

アネコユサギ

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盾の勇者の成り上がり⑫



MF 2012

Revival Festival

A little while after the Heroes held their conference.

Recently, Ren's curse's effects have been lessening. His loss of luck, and his decrease in EXP has gone below levels where we have to worry about it.

The Status reduction from my curse is almost trivial as well.

There's around one month left until the next wave...

Imya's uncle was quite a skilled craftsman, and he's been making weapons and armor for everyone.

As his disciple, Ren and his group are going around the country looking for materials.

Now, the villagers have become quite strong. The Granny also carries out training to increase their combat abilities as high as possible.

Isn't it about time for me to go raise my level as well? I guess I should go on a quest to some monster-infested dungeon or something.

As I was thinking that...

"Revival Festival?" (Naofumi)

Melty came to my place carrying a stack of documents.

"Yeah." (Melty)

"What's that supposed to mean?" (Naofumi)

"Well, we've pretty much finished reviving the villages, and we resolved the

Three Hero Church brainwashing incident, right?” (Melty) “Hmm... Do we have the time to be doing such things?” (Naofumi)

Houou will attack in one month’s time. Should we really be holding a festival?

Is what I think, but in a world like this one, it’s probably best to have fun while you have the time.

“Then just go and hold one by yourself.” (Naofumi)

“Are you sure? If you joined, you could expect quite a bit of profit.” (Melty)

“How much?” (Naofumi)

“If you want a rough estimation, about this much.” (Melty)

Melty presents a numerical estimate to me.

It was an absurd amount.

“What, this much?!” (Naofumi)

“Because we’re going to host quite a few attractions, and we’ll be managing a bit of healthy betting.” (Melty)

Gambling.

I don’t hate that sort of thing.

Don’t get me wrong. I hate participating in it.

I enjoy gambling others out of their money.

But that presents a problem.

“Isn’t that dangerous?” (Naofumi)

“There’s no problems. We’re planning some Filo Rial races similar to the ones at the Coliseum. Naofumi’s place has an abundance of good steeds.” (Melty)^[1]

So we’re using the Filo Rials.

I get the feeling they’re living sedentary lives, so perhaps an event like this is a good opportunity.

“We’re having other people challenge them. The earnings will definitely be great.” (Melty) “...Fumu. Got it.” (Naofumi)

“We also have a music show by Firo-chan planned.” (Melty)

“Music?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah, Firo-chan’s had experience singing in bars. She’s become quite famous by word of mouth. If you find her, go call out to her.” (Melty)

Yes, Firo’s definitely good at singing.

If there’s music playing, she can make words and tunes to complement the song perfectly, and she’s got a nice sense of rhythm.

She also likes dancing, and in human form, she’s a bishojo.

It’s as if she’s a...

“She seems to have a lot of fans. Last time Firo sang in the village bar, the bar was so packed that no one could fit through the door anymore.” (Melty) “Is she some sort of Idol?” (Naofumi)

“Some people even settle in the village for Firo-chan. Painters have sent in requests to use her as a model. Should I permit them? I think we’ll be able to rake in quite a bit.” (Melty)

I can’t wait to see what sort of face Motoyasu will make.

Will he snap, and try to monopolize Firo?

No, his wallet will probably go to the great bin in the sky as he buys all her merchandise.

“In this case, should we open up a photography session, and sell each photo crystal for 1 gold?” (Melty) “Fumu. That sounds good.” (Naofumi)

Excess gold is never a problem.

I’ve started instating small taxes in the village as well, so my finances are rising.

Well, making Imya's uncle's workshop, miscellaneous costs relating to weapons and armor, maintaining Rat's equipment, procuring medicine, and a lot of other things have cut it by quite a bit.

Still, Melty plans to exploit her best friend to earn money...

It seems she hasn't realized it herself, but she definitely carries the blood of her parents.

No, she's creating a place for Firo to shine... If you look at her like a Producer, I guess she's trying to benefit her friend.

"Got it. The merchant association has already begun progressing, so we should be able to hold it in around three days." (Melty) "Should I participate as well?" (Naofumi)

"You're the lord, so that goes without saying. Though things should proceed just fine as long as you signal the opening and closing." (Melty) "Understood. You can permit any event that guarantees profit." (Naofumi)
And stuff happened, and three days passed.

"Then the Revival Festival will henceforth commence!" (Naofumi)
A grand opening ceremony was held in the town plaza, and the Revival Festival began.

The neighboring town's started expanding on a large scale, and it's becoming a town of magnitude second to only the Castle Town.

I'm amazed that it's made this much progress in the two months since its founding.

Even though it was supposed to have suffered quite a bit of damage from the Three Hero Church brainwashing incident...

Well, the damaged buildings have all been supplemented with Camping Plants, so it's more of a temporary town.

The people give a loud applause in response to the starting signal.

I haven't heard a single good thing about this country's state of affairs.

Perhaps attractions like these are good for the people to vent off steam
"Then Firo will sing~!" (Firo)

Melty nods, and Firo races onto the special stage we erected for this event, in special clothes we prepared for it.

"YEAH!" (Crowd)

A cheer much greater than the previous one echoes through the area.

As I look over the people, I see many of them reminiscent of idol groupies I saw only too often in my world scattered here and there.

Hold on... Just how many fans does that bird have?

Are those people behind her musicians?

A large number of people carrying instruments begin playing to match Firo's song.

The instruments seem to be gentle harp-like ones, but somehow, I get the feeling of a live concert here.

"L. O. V. E. Love me! Firo-tan!" (Motoyasu)

... Behind all of the fans, Motoyasu is waving around a flag.

I feel disgusted.

Oh, the people around him are Kuu, Marin, and Midori, I think.

The three Filo Rials are staring into space with extremely bored expressions on their faces.

The contrast in enthusiasm between them and Motoyasu is amazing.

"Ah... It's good to be alive."

“Since the first time we laid ears on Firo-tan’s singing, we couldn’t work up our motivation to do work until we heard it again.”

“Yeah, who cares about Humans and Demi-Humans? We’re all simply people united in listening to her voice.”

This was an unexpected result.

Because of my orders, fighting between races has stopped. I was also trying to end discrimination, but it seems some people have completely abandoned their discriminatory mindsets to pursue Firo.

Are they saying that whilst knowing her true form?

“Ah, I hope the curse that turned Firo-tan into a divine bird gets dispelled soon. We’re praying for you, Firo-tan!”

... They’re under the impression that she’s under a curse.

How convenient.

When I asked Melty later, she said that Firo’s backstory was arbitrarily decided by the fans.

Apparently she has to act as an idol and earn money in order to break her curse... or something.

It’s a setting that seems possible for a certain TS Idol protagonist.

Though in truth, her true form is the bird one, people.

“Now, everyone! Let’s cheer with all our might!”

“Yeah~!” (Crowd)

The village plaza’s completely become a concert hall.

Hmm? In a distant corner, a person wearing worn out clothing is cheering for

Firo as well.

I quietly leave the plaza.

“Firo’s popularity is amazing.” (Raphtlaia)

Raphtalia breaks out of the crowd, and follows behind me.

I nod honestly at her statement.

“That’s true. Melty told me beforehand, but the sales of her goods are also quite something.” (Naofumi)

Since he was convinced they would sell, the accessory merchant started producing and selling official Firo goods.

He set the price quite high, but with that many fans, they’ll sell out in no time.

With this much popularity, perhaps we can have a handshake event, and charge one gold per turn.

And finally, we can start producing dakimakura... or not.

“Ah... If I were to buy this... tomorrow’s food will...”

The person in the worn down robes hesitates over his purchase He obviously doesn’t have the finances... value your life more, dude.

It’s not my problem if you starve.

By the way, I was informed afterwards that Motoyasu’s three stole the stage and did a concert of their own.

Firo’s show became really heated.

“It seems today’s going to get really hectic.” (Naofumi)

The people from my village wanted to participate as well, so they've taken various jobs...

It seems that Kiel's stall is quite crowded.

What was she selling again?

When I look over, I see it's a crepe stand.

"Ah, Nii-chan!" (Kiel)

"Oy, you knew how to make crepes?" (Naofumi)

"Of course!" (Kiel)

An excited Kiel, in dog form, dexterously handles the crepe skins on the pan. She's selling them with the slaves usually on kitchen duty.

Hmph. I thought she was growing to be a gluttonous battle maniac, but she was able to cook as well.

I never expected to find a girly aspect in her at this point.

"Using Nii-chan's crepe as a base, and adding new ideas, this is my original crepe." (Kiel)

And what Kiel brought out was grilled fish...

She cuts the body into a texture like canned tuna, adds on sliced Bioplant fruit, and wraps it into the crepe skin.

"Crepes aren't just dessert, you know." (Kiel)

"Ah, yes, yes." (Naofumi)

That sort of crepe existed in my world as well, so it's not like I find it surprising.

It's a way of cooking befitting of Kiel.

"Imya-chan's also opened up a store." (Raphtalia)

In the Bazaar area, I found the stall Imya had opened.

The walls were lined with clothes she made especially for this day.

After appraising them, I find they are all of High Quality. Even so, the price is reasonable, and they're selling like hot cakes.

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

"If they're selling this well, why not raise the price?" (Naofumi) "But the cost of production was quite low, so selling it at any more than this would make me feel..." (Imya) "Ah, so it's about virtue. But the cost of your work itself needs to be included, so you should charge higher. Take note of that." (Naofumi) "Yes." (Imya)

She's quite an obedient child.

Raphtalia is carefully inspecting the cheap clothing... Wait, that's underwear.

I feel like I'm looking at something I shouldn't be.

It's that. The feeling I would get if I enter a lingerie shop. Perhaps.

"Is there anything you want?" (Imya)

"Let's see. Can you use slightly better materials to raise the defense?" (Raphtalia) "Um... Does underwear need defense? For Raphtalia-san, I would recommend these ones." (Imya)

And what Imya brought out was bright red... Victory Panties?^[2]

There's a hole in a strange area.

"Why are you selling something like that, Imya?" (Naofumi)

"Ah, yes. Master told me that these items would be in high demand, so it would be beneficial to stock them. I have something for Hero of the Shield-sama as well." (Imya) "...Why is there a hole in the one you're recommending me as well?" (Naofumi)

And this one is around the anal region.

Even for a tailed Demi-Human, the placing is strange.

“That’s odd... Master said the Hero of the Shield-sama would want something like this...” (Imya)

Damn Tailor. Just how rotten is her brain?

