

盾の勇者の成り上がり

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MF777

Superiority Complex

After that, I got busy.

I had to treat the new Demi-Human slaves from that facility, and there are too many things that need to be done in the village.

I also have to offer compensation for the damages to the merchants in the neighboring town.

Apparently, the Accessory merchant helped quiet everybody down.

He argued that the tax was ridiculously low, and that The Hero of the Shield was treated as a devil in this country, so such events were to be expected.

It seems he thinks that there are great profits to be made here.

The main reason for this is the expansive trade network built on my Filo Rials' fast legs.

We agreed to carry his goods, so his profits rose.

Whenever Motoyasu gets his hands on some money, he goes off to buy and raise Filo Rials. We have no scarcity in that department.

And the repairs to the damaged buildings are proceeding at a good pace.

Even in such a time period, I cook every day, and spar with Atlas. It's getting really hectic.

And three days after I returned to the village.

Me and Atlas learned the technique Rishia used of sucking in Chi from the air.

"It's quite difficult." (Naofumi)

"Yes... Musou Kassei, was it? It seems that I'll be able to keep it up for quite a

while.” (Atlas)

Yes, Atlas learned how to hold up Mussou Kassei for long periods of time.

But even though I learned how to suck in Chi, I can't seem to get any grasp of Mussou Kassei whatsoever.

“Master, are you doing it again? Let Firo join.” (Firo)

When Firo tried to copy our actions, she immediately grasped how to do it.

It seems that Genius type characters like to gather in my village.

Even though Firo had experience using the pose to recover magic, in just a day or practice, she learned to suck in Chi and move around.

For her to be able to obtain power so easily... how convenient.

What's more, it seems that Firo subconsciously activated Musou Kassei. Her movements are quicker than before.

Just how strong are these people getting?

Firo can't use pressure points or Hengen Musou, but she can use her natural overflowing power to subjugate her enemies.

“Fuee... Naofumi-san and the others learned to use it without an instructor?”
(Rishia) “Yeah.” (Naofumi)

Rishia happens to pass by in the middle of looking after Itsuki.

“I tried so hard to learn it, and yet... This can't be...” (Rishia)

From Rishia's point of view, Atlas and Firo are absolute geniuses.

But that Granny said Rishia was the one with outstanding talent. From watching her fight with Itsuki, I'm pretty sure she's a genius in her own right.

I get the feeling that the Musou Kassei that Firo and Atlas picked up is somehow different from the one Rishia used.

They only learned through observation. There's no way it's as effective.

Even so, Rishia says their skill is not inferior.

Still, it somehow gives off a different feeling...

Ah, right. Just as I can't grasp Musou Kassei, Rishia somehow became unable to use it.

Even so, she fights without problem. For some reason, she seems even stronger than before.

Perhaps Heroes just can't use it.

"Then the two that learned to use it should proceed with caution, you know."
(Rishia) "Why is that?" (Atlas)

"Why~?" (Firo)

"It's best not to keep Musou Kassei on for a long period of time. Your body won't hold up." (Rishia)

Ah, so it's that sort of boost skill.

In Manga and Anime, quite a few secret skills put large burdens on the body, and make it so that you can't fight again after you use them.

But when the main character faces an extreme dire situation, he uses it and loses his ability to fight. He either miraculously recovers, or awakens to some other power.

But it's not as if the world is that convenient for us.

It's likely that Rishia's ability to take in Chi is on another level.

The amount of Chi she had from the beginning didn't get that high even when she raised her level. That's the only reason I can think of.

And no matter how long Firo and Atlas can keep Mussou Kassei up, there's still a limit.

Using only internal Chi, it's one minute. While taking Chi in, five.

But Rishia was able to use it throughout her battle.

“That’s correct. There are times when you can hear grinding sounds from your bones. When you see opportune moments, you should activate it right before you attack.” (Rishia) “Right.” (Naofumi)

Female Knight’s Musou Kassei wasn’t very effective, and had a short active period. These aspects aren’t really that important.

Fumu... Even though we just copied what we saw, it’s surprisingly complicated.

“It’s around time for food.” (Naofumi)

I put my training on hold, and go to the dining hall to prepare food.

And I prepared it with the slaves I left the initial set up to.

We already set up a Bioplant to take care of the poisoned well and river.

The Three Hero Church didn’t leave anything positive behind in their legacy.

They were executed yesterday.

The head sister was sent to Faubley to become food for the pig. The rest were sentenced to the Iron Maiden.

In order to keep up the image, I had to go out in front of the public, and pretend to be one of the executioners.

Perhaps because I was raised in modern Japan, seeing a public execution was not good for my heart.

I had nightmares that night.

As the populace suffered quite a bit of damage, they booed and jeered at the convicts right through their deaths.

I’ve read in a book that such executions were held in the Middle Ages in my

world in order to help the public vent stress.

Though I don't know if that's true.

Is it some instinctual stress reliever?

Like the feeling you get when you watch a public bonfire?

Why are they using a torture device like the iron maiden for an execution, anyways?

The victims' screams echoed throughout the town. It was traumatizing.

And Armor, along with all of Itsuki's other companions that I haven't seen since Cal Mira, were executed as well.

Ironically, they were burned inside the Brass Bull.

In my world, I think it was called the Phalaris Bull.

It's one of Itsuki's curse skills.

Even though Armor had been informed beforehand that he was set to die, when the time came, he trembled and begged for his life. His legs gave way below him.

Dreadful screams came from the bull statue.

Yeah, this is quite a cruel world.

I do think that some criminals deserve death, but when I actually encounter such scenarios, my head starts spinning.

It wasn't refreshing in the least.

If I were to kill them by my own hand... would I feel any better?

Now that I think about it, I killed the pope with Blutopfer...

Back then, I didn't feel refreshed at all. The only thing I could think about was the pain coursing through my body.

Yep, I don't understand it.

At this point, I shouldn't be bothered by killing, but watching people die in such gruesome ways makes me sick.

Uu... After remembering what happened yesterday, I have become disinclined to cook meat dishes.

I had my nose filled with the smell of Itsuki's comrades burning, and I want to avoid blood for a bit.

"Niichan! Food!" (Kiel)

A loinclothed dog excitedly runs up to me, begging for food.

"Okay." (Naofumi)

I take out an item I had prepared. A crepe covered in dirt. I place the plate on the ground by the dog's feet.

Everyone is at a loss for words as they stare at me.

What's so surprising? I'm a man who keeps his promises.

Even if she was being brainwashed, I have to give some sort of punishment to the one who spoke so ill of me. [\[1\]](#)

She should be thankful that her punishment ends with just this.

Anyways, for today, Kiel is the only one that gets a rundown crepe.

"I won't let you say you forgot about it. That's your meal for today." (Naofumi)
By the way, I made the meal a little bit more extravagant for everyone else.

With this, she should reflect on getting brainwashed by the enemy so easily.

Though I'll probably end up giving her food anyways.

"Thank you, Niichan!" (Kiel)

"Wha-?" (Naofumi)

Kiel begins devouring the crepe like a dog.

The other slaves stare at her with their mouths wide open.

“Hehe.” (Kiel)

With eyes brimming with a sense of superiority, the loinclothed dog looks over the other slaves in the dining hall.

The slaves swallow their spit as they stare at the plate she licked clean.

Taniko and Ren, who were eating together, are silent as well.

“W-what? How should I say this, it seems that only Kiel got the best food. And it looks like he made it especially for her.” (Slave) “Yeah.” (Slave)

“Shield oniichan, please give me a crepe too.” (Slave)

“Me too!” (Slave)

“Gimme!” (Slave)

“That’s not why I made it!” (Naofumi)

It’s lecture time!

Why does it seem like I’m giving that loinclothed dog special treatment!?

These people... They’re way too optimistic!

Revelation

“Now then, where was I again?” (Naofumi)

We somehow finished lunch, so I returned to my training.

I'll have to think of another punishment for Kiel.

Ren left with a group to go peddle.

It seems that he's working diligently, and Female Knight is with him, so it should be fine.

Female Knight never got brainwashed during the incident.

However, she became greatly troubled over the nature of Justice due to it.

She sure likes to beat herself up.

But I'll deal with that problem at another time.

Right now, I'm training for battle.

By sucking in Chi from the outside, I can hasten my SP and Mana recovery.

That's efficient in itself. I can see it having a lot of uses.

However, it's disappointing that I can't use the convenient skill known as Mussou Kassei.

“Fumu...” (Naofumi)

“Master, what's wrong?” (Firo)

“Well, I'm thinking of how to apply it to my skills. 「Shield Prison」!” (Naofumi)
I test to see what happens if I mix the Chi in the air and my internal Chi, the fusion of my magic and SP, when I use a skill.

Checking my status, I can see that the SP cost was cut by quite a bit.

Its flaw is that I cannot use it immediately. It's quite difficult.

"How is it, Atlas?" (Naofumi)

"Yes, the prison feels much more complete than before. I don't think even I would be able to find its weak points and break it." (Atlas) "I see." (Naofumi)

It seems that the skill's effect also increased.

And with the cost reduction, I've learned something nice.

I need to get this to a state where it's usable in battle.

Take in energy from the outside, join it with my internal power, and convert that energy into a skill.

The skills that haven't been able to protect anybody lately may become quite useful.

My Meteor Shield and Shield Prison seem to get destroyed every single time. I was worried if I would be able to use them in battles to come.

If I can decrease the activation time, and increase the accuracy, I can try strengthening my skills in battle.

Hmm?

Wait a second. Isn't this similar to something?

Isn't this the same fundamental theory as the Dragon Pulse Law?

... Right.

It was a magic where you gather power from the outside, and use your internal power to set it off.

That seems to be what I'm attempting at the moment.

If I can apply it to skills, can I use it in magic?

I can. Probably.

Yeah, I better test it.

“Did something happen?” (Firo)

“Wait there for a second.” (Naofumi)

I take a deep breath, and begin chanting magic.

I use my body as a medium to borrow power from the area.

Right now, I need to rely on the power on the outside... and the power called SP from my shield.

And my magic... I hold it back. I'll use it separately.

I take in Chi, and lead its flow like a complex puzzle.

At the same time, I picture a magic chant.

Uwah... This is really hard.

The puzzle I need to make shows itself to me.

If I don't concentrate with all my might, it won't be solved. If I move, it will immediately shatter.

Even so... I construct the puzzle under this pressure.

Good, with this, it's complete.

It's not the best, but I was able to make it.

『I, the Hero of the Shield, order the heavens. Cut off reason, retie it, and release it. Power of the Dragon Pulse, with my Magic and my power as a Hero, I, the Shield, who has understood the origin of power command. Let the truth of creation once more be read forth and manifest, Give all his things to me.』

The Chant was freakin' long.

I'm impressed that I was even able to chant it.

It'll be a little difficult to use in real battles.

But still, I did it.

Using the Dragon Pulse, I can see just how different its structure is from normal magic.

The foundation is definitely the same, but the difficulty is different.

The magic I make with my own power from this world's words focuses on ease of release. But you need to be able to memorize the higher class spells from the start.

But casting magic to obstruct another's spells takes too much time.

Contrarily, the Dragon Pulse Law makes the user assemble the power flowing into them.

There's no set chant.

Because there's no set formula, you have to assemble it differently every time.

Perhaps this could be compared to the difference between English and Math.

If you want to make flames, normal magic just has you reading out the words for fire.

However, each level of fire has a different word. You need to remember what to use for blaze, inferno and hellfire.

However, using the Dragon Pulse, you have to figure out what = Fire.

Along the way, you can calculate Fire + Oil = blaze, or inferno + water = blaze.

Taniko can borrow the earth's power and still make fire. From Earth + Darkness, she somehow solves for the Darkness, and converts that to flame.

That's why obstructing the magic may prove simple.

By taking in the variables, and reasoning what the enemy is going to solve for, you can derive it first.

I can also see why it proves effective with choral magic.

Even if you don't solve a puzzle alone, as long as it's solved, it's solved.

I see why these two types are incompatible with one another.

However close the theory may be, like oil and water, their compatibility is terrible.

But SP is the link that connects these two worlds.

...That means that only heroes have the ability to mix them.

Okay, let's release this power.

「Revelation Aura」!^[2]

Revelation... is it a level above Dreifach?

The words come naturally out of my mouth.

Now then, who should be my guinea pig?

I'll try casting it on the sturdy Firo.

“Firo, stay still for a bit.” (Naofumi)

“Eh...” (Firo)

Firo's face shows blatant discontent.

What's with that attitude?

“Whenever master says something like that, nothing good happens.” (Firo)

Ah, I get that feeling too.

Especially for Firo. Those are the words I used when she had the Monster Crest carved on her.

The Firo of that time was shaking. Did she get a trauma?

If that's the case, I guess I can understand why she would hate it.

“Well that's true, but it won't really hurt this time. I think. So just become my test subject.” (Naofumi) “No...” (Firo)

I hear Firo complaining, but I forcibly cast it on her anyways.

I really am a devil.

But it's support magic, so it shouldn't hurt.

Anyways, the magic eventually comes into contact with Firo.

The visibly dense mass of magic envelops Firo, and permeates into her skin.

Gu... My magic and SP's been drained clean.

That's just how much it cost.

“W-what did you cast?” (Firo)

“I used it before, right? It's the spell Aura, which increases all stats. I think it's a higher level this time.” (Naofumi) “Is that so?” (Firo)

“Yeah, so try jumping.” (Naofumi)

“Okay.” (Firo)

Firo tries to jump lightly while flapping her wings.

But...

“Wa-” (Firo)

With amazing force, she sends herself flying towards the ocean.

It was as if a rocket had been launched.

“Ah...” (Naofumi)

Yeah. For now, let's check Firo's status.

Uwah, this is amazing. Every single stat has more than doubled.

I guess moving with this status would cause her to blast off.

I chased Firo with Atlas.

“Ahahaha~! Master, this is fun!” (Firo)

With a rumbling sound, Firo is... running on top of the ocean.

Wow... before one foot sinks, she's already put her weight on the other one.

No matter how amazing she was, even Firo was unable to run on the ocean before.

So this is the power of my magic.

After about 10 minutes, the effects of Revelation Aura wore off, and Firo sunk.

She swam back to shore.

“That was fun, Master. Do it again~.” (Firo)

“Rejected.” (Naofumi)

That was ridiculously difficult! There's no way I could use it continuously.

But with this, I've understood the theory behind the magic.

Perhaps Mussou Kassei artificially creates something similar to SP.

When that's in place, Magic increases in effectiveness.

But without SP, Magic has its limits.

That means Hengen Musou may have been created in an attempt to become closer to the heroes.

Anyways, I should tell the Magic Shopkeeper about this.

Even if Revelation is impossible, I think I could use it to do a Dreifach Heal.

I can use it to reconstruct a magic that I already know to find another answer.

And if I just remember the chant that comes out, my life will be easier.

I never thought I would be able to master magic by studying Chi.

With this, I can get a discount on my payments to the Magic Shop.

Gaze at Both Sides of the Shield

The night of the next day.

I was watching over Ren's studying, when he suddenly let out a deep sigh.

"What's up? If you don't concentrate, you'll never learn the language."

(Naofumi)

If you don't have the motivation to learn, I'm not going to teach you.

"Ah... Just a bit. Won't you hear me out?" (Ren)

"That depends on the content." (Naofumi)

"As I thought. Actually, it's about Eclair-san." (Ren)

Eclair... Female Knight?

Just by hearing her name, I feel that this is going to be a pain.

However, I'm slightly curious as to why Ren would sigh over her.

"Did that woman cause any problems again?" (Naofumi)

Is it time to send her back to the castle yet?

Since Ren has begun working on his own, there's no point in me having her around.

Right now, she's sparring with Atlas outside of my house.

How diligent.

"Did something happen?" (Naofumi)

“Well, that is...” (Ren)

Apparently it happened around noon.

Some reckless thieves tried to go after them while they were peddling.

Even though everyone from my place has the ability to crush a bandit group or two.

I think the group Ren usually goes out with is Taniko’s.

No matter how many bandits we capture, they still keep popping up.

But that doesn’t really matter.

According to Ren, they subjugated the bandits immediately, and tied them up.

“Oy, jump up and down. I can see that you’re still hiding something.” (Taniko)

“Uu...” (Bandits)

Taniko uses her magic to threaten the bandits in a manner reminiscent of a gangster. She even takes all of their small change.

The threatened bandits desperately look to Ren for help.

“Wyndia. There’s really no need for you to do that.” (Ren) “Shut up.” (Taniko)

Ren is shut up immediately, and Taniko continues extorting the bandits.

And at that point, even Ren starts to feel sorry for them. He grasps her shoulder and pulls her back.

Recently, Taniko’s developed a sort of switch. She occasionally becomes very dark and negative.

In the village, she happily plays with Gaelion, the Caterpillands, and the other monsters.

She occasionally goes over to see Rat as well.

Because of her switch, Gaelion has come to consult me as well.

I'll have to think of something.

"Really, where could you have learned such a thing..." (Ren) "It doesn't matter where, does it? More importantly, they still have some valuables, so move over." (Taniko)

Ren sighs at seeing how bad Taniko's upbringing was. Female Knight, who was busy tying up the other bandits, heard them and came over.

Taniko was in for a long lecture... he thought.

But Female Knight went over to the bandits that were being threatened.

"Hey, jump. You still have some valuables in your possession, do you not? How does it feel? To have your things taken instead?" (Female Knight)

She starts threatening them with her sword.

... Eh?

What does this mean?

Within my village, I thought she was on the honest side...

"O-oy... What happened to you!?" (Ren)

"Wyndia, help me carve the consequences of their crimes into their bodies." (Female Knight) "Sure." (Taniko)

"Now Jump!" (Female Knight and Taniko)

"H-hii..." (Bandits)

As the bandits jump, coins scatter across the floor.

The ground was covered with several copper and silver coins.

"Really, you could have just handed them over..." (Female Knight) "What the hell are you doing!?" (Ren)

Ren got over his initial shock, and shouted as Female Knight kicked the bandits around with a cold expression, while loading them onto the carriage.

“Ren, this is a necessary evil. For someone who makes a good life off taking the belongings of others, it’s necessary for them to feel what it’s like to get taken from. They need to learn need to learn from experience.” (Female Knight)

“Wha-” (Ren)

After that, they turned them in to a nearby town, but Ren had believed that Female Knight was normally not a person to do such things.

But no matter how far he pressed her, she never gave an honest response.

“So that’s why you were troubled?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah.” (Ren)

What could have caused this change?

I can’t think of a reason why that stupidly stubborn Knight would go so far.

If there was one, it would be related to that brainwashing incident...

“Call Female Knight... Eclair, over.” (Naofumi)

We call Female Knight inside from her training.

After a while, she enters the room.

I reiterate Ren’s story, and ask.

“What sort of change is this? To you, weren’t all of my actions cruel and unjust?” (Naofumi) “Ah, so it’s about that.” (Female Knight)

Female Knight has a philosophic expression as she turns to me.

What? It's rare for that diligent knight to make such a face.

“Do you remember that incident the other day?” (Female Knight) “Yeah.”
(Naofumi)

“Up 'til that point, I thought it was best for me to only follow the justice I believed in. However, I realized that their justice also had some logical points.”
(Female Knights) “It did?” (Naofumi)

They had no logic, and their arguments were all over the place.

“I'm not sure what they told you, Iwatani-dono, but this is what they were screaming at me: 『In order to make a world without Discrimination, we can't allow them to give Demi-Humans preferential treatment.』 『Even those that take can only live by taking. They have their own situations.』” (Female Knight)
I'm not sure about the first one, but how about the second?

“There was definitely some logic. The second person added on, 『If it's wrong to take from people, then how about monsters? There's no reason for us to think about reaping crops. It's human pride. For the sake of asserting our rights, we are waging this rebellion.』”

“You know...” (Naofumi)

That's like saying that bullying is right because the bully has reasons for bullying.

Even if that's true, that doesn't make it right.

I have no reason to empathize with those messed up zombies. Just hearing their arguments makes me tired.

“By that logic, I who aids one side of a war am definitely evil to the other. But still, I have my justice. That's what I believed. Even so, I kept seeing the people I

protected, the people I trusted turning on me. Then what is justice... It must be something that constantly changes. The second I thought that, my own justice began to collapse. Perhaps I was evil from the start.” (Female Knight) “So that’s why you’ve given up your honesty, and started doing bad acts?” (Naofumi) That’s way too extreme of a change.

She was always one who over-fixated on small things, but she was still fundamentally a good person.

Just because your opinion clashes with others, that doesn’t mean one of you is wrong.

“You’re wrong.” (Female Knight)

“What’s wrong?” (Naofumi)

“Doing what you believe to be correct is definitely important. But there’s a flaw in living only by that belief. In the end, it leads to using violence to solve problems, and silencing all that prove to be flaws. It’s merely an endless cycle.” (Female Knight) “No matter how you’re trying to live, your way of thinking is too bizarre.” (Naofumi)

I thought she was idiotically diligent, but isn’t she getting a little strange in the head?

Perhaps I’ll have to throw her in solitary for a while.

“And while I was worrying about all of this, I recalled my father, and Iwatani-dono.” (Female Knight) “... Why me?” (Naofumi)

“In a country of human superiority, my father established a land that favored Demi-Humans. But were his actions truly correct? And Iwatani-dono continuously performs evil and brutality, but...” (Female Knight) By evil, do you mean my treatment of bandits?

I don’t really think that taking from them is particularly evil.

“If you change perspective, my father is the one who broke the rule of human superiority. Even so, I don’t think his way of thought was wrong. But evil is evil,

and the one who continued to protect this land was father. There's no way... he did something that could be called a crime to humanity."

Well it's not like I can deny that.

The Queen is the one who administers this country, and she does use her power to silence nobles.

There's a possibility that nobles who take unnecessary action are fated to get into accidents.

No, unless they cause an incident of this level, I don't think she would execute them.

She's more of the type to control their actions from behind the curtain.

"And the answer that came to me was one I learned by Iwatani-dono's example. That is my conclusion." (Female Knight) "Hah?" (Naofumi and Ren)

Both I and Ren make the same noise.

I can't follow what part of the previous conversation led to this.

"Iwatani-dono is loved by his Demi-humans. Even if they are supposed to be separated by the wall known as master and slave. That isn't just because he is the Hero of the Shield. However, Iwatani-dono calmly perpetuates acts of evil. Yet still, the people follow him... It's because he has the resolution to do evil for the sake of his allies." (Female Knight) "That wasn't really my intention..." (Naofumi)

"Don't be humble. I had misinterpreted the words father left to me. 『Live nobly, without any regrets.』 I think he was asking me not to become like him... But I want to become a person like my father. I want to be a noble who fights for the people." (Female Knight) "And how does that lead to extorting from bandits?" (Naofumi) "A long journey starts with the first step. Iwatani-dono and the people living here do whatever they can to make as much profit as possible. It was something I had labeled as evil, yet it was done with resolve." (Female

Knight)

Is that how it is?

No, Female Knight is being less stubborn, so I guess I can say she's grown a bit. But that growth is in quite a strange direction. It's a bit scary.

