would give those skills.

This is one thing I have to ask next I see them.

Though I don’t think they’ll tell me.

“How long by boat?” (Naofumi)

“4 days.” (Slave Dealer)

“Fumu...” (Naofumi)

I glance at the villagers.

Everyone is earnestly working towards reconstruction.

Imya is working with the Dunes to dig a hole.

Because she is a mole, it looks quite fitting.

Raphtalia is lecturing on peddling, and Firo is taking a nap.

Rishia and Kiel are learning swordsmanship from Female Knight.

Other slaves who have decided to fight are getting drilled from the soldiers.

I guess I can leave the village be for a week.

“Then I guess we should go.” (Naofumi)

“I thought you would say as such.” (Slave Dealer) “Raphtalia, Firo, everyone else, please gather here for a second.” (Naofumi)

I call everybody here.

“I’ll be away for around one week. The people accompanying me will be Raphtalia, Firo and...” (Naofumi)

Who should I take?

I think Itsuki had been witnessed in that area.

... Should I take Rishia?

“Rishia, want to come?” (Naofumi)

“Yes!” (Rishia)

“Kiel, please take care of Rishia’s duties while she’s away.” (Naofumi)

“Understood, Nii-chan.” (Kiel)

“Don’t get too carried away.” (Naofumi)

“I-I got it.” (Kiel)

Rishia and Kiel have different ways of working. Of the two, Rishia is more skilled at raising her level.

She’s a bit more like a leader. I guess a Jack of All Trades is good at covering for the faults of a team.

People like Firo just take out enemies with powerful attacks, so nothing can really be learned from them.

The one truly teaching the slaves to fight is Rishia.

I'm a bit nervous leaving that spot to Kiel.

She can be quite rash at times.

"If anything happens, go to the medicine shop in the neighboring village. Otherwise, get the people who specialize in healing magic to help." (Naofumi)  
The Magic Shopkeeper came here and told people what their magic specialties were, so now quite a few people have started to learn basic spells.

I think nothing will happen in just a week...

"And... you." (Naofumi)

I stare at Taniko and think.

"Don't fight too much with Rat over monsters." (Naofumi) "The old lady is doing mean things to them." (Taniko)

This girl likes monsters way too much.

How exactly was she raised?

I should ask her sometime.

"Ah, right. Kiel, try hunting with Rat at some point in time." (Naofumi) "Hm? Sure, but why?" (Kiel)

"That woman incapacitated Firo in an instant. She should have quite some skill, and she is quite knowledgeable on monsters." (Naofumi) "Got it." (Kiel)

"Should I report to the Queen that Iwatani is going to Zeltbur?" (Female Knight)

Female Knight speaks up.

"It's not like I'll be causing any problems." (Naofumi) "Understood. I'm sure the Queen will permit it. We aren't on bad terms with that country." (Female Knight) "Oh, and keep up surveillance on Rat." (Naofumi) "Understood."

(Female Knight)

“... Is there anything I’m forgetting? No? Then let’s go.” (Naofumi)

And that’s how, following the Slave Dealer’s words, we set off for Zeltbur.

By the way, two of the Slave Dealer’s men had hooked up his carriage to ours when we weren’t looking.

“Wow, it sure is fast.” (Slave Dealer)

“Well, yeah...” (Naofumi)

“And I also feel a little sick. Yes.” (Slave Dealer)

Though he is smiling, his face is pale. Is that really something to laugh about?

The men that came with the Slave dealer are already vomiting.

If you aren’t used to it, it is near impossible to ride Firo’s carriage for long periods of time. We aren’t travelling on paved roads, so the carriages are swaying.

I wonder just how fast Firo is running anyways.

It’s definitely fast, but...

“Ahahahahahahahahahah... This is fun!” (Firo)

Firo is laughing dangerously.

I hope we haven’t been jinxed.

Is running in her instincts?

And in three days, we crossed the border without any harm and headed into Zeltbur.

“It’s quite a busy place.” (Naofumi)

Business is thriving here much more so than in Melromark's Castle Town. It is also much more crowded My face isn't widely known here, so no one says anything to me.

"What sort of country is Zeltbur? I just realized I know absolutely nothing about it." (Naofumi) "Then let me explain." (Slave Dealer)

The Slave dealer begins speaking with enthusiasm.

"Zeltbur, the country of mercenaries. Just as its name implies, this country is populated largely by mercenary organizations." (Slave Dealer) "Well, that sounds self-evident." (Naofumi)

"Do you know about Swords for Hire? Their people make money by selling their strength to others. The adventurer's guild has deep ties to this country. This makes industries such as Weapon Shops and Medicine Shops prosper as well. It's a country in which an unbelievable amount of money circulates." (Slave Dealer) "It sure does seem lively." (Naofumi)

I peer outside of the carriage.

You can feel some energy from the Castle Town's residents, but the feeling here is overpowering.

Whether it be the shopping district or the slums, the people here seem to move with more energy than those in Melromark.

"By the way, this country has no monarchy. It is ruled by a council of merchants." (Slave Dealer)"

"Hmm..." (Naofumi)

So it's like a Republic.

Well I guess a country of Mercenaries wouldn't care for monarchy. All that

matters is ability.

“This country also has a dark history involving constant warfare, so you should caution yourself.” (Slave Dealer) “I know.” (Naofumi)

“My clan has set up a base here. We are partaking in quite a profit.” (Slave Dealer) “... As I thought.” (Naofumi)

How should I say this, yesterday I had a nightmare.

I was surrounded by thousands of people that looked exactly like the Slave Dealer. They tried to sell me things.

“And the most famous attraction of the Country is its coliseum.” (Slave Dealer) “Coliseum?” (Naofumi)

A fighting arena. <sup>[1]</sup>

Brawlers fight against one another, and people place bets.

“It’s this country’s trademark. Perhaps the Hero will want to visit as well.” (Slave Dealer) “I’ll consider it. Now where are we headed?” (Naofumi) “Get off the main road, and go down that back alley.” (Slave Dealer) “Got it. Firo.” (Naofumi)

We follow the Slave Dealer’s instruction and head down a back alley.

And then...

From somewhere, a rope is thrown at Firo’s neck.

“Hehehe, that’s quite a rare monster you got there!” (???)

Some Delinquent-esque men appear.

These people don’t know about Firo?

Well, I guess my wanted posters were only spread in Melromark, so they

wouldn't know.

Anyways, these people remind me of someone.

But their fate has already been sealed.

“Ya!” (Firo)

“GUHAAAAAA!?” (Delinquent-esque Male)

The person who threw the rope carelessly approaches Firo, only to get kicked.

... This sure is a barbaric country.

“W-what's with this one!? Quiet down! GUHA!?” (Delinquent-esque Male) “It's a wild one! Quick, tie it up... NUGUGUUUUAAAA!?” (Delinquent-esque Male 2)

And Firo bites down on idiot number 1's head. [2]

He thrashes around for a while, but finally gives up.

“I-it's a monster!!!!” (Delinquent-esque Male)

“Please save me!” (Delinquent-esque Male)

Firo drops the Delinquent, and then takes the rope off of her neck.

“I'd prefer them a bit more salty. Also, they don't look too healthy.” (Firo) “...” (Delinquent-esque males.)

Firo really looks like she will eat them.

I hope she doesn't start maturing in a strange direction.

“Firo, remember that Humans are not food.” (Raphtalia) “Hm?” (Firo)

Though she's like this, she's still a Filo Rial. Her base mental capabilities are not

that high.

It's a pain. I would have preferred it if her intelligence was even lower.

"Firo, when it comes to people, children are tastier. They're softer." (Naofumi)

"Naofumi-sama, what are you teaching her!?" (Raphtalia)

In games and novels, monsters often use that line. I'll try using it here.

But Firo shakes her head violently.

"No!" (Firo)

"Firo learns faster if you bring up children." (Naofumi) "I'm not sure if she even learned anything or not..." (Raphtalia) "Anyways, Firo. It's better if you don't act like you eat people, unless we're threatening them." (Naofumi) "Yeah. I thought I could get them to run away." (Firo)

So she understood what she was doing.

She's picking up things surprisingly well.

It's a pain if she gets too smart, but I guess she's doing well.

"What was that about being salty?" (Naofumi)

"That's what I felt when I licked him." (Firo)

... Let's pray she hasn't gotten a taste for humans.

We stop the Carriage at the Slave Dealer's acquaintance's house.

"Rishia, what will you do from here?" (Naofumi)

"I want to search for Itsuki-sama." (Rishia)

Rishia had been silent in thought for much of the journey. So this is the conclusion she has come to.

I already knew, but Rishia is still chasing after Itsuki.

The other heroes have had some of their comrades captured or killed. But there is no information on Itsuki.

From the beginning, there had been little information circulating about him anyways.

He tried to act like a hero and work under the radar.

“I understand. When night falls, we’ll meet up back at this carriage. Until then, you are free to act on your own.” (Naofumi) “G-got it.” (Rishia)

“What about Firo?” (Firo)

“I’m a little worried about Rishia travelling alone, so please follow her.” (Naofumi) “Yes.” (Firo)

I leave bodyguard duties to Firo, who is not in her human form.

Rishia has gotten strong, so I don’t really have to worry, but the chances of her getting wrapped up in something strange is not zero.

It doesn’t seem that this country keeps good public order.

“Also, Rishia.” (Naofumi)

“What is it?” (Rishia)

“Take off the costume.” (Naofumi)

“I-I know!” (Rishia)

Though she says that, it seems she had forgotten about it up until that point.

I want to believe that she had simply forgot about it, and hadn’t intended on walking through town dressed like that.

**This text is a machine translation (MTL).**

Be warned that the degree of translation error may be higher than



usual.

This page was created before the updated (July 19, 2015) MTL guidelines and has not been reviewed.

For details, see the [machine translation guidelines](#).

# Fulfilled Dream

After parting with Rishia and Firo, Raphtalia and I head to the Slave Dealer.

At the end of the back alley, we see a big coliseum.

In front of this stone dome-like building are sturdy men keeping watch.

Looking at the people standing in line, it seems to be quite popular.

"This way, please." [Slave Dealer]

Walking to the back door, the Slave Dealer lightly greets the men keeping watch.

The men clear the way and let us pass.

"This is just a coliseum on the surface. In the basement, we deal with slaves behind the scenes. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"Ho~..." [Naofumi]

"Well, in this country, most coliseums are like this. Depending on the Union, the traded goods differ. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"And what about your place?" [Naofumi]

"Needless to say, I'm mainly practicing slave trade." [Slave Dealer]

Unrelated to Humans and Demi-Humans...

After walking a bit, we get to a staircase and go down.

We can hear the cheers from above echoing.

The coliseum seems to be quite popular.

"Above us are mercenaries and slaves..... we also have monsters in the coliseum. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"You handle quite a lot." [Naofumi]

"Because of that, I've turned down all the other fights down on that day. There will also be an eating contest. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"I want to let Firo participate." [Naofumi]

It's worth it just to see how far that monster's appetite can go.

Free food and prize money.

Well... I wonder if there's a penalty for losing.

"That would be interesting to see. Maybe it can somehow be done. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

The Slave Dealer gives a strange signal to a bulky man with his fingers. I'll just take you by your word then.

"It would also be good for the Hero of the Shield to enter the drinking contest, otherwise some would suspect that you are a fake." [Slave Dealer]

"To become famous here is one thing, but....." [Naofumi]

By eating the Rukoru Fruit raw, I should be able to win... but the moment I eat it, people around me get nauseated. I don't want to eat in that situation.

Also, I'm not sure to what extent I can handle alcohol.

The Hero of the Shield getting poisoned to death because of drinking too much wouldn't be funny even as a joke.

First of all, I don't really drink that much, so it shouldn't happen.

"And? Are we still not there yet?" [Naofumi]

"We should be almost there." [Slave Dealer]

Saying this while leaving the staircase to a stone corridor, numerous cages become visible.

There are more cages than in the tent of the Slave Dealer. Inside the cages are human and demi-human slaves milling about aimlessly.

Inside this prison, there is a small room visible. There, a tough-looking guy and merchant are waiting.

"Oh... Melromarks-" [Slave Merchant]

"U-Uncle..." [Slave Dealer]

I doubt my eyes. This person... is happily hugging the Slave Dealer in a family reunion.

While the Slave Dealer is a strange gentleman wearing a messy tailcoat and over-sized sunglasses, the Slave Merchant has the same build with almost the same face. The only differences are the tailcoat and the glasses.

"Naofumi-sama, are my eyes fooling me?" [Raphtalia]

"What a coincidence, mine are too." [Naofumi]

Family business is one thing, but what's up with them being this similar?

Dangerous. I almost wanted to see how it would be like to have the whole family gathered together. It would be like some sort of twisted dream come true.

An anime I watched had a similar family business of sisters managing treatment facilities. It was...

Anyway, if they wore the same clothes, you wouldn't be able to tell them

apart.

"While we're at it, I would like to introduce the Hero to my uncle. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"Well, if this isn't the Hero of the Shield. What a strange expression and eyes... I'm about to fall in love. Yes." [Slave Merchant]

"Stop it." [Naofumi]

Ugh. I'm really getting goosebumps. I want to get away from here as soon as possible.

However, to go back just like that would piss me off, so I try to keep patient and stop my feet from retreating.

"Your voice seems to be the kind that's good at handling slaves... I'm thrilled. Would you like to marry my daughter?" [Slave Merchant]

I try to imagine a woman that looks like the Slave Dealer.

"Give me a break..." [Naofumi]

"Right! Did you call Naofumi-sama just to say such stupid things?!" [Raphtalia]

Raphtalia responds angrily.

Ah, she's looking for comrades from her village. It's understandable why she is so angry.

Please get more heated up so that he stops his idiotic jokes. [\[3\]](#)

"Hahaha, that was a joke!" [Slave Merchant]

"Uncle is bad with people." [Slave Dealer]

"Not as bad as you." [Slave Merchant]

The two of them laugh.

Creepy...

"Back to the story." [Naofumi]

"Oh, right. What kind of goods did the Hero of the Shield want to be offered?"  
[Slave Dealer]

"What, straight to the point? I wanted to deepen the friendship between me and the Hero a bit more. Yes." [Slave Merchant]

"That depends on Uncle. Yes" [Slave Dealer]

Yes yes yes yes... How long will this question and answer play go on?

It's getting really troublesome. Is it okay to leave?

"Fumu... since you told me that he is the kind of person you'd fall in love with, I wondered what he was like. Now I understand." [Slave Merchant]

"How could I be so charming?!" [Naofumi]

After all, I don't understand the Slave Dealer's sense.

The reason for that is, no matter what I do, he always talks positively about it.

But, on the other hand, I always have to worry about what he does behind my back.

"Fufufu... no matter where you go, you have this sinister air around you. Yes."  
[Slave Dealer]

"Am I something like the incarnation of evil?" [Naofumi]

"No no, it's your quality as a slave user. It appeals to our eyes<sup>[4]</sup>." [Slave Merchant]

"This person, instead of forcing his slaves to work under penalty of death<sup>[5]</sup>, has the kind of charisma that makes his slaves fight to the death for him." [Slave Dealer]

Big bro~ food~.

Master~ food~.

Hero of the Shield~ food~.

Why did I suddenly think about feeding those guys?

Is this what you call charisma?

...You lose the moment you begin to mind it.

"Fumu, if it comes to this person here, let's pretend that that story never happened." [Slave Dealer]

"What?" [Naofumi]

"No no, don't mind it. Yes." [Slave Dealer]

"Did something happen? Yes." [Slave Merchant]

"Actually--" [Slave Dealer]

Both slave traders start to whisper.

Huh? Which one did we come here with again?

"Shiruru..." <sup>[6]</sup>

I couldn't even understand a bit.

What are they talking about?

"I see, of course you would refuse at such a time. Yes." [Slave Merchant]

"What are you talking about?" [Naofumi]

"How about trying it?" [Slave Merchant]

"Like that, it will be quite convincing." [Slave Dealer]

"Listen." [Naofumi]

The slave traders begin to laugh while looking at me. Stop it.

"Well with that, let us head this way please." [Slave Merchant]

The Slave Merchant of this country starts to guide us.

We follow him just like that.

What the heck did they talk about?!

"This way please." [Slave Merchant]

So, while being guided, we look at the cages and prisons from before.

It looks like in this prison, there is a female Demi-Human sitting in a moldy corner.

She has brown skin and quite a good face.

Her body is quite big.

With a large chest, you could call her an incredibly beautiful woman... right?

Her face also has quite a good complexion.

But, even saying this, she is not a slave that I am looking for.

"I'm not interested in slaves for sexual use." [Naofumi]

"No no, even among the different Demi-Human species<sup>[7]</sup>, this one is quite strong in battles." [Slave Merchant]

"Is it?" [Naofumi]

Somehow, he begins to wave his hands with a business smile on his face.

I somehow get a chill.

That slave...

She has the type of face that makes me want to involuntarily hit it.

No, with this one, there would be a lot of problems.

"It's probably too expensive. I don't need it." [Naofumi]

The slave makes a sullen expression after my reply.

"No no, I'll make you quite a cheap offer." [Slave Merchant]

"Even so..." [Naofumi]

Somehow, I don't like it. Or, to put it in a better way, I don't want to make her my slave.

Even as a slave, if I'm caught up in anything again later, her resemblance to Bitch is too high.

"Do you want to take a look at the next slave?" [Slave Merchant]

"Ah yes, my bad, but I have to refuse this one." [Naofumi]

"Why!?" [Slave]

The slave yells.

Did that hurt her pride?

I don't understand the disgraceful<sup>[8]</sup> behavior of this sex slave.

"You're just not a slave to my taste. That's all." [Naofumi]

"Pedophile!" [Slave]

Shout as much as you want<sup>[9]</sup>. However, while I'm at it...

I glare at the Slave Merchant.

He quickly evades my line of sight.

"Pedophile... It's almost as if she knew about me ahead of time, right?"  
[Naofumi]

After my reply, the Slave Merchant just keeps his mouth tightly closed.

As I thought, there has to be a reason behind it.

Even so, looking at me objectively, all the slaves I bought are children, and most of them are female.

Although it's just a coincidence, it's starting to trouble me recently.

"Uhm, Naofumi-sama? What country's language did she use there?" [Raphtalia]

"You don't know?" [Naofumi]

"Yes." [Raphtalia]

I almost forgot that the shield has a translation function.

Since it seems that this world has multiple languages, it's quite useful that the shield seems to translate all of them.

As I heard the words in Melromark's spoken language... it seems like it's a language spoken in countries with many humans.

Could it be...

"Well, you don't have to concern yourself with it." [Naofumi]

"Why!? Why would you reject me?!" [Slave]

Like that, we continue to follow the Slave Merchant while ignoring that self-proclaimed slave.

# Purchase

“Next is this one.” (Slave Merchant)

I look into the next cage, and see another healthy-looking Demi-Human slave.

But it's a child... a girl.

The child is giving off a suspicious smile and waving her hand at me.

“Ah. Rejected.” (Naofumi)

“Why!?” (Child)

Of course, she objects.

Even though she looks healthy, that doesn't really matter to me.

Most of the slaves I bought were malnourished, and had dead eyes.

Even Kiel wouldn't stop shaking unless Raphtalia was nearby.

Someone who's never been bought. I can't call this dreaming adventurer a slave.

I continue to reject every slave that I am led to, and they object to my rejection.

This continues for a while.

I already understand these people's objectives.

I glare at the Slave Dealer. Both of them. They are both sweating heavily.

“Yo.” (Naofumi)

“It’s unfortunate that there is nothing here to the Hero of the Shield’s liking. Yes.” (Slave Dealer) “*Sigh*... There’s no choice. I didn’t want to have to use this, but...” (Naofumi)

I go towards the child slave I was shown before.

“Oy, what are you planning. This is the Hero of the Shield’s orders. Resist and your country will be ruined.” (Naofumi)

I call out in a Yakuza-like voice.

I don’t think I’ve had to use it recently. The last time I had to was with the accessory merchant.

“Hiii... P-papa said... to become the Shield Hero’s bride. But the Hero only trusts slaves, so to get closer to you I went to a good merchant, and...” (Kid Slave)

In response to my stare, the child slave answers in fear.

But as she is a small child, there’s no helping it.

“... And you’re okay with that?” (Naofumi)

“Eh?” (Kid Slave)

“Even though it’s for your family, do you really want to become the bride of someone you don’t even know?” (Naofumi)

She’s even smaller than Raphtalia when I met her.

It feels unpleasant that someone wanted to use a kid this small to gain status.

“Anyways, just go home and tell them you were seen through. And if they aren’t satisfied, tell them that the Hero of the Shield only takes on people who actually need help.” (Naofumi) <sup>[10]</sup>

It seems that quite a few slaves are here for that purpose.

The Slave Dealers are sweating profusely.

“And that’s how it is. I don’t want any of your merchandise.” (Naofumi)

It seems this was supposed to be a sort of marriage interview.

These people were only slaves in name, and were truly the children of nobles who wanted to get closer to me.

“I believe that my name holds some level of power. Should I write a letter of complaint directed at your enterprise?” (Naofumi) “I understand. Yes. I think the other side will back off. Yes.” (Slave Merchant) “As expected of the Hero of the Shield. You were able to see through the fake slaves in an instant. My heart is racing.” (Slave Dealer) “Stay away!” (Naofumi)

It was blatantly obvious that they weren’t slaves.

Put in more effort if you want to conceal them.

“How deplorable...” (Raphtalia)

Even Raphtalia is fed up.

“Don’t think it’s that easy to seduce Naofumi-sama... If he was that easy, then I wouldn’t be having so much trouble.” (Raphtalia)

Hm? What is she saying?

“Do you have anyone else? If you brought me here for nothing, I will get mad.”

(Naofumi) “Of course we have more. That is our main business, you know.”

(Slave Merchant) “... Don’t try to fool me again.” (Naofumi)

That’s why I don’t like involving myself with these people.

“Does the Hero of the Shield have any specifications?” (Slave Merchant) “Right now, I am looking for slaves that can do skilled work. Also, anyone who was

from Raphtalia's village." (Naofumi)

I have already gathered several skilled individuals, but I need more people.

We now have a medicine and clothing store, so perhaps I can get some people to learn those trades.

Imya is doing well, and I'd like a few more people like her.

"I see, then please step over here." (Slave Merchant) "No lies, okay?" (Naofumi)

"Yes, I know." (Slave Dealer)

"Are you Raphtalia? Would that make your village that one that got hit in the first wave?" (Slave Merchant) "Yes. It may be a difficult request, but do you have anyone?" (Raphtalia) "I have already heard from my nephew and prepared some. Please wait a second." (Slave Merchant)

The Slave Dealers bring out... some from a familiar race.

"So there are Lemos here as well." (Naofumi)

"We have everything to fit your needs." (Slave Merchant)

So these are skilled slaves... There seems to be octopus Demi-Human among them.

"These individual is from the Opuscot<sup>[11]</sup> Race. They are an aquatic race of Beastmen." (Slave Merchant) "They look like monsters." (Naofumi)

"It pains me to hear you say that. We also have Kafe Race slaves prepared." (Slave Merchant)

This one looks like a dolphin... Albeit a bipedal dolphin.

There sure are quite a few types of Demi-Humans.

In such a war-stricken country, they have collected a wide variety of slaves.

"My village is right next to the sea, so there shouldn't be a problem." (Naofumi)

"Then I will prepare some for you. Would you prefer to have children?" (Slave Merchant) "I don't have such a preference. As long as they can do work, there isn't a problem." (Naofumi)

Ah, right.

“There are a lot of Lemos here. Please sort them out.” (Naofumi) “Understood.”  
(Slave Merchant)

I look at the large group of Lemos.

“Does anyone here know a child called Imya?” (Naofumi)

It would be best if they had someone familiar to help them get used to the village.

So I'll try to find people who know Imya.

“'Tis a common name. Just from that, we cannot be sure.” (Lemo Slave)

... I guess it is a common name.

What was her full name again?

Lu... I can't remember.

I guess I should give up. I thought it was a good idea, but...

“Imya Lucullan Lisella Tereti Quariz-chan, Naofumi-sama.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia casually says Imya's real name.

Just how good is her memory?

Raphtalia may be more high-spec than I thought.

Though she is turning into a militaristic character as of late.

“Quariz's Imya!?” (Lemo Slave)

“Do you know her?” (Naofumi)

“There are quite a few people here from the same village.” (Lemo Slave)

“Then I'll take those people.” (Naofumi)

“I understand. Yes.” (Slave Merchant)

“Oi, just who are you?” (Lemo Slave)

“Can’t you tell? I’m a simple slave user.” (Naofumi)

I don’t want to cause a commotion here.

It would be a pain, so I won’t say anything.

“So you’re hiding it...” (Raphtalia)

“Is Imya healthy?” (Lemo Slave)

“Yes, she is working hard in our village.” (Raphtalia)

She answered honestly.

I hope this doesn’t cause any problems.

“I see. I can’t wait to meet her again.” (Lemo Slave)

For her long name to come in handy here, I guess I should pay more attention to the small details.

After that, Raphtalia was able to find 3 of her fellow villagers.

The first one was an Orca-like Beastman.

Her name was apparently Sadina.

I believe I heard her name when Raphtalia was talking to Kiel.

I can’t really read her expression... her figure is large in all directions.

She’s not fat, she’s just giant. Apparently she is average-sized for her race. Somehow, I can imagine her standing out in that village.

“Sadina-nee-chan was a fisherman.” (Raphtalia)

“Nice to meet you, I’m surprised that Raphtalia got so big.” (Sadina) “I’ve heard about you... but why have you become a slave?” (Naofumi) “Well... I could have escaped into the sea alone, but... I got captured when I tried to protect the children.” (Sadina)

So she’s similar to Firo.