And for such depravity to exist in this alternate world where such a genre shouldn’t exist yet...

How frightening. The Tailor is a genius. That wasn’t a compliment.

Let me just declare this. If she were to come to my world, she would have no problems putting food on the table.

“Does it not look cool to you?” (Imya)

“Imya... I’m definitely raising you in a way that you won’t learn that garment’s true meaning.” (Naofumi) “...? Understood.” (Imya)

“Naofumi-sama! If I were to wear this, what would you think!?” (Raphtalia)
Raphtalia inquires with an excited expression. She’s holding the Victory Panties.

No matter how I look at it, she’s still a child on the inside. For her to see such a stimulating item, there’s no helping if she gets strangely excited.

“Raphtalia is already good looking, so I don’t think you have to dress up with things like that.” (Naofumi) “Is that true!? Wait, Naofumi-sama?” (Raphtalia)

“I think Raphtalia would do fine with a normal pair. How about it?” (Naofumi)
I point to a pair of undergarments similar to the one she usually wears.

“Um, Naofumi-sama. This may sound slightly rude, but you’re not getting aroused at all?” (Raphtalia) “Meaning?” (Naofumi)

Is it like a daughter asking their father?

I think it would be best for her to look natural, rather than wearing those overly-stimulating items.

“Ah, never mind. You don’t have to answer that one.” (Raphtalia)

Before I can say anything, Raphtalia puts the underwear back.

What’s wrong?

Did she guess my intentions?

It helps that Raphtalia’s so understanding.

Bird Competition

“Instead, I think Japanese clothing like Hakama and such would suit Raphtalia more.” (Naofumi) [3]

“Hakama? What do you mean by Japanese clothing?” (Imia)
Imia asked, tilting her head.

Because she usually specializes in Western dressmaking, she has an interest in this unknown genre.

“Er.. Japanese clothing also encompasses the Loincloth that Sadina recommended to Kiel.” (Naofumi) “Ah, so you mean Eastern clothing. In that case, should I investigate and make some?” (Imia) “That’s right..... since it will probably look good, let’s request it.” (Naofumi)
Raphtalia in Japanese clothing, huh.

“I understand. I’ll make it later. Do you have any preference for the materials?” (Imia) “It’s not being used for battle, so it’s fin... no, I’d like you to use quality materials to make it if you can. I’ll be waiting.” (Naofumi) “Oka~y.” (Imia)

Imia finished talking with me and started serving another customer.

Raphtalia in Japanese clothing, huh.....

“Abstain from having a wooden umbrella, unrefined sake, and leaves as clothing.” (Naofumi)

That could be passed off as a joke if she was still around 5 years old, but letting Raphtalia wear that kind of outfit now would be a crime.

“Why is it that sort of concept, Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)

Well, Raphtalia is a Tanuki....

So Shigaraki Ware only exists in my country. [4]

I don't really know if Shigaraki Ware has female tanuki though.

Now, how should I pacify Raphtalia?

“Ah, Naofumi-sama.” (Atla)

“Why are you here!?” (Fohl)

I was wondering who Imia was serving, but it turned out to be Atla and Fohl.

“Is it bad that I'm here? More than that, what are you guys doing?” (Naofumi) “I have been searching for Naofumi-sama.” (Atla)

“Atla! Don't approach him!” (Fohl)

“So, Fohl. What are you doing?” (Naofumi)

“He has been choosing clothes for Atla-san.” (Imia)

Imia replied.

In her hand was a cute dress and accessories.

So he's already bought them.

“In addition to that, he has commissioned some custom-made items. He's requested cute clothes and stuffed toys.” (Imia) “I see, I see.” (Naofumi)

As usual, he's been trying to turn his sister into a dress-up doll.

“Clothes that are easy to move in are better though.....” (Atla)

Atla announced ostentatiously.

Well, Gothic Lolita and other cute styles are indeed unsuited for battle.

Besides, a resolute-type like Atla probably doesn't like them.

"Atla, you won't be fighting, so it's fine for you to be at ease. Because you're still too young to be mobilized!" (Fohl) "Even if you say that...." (Atla)

Atla facepalmed and then turned to Imia, looking troubled.

"Have you finished the underwear I wanted?" (Atla)

"Ah, yes. It's an attractive pair of underwear."

...She took out a thin pair of underwear, adorned with pretty ornaments, that was more risqué than the pair she showed Raphtalia.

It was black.

However, the problem was that Atla had a child's body and appeared to be around 10 years old, so there was a disparity, or whatever it's called.

Or rather, Atla can't see, so why would she even want such a thing?

"Wh—" (Fohl)

Fohl became speechless.

I also feel the same way.

What does Atla intend on by wearing that!?

"Stop it, Atla! Nii-chan will never approve of that kind of underwear!" (Fohl)

"Onii-sama." (Atla)

Atla grasped Fohl's hand gently.

"The sister of your dreams doesn't exist. Please look at the real me. I'm

someone who would wear this kind of underwear and attack Naofumi-sama.”
(Atla) “What are you saying!?” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia shouts with all her strength.

“Wah....” (Fohl)

Fohl looked away from Atla in disbelief and glared at me for some reason.

Why does it feel like I’ve stolen his lover?

I don’t need that kind of development.

“Right. Since you know my feelings of it being wrong, stop your sister’s
rampage.” (Naofumi) “Gu... I get it. Nii-chan will make Atla return to normal.”
(Fohl) “Do your best.” (Naofumi)

“Don’t you say that! Now, Atla! We’re going to the next store, there’s still a
lot of things we need to buy!” (Fohl) “Ah, Naofumi-samaaaaaa!” (Atla)

Don’t reach your arm out to me whilst still holding the underwear.

That just looks like you’re trying to give me the underwear.

“Atla-san is amazing.” (Imia)

“Yeah.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia and Imia gazed at the scene with a faraway look and nodded to each other.

Was it just in my imagination that they were looking as if it was dusk?

“....Maybe I should also buy some.” (Raphtalia)

“What are you saying? I think normal underwear is fine for Raphtalia.”

(Naofumi) “.....I understand Atla-san’s feelings now.” (Imia)

Atla’s feelings?

While they were talking, I heard a somewhat noisy voice from outside the town.

If I’m not mistaken, that is where the hurriedly established grass racetracks that Taniko had sponsored were.

For the time being, Rat should be there, looking after the health of the monsters that were in the Filorial category.

‘Waaaaaaaah!’

I could hear cheers and angry bellows.

That was the mix of voices rejoicing their victory and the cries of defeat.

It was a little noisy, but it might be good for improving Raphtalia’s mood.

“Let’s go look at the racetracks.” (Naofumi)

“Ah, wait a minute.” (Raphtalia)

When I look at the Filorial racetracks, unknown Filorials and trainers hung their heads in defeat, and the Filorials from my place raised a victory cry.

As far as it goes, they were all guys who had changed into Filorial Queens and Kings.

Ah, Ren and Itsuki were keeping a lookout as guards.

“Kue.” (Filorial)

The Filorials located me and ran over.

“”Kueee?” (Filorials)

You won? The Filorials faced me and held their heads high, seeming to say ‘Praise me, Praise me’.

“Yes yes, alright.” (Naofumi)

It looks like this is the race under the command of Firo’s number one subordinate, the cutesy kid.

I don’t really want to address them, but I stroke them anyway.

And the angry bellows from before were?

Or so I wondered, but when I looked around, I saw visitors crying from losing their bets in the audience stands.

“That’s ridiculous! Our First Honor lost!?”

What’s with that horse-like name? [\[5\]](#)

“Even our legendary Shield Lion! What’s with that!?”

.....It seemed there were similarly named racehorse-like competitors everywhere.

“Are you these Filorials’ trainer!?” (Filorial Trainer)

The losing Filorials’ trainer approached me, who the Filorials had gathered around.

“If I’m not mistaken, you’re the lord of this land, the Hero of the Shield-sama.” (Filorial Trainer) “Yeah, that’s right?” (Naofumi)

“The Filorials from the Hero of the Shield-sama’s place are all excellent. By all

means, would it be acceptable to let our Filorials breed with yours?" (Filorial Trainer) ""Kue!?" (Filorials)

The Filorials from my place raised their voices in surprise.

And then... I looked at the Filorials of the fellow who brought up the conversation.

When I do, it seems like the losing Filorials were looking this way with somewhat heated gazes.

""KueKue!!"" (Filorials)

Everyone shook their heads and tried to hide behind my back.

Because there were so many of them, they weren't hidden at all.

Or rather, imitating normal Filorials despite being able to talk is unnecessary.
[6]

"Of course, we'll provide a mating fee, so won't you consider it?" (Filorial Trainer)

And then the trainer showed me how much he was willing to pay on an abacus-like tool.

....It's a considerable amount of money.

From the audience stands came cries of 'Ooh! Mating with those legendary Filorials!? That'll be the start of a new legend!', the audience holding their breath and watching attentively.

I want to nod along with the mood, but.....you know.

I glance behind me.

When I do, all the Filorials had their wings together, praying for my refusal with eyes like calves being sold off.

I see Rato and Taniko coming for a health check-up.

Rato shrugged casually and replied 'And if the Marquis decides on his own?'

Taniko also said 'Isn't it fine if it turns out well?' and nodded.

They knew just from experience.

"Ah.... I'm the person in charge for now, but the one who raised them is someone different, and I also want them have their own freedom. For that kind of thing.....naturally....that...." (Naofumi) Why are my words not coming out properly?

It's because it's not alright for me to arbitrarily decide on their engagement.

Also, they're Filorials raised by Motoyasu; I never had the right.

However, it might be good to accept the breeding charge.

If thoroughbred Filorials are added to my subordinates, then I'm sure our combat power will increase.

""Kueeeee....."" (Filorials)

Don't cling to me, guys.....

I heard from Melty that the opponent is quite a big organization.

Are they financed by Zeltbur? Betting is nearly everywhere there, like in the Coliseum.

Refusing is also a pain, and the prospects sound good.

If possible, I want the Filorial bonding to have been unsuccessful already and be done with it.

"Somehow it seems like these guys aren't interested. We can try to match my Filorials and your Filorials for a short time, but if it doesn't go well even then, will you give up?" (Naofumi)

And so we're compromising.

“I understand.” (Filorial Trainer)

Applause fills the racetracks.

It seems if it goes well, the Filorial Races get heated up.