If handled bad, this may become the thought process of a tyrant.

"Ren, this one's head is getting strange. I leave her guidance to you." (Naofumi)

"A-ah... I'll do what I can." (Ren)

Ren has a better sense for these things than me. He might be good medicine.

From continuously witnessing malicious acts, she began to be dyed with evil... Since she lost her parents, she had no one to lead her back on track.

Though I shouldn't really be the one to say it.

"In the lands my father liked, Silt Welt, and Shield Freiden, there's a saying like this: 『Gaze at both sides of the Shield』. Don't just gaze at the front, look to the back as well. On the other side of glory, there is tyranny and disgrace. One can only make a judgment after carefully observing both the good and bad of a situation." (Female Knight)

A word very familiar to me appears here?

No, my Shield may just be translating another word as Shield.

"Iwatani-dono is a one who displays both sides readily, I believe. His actions on his territory are worthy of respect, and he performs tyranny in order to protect his territory. In order to protect his people, even if he is a Hero chosen by god, he will dye himself with evil." (Female Knight)

Female Knight's eyes seem to have reached enlightenment.

She seems very excited.

Once she starts believing something, she'll follow it to the death, this one.

I thought she had become more flexible, but... Her explanation leaves

something to be desired.

“And so, I’ve decided to study land management under Iwatani-dono. Eventually, once Iwatani-dono leaves, I’ll protect this land with Raphtalia.”

(Female Knight)

Gu... She hit a good point.

Yeah. I was worried over what would happen once I left this world.

Even if the Queen prevents Demi-Human discrimination, the people may eventually revolt.

The Demi-Human slaves had always been abused as a source of labor.

If the people were to see such Demi-Humans walking around normally in broad daylight...

It may be peaceful now, but plots are already in action, and the chance that my village will cease to exist isn’t zero.

We may have gotten rid of the extremist faction, but there’s no telling what the moderate faction will become.

And then, my village will be swallowed whole.

For its survival, Demi-Humans would have to be given preferential treatment and political aid.

So Female Knight’s words aren’t wrong.

“I understand your thought. But extortion is going too far.” (Naofumi) “What are you saying? I merely imitated what Iwatani-dono was doing.” (Female Knight)

(Female Knight)

...Ah. When I took care of bandits with Female Knight, I did say the same things.

Though Female Knight complained to me afterwards.

She was just imitating me?

“Naofumi... you did such things?” (Ren)

Ren looks over me with doubtful eyes.

“There was no choice! And doesn’t this country have way too many bandits as it is?” (Naofumi) “Now that you mention it, that’s true. I get the feeling that when we were summoned, public order was being kept better.” (Ren)
Though most of them were probably just in hiding.

There’s also the fact that I’ve expanded trade routes and distribution recently.

The Accessory Merchant passionately gave me a speech on expansion.

The appearance of the Spirit Turtle and the country’s internal conflict caused a surge of nervousness among the populace. In order to protect their lives, many people have loosened their purse strings.

Some merchants want to hop on to the bandwagon, and get with this flow of money.

With food shortages and such, there are plenty of potential money trees around.

Perhaps the sudden increase of commerce has caused the amount of bandits to naturally increase.

It seems some unruly adventurers made a guild to gather money behind closed doors, while amassing forces.

That’s apparently what’s now known as this world’s Bandit Guild.

I don’t really have any relation to them, but the Adventurer Guild, the Merchant Guild, the Knight Brigades, the Church... Currently the Four Hero sect... They’re all supporting one another.

When they first got here, I think Ren and the others began earning at the Adventurer Guild.

I’m not someone who would get hired. I’m more on the hiring side, so they’re unrelated to me.

Returning to topic.

For a Bandit Guild to emerge, it must be a den of criminals.

Since acting alone is dangerous, ruffians get together and profit off of attacking merchants and towns.

The Spirit Turtle incident has, for various reasons, messed up the public order in Melromark.

“I may have to perform a grand sweep of them soon.” (Naofumi) “But what will you do?” (Ren)

“I have an idea.” (Naofumi)

The Chivalrous Thief

“And so, I thought I would dump this large job on you.” (Naofumi) “I-I don’t want to! When I make up for my sins, I decided to return to my village and live a decent lifestyle.”

Right. The one who had an abnormally high encounter rate with me, and the one who was under Ren when he was devoured by his curse. I got special permission from the country to take him out of the state prison, after which he had his slave rights turned over to me, and I had a contract written up.

I’m in the middle of persuading him.

Despite his repeat offenses, he’s repenting nicely. Or perhaps he just doesn’t want to contract with me. [3]

“Did you think you had the right to refuse?” (Naofumi)

“No matter what, I’m in rehabilitation so I can lead an honest lifestyle! I beg of you. Please don’t get in my way.” (Bandit) “Calm down. First, listen to what I have to say. It’s not like I’m asking for the impossible. And you’ll also benefit quite a bit.” (Naofumi)

Even though I continuously beat him up, he continued carrying on his role as a thief. My evaluation of him is quite high.

He may just be cursed with bad luck.

“First, I’ll specially grant you a class up. I’ll even cover raising your level.” (Naofumi)

By the way, the sentences the country issued to him included forced farm labor after having his level reset.

Meaning his current level is 1.

He has no means of fighting. He's in the middle of hard labor in order to make up for his crimes.

Of course, he's treated as a slave, so if he tries to escape, his slave seal will kill him.

It seems that management is much easier here than in my world.

"I don't know where your hometown is, but I'll even give financial aid to your family. Under the pretense that you were hired by the country. You'll make your folks proud." (Naofumi) "Gu..." (Bandit)

The bandit lets out a small grunt at my proposal.

"You're doing a good deed. If you do well, I promise you a large reduction on your sentence." (Naofumi) "Naofumi, you look like quite a villain right now." (Ren) "Can it. It's a plea bargain." (Naofumi)

"No, I think it's a little different." (Ren)

"Then Agent Provocateur." (Naofumi)

"He's an Agent?" (Ren)

Ren is looking at me with skepticism.

"Even so, I will..." (Bandit)

"Calm down. Don't be so hasty. This sudden situation must have made you hungry, right? Should I bring out some food?" (Naofumi)

And I bring out a dish I made to imitate Katsudon. ^[4]

It was impossible to procure all the ingredients, so it's really a different dish that only looks like one.

Guu...

The Bandit's stomach growls.

He looks at the dish I made, and gulps.

"Don't worry, it isn't poisoned. Do you want me to feed some to one of my slaves to demonstrate?" (Naofumi)

I call over the loinclothed dog, put some on a small plate, and give it to her.

"Niichan! This is delicious too! Give me more." (Kiel)

"Just wait a second. If this guy doesn't agree, you can have it." (Naofumi)

"Then decline, evil-looking person." (Kiel)

"I-I just have to eat it, right!? Right!?" (Bandit)

Fu...

The bandit starts eating the pseudo-katsudon.

"W-what is this!? It's ridiculously delicious, isn't it!? My hands can't stop! It reminds me of my mother's cooking... the tears are..." (Bandit)^[5]

I stare contently at the Bandit, who is assaulting the bowl.

Now that he's relieved some stress, he'll probably listen to some of my words.

Now I just need to make an under-the-table deal with him.

Negotiations like this sure are fun.

"Gu..." (Bandit)

"If you just move by my words, I'll write up a letter asking for your pardon."
(Naofumi) "Even so... I can't do something like selling out my comrades."

(Bandit) "Firo!" (Naofumi)

"I got it! When I succeed, you'll make them let me free, right!?" (Bandit)

I have various methods to 'negotiate'.

With that previous method, I think quite a few people would have agreed.

"Of course. It's a promise." (Naofumi)

That is if you succeed.

"Naofumi..." (Ren)

Ren opens his mouth as if he wants to say something.

"What?" (Naofumi)

"No... there's no choice... right? I feel like I just started to understand what Eclair-san was getting at." (Ren) "Still, there's a limit to going out and hunting bandits, right? In that case we better just cut them off at the source." (Naofumi) Using this bandit, we can investigate the cause of the sudden influx of bandits, and keep up public order at the same time.

If the coming of the heroes strengthens the world's light, we have to manage the shadows that come as a result as well.

And just how many people in this world would deduce that a hero would go around employing bandits?

Even if someone did, now that all four heroes are stationed at my camp, there's nothing to fear.

If I think about it, my position's changed quite a bit...

"First, you have to gather your thieving brethren. Then you have to build up your forces. Of course, you can't go around attacking any merchants from my place." (Naofumi)

By the way, I've already negotiated with the accessory merchant.

He was ecstatic, and said something about making me his successor.

I can't understand just what moves him so.

"If I can't attack merchants, how do you expect me to live!? Don't underestimate bandits!" (Bandit) "I never told you not to attack them, right? There are actually some merchants I do want you to attack." (Naofumi) According to the accessory merchant, there are several bad merchants who don't sign in with the Merchant's Guild. They break the rules and regulation, and sell in other's territories.

And backing them are the moderate faction of the anti-shield coalition.

They didn't act up during the brainwashing incident, but even now they're building up wealth and power to get rid of me.

I remember seeing a few nobles like that glaring at me.

And people with so much influence are the ones more likely to be keeping bandits under their belts.

Though I don't know the truth of the matter.

"I can't see the difference!" (Bandit)

"It's fine. I'll report the routes and schedules for my merchants and peddlers. You will be choosing evil merchants, and taking their cargo." (Naofumi) People call this looking for trouble.

I guess he would be a thief of justice who would only steal from evil.

"And? What should I do about the load from that theft?" (Bandit) "Let's see. You can bring it to my place, but it would be troublesome if they followed. Let's use half of it to pay your subordinates, and distribute the other half to the unfortunate towns and villages. If you do so, you won't be evil to the world. And the country will... Looking at me, you can tell, right?" (Naofumi) "Is that something a Hero should be doing...?" (Bandit)

I don't want to hear that from a bandit.

Covert operations are standard fare in a large organization.

Together with the Queen, I'll just carry out a large scale trash sweep.

"Will it be alright?" (Bandit)

"The Heroes will also go around under the pretense of getting rid of bandits. As a boss with good intuition, you'll manage the operation. If you find a troublesome subordinate or someone getting in your way, the people from my place will take care of them. But if you attack us for revenge, we won't show any mercy." (Naofumi)

And so I succeeded in taking a bandit as a disciple.

What about leveling him up?

I'll leave it to Firo's Spartan training program.

"Naofumi... aren't you getting darker and darker? It would be troublesome if Eclair and Wyndia were to imitate it, you know." (Ren) "If you just cut off the top of a weed, it'll grow in again, right? We need to pull it out from the root to clean up the lawn." (Naofumi) "No, it's not like I don't see where you're coming from..." (Ren)

And from my little protégée, I learned one thing.

As I thought, the main cause was the increase of wealth brought about from my land.

Since this country's bandits were regularly caught by my slaves, their forces decreased. And thus, many foreign bandits began to expand their area of activity here.

Because of that, the amount of bandits here increased.

It's like the cause and effect where if you hunt one animal too much, another increases too fast.

To summarize the result, a large organization known as the Chivalrous Thief Guild suddenly popped up in Melromark.

The country thought it was a good way to manage their more malicious bandits.

Well, the number of underworld organizations in this world merely increased by one.^[6]

By the way, the Bandit that I personally trained eventually became quite famous, but that's another story.

Growing Worse

And so, the events of the morning after dealing with the bandits...

“Naofumi-sama! I’m home~!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia opened the door and entered the house.

We met just a few days ago, but this feeling like we haven’t seen each other in a while is because we’re now in the village, or because we’re in the house I live in with Raphtalia, huh?

I can’t tell.

“Hm...ah, Raphtalia, welcome home.” (Naofumi)

“Onee-chan, welcome home~” (Firo)

“Ah, welcome home Raphtalia-chan~” (Kiel)

“Welcome home, Raphtalia-san.” (Imia)

“Kyua!” (Gaelion)

Raphtalia looked around in wonder at my surroundings.

It’s not a reaction I see often.

“It’s gotten worse than before!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia exclaimed in astonishment right after returning.

By the way, on the bed were Firo and Gaelion, as well as the loinclothed dog

and Imia.

“What’s the meaning of this, Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia) “Ah, I invited Firo to my bed as a countermeasure against Atla in the beginning, but Firo caused a problem after a short time, so I had Kiel and Imia stand guard instead.”

(Naofumi) “Sadina onee-san!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia questioned Sadina, who was lying on the other bed with Atla.

“As I promised, I haven’t let Atla-chan into Naofumi-chan’s bed.” (Sadina)

“That’s not what I’m asking about!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia staggered and then leaned against the wall.

Is she alright?

“Are you tired from training? You’d better rest well. I can cast recovery magic if you like. Recently I’ve worked out a way to increase its effects.” (Naofumi) “It’s not that!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia was in denial.

I was thinking of showing her the newly thought up Revelation-type magic though.

“Naofumi, what’s up? What happened?” (Ren)

Hearing the commotion, Ren and Rishia with Itsuki exited their temporary houses.

Their response is good.

It seems they’ll be able to cope when an incident occurs.

“...Why are the Sword and Bow Heroes here!?” (Raphtalia) “Huh? I haven’t told you?” (Naofumi)

She came out from the castle as if it was natural, so I thought she knew, but she didn’t know?

To begin with, she should have heard that I was cooperating with Motoyasu to protect the Castle Town, but... ah, that was after Raphtalia broke out, huh.

Speaking of which, Motoyasu views Raphtalia as a pig, so they can’t hold any conversations.

Because Raphtalia is female.

“I had some growth as a human being, and came to work in Naofumi’s place after I thought about fighting for the sake of world, but...” (Ren)

Even I would like you to hurry up and be independent.

Saying ‘hey, hey’, he came to reside in my village for some reason.

Well, it might be fine like this in terms of management.

“Atla!” (Fohl)

Fohl came into the room and embraced Atla.

“Nii-chan finally came home!” (Fohl)

“Please stop, Onii-sama, Naofumi-sama is watching.” (Atla) “Hmph! Now that I’ve returned, don’t go thinking you can continue as you have been doing!”

(Fohl) “Ah, yes yes.” (Atla)

It looks like Fohl’s really glad to officially be back, that Siskon.

He’s actually crying. So he liked Atla that much...

Huh, Fohl is alright.

“Naofumi-sama, please explain!” (Raphtalia)

“A lot of things happened.” (Naofumi)

“A one-liner! Aren’t those just some convenient words? If you don’t explain properly, I won’t be accountable for what happens.” (Raphtalia) “Ask the person himself.” (Naofumi)

At my reply, Ren started talking about being deceived by Witch and then being defeated by us, which led to him coming here for rehabilitation.

How Rishia defeated Itsuki in the same way and Itsuki being in recuperation was also explained.

Because the current Itsuki has become a ‘Yes Man’ and will obey everything that is said.

“Sigh... I understand the circumstances. Come to think of it, such a terrible thing happened in the village, so it’s a likely situation.” (Raphtalia) “Is there really such a change?” (Naofumi)

“There is! Haven’t the village’s surroundings become a dense forest!? Moreover, there’s also a farm nearby with Filorials that look like Firo!” (Raphtalia) “It is like that, now that you mention it.” (Naofumi) “It really does look like a lot of things happened while I was away.” (Raphtalia) “I suppose.” (Naofumi)

Come to think of it, even though it’s only been a month and a half since Raphtalia left for training, I feel like there’s been a lot of fighting.

Bringing down each of the three heroes is still fresh in my mind.

Some of it can be called beating, but there are also some shady things mixed in.

It can be taken as lengthy too.... or is it short, it’s been a series of battles day after day.

“Now then, Raphtalia-chan’s return means Onee-chan has completed her duty.”
(Sadina) “That’s right.” (Naofumi)

“It’s disappointing that you didn’t understand what I meant, Sadina onee-san.” (Raphtalia)

As far as it goes, was she helpful?

Well, Atla didn’t enter my bed.

“And so, Raphtalia-chan, I’ll be taking Naofumi-chan~” (Sadina) “What are you saying!?” (Raphtalia)

“What are you saying!?” (Naofumi)

“Er.... I am... seriously aiming for Naofumi-chan?” (Sadina)

Sadina calmly answered while swaying.

Stop it, that’s disgusting

“Perhaps Naofumi-chan prefers this human form? Then shall Onee-chan gallantly take care of you in my human form?” (Sadina) “Sadina onee-san..... are these your true feelings?” (Raphtalia) “That’s right~” (Sadina)

“Then now that Raphtalia-san has returned, you can finally start the fight.”
(Atla)

Atla asked for confirmation as if it was a matter of course.

This wasn’t a preparatory period!

I can tell you like me from your attitude, but all your heads are just filled with flowers.

Especially Raphtalia.

“That’s right. I did as promised with Atla, and I waited until Raphtalia-chan returned. Now then, won’t you assault Naofumi-chan together with Onee-chan?” (Sadina) [\[7\]](#)

Raphtalia's expression turned pale before my eyes and she turned to face me.

"Naofumi-sama.... could you possibly have had a drinking competition with Sadina onee-san?" (Raphtalia) "Yeah, we did." (Naofumi)

Raphtalia bent back and facepalmed as if she received a shock.

What's with that?

"Naofumi-sama... Sadina has been telling the villagers about a certain rule for a long time now." (Raphtalia) "Sigh..." (Kiel)

Kiel also nodded in agreement.

What the hell.

"Sadina onee-san said, 'My life companion must be someone who can drink more than me! If I meet someone like that, I'll never let them go, so everyone should be prepared~'" (Raphtalia) "Hmm..." (Naofumi)

If Sadina nee-chan is designating Nii-chan as her future husband to that extent, then Nii-chan must have had a drinking competition and won, or so everyone in the village has been thinking." (Kiel)

"Come again?" (Naofumi)

Well it's true I had a complete victory in the drinking competition against Sadina.

Eh? So that's the reason Sadina wanted me as a husband?

I thought it was just a prank.

When I looked towards Sadina, she was in her human form, holding her cheeks with her hands and looking bashful.

“I really enjoyed the days of watching Naofumi-chan’s sleeping face every night.” (Sadina)

Ugh.... not just Atla, the perverts are increasing!

I’m not interested in that.

“Nii-chan, how did you win against Sadina nee-chan?” (Kiel) “I just ate a Lukor fruit?” (Naofumi)

“”Of course...”” (Kiel & Slaves)

Kiel and the other village-born slaves nodded unanimously.

It seems Imia also nodded.

Was it well-known because Sadina played the role of big sister in the village?

“It was shown sometime when we went peddling, I think.” (Naofumi) “Eh? That was the Lukor Fruit? I thought it was a sign of welcome.” (Kiel)

It’s about the guy who made me eat Lukor Fruit as a countermeasure against impostors calling themselves the Hero of the Shield to become famous.

As expected, it seems there are no other guys who can safely eat Lukor Fruit apart from me.

It was thought to be some kind of reception and a tool to judge imposters.

“...I see, Naofumi-san is an ability wielder of Intoxication Neutralization. Everything points to that.” (Itsuki)

Itsuki just said something incomprehensible.

Ren and I slowly turned to face Itsuki.

“Ability wielder?” (Naofumi)

“Was there such a system?” (Ren)

I have abilities that resemble a resistance against abnormal status conditions.

Can I say it's like that?

Unfortunately, I don't recall an ability to neutralize intoxication.

“No, that's not it. We dimension travelers only attained these abilities after we came to this world.” (Itsuki)

ESPer

“Abilities we’ve had since before we came to this world?”

Hmm?

What is Itsuki talking about?

Is it that?

Something like how Ren’s world had VRMMOs?

At that time, Ren called normal MMOs archaic, and threw us into confusion.

I feel something similar from Itsuki right now.

“Hey Ren, do you have any idea what Itsuki is talking about right now?”

(Naofumi) “Sorry. There are a few possibilities, but I’m not sure.” (Ren) “Fumu.”

(Naofumi)

Like Ren, I have my guesses, but for now Itsuki cannot lie, so it would be faster just to ask him.

The current Itsuki just says whatever pops into his head.

If we ask him about these powers, he’ll probably answer.

“Itsuki, what powers would you be talking about? Do you mean about the power of the legendary weapons?” (Naofumi) “No. The legendary weapons may have a similar function as well, but I’m referring to something completely different. Isn’t it obvious?” (Itsuki) “Hah... Please elaborate. In the world that you came from... what were these powers?” (Naofumi)

I hold up my hand to quiet Raphtalia and Sadina.

“What do you mean what? Doesn’t Naofumi-san already understand? Or did Naofumi-san live in a rural area where power management hadn’t reached yet?” (Itsuki)

Oh my. He’s answering questions with questions again.

He should be answering honestly due to his curse, though.

Currently, he’s speaking expressionlessly in a disinterested voice.

Does that mean these 『Abilities』 are obvious facts of life to him?

It’s as if I just asked him how to breathe.

If asked such a thing, perhaps this is the natural response.

“Please. Explain what these powers are from the start.” (Naofumi)

“Understood. Abilities appeared in my world 25 years ago. Various incidents and calamities occurred, and by researching into the cause, it was discovered that each human possessed various abilities. They’re also called PSI and ESP, I think.” (Itsuki)

... Um...

That means Itsuki’s world is...

“Ren, did you get that? No, your world had VRMMOs, right? Were ESPers common knowledge?” (Naofumi) “There’s no way they existed.” (Ren)

No... I thought that since Ren came from an SF world, he would understand.

Or perhaps they’re both from modern day fantasies?

So Itsuki’s world is in the near future, and it has ESP?

In my world, it would be labeled as Psychic Battle! I would have been excited to go there.

The problem is just how Itsuki stood in such a world. What powers did he have?

“And? Itsuki, in your world, how were these powers treated?” (Naofumi) “First, all the people with powers were gathered into schools. There was one per prefecture. Though there were some exceptions.” (Itsuki) “I see...” (Naofumi)

Ability users...

Yeah. I don't get it.

“Powers are ranked from F to S, and classes are divided based on that rank. Of course, that also depends on the school.” (Itsuki) “Did your world contain nothing but power users?” (Naofumi) “No, that's not the case; there were also zeroes. In fact, there were more Zeroes than ESPers.” (Itsuki) “And you were?” (Naofumi)

“I was from the E class, with the ability 『Accuracy』.” (Itsuki)
Accuracy... is that why he's the Hero of the Bow?

How is it? Were there standards for choosing the Heroes?

Again, I don't get it.

“What sort of ability was Accuracy? I just want to confirm.” (Naofumi) “If you set your aim, you can hit things much easier than normal humans. If needed, I can also act like a sniper from afar.” (Itsuki) “Ah, I see.” (Naofumi)

So he never misses.

That's why during the kidnapping incident, he kept firing at me without minding Melty.

If he didn't have absolute confidence, there's no way he would attack there.

If so, I guess I can understand his behavior a little bit more.

Anyways, I don't feel any doubt from Itsuki's words, but I'm having trouble believing them.

『Accuracy』, is it?

Just by looking at it, it has quite a few applications to combat.

If the ranking is S-F, it's around the lower end?

“Even though the ability's combat utility seems to be high, why is it Rank E?”
(Naofumi) “Because there is the higher level 『100% Hit』 ability.” (Itsuki) “What is 100% Hit?”