Anyways, can she be classified as human? Beastmen display their race traits more readily than other demi-humans.

“Did you stand out in the village?” (Naofumi)

All of the villagers I’ve seen so far have been Demi-Humans. No Beastmen so far.

And most were of dog or cat-like races.

Now that I think of it, I haven’t seen any other Tanukis like Raphtalia yet.

“Like Raphtalia’s parents, I was a wanderer who only stopped by occasionally.”  
(Sadina) “I see.” (Naofumi)

So it was a village kind to strangers.

It seems the previous feudal lord was supposed to be quite wise.

And as such, the entire region fell to ruin upon his absence.

“Well... I guess that’s that...” (Naofumi)

My wallet is crying. It will be difficult to purchase anything else.

“Thank you very much.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia lowers her head towards me.

“Don’t worry about it. You’ve performed duties worthy of this sort of reward.”  
(Naofumi) “Truly, thanks...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia firmly grasps my hand in tears.

I owe her much more than just this.

“Then I guess it’s time to go home.” (Naofumi)

“Please wait a second.” (Slave Merchant)

The Slave Dealer of this country stops me.

“What? Is there anything else?” (Naofumi)

“Before you embark on the journey back, there is a slave you must see.”

(Slave Merchant) “I don’t want to see any more marriage candidates. I know it’s

your job, but please leave it at that.” (Naofumi) “No, not that... It’s today’s main

attraction.” (Slave Merchant) “You do know my financial state, right?”

(Naofumi) “It’s an amazing slave child. I think you will be able to put it to great

use, so I’ll make it cheap.” (Slave Merchant)

Cheap...

I don’t know whether the slave will be helpful or not, though.

I guess looking won’t hurt.

I’ll have to Weapon Copy the Old Man’s new shield instead of buying it at this rate.

“I understand.” (Naofumi)

I follow the Slave Dealers further while being followed closely by my new slaves.

# Medicine of the Sacred Tree

Slave Dealer: “Here we are.”

I was shown a group of slaves who were kept away due to illness.

They were kept in poor conditions similar to those in the tent at Melromark.

Since there was no sign of their health being taken care of, their mental health has also suffered.

Naofumi: “Wait for just a moment.”

I gesture to a sick slave and approach the cell.

Even though the slave hesitates, as I take out medicine from the shield, it is snatched instantly.

There wouldn't be much loss, since the medicine is cheap.

Naofumi: “Open your mouth.”

The medicine given to the first slave starts affecting the surrounding slaves due to the effect: [Range Expansion (small)].

While the medicine was cheap, it was still able to heal the slaves since their illnesses were only superficial.

Slave 1: “...”

Slave 2: “No way, it's a miracle!”

The medicine's effect seems to have worked, as the slaves' skin color gradually returns.

Slave Dealer: "As expected of Hero of the Shield... giving strength to sick slaves at a bargain price instead of paying more for healthy ones!"

A voice of admiration was let out by the Slave Dealer.

Naofumi: "I had no intention of looking after slaves that cannot be healed, since I am no saint. Show me around quickly."

I told the Slave Dealer, while giving out medicine as needed.

Slave Dealer: "As expected, you are truly a god of Demi-Humans."

Naofumi: "So noisy."

For the sake of my mental health, I gave medicine to whoever needed it, even in this world that thrives on commercialism.

Slave Dealer: "I think you understand."

Even if I understand, even if I lose profit...!

Naofumi: "It still feels unpleasant."

The Slave Dealer begins skipping along.

How irritating!

However, at that moment... I was about to meet a certain slave.

It would be a fateful encounter, different than the one with Raphtalia.

Slave Dealer: "Here they are."

Within the cell was a pair of demi-human siblings.

The boy seems to be around 12 years old and appears to be healthy.

On the other hand, the girl is lying down in the opposite direction.

It was difficult to see in the cell. The floor was covered in straw and had one blanket.

The girl seems to be in a bad state.

Sister: "Keho... Keho..." [\[12\]](#)

I took a glance at the boy whose hair color entered my sight.

His hair was black and white and with just a glance, I could grasp that he was of a higher quality than the other slaves.

While his pupils were blue... a portion of his iris had vertical stripes which made me think of a cat's pupil.

The whites of his eyes gave off an intimidating look and his savage facial expression spoke of his wild nature.

His ears were thick and roundish for a cat, and his tail had impressive black and white stripes.

Naofumi: "Seems expensive for a child."

Slave Dealer: "As expected of a hero, who takes immediately considers price even during first impressions."

Raphtalia was cheap in my opinion. Well, it's better to calculate price before performance.

Naofumi: “Doesn’t he seem unique?”

Slave Dealer: “In a way. Yes.”

Naofumi: “Compared to other Demi-Human slaves, there’s something different about him.”

Slave Dealer: “Yes, this is a famous species called the Hakuko.”

Naofumi: “The Hakuko...”

Is it a white tiger subspecies?

The white tiger was a powerful animal in my world with enormous physical strength.

Slave Dealer: “The name was said to be given by the Four Heroes of ancient times.”

Hakuko... why was it named in a provincial accent?

From Calmira Island, I learned that all of the past heroes had horrible naming sense.

Well, Firo isn’t a name that I could be proud of either. Firo... Firorial...

Naofumi: “It passes. How much will it cost?”

Slave Dealer: “Would you like to see its stats?”

Naofumi: “I don’t think he’s that strong, but can his level and statistics be seen?”

According to the document given to me, the brother’s level is surprisingly high.

However, his appearance is fairly young for a level 32.

If he was a member of my village, he would be fairly tall by level 30.

Naofumi: "His level is higher than expected, but are there any racial or individual differences for this kid?"

Slave Dealer: "The reason he is still a child at this level is because his race is special. Level 60 is his race's max limit and they can class up starting at level 50."

Naofumi: "So when he becomes an adult, he will get stronger?"

Slave Dealer: "That's correct."

Does this kid belong to a powerful race?

If class ups are usually only possible at level 40 for even someone like Firo, what will happen when this guy classes up?

This kid sparks my interest.

By the way, the younger sister is level 1.

Slave Dealer: "The Hakoku are famous for acting against the plans of a hero called the Sage King of Melromarc in the past."

The example is wasted because that is a person I hold in low regard. Still, maybe he became foolish because of his power...

Raphtalia: "Even if he's called the Sage King..."

Naofumi: "Even if that guy wasn't there, Melromarc wouldn't be affected at all."

Slave Dealer: "Well whatever, even if you don't respect the Sage King, the Hakoku is a race that is counted among the Five Fingers of this world, a difficult feat indeed."

It any case, it would be a waste to miss this opportunity of greatly increasing my war potential. If I run into an opponent with a tricky defense, the Hakoku's

power may be a necessary weapon in my arsenal. That's assuming of course that they truly have that much potential power.

The Slave Dealer whispered into my ear so that the siblings wouldn't hear.

Slave Dealer: "Although the elder brother is healthy, the younger sister suffers from a hereditary illness. She cannot see, she cannot walk, and she has a short life expectancy. However, the elder brother still cherishes the younger sister."

Even if he becomes a slave, he will still try to protect his sickly younger sister like some sort of hero.

Even if he was the bad guy in a manga, he would still be a popular character even if he's not the main character.

Furthermore, he also has the power of the Hakoku race. I'm a little interested in this fellow.

Naofumi: "Hmm."

Slave Dealer: "I have a plan. You can separate the siblings while the elder brother works for you. After the younger sister dies, we can make the elder brother believe that she is hospitalized in a clinic by imitating her voice. I've heard that you have a monster that is good at mimicking voices, yes?."

Was the vocal mimicry in one of my monsters that good?

Although I am always peddling or fighting like the other heroes... Firo could have become a hit singer.

When we visited bars with her in a good mood, Firo could easily sing the songs that the bard had just sung.

Slave Dealer: "The brother will continue to fight thinking that his sister is alive, and will keep fighting until he dies."

An evil mob-boss-like proposal was made.

It would end up being an endless betrayal flag.

That's right. Then is saving both of the siblings how to reach the good ending?

Even if it was a joke, there's no need to become an enemy of the state.

Naofumi: "That is why a Slave Dealer like you can only amount to this much. Let me show you how it's done."

I gestured to the Slave Dealer to open the cell.

Brother: "What are you planning!?"

Naofumi: "Whatever, just be quiet for now."

I enter the cell while approaching the younger sister, who is lying down in the back.

Brother: "Stop! Don't you lay a hand on Atlas!"

Atlas... how unusual. It's a name I've seen somewhere in a game or something in my world.

Was it ever a girl's name?

The elder brother kept getting in the way, so I took out and showed him some medicine.

Naofumi: "I'm only going to give her medicine. Have you seen this kind of medicine before?"

The medicine was made using the Shield. I'm not actually able to make it myself yet.

It was a skill that came from the Sacred Tree Shield of the Spirit Turtle...  
Making it was possible because of a recipe called Medicine of Miracles.

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Sacred Tree Shield of the Spirit Turtle 0/40 C

Ability Unsealed

Equipment Bonus: Recipe: Medicine of Miracles.

Unique Effect: Divine Protection of the Sacred tree

Proficiency 0

---

The effects of the shield were still unknown, but it seems to have something to do with a plant.

The medicine can only be made once for now. Some ointment, magic water, soul healing water and a few other ingredients were mixed together into a supernatant fluid with the toxic parts being filtered by exquisite distribution... in other words... it's sap from the Sacred Tree.

Tons of medicine had been used up in the process of creating the Medicine of Miracles. Preparing it involved a great deal of trial and error.

Trying to make it would be considered reckless by any drug store. It is so difficult to make that I could barely make one, even with the power of the shield.

It is an extremely valuable medicine and it goes by the name... Yggdrasil.

Speaking of the Yggdrasil medicine, it's the same medicine that that cheerful Old Hag took saying that it wasn't strong enough.

In the case of a game, it would be of the Mega Elixir class.

Just how much money did that Old Hag think was spent for her to drink such valuable medicine?

For an adventurer that was retired in the countryside, the son must have

been pretty foolish to spend that much money. Does he even care?

Well, in any case, the medicine is an extremely powerful one that cures most illnesses.

Naofumi: "I am going to be the owner of both of you. This medicine is a powerful medicine that will heal your sister. You can repay me the cost of this medicine with your life."

The pharmacist told me that it had an unbelievable price according to market value.

However, when it comes down to life that cannot be saved without it, people would do anything to get it.

Its powerful effect has many people asking for it. Although it would end up being bought for an incredibly high price, its power of practically giving life to the dying makes it much more important to keep rather than sell. It's better to keep a strong ally alive than it is to make money, which can be done at any time.

Brother: "...It's not a lie?"

Naofumi: "Can't you tell by its smell?"

The elder brother took a sniff of the medicinal smell.

He soon raised his face and cried-

Brother: "It's Yggdrasil medicine!"

Naofumi: "Correct."

Is he a dog or something? Does this place really have such excellent races?

Brother: "It still doesn't mean that there isn't poison in it!"

Naofumi: “How can you be alive while suspecting all medicine? Do you suspect that all the medicine given to your sister has been poisoned too?”

Brother: “...”

Naofumi: “I may not be trusted and I don’t need to give the medicine to your sister, but isn’t she in pain? Doesn’t that mean anything to you?”

Brother: “...”

The elder brother groans regretfully.

Atlas: “Is someone here?”

The girl slowly turned her head while coughing.

They said that she couldn’t see. She can only determine where we are by our voices.

Atlas: “I think... although his voice seems powerful and forceful... it is actually very gentle. Elder brother... how do you see it?”

Brother: “Ah... come on... how can that be...”

Atlas: “Even though such great power is felt...”

Slowly, the girl turns herself towards me.

The elder brother reluctantly guides her hand to approach me.

I approached the girl called Atlas.

How terrible. Her entire body is covered in bandages so that I couldn’t even see her real face.

Her skin was also covered with festering sores, so much so that it’s a wonder she’s even alive...

Although her ears and tail were probably of the same race as her elder brother, it was difficult to say for sure.

Atlas: "You came for business..."

Naofumi: "You somewhat understand."

Atlas: "Yes... you want me to act as a hostage for my elder brother..."

To understand this much... and yet... her tone was of one who has given up.

Atlas: "Owner of the gentle voice... would you please tell me your name?"

Naofumi: "Naofumi."

Atlas: "Naofumi."

Her pronunciation was excellent, as she was the first one to say my name correctly.

Atlas: "Naofumi... if you can... please cherish my elder brother."

Brother: "Atlas! What are you trying to say!?"

Probably, she knew about her situation, but wanted to ask for just this one small request.

Naofumi: "Unfortunately, I have no intention of listening to that request..."

Atlas: "Is that so..."

Naofumi: "...since I'm going to be taking care of you as well. I'm sure you know what this medicine is."

Atlas: "Ah... this is..."

Although she tried to say more, Atlas just nodded to my words while drinking the Yggdrasil medicine given to her.

The elder brother clenched his fist, but was stopped by Atlas without being

able to complain.

Atlas: "Ku... N..."

Atlas drank the medicine obediently.

A strange and exceedingly expansive light from the medicine's effect was emitted.

Is it because of the Sacred Tree Shield of the Spirit Turtle? It's obvious that the Shield clearly affects the power of medicine. It would not be funny if its effects have risen even further.

Atlas: "Fu~u... Fu~u..."

The medicine was effective and her breathing has become quiet.

Atlas: "W... hat? My body feels much lighter."

Brother: "Atlas..."

Atlas: "The back of my body feels warm and my skin is itchy."

Naofumi: "The medicine is effective, but since it takes time to fully work, you'll need to sleep obediently."

Atlas: "Yes... but... I'm not used to this... Thank you..."

I stood up and left the cell.

Naofumi: "Now then, what is your name?"

The elder brother hides his face while staring at me.

Naofumi: "I see... Atlas? What a bad place this is to sleep..."

Brother: "It's Fohl!"

Naofumi: "I see... well, now you're my slave. As you can see, the medicine has worked.."

Fohl: "...Fine. It seems the medicine was real. I'll work off the cost of it."

Fohl answers reluctantly.

Even after I helped him, this is what I get.

It seems that Fohl is a considerable siskon.

Naofumi: "So you admit that it worked?"

Fohl: "Maybe... but I'll never hand over my younger sister to... you."

Raphtalia: "What is this? It seems that his younger sister liking Naofumi-sama has sparked his jealousy."

Fohl: "What?! No! It's different! For this woman to say such a rude thing!"

Fohl bellowed and pointed at Raphtalia.

It's normal for this kid to not know his place. When he arrives at my village, I will give him proper Spartan training. I am looking forward to his growth.

The Yggdrasil medicine is the medicine that cured that grandma. If it can heal that old lady, it should be able to cure this younger sister. If the younger sister can be cured, my military power will be greatly increased. You could even say that the price of the medicine was worth it.

Raphtalia: "It's okay, Naofumi-sama is not a bad person."

Raphtalia shows a small smile to Fohl.

Naofumi: "I'll perform the slave registration later."

Slave Dealer: "As you request."

In this way, I opted for the siblings' purchase.

# Perfect Hidden Justice

I apply my blood to the slave sealing ink and leave the rest to the slave dealers.

“Don’t register something else with it like last time.” (Naofumi) “I already understand.” (Slave Dealer)

I’ll file a complaint if I get another random slave mixed in.

“Now then, while the registration happens, you will have free time, so why not check the Coliseum upstairs? Yes.” (Slave Merchant) “Fine.” (Naofumi)

On the Slave Merchant’s orders, the Slave Dealer begins to lead me towards the Coliseum.

And, with nothing else to do, we follow him.

According to the Slave Dealer, today they are holding free matches.

Anyone can enter if they want money.

The spectators bet on who will win, and many will lose all of their money.

We get out of the dungeon area, and begin climbing some stairs.

“The crowd is quite large.” (Naofumi)

The matches have yet to start, and the reception desk is quite lively.

The atmosphere is like that of a baseball stadium.

“For my uncle’s work, I will be drawing in customers. Yes.” (Slave Dealer) “This place seems to have a lot of money circulating around.” (Naofumi) “Hero-sama should participate as well.” (Slave Dealer) “And why would I do that?” (Naofumi)

I can only defend, so how the hell am I supposed to win?

“There are also team games. I’m sure you will be a popular competitor.” (Slave Dealer) “I’ll consider it based on the rewards.” (Naofumi)

I might be able to make a bit of money here...

If Raphtalia and Firo fight with me, I don’t see how we would could lose.

“Another Coliseum we manage has special events for monsters. Yes. Perhaps you may be interested in entering your Filo Rial there.” (Slave Dealer)

If Taniko or Rat heard of that, they’d throw a fit. They’re both against the exploitation of monsters.

Having Firo fight for money doesn’t sound bad though.

“I’ll consider it.” (Naofumi)

“I’ll wait for a favorable response. Yes.” (Slave Dealer)

The Slave Dealer leads us to some spectator seats reserved for him.

The seats are right above the Competitor waiting room. We can see the entire stadium from here.

Hmm... There are quite a few people with evil eyes. Quite a few of them look very muscular.

... And there I witnessed something I hadn’t been expecting.

“I-Itsuki!?” (Naofumi)

Mixed in with the other contestants is, without a doubt, Itsuki.

I get up and head down towards the field.

“Is something wrong? Yes.” (Slave Dealer)

“Yeah.” (Naofumi)

I tell the Slave Dealer that I saw the Hero of the Bow among the contestants.

“Here, anyone can enter the games, so it’s not odd for a hero to participate. Yes.” (Slave Dealer) “Don’t they have to register themselves?” (Naofumi)

“Participants can register under any name they wish.” (Slave Dealer) “What is he registered as?” (Naofumi)

I read out the number printed on Itsuki’s chest.

“Um...” (Slave Dealer)

The Slave Dealer receives a list from a muscular man with a sack over his head.

“That number, 982.. That person seems to be registered under 『Perfect Hidden Justice』.” (Slave Dealer)

I thought I would fall over.

So jokes really can make people fall over.

Perfect Hidden Justice!? What sort of bad joke is that?

Not even someone with Chuunibyou would use that one. [\[13\]](#)

Doesn’t he feel embarrassed? Even I’m feeling embarrassed here.

“Can you arrange to talk with him?” (Naofumi)

“Yes, my authority will allow it.” (Slave Dealer)

The Slave merchant gives orders to his subordinates, and we are led to the contestant waiting room.

“Oy. Been a while.” (Naofumi)

I call out to Itsuki.

I could have called Rishia, but I wouldn't be able to talk to him after the game started.

I'll find her later.

“I... right... everyone...” (Itsuki)

“Oy.” (Naofumi)

“Yes, everyone's looking at me... yes. Everyone... looks at me...” (Itsuki) “Listen when someone's talking to you!” (Naofumi)

Itsuki continues to mumble something to himself. I can't really tell what he's saying.

I hear a gong-like sound from the center of the Coliseum.

“I'm... a Hero of Justice!” (Itsuki)

My words don't even register to him. Itsuki follows the other competitors and leaves the room.

“The hell is up with him?” (Naofumi)

It's as if he didn't even notice me.

"Well... I looked into that competitor, but he seems to visit a coliseum every day. Yes." (Slave Dealer) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"Yes. He has made himself known in this country as a mysterious archer. He has been recorded to become ecstatic when he hears applause." (Slave Dealer)  
"...Did something happen?" (Naofumi)

His desire for praise had always been strong, but now he sounds like a mental patient.

What could have drawn him down to that level?

I can kinda imagine what his experience with the Turtle must have been like.

"Shadow." (Naofumi)

Let's see if she's here. [\[14\]](#)

"What is it-gojaru?" (Shadow)

... She really appeared.

"The ride on the Hero of the Shield's carriage was terrible-gojaru." (Shadow)  
If I worry about it, I won't get anywhere. I won't confront her on the matter.

"Why were you unable to locate Itsuki when he's in such plain sight?"  
(Naofumi) "The Hero of the Bow has a habit of concealing himself, so there was little information on his appearance and location being circulated-gojaru."  
(Shadow)

Well, that's true. The Heroes have changeable weapons and common faces. If they change to a common weapon, then they are unidentifiable from the rest.

Though he still uses a bow, I guess he is smart enough not to change it in battle.

“Do you think you can capture him here?” (Naofumi)

“The Queen has given an order to keep tabs on him, but to wait until an order is given. That Hero is good at running and hiding-gojaru.” (Shadow) “Well, that’s true... can you continue following him?” (Naofumi) “I’ll do that-gojaru. However our personnel has decreased from that time with the Spirit Turtle. I cannot call for reinforcements.” (Shadow) “Understood. Ah, right.” (Naofumi)

I turn to Raphtalia

“Raphtalia, should we report this to Rishia?” (Naofumi)

“No! Absolutely not. If Rishia sees the Hero of the Bow acting like that, she’ll develop a mental trauma.” (Raphtalia) “I... see...” (Naofumi)

He seems to have become mentally crippled, fighting in the coliseum only for praise.

If Rishia met Itsuki like that, there’s no telling what will happen.

There’s a possibility she will continue trying to talk to him and... Perhaps snap and stab him? [\[15\]](#)

I can only see bad endings to that scenario.

And where are his comrades?

“Anyways, I’ll start my investigation-gojaru.” (Shadow)

“Ah, if you find anything out, please report it to me.” (Naofumi) “Understood-gojaru.” (Shadow)

“Now then, what should we do about Rishia?” (Naofumi)

“I’ll meet up with her and keep her away, so please... keep it a secret.”

(Raphtalia) “Understood, I leave it to you.” (Naofumi)

I use the slave system to track down Rishia. It gives me a general idea of her location.

I can't use it to find people who aren't in my party, and I can't use it to find people who are too far away.

“It seems she's in the Plaza south of here. I'll leave it to you, Raphtalia.”

(Naofumi) “Understood. I'll definitely keep her away.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia runs off.

Those two do get along quite well.

“Anyways... I wonder what happened to him.” (Naofumi)

“Ah, about that-gojaru. We have some witness testimonies from the soldiers from the Spirit Turtle Village.” (Shadow) “You should have brought that up sooner.” (Naofumi)

“Even though I say that, it's information you probably already inferred. Apparently the order in which the seal statues were destroyed was first, the Hero of the Bow; second, the Hero of the Spear; third, The Hero of the Sword-gojaru.” (Shadow) “I see...” (Naofumi)

Ren's story did give off the feeling that the turtle awakened almost immediately after he destroyed the statue.

“The Hero of the Bow was the first one to cause a commotion, and all of his companions were with him, or so it was recorded-gojaru.” (Shadow) “What do you mean?” (Naofumi)

“...The Hero of the Bow destroyed a statue half a day before the other two. After that, taking advantage of the commotion, numerous treasure hunters began plundering the nearby ruins causing mass confusion. The Hero of the Spear used the chaos to enter a temple and break a statue, and almost

immediately following him, the Hero of the Sword destroyed one as well-gojaru.” (Shadow) “So Itsuki and friends were apprehended after they first broke a statue, and had this action recorded by the area’s soldiers?” (Naofumi) “And after a while, the Spirit Turtle awakened just as the Hero of the Bow testified-gojaru. In a panic, the guards released him so he could go fight it-gojaru.” (Shadow)

And after that, he went missing.

Something must have caused the time lag in the Spirit Turtle’s awakening.

That kid is a mass of half-assed justice.

What could have caused him to have to break laws with his Justice?

So the reason Ren and Elena were able to enter so easily was because of the chaos caused by Itsuki’s group.

The game starts, and I watch Itsuki fight.

I thought that a long range weapon would make the match unfair, but the playing field was a narrow maze where one would be unable to build up distance. He was at a disadvantage.

But Itsuki is easily able to win.

So he’s at least stronger than the average fighter.

But his eyes look strange. Whenever the crowd gets louder, he raises both of his arms in the air and shouts out.

Is that really Itsuki?

The Itsuki I know is just a bit more mature. He was a relatively docile hypocrite.

I haven’t talked to him yet, so the cause is still a mystery.

Though I’m not sure if he’ll actually say anything.

I guess I should at least try.

# Return to the Village

After Itsuki's game ended, the coliseum continued to host other events, but I didn't feel like watching.

"I heard that the weapon shops here had a wide variety. I'm going to go check them out." (Naofumi) "Should I show you around? Yes." (Slave Dealer)

"Yeah... I'll leave it to you." (Naofumi)

It's quite a bustling city. I think that it will be easy to get lost.

"Then, you there, please lead him around." (Slave Dealer)

A large muscular man raises his hand to announce his presence.

I follow him and arrive at the biggest market area in the city.

It reminds me of a mall from the other world.

"Well, well. If it isn't the Hero of the Shield." (Accessory Merchant) "I don't know you." (Naofumi)

The Accessory merchant beckons to me from a nearby store. I act oblivious.

"This is one of the stores I manage. I'd definitely like to show off some of my wares." (Accessory Merchant)

So it's his own store.

I can see some rubies on sale.

If I keep ignoring him here, I may come to regret it later.

I take a deep sigh and enter the store.

“You have quite a big store here.” (Naofumi)

“Yes, is there anything you are particularly looking for?” (Accessory Merchant)

“I’m looking for weapons and armor.” (Naofumi)

“Then you will want the second floor. Are you certain you have no interest in the accessories on the first floor?” (Accessory Merchant)

I scan the store’s interior. Sparkling gems are displayed in multiple cases and hung all over the walls. It’s too bright.

“I’m not interested.” (Naofumi)

“By the way, is Hero-sama still using the techniques I taught you? You can’t make good equipment if you let your skills dull.” (Accessory Merchant) “I use them occasionally.” (Naofumi)

I’ve made some accessories for the slaves out of monster materials.