“””Kueee...””” (Filorials)

The Filorials shake their heads in refusal.

I entered the ring and muttered so the other side couldn't hear.

“Rest assured. It's fine if you guys dislike it. It's alright to send them flying if they approach against your will, as long as there are no injuries.” (Naofumi)

“Kuee...” (Filorial)

“Also, I don't think Motoyasu, who deeply cares for you guys, will swallow the story.” (Naofumi)

Incidentally, well, this can also be said to the Filorials.

“There are those among you who aren't that dissatisfied, so please consider their feelings.” (Naofumi)

There's the main group who want to refuse and the group who doesn't really care.

“It's not like the whole group thinks the same. You guys have the initiative until the end. Understand?” (Naofumi) “””Kue!””” (Filorials)

I don't know if they understand, but the Filorials nod vigorously.

By the way, the Filorials' breeding season lasts for a month.

The neutral group mate with the Filorials in custody, the birds that become renowned later are a different story, and Motoyasu heroically fighting those Filorials is yet another story.

Well, the trouble with that later care was when some of the Filorials in custody lost their minds and decided to target Firo of all choices.

Firo's kicks were quite capable of paying barely-outrageous retributions.

They tried to chase the future queen, and so they were just getting what they deserved though.

The New Seven Sins

To celebrate the end of the Revival Festival, we raised a large bonfire in the plaza.

If a certain famous Japanese composition were playing in the background, it would be similar to a festival I knew of, but what's playing is Firo and her accompanying band.

When I head to my village to take a break, I see they're lively with some event over there as well.

It's already late, so it seems my villagers have already returned.

The Slaves, monsters, and Filo Rials are gathering for some reason.

"Now it's time to announce the results of the fifth popularity poll."

...What are they doing?

Fifth?

I get Raphtalia to cast invisibility magic on me, and I sneak closer.

"First, we asked the monsters, 『Who do you like most?』"

"The results were as follows. First place was Rat-san. Second was Wyndia-chan. Third was Hero of the Shield-sama."

The monsters let out their respective cries.

Seeing a gathering of Demi-Humans, monsters, and birds is quite surreal.

I think that as I gaze at Raphtalia. But her expression indicates that she

doesn't find anything strange about it.

“Raphtalia, what do you think about that scene?” (Naofumi)

“Meaning?” (Raphtalia)

“Well...” (Naofumi)

“Because of Naofumi-sama, everyone in the village can live their lives happily. I'm also having fun.” (Raphtalia) “Ah, I see.” (Naofumi)

Oh, the chairman of this meeting is supplementing some info.

“By the way, last time's results were Hero of the Shield-sama first, and Rat and Wyndia in a tie for second. It seems separating out the Filo Rials as a second category altered the results.”

The monsters nod among themselves.

“Next, we posed the same question to the Filo Rials. 『Who do you like most?』”

“The results were as follows. First place was Hero of the Shield-sama. Second was Melty-chan. Third was the Hero of the Spear-sama.”

“KUEE!” (Filo Rials)

The Filo Rials each begin chirping.

Why am I first?

Motoyasu tends to all of their needs, so isn't he a shoe in for first place?

How would Motoyasu react if he learned about this?

I kinda want to know, but then again, I kinda don't.

“The Hero of the Shield-sama's popularity is overwhelming. Next, we posed this question to everyone. 『Which boy do you think is coolest?』”

Applause fills the area.

“This one gives divided results every time. This time around, the results were as follows. First place goes to the Hero of the Spear-sama, second to Imya-chan’s uncle, and third to Fohl-kun.”

This is beginning to get pointless. Should I ignore them, and go home?

But why is Imya’s uncle second?

From what I see, he’s a diligent Mole-like Beastman.

And for Motoyasu and Fohl to be up there, they’re only polling about looks, right?

“As expected, Imya-chan’s uncle has captivated everyone.”

“Of course. The way he coolly swings his hammer as he repairs all of our equipment is simply charming.”

I give Raphtalia a questioning glance.

“Is that how it works?” (Naofumi)

“Well... He does quite a manly job, but he doesn’t act like it. He’s a well-mannered person. But why won’t anyone call him by his real name?”

(Raphtalia)

It’s because Imya’s family’s names are way too long.

I’m more curious as to how Raphtalia can remember it.

I’ve heard it once, but I can’t recall it.

It’s on the tip of my tongue, but it’s not coming.

Tri... I believe it started with something like that.

How should I put this, his name doesn't match his image at all.

In a fantasy story, a skilled blacksmith usually has bad habits, such as drinking. But that man is completely different.

He doesn't gamble. He doesn't drink. He doesn't use any luxury items like Tobacco.

I feel that he does a good job looking after the village children.

Wait, with that many factors, I guess I can agree with his ranking.

Making armor and weapons is skilled labor, so he won't have trouble with money.

The kitchen knives he gave me after his workshop was completed cut really well.

He's also diligent with maintenance. He's quite a skilled man.

And it goes without saying, because he's my slave, but I can get him to make things for free.

The Old Man at the weapon shop's the same. The blacksmiths of this world are good people.

He's taken Ren as an apprentice. Ren said he was a kind and polite teacher.

"Next, we asked this question to everyone. 『Which girl do you think is coolest?』"

Girls... is it?

This village has a high female to male ratio for some reason.

"This time, first place was taken by Sadina-neesan. Second was Rat-san. Third was the Magic Teacher."

Um... I don't think that's a ranking of coolness. That's just the three oldest...

More than cool, the Magic Shopkeeper gives off a reliable feeling.

In an intellectual way.

Oh, is it because they give off kind, polite impressions?

“Raphtalia, what’s your rank?” (Naofumi)

“Who knows...” (Raphtalia)

For them to have done this five times, these people must be bored.

No, these people are probably having fun doing this in secret.

Their polls are covering multiple genres.

But, it felt like a pain to deal with, so I went home and slept.

The next day.

I was called to the castle, so I warped there with my Portal. The Queen requested that I have an audience with a messenger from Silt Welt.

It was a Turtle-like... Beastman.

His tail is a snake? It looks quite plump, but is that my imagination?

“He’s of the Genmu race. It’s a famous race among the Demi-humans. This person is a famous noble in Silt Welt.” (Queen)

Genmu... Genbu?

What sort of naming convention is that?

Hakuko was the same.

“If it isn’t the Hero of the Shield-sama. I’ve been informed of your exploits. I’m glad to be given the honor of meeting you like this.” (Genmu) “I... see.” (Naofumi)

“During the brainwashing incident, they received word that a Demi-Human

tried to poison The Hero of the Shield-sama's village. They sent a messenger for the purpose of investigation." (Queen) "Yes. The culprit seems to be unrelated to us, but Hero of the Shield-sama, is it not time for you to leave Melromark behind, and pay a visit to our country of Silt Welt?" (Genmu) "Even if you ask me that..." (Naofumi)

Silt Welt is kinda far, and I get a sense of danger from it, so I'd like to avoid going if possible.

"Iwatani-sama, the Hero of the Shield, is currently assisting in moral reform within our country, so he does not yet have the free time to visit another country. I offer my greatest apologies." (Queen)

The Genmu raced Beastman looks at the Queen with gentle eyes.

I thought the situation would explode, but it seems a peaceful resolution will be possible.

"I see. But just how much longer will our people have to chant, 『Give us back the Hero of the Shield-sama』? Soon they will tire of it. I came here to ask the Hero-sama directly." (Genmu)

Even though his atmosphere is calm, he says what he wants.

"More importantly, how much longer will you stay in battle form? Are you that untrusting of us?" (Queen)

The Queen lets off killing intent for a moment, and the Genmu messenger smiles.

"... My, my, I always assume this form to protect myself. I simply forgot."

(Genmu)

The Genmu messenger... changes his form.

His turtle-like figure changes to that of a plump man.

He's a middle aged man that looks to be around 50.

He doesn't give off a bad impression.

I bet he used something like the Beast Transform Sadina and Kiel use.

“Well then, around when will the Hero of the Shield-sama be able to return? If I don't hear at least that, then I won't be able to return either.” (Genmu) “It's as of yet uncertain... I believe I already sent a letter asking to put this matter on hold until we overcome the next wave.” (Queen) “Yes, but the Shusakus are kicking up a storm.” (Genmu)

“Don't act like I don't know your true intentions.” (Queen)

What is this? It may be my imagination, but I feel the messenger's subordinate... The red youngster behind him is glaring at me.

As I direct my eyes to the young man, he breaks eye contact, but... His gaze was fiery.

“The people giving the orders are a bit overcome with desire, you see. They even sent the old, retired me to drag him out.” (Genmu) “Are you sure you're not the one pulling the strings in the first place?” (Queen) “My, my. I don't think that this conversation had anything to do with that.” (Genmu)

The Queen and the messenger's cold exchange continued.

But I've also begun to pick up the intent of the discussion.

That messenger is probably of the faction that does not wish for me to venture to his country. But for some reason, he was dispatched. The red one behind him is of the faction that wants to drag me there, so the messenger's glancing at him to make sure his behavior seems natural.

“Ah, right... Hero of the Shield-sama?” (Genmu)

“What is it?” (Naofumi)

“I've heard that some Hakuko are troubling your village, but what is the truth on the matter?” (Genmu)

Should I tell the truth here?

I'm counting on Atlas and Fohl to add to my fighting force.

From their stories, they've fallen quite a bit, but... what sort of position do the Hakuko hold in Silt Welt?

If I affirm the statement, I can't tell what will happen to the two.

Even so, deceiving him will be hard.

Here, I should give an answer that sounds like me.

"No idea. I'm only raising whatever slaves seem useful to me. I have no interest in their race. But from what I've heard, they're of mixed blood." (Naofumi)
I subtly give the info that they're my subordinates. I'm well aware that these people won't listen.

"But if you plan on raising your hand to my subordinates, you'd better expect an appropriate response." (Naofumi) "I see. Mixed blood... I understand. In the name of the Hero of the Shield..." (Genmu)

The messenger put his hands together, and began praying.

Does this mean... he's pulling back? The red one seems like he wants to say something, but when I fix my gaze on him, he shuts his mouth.

It would be best to warn Atlas and Fohl about this.

After that, the conversation shifted to idle chatter, and ended with a lecture directed at the Queen to end all Demi-Human discrimination in its entirety. Finally, it shifted to talks about the next wave.

The next wave will call Houou, a monster sealed to the west.