“Naofumi-san was able to interfere when I fired my arrows, but if someone with 100% Hit shot them, they would hit no matter what.” (Itsuki) “Hmm...”
(Naofumi)

“No matter which direction they were aimed, the arrows would come flying right at Naofumi-san.” (Itsuki)

So it's Homing!

I guess we are dealing with ESP here.

“It's a common ability among baseball players. Of course, it is heavily regulated.” (Itsuki) “So that means, Itsuki, because you had a lower level ability, you were looked down upon within your ESPer School?” (Naofumi) “Naofumi, I think you're saying a bit too much.” (Ren)

“That's right. That's why I enthusiastically focused on games to run away from reality.” (Itsuki)

Itsuki boldly answers. I don't hear any sarcasm or regret.

So Itsuki's idiotic Justice... Hero Complex came from him not being granted a superior ability.

“I had always known I was special from the special ability screening in elementary school. From middle school onwards, we were all transferred to special schools. But there, I learned that there were plenty of people better than me, and fell into despair. Even in high school, that fact never changed.”
(Itsuki)

Since he was surrounded by normal people, Itsuki was filled with confidence

when he found out he was special during elementary school But when he finally went to the special school, he found out that his power was nothing. He ran to games to console himself.

In most Manga and Light Novels, the main character has some sort of superior ability.

However, in an actual society based on special powers, there are people all over the spectrum. It may be hell for the lower people.

Within his culture of ESPers, he saw numerous people perform amazing feats, and defeating evil. He wished to be like that.

“I understand what you’re saying. And? I can ride any vehicle without getting sick, and drink however much I want. Are you saying that’s a power?” (Naofumi)

“Yes. Naofumi-san’s power is probably 『Intoxication Cancel』. There’s also a lower level version called 『Intoxication Resist』. The lower one’s F Rank.” (Itsuki)

“Intoxication Cancel is?”

“Based on the future prospects, I’d say it’s around C-D rank. Against ESPers with gravity and pressure controlling powers, it’s conditionally classified as S.”

(Itsuki) “Hmm. So what do you mean by future prospects?” (Naofumi) “Think about it. Being invulnerable to dizziness makes attacks by people who change pressure in set areas ineffective. It also strengthens one’s ears and cochlear fluid. It can change into a skill that lets one act in areas with absolutely no gravity. It’s an essential skill for astronauts. The evolved one is 『Gravity Attack Cancel』, a strange power. Its full extent has yet to be explored.” (Itsuki)

Was it that great of an ability?

No no no. I’m just strong against vehicles, and I pretty much was like that in my world as well.

And I just don’t get drunk, right?

Is what I think, but even I’m beginning to get my doubts.

I didn’t feel anything when I stuffed my mouth with the Lucor Fruits that were enough to knock Motoyasu out, and even when Firo runs at her top speed, I’m unaffected.

Even if the others get used to it, it's not as if they enjoy it.

"I also have the suspicion that Naofumi-san has a double skill." (Itsuki) "You mean that I have multiple skills?" (Naofumi)

"Yes." (Itsuki)

"What else is there?" (Naofumi)

I don't really have to listen.

Itsuki's world was one set in the near future and ruled by ESP.

And the reason Itsuki thought he could look down on us was because he thought we were all without abilities I guess. That makes sense.

Even so, Ren's world has Virtual Reality, and Itsuki's had ESPers.

What does Motoyasu have?

Whenever he talks to girls, do options appear before his eyes?

Not that it matters. He's like that. Even if I ask him, I don't feel that I'll get a serious answer.

"I think you also have 『Animal Friends』, an ability that attracts animals to you naturally. You'd do fine as a veterinarian." (Itsuki) "Ah, I see." (Naofumi)

"Master~ Pat Firo's head~" (Firo)

"Niichan, play~" (Kiel)

"Hero of the Shield-sama, um..." (Imya)

The Bird, the Loinclothed Dog, and Imya are swarming around me.

... I wonder.

I get the feeling that animals have liked me since I was young.

When I walked around the mountains, wild birds naturally perched on my shoulders, and I encountered wildlife easily.

I once encountered a bear, and played dead to try to survive. Rather than attacking, it started licking my face.

I later learned that playing dead doesn't actually work.

When I was in elementary school, the large dog in the neighborhood let me ride on its back.

No, it's more like it sat down in front of me asking to be ridden.

I rode around waving a stick, pretending I was an Ainu Girl from a fighting game.^[8]

The monsters of this world have a wild disposition, so I tend to avoid them, though...

The monsters in this village are strangely drawn to me. But that must be the power of the Shield.

Yeah. It's best not to believe everything Itsuki says.

He's talking about his own world, and mine doesn't come equipped with any such powers.

"Well, I guess Itsuki's world is just like that." (Naofumi)

I think I've caught a glimpse of why Itsuki's personality is as it is.

I forcefully bring the topic to a close, and signal for Ren to help me drive him out. I turn to Raphtalia.

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

"Umm... What were you talking about with the Hero of the Bow? I don't really get what you mean by ESP and everything." (Raphtalia) "Ah, it seems that if you look at Itsuki's world, it's not that different from this one." (Naofumi) "More importantly, Naofumi-chan, won't you do something fun with me?" (Sadina) "I won't. I have no interest. Get out." (Naofumi)

"Oh, Naofumi-chan, but that's your charm." (Sadina)

Sadina ignores my rejection, and provokes Raphtalia with challenging eyes.

I'd appreciate it if you didn't do that.

I don't think Raphtalia wants to witness a love scene, and I'd like to avoid unnecessary things like that until the world is at peace.

"Sadina-oneesan! You've done enough, so please separate from Naofumi-sama!" (Raphtalia) "No, Oneesan isn't going to back down here." (Sadina)

"Just get away from him!" (Raphtalia)

"Ah, for the love of god! All of you are being too loud, so everyone besides Raphtalia, get out!" (Naofumi)

To clear up the misunderstanding with Raphtalia, I drive everyone else out of the room.

"Ah, Naofumi-sama, you're being too forceful. And Onii-sama, please go away!" (Atlas) "Bu-Master is mean." (Firo)

"Yeah, Niichan! Make some food." (Kiel)

Atlas, Firo, and the loinclothed dog offer various complaints as I drive them out, but it's not my problem.

I close the door, and once again celebrate my reunion with Raphtalia.

"I'm sorry. It got very annoying." (Naofumi)

"Truly, that was a series of surprises." (Raphtalia)

"Yeah." (Naofumi)

I look over Raphtalia again.

Yeah, though I get the feeling she's become stronger, her face is the same as always.

“With this, is your training over?” (Naofumi)

“Yes.” (Raphtalia)

I open Raphtalia’s status. I haven’t checked it in a while.

Her level is... 100.

Her journey led her all the way to the max level.

I need to work hard to catch up.

“From now on, I can always be with you.” (Raphtalia)

“That helps. There have been too many things happening beyond my power. If Raphtalia’s here, my life would be easier.” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama... I’ll try my best.” (Raphtalia)

“I’m counting on you.” (Naofumi)

I’ve been with her for a long time. She can understand what I want to do, and act based on it.

“The most pressing matter is... Atlas countermeasures?” (Naofumi)

Atlas and Sadina are peering in from the window.

Firo as well.

... What should I do? It seems that they’ll sneak in regardless of what I do.

And Atlas is blind, right? Does she even have to be at the window?

She can sense whatever happens in here without looking. It’s kinda scary.

“Naofumi-sama rejects her advances, right?” (Raphtalia)

“Isn’t it obvious? The one who refuses to learn is Atlas.” (Naofumi) “I think Fohl-kun will be able to stop them.” (Raphtalia) “I have doubts as to whether he’ll stop Sadina as well.” (Naofumi) “Right...” (Raphtalia)

“And so, Raphtalia.” (Naofumi)

“W-what is it?” (Raphtalia)

“From tonight onwards, you’re on guard duty. I’m leaving it to you.”

(Naofumi) “Y-yes!” (Raphtalia)

For some reason, Raphtalia’s face is red as she nods.

Did I say something strange?

If I leave it to Raphtalia, who seems strict on public morals, I think I’ll finally be able to sleep.

“Well, from here on out, I’ll be doing my morning warm up, and then I’m going to make breakfast. Won’t you accompany me?” (Naofumi) “Understood.” (Raphtalia)

And so, Raphtalia joined me in my daily routine, and I resumed my work.

Lab Visit

Noon, that day.

I head to Rat's lab to see her progress.

Atlas and Sadina went with Fohl to raise their levels.

I have no idea why Sadina's joining. Are they going to be training in the sea?

"So this is the equipment you procured from that facility you found while we were fighting in the Castle Town?" (Raphtalia)

I managed to obtain various magic tools and machines, as well as many large test tubes.

Rat, Taniko, the village's more intelligent slaves, and researchers from the castle are in the middle of setting them up.

"Yeah. In order to overcome the wave, we have to make use of whatever we can get." (Naofumi)

Raphtalia absentmindedly pokes an empty test tube.

The Granny is currently giving basic training to everyone in the village who wants to fight.

She's looking for people to send on her Spartan Training session.

The Loinclothed Dog is also a candidate.

Though if she goes, I would be troubled.

Despite how she acts, she helps bring together the slaves and acts as a sort of leader.

But since Raphtalia's back, I think we'll manage one way or another.

And that doesn't really matter right now.

Right now, I'm here to ask Rat about her progress.

The only thing I've personally asked her to do is the Bioplant research. I think it would be fine if she took on other projects as well.

There are jobs that need to be done, and I estimate that Rat's research will prove useful soon.

"Ara? Count... no, was it Marquis now? What's up?" (Rat)

Rat is facing a giant petri dish and tapping on what appears to be a stone tablet.

Is that supposed to be a computer?

Rat puts her work on hold and addresses me.

"It's a regular inspection. So has anything happened?" (Naofumi) "Let's see..."

We're in the middle of tuning the new equipment you got." (Rat)

Inside of the dish, Rat's favorite monster is swimming around. It waves its hand at me.

When I return the wave, it gives a happy expression and begins spinning in circles.

"Can you do something about that monster?" (Naofumi)

"Right now, it's still uncertain. I can't complete that child's body yet." (Rat) "I see." (Naofumi)

Based on her actions, we may get a powerful fighting force. My expectations are high.

But there's the chance that she may trigger a Biological Disaster, so I still want to manage her actions.

In this instance... would it be a Magical Disaster? Or perhaps an Alchemic Disaster?

But Rat seems to be the type who takes care in her research. Maybe my worries are unfounded.

She's tending to the Bioplant matter with great care.

Though I can instantly make vague modifications, if I leave the fine tuning to Rat, it takes a while.

"I told you that I looked through the report on replicating Legendary Weapons, right?" (Rat) "Yeah." (Naofumi)

She said something about it not being worth it.

"Does that mean that making growing weapons will prove impossible?" (Naofumi) "That's not the case. I think I'll be able to do something about that one." (Rat) "Specifically?" (Naofumi)

"It's incomplete, but could you look at this?" (Rat)

Rat strikes the tablet with her index finger, and a single blue display pops up.

An item is displayed on it in 3D.

From what I see, it looks like a carriage.

But... it somehow seems alive. Is it an insect...?

"What is that?" (Naofumi)

"As you can see, it's a Carriage-type monster." (Rat)

"Hah?" (Naofumi)

"It's still in the planning stages, but in order to make a weapon that grows... no, more specifically, a monster in the shape of a weapon, I'll need to start large and go down from there. This is trial number 1." (Rat)

Um... That means that she's going to make an artificial Carriage and downsize from there?

The problem is whether this thing can move on its own.

Will one of my Filo Rials be pulling it?

I get the feeling Firo would hate it.

With it being a monster, can you even put people in it?

It's scary that it looks like it'll eat anyone who sits in it.

"What will it be able to do?" (Naofumi)

"Magical Support and some other miscellaneous options. You can attach a crane to let it lift and bind enemies as well, I think." (Rat) "Fumu... Can it function as a normal carriage?" (Naofumi)

"That's what I'm looking into right now. I don't think it will be capable of self-propulsion, so it's only a prototype. If it doesn't go well, I might just scrap it." (Rat) "I see." (Naofumi)

I guess making something like this would require prototyping.

Though Rat may seem a little strange, I knew that when I hired her.

"If that succeeds, this is next." (Rat)

And, what appears on the display is the Firo Plushy I gave to Rishia.

Various additions and augmentations are scribbled all over it.

"The only thing I see here is a costume. Is that just me?" (Naofumi) "Nonono. It's a Costume-type Monster." (Rat)

"Is that so..." (Naofumi)

Rat hits the tablet again, and the Firo Plushy on the screen begins moving.

It looks like the actual Firo running.

“The problem is that you have way too many Firo Rials, so I question whether this one will actually be necessary. It may just be a long, unneeded detour towards my goal.” (Rat)

Yeah, that’s true.

But the concept is interesting. It’s an armor that levels.

Ah, right. My Barbarian Armor also got something called Growing Power.

Though I have no idea what it’s supposed to do.

“If that also turns into a success, I’m moving onto weapons, but that seems to be a bit far away.” (Rat) “Got it. It’s good enough that you have a concrete plan.” (Naofumi) “... You’re not going to speak of heresy? You’re not going to reject me? That’s surprising.” (Rat) “What are you saying at this point in time? Is your conscience finally acting up? I’m not from this world, so I don’t care about you guys’ sense of morals.” (Naofumi)

And even though I look like this, I was a complete Otaku before I got here.

I’ve read plenty of manga and played plenty of games with psychopathic scientist characters.

This one is much saner than I expected.

More importantly, she’ll definitely add to our fighting force.

If the Carriage-type monster goes well, we might be able to upgrade to a self-propelling car.

No... if all goes well, we may get a giant mobile Robot. But that might be going too far.

We should stay away from Sci-fi stuff in this fantasy world.

It’s nice to be able to dream of something besides combat ability.

The growing Costume-type monster is the same.

Instead of constantly mending and replacing armor, we may be able to grow

the strongest equipment.

“All of these concepts are intriguing. You don’t need to set growing weapons as your end goal. There are plenty more possibilities here.” (Naofumi) “... This is the first time the Marquis has supported me to this extent.” (Rat) “If you have time to give thanks, then go get some results.” (Naofumi) “As expected of the Marquis.” (Rat)

“Shut it. Let’s get to work already... Ah, would the Bioplants be a good base for the Carriage? We could try making a plant-based trial product.” (Naofumi) “Interesting.” (Rat)

As I offer suggestions, I feel Raphtalia fidgeting behind me.

“You’re having quite an amazing conversation there.” (Raphtalia) “There’s nothing amazing about it. Ideas like these are born of the imagination.” (Naofumi)

There’s no way to attain progress without an insatiable thirst for knowledge and an ample amount of dreams.

Common sense rarely gives way to change.

In my world, the system of slavery became obsolete, but in this one, it’s a fact of life.

If you cared for what everyone else thought, you would never get where you truly wanted.

“And? When will your precious partner’s body be completed?” (Naofumi) Rat’s goal is probably related to strengthening that monster. Her entire career may even hinge on it.

“If I just wanted to bring him into the outside world, I could make a Homunculus body, but that won’t make him strong. That’s why I want to make a sort of replaceable... this may sound weird coming from me, but I want to give him a

body with a system like that of the Dragon Emperor cores.” (Rat) “I see. Homunculus... is it?” (Naofumi)

She wants to make her partner out of the best materials possible.

And because she trusts her partner will answer to her good will, Rat continues researching.

Even if the body turns out to be a failure, she could merely switch it out... If she made a system like the Dragon Emperor’s core stones, she could just switch its soul between bodies.

Gaelion’s a good example.

The True Gaelion lives within the child one. If they want to switch, they can.

Though, it seems there’s a time limit for switching.

Perhaps Rat wants to make her partner an emperor.

“Well, while you’re at it, make sure to take care of my requests as well.” (Naofumi) “... It’s not like I can defy the Marquis.” (Rat)

With a delicate expression, Rat scratches her head and nods.

“Now that you mention it, about dragon cores...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia lifts the bag that was hanging on her waist.

“What?” (Naofumi)

“Ah, yes. While I was out training with Master, we went Dragon Hunting. I brought these back as a souvenir. I heard they were valuable, so I kept them and sent the other items to the storage house.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia presents the contents of the bag.

Inside was a large quantity of dragon cores.

One. Two. Three... Anyways, there's a lot.

Just how much did she fight?

And what's dragon hunting supposed to be?

"Then let me call Gaelion over." (Naofumi)

And so, I called over Gaelion, who was conveniently in the area.

"Fumu. This is quite the amount of cores." (Gaelion)

"It spoke-!" (Raphtalia)

Watching Gaelion dig through the bag, Raphtalia raises her voice.

Ah, I never told her.

And during the Wrath Dragon incident, Gaelion refused to say a word.

"Yeah, Gaelion can talk. Remember when we fought the Zombie Dragon? That was this guy when it was still alive." (Naofumi) "A-alive...? Just how did he come back to life then?" (Raphtalia)

I give a vague explanation of Gaelion's situation.

Even Raphtalia seems quite shocked.

"With this amount, I'll get quite a bit of strength." (Gaelion)

Core stones are like doping items to dragons. I guess they'll prove useful.

It's quite a nice souvenir. And there are more surprises to be found in the storage house, apparently.

I'll look through them with Imya's uncle and get him to forge some weapons and armor.

"A nice ratio of them are Dragon Emperor Fragments at that. That's a life

saver.” (Gaelion)

Gaelion empties the bag into his mouth and gulps them down at once.

“Those would have sold for a lot. You should treat them better.” (Naofumi)

“Hmph, in exchange, I’ll get stronger for you, so avert your eyes to this one.”

(Gaelion)

This wimpy dragon... The only thing big about him is his talk.

Gaelion’s scales begin to glow faintly.

“Fumu... I see. I see.” (Gaelion)

“Did you remember something?” (Naofumi)

It would be nice if he finally obtained the knowledge on how to break the level 100 cap.

“Unfortunately, the information you’re looking for was not in these fragments.”

(Gaelion) “Dammit!” (Naofumi)

The information we get is random, and I’m not getting anything useful.

“However...” (Gaelion)

“However?” (Naofumi)

“I learned that only Heroes can achieve the level above Dreifach, Revelation.”

(Gaelion) “I know!” (Naofumi)

Why. Why is it that I only get information I already know?

But I’ll need to learn how to invoke it easier, so I won’t call this information completely useless.

“Also, the previous four heroes, and the ones before that, though they were able to survive the wave, they were unable to win against it.” (Gaelion)

Hmm? They survived, but they lost?

What does that mean? I thought beating the wave meant surviving against it.

Is it like winning the battle but losing the war?

The wave’s identity remains a mystery.

“... The four must definitely not be killed... otherwise, overcoming the wave will become exceedingly difficult. It may even be impossible for the Seven Stars.

Also, this wave is the last one. If you fail, the world is done for.” (Gaelion)

The last one... he probably doesn’t mean the next battle, but the series of waves we were summoned for as a whole.

“And the Four Good Omens are...” (Gaelion)^[9]

“They are?” (Naofumi)

“I can’t remember any more. This is all I could get from the fragments.”

(Gaelion) “I see. It was a little useful.” (Naofumi)

I’m thankful for the information, even if it may be broken up.

I didn’t find what I wanted, but I cleared some things lingering over my head.

The problem is: what we have to do to win, or what must we do to lose?

Do we have to kill every single enemy summoned? Or is there another goal entirely?

Perhaps I’ll have to actively start gathering fragments.

“Also, the amount of people I can grant a special Class Up to has increased. If anyone wants to do one, I’m free at any time.” (Gaelion) “Got it.” (Naofumi)

I unfasten the core of my Barbarian armor and hand it to Gaelion for renewal.

...The Armor's stats rose by a questionable margin.

"Ah, right. Alchemist, you examined my body, did you not?" (Gaelion) "That I did." (Rat)

"I'm also greedy for power. If you have the tools, I'll permit you to modify my body at any time." (Gaelion) "Taniko will get loud." (Naofumi)

"If it's about Wyndia, you needn't mind her. If I'm not strong, I won't be able to protect what I must." (Gaelion) "Rat was looking into the inheritance properties of dragons. Please tell her what you know." (Naofumi) "Even if I try, it would be like my trying to explain how to breathe, you know?" (Gaelion) Mu... Gaelion gives a troublesome reply.

I guess that would be difficult.

"Don't worry, I'll be looking into that by myself. Perhaps I'll add on some modifications while I'm at it." (Rat) "Fufufu, first, I'll need to get strong enough to take down the next Filo Rial Queen." (Gaelion)

Gaelion lets out an evil laugh. He seems to understand that he's no match for his rival.

Well, like that, I ended my visit to Rat's lab.

Surprise Inspection

Now then, today I've decided to perform a surprise inspection on the slaves' and heroes' dwellings.

The reason being to make sure they didn't bring back something strange again.

Even though we can absorb things into my weapon, taking them out is difficult, so personal property must be kept safe.

Magic water and Spirit water are unexpectedly easy to compound, and quite a few useful items come out from monster drops.

But other drops and materials need to be kept apart, or we won't be able to find them when they are needed.

I warned Ren and Motoyasu not to rely too much on their weapon's automatic compounding abilities, so they should have some materials lying around.

And, I don't want them to be monopolizing rare items.

Things like those will be confiscated.

For this inspection, I'll be investigating behind everyone's back.

“Naofumi-sama, what are you doing?” (Raphtalia)

I was in the middle of secretly breaking into the Camping Plant we erected for Ren.

I turn around to find Raphtalia looking at me with doubting eyes.

“I'm investigating whether Ren is hiding anything nice.” (Naofumi) “Hah... That

is... I understand. Naofumi-sama is just this sort of person.” (Raphtalia)
Though her expression indicates that she wants to give up, Raphtalia follows me.

She probably has something to say, but she holds it in.

I still get the feeling that I’m doing something wrong, so I guess I’m not completely devoid of human conscious yet.

There are people who praise me no matter what evil things I do, so I’m starting to lose track of myself.

Unlawful breaking and entering, as well as theft, are trademarks of Heroes.

Most of the Heroes I know of are habitual offenders.

But... that’s just in games.

The first room I check is Ren’s.

“Fumu... There isn’t really anything here.” (Naofumi)

It’s a bare room with a desk and a bed. Imya’s uncle also taught him some smithing, so there are some broken swords and ores scattered around.

On the desk is a notebook he seems to be using to practice writing.

It looks like he’s studying diligently.

Now that I think about it, it’s impossible for the current Ren to get ahold of Rare Items.

His curse decreased his luck, and he doesn’t get any EXP.

“Is this the Hero of the Sword’s room?” (Raphtalia)

“Yeah, Ren’s using this room.” (Naofumi)

But he doesn’t come by this room often.

He usually goes around with Female Knight or Taniko.

It doesn't seem like he has any hidden items, so I guess that's it.

"It's cleaner than I imagined. Is he studying Blacksmithing?" (Raphtalia) "Yeah, I've left it to him. He seems to be diligently learning." (Naofumi)

Is this a copper sword? I guess he made it for practice.