Most of them now wear items made of monster bone.

The bone makes for quite potent accessories, giving numerous bonus effects. They also deteriorate slowly. The downside is that they don’t grant many stat boosts.

“Here, though it may look rough.” (Naofumi)

I hand over an accessory I had randomly made in my free time.

“Wow! A bone accessory!?” (Accessory Merchant)

“... Is something wrong?” (Naofumi)

“What are you saying...? The materials used to make it may be cheap, but the bonuses it grants will make it sell high among adventurers.” (Accessory Merchant) “It’s definitely cheap, but I’ve been practicing my design skills.”

(Naofumi) “Obviously! By the way, is it true that you’ve recently acquired a large amount of land?” (Accessory Merchant) “... If you want to set up a store there, then just go over.” (Naofumi) “I still have contracts here, you know!” (Accessory merchant)

The accessory merchant’s eyes shine with an evil light as he says this.

I hesitate before proceeding. Anyone would.

“Anyways, if you come over, make sure not to interfere with reconstruction.” (Naofumi) “I know... Fufufu...” (Accessory Merchant)

Why is it that all the merchants I meet seem evil?

“How goes the selling of the Miraka accessories?” (Naofumi) “They’re quite popular. After all, a great calamity did just occur... Even average civilians have begun training to protect themselves.” (Accessory Merchant)  
So his profit has increased.

“Well, I’m going off to check the weapon selection.” (Naofumi) “I look forwards to our next meeting.” (Accessory Merchant) “Yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

It enervates me dealing with this type of merchant.

I think so as I proceed to the second floor.

Weapons are displayed everywhere like in an exhibition.

There are also various articles of clothing.

...hmm. There are some familiar weapons, such as the Meteor Iron Sword and the Meteor Iron Lance. They’re on sale for a bargain price.

Oh? There’s also Spirit Turtle armor here.

The variety here isn't much different from Melromark.

And the price is exponentially higher.

Well, I guess the price of imports are higher than they are in their original country.

... I look around for shields, but I don't see many that I haven't seen at the Old Man's shop.

Well, there are a few unfamiliar shields. I guess I'll try touching one.

"Ah, can I try equipping this shield for a second?" (Naofumi) "Go ahead." (Store Clerk)

With the clerk's consent, I lift up the unfamiliar shield. Weapon Copy activates.

Spike Shield, Frisbee Shield, Jewel Shield, Platinum Shield.

I copy all of the weapons unfamiliar to me.

I wonder how powerful these new additions are.

I haven't really been fighting as of late... My stats are still affected by the curse.

I remember the Old Man saying that Spirit Turtle Materials were hard to work with, but that seems to be true.

In this large store, I don't see any weapons made of the material.

"Hm?" (Naofumi)

I notice an item marked as 'Not for Sale'.

It's a single edged sword... With a glance, I can tell it is made from Spirit Turtle parts.

I try to appraise it.

Spirit Turtle Sword.

Quality ...

It's no good. My appraisal level isn't high enough to get any info.

But I can see that it is quite skillfully made... It's even being kept from sale.

Perhaps it shall be put up for auction in the near future.

So there really are skilled craftsmen in this world. However, as I have no money, it doesn't really concern me.

I'll tell the Old Man about it later.

And so I stayed a little longer, then left.

"You're already back?" (Rishia)

As I return, I see Rishia waiting at our meeting spot with a depressed expression.

"I need to get the slaves I bought to the village. I don't have any money for an inn for them all." (Naofumi)

I could just leave them at the Slave Merchant's place and pick them up later, or I could send them back with Firo, but... I don't want to risk Rishia finding Itsuki, so it's probably best to leave early.

Raphtalia is comforting Rishia while sweating profusely.

"Hey hey hey, why is Raphtalia Oneechan..." (Firo)

"Quiet, bird." (Naofumi)

Firo stares at Raphtalia and enters Inquisition Mode, but I use her slave seal to

stop her.

“Mu....” (Firo)

Firo tries to raise a complaint, but I keep her quiet.

If things go wrong here, Rishia will develop a mental trauma.

Her mental breakdown flag has been raised for a while, but I don't want it to go off now.

After Itsuki... is able to collect himself some more, I can let Rishia deal with him.

I'm a little hesitant letting them meet. For moral reasons.

Rishia seems to hold a fantasy-like image of Itsuki.

I think their personalities will prevent them from making up.

That won't help Rishia's motivation at all.

But I guess I'll at least ask.

“Rishia.” (Naofumi)

“What is it?” (Rishia)

“You want to become strong so that Itsuki recognizes you, correct?”

(Naofumi) “Yes.” (Rishia)

“Then you'll still work to become stronger from here on out?” (Naofumi) “Yes. I still have a long way to go. I want to get strong enough to fight alongside Itsuki-sama.” (Rishia)

And that's why I can't let them meet now.

For Itsuki's sake and for Rishia's sake.

Though I only really care about the latter.

If they meet now, both of them will only suffer.

And so, we all keep silent and turn our backs to Rishia.

We load the new slaves onto the carriage, and prepare set off.

There are now three carriages connected to Firo.

And she is having more fun than ever.

The Slave Dealer apparently has business in Zeltburg, so he stayed behind.

There's no need for us to return together. He seems to have taken a strange liking to me, but I don't really enjoy his company.

I look at the slaves on the carriage I'm in. It's quite cramped.

We've split them between the carriages to make the trip easier, but Sadina is too big... just her alone takes up much of the carriage's space.

"Hey, you're too big. Could you possibly get there alone by sea?" (Naofumi)

"Naofumi-sama!?" (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia seems mad.

Her reaction is justified, however Sadina really is in the way.

She's too big to fit in a carriage. I could send her by foot, but would she be able to keep up with Firo's legs?

That's not possible.

Is having her go by sea that cruel?

"That sounds good!" (Sadina)

And Sadina happily accepts my proposal.

I was half-joking, you know.

“Really?” (Naofumi)

“It’s much easier than walking on land, and if I use underwater currents, it will also be faster.” (Sadina) “Will you be able to deal with sea monsters on your own?” (Naofumi) “Don’t underestimate me.” (Sadina)

I think her level was... in the 40s.

Even with a discount, she was quite expensive.

“Understood, then I’ll leave it to you.” (Naofumi)

“Yes. I can’t wait to see everyone.” (Sadina)

She says as she jumps into a river by herself.

Zeltburg is close to the ocean, so she’ll probably make it just fine.

“Sadina Neechan is really strong, you know.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia seems proud of the village slaves we found this time.

It doesn’t seem Sadina had as many signs of abuse as the others.

“Oneechn helped protect us.” (Raphtalia)

“Hmm...” (Naofumi)

Is it because she was older?

Her stats aren’t particularly high, but I guess she is skillful.

The village’s children probably relied on her quite a bit.

“...I see.” (Fohl)

Fohl watches Sadina as she disappears into the water.

Can he sense her will?

He places a jug of water next to Atlas, who is lying on the floor.

“Thank you, Onii-sama.” (Atlas)

“Don’t worry about it. Is your health getting any better?” (Fohl) “Yes... Most of the pain is gone.” (Atlas)

“That’s good.” (Fohl)

“Naofumi-sama... when will we leave?” (Atlas) <sup>[16]</sup>

Atlas directs a question towards me.

She can’t see, so I’m a little concerned.

“Yeah, we’ll depart soon.” (Naofumi)

“Understood.” (Atlas)

“I think it’s best if you took some more medicine.” (Naofumi)

I change my shield to the Sacred Tree Shield, and hand all of the Yggdrasil medicine I have left to Atlas.

Perhaps it will improve her condition further.

“Thank you...” (Atlas)

“Don’t worry about it.” (Naofumi)

I direct a condescending glare at Fohl.

“Gununu...” (Fohl) <sup>[17]</sup>

He seems conflicted.

Well, I’ll have him work hard to pay off the medicine costs.

It was expensive, so he better be prepared for hell.

“Naofumi-sama...” (Atlas)

Atlas grasps my hand.

“Please get along with my brother.” (Atlas)

“We’re not fighting! Right?” (Fohl)

Fohl approaches me amiably and puts his arm around my shoulders.

What’s with his feigned friendliness?

If you think we’re friends, you’re wrong.

“You too, Onii-sama. Get along with this nice person.” (Atlas) “I-I know!” (Fohl)

“That’s good.” (Atlas)

Atlas seems tired.

Even though the medicine is working, she’s still sick.

“I’m getting a little tired.” (Atlas)

“Then rest. Our village is a bit far... And our carriage’s bird is a terrible driver. It’s best to rest now.” (Naofumi) “Your carriage’s bird? She must be... that person with a strong aura like Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

Atlas points in Firo’s direction.

Though she’s blind, it seems she can sense some things.

“What’s up, master?” (Firo)

“Ah, our new slave, Atlas, is blind, but she could tell that you were strong.” (Naofumi) “Ehehe, Firo has been praised.” (Firo)

“That person... is very energetic and... has a lot of innocence. I can tell that she has been raised by Naofumi-sama’s kindness.” (Atlas) “Yeah!” (Firo)

Firo puffs up her chest and answers.

Kindness? When have I ever been kind to anyone? What is this person saying?

I’ll ignore it.

“Anyways, we have a sick patient here, so sudden accelerations are banned.”

(Naofumi) “Yes~” (Firo)

“And Atlas, if you’re sleepy then go to sleep. Let Fohl endure the ride by himself.” (Naofumi) “...ah.” (Atlas)

Fohl glares at me with rebellious eyes. It’s of no concern to me.

The coupling of the carriages is complete. We leave Zeltburg in the darkness of the night.

# Princess Visit

With Firo advancing at a slow pace, we needed 4 days to reach the village.

We turned the monsters in our path into food and our carriage journey advanced with no problems.

All the slaves who ate my food for the first time had the same reaction. Was it really that delicious?

By the way, Fohl became sulky, whereas Atlas praised it greatly.

The third night of our trip.

“Naofumi-sama.....um.....my apologies, but could you please change my bandages?” (Atlas) “I’ll do that kind of thing!” (Fohl)

“Well, I should apply a salve for skin disease while I’m at it.” (Naofumi)

“Damn...” (Fohl)

The medicine seemed to be working and Atla’s skin improved, but she complained about itching, so I took off her bandages.

“...Huh? It seems that the skin that had looked like it was burned has now healed.” (Naofumi) “Y-yeah.” (Fohl)

Fohl stared at his little sister with astonishment.

Was this really such a surprising situation? Well it was a marvelous recovery though.

And so I removed the bandages covering her face and checked.

“Well.....” (Raphtalia)

When Raphtalia looked at her condition, her voice slipped out without thinking. It's unusual for Raphtalia to expose such behavior, because she always maintains her silence when it's quiet. It isn't really that surprising though.

The brother's face looked conceited, but even though I had been prepared for it, when I looked at the little sister, I was also surprised.

Despite being a slave, her hair was glossy and her skin was smooth and pale.

I wonder how old she is....her brother looked about 12 or 13, so she should be younger than that....

Her eyes were out of focus and her pupils were dilated. I knew that if a blind person had their eyes open, their eyes would be like this.

That slave merchant said such unorthodox things, but isn't he selling slaves of this class for a different reason?

Well, I should be saying this after the skin disease has recovered completely.

“I feel so refreshed. Naofumi-sama, thank you very much.....for applying the salve for me.” (Atlas) “Mm....” (Naofumi)

I'm lost for words. Raphtalia and Firo can be considered to be beautiful without being biased, but Atlas' is a beauty of a different class.

She has a young appearance, and yet, it could be said that she was as delicate as a doll.

“Ooh....Atlas has become so pretty.” (Fohl)

Are you the father of a bride the night before her wedding or something!

“It looks like the progression is going well. The salve isn't really necessary

anymore.” (Naofumi) “Is that so?” (Atlas)

The blind Atlas touched her face with her hand.

“It’s not rough anymore.” (Atlas)

“So it seems.” (Naofumi)

“It’s all thanks to Naofumi-sama. Thank you very much.” (Atlas)

Atlas made a quick bow of her head.

“Don’t worry about it.” (Naofumi)

Another slave peeked at us from a crack in the carriage. I could hear a small voice exclaiming something about a beauty.

She hasn’t been completely cured yet, but she should be soon. As expected of the Yggdrassil medicine, the results are extraordinary.

“And there you have it, Fohl. You understand, right?” (Naofumi) “.....Yeah.” (Fohl)

Fohl came to his senses with my words and nodded with vexation.

I’ve healed his frail little sister to this extent. I will have him work wholeheartedly.

“Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

“What is it?” (Naofumi)

“Please tell us.....what will be awaiting us in the village that we’re heading to? Raphtalia-san, please teach us as well.” (Atlas)

When we journey in the carriage, I usually process monster parts, compound medicine, and also study magic, but I wasn’t doing those things right now.

Well, it's fine.

“The hell-like days of me working everyone hard are——” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia was rather loud.

I was only going to scare them a little.

Raphtalia hates these kinds of pranks, doesn't she.

Well, I have the feeling that I may have been the cause of that.

“Tsk! Let's see.....” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia and I told Atlas about the other villagers and what would happen in the future.

It may have been trivial, but when I thought about how healthy this frail girl had become, I thought it was good that I had learnt to compound medicine.

“We've just returned~” (Naofumi)

The slaves undertook Firo's right of passage when she decided to play around just before we reached the village, and by the time we arrived, they were completely exhausted.

“Ah, welcome back~ I arrived earlier.” (Sadina)

.....How did Sadina arrive ahead of us?

Honestly, it's quite unexpected. She couldn't have been faster than Firo.

“You were quick.” (Naofumi)

“Hmph.....If Firo was being serious, she would have arrived earlier!” (Firo)  
“What are you being so competitive for?” (Naofumi)

Firo glared at Sadina provokingly while muttering.

Is it her pride as a mount?

Such unnecessary..... Sadina’s not even a steed.

Besides, Firo had been giving a ride to lots of sick and inexperienced slaves.

It would have been troubling if she had made a serious effort.

“Brother, are you alright?” (Atlas)

“Y-yeah....I’m fin— —\*ugh\*” (Fohl)

Unexpectedly, Atlas appears to be good with motion sickness.

Well, I’ll have to reprimand Firo later for playing around when we’ve got sick people on board.

“So this is....Naofumi-sama’s village.” (Atlas)

Despite being unable to see, Atlas surveyed the village.

“Can you see?” (Naofumi)

“No, but the aura....” (Atlas)

Speaking of which, she’s been saying that sort of thing for a while.

It’s amazing that she doesn’t seem to be inconvenienced even though she’s blind.

I mean, aura.....

“It’s good that you’ve returned. I also have a mountain of things to report that I’m starting to get impatient.” (Female Knight)

The female knight was there, but Melty had also come along.

Melty was almost angry enough for steam to come out of her head.

So she’s becoming hysterical again.

“Why did you leave even though Firo told you I would be coming over to Naofumi-sama’s place soon!?” (Melty) “Ah, now that you mention it, there was something like that.” (Naofumi)

She was completely infuriated.

Which reminds me, Melty was going to come and play.

“When I came to the village, Naofumi had already left and Firo wasn’t here either, so there was no reason for me to even be here!” (Melty) “My bad, my bad. So, when are you leaving?” (Naofumi)

“Asking me when I’m going home after I’ve been waiting for so long, isn’t there a limit to your insolence?” (Melty) “But you’re the princess.” (Naofumi)

“So what about me being a princess!” (Melty)

Why is with the next queen of a human nation coming to visit a Demi-human village?

“I have proper orders from mother.” (Melty)

“Ah, so it’s like that.” (Naofumi)

It seems the queen was still plotting to set me up with Melty.

Well in her position, it would be best to win over the Hero of the Shield.

“So, how long are you staying?” (Naofumi)

“A long time! I was dispatched by mother to help out with Naofumi’s land management. To go learn to manage a village or town for the sake of the future....I’ve been forced to do such a troublesome job.” (Melty) “Your parents are strange. In the head.” (Naofumi)

Both her father and her mother were.

She’s superior to her elder sister at her age, but learning land management at this age is a lot of work.

What’s worse is that she might not have my obligation to push the demi-humans to grow rapidly.

“Shut up! I already know that.” (Melty)

“All right, you go and play with Firo.” (Naofumi)

“Why!? Didn’t you hear what I said?” (Melty)

I did hear it, but....fair enough.

Melty seems like she’ll kick up a fuss again if I talk, so let’s take some countermeasures against her.

“Hey Firo, go and play with Melty-chan.” (Naofumi)

“Oka~y.” (Firo)

“Wai..Firo-cha——I haven’t....talking with Naofumi——” (Melty)

And so, Melty struggled while being dragged away by Firo.

With this, it should be quiet.

As expected, Firo is the best when it comes to Melty.

“How about treating Princess Melty a little kinder, Iwatani-dono?” (Female Knight) “Our relationship is just like that. She’s strong-willed.” (Naofumi) “Is that so? She was really disappointed when she heard that Iwatani-dono wasn’t

here though.” (Female Knight) “That’s because Firo wasn’t here. They’re good friends.” (Naofumi) “I don’t really think so, but.... I suppose it depends on Princess Melty’s tenacity from here on.” (Female Knight) “What are you talking about?” (Naofumi)

“Never mind. More importantly, I have some information to report.” (Female Knight) “Did that woman and the brat finally cause a problem?” (Naofumi) By that, I mean Rato and Taniko.

Whenever I leave the village for a prolonged period of time, I expect something to happen.

“No, they’re quite docile.” (Female Knight)

“Is that so?” (Naofumi)

“They seem to be joyfully playing with the monsters.” (Female Knight) “Get to work!” (Naofumi)

This passiveness is wrong!

Why the hell are they playing around!?

Jeez.... they haven’t caused any problems, but it’s practically the same as doing nothing.

“So? What’s the problem?” (Naofumi)

“Ah, it kind of concerns that woman but, come to the warehouse for a bit.” (Female Knight) “What’s there?” (Naofumi)

“Just come.” (Female Knight)

“Ah, just wait a moment.” (Naofumi)

After I watch the slaves dismount from the carriage, I call the village slaves over.

And then I beckoned to Imia when she emerged from a hole. Is that a burrow?

“Imia, I’ve brought along some of your colleagues.” (Naofumi) “Eh? Ah, Uncle!”  
(Imia)

“Oh, it’s really Imia. You’ve grown.” (Lemo slave)

Imia and another Lemo reunited with pleasure.

“Thank you very much, Hero of the Shield-sama!” (Imia)

“Eh? He was the Hero of the Shield!?” (Lemo slave)

Come to think of it, I hadn’t told them.

Imia’s family bowed their heads deeply.

Their mood turned into admiration. There were also those who didn’t care though.

“I’d like you guys to learn a variety of detailed-oriented tasks. Can I ask that?”  
(Naofumi) “We owe you a debt of gratitude even if it costs us our lives.” (Lemo  
slave) “.....Is your hometown in Silt Welt?” (Naofumi)

“No? It’s not, but.....the legend of the Hero of the Shield-sama is very well  
known and we’ve heard the rumours. Moreover, you’ve also let us meet with  
Imia again.”

“I don’t know if it will be pleasant, but I wanted to let you to live in even a bit  
of comfort. Because of that, I’d like you to hang in there.” (Naofumi) “Okay!”  
(Lemo slave)

And thus I ensured to a certain extent that I had some adept subordinates.

I’ll think about what they should learn later.

“Now then, all you new slaves introduce yourselves. Make some friends so that  
you can get accustomed to the village.” (Naofumi)

Everyone started introducing themselves noisily. The village has become quite lively.

“Um, where shall we be residing?” (Octopus slave)

One of the aquatic slaves inquired.

Indeed, it would appear to be hard for them to live in a normal village?<sup>[18]</sup> or the camping plant houses.

“You guys can live near the sea along with Sadina.” (Naofumi) “Ah, okay.....” (Octopus slave)

The dolphin and octopus-like Beastmen nodded obediently.

Ah, they’re probably surprised to know that I’m the hero of the shield.

“You guys seem pretty dexterous. You’ll also be allocated work soon, but I’d like you guys to level up enough to protect yourselves.” (Naofumi) “I understand.” (Octopus slave)

The octopus-like Beastman assented with a wave of his hand and walked towards the ocean with his many legs.

The dolphin.....I hadn’t really been looking, but if I compared his height with Sadina’s, then he’s rather small. And round.

Was it an issue of age? It was like Raphtalia when she was little.

I feel like I shouldn’t ask his gender. It’d be bad if he turned out to be a girl when I thought he was a boy.

The high female ratio is troubling, and it’d be better if I didn’t know. There’s no need to go and ask.

“Fohl and Atlas are.....” (Naofumi)

Those siblings were....Fohl was carrying Atlas on his back and doing self-introductions with Kiel and them.

Fohl had a greatly displeased look on his face, but Atlas was happily chatting with her new friends in a gesture of friendship.

.....How far did Firo and Melty go?

What do I do if they don't introduce themselves here?

"I've kept you waiting." (Naofumi)

"Ah, but I've become motivated from watching Iwatani-dono's actions, go figure." (Female Knight) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"It is. Everyone's desire for improvement has been circulating." (Female Knight) "So it's that sort of thing....." (Naofumi)

I came with efficiency in mind, though.....

"It's rare for someone to do that subconsciously. Iwatani-dono really is a Hero." (Female Knight) "Nothing will happen even if you praise me. Besides, I'm doing things for myself. Those guys are just putting themselves to work at their own pleasure." (Naofumi) "Fufu....and that's why your dearest Raphtalia has been boasting."

"Huh?"

I don't understand what she's saying at all.

Has Raphtalia been telling stories?

"And, what did you have to report?" (Naofumi)

"I said so before, but please come to the warehouse. Rato is also waiting there." (Female Knight) "Huh?" (Naofumi)

Why is Rato also there?

For now, I continue to follow the Female knight.

# Filo Rials and Dragons

Following the Female Knight, I leave the slaves to themselves and proceed towards the Village storehouse.

And there, I find Rat with her arms crossed and an unpleasant expression on her face. Contrastingly, Taniko's eyes are sparkling. They are both waiting for me.

“What have you called me for?” (Naofumi)

“First, look inside the storehouse.” (Female Knight)

I slowly open the door and peer inside.

Inside is... various armors and materials. There are also monster eggs.

Hm? There wasn't supposed to be anything in here.

“Did you use my money to buy these things?” (Naofumi)

“No, these were sent in a parcel addressed to you.” (Female Knight) “What?” (Naofumi)

Inside the storehouse, I see an open wooden box.

The words, ‘To the Hero of the Shield, please give these gifts to the slaves blessed with misfortune’ are scribbled on the side in terrible handwriting.

“...?” (Naofumi)

“They seem to be some sort of donation. There are some strong armors mixed in with the ones sent, and some of the herbs, jewels, and lumbers sent

are quite rare.” (Female Knight) “The reason that Rat and Taniko are here is for the eggs, right...? Who is it? Who sent them?” (Naofumi) “... I got them from the Queen when I went to give my report. They were left anonymously, but are probably from Siltwelt or Shieldfrieden. Based on the handwriting and ink used, this is the most likely case.” (Female Knight) “Is it fine for me to take them?” (Naofumi)

“All of the items sent are impossible to trace. Even the armor’s inscriptions have been destroyed. Even if we find the sender, it will be impossible to confirm it.” (Female Knight)

This is that, isn’t it? Some high up person sent it to get in my favor.

It doesn’t matter who sent it. Just the fact that I received a gift shows that their country gave favor to the hero.

A long time ago, a certain god of manga’s irritated editor got tired of the god’s son’s mischievous pranks and finally threw him into the pond in the yard.

After that, the editor honestly stated that he did it, and it became something he could brag about.

The truth is uncertain, but there is a high probability that something like that did happen. [\[19\]](#)

It doesn’t matter who gave the gift. Now anyone can brag and call themselves a benefactor of the Hero of the Shield.

“They really sent over some troublesome things.” (Female Knight) “Yeah, and what are those eggs?” (Naofumi)

“There's a wide variety from common Usapills to rare seasonal monsters.” (Female Knight)

So the contents have already been inspected.

But Rat is acting strange. She’s really mad.

“And the problem is that one. The huge egg in the back.” (Female Knight)  
There is an exceptionally large egg in the back corner of the storehouse.

What could it be? Could it be on a monster on the same level as the Spirit Turtle?

“So what is it?” (Naofumi)

“It’s a flying dragon egg. It’s supposedly a kind, reliable, expensive species.” (Female Knight)

Yeah, they really did send something troublesome over.

Though I don’t know why, Rat hates dragons.

“For a dragon to live in this village... How wonderful!” (Taniko)

Taniko seems very excited.

What’s with her? Is she the opposite of Rat?

“What should we do? The sender is unknown, but should we try to find them and return these?” (Female Knight) “Even if you say that... I never thought we would be so troubled over a gift.” (Naofumi)

I’m somehow troubled by the fact that someone sent me expensive goods. Someone may try to take advantage over me with them later.

But returning them seems impossible, so I can only accept them.

If something bad comes of it, we just need to be ready for it.

If the package truly is from Siltwelt, then it is most likely an earnest donation to the Hero of the Shield.

“For now, let’s accept them. If someone comes to claim them later, then ignore them. By the way, will we be able to place a monster seal on the Flying Dragon?” (Naofumi) “We’ll need a higher level of seal for it. But the sender kindly sent the tools necessary for the ritual with the eggs, so... If the Count wishes for it, then I can place a seal on all of these monsters.” (Rat) “Hey, why do you hate Dragons so much?” (Naofumi)

“Ah, I haven’t told you yet.” (Rat)

Rat angrily glares at Taniko and begins speaking.