A week before, we'll head to the place where it's sealed, and wait on standby. We'll evacuate the surroundings, discuss matters with the other countries, and propose various plans. Etcetera.

Well, it was pretty much like a guild meeting.

Silt Welt would be dispatching a large amount of flying troops. Finally, the meeting was over.

After the messenger gave a salute and left the room, the Queen untenses her muscles and addresses me.

“Iwatani-sama, I appreciate your cooperation.” (Queen)

“I get the feeling the turtle-like person doesn’t want to bring me back.” (Naofumi) “He’s of the moderate faction, and he’s famous for objecting to relying solely on the Hero of the Shield.” (Queen) “What sort of country is Silt Welt?” (Naofumi)

If I think about it, I don’t know anything.

“It’s a country where the four great races sit on top. In the past, the Hakuko were at the very top, but at the moment, the other three are the ones in power.” (Queen)

They were at war with Melromark for a long period of time.

But due to Trash’s efforts, the Hakuko’s forces were greatly ravaged And the Genmu are of the moderate faction, and they don’t have as great of a belief in the shield?

No, it’s hasty to make a generalization about the entire race.

“The ones behind this are the Shusaku race. They’re one of the top three.” (Queen) “Fumu...” (Naofumi)

“If I had to say, then they’re supposed to be neutral, but... That youth seemed to be a radical. Even though I understood that, it was quite tiring.” (Queen) “You’ve known that turtle person for a while, haven’t you?” (Naofumi) “I’m surprised you guessed it.” (Queen)

As I thought.

They were exchanging cold words, but I didn't feel animosity.

"It seems he was worried whether the Hakuko were meddling with affairs here. Whether they were getting special treatment as the Hero of the Shield's subordinates." (Queen) "Would that be bad for the power balance there?" (Naofumi)

"The Hakuko were the head of the radical party. Well, the king's gone, and they've quieted down, but people are wary of whether or not they'll rise again." (Queen) "So what was the result? I couldn't really see what was decided." (Naofumi) "It seems that they were satisfied with Iwatani-sama's response." (Queen)

They're trying to avoid pointless war as well.

My actions should be more of a reason for celebration over there. There's no reason for them to be angry.

Their long time enemy, Melromark, has possession of the Hero of the Shield, and as a result, many of their enemies within that country were sent to execution.

"And besides those with the blood of heroes, mixed bloods are usually treated as separate races, so... The Hakuko that are your subordinates will probably not be looked at as Hakuko." (Queen)

So just because that Trash's sister's blood runs through their veins, they're already a different category.

I don't get the reason behind that.

Well, I also don't know if it's the same with the other Hakuko.

"I've troubled you all day, haven't I?" (Queen)

"Don't mind it. Going to war would be even more of a pain." (Naofumi)
If the Queen merely sent them home here, we may have gone to war.

The Queen seems to be skilled in diplomacy, so it probably wouldn't have gone that far, but it would be best to quiet them down.

“I think that messenger group will be paying a visit to your territory soon. Be on your guard.” (Queen) “Will they cause trouble, even among my Demi-Humans?” (Naofumi) “There’s a skillful moderate with them, so it should be fine.” (Queen) “... got it.” (Naofumi)

I part with the Queen, and return to the village by Portal. Melty was calculating the earnings from the Revival Festival, so I went to her estate to check it out.

On the way, I met another idiot asking me to revive their deceased, and a poor-looking lazy man. I had the town’s soldiers take them to appropriate places.

And I passed by a storeroom with bags of coins stacked up like mountains.

Ah, I was overcome with greed for a second.

If I take this, I won’t go to prison, right?

“Naofumi, just in case, can you check these?” (Melty)

“Sure.” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia’s training with Fohl in my village.

And Melty left managing the money to me while she left to manage the clean-up of the festival.

Wow... We earned this much from that festival alone?

I’ve climbed this high from having nothing on me but the clothes on my back.

I slowly lift up one of the money bags, and check the contents.

And gold coins chime as they fall to the ground.

... Fufufu. What should I do with this money?

Should I invest in something bigger? Should I improve the workshops, or expand the lab?

We’ll need to get some progress from Rat’s monster creation.

To complete it within a month's time, what do we have to do?

“Ku...!” (Naofumi)

It happened as I was laughing to myself.

All of a sudden, my head started hurting as if something were screwing through my brain, and my vision began warping.

Curse Series. The New Seven Sins.

You have unlocked the Shield of Gene Modification.

You have unlocked the Shield of Environmental Pollution.

You have unlocked the Shield of Social Injustice.

The amount of times you can modify the Bioplant has increased!

Curse Series, Shield of Gene Modification Enhancement!

The Extent to which you can Expand the Bioplant has increased!

Curse Series, Shield of Gene Modification Enhancement!

The Shield of Gene Modification has forcefully unlocked the Shield to Poverty!

The Shield of Gene Modification has forcefully unlocked the Shield of Excess Happiness!

etc...

_____!

My head hurts, and I stagger on my feet.

What!?

What the hell is happening to me!?

New Seven Sins?

What did I even do to unlock something like that?

Gu... I feel a dark power coming from the Shield - It's corroding my emotions.

It's not like with my Shield of Anger. I don't feel an endless stream of rage erupting from my stomach.

If it was something like that, I could contain it.

But... It was completely different.

More of a... something... I have no idea what to do.

You have completed the New Seven Deadly Sins Series!

"Raph...talia..." (Naofumi)

My vision goes hazy as I begin to lose consciousness. I call out the name of the woman who saved my life, and extend my hand to the air before me as if to grasp something. I hit the hard ground.

And my consciousness drifted to somewhere far, far away.

Author's Note

The polls have been closed.

Thank you for all of your votes.^[7]

Gene Modification

Day 1.

Slowly getting up, I check my surroundings. [8]

And then I was subjected to a feeling of ecstasy, more so than before.

I wonder why I didn't think of this until now? It would be fine to just solve everything with the shield's power, without using money.

I check the shield that transformed just now.

...It's already awakened from the start, and I can't enhance it at all.

However, there should be a surplus of abilities as a rule. [9]

Shield of the New Seven Sins (Awakened) 0/0 UR

Ability Sealed..... Equipment bonus, Gene Modification, Human Experimentation, Social Injustice = Slave Labor Ability Increase, Curse of Poverty, Prosperity of Excess Corruption, Narcotic Compounding, Taboo Alchemy Technique, Forbidden Sorcery, Study of Sealing, Food of Sealing, Sleep Mechanical Engineering, Core of Magical Science.....

Special Effects..... Bio-Custom, Logic of Life, Dragon Pulse Control, Magic Up, Emergency Convening, Alchemic Correction^[10], Harvesting Limit Breakthrough, Rapid Growth Supplement, Pharmacy Skill Increase, Alchemy Skill Increase, Ore Creation, Magic Gem Production, MP Recovery (Extra Large), SP Recovery (Extra Large), EP Recovery (Extra Large), Cooking Skill Increase.....

It's really magnificent. And as for Item Creation, I have a full set of everything I need.

There's a bit of a fatal flaw in regards to defense, but it doesn't seem like I'll

need anything else as long as I have this shield.

If I try to inspect everything, the sky will be dark by the time I finish. [11]

My head has cleared, just by changing into this shield.

Now then, let's reaffirm the conclusion I've come to.

What I have concluded after having my intelligence increased by the shield's power.

That is, in order to survive, I first need to prepare the environment before the world is ruined by the waves.

Unlike the petty methods so far, there's a need to change the environment on a grand scale.

Therefore, I should eradicate the majority of the people living in this world for once.

I should instigate them immediately – the masses who are easy to manipulate, the religion that manipulates those masses, and the royalty who control the country.

The people of this world are rotting.

First I should choose the survivors, exterminate the others, and settle my anxiety about the future, then challenge the waves and save the world.

Otherwise this world will eventually perish on its own, without the waves.

I must guide them.

“Now then, I need to use this shield's maximum power to prepare the environment at once.” (Naofumi)

I exit the room and head towards the village.

That's right. I have Bioplant Seeds in my pocket.

I deliberately take out a Bioplant Seed and call on the Plant Modification icon.

With a *beep*, the modification icon appeared, and I smiled.

What the hell is this, it's too obsolete.

No matter how I look at it, it's obviously at the level of a toy made by a child.

Manual operation that only raises and lowers the established stats, it's too ridiculous.

I activate the Gene Modification skill concurrently.

When I do, minor static occurs in the Plant Modification screen, and a new entry....the Free Word entry appears.

What should I make?

Hmm... first I need a castle, to be used as a base.

I enter the word 'castle'.

A list of the equipment and materials required for the modification appears.

....It seems I'll be able to cater with a large quantity of things from Rat's laboratory.

Let's immediately confiscate the things in Rat's laboratory.

I headed towards the village at a quick pace.

"Ah, it's Master~ Welcome back." (Firo)

"Oh, if it isn't Firo. What's up?" (Naofumi)

Firo, who is one of the monsters that submissively obeys me, comes to greet me together with the slaves.

I have faith in these guys to some extent.

They're my retainers and will be good to spare when I transform the world.

"You see~ we're hungry, so we've been waiting for Master to return~" (Firo)

“Sorry, Firo. Now is not the time.” (Naofumi)

“Aw...everyone has been looking forward to it.” (Firo)

“Is that so.” (Naofumi)

But time is limited.

I have to quickly head to the laboratory and procure the equipment.

....That’s right.

I call up the Gene Modification skill again to modify the Bioplant.

I enter ‘Bread-producing Plant’ in the Free Word entry.

Oh?

I have both the required materials and the skill on hand.

I held out a Bioplant Seed and activated the skill.

“Master?” (Firo)

“Shield-niichan?” (Kiel)

The slaves all tilt their heads and watch my experiment intently.

The Bioplant shines, scattering the wind together with the light, and changes into the shape I imagined.

There was a flash of light, the wind was dispelled, and my intended Bioplant was complete. [\[12\]](#)

“Watch.” (Naofumi)

I dropped the completed Bread-producing Bioplant into the ground.

The Bioplant made a conspicuous sound and grew rapidly, producing large pieces of bread.

""Oooh!"" (Slaves)

Firo and the slaves let out their voices en masse, looking dumbfounded.

I'm a little shocked that they're surprised about something on this level, but they seem delighted so it doesn't feel bad.

"Can we eat this?" (Firo)

"Of course." (Naofumi)

""Ya~y!"" (Slaves)

Firo and the slaves each pick up a piece of bread and start eating.