Because he has no luck, its make isn't the best.

The desk has a few diagrams for sword designs.

They're like the ones I make for accessories.

Wondering if he had some black history involving Chuuni, I look through them.

But unfortunately, I don't find any dirt.

In retaliation, I looked under the bed for porn, but again, nothing.

He's no fun at all.

"Naofumi-sama, if you've lost interest, you don't have to search." (Raphtalia)

"Was it showing on my face?" (Naofumi)

"Yes." (Raphtalia)

Fuu... Well, since I'm starting to act like a burglar, I better call it quits here.

Ren's in the clear.

I'll check the Heroes in order. So next is Motoyasu.

Motoyasu has a house built away from the village, next to the Filo Rial stable.

He lives there with his initial three.

By the way, it's quite a big building.

I'm the designer.

Though it's just a temporary Camping Plant-based house.

Currently, Motoyasu is transporting Witch, so he's not in.

If I want to search, I won't get a better time.

I can't stand dealing with him after he went insane. Though, I couldn't deal with him earlier either.

"Is this the Hero of the Spear's house? He seemed quite different when I saw him at the castle." (Raphtalia) "Yeah, he'll call any woman a pig, and raising Filo Rials has become the meaning of his existence." (Naofumi) "... " (Raphtalia)

I speak as I undo the house's lock.

In this village, locks are meaningless before me.

"Naofumi-sama, I think you should learn about something called privacy." (Raphtalia) "Those heroes don't have the right to privacy." (Naofumi)

I mean, they are currently criminals.

I'm no demon. I won't seize anything without reason.

If it's just something like porn, I'll leave it as is.

"Hah..." (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia's sigh is quite heavy.

Anyways, I'm in Motoyasu's house.

The entrance leads to a mixed living room and kitchen.

It's much tidier than I thought it would be.

I remember Midori and the other two saying something about cleaning up the place.

Out of the three, I believe that Midori is the most reliable one on things like this.

Though the fact that the only male in the group is as such is strange in itself.

No, is Midori the one that's weird? Given his gender, he still targets

Motoyasu.

And from the shared living space, the house divides into four rooms.

Each room had something drawn over it: a red feather, a blue feather, a green feather, and finally a spear.

I guess each room is assigned individually.

Without any hesitation, I proceed to disengage the lock on the room with the spear.

For some reason, there are three sets of locks on it.

His security is making me curious.

Could it be that his behavior is an act, and he's planning on framing me again?

The door opens.

Inside is an exceedingly ordinary room, though there are a few Filo Rial goods here and there.

It seems there's no bed.

Motoyasu sleeps while cuddling with Filo Rials, so I guess a bed is unnecessary.

"This room somehow feels nice." (Raphtalia)

"Yes... but..." (Naofumi)

Something's strange.

This room is much narrower than the one I designed in the house's construction plan.

There must be some secret passage somewhere, but... finding it is a pain.

「Emergency Modification, Door Creation」

I instruct the Camping Plant to create a door.

With a creaking sound, a door is made.

“...There is no privacy before Naofumi-sama, is there?” (Raphtalia) “Yes, inside of a Camping Plant house, there is none.” (Naofumi)

Otherwise, there’s no way I could let Ren and Motoyasu live so freely.

I think as I open the door.

“This is-” (Naofumi)

I close the door.

“Naofumi-sama?” (Raphtalia)

I put my hand on my eyebrows and think.

‘There are some things in this world better left unknown.’

Is what I really thought.

“What’s wrong?” (Raphtalia)

I silently beckon Raphtalia to open the door.

Understanding the situation, Raphtalia takes a deep breath and opens it.

“Wha...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia is at a loss for words.

Right, as expected, Motoyasu's hidden room... was colored with Firo.

In the literal sense.

The walls were covered with hand-drawn pictures of Firo, and they even extended up to the ceiling.

On a desk is a large stack of notebooks.

Scattered around them are drawings of bird form and human form, all forms of Firo.

He's actually quite good...

That guy's got a nice face, he's a Hero, he can cook, and he can draw.

If he did something about that personality, he'd be ridiculously popular.

No, he really was quite popular.

But, Motoyasu's love life doesn't really matter to me.

I turn off my useless thoughts and look over the room once more.

Every corner of the room is sprinkled with Filo Rial feathers, and the bed... no, that's a Firo stuffed doll (Filo Rial form) that had a Firo stuffed doll (Human Form) on top.

Using these two, could he...

No, thinking about it is dangerous. I don't need to look into it that deeply.

The doll's stuffing seems to be Firo's molted feathers.

Uu... The whole room smells of Filo Rial.

"W-what is this!?" (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia takes in a deep breath and shouts out with a pale face.

I'm of the same opinion.

"It's the room of Firo's stalker. No, perhaps the room of a Yandere." (Naofumi)

Why has the Yandere hater become the Yandere?

I try opening one of the books.

For some reason, I hear a high pitched squeal from behind me.

Inside, sketches of Firo were closely packed together.

And I open another book... It seems to be an Ero Doujin based on Firo.

Why does he even have one for her bird form? And his skill is amazing.

The male character in these is Motoyasu? No, there are tentacle ones as well...

“Isn’t Firo in grave danger?” (Raphtalia)

“That Firo? Motoyasu shows absolute obedience to Firo. He believes that she’ll fall for him someday.” (Naofumi) “B-but even that man’s a Hero. He may force Firo to do things like this.” (Raphtalia) “I don’t think that’s happening.” (Naofumi)

Even if he tries to force himself on Firo, Firo can fend for herself.

He doesn’t lay hands on those three, so I don’t think he’ll be breaking soon. I hope.

“And if I try to confiscate any of the items here, I fear for the future.” (Naofumi)

“... Right.” (Raphtalia)

This is most likely where Motoyasu keeps all of his pent up desires.

If I try to suppress them, he may explode.

Right now, keeping the status quo seems to be best.

Anyways, I didn’t have to see this.

Motoyasu’s madness is endless.

... For now, let me just go check the other three rooms.

The result: Pets tend to resemble their masters.

If Motoyasu goes on a rampage, those three will probably resolve it.

“Next is Itsuki.” (Naofumi)

“Umm... Can't we stop at this?” (Raphtalia)

“If I leave his unchecked, he may do something troubling.” (Naofumi)

I won't let you say you forgot Motoyasu's room.

To see what they're planning and to make countermeasures is vital.

“But, you left the Hero of the Bow to Rishia-san, did you not?” (Raphtalia)

“Yeah, but it would be no joke if he brought Rishia over to his side.” (Naofumi)

“Hah...” (Raphtalia)

But Itsuki hasn't been here long, so he probably doesn't have much there.

Rishia is constantly watching him, so he won't do anything strange.

Today, he left with Rishia to assist in leveling the slaves.

Since he's been cursed to be a Yes Man, he won't run anytime soon.

And so, we proceed to Itsuki and Rishia's house.

For Rishia, is it her nest of love?

I told her not do anything immoral, so it'll probably be fine.

“Fumu... it's all clear.” (Naofumi)

“Yeah. And isn't this Rishia-san's house? I don't think you'll find anything.”
(Raphtalia)

Well, Rishia's been here since the village started.

Her personality seems to be quite loyal, that girl.

The place seems to be cleaned regularly.

The rooms are decorated with weapons and armor, and it gives off the impression of an adventurer's house.

Inside of the bedroom is a single large bed.

Do they sleep together?

It is an ordinary house without anything out of place.

I wonder what fun things Itsuki will say about living here after his curse clears.

“Naofumi-sama? Are you thinking something strange again?” (Raphtalia)

Imagining Itsuki getting hooked on gambling and slowly whittling down Rishia's savings, leading to the collapse of the family, puts my mind slightly at ease.

After all, Itsuki abandoned Rishia, ran off to commit a crime, and came back after we beat him up.

“Naofumi-sama! Get a hold of yourself!” (Raphtalia)

“... What?” (Naofumi)

I'm just indulging myself in some pleasant fantasies, but Raphtalia scolds me.

I mean, Itsuki isn't repenting at all, and he can't think at all right now.

Though I admit, based on my previously imagined scenario, that I am garbage.

Familiar

“Where to next?” (Raphtalia)

“That’s right. Let’s go to Firo’s room.” (Naofumi)

I’ve given a room to Firo for the time being.

It’s a room in my house.

I originally thought a Filorial barn was fine as well, but since it’s what Firo had wanted, it couldn’t be helped.

Kids want their own room, right? It’s probably similar to that.

She’s never stayed in it though.

It’s locked for now, but it’s a good time to check to see if anything happened.

We went into my house, and I opened the door to Firo’s room.

“This is...” (Naofumi)

Children’s toys and shiny objects were scattered all over the place; it looked just like a little kid’s room.

Except there was a nest made out of straw.

Has she used it? There weren’t many traces of it.

“There might be some eggs lying around.” (Naofumi) “Firo lays eggs?”
(Raphtalia)

“Ahh... maybe with Motoyasu... no, there could be eggs made with Melty.”

(Naofumi) “Melty’s a girl!” (Raphtalia) ^[10]

Raphtalia made a sharp retort. [11]

Raphtalia might not know, but Firo and Melty do have that kind of relationship.

I was the cause of that though.

There's no match for that whole affair.

Though the person herself might claim differently. [12]

"I don't know, some might even be Naofumi-sama's." (Raphtalia) "As if that's possible!" (Naofumi)

Really, Raphtalia, what are you thinking?

Such things as Firo being my partner, save the sleep talk for when you're asleep.

....I was assaulted just a while ago though.

Now then, I investigate to see what's in this messy room, but....

Somehow, precious-looking ores and ornaments were carelessly left around.

Just where did they come from?

Also, what's with these bones inside the nest? Leftovers?

If I think about it, Firo has two sides.

The airheaded, pure side and the beastly side. The beast is probably her true nature.

Well I've warned her before and there aren't any pellets so it's fine, but.....

This bone... looks like a dragon's.

Are these spoils of war from when I let Firo go wild and had her raise her level?

“She’d probably get mad if we take them away, huh?” (Naofumi) “I think she’ll be angry for just looking around without permission.” (Raphtalia) “That’s true...” (Naofumi)

...huh?

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

Filorial chicks come out from inside my armor and start examining the room.

“What is that?!” (Raphtalia)

“Well, I somehow received some chicks from Firo, but just where are they coming from?” (Naofumi)

They’re not there when I take off my armor and they don’t appear when I take off my clothes either.

They come out from the gaps in my armor at times.

What are these Filorial chicks?

“Naofumi-sama, could they possibly be... parasitic?” (Raphtalia) “What!” (Naofumi)

These two chicks, it can’t be, they are parasitizing me?

Don’t joke around!

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

The two baby chicks rummage around the nest and retrieve something.

What?

They come back with a gem a little bigger than my fist.

“What a pretty gem. It’s light pink.” (Raphtalia) “Yeah... What is this?”
(Naofumi)

“Who knows?” (Raphtalia)

I try to identify it with Judgement. ^[13]

Firo’s... Magic Stone?

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

The two chicks jump onto the magic stone in my hand.

“What happens when I hold it?” (Naofumi)

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

“Won’t it be dangerous if Firo finds out?” (Naofumi) ““Pii!”” (Chicks)

The two chicks shake their heads.

Or rather, what the hell are you guys?

While I was wondering about this, the magic stone in my hand melts and then evaporates.

“Uwa!” (Naofumi)

A cloud of smoke billows up, and some kind of vapor flies towards me.

Ah Crap! Let’s escape!

Immediately after I thought that, the smoke wraps around me... and dispels.

“Wha, what was that?” (Naofumi)

“Naofumi-sama, are you all right?” (Raphtalia) “I don’t feel any particular abnormalities...” (Naofumi)

Just in case, I check my Status.

I would be troubled if I got some Status Abnormality without realizing.

Somehow I feel like my magic power has increased. Actually... what’s going on?

I feel like something has been applied on top of Gaelion’s divine protection.

Also, I feel like I can sense Firo’s whereabouts.

I think, she’s running this way.

Seriously, what’s going on here?

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

“You guys—!” (Naofumi)

As I think that, the two chicks’ monster crests begin to change.

The shield is shining.

Skill <Filorial: Familiar> acquired.

Skill <Filorial: Mode-Change> acquired.

Familiar?

It’s like those familiars from games, right...?

What’s up with that?

But, if I waste time worrying too much it’ll be dangerous.

Firo will be back very soon!

“Raphtalia. Hurry, we’re leaving the room! Firo has returned!” (Naofumi) “Eh?”

Um, okay!” (Raphtalia)

We leave the room in a hurry.

Immediately after that.

“I’m back~!” (Firo)

Firo comes through the front door in high spirits.

“Welcome back.” (Naofumi)

“Y, you seem to have known she returned, huh?” (Raphtalia) “Somehow, yeah.” (Naofumi)

I wonder why that is?

I can sense Firo’s whereabouts without checking for things like Ki.

Speaking of which, what are Filorial: Familiar and Filorial: Mode Change?

“Ah, Master~. You see~ Fitoria’s skill is thanks for before, she says~” (Firo)
She saw through me!?

There’s no need to hide then, huh?

“You see~ apparently those children were entrusted and given to Master by Fitoria, but~ ...They’re made of magic and will always protect Master~” (Firo) “I see, so that’s why they appear all of a sudden.” (Naofumi) “Yeah. She said they stayed quiet until they adapted to Master’s magic~” (Firo) “Aren’t they parasites?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah~ um...huh? I can’t hear her voice anymore?” (Firo)

Firo fiddles with her ahoge and replies.

As I thought.

These two Filorial chicks really are parasites inside of me!

“If you dislike it, you can attach them to Firo, she says.” (Firo) “Really...” (Naofumi)

“It’s now possible for Master’s magic power to be assigned to Firo, and that’s why Firo knows Master’s whereabouts.” (Firo) “Ah, right.” (Naofumi)

“...Weren’t you in Firo’s room just now?” (Firo)
Gulp...

Well, there’s no problem even if it’s exposed to Firo.

“I saw your room. Tidy things up a little more.” (Naofumi) “Boo~” (Firo)

“And, we found a cherry pink stone in your nest.” (Naofumi) “There was such a thing~? Firo didn’t know at all~” (Firo) “You didn’t know?” (Naofumi)

“Now that you mention it... Melty-chan also said she saw it the morning after we slept together.”(Firo) “Right...” (Naofumi)

“I wonder if that’s the reason Melty-chan also has the kids given to Master lately?” (Firo)

So Melty also has parasites, huh.

She simply has a worrisome nature too.

Some people might say it’s my fault.

““Pii!”” (Chicks)

In any case, I don’t like them, so I’ll attach them to Firo.

I seize the two and push them against Firo; they suddenly become limp and enter Firo.

“Eh?” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia stared in wonder.

Firo transforms into her human form and her wings shine.

An icon with Filorial: Mode Change pops into view.

...There seem to be a number of patterns.

Default, Power, Speed, Magic, there's a variety.

For the time being, let's try Power.

"Ah, I feel like some kind of power is coming forth." (Firo) "HmMMM..."
(Naofumi)

Ah, so this can tamper with Firo's settings?

Let's put it back to default. Setting off some weird rampage would be a pain.

When I do, the two chicks come out from Firo and come to me.

""Pii!"" (Chicks)

The two chicks slipped inside my armor.

Damn! Get out!

They don't come out when I take off my armor! And they're not under my clothes either.

Jeez, these Filorials are an unnecessary thing stuck to me.

Speaking of which, did these guys just enable Firo to power up strangely?

It would have been better if I didn't search Firo's room.

I'll give her some unreasonable order in retaliation.

"Firo, clean your room regularly; I looked inside unannounced, but it's filthy."
(Naofumi) "Oka~y!" (Firo)

For some reason, a happy Firo starts cleaning her room as per my instructions.

We don't need the precious ores and such, so she takes them to the warehouse; I feel as though she's become a little more obedient.

"You know~ I feel like I've come to understand Master a little more~" (Firo) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"I won't lose to Onee-chan." (Firo)

"What are you talking about!" (Raphtalia)

"Is Master going around to inspect the other kids' rooms after this?" (Firo)

"Yeah." (Naofumi)

I plan to look around for the time being.

While the owners are away.

After that, we make our rounds of the villagers' rooms, taking Firo along with us.

Next is the Loinclothed Dog... the investigation of Kiel's room, but her diary is inside.

We read it, but it's just full of things such as what delicious foods she ate that day, her loincloths, and how to be manly.

...Why is there a Kennel in the room? This Loinclothed Dog!

Next is Taniko.

It's a room full of research on monster ecology.

Each one of my monsters has their personality, size, and likes carefully recorded in fine detail.

As usual, she's really fond of monsters.

"I still think we're doing something bad, but everyone has their own individuality." (Raphtalia) "Yeah." (Firo)

“I guess so...” (Naofumi)

Next up is Atla and Fohl’s house.

In reality, it’s the house Atla has been using until recently.

...Checking the inside, it seems cleaning has been really thorough.

Well, Atla has been hanging around my place after all.

Since Fohl hasn’t been here, it’s mostly been unused.

First is Fohl’s room.

It’s very crude, with just a bed and a desk. Well he only returned today, so there wasn’t any reason to change it.

Atla’s room is full of stuffed toys and such; I was unaware she had them.

I’ve never seen Atla’s valuables before.

Actually, aren’t these Fohl’s personal belongings? Huh?

This seems more like Fohl’s room rather than Atla’s.

I feel like it’s fancier than when I saw it before.

Pink wallpaper covered the walls. There aren’t many traces of the bed being used.

Somehow... this room is cut off from all the other rooms I’ve seen.

How should I put it, it’s very feminine.

“It’s a lovely room. Is this the room Atla-chan sleeps in?” (Raphtalia) “No? This room was probably never used until Fohl came back.” (Naofumi) “Yeah. Atla always sleeps in the bed next to Master’s.” (Firo) “...In my bed?” (Raphtalia)

“Now that you mention it, that’s right. She sleeps together with Sadina.” (Naofumi) “So tonight I have to sleep in a bed that smells like Atlas and Sadina-neesan....” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia frowns, looking troubled.

Well, that's how it is.

Atla just wants to come to my room, and it seems she doesn't really need her own room.

Let's just call it Fohl's dream room.

Then... Sadina's room is not in the village.

The secret base is her home.

Next is Imia's room.

The Lemo demi-humans took residence under the village.

They've built it so there won't be any cave-ins.

I can't force the door open because they aren't made with the Camping plant, but it wasn't locked.

Inside were clothing designs and manikins, and it showed that she was serious about dressmaking.

Oh? The sunglasses I made were decorating the room.

Her current ones were received later, made by the other Lemo slaves. They were improved and superior to mine, so I encouraged them.

She's a good girl for valuing things.

This is an important point.

The other slaves' rooms were similar.

However, there were many like Firo's room, with cleaning done halfheartedly and a mess left behind.

I'll inform everyone about my sudden inspection and caution them during dinner.

Late Night Combat

Night fell, and work pretty much came to an end.

I became quite sleepy, so I believe it's time to go to sleep.

"Are you going to sleep soon?" (Raphtalia)

"Yeah, I'll need to get up early tomorrow." (Naofumi)

I sit on my bed and ponder who to call for guard duty today... No, Raphtalia's here now, so I can just leave Atlas countermeasures to her.

"Raphtalia, if Atlas comes here, make sure to kick her out." (Naofumi) "Got it!" (Raphtalia)

She's quite energetic.

I get a different feeling than that of the usual Raphtalia.

"... Why are you taking off your sleeping clothes?" (Naofumi) "Eh? Ah..." (Raphtalia)

As if she were trying to strip naked, Raphtalia starts removing her clothes.

I understand that it's hot, but I don't get why she has to be naked.

Hmm? I hear a knocking on the door.

I don't know why, but I get a bad premonition as I open the door.

"Yo, Naofumi-shan. I came here with Atlas to sleep." (Sadina) "Naofumi-sama, I'll be sleeping in your room again." (Atlas)

A drunk Sadina with Atlas in tow gives a wide smile as she tries to come in through the front door.

I silently shut it.

“Go home!” (Naofumi)

“Why~? Isn’t it fine~?” (Sadina)

“Right, Naofumi-sama. Up until yesterday, did you not let us sleep in the same room as you?” (Atlas) “Now that Raphtalia’s here, things won’t play out the same. Sadina, the same goes for you as well.” (Naofumi) “Ara~? He’s driving us out.” (Sadina)

“Whatever shall we do?” (Atlas)

Atlas and Sadina begin talking amongst themselves.

If Atlas and Sadina form an alliance, there’s no way Fohl will be able to stop them both.

He’s weak against his sister.

“First, we must get a grasp of the situation...”

I can hear some suspicious conversation, but I ignore them.

“Um...” (Raphtalia)

“Just in case, let’s sleep in the same bed.” (Naofumi) “Y-yes!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia back suddenly straightens as she nods.

“I won’t let it go as Raphtalia-chan plans. But first, I think we should see how things play out, Atlas-chan.” (Sadina)

‘Can Sadina sense what’s going on through some invisible force as well?’ I think,

but then I notice the two of them at the window peeking inside.

I slide the curtains shut without saying a word.

“Fufufu, don’t think this is enough to stop our peeping~!” (Sadina)
T-they’re annoying as hell...

Ignoring Sadina’s words, I invite Raphtalia over to the bed.

“E-excuse me!” (Raphtalia)

It’s a response like the one I got from Imya when I first invited her into the bed.

Why is she so tense?

We slept together plenty of times before.

Ah, back then, she even wet the bed.

“Good, good.” (Naofumi)

I lie down flat and place my hand on Raphtalia’s tail. ^[14]

“Hii!? N-Naofumi-sama, why are you touching my tail?” (Raphtalia) “Hmm? I often touch Firo’s feathers, and Imya and Kiel’s fur, so I guess my hand naturally went to it.” (Naofumi)

Recently, I’ve been sleeping while touching one of them, so it’s become somewhat of a habit. Or perhaps a custom.

It’s like hugging a Dakimakura to sleep.

“You were doing things like that... You’ve changed quite a bit in the time I haven’t seen you.” (Raphtalia) “It’s not like anything really changed, you know.” (Naofumi)

I gently stroke Raphtalia’s tail.

“Ah... uu...” (Raphtalia)

The feeling is a mixture of all of the good parts of Firo’ feathers and Kiel’s fur.

I guess she’s a good breed.

It’s really fluffy.

I may make a habit out of this. The feel is top class.

“Hah... hah...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia’s breathing becomes strained. Perhaps it’s because she isn’t used to having her tail touched I pull the cover over myself and close my eyes.

“...”

What is this? I get a strange feeling similar to the one I get when Atlas crawls into the bed.

This is strange. Firo, the loinclothed dog, Imya and all the other Demi-Human slaves, I never got such a feeling with them. Is it impossible to sleep next to Raphtalia?

“Ah... uu...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia is shaking. It seems she can’t calm down either.

Every time I stroke her tail, her whole body convulses.

How much time has passed? I’m this sleepy, yet I can’t fall asleep. The feeling irritates me.

“N-Naofumi-sama...” (Raphtalia)

“Fumu.” (Naofumi)

I sit up.