“High level dragons, you know. Once they go into heat, they lose all self-control.” (Rat) “Wait, what?” (Naofumi)

“You don’t know? Most dragons begin to corrupt the land they live in. Their homes are always quite dangerous.” (Rat) “Is that how it is?” (Naofumi)

The only dragon I know of is... the dragon that Ren defeated.

There, the dragon’s curse caused a plague.

It definitely was a contaminated area.

“Dragons, you know. When they lose their self-control, they will try to violate monsters of different species. That’s why in the land that dragons live, many dragon-like monsters come into being.” (Rat) “This is quite a dangerous topic.” (Naofumi)

Many fantasy games have half-dragon races, but is this the cause?

“Well, they do take the courtesy of setting up a territory and never leaving it, but the reason that I hate them is because they can easily screw up the ecosystem. By the way, Flying Dragons are a mix between a Dragon and some other weak monster.” (Rat)

Fumu... so that’s how it is.

“The biggest problem is the purebred dragons. They really have absolutely no distinction, and will even violate human women.” (Rat)

It seems like quite a troublesome species.

Hm? Taniko is glaring at us.

“They do have dignity!” (Taniko)

Why are you angry? She’s acting like someone directly related to the topic.

Whenever monsters come up, this girl starts yelling.

She takes turns with Rat managing the various monsters.

“There’s already a race of Dragon Demi-Humans. The Dragonewts.” (Taniko)

I think I’ve heard something about Dragon Demi-humans before.

“Of course, even if Dragons don’t go into heat, that race will continue to exist, and they’re quite a docile people. But the only ones who can withstand a Dragon’s lust are the Filo Rials.” (Rat) “Is that so?” (Naofumi)

“Yes, the Filo rials often have Turf wars with the dragons.” (Rat)

... Firo pops up in my mind.

That gluttonous demon bird doesn’t seem like such a high-class race to me.

“And because that egg holds a Dragon, will you hate it?” (Naofumi) “Yeah, kinda. I believe the Monster seal has an option that controls sexual lust, so make sure to check that box. Or else this area’s monster population will be corrupted.” (Rat)

What is this feeling?

In the hunting games I’ve played before, I’ve had to hunt dragon couples before. From the amount of children they had, I’ve always wondered why they didn’t just go and wipe out humanity already.

“The Dragon Emperor-sama won’t allow such behavior!” (Taniko)

Taniko calls out.

That’s quite a powerful-sounding name.

Why is she that knowledgeable on monster matters?

Is that just how she was raised? I don’t care enough to ask.

“Yes, yes. The legendary King of Dragons. I believe he was at war with the Filo Rial Queen.” (Rat) “There’s a legend like that?” (Naofumi)

“It’s only a legend. Both of their existences are subject to doubt.” (Rat)  
... Well, I’ve met one of them before.

But an argument will break out if I bring it up here.

Anyways, I assume the story is something along the lines of the Legendary Dragon King threatening the lives of many civilians and the Holy Filo Rial Queen driving him out.

Or something about how both sides were continuously at war with one another.

“But... If they have such reproductive capability, why have I never met a live one?” (Naofumi) “They usually live in very remote areas. Has the Count ever ventured that far?” (Rat)

I’ve only ever used the merchant roads for peddling... I’ve barely ever entered caves or mountains.

So that’s why...

“So that’s why.” (Naofumi)

“They pretty much keep to their territory. If you don’t try to expand a settlement into said territory, you probably won’t meet one.” (Rat) “I see. Anyways, I have a policy of using what I can, so I’ll keep and raise the dragon.” (Naofumi) “Make sure to be strict with it. I don’t want to become part of a Dragon’s Harem.” (Rat) “Yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

As long as it has a monster seal, I should be able to manage. If anything bad happens, I can feed it to fire.

As if she can read my mind, Taniko’s glare intensifies.

“Don't spread your legs for a newly hatched dragon.” (Rat) “I-I wouldn't do that for anyone!” (Taniko)

Does she know what she's saying?

“Please stop your vulgar conversation.” (Naofumi)

Rat lets out a sigh.

Female Knight... Is staring at us with an amazed expression.

“Training a flying dragon is difficult. People who accomplish it are called Dragon Knights.” (Rat) “Ah, I remember seeing some when we were fighting the Spirit Turtle.” (Naofumi)

They didn't really help out, though.

Most of them fell to the ground screaming after taking attacks from the Spirit Turtle's familiars.

“There's a danger of falling off. And the dragons themselves are not particularly strong.” (Rat) “I see, well raising it shouldn't be all that difficult.” (Naofumi) “I don't know what will happen if the Count raises it. It might turn out like your Filo Rial.” (Rat) “Mu... You're right. I'll be careful.” (Naofumi)

And so it was decided that we were going to keep the Flying Dragon Egg.

But it seems it will take a while to hatch. I have to personally bind it to my blood.

Rat goes back to her lab with a disappointed expression.

The Bioplant research has continued, and it seems that Rat has finally completed a prototype that can grow medicinal herbs. However right now it can only produce herbs that can be found anywhere on the side of the road. But still, the research has progressed.

...

“Why do I have to carry around the egg!?” (Naofumi)

For some reason, I have been tasked with keeping the Flying Dragon egg warm.

As soon as she saw me, Kiel burst into laughter.

“If you don’t do this, you won’t be able to imprint yourself as the parent. If you don’t start out with this, it may ignore your commands later!” (Rat)

Rat seems fed up.

Are Flying Dragons really this troublesome to deal with? I regret my decision to raise it already.

“Is that how it is?” (Naofumi)

“Yes! I happen to be an expert on the subject, so trust me.” (Rat) “I’m having a hard time believing because you’re the one saying it...” (Naofumi) “What was that?” (Rat)

“Understood. I didn’t say anything.” (Naofumi)

This is a pain.

“AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! Naofumi, what are you doing?” (Melty)

Melty appears, riding Firo. She points her finger at me and starts laughing.

“Shut it, second princess!” (Naofumi)

“You promised not to call me, ‘Second Princess’, remember!?” (Melty) “Then don’t laugh, idiot!” (Naofumi) <sup>[20]</sup>

“Idiot!? Who are you calling an idiot!?” (Melty)

Ah, it seems that playing with Firo has caused her to forget her original objective.

“Um... You look... peculiar... Naofumi-sama.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia is trying to choose her words. I don't need her sympathy.

“Damn.. Just go off peddling already! This time, me, Raphtalia, and Firo will have to go alone.” (Naofumi)

I can't be seen like this by all of the villagers. I'll have to send them out.

“You're running away from the issue~!” (Melty)

“Shut it.” (Naofumi)

Melty is being overly obnoxious.

“Well, you'll have to keep this up for two to three days. After that, it should hatch.” (Rat) “Dammit all.” (Naofumi)

“If you need anything done in the adjacent village, leave it to me. Otherwise, you're going to slip out of this duty and head over, right?” (Melty) “...!” (Naofumi)

Melty hit the mark right on.

For now... should I hide with it in the carriage?

“Master, are you carrying an egg?” (Firo)

“Yeah. I apparently have to do this because it's a dragon.” (Naofumi) “Hmm... Can Firo warm it?” (Firo)

Right, Firo is a bird so her body is quite warm.

Should I leave it with Firo?

“No.” (Rat)

“No!” (Firo)

As soon as she hears Rat’s warning, Firo runs off.

Does she really hate her that much?

“As I said before, Filo Rials and Dragons don’t get along. You can’t let her warm it.” (Rat) “... I see...” (Naofumi)

I thought I could push my troubles onto her...

Could I give it to Raphtalia?

“It’s your dragon, right? You can’t give it to someone else.” (Rat) “Damn!” (Naofumi)

How is she able to read my thoughts?

There’s no helping it. I’ll hide in the carriage and go on a little trip.

And like that, I go peddling to run away from my troubles.

I am wearing a cloak to hide the embarrassing egg on my back.

“It’s been a while since we went out peddling with just the three of us.” (Raphtalia) “Now that I think about it, you’re right.” (Naofumi)

The last time I went peddling with just Raphtalia and Firo was a long time ago.

Now we're always surrounded by Kiel and the other villagers. Before the matter with the Spirit Turtle, we were always running around by ourselves.

"A flying dragon. I wonder what sort of child it will grow up to be." (Raphtalia)

"No idea." (Naofumi)

"Will Firo still be pulling the carriage?" (Firo)

"Of course." (Naofumi)

It seems Firo holds a strange sense of Pride. But I don't think a Flying Dragon can pull a carriage in the first place.

"Firo will always be Master's legs!" (Firo)

"I wonder." (Naofumi)

The ability to fly will be quite advantageous. If he turns out to be more efficient than the ground-bound Firo, then I'll use him instead.

However, a Flying Dragon has very limited carrying capacity.

Only one person can ride it at a time. I'll only use it if I have to go in a hurry by myself.

Or so Rat told me.

"Mu..." (Firo)

"Firo, make sure to look ahead as you walk." (Raphtalia) "But Master said..." (Firo)

"It's alright. If Firo works hard, Naofumi-sama will learn to rely on you more." (Raphtalia) "... Really?" (Firo)

"I wonder." (Naofumi)

"Naofumi-sama, please be quiet for a second." (Raphtalia)

I guess there's a limit to teasing Firo.

Perhaps this Dragon will be able to bring out Firo's competitive side.

She's getting a little too conceited over her leg power.

"Firo will work hard!" (Firo)

"Yes, let's work hard together." (Raphtalia)

"Yeah!" (Firo)

"Now then, I guess I should get to making some medicine to sell." (Naofumi)  
I also need to think of what jobs to give the slaves later on.

And... the first day of peddling went by with no problems.

# Witch

That night, I heard a voice when I retired to bed.

『Kukuku...’twas that woman and pack-bird’s fault that I was repressed, but when the perfect host for mine spirit comes, it will be..... fun.』<sup>[21]</sup>

What? This voice.....I’ve heard it before, but I can’t remember.

『The wrath of thou who burned me was exquisite....no, that’s wrong. Together with me and mine power, thy strength was raised. However, it’s insufficient. I’m unsatisfied.』

This is....who? Whose voice is this?

『I will be the ones to kill thee. I will have thee take responsibility for killing me, by compensating with thy body.』

I felt extremely unpleasant sweat flow from my paralyzed body.

『I look forward to coming out.』

That was the kind of nightmare I saw that night.

I had the feeling that I knew who the owner of the voice was.

But this was lost as a part of the dream.

“I wonder how long left until the egg hatches.” (Naofumi) “Yeah.” (Raphtalia)

“Firo also wants to incubate the egg.” (Firo)

“You were told that you couldn’t though.” (Naofumi)

That was the sort of conversation we had while on our peddling trip.

And just like that, we arrived in a large town. We’ve come here many times to sell our goods, so I recognize the faces of the townspeople, to a certain extent.

After most of our stock was sold, I was staring out of the carriage wondering what to do in the future when I recognized a familiar-looking figure walking away.

“Firo, stop.” (Naofumi)

“What’s the matter, Master?” (Firo)

I stopped the carriage, covered myself with a robe to hide the egg, and then approached the figure.

He stood in the shade of a building and seemed to be looking out onto the main street. Raphtalia also realized who it was and stopped her query midway.

“That’s right. Raphtalia.” (Naofumi)

“What is it?” (Raphtalia)

“I forgot about it last time, but you can use concealing magic, right?”

(Naofumi) “Yes. I learnt how to cast it so that everyone else will have difficulty sensing us.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia was taught magic in the castle and therefore knew more advanced concealing magic.

Recently, she also studied this magic, saying that she was trying to think up a countermeasure against Motoyasu and Ren.

If Portal Spear was used then it would be over, but it seems like we can do

something about the Flash Sword.

“Then please do so.” (Naofumi)

“I understand.” (Raphtalia)

We hid in an alley and Raphtalia grasped Firo and my hands while concentrating.

<As one worthy of the origin of power, I am commanding. I’ve reread and understand the principles, clad us in a coating of illusion> “Al Hide Mirage”

Raphtalia’s magic wrapped around us gently.

“It should be fine now.” (Raphtalia)

“Ah, this is helpful.” (Naofumi)

We tailed our target with our hands linked.

Somehow, it seemed like he was tailing someone as well.

No, more accurately, he was waiting for the right timing to talk to them.

“What should I do.....I just hope it doesn’t end up like with Erena.” (Motoyasu)  
Did he not even realize that we were behind him, filled with anticipation all by himself?

Just what was he so anxious about, that idiot.

And, as I was thinking that, I followed the idiot’s gaze.

And then the idiot’s face changed colour.

At first I thought the magic had released and we had been discovered, but I was wrong.

When I saw who the gaze was resting on, I was also speechless.

Somehow Bitch had brought along Woman 2.....and was talking to Ren for some reason. What were they saying?

I ignored the idiot Motoyasu and approached Bitch. Or I should say, I advanced in order to arrest her. Motoyasu and Ren will run away so I can't catch them, but Bitch is different.

It seems something interesting will be awaiting if I arrest her, and I don't have the option not to.

I sent Raphtalia a glance.

Raphtalia nodded. I'm not sure if Firo understood the situation or not, but she followed silently.

A sound reached my ears. It was a pretty loud voice.

"I'm not the Hero of the Spear's weapon. The first time we met, I believed Ren-sama was also a hero who would save the world." (Bitch)

Bitch is saying some terrible things.

I have a strong impulse to jump out and bash her face in.

"Besides.... Spear forces us into unreasonable relationships, just like Shield. Needless to say, I.... searched for Ren-sama with my newfound freedom." (Bitch)

She's saying some really infuriating lines. And this outburst of emotions after so long...

You, I thought you were together with Motoyasu for a good many months.

I promptly look towards Motoyasu.

"Gununu...." (Motoyasu) [\[22\]](#)

Wow, he's peeping with such a prominent face.

"But I think the queen said that you've always had problems...." (Ren)

As expected, Ren also felt the need to be cautious.

Well, she has to struggle that much at least.

“Ren-sama doesn’t know Mama’s true colours. Mama’s the woman known as Melromarc’s vixen. She invented a ploy to produce large profits by humiliating me. This gave credit to that demon, Shield, and Spear was also part of it too.”  
(Bitch) “I-is that so....” (Ren)

What will you do? Will you raise your voice and object?

Or rather, say something with credibility.

Although I’ve also put my faith in her before, these are Bitch’s words, so they’re definitely lies.

It would be better if you believed someone who has been antagonized by Bitch.

Like Melty, or the current Motoyasu.

Then, Bitch embraced Ren and stroked his hair.

“Ren-sama.....losing your comrades must have been very heart-breaking.....it’s okay to cry now. It’s alright. The whole world may be calling you a criminal, but I believe. I believe that Ren-sama has been fighting for the sake of the world.”  
(Bitch)

She’s pretty good at sucking up to weakened guys.

Raphtalia looked at Bitch with an incredibly doubtful face.

It’s similar to what she said to me.

Or should I say it’s a complete rip-off?

Right, in a bit.....just a little bit longer and I’ll grab Bitch’s shoulder.

“Wait!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu rushed over at this point.

He looks as though he saw something really despicable.

Was this really the rumoured ladykiller?

No, no.....

“Well if isn’t it the Spear.” (Bitch)

Bitch flicked her hair back with an incredibly obnoxious face and deliberately gave Motoyasu a dirty look.

For some reason, my trauma was evoked and I felt pissed off.

Bitch, you won’t be laughing for much longer.

“That’s my line! What the hell are you doing!? Sucking up to Ren, I’ve been searching for you!” (Motoyasu) “Ahaha, charging in recklessly, I’m not an idiot. Ren-sama, please listen.” (Bitch)

Bitch clung to Ren and declared this while crying fake tears.

“When we got into a pinch, that Spear focused the enemy’s attention towards us. He said he would defeat the enemy, but he just used us as a shield. We fled because we were scared, but when we did, he chased after us obstinately, saying that he won’t forgive us for deserting in the face of an enemy.” (Bitch)

“Lies!” (Motoyasu)

I started to get a headache.

Bitch was following her usual pattern..... I should probably hurry and arrest that Bitch.

Speaking of which, I recognize Motoyasu’s current expression.

Obviously. It’s the me from that day!

Bitch.....You're repeating the same things as before.

Sinking your fangs into three heroes.....you're a bitch who has transcended beyond a bitch. I'm renaming you Witch.

It even has the double meaning of being a sorceress.

I should just kill her and say she tried to resist.

Yeah, let's do that. I can't think of anything else.

"So you were trying that kind of thing, huh. You're as bad, or even worse than Naofumi. Betraying people's trust, you're a disgrace." (Ren) "Ren, Whore has been telling lies! Please believe me." (Motoyasu) "Who's going to believe that!?" (Ren)

"That's right! Forcing us into a relationship every night..... and if not, you would threaten to kill Papa!" (Bitch) "Stop lying! I.... really did worry!" (Motoyasu)

I'd like to see more of Motoyasu's misfortune, but I can't stand it any more.

Filled with murderous intent, I firmly grasped Witch's shoulder with my hand.

"Eh?" (Bitch)

Raphtalia snapped her fingers and released her spell.

"How dare you spew out such lies, Witch." (Naofumi)

"Shield!" (Bitch)

Witch's eyebrows sprung up high. She looked as if she came across someone detestable.

But I feel the same way.

“Sorry but I’m going to have you come back to the castle. I’ll arrest you, dead or alive.” (Naofumi)

# Negligence

The first one to react to my words was Ren.

“Keep your hands off of Mein!” (Ren)

Ren brandishes his sword.

It lets out sparks as it collides with my arm.

Of course, I don't take any damage. It's not like he learned the other reinforcement methods in this short amount of time.

At this level, I don't even need to use my shield.

“You know. If you call her that, her punishment will only increase.” (Naofumi)

“Shut it. Get away from Mein!” (Ren)

Witch is also struggling. It's become difficult to hold her with one hand.

「Meteor Sword!」 (Ren)

Oh, a skill might be able to inflict some damage on me. I'm holding a relatively rare egg right now.

It will be a waste if it breaks, so I back off.

In exchange, Raphtalia and Firo step forward.

Even Motoyasu takes up a fighting stance.

We're all prepared to capture Ren, Bitch, and Woman 2.

“Ren, it’s better if you don’t trust that witch. She’s exactly as the Queen described.” (Naofumi)

She can put false crimes on people without remorse, and she loves watching others struggle.

Ren will probably be tricked and discarded sometime soon as well.

Just like Motoyasu.

“Look closely at Motoyasu’s face. Doesn’t he look pitiable? Is this the face of a person who would do such things?” (Naofumi) “No, I heard Motoyasu was also coerced by the Queen! The Queen is the ringleader behind all of this.” (Ren) “And isn’t that single woman the only one telling you that?” (Naofumi) “Even so, I must fight for the people who believe in me!” (Ren) “Calm down. Think logically. The normal you would have figured it out by now.” (Naofumi) “Shut up!” (Ren)

Ah... this is impossible. He seriously believes he is in the right.

I can’t really blame him here.

In my case, I had the slight feeling that something was off, but I never realized I had been deceived until the end.

And the current Ren is mentally unstable. He sides with Witch, who offered him plenty of soft words.

... Should I kill her?

I should have enough power now. Unlike before.

Wait, a Shadow should be somewhere around here.

If the Shadow utilizes the slave crest, I won’t have to fight Ren.

Perhaps I will be able to teach him proper reinforcement techniques and add him to my fighting force.

... Though earning his trust won’t be that easy.

As if responding to my thoughts, Bitch's slave crest begins to glow.

"Ku.... Ren-sama! We should retreat for now." (Bitch)

"Understood! 「Flashing Sword!」" (Ren)

On Witch's words, Ren unleashes a skill.

And as before, his sword starts glowing.

"Damn! Raphtalia, Firo!" (Naofumi)

"Yes!" (Raphtalia)

"Yeah!" (Firo)

Right after I gave my warning, the sword releases a blinding light.

As if that will work forever!

"I, who has understood the origin of power commands you. I shall once again read forth the truth. Bind this foul light that clouds us from knowledge!"  
(Raphtalia) 「AI Anti-Shining!」

Our eyes that were under the influence of Ren's flashing sword start to clear up, and Firo jumps into the air in preparation for a kick. But she is too late. Ren picks up Bitch and Woman 2, and brandishes his sword once more.

「Transfer Sword!」 (Ren)

Just like when Motoyasu disappeared, Ren's image starts to fade.

And so does Witch's.

“Witch, it seems you were able to escape this time. But remember this: I’ll chase you to the depths of hell. All you have to do is wait in a corner, cowering in fear.” (Naofumi) “Hmph!” (Bitch)

I hear witch snorting at my proclamation before she completely disappears.

This skill truly is annoying.

I need to find some way to seal it.

“Dammit! She got away again! That damn Witch, I’ll definitely slaughter her later!” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama, please calm down.” (Raphtalia)

“Aren’t you frustrated? Has she begun corrupting you as well!?” (Naofumi) I’m madder than I’ve ever been in a long time.

What should I take my anger out on?

It’s immature, but I start to get angry at Raphtalia.

“... Naofumi-sama, your words are enough to keep me by your side.” (Raphtalia)

“I see...” (Naofumi)

If Raphtalia is okay with this, then I guess I should endure my rage for a little longer.

But I won’t forget this, Witch.

This rage greater than I can handle. Someday it will be embedded into your chest with a ten inch rusty nail.

As I slowly stomach my rage, Shadow appears.

“...She has escaped out of my range-gojaru. I can only send out fatal punishment, but I cannot track her.” (Shadow)

I don’t think killing her would be that bad, but Shadow also has orders. We can’t kill her without due process...

And I kinda want her to suffer 100x more. Am I a bad person?

“So it seems.” (Naofumi)

“I never thought the former princess would be able to seduce the Hero of the Sword so easily-gojaru.” (Shadow) “Just when I was looking for them, they suddenly appeared. Perhaps my luck is better than I thought.” (Naofumi) “I see-gojaru... anyways I’m off to give a report to the Queen-gojaru. By the way, what should we do with the Hero of the Spear-gojaru?” (Shadow) “...If we try something, won’t he just run away?” (Naofumi)

If he has such a convenient skill, I don’t think we can apprehend him.

I can’t even begin to think of how convenient it would have been for me if I had it when I was on the lam.

“I don’t think it seems that way-gojaru.” (Shadow)

Motoyasu has dropped his stance and is staring at the ground sighing.

So his heart has already given up.

“What’s up? Won’t you run?” (Naofumi)

“It’s fine... I wanted to find everyone. I believed in them, but this is all I get... The townsfolk all treat me coldly... I’m tired...” (Motoyasu)  
His eyes look cloudy. If he were a magical girl, this is where he would turn into a witch. [\[23\]](#)

“So will you take him in?” (Naofumi)

“I don’t think he will be punished that badly-gojaru. The world still needs him to fight in the wave-gojaru.” (Shadow) “Yeah, that’s true... We can’t really give him overly cruel penalties, and we can’t kill him...” (Naofumi)  
If killing was all we had to do, then Raphtalia and Firo would be able to do it in one blow.

But then we wouldn't have to capture him.

"For now, Motoyasu, you're under arrest." (Naofumi)

"... Yes, yes I understand. Take me wherever you will. Kill me if you want..."  
(Motoyasu)

Motoyasu seems to have given up all hope

But after what just happened, it can't be helped.

"Everyone asks me to save them, and if I make the slightest mistake they throw stones at me... The Bitch and Elena that I believed with all of my heart turned out to be bad people... I don't even care anymore..." (Motoyasu)

He had believed in his comrades, and had thus tried to search the globe for them, but those very comrades abandoned him.

There must be a reason it turned out like this. I'm not at fault. He must be thinking things like that.

And the sun is already setting.

"Should I take him to the castle now?" (Naofumi)

"It seems to be an urgent matter, so I'll leave it to you, Iwatani-dono-gojaru."  
(Shadow) "Got it. Oy, Motoyasu." (Naofumi)

"It's fine. Just say I caused this disaster already... Will that satisfy you?"  
(Motoyasu)

What the hell are you giving in to. You're definitely a cause of this disaster.

Why are you acting like it's someone else's problem?

"... Can you use that Warp skill to go to the castle?" (Naofumi) "That's not its current registered destination, so it's impossible." (Motoyasu) "So it's no use here. What material did you absorb to get that spear?" (Naofumi)

Learning that skill will make transportation convenient.

It can be used for peddling, level grinding, and many more.

I should probably have the ability to learn it.

“... It’s the Dragon Hourglass’s sand.” (Motoyasu)

“When were you able to take it-gojaru!?” (Shadow)

So that’s what it is. Isn’t that kinda illegal?

Ren and Itsuki probably already absorbed some as well.

Why didn’t I try it yet?

“I didn’t steal anything. The sisters gave it to me when I asked.” (Motoyasu)

Shadow glares at him.

“N-now that I think about it, there were some reports of that happening when the Three Hero church was in control... gojaru.” (Shadow) “Say that ahead of time!” (Naofumi)

Now that I think about it, there are a mountain of materials I have yet to try. I haven’t been feeding the shield much lately.

The Yggdrasil medicine was too valuable, so I didn’t feed it to the Shield.

I should start testing more things.

“What sort of skill is it?” (Naofumi)

“It lets you teleport to a preset location...” (Motoyasu) “Are there any conditions?” (Naofumi)

“No idea... In my game you could use it in any area that didn’t prevent skills.” (Motoyasu)

I still have no idea how to prevent it.

Though there may have been areas that limited it while in the game, I have no idea if this world has such places.

Can you set to anywhere you've been before?