"Delicious~" (Kiel)

"It doesn't have as much flavor as Master's cooking, but it's yummy~" (Firo)
It seems everyone is satisfied.

Then let's head to the next destination.

"Niichan! Can't you make a Crepe Tree?" (Kiel)

Kiel asked, tugging on my shirt.

This guy used to be a fellow of humble birth who clashed with me at first, but has turned over a new leaf and now serves me.

She's a friend of Raphtalia's, and is now quite a reliable guy.

I need to hurry up and go procure the goods in Rat's laboratory now, but I guess I could make something on that level as a reward for her efforts so far.

"I'll do it later." (Naofumi)

"You definitely have to, okay." (Kiel)

“Yeah.” (Naofumi)

When I nodded, Kiel started eating together with Firo and the others, indulging in her piece of bread.

I enter Rat’s laboratory and touch the slate established as the laboratory’s kernel. [13]

Hmmm.... As far as it goes, the security is flawless, possibly because it was made together with me.

The experimental Bioplant’s defense mechanism functioned with no incidents.

I suppose it won’t allow any ridiculous situations like getting hacked.

However....the security is childish. If I was serious, I could break through in less than 10 seconds.

Access to the Kernel Seed....it’s formed with quite a childish frame.

I ought to modify it more extensively; it will be tough to handle it from the beginning.

I use the Gene Modification skill, make good use of the items in the laboratory, and attempt to upgrade the Kernel Seed.

It’ll be around 30 minutes to completion.

Then I’ll need to recruit a reliable accomplice while waiting for it to finish.

“Oh? Marquis?” (Rat)

While I was tampering with the Kernel Seed, Rat nonchalantly entered the room.

“What’s the matter? There aren’t any experiments, and the equipment I requested hasn’t arrived, so there’s nothing to do.” (Rat)

Right now, it would be a bother if I carelessly tampered with this woman.

“Yeah, I’m swinging by to engage in a sudden check up.” (Naofumi) “....to engage in?” (Rat) ^[14]

“To do.” (Naofumi)

“I see.” (Rat)

That was close. Rat looked at me with doubtful eyes.

If I say something carelessly, I’ll waste too much time.

Let’s proceed as carefully as possible.

“Marquis, the next machine we need is a Chemical Amplifier—” (Rat)
Fu... when I look at such childishness, I can’t stop laughing.

I wonder how much time was spent on the vulgar experiment she did recently.

“Marquis, what are you laughing at?” (Rat)

“No, I’m just thinking that you’re talking so happily.” (Naofumi) “I guess. Given that I’ve finally gotten to research properly, I’ve got to show my enthusiasm.” (Rat)

Outside the room, Rat’s beloved monster was swimming in a cultivation chamber and it waved its hand this way.

Hmmm....

Suddenly our gazes meet.

.....

“!” (Monster)

With a bang, the Monster hits the cultivation chamber and, pointing at me, it alerts Rat.

“What’s wrong?” (Rat)

Hn? Did it notice my Hacking?

Should I modify that monster’s mouth shut?

And, while I was pondering, it lost interest and began swimming again.

“I wonder what that was about? Mii-kun.” (Rat)

Rat’s partner waves at me from within the cultivation chamber.

Well, it’s fine. If it doesn’t plan on doing anything unnecessary, I won’t do anything to it.

I don’t know if this woman agrees with my thinking, but it’s sufficient to deal with it after I finish upgrading the Kernel Seed.

“So, Marquis. Did you discover any problems?” (Rat)

“Research seems a little delayed. You should be quicker.” (Naofumi)

“Obviously it wouldn’t be good if I don’t ensure its safety.” (Rat) “Limit the duration. You should bring forth definitive results while it’s safe.” (Naofumi)

“Marquis, did something bad happen? You seem to be in a bad mood.” (Rat)

Rat looked at me suspiciously.

At this rate, it seems my expected results won’t be produced by the fixed date.

I expected to treat her like an assistant, but.... I wonder how it’ll turn out.

“We’ve decided to prioritize life, right? Doing something dangerous and killing it will only cause regret.” (Rat) “I see, you have a point.” (Naofumi)

It's useless to continue talking any more.

Her type probably needs to be shown results.

She'll probably want to be my assistant after she sees the masterpiece I've made by modifying the Kernel Seed.

"Now then, I have somewhere I need to go after this." (Naofumi) "Marquis? Well, it's not like this is the first time the Marquis' behavior has been erratic..." (Rat)

I produced a strong security system and left Rat's laboratory behind.

"Ah, Naofumi-sama, I heard about it. Apparently you made another strange thing with the Bioplants." (Raphtalia) "Oh, well if it isn't Raphtalia." (Naofumi)

When I left the laboratory and headed into the village, the person I was looking for, Raphtalia, noticed me and started talking.

Until I found Raphtalia, I had been reinspecting the village.

Currently, there are no problems with the goods.

When I made an appearance at the Monster Hut, the monsters all swarmed around me.

They seemed to sense it instinctively. That they'll become stronger if they follow me.

I can't understand why we stopped rearing the monsters halfway.

Well, it's not like there aren't any that we can count on somewhat for combat, now that Gaelion has been aiding the Class Up, but their foundation is too low.

They're all monsters that have already hit their limit, but only in regards to Levels and, to a certain extent, growth correction.

"Just then, Kiel-kun and Firo were boasting that Naofumi made it in front of

them.” (Raphtalia) “Hm, isn’t that natural? That level of ability is no trouble at all.” (Naofumi) “....? Th-that’s amazing. So Naofumi-sama’s shield was capable of that sort of thing.” (Raphtalia) “Yeah.” (Naofumi)

Since it was just about midday, everyone had gathered in the Dining Hall.

They noticed us, and came to greet us.

“Now then, Raphtalia.” (Naofumi)

I think it’s better to be frank with Raphtalia before I announce my intentions.

“I’ve discovered a conclusion to certain thoughts and have decided to change my actions from now on.” (Naofumi) “...!? Um, what are you talking about?” (Raphtalia) ^[15]

I thought Raphtalia would understand and that there would be no need to explain, but it seems to be necessary to tell her personally.

“You see, the royalty of this world, the nobles, merchants, all the masses, they were all rotten from the start. And it’s evident that even if they endure the waves, they’ll still perish in the end.” (Naofumi) “Well... I won’t deny that.” (Raphtalia)

“And so I’ve come to the conclusion that we must first to clean up the rotten trash, and then challenge the waves with only the chosen people.” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama?” (Raphtalia)

I held out my hand towards Raphtalia and declared.

“Raphtalia. The world is now controlled by my hands, and I shall share half of it with you. Now, won’t you rule the world together with me!?” (Naofumi) ^[16]

“.....” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia drew the sword on her back and took a stance, facing me of all things.

“Who are you!? You’re not Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)

Floating Sky Fortress

“Wha...”

What was that!?

Why is Raphtalia glaring at me with such hostility!?

“What art thou saying, Raphtalia!?” (Naofumi)

“Even though the Naofumi-sama I knew was a bit twisted, he would never do something like this!” (Raphtalia) “I’m always evolving. Mine values hath merely shifted!” (Naofumi) “Even so, there’s a limit to that. Who are you?” (Raphtalia) Ku... Why doth she be opposing me?

“Ah, Naofumi-sama. Did something happen?” (Atlas)

Atlas appears with Fohl.

“Atlas-chan, Naofumi-sama’s acting strange. Can you sense anything? No, he may even be a fake.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia holds back her anger as she asks Atlas.

What be there to doubt? What’s strange about me?

The strange one is Raphtalia be it not?

Thy Raphtalia would never deny me.

She should accept my new thoughts.

“Let’s see...” (Atlas)

Atlas stareth fixedly at my face. Though she canst see.

“Dost thou continue to doubt me!?” (Naofumi)

“No matter how I look at it, it’s strange, Atlas!! There’s something wrong with him!”

“Ah, don’t worry. He’s no fake.” (Atlas)

“Is that true? Then what happened to him!?” (Raphtalia)

Perhaps she activated some Hengen Musou Skill. Raphtalia stares at me.

“He seems to be... wearing a strange aura. Is that shield the source of it?”

(Raphtalia) “Raphtalia-san.” (Atlas)

“What is it?” (Raphtalia)

“There are no problems. There is nothing wrong with Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

“Even with the way he’s speaking!?” (Raphtalia)

“Yes. I will continue to yearn for Naofumi-sama no matter what he becomes.”

(Atlas) “Doesn’t that mean you admit that something’s happened to him!?”

(Raphtalia)

Raphtalia and Atlas are more heated than usual.

Hearing the commotion, Ren, Motoyasu, Itsuki, Rishia, and the other slaves exit the dining hall and come here.

“What? What’s up?” (Ren)

“Is it a fight? How rare.” (Itsuki)

“Father-in-Law, I’d like to speak with you about my Firo-tan’s health.”

(Motoyasu)

Ren and the others do come over.

“Oh my, if it is not the pieces of garbage who self-destructed with their own useless knowledge. Wilst thy not stay back!?” (Naofumi) “!?”

Ren's eyes lose color, and he looks towards Raphtalia.

She's not someone trash like you should be laying eyes on!

"Fuee... Did something happen!?" (Rishia)

"Then should I stay back? I feel that something's off." (Itsuki) "Don't run away!" (Rishia)

I tire of these fools' questions.

More importantly, Raphtalia.

Why doth Raphtalia deny me!?

"Father-in-Law, what happened?" (Motoyasu)

"Motoyasu, you shut up." (Naofumi)

"Atlas-chan, can you still say the same things after seeing that?" (Raphtalia)
Upon Raphtalia's enquiry, Atlas nods twice and speaks.

"Yeah, I'll declare it as many times as I must. There's nothing wrong with Naofumi-sama. Do you see anything strange about him?" (Atlas) "Of course! A lot! What was with his line back there!? He declared something about world domination, you know!" (Raphtalia) "Then let us set out to dominate the world. If Naofumi-sama wishes for it, it must be necessary." (Atlas)
Atlas acknowledges me in my entirety.

Raphtalia never blindly accepted me like this, but at the very least, she understood me.

So why is the Raphtalia before my eyes failing to understand? What doesn't she see?

... That's it!

“You over there! Are you not an imposter!?” (Naofumi) “What are you saying all of a sudden!?” (Raphtalia) “It’s true, isn’t it? The Raphtalia I know would never display animosity towards me!” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama, let’s have a long talk after you return to normal. Now stay still for a second.” (Raphtalia)
Pointing her blade at me, Raphtalia lowers her stance, and prepares her Chi to use a Hengen Musou skill.