“Raphtalia, I’m sorry. It seems I can’t sleep with you.” (Naofumi) “Eh!?”

(Raphtalia) ^[15]

Raphtalia’s face goes red for a moment as she lets out a confused voice.

“I don’t know why, but I can’t sleep.” (Naofumi)

“Fufufu, Naofumi-chan. Shall the two of us sleep with you, then?” (Sadina)

Sadina’s voice emanates from the other side of the window.

What sort of cause and effect is that?

And those guys are still here? Go to sleep already.

“I heard all about it, Naofumi-chan. The reason you won’t sleep next to Atlas-chan is because you don’t want Raphtalia-chan to misunderstand, right?”

(Sadina) “Well...” (Naofumi)

The larger truth of the matter is that I’ll wake up if something happens around me while I’m asleep.

But recently, I’ve been able to ignore it.

“Then, we just have to sleep with you with Raphtalia-chan’s permission. Now let us start this carnival of lust!” (Sadina) “What carnival!? Stop messing around!”

(Naofumi) “Naofumi-chan, the night has just begun~!” (Sadina) “Sadina-

oneesan, could you quiet down and go home!? Atlas-chan too!” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia opens the curtain and directs these words at the two.

Right. Drive them away.

The fact that she can put it clearly like that is Raphtalia’s strong point.

“What are you talking about, Raphtalia-chan? We are your allies, you know. You want to do fun things with Naofumi-chan, right?” (Sadina) “That’s right, Raphtalia-san. Let’s all sleep together with Naofumi-san.” (Atlas) “I’m not making any alliances here!” (Raphtalia) “That’s right. It’s not like she has to sleep in the same bed as me. If she just sleeps in the adjacent bed and keeps watch over you two, there are no problems.” (Naofumi)

I close the curtains Raphtalia opened.

“And so, Raphtalia, can you sleep in the next bed?” (Naofumi) “Hah... I understand...” (Raphtalia)

With an extremely regretful tone, Raphtalia sulks over to the next bed and lies down.

... Now then, I should sleep too.

I thought that as I close my eyes, but...

“Sadina-oneesan... I can tell that you’re in the room already. There’s no use in concealing your presence.” (Raphtalia)

Before I noticed it, Sadina had infiltrated the room and Raphtalia had scolded her.

It’s a pain to get up, so I pretend to sleep.

“I see. In order to pursue Naofumi-chan, I must eliminate the large obstacle known as Raphtalia-chan. Oneesan won’t lose.” (Sadina) “Reinforcements have arrived!” (Atlas)

“Fine... Then I’ll be your opponent! Naofumi-sama, just sleep over there without worry.” (Raphtalia)

The three left the room with a bang.

I hear the sound of clashing metal and thunder from outside.

“Why can Atlas-chan use Musou Kassei!?” (Raphtalia) “I learned from watching Rishia-san.” (Atlas)

“Just from watching?” (Raphtalia)

“Naofumi-sama also learned it.” (Atlas)

“For what purpose did I go on that journey!?” (Raphtalia) “I won’t lose!” (Sadina)

“Even so, the one with the most experience is me! Hengen Musou Sword Skill-!” (Raphtalia)

Well, I can leave it to Raphtalia without worry.

Even Atlas shouldn’t be able to defeat her.

“Master~! Let’s sleep together~.” (Firo)

Firo, who was supposed to be sleeping at Melty’s place, arrives.

Did she run here?

She came when I was half asleep, so I absentmindedly nod.

“Yeah, then in the one-in-a-million chance that Sadina and Atlas break through, you can be their opponent.” (Naofumi) “Okay. Kiel-kun and Imya-chan are with me too~.” (Firo) “Niichan, Raphtalia-chan, Sadina-nee-chan, and Atlas-chan are having an epic battle outside right now.” (Kiel) “Yes... The battle was getting intense, so everyone woke up to watch it.” (Imya) “Yeah, I thought it was getting loud. So that was the reason. Well, I’m going to sleep, so see ‘ya tomorrow.” (Naofumi) “Who do you think will win, Niichan?” (Kiel)

“Raphtalia.” (Naofumi)

“I see. Well, when I get bored of the fight, I’ll sleep with Niichan.” (Kiel) “Ah, yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

By the way, it seems the three of them fought until dawn. When I left the house in the morning, I found the three of them sitting back to back.

I thought Raphtalia would be able to take both of them out easily though.
But, I'm the one who went to sleep by myself, so I can't really say anything.
Raphtalia told me I could sleep without worry, so I had faith though...

"T-that's quite some skill you've got there!" (Raphtalia) "Amazing. If Sadina-san wasn't here, I would have lost instantly." (Atlas) "Raphtalia-chan's gotten strong~. But still, I won't lose." (Sadina) "It's already morning, people."
(Naofumi)

"Eh?" (All Three)

These people continued fighting without realizing it.

Just how militaristic are these people?

Even Raphtalia's become a battle maniac.

Though the fault lies with me for leaving these two to her.

But, it's no joke if Sadina and Atlas have teamed up.

I can't have Raphtalia battling all night. I have to do something.

Tiger Man

“And that’s how it is, Fohl. In order to make sure that neither Raphtalia nor Atlas sleeps with me, I’ve decided to sleep at your place.” (Naofumi) “Get out!” (Fohl)

The next night, I went to Fohl’s room.

By the way, Raphtalia is in the next room just in case. If Fohl acts up, or something bad happens, she’ll rush over.

This morning, Raphtalia said that Firo, the Loinclothed Dog, and Imya had, ‘gotten an unfair head start’, but I wonder what they were racing in.

“What are you talking about? Does the man who was dead drunk yesterday have the right to refuse?” (Naofumi) “Gu...” (Fohl)

Fohl gives a pained grunt.

“You’re able to prevent your sister from sleeping with me.” (Naofumi) “You haven’t slept with Atlas yet!?” (Fohl)

“Yeah.” (Naofumi)

I mean, this guy apparently learned Hengen Musou as well, and he was training with Raphtalia.

He’s strong. Or at least he should be.

Anyways, if he assists Raphtalia, the two-on-one would become two-on-two, so we should be able to win.

But he can't lay hands on Atlas, so I doubt he'll use his full strength.

When Ren gets back, I'll ask him as well. I bet he'd put up a better fight than this one.

"You bastard! Are you saying Atlas has no charm as a woman!?" (Fohl) "What the hell are you saying?" (Naofumi)

"I mean, isn't that so!? You had so much time, and Atlas was sleeping in the same room as you every night, right?" (Fohl) "That's right." (Naofumi)

"So you're telling me my cute sister has no womanly charm!?" (Fohl) "Like I care." (Naofumi)

I really don't.

Whenever I talk to Fohl, it turns out like this.

"Bastard! You're saying my Atlas isn't cute!?" (Fohl)

"I have no interest. And what do you mean by your Atlas...?" (Naofumi)
Ah, this is getting to be a pain.

When he learned I was sleeping with Atlas, he snapped. When I clarified that I wasn't sleeping with Atlas, he snapped.

"Don't worry about it. Just lie down already." (Naofumi)

I lie flat on the bed, and beckon Fohl over.

"Wha..." (Fohl)

Fohl's face gets paler and paler.

"Could it be... you..." (Fohl)

"What is it? Ah, I think you were able to beast transform, right? Transform

and come to the bed.” (Naofumi)

I don't know what Sadina's true form is, but for the Loinclothed Dog, it was her toy dog one.

Perhaps Fohl can become a Tiger cub or something.

“S-stop it! I don't have such preferences!” (Fohl)

“What's this about preferences?” (Naofumi)

Is beast transform considered to be in bad taste?

Then the Loinclothed Dog has bad preferences, I guess.

“Hah... Hah...”

From the ceiling, I hear strained breathing.

“I-intruder!” (Fohl)

Fohl releases an orb of magic from his fists.

A section of the ceiling smashes, and a human drops to the floor.

It was the Tailor.

“I had the feeling that a glorious situation would present itself, so I came to watch. Thank you for the splendid meal!” (Tailor)

She's energetically sketching something.

What's she doing? I have a bad feeling about this.

There's no doubt that she's misunderstanding something.

“For now, get out.” (Naofumi)

I grab the Tailor's collar, and toss her out of the house.

"And so, there will be no misunderstandings. Now transform and get in the bed." (Naofumi) "N-no!" (Fohl)

I sense the Tailor putting her ear to the door.

"Just be quick about it. I'm sleepy." (Naofumi)

I activate Fohl's slave seal, and issue an order.

"Gu... You bastard... uu... I-I got it already." (Fohl)

I guess he isn't able to withstand the slave seal like Atlas. Fohl changes shape.

He's a splendid white tiger.

He seems quite muscular, and I'm a little disappointed that he's not a cub.

This is strange, the dog definitely gave off a cute impression.

But this one seems powerful.

I wonder just how strong he is.

Right now, I get the impression that Atlas is the stronger one. She's already worked off her own debt without Fohl's help.

"Well, I guess that works too. Come to the bed already. If I have that fur around it'll be easier to sleep." (Naofumi) "Uu..." (Fohl)

With the face of a dead man, Fohl lies on the bed.

As I extend my hand, he immediately jumps back.

Well, I just wanted to touch him a bit.

“A-Atlas, for your sake, your brother is willing to give up his purity. Even if I become tainted, I definitely won’t lose!” (Fohl) “Shut up. Go to sleep.” (Naofumi)

It’s not like I’ve awakened to homosexuality.

But if Sadina and Atlas get that impression, and give up, then I guess that’s fine too.

If Fohl’s fine with it, then I... No, the idea is rejected.

What sort of sad situation would lead to me sleeping with a tiger? But it’s better than not being able to sleep with Atlas and Raphtalia.

When Firo and Kiel slept with me, Raphtalia seemed to get unhappy, so...

Then is the male Fohl fine? I asked, and she permitted it.

Though she had on quite a strange expression at the time.

Of course, I have my reasons for choosing Fohl.

There was something I was curious about.

“Right, during the brainwashing incident, you and Atlas were speaking with Trash about something, right? What were you talking about?” (Naofumi) “Why do I have to tell someone like you?” (Fohl)

“If he was plotting something, would you be able to figure it out? He’s the man that drove your entire clan into a corner, you know.” (Naofumi) “Uu...” (Fohl)

When they first met, I got some information from the Queen.

Without making any excuses, Fohl begins speaking.

“He tried to offer Atlas some food, so I tried to escape. He seemed to have aged a bit since when I met him with you. He had no energy.” (Fohl) “That seems

likely.” (Naofumi)

“What are you doing? I’m calling out to someone who greatly resembles Onii-sama. I’m not that old, and it doesn’t make me happy if you say I’m like the enemy of the Hakuko race. Hmph.” (Fohl) “Start from the beginning.” (Naofumi)

“... Understood. After that, the old man looked over me and Atlas, and started gazing far away. He said in a sad tone, ‘No matter what happens, you’ve got to protect your sister, okay? Otherwise, you’ll regret it for the rest of your life.’” (Fohl) “... I see.” (Naofumi)

That was within my expectations.

If the speaker wasn’t Trash, those would have been wise words.

“What is that man doing? Why is he trying to approach Atlas?” (Fohl) “That Trash had a sister that looked much like yours. She was kidnapped by the Hakuko, and is still missing.” (Naofumi) “Wha-” (Fohl)

“So perhaps you guys are the children of that sister, is what he’s thinking. Can you remember anything?” (Naofumi) “Mother was... definitely human. Though she couldn’t see, she was always very kind.” (Fohl) “What was her name?” (Naofumi)

“Alucia.” (Fohl)

A different person?

No, there’s the possibility that name is fake.

And I believe Trash’s sister’s name was Lucia. It’s only a letter extra.

“A little while after giving birth to Atlas, she got dragged into the war, and died... She entrusted Atlas to me.” (Fohl) “I see... So you knew you were half-human?” (Naofumi) “Yeah.” (Fohl)

“What about your father?” (Naofumi)

“Why do I have to give you so much of my personal information!?” (Fohl)

“That’s true. But if I don’t know, there’s nothing I can do. I heard the Hakuko race was gathering quite a bit of power around Silt Welt. Since you’re under me, the Hero of the Shield’s protection, some of them may get jealous.”

(Naofumi) “Uu... Understood. My father was... not someone who wished for fighting. He was a calm and kind person. Still, I get the feeling he was quite strong. In order to allow his subordinates, me and Atlas escape, he stayed on the frontlines ‘til the end, decimating his enemies.” (Fohl) “So you lost both of your parents in that war.” (Naofumi) “Yeah... but that was quite a while ago.” (Fohl)

Fohl’s age shouldn’t be that high.

He looked to be around 12 when I met him, so I guess if he says a long time ago, it would be 6 years ago at max.

I don’t know the details, but it seems this world is filled with wars.

Due to Trash’s leadership, it seems Melromark was able to avoid quite a few of them, apparently.

Using Witch’s age as a basis, does that mean they’ve been at peace for around 20 years?

I don’t know what sort of position his grandfather took in Silt Welt, but he was supposed to be famous.

His troublesome legacy surrounds me.

“I have to protect Atlas, even if it kills me.” (Fohl) “And that sister of yours seems to be yearning for a scoundrel like me. Do a better job at it.” (Naofumi) “... You really have no interest in Atlas?” (Fohl)

“No matter how I answer, you’ll get mad. What answer do you want?” (Naofumi) “Uu...” (Fohl)

“Is what I’d like to say, but I have no interest in love. Atlas is... let’s see... If I had to choose, I’d say she’s like a child to me.” (Naofumi)

Like I think of Raphtalia as a daughter, Atlas is like a young child who forcefully tries to approach me.

I'm getting the same feeling from the village's slaves as well, as of late.

But at the moment, I don't seem to have any emotions like love in me.

"Aren't you in a similar position? Do your best to protect her, and get strong enough as not to lose to her. Though since I'm raising you to combat the wave, I probably shouldn't be saying such things." (Naofumi) "I'll do it, even without your input! I'll beat down anything that comes in my way, so Atlas won't have to fight." (Fohl) "Yes, yes. Then, as you wish, I'll think of a way to make it so Atlas doesn't have to fight in the wave." (Naofumi) "Hah?" (Fohl)

Fohl seems taken aback.

"What's so strange? I won't take anyone who doesn't want to fight onto the front lines, and it's not like I'll ignore people who say they don't wish for battle. You don't want Atlas to be thrown into dangerous battles, right?" (Naofumi) Though I'm the one putting Atlas through a lot of danger in the first place. Even so, if Fohl wishes for it, I could even prevent her from participating.

"Are you sure that's okay?" (Fohl)

"Only if you work hard enough to cover her share as well." (Naofumi) "..."
(Fohl)

Fohl answers with silence.

"Well, the individual may wish to fight, so it's your job to stop her then. I won't pressure her decision." (Naofumi) "Got it." (Fohl)

He gives a strangely honest reply.

"I think I kinda understand the reason Atlas has... taken a liking to you. But I still hate you." (Fohl) "Can it. Anyways, you need to try to stop your sister's

recklessness now.” (Naofumi) “...” (Fohl)

“Then I’m sleeping. If they try to come in, make sure to drive them out.”
(Naofumi)

And like the, the night quietly descended.

As expected, Atlas and Sadina tried to intrude, and Raphtalia and Fohl fought them... apparently.

This time they were able to repel them quite quickly.

When I woke up, Raphtalia was sleeping while holding my hand.

After apprehending Atlas, Fohl put her to sleep in her own room.

His sleeping face was that of a man who overcame the greatest obstacle of his life.

“Tomorrow, I’ll be the one on top!” (Sadina)

“Niichan will prevent Atlas from walking the wrong path!” (Fohl)
And the next day, they fought again.

Temporary Truce

“Just give it up already, you people.” (Naofumi)

“Right, Sadina-neesan, cease this nonsense!” (Raphtalia) “Don’t be so stiff, Naofumi-chan.” (Sadina)

It’s been three days. Through Raphtalia and Fohl’s actions, we have been able to put a complete stop to Atlas and Sadina’s night operations.

Raphtalia’s high level worked in our favor.

Then, while we were casually eating lunch, Sadina happily approached us.

“So, Naofumi-chan. Tonight, won’t you come to my place to drink with Raphtalia-chan?” (Sadina) “No.” (Naofumi)

She’s probably trying to get Raphtalia drunk to get her out of the competition.

“Don’t worry. I won’t bring Atlas-chan with me this time. I just want to talk with Naofumi-chan.” (Sadina) “And you’re expecting me to believe that?” (Naofumi) “Then I’ll work with Fohl-chan to make sure Atlas-chan doesn’t come, so join me. This Oneesan keeps her promises.” (Sadina) “I remember Oneesan breaking quite an important one.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia smiles as she begins releasing bloodlust.

She’s quite mad.

Yep, Raphtalia was a child who showed her anger like this.

“But Raphtalia-chan, until you returned, I made sure to keep Atlas-chan out of

Naofumi-chan's bed. I never heard anything about keeping the other children out." (Sadina) "Uu..." (Raphtalia)

She's getting into the technical details...

And I think I've heard sophism like this before.

Ah, right, it came from me.

I've begun to understand Sadina's personality.

She acts lazily to prevent others from getting a hold of her, but underneath that, she easily obsesses over things.

To summarize, she's someone you can't let your guard down around.

She's really capable, and her fighting power is quite something...

She denied the Granny's training, saying it was unnecessary.

Though that very Granny said that she was one who could master fighting by instinct, so there was no real need.

I've also heard from Raphtalia.

Apparently, she uses lightning magic on herself to forcefully increase her own reaction speed to levels around Musou Kassei.

She can cast self-buffing magic, and has plenty of ways to raise her own parameters.

What's more, she can use echolocation to read movements, so illusion magic isn't very effective on her.

Just how skillful is she?

But if I think about it, she's supposed to be of a race stronger than the Hakuko when in the water.

That seems right on the mark. Her appearance definitely fits an aquatic Demi-Human.

“And Atlas-chan is a little different from the other children in that aspect.”
(Sadina) “Is that so? Well, I just let the others into my bed as an Atlas countermeasure, you know.” (Naofumi)

When I’m alone, I’m paranoid of the moment Atlas enters.

Especially on the days when Sadina is away.

“It’s because Naofumi-chan is a dense.” (Sadina)

“Is this about love? I don’t have any interest, and Raphtalia is strict on public morals. I just don’t want to cause an unneeded conflict.” (Naofumi)

I’m no harem-making protagonist.

If a man didn’t realize anything from Atlas’s persistent approach, they wouldn’t just be dense. They would have transcended density.

“Ara?” (Sadina)

“And I’ve been saying this for a while, but once the wave has been dealt with, and the world is at peace, I plan on returning to my own world. I have no intentions of making a family here.” (Naofumi) “Hah...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia lets out a deep sigh.

Whenever this topic comes up, she always does that.

But these guys only ever talk about things like this, so perhaps Raphtalia is just tired of it.

“Then, Naofumi-chan.” (Sadina)

“What?” (Naofumi)

“After the world is at peace, and you’re ready to return, make sure to leave after you give love to all the ones who want to hold you close.” (Sadina) “Listen to what I’m saying!” (Naofumi)

What is this whale woman saying!?

“Ara? This onee-san doesn’t recall saying anything strange. Even when Naofumi-chan isn’t here, I think there are definitely some who wish to carry your child. Like me.” (Sadina) “Like hell there are!” (Naofumi)

I think the Queen said something similar.

Something about marrying Melty.

If Melty married me, the fact that they had a hero in the family may increase the country’s authority, but I won’t let it end that way.

That strong-willed Melty probably won’t want relations with anyone besides Firo.

And wait, to obtain status from having a hero’s child. How calculating are these people?

“Ah, Naofumi-chan. I’m not sure what you’re misunderstanding, but Oneesan doesn’t want to become famous, or have the child of a hero or anything.” (Sadina) “I wonder.” (Naofumi)

“Oneesan... wants mutual love with the strong drinker, Naofumi-chan. Oh my, what am I saying?” (Sadina)

Annoying!

Raphtalia’s bloodlust becomes stronger.

Their nightly battles may come to a conclusion here.

Should I assist in silencing this whale?

“Anyways, Oneesan wants time to talk to you tonight.” (Sadina) “Here is no good?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah, it’s a secret matter. Here is a bit...” (Sadina)

Sadina looks towards an area that seems devoid of people.

... Is there something there?

Is that where Shadow's hiding?

I don't see Shadow often, but she seems to be monitoring me.

She has the ability to disguise herself as the slaves in the village, apparently.

I don't really care, because she helps out too, though.

"So come to the secret base with Raphtalia-chan tonight. If you do so, I promise I won't come to your room with Atlas-chan again." (Sadina) "Ah, yes, yes."
(Naofumi)

She's quite a stubborn person. Though she'll probably fold at some point.

"It's a promise." (Sadina)

Sadina says this as she departs.

"I wonder what that was about." (Raphtalia)

"Who knows?" (Naofumi)

That drunkard's objective is as of yet unknown.

Starting with my village, Firo and the people in the other village, she seems to garner great respect.

But I can only see her as a loose person who likes to play around.

Though when the time comes, she does perform well.

Apparently, she does a lot of other things as well, but I haven't seen anything.

I've seen her speaking with Melty as well. The princess wouldn't tell me what it was about.

Even when Firo went into question mode, she continued to reply, 'It's a secret.'

Forcing it out of her wasn't necessary, so I ignored it.

But where is this charisma coming from?

Anyways, that night.

Sadina tied Atlas up, and brought her to my place.

"Now, Fohl-chan. Atlas-chan. I'm going to be heading out with Naofumi-chan."
(Sadina)

She... actually did it.

"Sadina-san. Is this betrayal? Is that what it is?" (Atlas)

Atlas is bewildered, as she presses Sadina.

Was she suddenly assaulted without question?

"Tonight's a temporary truce. Just calm down, and leave it to Oneesan. Atlas-chan should just sleep with Fohl-chan today." (Sadina) "Ah... Naofumi-sama, please save me!" (Atlas)

"Sadina, don't betray those who believe in you as a joke. That's the thing I hate most in this world. If you go too far, I'm kicking you out." (Naofumi)
It's probably a simple joke, but whenever I see someone deceive someone else, I get a strong sense of discomfort.

But Witch's already gone.

... I have to forget her.

"Yes, yes~. Then I'll be deceiving Naofumi-chan only once more after this~"
(Sadina) "Declaring it beforehand doesn't solve the problem." (Naofumi)

As we were talking, Fohl picked Atlas up in a princess cradle. He has on quite a happy expression.

“Now, Atlas. Today, you’re going to be sleeping peacefully. It’s too early for you to be doing things like this.” (Fohl)

His face and build are naturally good, so he looks like some sort of prince.

No, by blood, he is a prince.

Not that that matters.

Anyways, he carries the young body of Atlas, which refuses to grow any older. The scene gives an elegant feeling like one found in Shoujo Manga.

“Uu... Onii-sama, I won’t forget this disgrace. I’ll hold a grudge.” (Atlas)

Atlas complains as Fohl carries her off.

Wouldn’t it be best to keep her tied up like that forever?

Am I scum for thinking that? Yep, I am.