"What can you set the destination as?" (Naofumi)

"You can set up to three locations. If you try to set another, the oldest one will be forgotten. The most people you can take with you is 6." (Motoyasu.)<sup>[24]</sup>

He's being strangely compliant... Anyways, the castle is quite a distance away. If we can't warp there directly, I guess we'll have to stay the night in this town.

"Then we'll find a place to stay the night here." (Naofumi) "Understood."  
(Motoyasu)

"Understood-gojaru. I will depart to relay the situation to the Queen-gojaru."  
(Shadow) "How do you contact the Queen anyways?" (Naofumi)

"Secret-gojaru. I'll only tell you that I can't carry anyone with me-gojaru."  
(Shadow)

Shadow disappears as she says this.

Her response somehow annoys me.

Firo begins poking the depressed Motoyasu.

Even after he saw what that woman did to me, he's still this depressed?

Perhaps he is finally feeling the fatigue of the lifestyle he has been living until now.

I don't really care, and I kinda like seeing his depressed face, but I notice Raphtalia glaring at me.

"Naofumi-sama? What's wrong?" (Raphtalia)

"Nothing really. Let's go find an inn." (Naofumi)

"Yes." (Raphtalia)

And that's how we dragged Motoyasu with us, and found an Inn to stay at.

# Another Awakening

The inn we stayed at didn't include food, so we all, Motoyasu included, went off to the bar.

As soon as we stepped in, Motoyasu rushes over to the counter and orders some alcohol. And he hangs his head while downing it at an alarming rate.

He really has nothing but women on his head, this one. When he loses them, this is the inevitable result.

Some people who don't realize his identity try to converse with him, but he brushes them aside.

"Ara, do you want to have a drink with this Onee-san?" (Older Woman) "... I'm sorry. I kinda want to drink alone now. Please don't mind me." (Motoyasu)  
He even brushes away the females.

This may be more serious than I thought.

Bitch was always like that. Did you really believe in her that much?

The rest of us order dinner.

Though I don't really think that a bar should have good food, after asking around, I found that this bar had the best taste in town.

The servings are also quite large and the price isn't that high.

And after having her fill of good food, the Human-form Firo begins to sing along with the bar's bard.

The egg on my back is a nuisance. I try to stay inconspicuous.

"Young girl, let's sing another one!" (Bard)

“Sure, let’s go~!” (Firo)

Firo starts singing with an unnerving amount of energy. Her voice is quite good.

She gets carried away and begins singing a strange tune. It sounds like an Anime song.

It might be my imagination... but the people in front of the stage seem to have a strange look in their eyes.

“... Naofumi-sama, I’ve heard that there is a type of monster that uses its singing voice to lead ships astray at sea.” (Raphtalia) “What a coincidence, I was thinking of that monster as well.” (Naofumi)

The people listening to the song seem to be mesmerized, as if they were being bewitched by the Sirens.

After Firo finally finishes her song, the establishment is shaken by an explosive cheer from the crowd.

Quite a few people call for an encore, but it seems Firo got bored. She shouts, ‘No!’ and gets off the stage.

She’s become quite popular, and some people are handing her bouquets of flowers.

Someone also hands her a vegetable that looks like a carrot. Firo stares at it and licks her lips. After seeing this, numerous people begin giving her food.

I don’t know if she’s lost her mind, but Firo, carrying a mountain of gifts, goes over and sits down next to Motoyasu.

“What’s wrong? You’re not energetic like usual. What happened?” (Firo) “...” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu directs an annoyed glance at Firo.

He’s even acting this way towards his beloved human-form Firo. This truly is serious.

“Are you hungry? If you’re hungry, you won’t feel good. Do you want me to sing a song to give you energy?” (Firo)

Firo makes her way back to the stage, and starts singing again.

It’s quite an upbeat song. Almost as if...

“Firo knows quite a few songs. I never knew.” (Naofumi) “Well we did travel around a lot. She loves to sing, you know.” (Raphtalia)

Firo stares out Motoyasu as she sings. She also begins dancing.

Just looking at her seems to give me energy. It sounds like a song from that one anime with a transforming plane. [25]

The song ends, and Firo goes back to Motoyasu’s side.

“Please, just ignore me.” (Motoyasu)

“Ye~s.” (Firo)

Is what she says. She starts rummaging through the various items she received.

“Eat this. It always gives me energy.” (Firo)

Motoyasu finally takes the food and flowers presented to him.

Firo is acting out of pure curiosity right now.

Her interest was probably peaked upon seeing the usually-energetic Motoyasu acting this down.

Wha?

“U, UWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu lets out a cry and suddenly clings to Firo.

“NYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!?” (Firo)

And Firo lets out a surprised cry that doesn't lose to his.

And she begins twisting her body to get out of Motoyasu's grasp, but Motoyasu uses all of his power to prevent her escape.

“Uu...uuuuuuuu...” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu seriously starts crying.

“Master! Save me!” (Firo)

Firo is also crying as she looks at me for help.

... Is he an idiot?

“What the hell are you doing?” (Naofumi)

I approach the two to save Firo, but Motoyasu suddenly presses his head into Firo's chest and sobs harder.

Since Witch was no good, he turned to Firo?

No... Motoyasu has been showing interest in Firo for a long time.

“Return to your original form. Motoyasu will probably let go.” (Naofumi) “G-got it!” (Firo)

Motoyasu should have a trauma for Firo's original form.

He never approaches her when she looks like that.

Firo transforms as per my request.

The people in the bar begin screaming in surprise, but I ignore it.

However.

“Super... Firo-chan’s smell... Sniff...Sniff...” (Motoyasu)

... Motoyasu continues to hold onto monster-form Firo, and takes in her scent.  
How indecent!

“He’s not letting go! He’s not letting go, master!” (Firo)  
He’s not even backing off from Monster-form Firo!?

How could this be!? Wait, I can imagine his reasons.

“He’s like this because you offered kind words to him when he was depressed!  
Take responsibility, and look after him.” (Naofumi) “Wait a second. Using that  
logic, Naofumi-sama has to look after me!” (Raphtalia) “What are you talking  
about, Raphtalia!?” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia seems to be caught up in the chaos as well.

“No!” (Firo)

“Firo-tan, Firo-tan...” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu begins nestling his face in Firo’s plumage.

Firo tries to use her superhuman strength to lift him off, but Motoyasu grips  
her with his entire body, and he isn’t moving.

When she tries to get him off, her feathers come with him. The pain prevents  
her from going all out.

Firo is one who hates pain.

“Save me!” (Firo)

Firo is pleading at me for help with teary eyes. What should I do.

“Fine... Motoyasu.” (Naofumi)

This is no good. He can't hear me. He can't even hear Firo.

Motoyasu has finally broken.

Or perhaps... he has awakened to a new fetish.

He's even accepting Monster-form Firo. Has he become a Masochist?

“Master!” (Firo)

I'm supposed to take Motoyasu to the castle, but will it be possible like this?

“If you don't like it, just tell him and dump him.” (Naofumi) “Got it!” (Firo)

Firo walks out of the bar with Motoyasu still clinging to her.

“Eh...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia lets out a confused voice.

“Anyways... We'll have to have to put turning Motoyasu in on hold. If he doesn't suffer some more, I won't be satisfied.” (Naofumi) “I think he has transcended the state of suffering and reached some form of enlightenment...” (Raphtalia)

“If we get Firo to act like an evil woman, he'll probably snap out of it. Get her to

tell him that she only approached him for food.” (Naofumi) “I see...” (Raphtalia)

“It’ll probably work... Probably.” (Naofumi)

I have a bad premonition about this. But if I don’t do this, we’ll never get rid of him.

It’s fine. It’s Motoyasu. He should be back to skirt-chasing in no time.

And so we spent a peaceful night, and morning came.

By the way, it seems Firo finally managed to dump Motoyasu. Down a cliff.

The amount of feathers on her body has decreased.

“Now then, since we’re putting turning Motoyasu in on hold, should we wait for Shadow to return, then head back to the village?” (Naofumi)

I planned to stay away until the egg hatched, but it should hatch any minute now.

It moves occasionally. It should hatch soon.

“We should do that.” (Raphtalia)

“Master, Firo wants to leave soon...” (Firo)

Firo looks at me with fearful eyes.

She has developed yet another trauma. She hated the man from the beginning anyways.

Why did she approach him even though she hated him?

“Why did you try to cheer him on?” (Naofumi)

“Because he didn’t have any energy. He seemed like the village children when we first met them.” (Firo)

But the medicine was too potent for Motoyasu.

He’s going to become annoying.

“Next time you see him, tell him the lines I taught you in advance.” (Naofumi)

“Yes~” (Firo)

“Well then, let’s get breakfast and prepare to depart.” (Naofumi)

I open the door to the room.

“Good Morning, dear father-in-law.” (Motoyasu)

I slam the door... Was that Motoyasu?

I must be going crazy. Let me recollect myself.

“What was that...” (Naofumi)

“Did something happen?” (Raphtalia)

“Well...” (Naofumi)

What was Father-in-Law supposed to mean? Why was Motoyasu on standby in front of the door?

I just got up, my mind isn’t working properly yet.

Explaining is a pain. I step aside and offer the door handle to Raphtalia.

Raphtalia tilts her head to the side and opens it.

“Why is the Tanuki-pig in Firo-tan’s room!?” (Motoyasu)

...

“Fuge!?” (Motoyasu)

A vein pops up on Raphtalia’s forehead. While smiling, she whacks his head and slams the door.

Tanuki-pig... I’m hearing some amazing things so early in the morning.

What is he doing?

“Well...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia looks just as confused as me.

“I understand the situation. What should we do...?” (Raphtalia) “And from when was he standing in front of the door?” (Naofumi) “I heard a banging sound quite a while ago, but he couldn’t have been there for that long...” (Raphtalia) “I heard it too. I thought it was an adventurer wandering around, but was that Motoyasu?” (Naofumi)

He seems too energetic for having been pushed off a cliff.

“Firo.” (Naofumi)

“No!” (Firo)

“If you don’t clearly tell him, he’ll never leave you alone, that man.” (Naofumi) “Uu.....” (Firo)

Firo opens the door while frowning.

“Oh, Firo-tan!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu jumps at Firo, but Raphtalia halts him with an iron claw to the face.

“Unhand me, Tanuki-pig! I must embrace my beloved Firo-tan!” (Motoyasu) “...” (Raphtalia)

She’s smiling, but she’s letting out a dark aura.

What is Motoyasu doing?

“Um, I only approached you for food. Don’t misunderstand my intentions.”  
(Firo) “Love is something that stems from misunderstandings, dear Firo-tan. It’s fine, I’ll accept your selfishness as well.” (Motoyasu) “No!” (Firo)

She’s shivering. This is no good.

I try to comprehend the current situation, and Motoyasu turns to me with serious eyes.

“Dear Father-in-Law. Please leave your daughter to me.” (Motoyasu) “Who are you calling Father-in-Law!?” (Naofumi)

I don’t remember becoming the father of this gluttonous devil-bird.

I may have raised her, but I don’t remember making her my daughter.

“Father-in-Law. I was saved by your daughter, and have realized my true feelings for her. I’ll definitely make her happy. Please leave your daughter to me!” (Motoyasu) “And I’m saying I’m not this girl’s father!” (Naofumi) “You can’t say that! A father shouldn’t think that way about his daughter, Father-in-Law!” (Motoyasu) “Are you even listening to me? She isn’t my daughter!” (Naofumi) “That sort of relationship between father and daughter is immoral, Father-in-Law!” (Motoyasu) “Just be quiet already!” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia drives Motoyasu out and slams the door again.

This is exponentially more serious than I had previous thought.

If I deal with this poorly, he might end up with irreparable mental damage.

“Step down, Tanuki-Pig! Release Firo-tan and Father-in-Law!” (Motoyasu)  
Motoyasu bangs on the room’s door.

My head is hurting a lot...

I could never reason with him before, but his brain was never this messed up.

He's become a complete stalker now.

The reason for this is... probably because Firo treated him nicely.

If you corner humans, they may develop unimaginable levels of devotion to their goals.

My and Ren's cases prove that.

Though I don't get what part of yesterday's events led to... this. But it seems that Motoyasu views Firo as his savior.

Motoyasu seems to be the type that gets obsessed easily.

From Motoyasu's reaction, is he the type of person who keeps trying until his target develops feelings for him?

... I really REALLY don't want to involve myself in this. This is a major waste of time.

"You're being too loud!" (Adventurer)

A female adventurer staying in the same inn begin to complain.

"You pigs are the ones who are being loud! Quit your squealing!" (Motoyasu)

"P-pigs!? What is this man saying!?" (Adventurer)

... The skirt-chasing Motoyasu is now verbally abusing women.

What sort of woman could it be? I slowly stick my head into the doorway.

The woman Motoyasu is quarrelling with is quite a beauty.

I think it's the Onee-san that approached him earlier.

I can't understand what drove him this far.

What the hell is going through his head...?

What do Raphtalia and that Woman look like to him?

“What should we do? We won’t be able to leave like this.” (Raphtalia) “Firo, take responsibility and marr-” (Naofumi)

“No!” (Firo)

Really, what should we do? It doesn’t seem Motoyasu will leave us alone any time soon.

“Let’s leave through the window. We can explain our situation to the inn manager and run.” (Raphtalia) “U-understood.” (Naofumi)

Is Motoyasu truly an idiot?

What could have led to this? I can’t even imagine it.

Why do we have to run from him?

Shouldn’t it be the reverse?

And so, we left the Inn.

Afterwards, while we were travelling, Firo randomly began running off to kick things.

I can imagine what she’s kicking.

To withstand Firo’s kicks, he must have quite a bit of stamina.

Or perhaps Firo’s trauma prevents her from finding the strength to kick with all her might.

Recently I’ve been seeing Witch’s wanted poster hanging around.

She is to be captured on sight.

The problem is that she’s travelling with Ren.

And we began our escape from the clutches of the Broken Motoyasu.

# Hatching

We frantically drive the carriage to get away from the broken Motoyasu, and head for our village.

Paki... paki.

I hear some sounds from my back. It seems the egg is about to hatch.

I take it off of my back and examine it.

“Is the egg ready to hatch?” (Raphtalia)

“It seems that’s the case.” (Naofumi)

The carriage is shaking. Firo is running with all of her might.

Well, something terrible did happen to her...

This egg is much bigger than Firo’s. It’s not big enough that I’d have to carry it under my arm, but it’s about as big as an ostrich’s.

Cracks begin to spread across the surface of the egg, and from it a small dragon begins to emerge.

“What do dragons even eat?” (Naofumi)

“I think it’s probably meat.” (Raphtalia)

“Did we have any meat?” (Naofumi)

We should have some extra smoked fish and jerky in the store house, so we

should be fine...

“I’ll ask Rat later.” (Naofumi)

“Let’s do that.” (Raphtalia)

Even if she hates it, she will probably talk.

Taniko has been getting annoying lately.

“KYUAAAA!” (Dragon)

The dragon’s head is fully out of the shell. It lets out a cry.

“Did it hatch?” (Firo)

“Yeah.” (Naofumi)

How nostalgic. Firo was also born like this... no she was much more energetic than this.

The dragon chick is about the size of my head. Much bigger than Firo was.

“Doesn’t it look a little strange?” (Naofumi)

Its body is charcoal colored with a metallic gloss. On its back are wings way too small for the body.

Its tail is quite thick.

It has two horns, and it hasn’t grown any scales yet.

I try to lift it up and find it to be quite warm.

“KYUA!” (Dragon)

It starts blinking and rests its gaze on me.

“KYUAA!” (Dragon)

It raises one of its arms as if to greet me, and lets out a sound.

“What should we name it?” (Raphtalia)

“What would be good? Let’s ask the villagers.” (Naofumi) “Fine, let’s decide one together.” (Raphtalia)

“Then should Firo rush to the village?” (Firo)

“We’re already quite close. There’s no need to rush.” (Naofumi)  
It would be troublesome if it died on the ride right after we got it.

Ah, right.

I should feed the egg shell to the shield.

I touch the shell to the shield.

... bang!

What? The shield lets out some sparks.

... series is currently locked.

Locked?

Now that I think about it... I raised my level quite a bit, but I haven’t unlocked any dragon-based shields.

The Zombie Dragon didn’t give me such a shield, and I haven’t met any other dragons.

I don’t know the reason, but my shield has yet to unlock any dragon shields.

The closest thing I have at the moment is the Wrath Shield.

Should I take Raphtalia and Firo to the mountains later?

I don't know how well I will be able to fight under this curse.

However there are many things I need to test out.

Ah, I forgot because of that incident with Motoyasu, but I have to go to the Castle Town soon.

I need to get some Dragon Hourglass sand to unlock the Warp Skill, and get some weapons from the Old Man.

"Fufu... It looks cute. It reminds me of when Firo was little." (Raphtalia)  
Raphtalia gently pokes the baby dragon.

The dragon grabs hold of Raphtalia's finger and lightly gnaws on it.

This is supposed to be an incarnation of carnal lust?

I better raise it carefully.

We arrive at the village, and I park the carriage next to Rat's research lab.

Raphtalia goes off to talk to the other villagers, and Firo goes off to find Melty in the neighboring town.

And I walk into the Laboratory.

"Yo." (Naofumi)

"Hm? It seems the dragon has finally hatched." (Rat) "Yeah." (Naofumi)

I lift the Dragon up and show it to Rat.

"Well then, let me give it a medical examination." (Rat)

Rat carefully examines the chick, and does some light palpations on it.

“Okay, there are no problems to report. It is a male.” (Rat) “That’s good.” (Naofumi)

There should be no problems if he gets the ability to turn human like Firo. No, the ability to turn human is a problem in itself.

“What should I feed him? Is it meat?” (Naofumi)

“Though it has carnivorous tendencies, it is an omnivore. You can feed it whatever you want.” (Rat)

As Rat begins speaking, the Dragon chick jumps out of her arms and starts climbing up my leg. What is he doing?

“Is there anything particular I have to watch out for?” (Naofumi) “Don’t feed it after midnight. Bad things will happen.” (Rat)

What sort of Demon is that? [26]

Is it that one? The one you can’t splash water on?

“By the way, that was a joke. Well just be careful what you feed it. It might end up chasing you to make you cook more.” (Rat) “I see.” (Naofumi)

“I recommend taking it hunting soon. The appetite of a growing dragon is not something to be trifled with. You better get it out of the way quickly.” (Rat) “... Is that something I should worry over?” (Naofumi) “Yeah, but Count, most of the kids in your village won’t lose out appetite-wise even to a hungry dragon.” (Rat)

Rat begins talking in a haughty tone. She seems to have arbitrarily come to her own conclusion.

“What species is this dragon?” (Naofumi)

“It’s part of the Wyr race. It’s a race with exceptionally high loyalty. It seems to be a mix of a pure-blood Wyr and a Tyrera.” (Rat) [27]

“Tyrera?” (Naofumi)

“It’s a monster that looks like a giant lizard. They don’t fly but make for good vehicles. Though they aren’t exactly common.” (Rat) “I see...” (Naofumi)

I’ve never heard of or seen one.

“It’s not a monster native to Melromark, so you probably haven’t seen one. I don’t think anyone even keeps one in this area.” (Rat) “Is that how it is?” (Naofumi)

“It’s much more common in Faubrey, Shildfrieden, and Silt Welt. Its natural habitat is quite limited.” (Rat) “Hmm...” (Naofumi)

“Your area of operation is quite small, you know, Count.” (Rat) “I’m well aware.” (Naofumi)

Don’t stress over things that don’t concern you.

When the other three heroes were sent to other countries, I had to remain here.

I never received any international missions.

If I can make a profit overseas, I should probably consider it, but now is not the time for that.

But I don’t think I will be freed of my work here soon... Perhaps I should let the slaves branch out my company.

I’ll ask the Queen about it later.

“So you were over here.” (Female Knight)

Female Knight arrives at the Lab with Taniko.

“What’s up? Did something happen?” (Naofumi)

“Well-” (Female Knight)

“Is this the Dragon child that came from the egg?” (Taniko)  
Taniko interrupts Female Knight and stares intently at the baby dragon.

“Kyua!” (Dragon)

The dragon seems to give off a smile. It doesn't seem to be afraid of strangers.

“For now, you can go play with the chick. I have some business to speak of with Naofumi-dono.” (Female Knight) “Ye~s!” (Taniko)

“Why do you listen to her words, but not mine!?” (Naofumi)  
I'm technically your master, you know!

... Well, she'll be taking a burden off my hands for a while.

I hand the dragon chick over to Taniko and face Female Knight.

“And? What happened?” (Naofumi)

“Ah, it seems that the country has sent over a military instructor for you.”  
(Female Knight) “Military Instructor?” (Naofumi)

“You know the definition, right?” (Female Knight)

“Well, yeah... someone who teaches how to fight, right? I thought you were already teaching the villagers.” (Naofumi) “You're not wrong. But the person sent is a specialist in the field.” (Female Knight)

Female Knight seems to want to drag me over to him quickly. She starts explaining the situation.

“It's a practitioner of a legendary style, Hengen Musou. That person volunteered to lend Iwatani-dono their power.” (Female Knight)<sup>[28]</sup>

“Hengen Musou? What is that? What sort of style?” (Naofumi)  
It sounds like something someone with Chuunibyou would think of.

“It's a legendary style that is said to have never lost on the battlefield. I heard

tales of it while growing up. The last remaining practitioner said that the style was no longer needed in this world, and planned to take it to the grave with them. But after being helped by Iwatani-dono, that person has decided to pass on the legend for the sake of the world.” (Female Knight) “Hmm... Is it strong?” (Naofumi)

“Of course. The style has left its mark on the histories of countries around the globe. Just like the Four Summoned and Seven Star heroes.” (Female Knight) “It’s that famous? It must be an interesting style.” (Naofumi) “However half a century ago, internal discord caused the death of a majority of its practitioners. Those left all swore to never pass it on. And this is the last practitioner left alive.” (Female Knight)

Really, what sort of style is it? I imagine it coming from a land plagued by bandits.

Something like that one godly martial arts style. [\[29\]](#)

“That person is a famous individual who participated in Melromark’s previous major war.” (Female Knight) “Who?” (Naofumi)

“They said they were on friendly terms with you, but...” (Female Knight) Who is it? Did I know such a person?

“If you can’t remember, I think it’s best if you met them. I want to undertake that person’s lessons as soon as possible.” (Female Knight)

By Female Knight’s behavior, a really amazing person must have come.

Female Knight grabs my arm and begins pulling me away.

“I’m off. Is there anything you need to report?” (Naofumi) “Could you come to see my progress on the Bioplant later? I think you will have to perform a modification on it.” (Rat) “Understood.” (Naofumi)

“KYUA!” (Dragon)

“You should... go feed him something. I’m going to take him leveling soon.” (Naofumi)

Taniko, who is cuddling with the baby dragon, nods at my orders.

I guess she'll listen to my words this time around.

She does not protest against the slaying of innocent wild monsters.

Her philosophy is closest to Survival of the Fittest.

What exactly is she trying to accomplish?

“Your name is now Gaelion.” (Taniko)

“Don't go arbitrarily naming it.” (Naofumi)

“KYUA!” (Gaelion)

The Dragon chick cries out. Was that a yes, or a no?

By the way, the villagers had also been trying to think of a name for the baby.

However, after hearing that Taniko already gave it one, they lost interest.

**This text is a machine translation (MTL).**

Be warned that the degree of translation error may be higher than usual.



This page was created before the updated (July 19, 2015) MTL guidelines and has not been reviewed.

For details, see the [machine translation guidelines](#).

# Peerless Transformation

“Oh! A child with this talent is found only once every 100 years!” (Battle Instructor) “Fuuueeeeeeeeeee!?” (Rishia)

So I went to meet the battle instructor. I placed my hands in front of my face and looked down because of what I saw. [30]

My head hurts

Why is this old hag rubbing Rishia’s body?

What extravagant equipment she’s wearing. [31]

The old hag is wearing a Chinese-style dougi; so she is the battle instructor of the Peerless Transformation Style huh?[32]

“Oh my, Saint-sama, it’s been a long time!” (Battle Instructor) “I’ve heard about you, but you are the Battle Instructor, right?” (Naofumi) “Yes indeed.” (Battle Instructor)

I shouldn’t have asked, but I didn’t want to admit it

I mean, I somehow understood it

But inside my head, I instinctively refuse to believe it

I think I’ve heard a similar voice back in Cal Mira Island, and I also remember ignoring that voice.

“Saint-sama saved many lives, so I rushed over to help save the world.” (Battle Instructor) “Ah.....alright, I understand, but why are you keeping Rishia in this

place?” (Naofumi) “Don’t you understand Saint-sama? Extraordinary talent is sleeping within this person. Her great qualities are suitable to be the next successor.” (Battle Instructor) “Fueeeeeeee?! Naofumi-san, please help me!” (Rishia)

Recently, her favorite word seems to have been running out in a full throttle.

Was it really that unpleasant?

If I remember correctly, Rishia’s been focusing on training and is now around Lvl. 65.

Her stats aren’t very high

Also, her general status is inferior to Kiel, who’s only Lvl. 55.

Her highest is only half as much

And if you compare it to Raphtalia.....It’s too terrible to look at.

However, the level-up speed is rather high.

Still, in this world, the slave training level up speed is different for each individual.

To think that Rishia was some sort of a genius...

“I’m curious about what level you are, battle instructor. If I’m not mistaken, I remember them saying that your age is the same as your level.” (Naofumi) “Oh that... Brings back old memories... It’s level. 100. With further training, I was able to push it through its limits.” (Battle Instructor)  
100! The limit in this world is level 100?