As I thought.

Raphtalia would never point her sword at me.

This must be an assassin sent by Trash. This must be his plan.

“I won’t let you.” (Atlas)

“Atlas-chan, please step aside.” (Raphtalia)

Atlas throws Fohl to the floor, and steps forward.

The fake and Atlas began exchanging dialogue.

At that time, Firo appeared, and spoke with a curious look on her face.

“Onee-chan, what’s wrong?” (Firo)

“Firo, there’s nothing wrong with me. Naofumi-sama’s acting strange, so please help me capture him.” (Raphtalia) “Eh... Master seems to be having more fun than usual.” (Firo) “There’s nothing fun about it! Please help me! Quickly!” (Raphtalia) “Firo.” (Naofumi)

I call out to Firo, and she stuffs her face with some Bread Fruit, and turns to me.

The chance of this Firo being a fake is low.

I mean, the fact that she’s still eating the Bread Fruit I made points to her validity.

“What~?” (Firo)

“Buy me some time by fighting that fake. I don’t want to be anywhere near a faker like that.” (Naofumi)

I haven’t finished preparations for battle.

If I stay here, I don’t know what sort of thing will happen to me.

Luckily, I had just completed the modifications for the Kernal Seed at the lab.

By now, it should be answering to my beck and call.

“Got it.” (Firo)

“Firo, please move.” (Raphtalia)

“No.” (Firo)

“I will assist you, Firo-chan.” (Atlas)

“Yay.” (Firo)

Firo and Atlas step onto the front lines to defend me.

Next to the Fake, Ren, Itsuki, and Rishia prepare for battle.

“I don’t know what’s happening, but Naofumi’s been devoured by some curse, right?” (Ren) “... If Atlas-chan, who’s infinitely more perceptive than us, says that’s the real Naofumi-sama, then I’m certain that’s the case.” (Raphtalia) “But

for Naofumi to become like this at this point in time... What should we do?” (Ren) “For now, let’s stop him. We need to have him overcome his curse.”

(Raphalia) “That’s how it is. Naofumi, I’m greatly in debt to you. That’s why I’ll

lend my power to Raphtalia to return you to your senses.” (Ren) “Ren... Not

once, but twice!? You damn traitor!” (Naofumi)

I saved him, and gave him an opportunity to rehabilitate himself, yet he sides with that imposter!?

Just how ungrateful are these bastards?!

“Marquis! What’s happening!?” (Rat)

It seems Rat heard the commotion and came over.

That means the research lab is currently empty.

How careless of her.

“Ah, if it isn’t Rat.” (Naofumi)

“I didn’t ask you about me. I’m asking you what the hell is going on!” (Rat)

“That imposter over there is pointing her blade at me.” (Naofumi) “Imposter...

No matter how I look at it, the Marquis is the strange one here.” (Rat) “Hmm...

So you’ll be siding with them? In the end you’re just an incompetent Alchemist,

are you?” (Naofumi) “What is the meaning of this? Why are you directing those

words at me?” (Rat) “This is the meaning of it.” (Naofumi)

“Wha-” (Rat)

I hit an icon on the shield, and remotely control the modified Bioplants in the Lab.

A cracking sound rings out. Using the power of the land... The dragon pulse’s energy as food, the research laboratory begins moving. It lifts off the ground, and starts floating above me.

Since its size didn’t change, it’s about the size of a gymnasium.

A ladder descends from above.

I grasp it, and order it to lift.

“What the hell is that!?” (Rat)

“It’s my newest Bioplant Modification. The Sky Fortress, the Castle Plant!”

(Naofumi) “Oy, oy... Naofumi, are you really doing this!?” (Ren) “It’s a flying

fortress?” (Itsuki)

“Fuee! What’s that!?” (Rishia)

“Slaves and monsters of the village! From here on out, I will be venturing

forward to create a new world. Those who wish to follow my dream, come aboard! I'll leave the choice to you. If you choose to become my ally, I'll be benevolent. If you wish to be my enemy, I'll have no mercy!" (Naofumi)
The slaves each turn to one another, and start speaking. The air is filled with noise.

What is there to hesitate about?

We'll be wiping out the fakes, and the traitors that follow them. We'll be reconstructing the world.

"Everyone, due to some strange influence, Naofumi-sama's gone strange. Don't be coerced by his sweet words." (Raphtalia)

The fake shamelessly puts on a Raphtalia-esque act to incite the slaves.

It's useless.

Look at reality.

"Niichan! I'll follow you!" (Kiel)

"Uwah! Kiel, stop!" (Imya)

"Kiel-kun!" (Raphtalia)

Kiel changes to her puppy form, knocks down Ren, and grabs the ladder.

Getting an attack from Kiel, who he thought was an ally, seems to have greatly confused Ren.

"Firo-tan's enemy is our enemy as well." (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu is siding with our camp, it seems.

He may have some problems with his mind, but his skill is certain.

I'll use whoever I can.

"A-Atlas! Uwah! Sto-! Uwaaaahhh!" (Fohl)

Fohl starts running. He reaches out his hand.

Well, as long as Atlas is on this side, he'll listen to my orders.

I'll bring him along.

Motoyasu holds off Itsuki and Rishia. The fake party can't launch any large attacks.

While he held them off, the monsters were raising their voices in approval, so I ordered the Bioplant to retrieve them.

... Gaelion came flying over. Taniko's on his back.

"KYUA!?" (Gaelion)

"What's happening this time?" (Taniko)

"Naofumi-sama's become strange due to a curse." (Raphtalia) "Again?"
(Taniko)

"KYUAAAAAAAA!" (Gaelion)

Gaelion changes to his small form, and flies towards me.

Good. I'll grant you the modifications you always wished for.

Is what I thought, but.

"No." (Taniko)

Taniko grasps his tail to stop him.

"What do you plan on doing by following that Hero of the Shield?" (Taniko) "He wants to become strong. Nature has its limits. He won't become strong as he is right now. As he wishes, I'll make him the strongest, so don't get in his way!"

(Naofumi) “Not happening! No good will come out of sending him to you as you are now.” (Taniko) “Hmph. I thought I would use you as a replacement for Rat. How foolish.” (Naofumi)

Now then. The slaves have each decided who they will follow.

“Henceforth, we will be moving to a location suitable for world domination. Farewell, imposter. How dare you imitate my Raphtalia? Eventually the real one will appear, and you’ll have your comeuppance. You better be prepared for it.” (Naofumi) “Like I’d let that happen!” (Raphtalia)

The fake brandishes her sword, and jumps towards me.

Well well well. At least this fake’s resistance is first class.

“I won’t permit it!” (Atlas)

“Onee-chan, don’t get in the way!” (Firo)

Atlas and Firo work together to block her sword. Firo kicks her away.

“Kya!”

It happened in midair. I immediately use vines from the Castle Plant to wrap around Atlas and Firo to recover them.

This much distance is enough.

I’ll need to prepare magic and skills to intercept them.

“Farewell!” (Naofumi)

I order the Castle Plant, and it releases a smokescreen for escape, and a simple magic jamming to prevent counterattacks. I worry about the fuel consumption as I cast a barrier as well, just in case.

At the same time the smokescreen is released, the castle starts moving to escape.

“Ah, wait! Ku... smoke!” (Raphtalia)

“If I shoot it down, the Floating Fortress will fall to the ground, and the people onboard will take heavy damage. Do you want me to shoot it down?” (Itsuki)

“You can’t, Itsuki-sama! If you do something like that...” (Rishia) “Understood.” (Itsuki)

Fufufu, the fake and her useless Heroes watch us leave with dark expressions.

The faker extends her hand towards me.

“Naofumi-sama——!” (Raphtalia)

I have nothing to offer to a fake.

If I have time to look at that piece of garbage, I’d spend it looking for the real one.

Following my orders, the Castle Plant sets out over the ocean. No one can follow us anymore.

Human Experimentation

“Ara-?” (Sadina)

The place I specified the fortress to move to was Sadina’s Secret Base.

Below, I see Sadina waving her hand at me.

“Hmm? Master, we’re getting off already?” (Firo)

“Yeah, the fuel efficiency of Flying Castle Mode is really bad, so we can’t fly for long periods of time.” (Naofumi)

I change it back to Laboratory mode. The Castle Plant extends its roots deep underground and begins recharging.

I still have much that I have to do.

I’ll need to gather as much energy as I can.

“What’s up, Naofumi-chan? You made quite a grand entrance.” (Sadina) “Fumu, I believe that you were Raphtalia’s guardian, right?” (Naofumi) “No, right now that’s Naofumi-chan.” (Sadina)

“She was a fake. She trampled upon my ideals.” (Naofumi)

I explain the events that had just transpired to Sadina.

And Sadina blinks rapidly in surprise.

“... Ara... That’s what...” (Sadina)

She nods with an indifferent expression.

“What sort of guardian are you? You can’t even tell the difference between the real thing and a fake.” (Naofumi) “To have fooled Onee-san, that must have been quite a fake...” (Sadina) “Yeah!” (Naofumi)

What a useless protector!

How stupid is she, for her not to notice she was guarding the wrong person.

“Master, what will you do from now on?” (Firo)

“You’re going to set out for world domination, right? What country are we bringing down first?” (Atlas) “Not yet!” (Naofumi)

Like I can invade when I don’t have a good grasp on my own forces yet.

What’s more, if Raptalia isn’t here, there’s no point in me ruling this world in the first place.

That means there’s one thing I must do.

Within the Castle Plant, I must carry out greater modifications.

I order it to search for enemies.

I raise the output to the max.

I don’t need to consider the consequences. Just once is enough.

The Castle Plant’s internal lights flicker as the output raises higher and higher.

“Wha!?”

“W-what is this?”

Starting with the people in the Castle Plant, then the people of the world. Every lifeform on the planet felt, for a single moment, the feeling of some magic passing through their body. The entire world turned its head at the strange phenomena.

But at most, the people would think of it as part of their imagination, or some minor earthquake.

From the power released by the plant, I could sense the location of each and every one of my slaves.

“Good!” (Naofumi)

The person I want to find. There is only one of them in the world.

Where is Raphtalia?

Of course, I don't mean that fake. Where's the real Raphtalia?

For that reason, I use the hair from her that I had fed into the Shield to designate her as a search target.