I evaluate myself, as I turn towards Sadina.

“Will you get on Oneesan, and swim there? Or will you ask Gaelion-chan to take you?” (Sadina) “I guess Gaelion would be fine.” (Naofumi)

If anything happens, I can use Gaelion to buy time for my escape.

Like that, we rode Gaelion to Sadina’s secret Island Base.

Alcohol

“There are quite a few more things here than when I last visited.” (Naofumi)
Like a pirate’s treasure house, Sadina’s secret base is littered with stuff.

Gold and Silver... isn’t in high quantity, but there seems to be quite a few magical tools.

It’s probably best to appraise them later.

Sadina brings back items that seem to be worth money to me, but it looks like these miscellaneous items remain.

The amount of money her salvaging has brought me is enough to cover the price I bought her for several times over.

I guess I have to raise my evaluation of her.

“Now then, today, we’re all drinking until we drop!” (Sadina)

Sadina declares, as she brings out a wine barrel.

“Fumu... Am I included?” (Gaelion)

Gaelion asserts his presence in response to the alcohol.

I’d tell him to go home, but Raptalia also seems to want to drink as well, which sounds dangerous.

It’s better to have more drinkers.

“All green~ here, this is for Gaelion-chan.” (Sadina)

Sadina produces a two liter bottle, and hands it to Gaelion.^[16]

Um, is that Japanese Sake?

Perhaps the previous heroes left behind the method to make it.

“Then without further ado.” (Gaelion)

Gaelion begins drinking straight out of the bottle.

“Oh... This is quite a choice sake, is it not?” (Gaelion)

“Yeah~ It’s a good enough, strong sake to please even the dragon from my home town.” (Sadina) “I see...” (Gaelion)

Gaelion’s mood improves as he continues to drink.

And where exactly did you get such a thing...

“Now the two of you don’t need to show any restraint. Drink. For Naofumi-chan, I even have some Lucor Fruit.” (Sadina)

Sadina begins offering us alcohol.

It’s not as if Lucor Fruit is my favorite fruit or anything.

I guess this is fine.

“And? What did you want to talk about? You didn’t want Shadow or the others to hear, right?” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-chan’s too hasty~ Can you wait until I get a little tipsy? Raphtalia-chan, drink too. Raphtalia’s parents were strong drinkers, so she must be strong too.” (Sadina) “I-I am...” (Raphtalia)

Sadina pours some sake into Raphtalia’s cup, and she timidly sips it.

I think she did drink some alcohol at Cal Mira, though.

I get the feeling that she was quite strong.

“How does Raphtalia-chan feel about Naofumi-chan? Onee-san wants to know.”
(Sadina) “I have great respect for him.” (Raphtalia)

Is that so?

She always seems fed up with my evil acts, so I thought she had lost her respect for me.

It may seem strange coming from me, but many of my actions are quite cruel.

“Are those your true feelings?” (Sadina)

“Yes.” (Raphtalia)

“You don’t wanna get hitched or something?” (Sadina)

“T-that is...” (Raphtalia)

Eh? Raphtalia wants to marry me? She recognizes me as a member of the opposite sex?

Nonono, she’s just trying hard to make sure the wave doesn’t leave behind any unfortunate children like her, isn’t she?

If she said she liked someone like me, I don’t think I would hate it, but I think that there’s something called priorities.

I remember what Sadina said during the day.

When the world is at peace, Raphtalia may... start thinking about things like that.

If we do well, her social status will be high by the time I leave.

“I am... that is... um...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia’s eyes spin as her face goes red.

Her real age is still quite low. I don't think she should really be drinking, and I don't think she's at an age where she should be concerned with love yet.

She only sees me as a replacement for her deceased parents, and she must be confused at being asked how she thinks of me as a member of the opposite sex.

Yes, it's still too early for Raphtalia to love.

It's like that.

When Raphtalia was troubled at misunderstanding regarding the situation when she found others sleeping in my bed, it was the unpleasant feeling and denial one gets when their parents remarry, and a child has to see their step-parent. Something like that.

Even though nothing's wrong, you still end up feeling nervous and uneasy.

Even I don't want Raphtalia to be feeling like that.

Ah, but Firo, the Loinclothed Dog, and Imya are all children as well, so perhaps it's fine?

“Nyaohyumi-sama isth my...” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia's articulation is getting messed up.

“Ara? Raphtalia-chan?” (Sadina)

“Isth my...” (Raphtalia)

With a bang, Raphtalia falls flat onto the table.

“Yes... I'm also... a bit...” (Gaelion)

Gaelion sways side to side and falls on his back, with his legs in the air.

“Well well well. As expected of 『Tanuki』, the wine said to be strong enough to bring down dragons... I guess it was too strong for Raphtalia-chan and Gaelion-chan.” (Sadina) “You... planned this, didn’t you?” (Naofumi)

This is bad. It seems Sadina prepared some sake potent enough to take down both Raphtalia and Gaelion.

At this rate, this whale woman may assault me.

Worse comes to worst, I can use Shield Prison, and escape with Portal.

“And so, let’s continue drinking.” (Sadina)

“Don’t want to. I’m going home.” (Naofumi)

“Now, now, this Onee-san has something to talk about, and if you go back, what are you going to do about Raphtalia-chan and Gaelion-chan?” (Sadina) “I’ll take them with my Portal.” (Naofumi)

“Ah, that’s right~. But could you leave it ‘til after you chat with this Onee-san?” (Sadina) “What talk? It better not be about a carnival of lust.” (Naofumi)

“Wrong, wrong, wrong. Tonight’s really a truce.” (Sadina)

With a relaxing atmosphere, Sadina continues drinking as she always does.

But, in the next moment...

“Naofumi-chan, I told you before, right? That if you wanted to want to get into a further relationship with Raphtalia-chan, you have to be prepared.” (Sadina)

Blowing away the laid back mood, Sadina changes into her human form, and stares seriously into my eyes.

“Yeah, you said that. You knocked out both Raphtalia and Gaelion, and that’s all you have to say?” (Naofumi)

To Sadina, who is the child known as Raphtalia?

I don’t really know, and it seems to be something she doesn’t want to dig up.

Whenever I inquire about it, she shifts the conversation.

It was quite a while ago.

When I was still constructing the village, one of the forces that came to my aid was a group of Raccoon Demi-Humans... The Raccoon race rushed to help me.

“If the Hero of the Shield’s right arm is a Raccoon, then you’re the same family to us. Please let us assist in the revival of this village.”

Sometimes, people like these would gather in my village under the pretense of offering aid.

At that time, I looked over the Raccoon Demi-Humans, and I was surprised at the sharp contrast they had with Raphtalia.

Should I say they were well-built... To say it bluntly, a large majority of them reeked of the sticks.

I can’t say they were particularly handsome, and they smelled of earth.

I also felt that they weren’t particularly motivated.

But as they were of the Raccoon Race, I couldn’t drive them out so easily. After they saw Raphtalia, they were quite insistent on pressing her for her lineage.

Eventually, I told them that I didn’t make her my subordinate because of her race, but because of her ability. That they had no relation to Raphtalia. I tried to get them to leave.

At that point, Sadina let out the bloodlust she usually concealed, and pointed her harpoon at them.

“I apologize, but the child serving as Naofumi-chan’s right hand is so separated from you people that she might as well be a complete stranger. Using blood relations to close in on this village... could you stop?” (Sadina)

Though her words were polite, upon sensing her bloodlust, the Raccoon race’s legs gave out.

There, I added on another thing to bring the matter to a close.

“Well, if you want to help no matter what, then please go work towards reconstruction in the other village. I’ll decide whether or not you’re competent based on your work.” (Naofumi)

And after that, the Raccoon group left for the village, but... I didn’t hear from them later.

Ah, I remember.

Three days after they were assigned work, most of them had quietly fled, I believe.

Though a few of them are still working diligently there, even now.

But the ones who stayed didn’t seem particularly concerned with me.

“Hey, what’s your relationship with Raphtalia, exactly?” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-chan, to me, Raphtalia-chan and her parents were my reason to live.” (Sadina)

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](#).

Truth in the Darkness

“Reason to live, you say.....” (Naofumi)

What kind of relationship do you two have? It’s getting harder to understand.

Chivalry or Bushido, it seems such a culture existed long ago in my world, but is it close to that?

“During the first wave, I was unable to protect Raphtalia-chan’s parents. No, when the wave occurred, I was far away and did not rush over. Because it was too peaceful back then, I had let my guard down.” (Sadina)

Sadina drinks her alcohol while muttering something that sounds like regret.

This appearance is... even if I’m wrong, it doesn’t seem like a prank.

Putting the helplessly drunk Raphtalia to sleep in a plain bed, Sadina continues talking.

If it’s a serious talk, then there’s no reason to handle it cruelly.

I’ll hear you out sincerely.

“...But when I finally managed to return a few days later, there was no one left in the village.” (Sadina)

Sadina continues talking.

“I looked for her desperately, hoping she had surely survived. However, I was not able to approach the dark side of this country as a Beastman. That’s why I became a battle slave in Zeltbur, which specializes in slaves, and began looking. That place has many connections, so I thought I would manage if I accumulated

some money.” (Sadina) “You took quite a detour.” (Naofumi)

In reality, Raphtalia was sold ridiculously cheaply.

Although Sadina was looking frantically, Raphtalia was in the unlikeliest of places.

“It took too much time trying to find a slave named Raphtalia with the appearance of the Raccoon species. I did find some children from the village though.” (Sadina) “Come to think of it, you were protecting slaves from the village.” (Naofumi) “Yes. And I was surprised when I found Raphtalia-chan. To think she was with Naofumi-chan, the Hero of the Shield...” (Sadina) “It’s full of drama, Raphtalia’s life that is.” (Naofumi)

If possible, I hope that Raphtalia can live in peace after the world has become peaceful.

Precisely because this child believed in me, I want her to be happy.

These feelings have not changed even now.

Even though I think the world ought to be ruined, I will endeavor to make the world peaceful for Raphtalia’s sake. ^[17]

“You say the appearance of the Raccoon species, but isn’t Raphtalia different?” (Naofumi) “Just like I may be mistaken for the Ruka species, she is similar to the Raccoon species but is still a different kind.” (Sadina) ^[18]

“Hmm..... well, Raphtalia is Raphtalia no matter what race she belongs to.” (Naofumi)

I see.

That explains why Raphtalia is a beautiful girl, despite supposedly being of the Raccoon species whose appearance is not valued very much.

“...That’s one of Naofumi-chan’s good points. Hey Naofumi-chan... if you have

no intention of taking care of Raphtalia-chan until the end... why not make do with this Onee-san?" (Sadina) "What?" (Naofumi)

"I hope you have the resolution to be in a relationship with Raphtalia-chan. If you don't, please use Onee-san to let it out if you can no longer endure it."
(Sadina) [19]

"Do you think I am the Devil or something?" (Naofumi)

Oh, I am aware of that sort of thing. But even if I die, I don't want any relations with women.

If I consider what you are saying... I think you're talking about a relationship with Raphtalia.

Of course, I trust Raphtalia.

If it's a question of like or dislike, I would say I like her.

This I can affirm. To the extent of being able to assent if I was told to say it to the person in question.

But when it is the feeling of love that is called into question... I don't know.

For me Raphtalia is a reliable partner, she is the friend with whom I shared my joys and sorrows, and at the same time I think of her as something like a daughter.

Meaning I think of myself as a foster father, like what Motoyasu has been saying.

Raphtalia is prioritizing her mission until the world becomes peaceful, and she has parental affection for me rather than having an interest in romance.

Hey, I'll lose if I get caught up in Sadina's pace.

"What is Raphtalia's race? I would like to ask for the time being." (Naofumi)

"Will you take responsibility since you want to know? Will you look after Raphtalia until the end?" (Sadina)

When Sadina said until the end, she probably didn't mean until the wave is

over, but until the day Raphtalia dies.

...I think that I can't take responsibility in that sense.

When this world has become peaceful, I intend to return to my original world.

"I understand. Then I won't ask." (Naofumi)

"Is that so... That's disappointing~" (Sadina)

Sadina's numerous acts of interference after Raphtalia came back is probably done out of fear that I will lay a hand on Raphtalia, and she's learning about my personality as well as making fun of me.

Sadina's repeated attack of annoying stories and harassment is probably so I don't do anything to Raphtalia.

This person usually plays around, but somehow she has developed the technique of calmly observing the behavior of people and guiding them.

I've overlooked it because there's no mischief that has been done to me, but I wouldn't want to be her enemy.

She said this in a playful tone, but her smile doesn't reach her eyes.

"You had a reason to say all this, right? Tell me about it a little, otherwise I won't be able to protect her." (Naofumi) "Oh, you've got a point. Then, just a little bit." (Sadina)

Sadina begins talking while lightly stroking Raphtalia's hair.

"You might not know, but Raphtalia-chan's father was of a noble lineage, and I was the priestess who governed that lineage." (Sadina) "Oh... Silt Welt or Shirudo Furiden?" (Naofumi)

"It was on the outskirts, but I can't give you a specific location. Because even this is big service." (Sadina)

Was it not a Demi-human country?

And what position did Sadina have?

She did say she was a priestess just now...

“To be honest Raphtalia’s father didn’t want to succeed his House, so he eloped with Raphtalia’s mother. I wonder if he knew that I agreed with his thinking and escaped here?” (Sadina) “Did you have your level reset then?” (Naofumi)

An image of the punishment for rebelling against the law comes to mind.

“Yes, various things were lost, but there was no dissatisfaction because I had gained a lot of things. I was essentially banished.” (Sadina) “Did you get the divine protection of a water dragon by working as a priestess? And compared to the lineage of Raphtalia’s father, who was superior?” (Naofumi) “Raphtalia-chan’s father was the most admirable in the area.” (Sadina) “More so than the Four Saint Heroes?” (Naofumi)

“There is no folklore of the Heroes, but they have been described by visitors.” (Sadina)

What kind of area is it?

It’s lacking in credibility and is becoming dubious.

But I feel like I have understood what kind of family Raphtalia came from.

In a certain country she would be worshipped as a descendent, like a child of God.

Let us deduce from the variety of material that has been provided until now.

The atmosphere and the name of the knockdown technique Raphtalia invented by herself, the appearance of Sadina’s human form ...

She’s a Japanese beauty. Sadina in her human form, that is.

And she habitually uses a loincloth.

So with ‘Japanese Style’ as a keyword, the eastern place that the Old Man

from the weapon shop was talking about before comes to mind.

“The country where Raphtalia father was born... was it in seclusion?” (Naofumi)
[20]

“Wow, Naofumi-chan is amazing. It is so. It’s been that way since the past. There are many of such countries besides our country, but it is a particularly exclusive area among those countries.” (Sadina)
When I look and think about it, it’s such a rotten world.

I have heard that there were also cases where some heroes were summoned in a peaceful time without wars.

It’s not strange for those guys to escape from the countries that summoned them, and use their knowledge of the modern world to make a hidden village-like country. [21]

That’s why it isn’t weird to have a Japanese country.

Or rather, it’s weirder for civilization to be stuck in the middle ages despite heroes regularly being summoned from different worlds, especially if you include the super element of magic.

...Perhaps there is a reason for that, but it doesn’t really matter now.

“Are you worried about that country?” (Naofumi)

The country is secluded in the east.

There is a country which looks like Japan, and Raphtalia has relatives with noble lineage there.

Does she feel like a pursuer will come to retrieve Raphtalia if it gets exposed?

“You’re only half-correct, but that’s alright. I’ve been worried about Raphtalia’s own happiness.” (Sadina) “Uhh...” (Raphtalia)

Sadina puts a cloth soaked in cold water on Raphtalia's forehead when she hears her groan.

"She will be waking up soon. Is there anything else you want to ask?" (Sadina)

"Why don't you speak to Raphtalia about this?" (Naofumi)

"It's the directive of Raphtalia-chan's father." (Sadina)

Pardon me for being involved with Raphtalia's family affairs like this though.

Let's deal with this after the world is at peace.

But then the Church of the Three Heroes and the nobles are also like that.

"Is it alright?" (Naofumi)

"I think so. They won't come unless you know too much." (Sadina) "...About their domestic affairs?" (Naofumi)

Sadina nods silently.

Ah, so it comes to that, as I expected.

So Raphtalia comes from a troublesome lineage.

To me, an ordinary beauty of the Raccoon species would have been good.

I see, so Sadina wants me to continue keeping it that way.

Let's assume I got involved with Raphtalia and made a child with her.

Then Raphtalia, pregnant with a child by me who is considered a God by some countries, might get targeted.

Sadina is concerned about the possibility and is taking precaution.

"If you really want a child with Raphtalia no matter what, do it after you stop worrying about the whole country being destroyed. It's a promise with Oneesan. The current Naofumi-chan is capable of doing that." (Sadina) ^[22]

“Aren’t you being too paranoid?” (Naofumi)

She’s thinking too much about understanding the big picture.

Of course it’s better to be a bit cautious.

“That may be true, but you must not underestimate a priestess or a user of unique abilities. If someone like me is idling about, they may be aiming for Raphtalia’s life.” (Sadina) “I see.” (Naofumi)

A country full of people with abilities like Sadina..... I would like to ask them to help save the world.

Since Raphtalia is extremely strong, she won’t be killed easily.

But even so, I won’t do something so irresponsible.

“I wonder if Naofumi-chan has arrived at an actual decision. Onee-san doesn’t want you to do things that would make a girl cry. Though it’s fine because Onee-san is not a girl but an adult woman.” (Sadina) “Various reasons are being piled up now.” (Naofumi)

“Nuu, Onee-san is troubled.” (Sadina) [\[23\]](#)

There was also the problem of Raphtalia’s parentage of course, but Sadina wanted to ask about my own feelings.

That much was conveyed.

“Uhh..... Naofumi-sama?” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia, who has recovered consciousness, gets up.

“Are you okay?” (Naofumi)

“Ah, yes. I feel fine, strangely.” (Raphtalia)

“That’s good.” (Sadina)

“Did anything happen while I was passed out?” (Raphtalia)

“...Not really.” (Sadina)

Sadina probably doesn’t want to tell her the truth.

I also pretend I didn’t hear anything because I don’t want to cause unnecessary trouble.

“That’s right. I just said that Raphtalia is like a daughter to me.” (Naofumi)

“Right!?” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia, who raised her voice in surprise, tentatively nodded in agreement.

‘If I have come to like Raphtalia, then show my resolution’..... it’s a troublesome topic.

I won’t permanently reside in this world.

I think so at least.

“I was told by Sadina, with her noninterference policy, to protect Raphtalia as a parent.” (Naofumi)

I say sarcastically and in an ostentatious way.

Because despite wanting to protect you, I neglected you while you were out training.

“Isn’t that called ‘If you love your children, send them out into the world’, Naofumi-chan?” (Sadina) ^[24]

Sadina murmurs absent mindlessly.

“Naofumi-chan may not realize, but someone who becomes the slave of a Hero has an unnaturally good experience rate, and there’s also the growth of the status. To the extent that half-hearted opponents are no match for us.” (Sadina)
“How good is it?” (Naofumi)

“In my experience, it should have taken several years to reach the same level. Please keep that in mind.” (Sadina)

I see, becoming a slave to a Hero can give you good experience gain.

That reminds me, Fohl also said something similar.

Moreover, there’s the influence of growth correction.

“Then, getting a good level is possibly due to Naofumi-sama’s influence?”
(Raphtalia) “That’s right. Onee-san has done many level resets and guarantees it.” (Sadina) “Now that you mentioned it, Teacher also said something similar. About Leveling quickly.” (Raphtalia)

Somehow it seems that the Hero correction thing also has some influence on companions.

I have felt it a little bit though.

“That’s why Onee-san has also become very strong.” (Sadina)

“You couldn’t possibly have been going easy on me as an opponent?”
(Raphtalia) “I couldn’t have done something like going easy on you. Raphtalia-chan has become very strong. Onee-san would have been defeated.” (Sadina)
We finished chatting like this and returned to our respective homes to sleep.

By the way, Gaelion enjoyed drinking the liquor he got from Sadina.

The Pig King

The next day.

Witch was successfully transported, and Motoyasu returned by portal. I was made to watch the Guro movie of Witch being violated by Faubley's Pig King.

Some of the king's soldiers are here as well.

Apparently, they're here to confirm that I watched the video.

Even I didn't want to watch it alone. I brought Ren, Motoyasu, and Itsuki along to do a private screening of it.

The soldiers cautioned me that it wasn't a pretty recording.

Well, Raphtalia and Rishia are watching as well.

Female Knight... would be dangerous to show it to, so I drove her away.

"Hero of the Shield-san, are you watching~?"

Uwah... It's a fat, wrinkly, pig-like fatty.

I think he resembles something.

Ah, he looks like that monster that appeared in that famous movie about wars in space.

How old is he? He's definitely older than Trash, but his terrible looks take away any age-distinguishing features.

It's like he's an ageless demon.

"Noooooooooo!" (Witch)

Witch screams out.

“You’re being loud. Like this, I can’t send a message to Hero of the Shield-san.”

He violently grabs her by the hair, and swings the naked Witch around.

“Ugu... Noooooo!” (Witch)

It seems that at this point, Witch can do nothing but scream.

For some reason, it puts my heart at ease.

“I told you to shut up.”

With his chubby hands, he grabs Witch’s neck. His motions seem highly practiced.

Oy, that’s the movements used to break a chicken’s neck.

“Ah... ku...”

Witch resists with her life on the line, but to no avail. Eventually, bubbles start coming out of her mouth, and she faints.

After that, the Pig King enthusiastically introduced himself, and awoke Witch with slaps to the face. The Guro scenes followed.

It was a mix of a health video featuring the copulation of pigs, and an overly sadistic snuff film.

If you made something like this in my old world, it would be a matter left to the police.

I was right to bar the others from viewing it.

Melty may have been fine, but Kiel and Taniko would be shaking in their boots.

Regardless, this would cause quite a few traumas, so I probably won't watch it if he sends another.

“Uu...” (Ren)

Within three minutes, Ren was covering his mouth and breathing deeply.

He and Raphtalia left the room together.

Though I feel it's revolting as well.

How about Motoyasu, Itsuki, and Rishia?

“Fu-fufufun-” (Motoyasu) [\[25\]](#)

Motoyasu is... spreading out a sheet of paper, and sketching.

When I peek over to see what he's drawing, I'm not surprised to find that it is Firo.

To be able to draw while witnessing this footage, I'm amazed. I honestly want to admire him.

No wait, he's not even watching.

When I'm feeling this unpleasant, he's humming and singing...

“Don't get distracted. Just watch.” (Naofumi)

“What's so fun about watching pigs mate? And I've already seen the scene happen, Father-in-Law.” (Motoyasu) “So you can remain cool while watching this?” (Naofumi) “It's not really different from watching monsters get killed. Hahaha.” (Motoyasu)

Yes. I feel madness from Motoyasu.

His three followers are watching the film while drooling.

“That pig. It has a lot of fat on it. Doesn’t it look tasty?” (Kuu) “But doesn’t it look a little tough?” (Marin)

“If you let it rot for a while, it’ll become softer and tastier. Leave the preparations to me.” (Midori)

They truly are beasts.