“Is that so, the level limit is 100?” (Naofumi)

“I thought it was, but the limit of the Hakuko kind that is one of your slaves, Iwatani-dono, is 120. It is said that they are the strongest kind.” (Female Knight)  
“According to the legend, the Hakuko kind is believed to exceed the normal class up.” (Female Knight)<sup>[33]</sup>

Female knight compliments Rishia.

To have someone who is knowledgeable sure is convenient.

I don't know anything about this world, and the slaves can't provide any useful information either. Only various knights and nobles can.

“What about the Four Saint Heroes?” (Naofumi)

“There seems to be no limit.” (Female Knight)

I see..... So the Heroes can exceed the level 100 limit, and the Hakuko kind is up to 120.

However, there seems to be a method to break through the class up limit according to the legends, but that method is still unknown up to this day.

“That reminds me, where is Raphtalia?” (Naofumi)

“She's over there.” (Rishia)

Raphtalia is sitting down, and she looks completely exhausted.

What's the matter? I can pretty much guess what happened.

“Are you alright?” (Naofumi)

“Yes..... That old woman groped my entire body without my permission; she said that it was some form of tradition.” (Raphtalia) “It's because you seemed strong.” (Naofumi)

In level, she is above Raphtalia.

But I don't know about stats.

“Earlier when I tried to move, nothing happened. It was as if my movement had

been suppressed. No matter how much strength I used, I still couldn't move.”  
(Raphtalia) “That’s amazing.” (Naofumi)

Was that a joint lock technique of some sort?

It’s a shame that I don’t know something like that

Back in my own world, this would be a typical otaku thing, since grappling anime is a genre that is watched the most. [34]

Well, to hold down Raphtalia, the one who cut the head off the Spirit Turtle together with Firo, like that, she must be a considerably strong person.

“I understand what Saint-sama is thinking. It is true that magic and stats are the keys to winning the battle. However, true strength can only be measured by experience.” (Battle Instructor) “Well...” (Naofumi)

If a person cannot handle his strength properly, then you might say that it is useless in battle.

I of all people knows that very well.

Even high level ones can be a bunch of weak people in a party True strength cannot be determined with stats alone.

“So, what weapon are you using?” (Naofumi)

Before, she used a hoe to fight. [35]

But it dismisses whenever I set it as a weapon

“There is no specific weapon with Hengen Musou Style.” (Battle Instructor)

“What?” (Naofumi)

“The Hengen Musou Style is an all-around combat art which utilizes a wide variety of weapons to fight different kinds of enemies.” (Battle Instructor)

Then even a hoe is considered weapon too.

It is a technique that does not specifically choose a weapon.

“How about testing Saint-sama’s strength with mine?” (Battle instructor) “Well, my body is still recovering because of the curse.” (Naofumi) “Then will Saint-sama escape when a sudden occurrence were to happen because he is not ready?” (Battle Instructor) “No.... Well you could say that I have reliable companions to fight with, although the only thing that I can do is to defend.” (Naofumi) “Well then, as a handicap, I’ll only use a wooden stick to hit you. A single blow should be okay, right? Saint-sama, try to endure the attack.” (Battle Instructor)

The old hag broke a branch off the bioplant and took a stance against me.

It was almost a personal thing.

I consider my abilities to be the weakest of all the people that I’ve encountered. Motoyasu is the strongest so far.

Well, when Motoyasu and I fought, he was on offense and I was on defense, which would obviously only lead to a stalemate.

He was glorified as a knight who pursued, though he was just a thief who robbed the masses.

I’ll use the Soul-eater shield this time because it has the highest defense.

The spirit turtle series is not that strong yet because the materials for enhancing are not enough.

“Well then, I’ll start.” (Battle Instructor)

The old hag jumped in front of me in an instant.

However, this speed is something that I can deal with.

I was able to react and push the shield in the direction where the wooden stick was coming from.

With this, I can lower the old hag's attack power.

“As expected of Saint-sama, you got accustomed to my movements in an instant. But how about this?” (Battle Instructor)

In spite of her weapon being just a stick, a shock ran through the shield.

“!?” (Naofumi)

The shock transferred to my hand and then my body.

Now it's reaching my abdomen.

“Gufuuu!” (Naofumi)

It's a strike to the stomach which made me lose my strength.

What now?

“One technique of the Hengen Musou Style is used to beat people with high defense such as yourself, Saint-sama.” (Battle Instructor)

My consciousness fading away, but I endured it and started chanting recovery magic.

“Tzuvaito Heal!” (Naofumi)

This power..... is the kind of skill that can carry damage in proportion to the defense of the object that it is to be touched by the stick. <sup>[36]</sup>

It's the kind of power that would be really fatal for me.

To think that the Eagle Piercing Shot could possibly exist somewhere in the world...

“However, a reversal technique also exists.” (Battle Instructor) “There is?”  
(Naofumi)

“Of course, and by all means I would like you to master those techniques.”  
(Battle Instructor) “.....understood.” (Naofumi)

I understand that it is a powerful technique

She is an excellent Battle Instructor and she’s not an enemy that I can possibly defeat.

There’s no reason for me to refuse and it’ll be troublesome not to cooperate.

Rather, it’ll be a great asset if it's taught to the slaves.

“So what should I do?” (Naofumi)

“Since Saint-sama already has fighting experience, I only need to explain the theory behind it. All you have to do is assess your opponent's internal spirit, and inject your own magic power to cause a disturbance to make your opponent’s magic power run wild.”

“Huh?” (Naofumi)

The image of a marble inside a vase that’s shaking floats in my head.

That kind of logic is probably not wrong

If you shake the vase very violently, sooner or later it’ll break because the inside is hollow.

To receive such an attack would definitely break me from the inside.

“To reverse the technique, you just have to redirect the power outside of your body before it begins to get out of control.” (Battle Instructor) “I see.”  
(Naofumi)

In other words, I just need to let it go outside before the power begins to act violently.

If you compare it to ceramics, it already has a hole, so do I just have to push it forward?

Such things only happen in manga... my life has become just like fantasy.

.....I can even summon a barrier from the shield.

"I understand the theory, but it seems really hard to do." (Naofumi)

Even though I have an idea on how it works, I still don't know how to do it.

This old hag really is amazing.

"I understand. I now appoint you as the Battle Instructor of this village."

(Naofumi) "Thank you very much... then I'll be in charge of this child and this girl who seems to be your right hand, Saint-sama." (Battle Instructor)

"Okay." (Naofumi)

"Naofumi-sama!" (Raphtalia)

"Naofumi-san!" (Rishia)

Rishia and Raphtalia are protesting.

"Do you not like it? But this person is really strong." (Naofumi) "You're right..." (Raphtalia)

"Do you want to be stronger? Then endure it. Training by yourself will just get you nowhere." (Naofumi)

It's an opportunity to learn something.

Because you are already close to reaching level 100, learning martial arts will make you even stronger.

Raphtalia and Rishia both want to become stronger.

And I don't have a reason to hate that.

“Starting today, things are about to get tough.” (Battle Instructor) “U-understood!” (Raphtalia)

“Fuueeeee!?” (Rishia)

# Alps

“It seems... that an amazing granny has arrived.” (Fohl)

Fohl arrives carrying Atlas on his back.

He’s acting as if he is uninvolved.

Raphtalia and the others have a level cap of 100, but these two can reach 120.

It’s true that having technique can balance out having low stats, but having high stats never hurts.

“What are you talking about? You’re taking her lessons as well.” (Naofumi)

“Ge...” (Fohl)

Fohl has recently been preoccupied with tending to Atlas, and he’s been ignoring my orders.

I don’t know why, but he is behaving quite rebelliously towards me, like Kiel when she first got here.

I was able to tame Kiel with food, but it seems that won’t work on this one.

The younger sister Atlas’s condition has improved quite a bit, and it seems a full recovery may be possible.

“Naofumi-sama, it’s been a while.” (Atlas)

“It’s only been two and a half days, you know.” (Naofumi) “And still we meet here and now. Naofumi-sama suddenly left, so I was feeling... anxious.” (Atlas)

Ah, so she was afraid that her medicine supply had disappeared.

If I don’t feed it to her personally, the effect decreases.

“Nununu...” (Fohl)

Fohl begins staring at me menacingly.

What’s he so bitter about?

“Hm? Oy, the little girl over there.” (Granny)

The old woman approaches Atlas.

She looks over her body.

Please choose one student at a time, or I will be understaffed.

“Laddy, why are you carrying that girl around?” (Granny)

She begins questioning Fohl.

And in response, Fohl shifts his glare to her.

Isn’t it obvious that Atlas is sick?

From my point of view, it looks as if the granny is bullying the two siblings.

I’m quite skeptical when it comes to the elderly.

This trauma was probably brought about by Trash.

“Atlas can neither see nor walk!” (Fohl)

“Really? I don’t sense that sort of aura from her. Can you have her stand up for a second?” (Granny) “D-don’t screw with me. Atlas can’t st-” (Fohl) “Dear brother, let me try it.” (Atlas)

“... I got it.” (Fohl)

Fohl slowly lowers Atlas, and grasps her arms to steady her.

Well... I don’t think anything will come of this.

This may be a world of magic, but there are some wounds that won’t heal so

easily.

“Naofumi-sama, if I may ask for your assistance.” (Atlas) “Ah, got it.” (Naofumi)

She won't be able to stand anyways. Someone with as weak a constitution as her won't recover this fast.

... The Yggdrasil medicine can't be that effective...

This old woman's standing right in front of us.

Perhaps the medicine will work.

“Hup...” (Atlas)

Atlas uses the hands of Fohl and I, and manages to stand.

“Wow... Is this what it means to stand on one's own feet?” (Atlas) “Ah... Atlas is... Atlas is standing!” (Fohl)

What sort of girl from the Alps are you? [\[37\]](#)

...If I never had asked Fohl for his name, I would have given him the nickname 'Alps' here.

And I would have stuck to it to the end. Like with Taniko.

Now that I think about it, I don't know Taniko's real name. But I have no real intention to learn it, and I don't really care.

Atlas slowly starts walking while teetering from side to side. She smiles.

“Thank you, Naofumi-sama, Onii-sama.” (Atlas)

“... Atlas, you've become healthy...” (Fohl)

“Yes, Onii-sama.” (Atlas)

Her condition was horrible, but she has recovered to this extent.

That medicine really is miraculous.

It worked for the old woman, and now Atlas.

“And so, Naofumi-sama... what should we do from now?” (Atlas) “Let’s see. I plan to have your brother fight for me. He’s been leveling up with the others, right?” (Naofumi) “Yes, Onii-sama has been diligently leveling with the others.” (Atlas) “So what do you want to do?” (Naofumi)

Even if she can walk, I don’t think I can count on her for hard labor.

Atlas is also a Hakuko, so she can reach level 120.

“I also wish to learn how to fight.” (Atlas)

“Atlas! You don’t have to do that!” (Fohl)

Fohl of the Alps shouts out.

But of course he will prevent his sick sister from participating in battle.

“No... I’ve wished this since I was small. If I was ever able to walk, then I wouldn’t want to be the one who just got protected all the time. I want to protect you too.” (Atlas) “B-but...” (Fohl)

Atlas’s strong will seems to have gotten through to Alps.

... If I keep thinking of him as Alps, I may end up saying it out loud and getting whacked.

I’ll stick with Fohl for now.

Taniko? No idea.

“And so, Naofumi-sama, please let me fight as well... Please let me level up with everyone.” (Atlas) “Understood. So Fohl, what will you do?” (Naofumi) “I’ll fight! Protecting Atlas is my duty.” (Fohl) “No, I wasn’t asking about that...”

I explained the powers granted unto me by my shield’s growth correction abilities.

“And so, if you want to truly become stronger, it will probably be best to reset your level. What will you do?” (Naofumi) “T-that’s...” (Fohl)

“With the Growth Corrections, Atlas may surpass you some day.” (Naofumi)  
My words seem to have affected him.

“I want to win against Onii-sama.” (Atlas)

“Nu...” (Fohl)

Fohl hesitates and stares at Atlas’s face.

I guess it would be painful for him if his precious sister gets beaten up on the battlefield. He seems to have come to a decision.

“... I got it. I’ll reset.” (Fohl)

“You seem to be discussing something interesting.” (Sadina)  
Sadina suddenly appears.

“I wonder if I should do it as well.” (Sadina)

“Fumu...” (Naofumi)

I was going to the Dragon Hourglass anyways, so I don’t mind.

“We’ll be leaving immediately. Military Instructor, please help Raphtalia and Rishia.” (Naofumi) “I understand.” (Granny)

Sadina is large, so we'll have to couple a cart to the carriage... Oh, right.

"Are the Lemos here?" (Naofumi)

"What is it?" (Lemo)

The Lemos gather.

"Are you people raising your levels as well?" (Naofumi) "Yes, most of us were already over level 30 when we got here." (Imya's Uncle)

Imya's uncle begins explanations.

"I see. Then if anyone here wants to learn blacksmithing, come with me."

(Naofumi) "Blacksmithery? Then I'll go." (Imya's Uncle)

Imya's uncle raises his hand.

What?

"I've already put the basics to heart." (Imya's Uncle) "I see, then come along."

(Naofumi)

"Understood." (Imya's Uncle)

"While we're gone, everyone can dig burrows for themselves. Does anyone specialize in that field?" (Naofumi) "Everyone is quite skilled in that aspect."

(Imya's Uncle) "Got it." (Naofumi)

It seems that at least that area will finish without a hitch.

"Where is Imya, anyways?" (Naofumi)

"Imya is currently at the clothing maker's place to learn how to make clothing. Is that alright with you?" (Imya's Uncle) "I have no issues. Tell her that she can learn freely." (Naofumi) "Yes." (Imya's Uncle)

Imya's developed an interest in making clothes.

If I leave it to the Tailor, it should be fine.

It seems that the people of my village will finally be able to wear decent clothes soon.

"Oy, why are you wearing a loincloth?" (Naofumi)

Sadina appears wearing a loincloth. She's also wearing a vest, but that doesn't make her appearance any less strange.

She's also given one to Kiel, and she walks around in it.

It's aesthetically terrible. It's up to Imya to prevent this town from turning into one of loincloths.

"Personal tastes." (Sadina)

Sadina offers a brief reply.

"I'm home~. Melty-chan was busy, so she rejected me." (Firo)

Firo comes back from the neighboring village at the right time. I call her over.

"Then what shall I do?" (Atlas)

Atlas, who we are leaving behind, calls out.

It's good that she's motivated to work.

Fohl is coming to the Castle Town with us to reset his level, but Atlas was level 1 from the beginning.

"Military Instructor, what do you think of this girl? Can we send her off to level in this state?" (Naofumi) "... Her battle senses are of genius levels. She has learned to sense presence even without my teachings. It will be fine to throw

her into battle now.” (Granny) “Quit spouting crap! Treat her more carefully!”  
(Fohl)

Fohl snapped.

Whenever I meet him, he seems angry.

...Though I’m not one to speak.

“What’s wrong?” (Firo)

“Firo-san, it seems that Onii-sama does not wish to send me into battle.”

(Atlas) “Hm... is Atlas-chan strong?” (Firo)

“No idea.” (Atlas)

“Try punching Firo.” (Firo)

Firo tries to act as Atlas’s senior and presents herself for Atlas’s attack.

“Eh? Ah... sure.” (Atlas)

Atlas closes her fist, and hits it against Firo’s chest.

It lets out quite a nice sound.

The next moment leaves me speechless.

“AKYAAAAAAAAAAAA!” (Firo)

Firo does a somersault and falls flat on the ground.

“I-it’s the real deal. Atlas-chan’s punch really hurt. Master, please heal me...”  
(Firo)

With teary eyes, Firo stares at me.

Is she acting? That was a terrible performance.

“I just slightly disrupted the flow of the massive power within Firo... did it hurt that much?” (Atlas) “Yeah...” (Firo)

“I’m sorry.” (Atlas)

“No, I’m fine. It doesn’t hurt anymore.” (Firo) “Stop it with the jokes, monster girl! Stop trying to send my sister into battle!” (Fohl) “Atlas-chan, punch him.” (Firo)

“Ah, yes.” (Atlas)

On Firo’s order, Atlas smacks her fist into her brother’s chest.

Fohl makes no attempt to block, and takes the attack head on.

“KAHA...” (Fohl)

He lets out a loud sound and falls to his knees.

He seems to be tearing up.

“I-I didn’t feel... anything so... Please stay... home.” (Fohl) “You’re obviously pushing it...” (Naofumi)

This is actually quite amazing.

How did she manage to inflict damage on Fohl and Firo?

Is she able to sense something else because she can’t see?

She’s... stronger than her brother.

If she grows from here, she may turn out to be amazing. As expected of the Hakuko race.

This was an unexpected development in a good way.

The old woman should get to work on her immediately.

“Well, just go level in a way that doesn’t put yourself in too much danger. We’re off to go Level Reset.” (Naofumi) “Ye~s.” (Atlas)

“I-I still don’t approve of you making Atlas fight.” (Fohl) “Onii-sama, no matter what you say, I want to fight. Please follow Naofumi-sama’s directions.” (Atlas)

“B-but...” (Fohl)

“Firo, grab Fohl. We’re going.” (Naofumi)

“Yeah!” (Firo)

Firo grabs the resisting Fohl. The other slaves prepare for the harsh trip.

“Level up the dragon chick with you. Now then, we’re off.” (Naofumi) “See you soon, Naofumi-sama.” (Raphtalia)

“Yeah, I’ll be back soon.” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia’s always seems to be seeing me off, but I’ve never had the opportunity of seeing her off.

But there’s no need for me to mull over it.

And so, I took the slaves that wanted to level reset and those that wanted to learn from the old man to the Castle Town.

# The Weapon Shop's Apprentice

“Yaaahhhhhh!” (Firo)

“Firo-taaa~~.....” (Motoyasu)

I saw Motoyasu off with a sigh as he flew off into space for the third time today.

He'll probably arrive ahead of us with his transfer skill, but she did well.

“As I thought, being with the Hero of the Shield-sama is entertaining~” (Sadina)

Sadina cackled with laughter at the sight of Motoyasu flying into space.

I feel like she was always laughing, but was that just my imagination?

Even Fohl screamed in the beginning. [\[38\]](#)

I also saw the other guys drawing away, but Sadina was the only one who laughed so readily.

Was she someone who laughs easily? How should I say it? I think it's too much.

Oh well, one way or another, the castle came into view.

Fohl looked to be suffering from very bad motion sickness, but we were nearly at our destination.

Returning with the transfer skill.....I didn't register my land or anything, so for the time being it's not an option.

Well, I have various things to do in the castle, so it's fine.

Before we enter the castle town, I stop the carriage at the village nearby, like always.

“Heh, are we walking from here?” (Sadina)

“Firo and I are famous, so we stand out whenever we enter the castle town.”  
(Naofumi) “Hmm. Well then, wouldn’t it’d be better for Fohl-kun to conceal himself as well, for the same reason?” (Sadina) “Why?” (Naofumi)

“Melromarc has been in a feud with Silt Welt for a long time, you know? And the Hakuko species is renowned because of it.” (Sadina)  
Mmm.....there’s some truth in that. His appearance may be noteworthy.

“My kind is not seen very often, but it’s fine since we’re not well-known.”  
(Sadina) “I see.” (Naofumi)

It seems kind of stupid. We might stand out for a different reason, but let’s just go as eccentric adventurers.

It seems that the Lemo slave was fine for the same reason.

We plan to leave him at the old man’s place. It was Imia’s uncle.

Was his a docile species?

Come to think of it, I haven’t been fighting at all lately.

I’m afraid my senses seem to be dulling.

I should also do some training exercises with the Battle Instructor.

Firo kept a restless lookout of our surroundings as she walked behind me.

Did she really hate Motoyasu that much?

If she hated him, she shouldn’t have given him such kind words.

I really didn’t want to tell her, but she should be more secretive about this fear.

What will you do when Motoyasu proceeds to the village?

We entered the castle town as I thought that.

It would probably be good to ask the queen to prepare for the Level Reset first.

Or, should I turn the slave over to the old man before that?

Well, we pass the old man's shop on the way to the castle, so the delegation is probably better.

"Oh, Laddie." (Oyaji)

When we entered the weapon shop, the old man was standing at the counter as usual.

The shop seems to have settled down and stabilized. Well, I had confidence in the old man's business.

"How is it? Is there any progress?" (Naofumi)

"Not at all. The ore from the spirit turtle also has the characteristic of being tough." (Oyaji) "Hmm.." (Naofumi)

"That part is very challenging right now, but I'm researching everything I can." (Oyaji) "I see. Which reminds me, in Zeltbur I—" (Naofumi)

I told the old man about the Spirit Turtle Sword I saw in Zeltbur. In any case, I could tell that it was a sword made by a skilled craftsman at a single glance.

"If you say so, it must have been quite a sword....I can probably tell who made it or how they made it just by looking at it, but...." (Oyaji) "I'd need to bring it here? Forgive me, but such an expensive weapon is beyond me." (Naofumi) If I sell the weapons made by the old man, I could probably get a bit of money, but that would be like putting the cart before the horse.

...Speaking of which, I also have the option of selling the rare or unique weapons gained from the drops. Since they're unusual, I should be able to get a

good price for them.

I'll think about it.

"Oh right, I thought about who I should make your apprentice, and brought the slave." (Naofumi) "Who is it?" (Oyaji)

I pointed to Imia's uncle among the slaves I brought.

"For a while now, I've felt like I know you, but is that just my imagination?" (Oyaji)

The old man inquired while pointing at Imia's uncle.

"Why, it's been a long time. It looks like you've graduated properly from the Master's place." (Imia's uncle) "As I thought!" (Oyaji)

"You're acquaintances?" (Naofumi)

"Yeah." (Oyaji)

"From the past." (Imia's uncle)

It seems that Imia's uncle and the old man from the weapon shop were fellow disciples under the same craftsman when they were younger.

"Even if I say that....I dropped out in the middle. There were a lot of troubles at home and we had to raise Imia and the other children." (Imia's uncle) "The management was completely screwed up back then." (Oyaji) "Despite being craftsmen?" (Naofumi)

It was a somewhat ridiculous story.

"Whenever there was a huge discussion, it'd be about women. My master was obsessed with love." (Imia's uncle)

It seems like the master was similar to Motoyasu. In my head, the old man's master turned into Motoyasu.

Although, the Motoyasu I know has already turned into a Firo maniac.

What kind of life did Imia's uncle go through? Imia also became a slave, but I really don't know any details.

A wave similar to Raphtalia's.....was considered strange. Since it was huge.

"Speaking of which, how did you and Imia become slaves?" (Naofumi) "We were forced into slavery after being caught by slave hunters. During that time, quite a lot of corpses appeared and the village was also ruined. The only survivors are the ones with the Hero of the Shield-sama." (Imia's uncle)  
I see, there was also that kind of pattern. Raphtalia also experienced something similar.

"The orphaned Imia seems so happy now. I feel that I also want to lend my strength to the Hero of the Shield-sama." (Imia's uncle)

The circumstances behind the slavery were things such as being sold by parents, having no relatives, or slave hunting.

Sadina's reason was the same, being caught by slave hunters.

Then what about Fohl?

"What about you?" (Naofumi)

"I couldn't pay for Atla's medical fees and we were also burdened with debt." (Fohl) ".....so it seems I'll receive a bill." (Naofumi)

Should I sell him depending on the amount of money?

No, there's also the medicine costs. This guy owes me quite a debt.

"As far as I know, it disappeared when we were presented to you." (Fohl) "I see, that's good." (Naofumi)

Those slave dealers... So that part was given as a service.

“Originally I worked and fought.....the debt was gone, or otherwise I wouldn’t have been able to buy medicine.” (Fohl) “I see....” (Naofumi)

“Atla should’ve been able to have a more normal life. At the very least, she shouldn’t have had to suffer from her illness.” (Fohl) “What kind of background did you have?” (Naofumi)

“Who knows....? I only know that grandfather was amazing. My parents were lost in the war when we were young, but I think they were also pretty influential. There were a lot of people who helped around.” (Fohl) “What about servants to put on your clothes?” (Naofumi)

“We didn’t have those kinds of guys. But since we couldn’t pay, our household belongings were distributed and we parted.” (Fohl)

Ruined by medical fees, huh.....

To have loyal subordinates and such, what kind of nobles were you?

“Where did you live?” (Naofumi)

“Why do I have to tell you that much?” (Fohl)

“Well, that’s true.” (Naofumi)

Worrying about the background of this hero-ish guy, my mind was dwelling on something inconsequential.

“Well since you’re already acquainted, it simplifies things.” (Naofumi) “Well that’s true, but.....I never thought the smithing place I would be employed at would be yours.” (Imia’s uncle) “I was also surprised. I’m taking in an apprentice due to Laddie’s request, but... Well, you’re a fine partner, so isn’t it good?” (Oyaji)

“How nostalgic. It brings back memories of the past.” (Imia’s uncle)

“Including lodging fees, how much should I pay?” (Naofumi)

“It includes boarding, right? If I can work him hard, then I don’t need it.”  
(Oyaji) “I’m grateful for your generosity.” (Naofumi)

“Hey....stop saying stuff like working me to death.” (Imia’s uncle)  
He’s become sturdier than normal Demi-humans due to there being some correction.

Will the old man also be Spartan when teaching?

How should I say it... Pipes or cigars would probably suit Imia’s uncle, but he doesn’t smoke.

He wears overalls and looks like a hillbilly.

Well, whatever.

“I’ll have you work to a similar standard as we did in the past.” (Oyaji) “That would kill me.” (Imia’s uncle)

“Hahaha, it’s not as bad as you think.” (Oyaji)

And with that, they started work as the old man chatted with Imia’s uncle.