The stone slate in front of me displays the words, 'Searching in progress.' The system computes the large amount of data at a high speed.

... Search completed. Results...

“What?” (Naofumi)

I can't do anything. I'm at a loss for words.

1 Match.

When I excitedly brought up the location, I saw that it was just the fake.

This can't be... Does that mean the real one is already gone from this world...?

Absurd! My Raphtalia would never be killed off so easily.

But, I have to look at the truth before me.

There's no way the system I made would lie to me.

“U...uu...” (Naofumi)

Extreme despair clouds my heart. It feels like I'm being strangled.

"Master, you're crying. Are you alright?" (Firo)

"Niichan, did something sad happen?" (Kiel)

"Naofumi-sama...? Please stop crying. If there's something I can do to stop your tears, please tell me. I'll do anything." (Atlas) "Atlas! Don't say things like that. And this guy! He's really crying! They're real tears." (Fohl)

How calm these people are.

Even when Raphtalia is no longer in this world!

If this is the truth, then for what purpose am I living in this world...!?

Anyways, when was Raphtalia killed?

I can't remember anything of the sort.

Was it when she was out training? Or after she returned?

The fake did a good job of playing the part. She must have thoroughly investigated Raphtalia.

That means the quickest way to find out would be to capture her and torture the information out of her.

... No, if Raphtalia's not here, there's no point in the first place.

Right.

If Raphtalia is gone, then I just have to revive her.

But since I have no idea where or how she died, I have no way of finding her remains.

What do I do?

"Naofumi-chan, what happened? You were just crying, then you made a serious expression, and from then on, various emotions have been rolling around your face." (Sadina) "... If I recreate her through a Homunculus... No, that would just be making a fake like that other one." (Naofumi)

Yeah, that fake is definitely a Homunculus in Raphtalia's form.

From the information this Shield imparted unto me, I know the workings of Homunculi.

A Homunculus is able to perfectly mimic a person, but for them to have prolonged life, they must go through constant maintenance. Even with that, it's difficult for them to live very long.

I can't call something like that living.

I'll need to bring Raphtalia back in a different way.

I realize that that statement seems very vague, but for the current me, nothing is impossible.

Okay. Let's make reviving Raphtalia the first step to my World Domination.

I also have to strengthen these people who have chosen to be my subordinates.

As I was thinking that, the Castle Plant, which had just recovered from the overheat caused by my orders, began giving off an alarm.

I immediately put my hand on the stone panel used for management.

An image from far away is displayed on the screen.

"Wah, Amazing!" (Firo)

"What is happening now, Naofumi-sama?" (Atlas)

It's because Atlas cannot see.

She can't see the image displayed.

"Fumu, that fake has taken the Heroes, and they're on their way here aboard Gaelion." (Naofumi)

At this rate, they'll arrive here in no time.

My Castle is still under construction.

As it is now, they should be able to drop it out of the sky easily.

“What should we do?” (Atlas)

“No problem. I expected this, so I already prepared countermeasures.”
(Naofumi)

I input commands into the stone.

The Fake is flying straight at us aboard Gaelion.

Sound also gets through, so I can hear their conversation.

“What is that building!?”

“A structure with a shape like a skull is covering the island...”

“KYUA!”

“For the love of... Let’s just capture Naofumi-sama quickly and return him to his senses.”

“Yeah...”

Like that’s happening.

At that moment, my commands activate, and the seeds I spread on the way here sprouted.

They rapidly burst out of the ocean. The relative of the Castle Plant, the Tower Plant.

“W-what are these!?”

Gaelion concentrates as he avoids the rising towers.

It’s like a scene from an Action Movie.

But it’s not like the towers are enough to drive them away. Gaelion and the Fake aren’t that soft.

Gaelion continues flying.

There's no way that's all I've got.

The top floor of the newly grown towers begins shining, and together with the Research Lab, they erect a barrier.

Of course, the center is the lab.

With the lab at the center, a powerful barrier is formed in the shape of a dome while the towers act as protective walls around the base.

“W-what!?” (Raphtalia)

Gaelion has no time to dodge. He rams right into the barrier and is stunned for a moment. The next instant, the barrier repels him, and he's sent flying while doing revolutions in the air.

“KYAAAAAAAAA-...” (Raphtalia)

“UWAAAAAAH-...” (Ren)

The fake and her Fake Heroes let out idiotic sounds as they're sent flying away. The scene is quite humorous to my eyes.

“Now then, with this, those fakes won't be able to approach for a while. Shall we not make preparations while they're away?” (Naofumi) “What could this be?” (Sadina)

Sadina asks while watching the screen.

Fumu, I guess I'll have to offer an explanation.

“Ah, this is a long-term barrier connected to my shield. Its origin is based on my Shield Prison and Meteor Shield.” (Naofumi)

Relying on my own power, this much is nothing.

“... How convenient. Does it have any weaknesses?” (Sadina) “Let’s see. I guess if you destroy all of the Eight Towers I erected, it will lose its effects. Setting it up is difficult, so if it’s broken once, I’ll need to halt all activity in the towers to restore it. Well, you’ll have to destroy the towers starting with the first one going up to the last one, so it’s at least good for stalling for time.” (Naofumi) “Niichan, that means you want us to defend the towers, right?” (Kiel) “Yeah, protecting them is one of your guys’ duties. But those incompetent fakes will never figure it out. Because I made each and every tower have the same outward appearance. They’ll never be able to figure out which one the first one is in time.” (Naofumi) “... Naofumi-chan, won’t you teach us the order? I mean, we’ll have to be defending them, anyways.” (Sadina) “This is number one, this one number two...” (Naofumi)

I carefully point out the tower’s numbers.

The enemy probably won’t figure it out, but if they do, we’ll need to defend them in that order.

“Ren-chan and Itsuki-chan are there too, right? Will they not be able to break the barrier?” (Sadina) “I guarantee the barrier’s strength. What’s more, if it does break, as long as the towers are there, I can deploy it again instantly. They’ll never be able to break through with only those Heroes’ powers.” (Naofumi) “Then we can’t get out either? That’s a little troubling.” (Sadina) “No problem. It uses the same concept as my Meteor Shield. Those I give permission to can leave and enter freely. Defend the seas however you wish.” (Naofumi) At the moment, it’s troubling to keep up. But there’s no way they’ll pierce my absolute defenses.

We’re not even the ones on the defensive here. We’re the attackers.

Trampling down the enemies before us will be my first step to World Domination.

But there’s something I need to do first.

“Wow, amazing.” (Sadina)

“As expected of Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

“Master is ama~zing.” (Firo)

“Father-in-Law! Good Job.” (Motoyasu)

“I-is this amazing? I don’t really get what’s... Atlas, do you really plan on following that man? I can only see him as a complete villain at the moment.” (Fohl)

Everyone sings praise of me.

Of course I’m amazing. But having them say it makes me happy.

“Hahaha, praise me more!” (Naofumi)

“Isn’t something wrong here?”

“Right, that bitch’s owner definitely has a screw loose.”

“Yeah, but that doesn’t change what we’ll be doing.”

“And wait, I think this is the first time I’m seeing him smile...”

“He always has a bored expression on his face.”

“No matter how I look at it, he’s getting too full of himself.”

Motoyasu’s three talk amongst themselves.

Like I care.

“Niichan, Niichan! What will you do now?” (Kiel)

“First, I’ll confirm our forces! Everyone, assemble!” (Naofumi) “OKAY!” (Everyone)

The slaves and monsters gather by my order.

Fumu... It’s about half of my village.

Ah, right. Should I use the slave seal to finish off that girl who thought she could take over Raphtalia’s place?

I opened up her screen, but perhaps an error has occurred. It's too staticy, and I can't give the order.

I can't use the slave seal. How troublesome.

There's no choice. I'll leave that fake's disposal for later... wait.

I noticed something.

"Firo, you don't have many followers." (Naofumi)

Only about one-fifth of the Filo Rials followed.

This is way too few.

"Motoyasu, you too." (Naofumi)

"Not everyone was there to follow us! There was too little time, so I'll have to get them later." (Motoyasu) "I'll leave it to you. Even so, with both Firo and Motoyasu here, why are there so few?" (Naofumi) "Well, you see, Piyo-chan got in Firo's way and didn't follow master." (Firo) "Piyo-chan?" (Naofumi)

"Firo's first follower." (Firo)

Ah, follower number one. He had a name like that?

That goddamn traitor!

Even though he's a faker himself, he chose to follow that fake. How foolish.

[17]

I'll have to deal with him personally.

"Also, there's also some needing medical care inside of the lab." (Firo) "I see... then I'll have to ask that one's will first. Everyone else, get to work." (Naofumi)
"Got it."

"What will we work on, Niichan? Peddling?" (Kiel)

"Wrong. In other rooms, you'll find glowing stones. Just rest near them.

They'll automatically recover your magic." (Naofumi) "Got it, Niichan!" (Kiel)

Kiel leaves, and the other Monsters and Slaves follow.

The people left are Atlas, Fohl, Firo, and Sadina.

We head to the medical division of the lab.

"Uu..."

"Don't come closer... go away..."

There are Demi-Human children undergoing treatment there. [\[18\]](#)

Rat and the medical personnel should have been looking after their injuries, but... It doesn't look like they're doing well.

There are slaves curled up in the corners, and one slave is shaking with a vacant expression.

Quite a few of them seem on the verge of collapse.

I know, because I've visited this room quite often.

Yggdrasil Medicine is all-purpose, but I've restricted the use as to prevent addiction.

The overuse of Yggdrasil will affect their lives, so I've limited it.

But still, we've given them a bit, so they're at least alive.

We'll need to treat them a little at a time. Their mental health also needs to be cared for.

Luckily, they've begun trusting me and Rat.

"Firo doesn't like this place... She really doesn't..." (Firo)

Firo mutters to herself.

Yes, if you have a healthy mind, you wouldn't want to spend a long time here.

“Every time, I feel a sad Chi from here. As if it would go out at any second.”
(Atlas) “...” (Fohl)

Fohl looks at the slaves in the room. He has a sad expression on his face, but he says nothing.

It’s because the Atlas of the past was in a similar state.

“Now then, all of you.” (Naofumi)

I raise my voice to the slaves undergoing treatment.

“KYAAAAAAAAAAA!”

One of them shouts out in response to my voice. It happens every time I come here. I’m used to it.

Eventually, the slave’s voice dies down.