But I guess this is how Filo Rials are.

Ah, I found this out later, but Midori was of a subspecies that could control poison and decay.

But for them to watch this footage and stay calm, they really are monsters.

By the way, when I showed it to Firo the next day, she became sick.

Does it have to do with individual personality?

Ah, but at the start, she did say, ‘That pig looks tasty.’

The Pig King can’t even be classified as human at this point in time.

Now Itsuki and Rishia are...

Rishia’s already fainted.

Itsuki has a calm expression... No, he has no expression as he silently watches it.

“Itsuki, what do you think?” (Naofumi)

“I don’t understand what’s fun about it.” (Itsuki)

“What a coincidence. I’m of the same opinion.” (Naofumi)

I’m already regretting ordering this video to be taken.

No, I wanted it as evidence, but I never thought I would have to watch it to the end.

Can I not fast forward?

“To make sure you’re actually watching, we’ll be taking a video.” (Soldier)

The soldier holds up a crystal in my direction.

“I’ll at least pretend to watch it.” (Naofumi)

“Yes... Um... I’m truly sorry for the trouble, Hero-sama.” (Soldier)

This soldier’s perceptiveness is a life saver.

To avoid any complaints, I have to continue watching the video to the end.

I absentmindedly stare at the screen, while I use status magic to check my slaves’ statuses, waiting for the end.

“Then I’ll be coming to deliver another one in the near future. The King was exceedingly happy to hear that the Hero of the Shield requested such a video, so he will continue sending them.” (Soldier) “... Could you reproduce and edit the footage you took right now to make it seem like I watched them? If need be, I can do some acting to increase the variety of reaction footage.” (Naofumi)

“Yes, of course we can do that.” (Soldier)

The soldier said as such, and when he brought the next video, we opted not to watch it.

Our hearts were as one.

If I had to see these videos again and again, I would go crazy.

At the end of the video, Witch was all beaten up, and she was put to sleep by strangling again. But only after she had lost an arm.

Her facial expression must have been appealing, because the Pig King gave a face of ecstasy.

No, I’ve played Guro Galge and Rape Galge before.

But this is too much.

With something like this, even simply owning it would be grounds for arrest.

And in the end, Witch was easily killed off. But as the Pig King was under the impression that I was still deriving enjoyment from his videos, he thought that I would like to see a large variety of woman being violated.

Instead of playing with his favorite toys for long periods of time, he seems to have found something else to take delight in.

Go to hell. Why do I have to watch these guro videos of other women being violated?

The end result is that a large amount of useless video crystals ended up piling up in the village store house.

I really don't want to meet that pig.

I once again pledged that in my heart.

“Ah... I feel sick.” (Naofumi)

A few days later, in the evening.

I muttered those words as I entered the onsen at Cal Mira.

I assigned everyone their jobs, and when evening came, I took Itsuki and Rishia here by Portal.

Itsuki doesn't recover Mana or SP, so he can't use portal.

That's why I have to bring them.

I got permission for Rishia to bathe in the men's side.

She was worried that if I was the only one there, Itsuki would die from drowning.

Wearing a white robe, Rishia helped Itsuki submerge himself in the water.

Wouldn't a swimsuit be fine here?

Ah, Raphtalia, Firo, and Melty are also here, albeit on the woman's side.

Atlas was going to come as well, but Fohl stopped her.

An onsen is perfect if you want to rest your body and mind.

I had just washed my body and was about to step in, when Firo jumped over the hedge separating the two baths with Melty on her back.

“Master~ Let’s bathe together again~” (Firo)

“Firo-chan! This is the men’s bath! Naofumi is here, isn’t he!?” (Melty)
Melty frantically covers her important places with a towel, as she embarrassingly complains to Firo.

Firo. You sure bought a troublesome person to a troublesome place.

“Don’t worry, Melty-chan. Right now, only Master, the bow person, and Rishia-oneechan are here.” (Firo) “Isn’t the problem the fact that Naofumi and the Hero of the Bow are here!?” (Melty) “Eh?” (Firo)

It may sound strange, Firo, but Melty’s reaction is the correct one.

I should leave disciplining her to Raphtalia and Melty.

It would be strange for me to be telling her that.

“But bathing with master is fun, so Melty-chan should have fun too.” (Firo) “No! I’ll get dirty!” (Melty)

“Hey.” (Naofumi)

I submerge myself in the bathwater as I speak.

Seeing her love of cleanliness and her innocence, I’m beginning to doubt whether or not she’s truly the sister of that Witch.

But I guess it’s fine.

Firo ignores her, changes into human form, and sits beside me.

“Pii!”

From the towel wrapped around my waist, one of the Filo Rial familiars appears.

“Where did you come out of!?” (Naofumi)

“N-Naofumi gave birth to a Filo Rial!” (Melty)

Melty shouts out, but from her towel, a chick emerges as well.

I heard about it, but I guess they’re parasiting off Melty as well.

“Like you should be saying that!” (Naofumi)

“S-shut up!” (Melty)

“Ahaha~ Master and Melty are having fun.” (Firo)

“We’re not!” (Naofumi & Melty)

Dammit, these birds can’t read the mood.

“Master, can you wash Firo’s back?” (Firo)

“Ah, yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

If I don’t do it, she’ll complain.

It’s been a few days since I started coming here to alleviate my curse.

Firo coming to the men’s bath has become a daily occurrence.

Though this is the first time she’s brought Melty along.

I take out the soap, and begin rubbing Firo’s back. Because she has wings, quite a few bubbles form.

“Hey, Melty-chan should get her back washed too~” (Firo) “Don’t! Want! To!”

(Melty)

Melty sure is stubborn.

Though I think I'm an expert in that field as well.

But Firo sure likes taking people over to the men's side.

Ah, the first person she brought over was Kiel.

Apparently, for the male-hearted Kiel, the woman's bath was uncomfortable, so she got Firo to bring her over.

After that, it became natural to scold Firo and Kiel, who swam around the male bath as if it were natural.

Why do I have to act like a parent and scold these kids when I'm supposed to be relaxing in the onsen?

Raphtalia always lectures them not to come over, but they don't listen.

"Look, you're all clean now." (Naofumi)

"Ya~y."(Firo)

I pour a bucket of hot water on her to wash away the bubbles, and Firo shakes her entire body like a dog to dry herself. Water droplets fly everywhere.

"Master, thank you~ Is Firo clean?" (Firo)

"If you doubt it, then wash yourself." (Naofumi)

"Bu-" (Firo)

Firo pouts, and Melty refuses to take her body out of the water.

The bath is as lively as ever.

"Then I'm going to be soaking for a while, so you guys better return to the

women's bath." (Naofumi) "Got~ it." (Firo)

I get in the water again to cure my curse, when Firo changes to Filo Rial form and sits next to me.

She's floating.

Is she some sort of water bird? Though Firo can swim.

"Ah!?" (Firo)

Firo seems to have figured something out, as she lets out a noise. She puts Melty on her back.

"Firo-chan, what are you..." (Melty)

Before Melty can finish speaking, Firo jumps over the hedge and returns to the women's side.

"W-what was that about?" (Rishia)

Rishia enquires.

"Who knows?" (Naofumi)

"Will Rishia-san not go to the women's bath as well?" (Itsuki)

Itsuki tilts his head as he asks.

It seems that a little bit of common sense still lingers in his head.

Though I have no idea how much we should trust Itsuki's common sense.

"I'm alright, Itsuki-sama." (Rishia)

These two are acting like an idiot couple.

Now that I think about it, since we started using this bath, Itsuki's condition has gradually started changing.

He's still expressionless, but his indecisiveness is beginning to heal.

The fact that he can ask things like this is proof.

“Oh my! If it isn't Father-in-law!?” (Motoyasu)

Ah, so this is the reason Firo quickly retreated.

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](#).

King

"Hey if it isn't Father-in-Law. Shall I wash your back?" (Motoyasu) "It's fine. Rather, it's already been washed." (Naofumi)

...Motoyasu came over.

There is the reason why Firo fled.

Together with him are his three companions. Behind them, Ren is also there.

Are you coming in the bath with that Motoyasu...?

If it were me, I'd come up with some reason and enter at a different time.

Huh? The women's bath became noisy.

"Kyua!" (Gaelion)

Even Gaelion came over.

Did Ren bring him along?

Which means, Taniko and Female Knight should be in the women's bath as well.

Gaelion came flying over here, and landed to soak in the bath.

"Among you three, two are female, right? Go to the women's bath." (Naofumi)
[26]

"What's with that! Are you trying to separate me from Mekkun!?" (Kuu)^[27]

"That's right, no matter what you say, I'll always be with Mo—chan!"
(Marin) ^[28]

The red one declared that while looking agitated, and the blue one agreed.

Right now they're in human form.

Looking it over again, though their colors and hairdos are different from Firo, their personalities are pretty close.

"Even though you're that female's owner, don't push it!" (Kuu)

For some reason, with a strong-willed expression, she raises a shrill voice.

For Motoyasu to be liked with this strong of a desire to monopolize, is he releasing some kind of pheromone?

Keeping him company is a pain.

"Father-in-Law said it's no good. C'mon you two, go to the women's bath."

(Motoyasu) "That's right. Kuu and Marin are females, so you're going to the women's bath." (Midori)

And like that, Midori (the green one) happily pushed the two other's backs and forcibly drove them away towards the hedge dividing the baths.

As I thought, he's a little black-hearted.

However, it's better than the usual noisiness.

Drive them away quickly.

""Bu—!"" (Kuu & Marin)

Leaving the same noise of protest as Firo usually does, the two jump over the hedge.

After that, a very happy-looking Midori took Motoyasu's arm and walked over here.

"All ri—ght, I'm washing Midori—" (Motoyasu)

"Yes!" (Midori)

In an extremely good mood, Midori was washed by Motoyasu.

Ren was pleasantly watching that scene.

"So Naofumi also came over." (Ren)

"That's right. More importantly, the women's bath sure is noisy." (Naofumi)

"There were some who said they wanted to come along, so I took them over."

(Ren) "So that was it after all." (Naofumi)

Over there is really a noisy state of affairs.

"Kya—" those kinds of screams like they're having fun can be heard.

"This is good water." (Ren)

"Indeed. How is the situation of the curse?" (Naofumi) "I think it's probably getting better. Just a little, but today I got some experience." (Ren) "Oh really?" (Naofumi)

Me too, I'm confident that since I started entering the hot springs, little by little I can see my Status Degradation getting cured more rapidly.

Well then... taking a long bath is also good, but is it about time to get up?

Thinking the same, Rishia and Itsuki get up from the spring.

"Then, I'm leaving first. Recover yourself at ease." (Naofumi) "Sure." (Ren)

It was around the time I was having this conversation with Ren, I think.

Motoyasu was walking along the hedge and started peeping.

"Motoyasu-san. Stop this." (Midori)

"What are you saying, Midori? I must confirm Firo-tan's growth with my eyes no matter what. For instance, even though there's a lot of pigs there, enough to make me nauseous, I'm not afraid." (Motoyasu)

Oh c'mon already... even if Motoyasu comes to the bath, his broken state doesn't change?

Something troublesome seems to be starting.

This time, let me get up quickly.

"What are you doing!?" (Ren)

Ren took care of cautioning Motoyasu, who started peeping.

Previously, you were aiming for the "cool", lucky lecher act, weren't you?

Judging by appearance, he cautioned him seriously, but...

"Fuee~..." (Rishia)

To the Motoyasu trying to peek in right before her eyes, Rishia leaked out her voice.

Indeed, trying to peek with a woman right next to you! That guy is a Hero.

In a different sense.

"Even though I was thinking of how much I want to see Firo-tan..." (Motoyasu)

"Indeed, anyone would think of wanting to see Firo-san, right?" (Itsuki)

Itsuki gets on board with Motoyasu's words.

What's with that? Why are you getting on board?

"Itsuki-sama! What are you saying?" (Rishia)

"But you heard it, how Firo-san has become pretty too, right? It's in that meaning, isn't it?" (Itsuki)^[29]

Indeed, when I washed Firo, she did ask, 'Is Firo pretty~?'

Is that what you're talking about?

So you're still a little weird after all.

"All right, then Itsuki, let's go peep in on the women's bath together!"

(Motoyasu) "Understood." (Itsuki)

"Stop Itsuki!" (Naofumi)

"Please stop, Itsuki-sama!" (Rishia)

"Understood." (Itsuki)

This routine sure is troublesome.

Should I get up already?

"Come on, Midori, become a foothold!" (Motoyasu)

Now you're trying to make a foothold to peep on!?

It's dislikable, isn't it? Midori wanted to come in the bath with Motoyasu, after all.

"I don't want to." (Midori)

Just as I thought, it was rejected.

"Nono, Midori, here you must follow my order." (Motoyasu)

And so, Motoyasu took off the towel that was wrapping around Midori.

Why did you take off the towel!?

""!?"

Ren, Itsuki, and Rishia all petrified in an instant.

I was looking away as I was leaving, so I didn't see it; what's up?

"A... u... It, it's embarrassing." (Midori)

For the first time, Midori went into his Filo Rial form in front of me.

It's huge!

Even bigger than Firo in her Filo Rial form.

While in human form they don't differ much, but even though among the three he's shortest, in Filo Rial form he's the tallest?

Is it because he's male?

No, in our Filo Rial barn there are other males, but they're not this big.

"Huge!" (Ren)

"It's big." (Itsuki)

"Fueeeeee..." (Rishia)

Motoyasu jumped on the embarrassed Midori's back and tried peeking over the hedge.

Certainly I also think he's big, but... why are you all surprised that much?

"Naofumi also saw it?" (Ren)

"Saw what?" (Naofumi)

"You didn't see it!?" (Ren)

"Like I said, saw what?" (Naofumi)

"Before that one transformed, underneath the towel——" (Ren) "Wa, Waaaaaaa!" (Midori)

Midori flails about and Motoyasu slips off; he sinks into the spring.

Midori then shuts up Ren's mouth.

"Truly a King!" (Itsuki)

However, Itsuki ended up giving the continuation.

Don't let your emotions show up only at a time like this!

Was it really something to be that astonished about?

"King? Isn't that because he's a male?" (Naofumi) "That's not it..." (Itsuki)

"Waaaaaaaaaaa! Stoooooooooop!" (Midori)

"Understood." (Itsuki)

Huh?

I don't quite get it.

"Naofumi-sama, did something happen?" (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia peeks over from the hedge, showing her face.

"Yeah, apparently this idiot tried peeping again, but Midori here——" (Naofumi)

"Please. Not one more word, don't cause an uproar!" (Midori)

Midori, who returned to human form and covered his nether regions with the towel supplicated.

What are you so afraid of?

"Is that so?" (Raphtalia)

"Naofumi-sama... didn't participate, right?" (Raphtalia) "Yeah, I was just trying to leave." (Naofumi)

Already at the vicinity of the dressing room, I wave at Raphtalia as I answer.

Or should I say, don't you peep on the men's bath.

"...A little..." (Raphtalia)

"Aa? Come again?" (Naofumi)

I'm not particularly going deaf.

The words Raphtalia was muttering, I heard them word for word.

Therefore, I try asking.

"You wanted me to see, is it?" (Naofumi)

It's a fact that I have no interest, but well...

At any rate, Raphtalia saying that kind of thing sure is unusual.

Is there some reason... Ah, is that it?

"Were you playing some kind of game? If you made me peep you'd win, that kind of game?" (Naofumi) "Haa....." (Raphtalia)

So it was like that.

That noisy bunch came over to the bath, so you ended up playing some weird game.

Those guys seem to have a lot of fun teasing me, so Raphtalia too got pulled into it.

The principal offender, is it Melty?

Kiel would also be a strong candidate, but it seems she came into the men's bath previously.

Who else came, I don't know.

Well, if they're getting along, it's fine.

"Fu...." (Gaelion)

Ignoring that situation was Gaelion, who went flying over to the hedge happily.

You're trying to peep, aren't you? Moreover, it's the papa Gaelion.

Don't get aroused over humans.

"Mu—! Don't come here!" (Firo)

To the Gaelion who was trying to peep from the hedge, Firo threw a bucket right into his face, a clean hit.

"Kyuaa..." (Gaelion)

With a splash, Gaelion sunk into the spring.

Are you an idiot?

Really an incorrigible fellow.

"Anyway, I'm leaving. Raphtalia and everyone else, soak at your leisure."

(Naofumi) "Haa... Understood." (Raphtalia)

Motoyasu sitting in a seiza alone this time is an inconsequential complement.

The Second Conference of Heroes

[Beginning]

I step out of the onsen, and expose my body to the nighttime breeze. While I bask in the cool air, Ren and Motoyasu get out as well.

Itsuki and Rishia are already out, and they're cooling off together.

I can see nothing but a couple when I look at them, but Itsuki's expressionless face makes it feel like they had just experienced a failed date.

"Naofumi." (Ren)

Ren calls out to me.

I'm not sure what Raphtalia and the others are doing, but they haven't exited the women's side yet.

They're taking a long bath.

"What?" (Naofumi)

"I asked this island's count when I got here. He allowed us to use the conference room we used last time. Can we gather all the heroes there to talk?"

(Ren) "Isn't the village fine?" (Naofumi)

"That's true, but if you think about it, that's the place where the heroes started arguing with, and denying one another. That's why I want us to gather there, and talk once more." (Ren) "How unnecessary." (Naofumi)

"I've already talked to Itsuki and Motoyasu. Let's talk a bit before the women come out." (Ren) "Waiting for them is a waste of time. I guess it's fine." (Naofumi)

There's nothing gained in waiting, so I'm fine with it.

It seems that Ren will be satisfied by it.

We climb the spiral stairs to the room we met in before.

Last time I climbed these steps, I was able to look out at the other islands.

When I try to look through the windows, my vision is clouded by the darkness of night. I see nothing but shadows.

The island's activation period is long over.

It's like a resort's off season.

This island will only be lively again in 10 years.

I remember hearing it from the lord here.

Even during off season, adventurers still come.

The area's a tourist attraction, and the monsters have moderate strength, so hunting is permitted to a certain extent.

There are some rare monsters to be found. Are the materials rare as well?

I didn't get too much money for them, though.

Me, Ren, Motoyasu and Midori, and Itsuki and Rishia enter the room, and find seats around the round table.

"Henceforth, the second official conference of Heroes shall commence." (Ren)
Ren raises his hand and declares.

"As there's no chairman, I'd like to act as a representative." (Ren) "Got it."
(Naofumi)

Recently, Ren's been overflowing with enthusiasm.

The goal of fighting the wave has ignited a flame within his soul.

My end goal is survival, so I doubt I'll ever become like that.

The fact that he's still obsessed with himself means that he hasn't changed that much from the start.

Though I think he's on a better track than before.

"And? What did you want to talk about?" (Naofumi)

"Let's continue the discussion that was suspended last time." (Ren) "I think we were arguing about reinforcement methods." (Naofumi) "Yeah..." (Ren)

Ren raises his sword out front, and starts reading something I cannot see.

"Naofumi gave Shadow... a list of our various methods of getting stronger. We can combine them to obtain greater strength. At first, I didn't believe it... but Naofumi was able to integrate all of them, to put a stop to the calamity we caused. This points to the fact that his words were the truth." (Ren) "That's right." (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu and Ren both nod.

No, Itsuki just gives off the feeling of nodding.

"Because of my curse, I was unable to carry out smithing or enhancements well, but thanks to the daily usage of the onsens, I'm gradually getting better." (Ren)

"There's no way Father-in-Law would ever lie. I learned to put these methods to practice myself!" (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu announces this fact with a smile on his face.

"I know, so calm down. Itsuki, what about you?" (Naofumi)

"...I understand." (Itsuki)

Itsuki fiddles with the icons on his status. His eyes dart back and forth.

“I did it.” (Itsuki)

It’s because he can’t think for himself right now.

The current Itsuki doesn’t know how to doubt others.

I guess this makes his situation worthwhile.

“... So it was true. If I wasn’t so prideful at that time, then perhaps all of that wouldn’t have happened.” (Itsuki)

Since his symptoms are slowly being alleviated, Itsuki is able to utter some words of regret.

Is this because of the curse? Or are those his true thoughts? Who can say.

“That’s why, once more, I wish to continue this talk.” (Ren) “Are you sure there’s more to talk about?” (Naofumi)

“No, there has to be something else.” (Ren)

“What is there left to say?” (Naofumi)

I think I know everything I need to know from the other three heroes.

“Naofumi, recently, I’ve been travelling with Eclair, Rishia, and the others from your village. During that time, I discovered something that I want to show you.”

(Ren) “What?” (Naofumi)

“This.” (Ren)

Ren changes the shape of his sword, and presents it to me.

It’s a strangely shaped sword, which looks like a bundle of strings strung around each other countless times.

Honestly, it doesn’t look strong at all.

“What is that?” (Naofumi)

“It’s a blade called the Comrade Sword. It’s ability is『Comrade Growth Adjustment (Small)』” (Ren) “What are the conditions to unlock it?” (Naofumi) [30]

“...I don’t know. Before I knew it, it was unlocked.” (Ren) “Fumu...” (Naofumi)

Comrade Growth Adjustment (Small)... is it? It’s the same as my slave enhancement.

Looking at the current Ren, I have no idea how he got it.

“If this were a game, would the unlock condition be something like trusting your companions from the bottom of your heart?” (Naofumi)

I start off with a vague inquiry. And Ren nods.

“Probably...” (Ren)

With a bitter expression, he continues.

“As I thought. I didn’t fully trust my previous comrades. If only this sword came out earlier, then perhaps they wouldn’t have died.” (Ren) “That’s one possibility. But that doesn’t make it useless now.” (Naofumi) “...As expected of Naofumi. That’s why, like this, I want to discuss any new things we may have discovered.” (Ren) “I see. I understand where you’re coming from.” (Naofumi) I think there are plenty of things I haven’t discovered yet, so asking around may be useful.

There may be materials I have yet to feed my shield with highly desirable abilities.

Comrade Sword... It seems to have an ability like my Slave User Shield.

... Wait a second. Do the effects stack?

I mean, Ren’s trusted comrades are Female Knight and Taniko, right?

Female Knight's another case, but Taniko's my slave.

If his comrade growth correction stacked with my slave one, then it would be really useful.

I'll need to carefully look over Taniko's status later.

By the way, I'm also doing a bit of research on my own.

"Then should I teach you something?" (Naofumi)

"What is it?" (Ren)

"Yeah, when I fed my slaves' hair and such to the Shield, more Shields with growth corrections came out. In Ren's case, I recommend feeding Kiel or Taniko's weapon to your sword." (Naofumi)

What I found was racial Shield systems.

But there are plenty of trees I'm unable to unlock as of yet.

Atlas, Fohl, and Sadina's races are currently impossible.

What I unlocked was race Growth Corrections.

"Recommend... Naofumi even knows that much." (Ren)

"But it's not like I've tried feeding meat and bone." (Naofumi)

As if I could do something that insane.

The Heroes must remain as humans.