It looks like it will be fine if it’s like this.

“Well, we’ve got some errands to do.” (Naofumi)

“Alright, I’ll beat the shop’s business into this guy.” (Oyaji) “I want you to teach me how to beat the techniques into this guy, so won’t you come to my land?” (Naofumi)

Depending on whether his skills rival the old man or if they’re just at the level of a salesperson, we’ll be able to have weapons and armour made for the village.

“I haven’t really thought about it. For now, I have to see how capable he is.”  
(Oyaji) “I haven’t done much. Only as far as continuing to do a bit of metalwork.” (Imia’s uncle) “A modest attitude. I’ll have you show me how well you swing your hammer.” (Oyaji) “Look forward to it.” (Imia’s uncle)

It feels like a reunion between long-term friends. It's not bad.

“Well then, I'll come again if anything happens. If you need me, just contact the village or the castle.” (Naofumi) “I know, Laddie.” (Oyaji)

“I'll work hard to learn the work, Hero of the Shield-sama.” (Imia's uncle)  
And like this, we left the weapon store behind.

**This text is a machine translation (MTL).**

Be warned that the degree of translation error may be higher than usual.



This page was created before the updated (July 19, 2015) MTL guidelines and has not been reviewed.

For details, see the [machine translation guidelines](#).

## Trash and Hakuko<sup>[39]</sup>

“Wow..... it's been a long time since I came here. The castle town has greatly changed.” (Sadina) “Have you visited this place before?” (Naofumi)

“Oh yes, once during Melromarc's National Day.” (Sadina)  
Sadina answers me while looking at the mountain of the Spirit Turtle.

The reconstruction has progressed further than before. The impression that the town has been ruined has been reduced considerably.

That being said..... what about the area around the shell of the Spirit Turtle? If one were to look closely, one could see that trees were being cut down and development was going smoothly.

As the saying goes, humans are strong.

The townsfolk were working hard to overcome the disaster.

“Where do you want to go now?” (Sadina)

“I'll go to the castle immediately. Since we came suddenly, the preparations for the level reset have probably not been done.” (Naofumi)

I doubt that the information about me arriving at the castle would not be transmitted either by the Shadow's information network or Female knight, but for now I'll meet the queen.

Unlike a class up, a reset is not usually done

“It's the castle! I've seen it before, but I have never entered.” (Anon Slave 1)

“Yes. Me too.” (Anon Slave 2)

“I thought as much.” (Naofumi)

The Demi-Humans and Beastmen were not welcomed in the castle of a

country that practices human supremacy.

“It is not a good place.” (Kiel)

“I guess.” (Naofumi)

I said while heading towards the castle.

..... As usual, Firo was looking around the area restlessly.

“We will know if Motoyasu is here; you are being too cautious.” (Naofumi) “Firo knows, but for some reason, Firo cannot settle down!” (Firo)

Being too cautious has its weaknesses too.

If I startle her, it would have the opposite effect.

In addition, I don't think Motoyasu would come to the castle town because of the warrant for his arrest.

When you're a known face in this town, it's impossible to hide.

He does not have the skills to hide like Raphtalia, and he is dependent on crystals for magic.

Until he finally acquires the skills to hide, based on his past behavior, he will continue to foolishly come directly charging at Firo.

“Well, don't worry about it.” (Naofumi)

“Muuu.....” (Firo)

We pass by the castle gates while chatting.

The gatekeeper lets me through after I have taken my robe off to show my face, though there is a subtle change in his expression when he sees Sadina.

Is that bitter face made for Sadina, who is obviously a Beastman?

Ah, back when I was summoned as a hero at the victory party after the first wave was over..... weren't there considerably few demi-humans there?

The demi-humans have a low status in this country.

I realized it a few times already.

The strong sense of discrimination is so deeply-rooted that even the Queen admitted to it.

“By the way, where is the Queen?” (Naofumi)

Are you playing a staring game with the documents in your office?

I inquired the Queen’s location from a servant. It looks like she's in the middle of conducting official business, but that seems like a stalling tactic because she knew I was coming.

Will she come if I wait?

Oh, I'll just rest here in the castle's garden.

“Wait here.” (Naofumi)

“Hmmm.....” (Fohl)

Fohl is wriggling uncomfortably in his robe.

Do you want to take it off here?” (Naofumi)

“Can I? Well then.” (Fohl)

Fohl takes off his robe.

Garangaran..... [40]

I hear a sound of something falling behind me.

Turning around, I see Trash with his mouth agape while staring at me.

“And.....”

I wonder, is Trash is still being forced to be the Naked King?

There's a signboard attached to him that says “Do one lap around the castle as punishment. Do not get help no matter what!” signed with the Queen's name.

What is with this guy?

“Finally the Shield has revealed his true colors!” (Trash)

He declares loudly while pointing his finger at me.

“Come on everyone! It's time to erase the Devil of the Shield from this world!  
(Trash)

Trash comes running at me with the sign. While the soldiers were still standing around dumbfounded, he was already in front of me.

Then, Trash was immediately suppressed.

“Let go of me! The Shield is the Devil, and he even brought a Hakuko<sup>[41]</sup> into the castle! Kill him!”

..... It sounds like Trash is hostile to the Hakuko in general.

Seems like some famous lines from this world have come out from his mouth.

Well, I have fun seeing Trash being overpowered.

“Why are you making a racket now?” (Queen)

The Queen comes out while holding her head.

“Oh my wife! The Devil of the Shield has shown his true nature, and brought a Hakuko into the castle!” (Trash) “Is that so?” (Queen)

“‘Is that so?’ That's all you have to say!? Those aren't the words I expected to hear!” (Trash) “The world is in crisis now. Dealing with the Wave is more important than dwelling on bad history. It is the law of nature for the Hakuko to be with the Shield, the God of the Demi-Humans. How could that make you angry?” (Queen)

The Queen does not mince her words.

I felt happy when she said that. Regardless if she was brainwashed or not.

Though I do..... not have a shield with such an effect.

Yeah, I definitely don't.

“Guh..... even though you are my wife, I will not allow you to defend a Hakuko!” (Trash) “I do not need your forgiveness. I cannot permit you to continue looking at the world with such clouded eyes forever. Take him away.” (Queen) “Let go of me! Vulture, do not let that vulture take advantage-J-  
JYHAAAAaaaAaaaaAAAAaaa!” (Trash) <sup>[42]</sup>

Trash is then taken somewhere else.

No matter where he goes, he will still be noisy.

“Was that..... because of me?” (Fohl)

“Don't worry. That guy's just crazy.” (Naofumi)

Fohl comes to me and asks while there is tension hanging in the air.

“Is that so?” (Fohl)

“The law..... I seem to have a mysterious relationship with the law of cause and effect.” (Naofumi)

I mutter while the Queen looks at Fohl.

“What is it?” (Fohl)

“You..... perhaps the name of your grandfather is Tai Ran = Ga = Feon?”  
(Queen) “Ah..... that's right. However, what of it? What did my grandfather do?” (Fohl)

On hearing that, the Queen nods as she is convinced.

“By all means, please follow the Shield Hero. Your late grandfather would have been pleased.” (Queen) “I don't know!” (Fohl)

Phew..... Whenever I'm in the neighborhood, Fohl becomes rebellious. Now he won't obey me.

“How do you know my grandfather?” (Fohl)

“That person who was making a racket a while ago was an enemy of your grandfather.” (Queen) “I see, what did you say.....?” (Fohl)

I am also surprised. How could you say such a thing with such ease? Well, if it was me, I would not be able to turn a blind eye to such things so easily.

“The thing about your grandfather, did you know?” (Queen)

“I didn't know at all. My parents never told me.” (Fohl) “Is that so..... it was rude of me to say that. I ask that you do not mind.” (Queen) “.....”

Fohl has a subtle face. Are you anxious because you are in a position your parents never told you about?

No, it is pretentious of me. I am going to take care of my own roots.

“Iwatani-sama, are you facing any problems? How are you holding up?”  
(Queen) “Well, I'm fine.” (Naofumi)

“And your territory? Anything that happens reaches my ear.” (Queen) “Both areas are having difficulty dealing with your daughter.” (Naofumi) “Result-wise, is Melty useful?” (Queen)

“Well..... I cannot leave the management of the town to her.” (Naofumi)  
Though it looks like due to the brat, the people of the town appear to have not faced many problems.

I cannot say anything more because she has only just taken over the management for a few days.

“Can't you do anything about Witch, your other daughter? Or rather, I feel like murdering her the next time we meet.” (Naofumi)

The thought of capitalizing on her information bounty fills me with a sweet feeling.

"We must take into account..... the possibility of that child crossing over the border together with Ren-sama and that other woman from the Spear Hero's party." (Queen) “When putting together Motoyasu's and Elena's stories, certainly there are other countries they could flee to.”

All in all, I would not be surprised if Witch attempts to pass through the border's barrier. However, if I were to guess methods she may use to break through it.....

Perhaps going over a mountain?

That Witch? She would never go through such an undignified method to enter another country.

Smuggling? Or hiding in a cargo hold? Neither options would be acceptable for her.

“Can't you just smoke her out with the slave's crest?” (Naofumi) “It's not possible. There is something interfering.....” (Queen)

Mu.....

“Can I kill her?” (Naofumi)

“If possible, don't.....” (Queen)

“Is it necessary to keep that girl alive and arrest her? Don't tell me it's because of the need to keep what she did hidden.”

“More or less. To put it specifically, it's a means to avoid a war.” (Queen) “Say what?” (Naofumi)

“That child, I hate her from the bottom of my heart. To the point that I would wholeheartedly ignore her denials and supplications even if she was writhing before me in agony.” (Queen) <sup>[43]</sup>

“Hō.....” (Naofumi)

“It's.....” (Queen)

“Oh, I thought of something better.” (Queen)

By all means, I would really like to enjoy the pleasant surprise of witnessing that moment while not knowing her fate beforehand.

It seems I can have more fun mentally by making a Daruma doll. Even if the Daruma doll wears out, in this world, it can be cured so long as there is money due to the miracles of recovery magic and alchemy.

“Is that so? Then this time, please tell me everything.” (Naofumi) “Oh, it is better that you do not know everything by all means.” (Queen) “But as punishment, for the sake of education, an iron brand should be firmly thrust in her.” (Naofumi) “Does that sound good to you?” (Queen)

“.....how is that good? (Fohl)

Fohl retorts in discomfort. Because Raphtalia is not around, there is no helping it.

If Raphtalia was here, this would have been her cue to retort.

Though I feel like I've become some stand-up comedian. [44]

I mean, from normal common sense standpoint, I wouldn't trust a Hero who rejoices from branding someone with an iron.

I'm not saying that I want to be trusted, but I'd better hide my inner feelings a little bit more.

However, the opponent is Witch. Considering all that has happened in the past, my thoughts should be justifiable.

“The woman that you hate, what kind of terrible person is she?” (Fohl) “Well, to give you an example, she's the type of person who would use your sister's body to commit various crimes, and once her use runs out, your crying sister would then be tossed away with a kick even as she laughs loudly. (Naofumi)

The victims are mainly Motoyasu and me.

I'm sure the number of victims will continue to grow until she is caught in the future, though.

“What did you say!?” (Fohl)

Fohl is enraged.

Even if you're that angry, you don't have to grab me.

“That is something absolutely unforgivable! I will kill you before I allow such a thing to happen!” (Fohl) “Hey, not me.” (Naofumi)

Why would I treat Atlas in such a way?.

Though I'll consider selling her if you are worthless.

“It's the same thing.” (Fohl)

Yikes, my mind was read?

Still, I do not laugh aloud.

“May I continue speaking?” (Queen)

“Ah.” (Naofumi)

“It's about the permission for the level reset this time.” (Queen) “Did you already hear about it?” (Naofumi)

“It was within the reach of my ear. I have already made preparations for you to visit the Hourglass of the Dragon's Era at any time. Please also go receive the sand at the same time.” (Queen) “It would be convenient if the Warp skill could be used for travel.” (Naofumi) “By all means, please come to the castle at any time. That way, I can report any developments to Iwatani-sama as soon as they occur.” (Queen)

Ah, I must go and meet the Old Man, and I have paid a visit to the castle for the time being, so there shouldn't be a problem.

“Based on the stories I heard from Motoyasu, 6 people seems to be the limit. You should find out what further conditions there are in order to catch the other Heroes.” (Queen) “I understand. I think I will attend to your request for their capture as soon as the conditions are met. Moving on, there is the issue about the Spear Hero.” (Naofumi) “That.....” (Firo)

Firo leans back with a wince and hides under my robe.

I do not encourage it because it is unpleasant under there.

“I feel guilty for deciding on my own to let him escape. Do I still attempt catch him?” (Naofumi) “Iwatani-sama is obligated to report anything that has to do with the Spear Hero, and if possible, try to get him to fight in the Wave.....but there is no problem as long as I get to hear a report.” (Queen) “What do you mean by that.....?” (Naofumi)

This person does not listen to other people's stories at all.

Even if I were to pursue him, I think Firo is the only one who would be scared.

There is also the option of letting Firo say something, but it seems that would lead to a funny misunderstanding.

“It should be possible for a slave, but the slave crest does not have an effect on a Hero.” (Queen) “So it seems..... Looks like I'll have to persuade them once I catch them.” (Naofumi) “Thank you. We will also investigate anything that has to do with the Sword Hero.” (Queen)

Because it has something to do with Witch, there is an unpleasant feeling that's attached to it.

That woman..... What on earth happened to make her grow up into such a character? Though I didn't want to know about it for obvious reasons, I wonder how she turned out that way.

“Hey, do you know why Witch became like that? A genius at lying, spitting insults, and manipulating people.” (Naofumi) “She inherited a few qualities from Trash and me. Perhaps the reason is because Trash spoiled her while she was growing up.” (Queen)

Is it the fault of Trash?

I mean, you should have been aware of her bad personality.

Oh, I'm also aware that I have a bad personality.

“As for that person, his daughter remained the apple of his eye even though she hurt others, and in the end they both became fools.” (Queen)

The Queen speaks with distant eyes.

This not the time for you to start reminiscing.

“Many times have I tried to fix her bad personality. I even let her study abroad in a school in Foburei to learn cultures. But the result was.....” [45]

Witch's school period<sup>[46]</sup>.

I really don't want to see it in my life.

“By the way, it was at the school in Foburei that that child graduated from her virginity.” (Queen) “Witch's past is not something I give a damn about!”

(Naofumi)

It really did not matter.

# Portal Shield

“I get that Witch grew up spoiled, but what about Melty?” (Naofumi) “That child was brought up with an exclusive teacher. So as much as possible, she was not too influenced by that person.” (Queen)

And that’s why Melty is respectable, compared to her sister.

Just compared to her sister though.

Because if I had to say, Melty’s emotional nature stands out.

She was angry even when we first met, and was also in hysterics recently.

“Ah, right, Iwatani-sama has somehow changed how he calls her, so I made the name change official.” (Queen) “You did well to distinguish it, despite the two names being mostly the same.” (Naofumi) “I also heard of it through Shadow’s report.” (Queen)

“Did you hear about the source of the name?” (Naofumi)

“Iwatani-sama’s world plays a factor. I dare say.... it’s probably a play on the words succubus or satan...sorceress or something, right?” (Queen) <sup>[47]</sup>

“Mn, correct.” (Naofumi)

However, what is with you coming up with those words to be associated with your own daughter?

Well, that’s the impression you get when talking about Witch, though.

“Also, I am entrusting this to Melty, but what what will you do about the tax rate in your land?” (Queen)

Tax rate, huh.

When I think about it, the nobles originally only had to deal with the land management, and doing nothing was a virtue, right?

Well, I don't know if that's even the case in this alternate world.

"Having high tax rates while we're still reconstructing is a bit....." (Naofumi)  
It's because it's this kind of occasion that the populace's power is swayed.

I feel that demanding taxes while they're still unable to live as they please will cause everything to fail.

I understand that the Japan I lived in also had such a sore point.

Even though we're in hard times, it'll accelerate if taxes are raised. The recession, that is.

If you look at history and such, taxes must be lowered during a recession.

Having said that, as long as we are spirited, we can still expect revenue somehow.

...Well, I don't know much about it.

"For now, we should lower those things that will affect the reconstruction and livelihood and raise the prices of luxury goods and such...." (Naofumi) "I'll have Iwatani-sama's show us your abilities."

"I hope you don't expect too much." (Naofumi)

How should I say it, I'm not that exceptional.

One way or another, it's just using the power of the Shield.

Come to think of it, it's almost time for the Bioplants to produce medical herbs, so I'll be able to manufacture medicine soon.

My purchasing has also been enhanced, and my property investments are somehow quite substantial.

One way or another, I'll be able to sell medicine.

“I heard from the reports that you made a rather interesting building. Something about a plant that simply becomes a building?” (Queen)  
....So you’re indirectly asking about Rat.

Just like I’m being cautious, even the country wants to be careful.

“Right, I created it with that Alchemist who was causing all that trouble in Forburei.” (Naofumi)

I hand a Camping Plant Seed to the Queen.

“This is a prototype for now.” (Naofumi)

“Will you be using this for business as well?” (Queen)

“There’s the issue of it going rampant, so I think it’s dangerous for it to be distributed too much.” (Naofumi)

For now there aren’t any problems, but I don’t know when something will happen.

The problem is that that danger is capable of reviving, especially with strange crossbreeding.

“When I was doing management tasks, a lot of places were lost because of the waves, so at most I was going to use them as a demonstration.” (Naofumi) <sup>[48]</sup>

My place is the result of displaying this technique, and originally I had the intention of emphasizing the selling of medicine.

“Then how about selling to nobles? Hypothetically speaking, if you cast magic to prevent crossbreeding, then it might be good value to sell them as disposable products.” (Queen) “That’s also an option, but...” (Naofumi)

It’s not like I can’t do it by fiddling with the plant modification. It’ll work if I change the fertility value to the lowest setting.

It might be good if it’s those nobles.

“I haven’t received any complaints, but is it alright?” (Naofumi) “The ones who’ll have complaints about the Hero of the Shield-sama’s work are the current authorities.”

“That’s what I’m worried about though....” (Naofumi)

Either way, land management is difficult. I’m under the pretense of teaching Melty, but it seems like I’m being taught instead.

It’s agony to yield to that short-tempered Melty.

“Come to think of it, how are the country’s nobles? Giving me, the Hero of the Shield, such hospitality is essentially just due to the Queen’s own judgement, right?” (Naofumi) “For the time being, there’s no problems. Instead, it’s so calm that it’s ominous.” (Queen) “It seems like something will happen?” (Naofumi)

“...Yes. Regrettably it’s at a state that I can’t reach with my power.” (Queen) I don’t have any conclusive evidence, but I have a hunch. My hunches are usually right when it comes to things like this though.

Originally I was like that too, managing a Demihuman village in a human dominated country, but the Queen, who embraced the Hero of the Shield worshipped by the Demihumans, is the Queen.

“This concerns that trouble-making Alchemist, but it seems she’s adapting to Iwatani-sama’s place from what I can see from the reports.” (Queen) “Yeah, it’s surprising how fast it was. What really happened in Forburei?” (Naofumi) “It’s as she said. Somehow it seems that Forburei’s Seven Star Heroes exiled her due to a conflict over her research and techniques. I suspect it’s that, rather than a religious issue.” (Queen)

One way or another, that guy has her own techniques. So she was exiled because of them.

I don’t know what she was researching in Forburei though....

Somehow, the atmosphere reeks of ‘Japan and a certain country competing

with their car import businesses'. It resembles being chased out by political power.

Well, Forburei will probably reveal new weapons eventually.

If it makes the waves and living easier, then it's good though. I won't be depending on it either. I still need Rat's support.

"So this is how the reports are, huh?" (Naofumi)

"That is the case; we'll be awaiting your next visit." (Queen)

With her head lowered, the Queen started to take her leave.

"That's right, there's ore excavated from the spirit turtle in the castle warehouse, so go ahead and take some whenever you like." (Queen) "Ah, please turn those materials over to my regular weapon shop." (Naofumi)

"Alright." (Queen)

Because I want to become Oyaji's power, somehow. I want to give him priority.

With that feeling, the conversation ended and we went to the Hourglass of the Dragon's Era for Fohl and Sadina's Level Reset.

At the same time, I recieved some of the sand from the Hourglass of the Dragon's Era. I let the shield absorb it.

The Dragon's Era Sand Shield was unlocked.

Dragon's Era Sand Shield 0/60 C

Ability Sealed... Equipment Bonus, Skill [Portal Shield]

Proficiency 0

I had a look at the sudden pop-up....there were no special skills attached. Its ability wasn't very high either.

“Portal Shield!” (Naofumi)

With a *Pop*, an icon appeared in my field of vision.

Transfer <-

Transfer Memory

Where was the initial transfer location?

I identify the transfer.

Melromarc Summon Space.

Ah, it’s that room I first appeared in. It’s unlikely to be anywhere else.

I should try jumping as a test.

When I do, I become aware of the range.

I can also designate comrades that can be transferred. It seems that I can also jump unintentionally.

Moreover it’s pretty vast. So there’s no need to be touching or anything.

They also have it as an emergency escape skill.

“Then I’m going to use the transfer skill to experiment.” (Naofumi) “Okay!” (Firo)

“Oh, it looks quite fun.” (Sadina)

“You’re going to do it?” (Fohl)

Fohl started and grasped onto Sadina. Sadina also embraced Fohl.

Firo was....

“That’s right Firo. Distance yourself a little more please.” (Naofumi) “Hm? Understood~” (Firo)

The human-shaped Firo trotted away from me.

It should be something like this.

I become aware of the transfer.

When I do, the scenery changes, and I jumped to the damp and humid, earth-smelling altar.

Speaking of which, this is that kind of place.

There’s no one around and there’s no ceremony being held, so it’s natural.

“You really jumped. How interesting~” (Sadina)

Sadina cackled with laughter. Say, you’re always laughing.

Fohl blinked with surprise.

Firo... separated from me, and yet she was standing close by.

It’s sure is a convenient skill...

What was the cooldown time like?

“Portal Shield!” (Naofumi)

Reuse time, a countdown time of 1 hour appeared.

It’s longer than I expected.

Well, if it was short then it could be utilized in battle.

“Now then, let’s return.” (Naofumi)

Just like this, we finished experimenting and returned to the village.

By the way, it seems like the possible transfer point memory of the Portal Shield is fundamentally impossible to set inside caves and buildings. The summoning space was the initial point, and that's why there's that sort of treatment.

And so, if I can't transfer to places that can't be registered, then it's practical to jump to somewhere different.

Moreover, there's actually no need to shout; just moving my mouth lets me jump.

I covered my mouth with my own hand, and just by saying 'Portal Shield', an icon appeared.

Furthermore, starting with my party members, I have the option of selecting allies in my surroundings to transfer with.

That is to say, it can still be used even if an ally is caught by the enemy.

Furthermore, a hostile opponent can't be transported.

In short, monsters, the heroes, and Witch aren't allies, so I can't forcibly take them with me.

That's a nuisance...

Ah, that's right. Speaking of limits, it seems like the carriage is too big and is impossible to transport with 'Portal Shield'.

That's why the other heroes didn't use carriages.

# Discipline

“We didn’t see Motoyasu on our way home.” (Naofumi) “Firo doesn’t want to see him.” (Firo)

I had thought to try to persuade Motoyasu if we encountered him, but we didn’t meet.

Was the kick so bad that he died?

It would be bad if he fell just like that.

But I can’t imagine that stalker just dropping dead so easily....

“Come to think of it, you guys reset your levels, but you’re moving unexpectedly normally. Was a stretcher not necessary or something?” (Naofumi) “I’m not that fragile!” (Fohl)

“My body feels quite heavy, but not to the extent of being unable to move~” (Sadina) “What kind of people are you guys?” (Naofumi)

Wondering if they were really alright, she tried poking Fohl in the arm. ....Firo did.

“~~~~!” (Fohl)

He really seems determined.

I don’t know if he understood that I was letting him try, but Fohl endured.

“Ahaha~ It’s ticklish.” (Sadina)

Fohl seemed fine compared to Sadina.

So were they fine if they had trained their body?

Level raising was a completely different category. Compared to training one's body, that is.

Unlike simply receiving divine protection from stats, if one trains, they should have no problems with most negative conditions.

Or perhaps I should say that these two had been doing such self-training.

Raphtalia also did something similar, but the lost stats from the Level Reset were compensated for by strengthening training, so there was no loss. [\[49\]](#)

In short, the ones who needed stretchers were those who specialized in magic or had been power-leveling, and were now bedridden.

The method of employing a young noble or adventurer and only raising one's level...

You'd expect a certain extent of effectiveness and the guys from my village also raised their levels in a similar manner, so it's not a bad technique.

The problem is that there's no choice but to improve with self-disciplining or something like the Old Hag's training after reaching the Level Cap.

It seems like there's no level restriction for the Heroes, but it's probably still better for me to also do the training.

This is a world where Levels and Statuses are natural, so I should train every day and repeat magic to improve the merit of the level cap.

In that case, it could be thought that one can be strong if one trains from young like Fohl and Sadina.

I don't know how it is in reality and I'm not going to be staying in this world, so I'll train until we suppress the waves.

Anyway, I wonder what would happen to the levels and stats after I return to my original world.

The shield as well.

No matter what I do, this shield can only be disguised with the book shield at best, so if it remains attached even in my original world, then it would already be in the region of a cursed item.

When I become a full-fledged member of society, always walking with a strange book would simply get me laughed at.

This kind of thinking is dangerous. I haven't even returned yet, so there's no point in me having such expectations.

Even if the shield remains attached, I should think about it when the time comes.

"You guys, I'll have you level up as soon as we return." (Naofumi) "Yes, Yes~" (Sadina)

"I know that." (Fohl)

I conveyed as such to Sadina and Fohl, and we had a favorable return from our trip.

It has been just over a day since we departed.

I could see the village.

"Welcome home....Naofumi-sama." (Raphtalia)

A somewhat tired Raphtalia came to greet us.

"You seem tired." (Naofumi)

“That old lady has been training me vigorously.” (Raphtalia) “I see...”  
(Naofumi)

Rishia collapsed face down on the floor as if she was dead.

When I drew near and checked her state, I heard a moan.

It appears that she’s not dead, but she was worn-out.

“Now then, break time is over, we’re leaving now!” (Granny) “Fueee.....” (Rishia)

“W-well then, we’ll be leaving for a little bit.” (Raphtalia) “Where to?”  
(Naofumi)

“We’ll be heading to the mountains for some training in a moment.” (Granny)  
“Ah...is that so.” (Naofumi)

Upon saying that, Raphtalia and the others followed the old hag on a trip.

Where did they go?

Before I realized, it became like a Shounen manga.

In the end, that kind of training is needed when learning martial arts.

Raphtalia, who had received growth correction from the shield, suffered such fatigue from leveling and self-training. It’s as the old-, or rather, the battle instructor had said.

“Welcome home Naofumi-sama, Brother.” (Atla)

“Why did you call him first? Atla.” (Fohl)

“That cannot be helped.” (Atla)

What can’t be helped?

Well, it’s probably that I’m the master of these slaves.

“I’ve already reached Level 15.” (Atla)

“I see.” (Naofumi)

“S-so fast.” (Fohl)

Is it really fast? Rishia reached Level 20 in half a day though. Rather, isn’t this on the slower side?

This probably differs between individuals.

If I had to say, it would be that Rishia’s leveling was on the fast side.

“I understand Atla’s growth. How is the baby Dragon?” (Naofumi) “Kyaaaaa!” (Taniko)

Some creature was giving Taniko a ride and was running around noisily, raising a cloud of dust.

Based on its size, it was as large as an average wild boar....compared to Firo, but she was already that size at two days old.

“Gaerion-chan has come.” (Atla)

Without turning around, Atla revealed the creature behind the dust cloud.

Nothing about Taniko riding on his back?

“Atla-chan! And....” (Taniko)

Taniko saw me and glared.

“Hey....Why do you hate me so much?” (Naofumi)

“...Because you’re a hero.” (Taniko)

“Huh?” (Naofumi)

“Nothing.” (Taniko)

Somehow, Taniko seems to regard me as an enemy.

Despite being such a monster-lover, she doesn't really hate leveling up....

When she came to this village among the slaves, her initial level was 10.

.....She was a complicated person.

The dust cloud cleared and I could see the baby dragon's figure.

....His whole body was a ball with some dragon parts attached.

He absorbed all sorts of things... He looked like that Poyo, but with bat wings and a lizard's tail. [\[50\]](#)

What is this?

Firo also had a figure similar to this before.

There's no way he'll become huge just like this, right?

“Kyuaa!” (Gaerion)

A smile surfaced on Gaerion's face; he dropped Taniko off and leapt at me.

As if I'll let you.

I prepared my shield to obstruct him.

However.

He clung firmly to the shield, then climbed over it and onto my back.

He's simply huge, so it's heavy.

“Let go! Don't stick to me!” (Naofumi)

“Kyuaa!” (Gaerion)

He stuck out his tongue and licked my cheek.

He's become unusually attached just two days after his birth.

Well, he probably thinks of me as his parent.

"Hey, stop it." (Naofumi)

"Kyuaa!" (Gaerion)

Gaerion ignored my edict and licked me, but he seemed to understand my dislike and ceased just clinging to me.

Hm...he's more lovable than I thought.

Firo's also quite cute when she doesn't talk though.

"Hmph..." (Firo)

Firo let out a frustrated voice.

And then she stood in front of me...

"What is it?" (Naofumi)

She licked me with her tongue.

Ugh... disgusting.

"Bird, what's with you all of a sudden?" (Naofumi)

"That position of Master's is Firo's~!" (Firo)

"As if I know! You've never had that kind of behaviour." (Naofumi) "But that way of playing is Firo's!" (Firo)

"I don't know." (Naofumi)

"Hmph~!" (Firo)

Firo ran away angrily.

Jeez, what was she so dissatisfied about?

Speaking of which, she also became sullen when I played with the new Philorial.

Was it jealousy?

I heard before that when keeping a dog, it might show hostility if there was an increase in new pets or children.

It's a bit extreme, treating a Philorial like a dog, but was it something similar?

Or it could be Firo's own personality.

I'll ask Rat about it next time.

"Kyua?" (Gaerion)

He inclined his head...but it was part of his body, so his whole body moved.

Taniko stroked Gaerion's head as he gazed after Firo's retreating figure with wonder.

"Hey, go play with him." (Naofumi)

"Kyuaa!" (Gaerion)

When I passed him to Taniko, she extended her hand to me as if wanting to play again.

If Firo had this kind of animalistic charm, she would also seem cute.

"I seems he's grown quite big." (Naofumi)

"Yeah." (Taniko)

"This isn't the end of his growth, right?" (Naofumi) "He's still a baby though?"

(Taniko)

Taniko replied while cuddling Gaerion.

Why are you so well-informed?

Ah, maybe she heard from Rat.

“But weren’t you on his back?” (Naofumi)

“...That monster lady said it would discipline him properly.” (Taniko) “I see....”  
(Naofumi)

Is it training for being a mount or something? Firo did that kind of thing sufficiently. [\[51\]](#)

As to be expected, dragons have their differences in regards to this.

“It seems like Gaerion-chan also loves Naofumi-sama.” (Atla)

Atla said charmingly.

“By the way, what is going to happen to Brother and Sadina-san now?” (Atla)

“Let’s see. Firo just left, so I can’t really use her right now...” (Naofumi)

Well, she was convenient as transport though.

“Did you need something?” (Firo)

Firo appeared from somewhere after I said her name.

“Ah, I wanted to have you help Fohl level up. You aren’t tired?” (Naofumi) “I’m fine?” (Firo)

“I see, then can I count on you?” (Naofumi)

“Ok.” (Firo)

“Is it alright if I join you?” (Atla)

Atla inquired of Firo. Firo responded with a nod.

“It’s okay.” (Firo)

“Kyua!” (Gaerion)

Gaerion also raised his paw as if announcing his participation. [52]

“No~!” (Firo)

Sticking her tongue out provokingly, Firo rejected Gaerion’s company.

“Then head to somewhere with appropriate monsters with the carriage....”  
(Naofumi) “Ah, I’ll be leveling in the ocean, so don’t worry about me.” (Sadina)  
Sadina held her harpoon and informed me.

Well, there’s no problem if she levels in her own domain.

“Are you okay at Level 1? If you need companions, I’ll send some with you.”  
(Naofumi) “It’s fine, it’s fine. I’m already used to fighting like this.” (Sadina)  
Sadina said I was worrying too much of all things and headed to the ocean.

She made me sound like I was her guardian.

I don’t have much material from sea monsters, so it would help if Sadina brought some back.

One way or another, she seems like she simply wants to raise her stats.

Then those who want to quickly raise their levels will...” (Naofumi)  
Firo hates Gaerion with prejudice.

It seems like she would cause an uproar if I said I was going to help with

Gaerion's upbringing.

It's none of my business, but she can't complain if I continue as I have been doing.

And one way or another, Firo's reliable when it comes to combat....

"Firo will help Atla and Fohl with their level raising. Gaerion and you and—"  
(Naofumi)

After I pointed to Taniko, I called Kiel over and instructed them to take the Caterpiland with them.

I actually wanted them to ride the Philorial, but it was rejected.

It seems that it's true that Dragons and Philorials don't get along.

I feel like Philorials are more peaceful and weak, but....how is it in the wild?

"Naofumi-sama, with that deployment, I would be better off with Gaerion-chan." (Atla) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"Really?" (Firo)

"Yes. Because I will grow together with Gaerion-chan." (Atla) "Hey, Atla! I—" (Fohl)

They did have the same levels...If that's the case, it can't be helped.

Besides, Firo's spartan course is difficult, which is perfect for Fohl.

"Then Firo." (Naofumi)

"Wha~t?" (Firo)

"Go train Fohl spartanly at the highest difficulty you can manage and raise his level rapidly." (Naofumi) "Ok!" (Firo)

"Of all things, what are you talking ab—" (Fohl)

Fohl idiotically clung to Firo's back as he rode her.

“We’ll be going now Master~!” (Firo)

“Ah, off you go.” (Naofumi)

“Wh-what’s with this guy’s feathers!? Don’t fall out! Don’t fall out! Ah, Atlaaaaaa—” (Fohl)

Firo ran around noisily.

Firo’s feathers were also mysterious. They could hold onto riders and made a strange song. [53]

And just like that, I could no longer hear Fohl’s voice.

“We’ll be taking our leave now.” (Atla)

“Work hard.” (Naofumi)

“Won’t Naofumi-sama join us?” (Atla)

“If I go, then Firo will..you know.” (Naofumi)

I pointed to Gaerion and explained my reasoning.

“That is troubling. However, I want to be able to Level up together with Naofumi-sama soon.” (Atla) “That’s true. I haven’t been suppressing any monsters lately, so it should be fine when I feel like going.” (Naofumi) “It’s a promise.” (Atla)

“I know. You’re also quite a strange fellow.” (Naofumi)

In this village, it’s rare that someone would want to fight monsters and level up together with me.

However if you think about, when fighting in the waves, it’s important know how to cooperate with me, as I can only defend.

Actually, right now only Raphtalia and Firo have experience fighting with me, but following the plan to a certain extent would mean I should have to participate in battles too.

All the same, if we went out to fight the waves together without being able to cooperate, there would have been no meaning in creating this village. [54]

“Come back before nightfall.” (Naofumi)

“I got it, big bro.” (Kiel)

And just like this, I saw the levelling party off and resumed work in the village.

# A Shield to Protect the Shield

A few days passed. The days went by way too peacefully.

The only problems I have to attend to are the maintenance of the neighboring village and Rat's Bioplant modifications.

And Melty is helping out a lot with the village.

But this seems to be largely due to her subordinates, who are well-versed in politics.

There is no tax as of now, but we will have to levy one in the near future.

For now, the villagers must focus on rebuilding.

And needless to be said, the villagers happily agreed to that matter.

Melty sometimes acts older than her age, but other times acts like a brat.

But after that assassination attempt, I guess this village is one of the few places she can be at ease.

The Queen? I don't consider her an enemy, but she's not a person I should trust easily.

The accessory merchant somehow opened a shop without me even noticing.

Because the shield is supposed to be the guardian of Demi-Humans, the bars are usually filled with Demi-Human adventurers.

We're relying on soldiers for security now, but after reconstruction finishes, I guess I can pass the task on to anyone with free time.

There are still too few slaves to start a village.

Should I go to the Slave Dealer again?

By the way, on the day he got back, Fohl was dragged off by Firo, and forcefully had his level raised to 18.

When he got back, he collapsed. To gain so many levels in an hour may have been too much for his body to handle.

“I’m leveling up quite fast.” (Fohl)

“It’s probably due to Firo. She can run at an amazing speed, taking down all monsters on the way.” (Naofumi) “Y-you’re mistaken... The Usapills just gave much more experience than usual.” (Fohl) “Is that so?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah, I don’t know why, but the numbers were definitely higher than when I had to fight them a long time ago.” (Fohl)

Fumu... It’s possible that Hero companions get more experience than other adventurers.

Why wasn’t I told this earlier?

Would anyone even notice unless they reset their level?

No, the other heroes may have been able to figure it out from other adventurers... but I’m not really in a situation where I can converse with them normally.

The slaves in my possession saw such EXP from the beginning, so they couldn’t notice anything off.

I’ll ask Sadina about it later.

“I’m home~!” (Sadina)

Sadina appears, carrying a large quantity of fish.

The villagers surround me eagerly, as if to demand that I cook for them.

Since things have been going well as of late, I guess I'll do it.

"The Hero of the Shield's power is amazing. I get more EXP and my stats rise higher." (Sadina) "So that really was the case." (Naofumi)

I guess the EXP bonus is a default setting of being a Hero.

It's not specific to the shield. Otherwise, Rishia would have noticed.

And so, night fell.

"I'm back!" (Kiel)

"I have returned." (Atlas)

"KYUA!" (Gaelion)

Kiel's party returns from hunting.

The party consists of Kiel, Atlas, Taniko, and Gaelion.

It seems that Kiel is the main fighting force.

When Fohl isn't frantically leveling with Firo, he also joins them.

But with this team, I see the balance of power shifting away from Kiel soon.

"You took a while today." (Naofumi)

"It took a while to feed Gaelion-chan." (Taniko)

So they fed him before they got back.

Gaelion's neck is growing longer, while the rest of his body remains the same.

His evolution is heading in an ominous direction...

"I made dinner, so eat it and sleep." (Naofumi)

“Niichan’s home-made?” (Kiel)

“Yeah.” (Naofumi)

“Hooray!” (Kiel)

Kiel seems happy.

Again, I question whether my food really is that tasty.

The shield’s effects are in place, but I wonder about my actual cooking skill. It’s probably raised as well with all the experience I’m getting.

“The food Naofumi-sama makes is superb.” (Atlas)

“...yeah.” (Taniko)

Even Taniko nods. The Shield is amazing.

Anyways, I take out food for Kiel’s party and return to my house.

Wait. Where is Raphtalia?

...Ah right.

Raphtalia and Rishia are off doing training with the Granny in the mountains.

Firo went off to sleep with Melty.

It’s been a while since I’ve found myself alone.

I guess I should put more work into making sellable medicine.

I need to teach some Lemos as well.

Kon. Kon. I hear a knock on the door.

Who could it be? It’s the middle of the night.

I open the door.

... No one's there.

Was it my imagination?

I close it and return to my work.

... There's another knock.

I once again open it to find the doorway empty.

Is someone trying to play a prank?

And so... Kon. Kon.

“Who is it!? Who's trying to incur my wrath!?” (Naofumi) “Eh? Wrath... is it?”  
(Atlas)

Atlas stares at me with a blank expression.

“You're not the one trying to annoy me, right?” (Naofumi) “This is the first time  
I knocked...” (Atlas)

“What are you doing here at this hour?” (Naofumi)

“That is... um... Can I sleep with you?” (Atlas)

“Don't you share a house with your brother?” (Naofumi)

If I handle this poorly, I think Fohl will get annoying.

I'd like to avoid trouble.

“Onii-sama is currently out cold. So until I fall asleep, can you please keep me  
company?” (Atlas)

Out cold... was it blunt force trauma?

No, I don't think this pure girl would do such a thing.

I'm fine with talking with her, but sleeping together is a bit...

I find it hard to sleep around Raphtalia. My eyes sometimes fly open in the middle of the night.

Though Raphtalia herself seems to sleep just fine.

It might be due to my own Trauma, but I get a bad feeling whenever I'm sleeping in the same room as a woman.

I want to decline if possible.

"Rejected." (Naofumi)

"Then I shall sleep in front of Naofumi-sama's house." (Atlas) "Why?" (Naofumi)

What's she up to?

She's acting strange.

"There's no choice. You can sleep in Raphtalia's bed." (Naofumi) "Understood." (Atlas)

Raphtalia is out, so we have an extra bed. I let her inside.

...I'm a little worried about Fohl's situation.

When Atlas falls asleep, I'll go check it out.

I lead Atlas to Raphtalia's bed, and tuck her in.

"Is Naofumi-sama not going to sleep?" (Atlas)

"Yeah, I have to work on making medicine." (Naofumi)

Medicine always sells well. If I leave all the work to the shield, the production speed is too slow.

I'll have to earnestly teach some villagers medicine-making soon as well.

This village needs a set, steady source of income in order to expand.

I've begun selling some to the Apothecary in the neighboring village, but my stocks are limited.

Though Rat's bioplants have started being able to produce herbs, producing the medicine itself seems impossible. I could sell the herbs whole, but that severely drops the price. I also don't want to risk anything, so I want the plants to be processed beforehand. I have high poison resistance.

With the shield, I can judge whether or not a plant is poisonous, and I can handle them regardless.

"Naofumi-sama sure is a busy one." (Atlas)

"I'm only doing it for the money." (Naofumi)

"But... Because of your hard work, I can now walk." (Atlas) "... " (Naofumi)

I was only calculating loss and gain. Don't mistake it for good will.

But Atlas seems to have found confirmation of her statement in my silence.

Keeping up with this girl is... difficult.

Like Raphtalia, she isn't pushing any ideals onto me, but is treating all of my actions as positive.

If I told her to undress now, I'm pretty sure she would do it without question. How scary.

Though she's just a kid.

This is bad... Isn't it dangerous to be alone at night with this sort of person?

A shiver goes down my spine.

"Naofumi-sama." (Atlas)

“W-what is it?” (Naofumi)

“Raphtalia told me that because you couldn’t fight, so she became your sword.” (Atlas) “Pretty much.” (Naofumi)

The only thing I can do is protect.

This is the Shield’s ability. One that hasn’t changed since I got to this world.

The only exception is Counter effects, and the Wrath Shield.

The Frisbee shield was a shield that let me throw Frisbee-like projectiles.

Now I can finally attack! I got really excited, and tried to throw one at a monster. But as expected, it fell onto the ground upon impact without dealing damage.

Now it’s completely become a toy to play with Firo and the other monsters.

After it’s been caught, it disappears and returns to my hand.

“Raphtalia is working hard for my sake. I depend on her a lot.” (Naofumi)

To fight the Wave. To save the world. Raphtalia really is working hard.

When I look at her, I feel motivated as well.

Raphtalia is the person I trust the most in this world. [55]

Everyone else seems to have hidden intentions. [56]

“Because I am the Hero of the Shield, the only thing this world lets me do is defend.” (Naofumi) “...I know. When I look at this village, I see that everyone is being protected under Naofumi-sama’s wings.” (Atlas) “Wings...” (Naofumi)

So I’m like a mother bird, protecting the chicks under its wings.

And that would make this my nest.

“If all you do is protect, everyone will someday leave your nest.” (Atlas)

“Anyone that wants to leave can leave, and still I will protect this village.”

(Naofumi)

This is Raphtalia’s homeland.

As long as I restore this land, she will be able to live on when I’m gone.

Even if I return to my world, she has people like Sadina and Kiel.

Firo has Melty, and Atlas has Fohl. This village won’t fall so easily. And the inhabitants here should be able to take care of whoever tries to attack, be it a country or an army.

“But then... who will protect Naofumi-sama?” (Atlas)

“Wha?” (Naofumi)

What are you saying? Why must I be protected?

Why would she direct that at me?

What point is there in protecting the Shield Hero?

“After coming to this village, I have heard all about Naofumi-sama’s exploits. You... did amazing work. No matter what adversity you faced, you overcame it and persevered.” (Atlas) “Y-yeah... I see. I did receive a promotion too.”

(Naofumi) “However, who is going to protect you, Naofumi-sama?” (Atlas) “... It’s not like I’m not protected.” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia, Firo, Melty, and even the Queen. If I ever get in trouble, I think that they would try to save me.

“This is what I think. If Raphtalia is Naofumi-sama’s sword, then perhaps I could become Naofumi-sama’s shield.” (Atlas) “Shield... That’s not as easy as it sounds, you know?” (Naofumi)

It doesn’t feel good to become someone else's shield.

And I see no need for protection.

I've gone through painful experiences, but if I mulled over them I would never be able to achieve victory, and just sink further into depression.

Becoming my Shield is quite a goal.

It's probably because from the moment she was born, she had to be protected by others.

She wants to be the one to protect someone.

If my right arm is Raphtalia, then she wants to become the left.

However... I get an uneasy feeling when she says this.

"That sort of thing is something you should say after you get strong." (Naofumi)

"Yes. I swear it to you that I will become strong." (Atlas) "Good luck." (Naofumi)

Atlas's breathing calms down. She starts to fall asleep.

She sure has developed a strange goal...

If Fohl heard this, he would probably get quite angry.

I carry Atlas and head over to her and Fohl's house.

...He's really sleeping.

"...Oy." (Naofumi)

"ZZZ..." (Fohl)

"ZZZ? This isn't a manga! Get up!" (Naofumi)

"Wha!?" (Fohl)

After putting Atlas in her bed, I wake Fohl up and take him outside to talk.

“Look after your sister properly. She came and said she wanted to sleep with me.” (Naofumi) “W-what!? Then... Atlas has already been...” (Fohl)

He glares at me as if I had insulted his ancestors. His slave crest begins to glow.

“Who would do anything to that brat?” (Naofumi)

“Are you saying my Atlas has no charm as a woman!?” (Fohl) “For the love of... This is a pain! I really just have no interest in that!” (Naofumi) “Liar!” (Fohl)

These siblings really are troublesome.

Though I say that...

To want to become my shield... what a strange child.

# Translator note

1. ↑ TL: Coliseum is said in english.
2. ↑ TL: She doesn't eat it, just bites it like Sadaharu
3. ↑ もっと拒め、そうすればうやむやにできる I don't fully understand the meaning of this one.
4. ↑ TL Note: lit. foresight.
5. ↑ 生かさず殺さず any better way to put this?
6. ↑ シル—ール— guess that's a whisper sound.
7. ↑ kikispecies?:キキ種
8. ↑ 分際 any better way to put it?
9. ↑ 罵声が五月蠅いな just guessed here.
10. ↑ ED Note: Holy shit! He actually admitted it?! For a Tsundere to be this honest...
11. ↑ TL: Opuscot is an anagram of Octopus. The Japanese is Kato, a anagram of Tako, the japanese word for octopus. I don't know what Kafe is an anagram of, so I left it the same as the original.
12. ↑ Yoraikun: Coughing sound.
13. ↑ TL: The imagination begins to explosively develop in the eighth grade.
14. ↑ TL: This is gender-neutral in Japanese, but it seems public consensus is that Shadow is female.
15. ↑ TL: He really says, and I don't know what will result.
16. ↑ TL: Note, everyone pronounces Naofumi's name phonetically, but Atlas says it with the Kanji.
17. ↑ TL: Grumbling sound.
18. ↑ T/N: Naofumi is rather dubious about calling this a normal village, hence the question mark.
19. ↑ TL: Research leads me nowhere on that one.
20. ↑ TL: Yes, he says Baka.
21. ↑ T/N: 'Pack animal' but with the character for animal replaced with

bird, therefore Pack bird. Also, they're using somewhat archaic pronouns hence the shakespearean-ness

22. ↑ T/N: Sound of outrage.
23. ↑ TL: Madoka reference... Yes, I watched it. Didn't enjoy it.
24. ↑ Random Person: Identical to the Acolyte skill "Warp Portal" from Ragnarok Online, just that it can take 8
25. ↑ TL: According to the comments, this is a Macross reference. I'm off to go watch it.
26. ↑ TL: Gremlins reference.
27. ↑ TL: ウィル the common romanization of Wyrm without an m. Perhaps It is supposed to be something else.
28. ↑ TL: Hengen Musou literally means Unparalleled Transformation.
29. ↑ TL: Fist of the North Star.
30. ↑ TL: naofumi is doing a facepalm
31. ↑ TL: the sentence refers to the "musuko" or son but it doesn't make any sense so I just referred to the old hag... correct me if im wrong.
32. ↑ TL: Dougi is a martial arts uniform and Peerless Transformation Style if you translate it. But it is read as "Hengen Musou Ryuu" but whichever you prefer.
33. ↑ TL: I think she was referring to second Class up or not but whatever.
34. ↑ TL: Baki the grappler reference.
35. ↑ TL: not a person but an object.
36. ↑ TL: so it was like a defense cancellation technique.. just assuming things here
37. ↑ TL: Heidi reference.
38. ↑ T/N: When he first saw Motoyasu go flying.
39. ↑ ED Note: This chapter needs TLC. While grammar has been improved, thanks to the collaborative effort of many users, the meanings of some sentences may need tweaking.
40. ↑ TL: clanging sound.
41. ↑ TL Note: White Tiger
42. ↑ TL: He actually says the word eagle here.
43. ↑ ED Note: Help...T\_T EDITE: Still not completely right, but better.
44. ↑ TL: I think he's making a joke here about plunging/thrusting the

branding iron and putting Fohl in an uncomfortable/unpleasant situation)  
EDIT: nope, wrong translation of the former sentences; stand-up comedians come in a duo of a fool and a straight man who retorts to the fool.

45. ↑ TL: Foburei is the most powerful country. The hero summons was originally supposed to be performed here.
46. ↑ As in "what happened when she was going to school"
47. ↑ T/N: In Japanese, the three words share the character 魔 (魔性 devilishness, 悪魔 demon, 魔女 witch)
48. ↑ T/N: Talking about the village being destroyed and camping plant was a trial modification.
49. ↑ T/N: Naofumi only got the growth correction after Raphtalia was ~Lv25 and he's talking about that part not being boosted by the correction – Raphtalia rejected the reset, so no extra bonus.
50. ↑



T/N: Poyo is an orange, round cat and main character of the series Poyopoyo Kansatsu Nikki.

51. ↑ T/N: And therefore didn't need training.
52. ↑ T/N: What do you call a dragon's arm? E/N: Claws?
53. ↑ T/N: like how grasshoppers make music.
54. ↑ T/N: Naofumi created the village to form a private army to fight the waves, but if they don't cooperate, it's the same as fighting with the random soldiers.
55. ↑ TL: Taken out of context, this sounds...
56. ↑ TL: No, dat girl has plenty of hidden intentions.