"Right. Ren, try Female Knight's hair too. Perhaps you'll get a Comrade Sword II." (Naofumi) "Eclair is a bit..." (Ren)

She looks like one who would complain a bit.

That girl seems like the type that would say, 'A girl's hair is her life' or something. ^[31]

"Father-in-Law, I've also tried absorbing everyone's feathers into my spear."

(Motoyasu) "I've already unlocked all of the Filo Rial series." (Naofumi) "As expected of Father-in-Law! How did you get them all!? Please tell me!"

(Motoyasu) "Motoyasu, you're being loud. Think about it by yourself."

(Naofumi)

My base stats have risen a considerable amount.

Now that I think about it... Sadina said that Raphtalia was not of the Raccoon tribe.

Though she's of some relation to them.

There was a Raccoon Shield on my shield tree, but it never unlocked.

I always wondered why, but it must be because Raphtalia is a subspecies.

I guess I'm satisfied with that explanation.

By the way, Sadina's didn't unlock either.

I fed her materials to the Shield too, but the Luka Shield didn't unlock.

She said she was of the Sakamata Race, I think.

Taniko was of the Nui Race, and when I inserted Kiel's fur into the shield, the Wanui Shield was unlocked. [\[32\]](#)

From a glance, they both have dog ears and tails, but it seems they're a little different.

I mean, Kiel can transform.

Anyways, with subspecies and relatives, even if I know the base, I can't tell the specifics.

Raphtalia's race is pretty much like the difference between a Balloon and an Orange Balloon.

If I took some Raccoon hair, would I understand something?

No, it didn't help at all.

An icon did light up, but it didn't unlock.

I should have been able to see the name of her racial shield, but I couldn't figure it out.

Though several shields light up, even if I know the race, I can't change to it.

The Shields linked to Raccoon are ones like High Raccoon, and East Raccoon. There are quite a few.

Perhaps it would be good to look at the Filo Rial tree for reference.

After I received Fitoria's feather, though it unlocked the series, after a certain point, the names showed up as ???.

It's like that.

The Fio Rial series has had all the material requirements met, so as long as I raise my level, I become able to use them. Even now, there are a few locked ones.

In Raphtalia's case, the materials are insufficient.

Is hair not enough?

But it's not like she's a monster, so I can't get any meat or bone.

... But if you think about it, could I use humans as materials too?

What exactly are these legendary weapons?

"Father-in-Law?" (Motoyasu)

"...What?" (Naofumi)

Is he going to talk about Filo Rials again?

"How about feeding death row prisoners to your weapon?" (Motoyasu)

".....Ren, how about it?" (Naofumi)

"Nonono! I get the feeling that's a line that should never be crossed..." (Ren)

"That's right, let's give up." (Naofumi)

Motoyasu. You're getting quite dangerous.

I think it's best to carefully distance myself from him.

I forcibly change the topic.

"Ah, right. The Hero Inscription on this island, did you people read it?"

(Naofumi)

Itsuki is still learning. His magic doesn't recover, so he can't read magic words.

Even so, he's learning the written language.

That's why I address this question to Ren and Motoyasu.

"Yeah, I read it." (Ren)

"Of course, Father-in-Law!" (Motoyasu)

"What magic did you get?" (Naofumi)

There's a possibility that the magic learned depends on the individual.

I learned Zveit Aura, but it's not certain that Ren and Motoyasu learned the same.

"Zveit Magic Enchant." (Ren)

The Second Conference of Heroes [Middle]

“Magic Enchant, right? Its effect is?” (Naofumi)

“It’s a magic sword. After casting, it endows magic that has been received, and I can slash at enemies while it improves the strength of my magic for a little while.” (Ren) “There are some guys who can use something similar.” (Naofumi) Sadina used a technique to pour magic into her harpoon.

I wonder if it’s different to that?

“It’s fine even if it’s not my own magic. Normally I can only improve my own magic for a short time.” (Ren) “I see.” (Naofumi)

It’s quite convenient magic.

You can also aim for a counter after receiving the opponent’s magic.

“Its weakness is that you can only take up to Zweite. When I tried taking Dreifach as a test, it was impossible.” (Ren) “Is that so? What about Motoyasu?” (Naofumi)

“I learned Zweite Absorb, Father-in-law.” (Motoyasu)

“Hm... its effects?” (Naofumi)

Well from its name, it seems like it would be able to absorb magic or something.

“It cancels Zweite-class magic and absorbs it. The problem is that I can’t move after casting it.” (Motoyasu)

It really is a problem for Motoyasu, who is good at fighting, to be unable to move.

So this magic can't be cast in advance.

"Its range is?" (Naofumi)

"From what I've experienced, it's around 5 meters." (Motoyasu) "I see."
(Naofumi)

Here, different magic was learned.

But they are useful in terms of convenience.

So what is written on that inscription, based on the current pattern, is support-type magic.

It's up to Zweite, but if I can use Revelation-level techniques, then they should probably be able to use something superior as well.

Because they've got a wide range of use, they should also be able to use Dreifach if they tune it.

....I can only use Recovery and Support magic, but I wonder how it is with the others?

"What are your aptitudes in regards to magic?" (Naofumi)

"Speaking of which, we haven't talked about that. Naofumi was Recovery and Support magic, right?" (Ren) "That's right." (Naofumi)

"Mine is Water and Support magic. Well, there are some water spells that can heal, so I can't say it's unconditional." (Ren) "Father-in-Law. I can use Fire and Recovery magic. Similarly, I can use Support magic with my Fire spells."

(Motoyasu) "I have Wind and Earth magic. Likewise, I can use a bit of Recovery and Support magic." (Itsuki)

Ren is Water and Support.

Motoyasu is Fire and Recovery.

Itsuki is Wind and Earth.

It's divided splendidly.

But they're able to use Recovery or Support Magic within their Systems.

"Our Recovery and Support magic don't have as high an effect as Naofumi's do." (Ren) "My Fire's Recovery magic is better." (Motoyasu)

"Well obviously." (Naofumi)

Because Motoyasu can use Recovery magic.

Speaking of which..... I have no offensive abilities.

I'm sure the Magic Shop said so.

For some reason, when one casts magic, it is influenced by the caster's disposition, and that disposition can be seen even in simple Recovery Magic or something.

Motoyasu's casting of Heal probably has some fire mixed in.

And when the caster doesn't have the disposition for it, for example when Motoyasu casts Support Magic, it is noticeably weaker.

Come to think of it.... Recovery magic should have an attack-type....

I'm sure it was Fast Decay.

I tried casting it, but it failed.

According to the Magic Shop, it's rare for someone to have no disposition for Offense like this.

But on the other hand, the magic Fast Grow Heal was a success.

Its effect is Fatigue Recovery.

Nevertheless, it has a weak effect on severe fatigue, and is rather pointless to cast on myself.

This is Recovery magic from the Support Category. Wounds also get healed somewhat.

“I guess the magic from the inscription is special.” (Naofumi)

Aura increases one’s full capacity.

Magic Enchant endows a weapon with magic, and even has the capability of using the opponent’s magic.

Absorb cancels out magic.

“What will Itsuki learn, I wonder.” (Naofumi)

“Yes.” (Itsuki)

“Itsuki-sama, do your best to go learn it, okay?” (Rishia) “Yes.” (Itsuki)

Itsuki nodded many times.

Has he become a little better?

“Right, speaking of magic, do you guys know of the Dragon Pulse magic series?” (Naofumi)

There’s probably no reason to untactfully conceal it any more.

Ren looks like he’s reflected and no longer cares about coveting methods to become stronger.

There would be no point in this tug-of-war of arms if we lose to the waves.

[33]

“Is that the unique magic that Wyndia uses?” (Ren)

“It’s the magic that Dragons and some monsters use.” (Midori)

Midori supplemented.

Well, he is a Filorial like Firo.

They hate dragons; I wonder if he even understands the magic system those

dragons use.

“I heard that Naofumi can use it. How is its use?” (Ren)

“Honestly, it’s a pain. However, I know how Ren feels when he casts supporting magic with Water magic.” (Naofumi)

I take power from the water in the pitcher and let them see it put into practice.

『I guide the power of this water and wish for its embodiment. Oh Dragon Pulse. Give me power』

“Aqua Seal.” (Naofumi)

I cast water support magic on Ren.

“Uwa!” (Ren)

Ren closed his eyes, blinking in surprise, and checks his status.

“Doesn’t magic have something similar?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah, it’s a spell to increase fire resistance called Fast Resist Fire.” (Ren)
Raising one hand, he cast magic on me the exact same way.

I see, indeed it’s similar.

I can confirm my fire resistance increasing with my Status.

“So what’s the trouble with that Dragon Pulse method?” (Ren) “The main thing is that you can’t use the Dragon Pulse method unless you do the calculations, unlike magic which you can cast as long as you can read the letters. The formula changes.” (Naofumi) “I don’t really get it, but it sounds difficult.” (Ren)

“You probably won’t understand until you’re able to use it. I’ll have you guys learn it eventually.” (Naofumi)

I suppose it’s better to ask Gaelion to also teach the others the Dragon Pulse

method.

It's needed for Revelation and magic comprehension, so it's better that they learn.

Or rather, I think so even now, but there's no doubt it was necessary to strengthen to this level.

"I got it. It must be true if Naofumi says so." (Ren)

"I don't want Motoyasu-san to learn it. It's magic that dragons use." (Midori)
"Midori, it's regrettable, but since Father-in-Law is telling me to learn it, I have to learn." (Motoyasu) "Buu..." (Midori)

Midori glares at me intently.

Not that I care.

"I've just been sharing so far, but have you guys discovered anything?"
(Naofumi)

For the time being, Ren brought information on his companion's sword.

I wonder what Motoyasu and Itsuki have found?

"Kuu, Marine, and Midori's pleasure points, the statistics of the pleasure points of all the Filorials is—" (Motoyasu) "Motoyasu, shut up. Don't talk anymore."
(Naofumi)

"Motoyasu-san. Please stop. It's embarrassing..." (Midori)

"Please wait, Father-in-Law. What did I say wrong?" (Motoyasu) "I don't want to know!" (Naofumi)

Does this guy only have Filorials on his mind?

Even Midori is getting embarrassed.

Jeez.

By the way, Firo likes it when I wash around the roots of her feathers. And also around her throat.

Firo's number 1 subordinate, the cutesy kid, also likes being stroked around the throat. [34]

“Let's see.... then I'll talk about what I saw when I went to Faubley. For some reason, there were Asphalt roads and cars.” (Motoyasu) “By cars you mean those Cars?” (Naofumi) [35]

“Yes. They were quite old, but there were other vehicles apart from carriages. This is something that differs a lot from games.” (Motoyasu)
Well, they do periodically summon heroes from different worlds, and it's not like there's no chance of some of those guys displaying their knowledge.

And Faubley is the country that embraces heroes the most.

I guess guys who possess that kind of knowledge appear a lot.

“Yes. They exist. It seems we can make them with alchemy from a different world.” (Rishia)

Rishia affirmed.

Alchemy from a different world, right?

Well, I have heard that the predecessor to science was alchemy.

In that case, calling it a different world's alchemy may not necessarily be wrong.

“I haven't seen any in Melromarc, though....” (Naofumi)

“It's no good if we don't have paved roads and supplying fuel is difficult, so it hasn't really been implemented.” (Rishia) “I see.” (Naofumi)

Because Heroes have a habit of keeping secrets, after all.

It's also very likely that the Heroes summoned in Faubley only used such convenient knowledge for themselves.

Which reminds me, the viewing crystals resemble digital cameras.

They might be a tool made by a past hero or their followers by combining modern knowledge with magic.

Come to think of it, do they use the parts that were in the carriage I requested?

Even I had the option of using that knowledge to attempt to improve my sales.

Well with the shield's capabilities, using items or the slaves and monsters was more cost-effective so I didn't, although I couldn't really do it anyway because I don't have the technical knowledge.

The fuel supply and such is also troublesome.

Would it be better use coal to move?

Or else use magic to move.... in that case, it's probable.

Frankly, it's a world that might even have aircrafts, so I shouldn't worry so much.

I should try consulting with Imia's uncle or someone.

"Itsuki, what about you?" (Naofumi)

"Here." (Itsuki)

Itsuki held out something that looked like a card.

"What's this?" (Naofumi)

"The Dark Guild's Membership card. As long as you have this, you can procure

information from the Dark Guild.” (Itsuki) [\[36\]](#)

The Second Conference of Heroes [End]

Wait, the Dark Guild's Membership card...?

My face cramped for a second.

"...And why do you have such a thing?" (Naofumi)

"It was a prize for one of the Coliseum events." (Itsuki) "Ah, I see..." (Naofumi)

He brought out quite a dubious item...

Though knowing Itsuki's circle of friends, it's not strange that he would have such a thing.

"As long as you can pay, there's nothing you can't get from them, apparently." (Itsuki) "I'll use it if it becomes necessary." (Naofumi)

Honestly, I don't really want to involve myself.

I mean, it's probably full of people like the Slave Merchant.

Even the Pig King's taken a liking to me. This may be a bit late, but I get the feeling that most of my acquaintances are villains.

It's that. Birds of a feather flock together. Something like that.

...If I had to choose, I would say I'm a villain. I can't find any evidence to deny that.

I mean, my enemy, Witch, was sent to a brutal execution. From the point of view of some protagonist out there, my actions are befitting of a criminal.

If this was a manga, perhaps some Hero of Light would be on his way to exterminate me.

But reality isn't so sweet, so I don't think that a messenger of justice will come for my head this late in the game.

Even so, why does Itsuki have this?

It's something the previous Itsuki would have detested.

"I'm surprised a justice idiot like you kept such a thing. I thought you would try to crush them or something." (Naofumi) "If used well, even evil can become justice." (Itsuki)

Is it like how assassination can be used to keep order?

That's a statement befitting of Itsuki's justice.

He may have even assassinated in the name of justice already.

"I want us to gather up the various gems, plants, and drops we've all collected. Naofumi, is that fine?" (Ren) "Yeah, that might actually be the main point of this meeting." (Naofumi)

Based on all of our operations, we're putting all the knowledge down on paper.

Even I'm remembering things I was on the verge of forgetting.

I guess there are still things for me to learn.

And sacrificing my own knowledge isn't a great price to pay for that.

"Ren, though you may already know, I'd like to talk about the Hengen Musou style of fighting." (Naofumi) "The one that Eclair and Rishia use?" (Ren)

"Right. That style focuses on the use of Chi." (Naofumi) "Eclair also explained it, but I can't seem to understand it. Can you?" (Ren) "A bit. Since Atlas, who can see things others cannot, has continuously been punching the weaknesses I never noticed in my defenses, I think I've grasped something." (Naofumi)

I start explaining from the first time Female Knight showed me the style. Even if

the heroes cannot use Mussou Kassei, the ability to recover Mana and SP will come in handy. It also has plenty of applications in skills.

As I was doing so, Ren, Motoyasu, and Itsuki began reading screens invisible to my eyes.

“...It’s true. It wasn’t there before, but the item known as EP appeared in the help menu.” (Ren) “What?” (Naofumi)

“I think it’s an abbreviation of Energy Points... Using SP and Magic to power up skills, and raising abilities... How to use it is...” (Ren) “W-wait...” (Naofumi)

It can’t be in the Help. It’s something I discovered.

It doesn’t even involve the legendary weapons.

“It also explains how to use it. There was an occupation that could do something like this in Brave Star Online. It was a bit simpler, but I think it’s something close.” (Ren) “Father-in-Law, there was also something like this in the games I played.” (Motoyasu) “Same...” (Itsuki)

Um, so it’s something like a job skill?

Something only a certain class can use?

Quit messing with me!

“Understanding the energy within the body... this is quite hard. But...” (Ren)
The Chi emitting from Ren starts changing.

It’s like it’s started flowing around his sword. Eventually it settles into a steady flow around his blade. I can tell all of this just by looking.

The same happened to Motoyasu and Itsuki.

Now if they were to use a skill, the potency would definitely increase.

“Fuee... Why can you use it after just getting that vague description?” (Rishia)

“Fuee...” (Naofumi)

“Fueeeeeeee!” (Rishia)

As I imitate Rishia, she cries out sorrowfully.

“Ku... My Mana and SP, my EP was instantly depleted. I’ll need to practice to master it. I feel really exhausted.” (Ren) “Right.” (Itsuki)

“This is amazing! I, Motoyasu, will work hard for Father-in-Law’s sake!”
(Motoyasu)

Belief can become power.

After listening to me, and believing in me wholeheartedly, it appeared in their help, and they became able to use it?

Cut the crap.

Just how hard do you think I trained to learn that!?

At this rate, if I just show them the basics, they should be able to use it just fine.

I check the Help screen of my own Shield.

It’s not there.

...Am I a non-believer?

Perhaps the way I feel right now is the same as when the other three saw me getting strong all of a sudden.

“This power... if I mix it into skills and magic, will it amplify their power?” (Ren)
I’m at a loss for words as I watch Ren, Motoyasu and Itsuki learning the basics of Chi control. The only thing I can do is watch.

I thought it was something I found on my own. They took it so easily.

How unfair this world is.

Even so, it seems that these three are finally starting to catch up to me...

Should I give up on telling them about Revelation?

I kinda want to be ahead, if not by just a little.

However, as long as I'm in control, it would be best to teach them if we wish to overcome the wave.

If belief can become power, then if you don't believe, then you won't find power. I don't think these people will betray me soon.

That being the case, since these people have the potential to become stronger than me, it's best if I taught them.

No matter how far I strengthen the Shield, I can't use it for offense.

And I'm curious as to what sort of large scale magic will come out of them using Revelation.

"Since you're just learning the basics of Chi, I'll have to explain SP later. Are you fine with postponing my explanation of magic as well?" (Naofumi) "Yeah, I wanted to learn it, but if I have to figure it out one step at a time, I guess we'll have to postpone it. If Naofumi teaches, then I think I can learn it quite fast."

(Ren)

Ren's lack of doubt in me is irritating for some reason.

Should I just make up some BS?

...But what if their belief in that BS makes it real?

If it fails, they'll begin to doubt me, so I should probably give up on that.

Though it wasn't present at the time, when I checked later, it was clearly written in the Help.

And on my status, the stat of EP also appeared.

What I was able to confirm was that Heroes are unable to learn Mussou Kassei.

The Legendary Weapons make one different from the average person. Just by possessing one, the user is sent into a constant state of Mussou Kassei.

The Help called it Energy Boost.

Since it's perpetually active, it can't be stacked on again.

It was quite a boring result.

"...Let's see. I've also used Item Creation to try to raise the quality of items. I may be able to put it into practice... That's about all I know for now." (Naofumi)

"Alright." (Itsuki)

"Father-in-Law, I still have more to say." (Motoyasu) "Yeah, that was quite a productive meeting this time around." (Ren)

I get the feeling that these people were simply listening to me give a presentation, though...

"Naofumi-sama...?" (Raphtalia)

The door to the meeting room opens, and Raphtalia sticks her head in.

"So this is where you were." (Raphtalia)

"Have you cooled down from the bath?" (Naofumi)

"Yes. I think it's about time we returned to the village. I was looking for you." (Raphtalia) "Ren wanted to restart the meeting that was put on hold earlier. We were just discussing a few things." (Naofumi) "Is that so? So did you learn anything good?" (Raphtalia)

No, I feel like I've been the one teaching.

No, I feel like I've been the one teaching.

But since Ren, Motoyasu, and Itsuki are counted as part of my forces, I can't call this result bad.

I guess these people were called to this world for a reason. They all have a screw loose in the right place.

“In order to respond to Naofumi’s trust in me, I will get stronger. Leave it to me.” (Ren) “Ah, yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

Ren’s turning into an annoying person.

I didn’t like the old Ren, but the current one is simply sweltering.

“Yeah, Father-in-Law! I’ll also work hard!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu is annoying.

Mostly his way of addressing me.

“For some reason, I get the feeling that everyone here has gotten stronger.”
(Rishia)

Rishia holds Itsuki’s hand as she collects her thoughts.

But with this, Ren, Motoyasu, and Itsuki are on the road to becoming stronger. Is that alright?

Translator note

1. ↑ TL: Refer to the last lines of Chapter 230.
2. ↑ TL: I'm not sure if it's liberation or revelation.
3. ↑ TL: /人● ~ ●人\
A diagram showing two stylized human figures facing each other with a wavy line between them, representing a relationship or interaction.
4. ↑ TL: Usually given by the police. See Hataraku Maou.
5. ↑ TL: Tate no Yuusha no Nariagari is a cooking Web Novel.
6. ↑ TL: Discworld, anyone?
7. ↑ T/N: ...3P rape?
8. ↑ TL: Ainu is a native tribe of Japan. With naturally reddish hair. This is apparently a reference to Nakoruru from Samurai Spirits.
9. ↑ TL: They're the Spirit Turtle, Houou... etc series, if you forgot.
10. ↑ T/N: But birds lay unfertilized eggs anyway, right?
11. ↑ T/N: Cue Raphtalia's straight man act.
12. ↑ T/N: "Master would be better~" (Firo)
13. ↑ T/N: An appraisal ability. Chapter 12, Equipment Bonus from Blue Egg Shield.
14. ↑ ED Note: Climax of the series, right here.
15. ↑ ED: *TACTICAL FACEPALM!*
16. ↑ TL: It's a 1 Sho bottle. 1 Sho is approximately 1.8 liters.
17. ↑ TC: Naofumi hates the world but will save it so Raphtalia can live in it.
18. ↑ TC: Ruka species = Dolphin species, but Sadina is an Orca.
19. ↑ TC: 'If you aren't resolved, then do it with Onee-san if you get horny'
20. ↑ TL: Sakoku or "locked country" was the foreign relations policy of Japan under which no foreigner could enter nor could any Japanese leave the country on penalty of death.
21. ↑ TC: So a larger scaled version where the whole country is secluded.
22. ↑ TC: 'Stop worrying about the waves and focus 100% on Raphtalia'
23. ↑ TC: Nuū = no, but more colloquial-ish? Idk how to describe it.
24. ↑ TC: Japanese idiom.... But Naofumi didn't say that aloud, is Sadina

reading his thoughts? o.0

25. ↑ TL: Humming SFX
26. ↑ TL Note: He's talking about Motoyasu three companions, the Filo Rials.
27. ↑ ED Note: The red one
28. ↑ ED Note: The blue one
29. ↑ The word here for pretty is 'kirei', which means both 'pretty' and 'clean'. Firo became "kirei"(clean) when Naofumi washed her in the previous chapter, which Itsuki has interpreted as "kirei"(pretty).
30. ↑ TL: Literally, the Nakama Sword.
31. ↑ TL: A Japanese saying.
32. ↑ TL: Nui is an anagram of Inu, which is dog. If I scramble Dog, they become too OP.
33. ↑ T/N: Arms as in weapons. The actual word used was 足 (lit. foot/leg), but my sleepy brain can't think of the right word to use, so arms will do for now.
34. ↑ T/N: The Purple Filorial, remember the one who was teaching all the others during the 'Be loved by Master' Workshop?
35. ↑ T/N: Cars from their worlds
36. ↑ T/N: Come join the Dark Side, we have Kookie(s) XD