Various drugs have warped half of the slave’s body, and its eyes have grown abnormally large. Perhaps I should say it became like a monster.

It’s gradually recovering, but it’s overly wishful thinking to believe that my Shield’s power will grant a full recovery.

“Have you calmed down? Now then, do you want to follow me? Or do you want to rot here?” (Naofumi) “...”

There’s no response. The slave stares blankly at the ceiling with eyes filled with madness.

Fumu... This is troublesome.

I activate my Human Experimentation and Gene Manipulation powers, and use it on the slave before me.

My goal is to treat the warping to the best of my ability.

From my Shield, a light blue pattern of formulas and letters fly out. They wrap around the slave.

“!?”

Without any ways of escape, the slave shakes violently. It tries to let out a scream, but no sound escapes its lips.

The other slaves retreat further into their corners as they look upon the scene.

Perhaps they believe that this is the time when they will be disposed of.

Eventually, the patterns shine brighter, and... The treatment finishes.

“Ah...”

The slave who had undergone treatment blinks as it stares at me.

“How do you feel?” (Naofumi)

“It doesn’t hurt. I’m not in pain... My consciousness doesn’t feel faint anymore.”

“I see.” (Naofumi)

“I think you were... The person who occasionally came by to give us medicine. Did you save me as well?”

“Yeah, now you’re definitely back to normal. If you want, try running around outside. Firo, play with him a bit.” (Naofumi) “Yeah!” (Firo)

“Thank You!”

The slave lowers his head to me.

And accompanied by Firo, he goes outside and returns a little later.

“It’s true. Again, thank you very much.”

“Now then, let me ask you once more.” (Naofumi)

“What is it?”

“Will you be my ally, and lend me power so that I can build my new world? Or will you foolishly oppose me, and join those idiots outside?” (Naofumi) “... What will you do if I become your enemy?”

“I’ll drive you out. You’ll become part of this wide world. But this applies to everyone out there: If you attack me, your life will be a short one. Outside, you can go wherever you want. I’ll even dispel your slave crest.” (Naofumi)

The slave ruminates over my words again and again...

“Yes. You are the one who saved my life, so I wish to repay the favor as best as I can. What sort of person are you?”

“Who am I, you ask? I am-” (Naofumi)

“Naofumi-chan is the Hero of the Shield. The god of all Demi-Humans.”
(Sadina) “Eh!?”

Sadina cuts off my self-introduction. The slaves undergoing treatment are all surprised.

“I’ve heard out your will. Now then, on to the next patient. I’d like to get you guys out of this facility and put you to work already.” (Naofumi) “U-understood.”

Like this, I treat all of the slaves in the facility and gain new subordinates.

The problem is that all of them are of low level.

I’ll overcome that with the power of the Shield some way or another.

But there’s a sequence to things like this.

If I have the time to grant them power, then there are plenty of things I have to do.

Life Ethics

Now then, on to the next task.

At the moment, the Slaves and Monsters are charging their magic through the Castle Plant.

I'll use that magic to create a magic amplification device to create even greater magic, and use it to expand my base.

"Good. Until the expansion is finished, I can devote myself to my own goals."
(Naofumi)

I step foot into the center of the Lab, the area Rat used for her own research.

"You all should get to work as well. If you need food, then go to the residential area. I have some prepared." (Naofumi) "I want to stay near Naofumi-sama."
(Atlas)

"Firo will... go for a walk." (Firo)

"Atlas, let's get out of here already." (Fohl)

"No way, Onii-sama." (Atlas)

"I'll go patrol the outside." (Sadina)

Atlas will stay beside me, and Fohl will follow her.

Firo will inspect the laboratory's interior, and Sadina will patrol.

"Then get to it." (Naofumi)

On my orders, Sadina and Firo depart.

“Naofumi-sama, what will you be doing next?” (Atlas)

“Isn’t it obvious? My goal is to revive Raphtalia!” (Naofumi)

I concentrate my Shield’s power on a stone tablet, and the Castle Plant draws in more and more of the land’s power... Using Raphtalia’s DNA from the hair in my Shield, I began researching ways to recreate her body.

The probability this hair is from the fake is exceedingly low.

It’s something I got when Raphtalia was still but a child.

If only I can recover her soul, it should work out.

It’s not like I’m omnipotent. Even if I have been granted a complete understanding of Alchemy, there is no precedent to reviving the dead.

But reviving my lost Raphtalia is something I’m willing to risk my life for.

For that sake, I begin my experiments.

I won’t make something half-assed like a homunculus.

This is a ritual to perfectly resurrect my ideal Raphtalia.

Inside of the large culture tube in front of me, magic-made electricity races back and forth. The power of the land gathers. My dreams gather.

And in order to make it go off without a hitch, I take care of all bugs and problems personally.

“From here on, I will be conducting research. Just watching will be boring, you know.” (Naofumi) “It’s fine, Naofumi-sama. Just being near you is enough for me.” (Atlas) “I see.” (Naofumi)

“Atlas! What are you saying!?” (Fohl)

“Onii-sama, if you have free time right now, won’t you offer assistance to the people who Naofumi-sama just granted power to?” (Atlas) “Uu...” (Fohl)

Atlas and Fohl whisper together, and after a while, Fohl heads off to the slaves I

had just treated.

“Now it’s finally quiet. Please research to your heart’s content.” (Atlas)

“Thanks.” (Naofumi)

I immersed myself in the research.

Perhaps 6 hours have already passed.

I finally finished the first stage of my experimentation.

When I turned around, Atlas waved her hand at me.

She was watching me the whole time, was she? She has too much free time.

“Naofumi-chan. How are things going on your side?” (Sadina) “Master~ The food is really good.” (Firo)

“Yeah, though the taste has dropped a bit from when Niichan makes it personally.” (Kiel)

Sadina, Firo, and Kiel drop by together.

I installed an auto cooking function into the residential area’s dining hall.

With the push of a button, it can instantly make pre-set dishes.

At the moment, the menu is a bit lacking, but at least it’s edible.

“Oh, you came at a good time.” (Naofumi)

“Niichan, what are you doing? Everyone’s already well rested.” (Kiel) “I see. Just watch for a second.” (Naofumi)

I flip a switch, and the culmination of my research materializes before us.

Electricity fills the tube, and smoke rises. The Experiment finishes.

Firo tilts her head as she focuses her eyes on the dish.

Eventually the smoke wrapping around it clears, and the bubbles that formed

in the liquid within subside. The form of a new Raphtalia shows itself.

“What is this?” (Firo)

I look upon my own results.

“Fumu... I guess this is the best I can do for a prototype.” (Naofumi)

Inside the tube floats something like a... Raccoon? A Tanuki? A Red panda...? A life form that I can only see as a mix of the three is suspended in the glass.^[19]

With that form, I guess letting it out won't cause any problems.

Using the dragon pulse, I can rapidly elevate its level. This skill sucks up the experience lying dormant in the earth, and allows me to grant it unto people. It's a higher form of an ability wild monsters naturally possess.

At the moment, the maximum I can grant is up to level 30.

I drain the liquid out of the tube, and take out the new life form I had created.

The new life shakes off the excess liquid on its fur, and looks over at me.

“Rafu~”

It slightly raises its front leg to greet me.

“Um... What's this supposed to be, Niichan?” (Kiel)

“Is it a monster? Its Chi is somewhat reminiscent of Raphtalia-san.

Somewhat.” (Atlas) “Fumu, it's a life-form born of my research to revive

Raphtalia.” (Naofumi) “Amazing, Niichan. You created a new type of monster!”

(Kiel) “Ara, Naofumi-chan is incredible.” (Sadina)

Firo approaches Raphtalia Prototype 1, and starts sniffing it.

Don't eat it.

If you eat it, I'll modify your form to be the same as it.

"Yeah, its smell is like Onee-chan. Its looks are completely different, but its tail and the feeling that I get are similar." (Firo) "Rafu~"

"Well, my research isn't over yet. Let's call this one the first generation of the newly formed Raph race." (Naofumi) "Yay. Pleasure working with you, small Onee-chan!" (Firo) "Rafu~!"

"It should have some ability for battle as well. I'll be continuing this until I can make the real Raphtalia's body. The number of Raphs will be multiplying until then." (Naofumi)

Just in case, I've given it the ability to fight. I tampered with quite a bit.

Gene modification sure comes in handy here.

Honestly, to take over the world, I'm greatly lacking in manpower, so mass production is a possibility.

They're based on a person I trust. The Raph Race may prove to be a great asset.

"Next, I'll make a system to mass produce Raphs..." (Naofumi)

As I was preparing to give a fervent speech, the alarm went off.

"W-what?" (Naofumi)

I put my hand on a tablet to see what set it off.

What's displayed is the figure of that fake, Ren, and Itsuki infiltrating the first Tower Plant.

"What!?" (Naofumi)

They got the first one on the first try?

No, this isn't the time to be wondering about that.

That tower's defense mechanisms won't be able to hold off against that fake, and those Heroes.

"Ku..."

Even if I send Motoyasu and His Filo Rials, it will be too late to stop the First Tower's destruction.

With their game knowledge, I can't deny the possibility Ren and Itsuki figured out the towers.

I focus the display on the tower's inside.

The fakes easily get through the tower and break the controlling device at the summit.

"Good! Let's move on to the next one!"

Fu... How foolish. Don't think the next one will be so easy.

I've prepared some things just in case something like this happened.

As soon as the device stopped functioning on the first one, the energy allotted to it flew towards the second tower. The power output on the second one greatly rose.

The Fake and her heroes gaze absentmindedly at the second tower.

And they head towards it upon Gaelion. But without accomplishing anything, they quickly return.

"It seems my Emergency Line is functioning correctly." (Naofumi) "Emergency Line? Did you do something, Naofumi-chan?" (Sadina) "Yeah, when one tower gets destroyed, it will send all of its stored energy to the next one, and strengthen it. The next tower gets a large boost." (Naofumi) "Boost?" (Sadina)

"Yeah, for about 20 hours, that energy will impede anyone trying to proceed to the next one." (Naofumi)

The barrier was made for the purpose of buying time.

In that time, I'll be able to prepare myself.

But I never thought I would actually be using these emergency measures.

"I was going to rest for a bit, but it appears that that's not happening. I won't let those Fakers destroy the second tower. Motoyasu, use your portal to jump, and bestow retribution onto those that oppose me. Take this with you." (Naofumi)
It's a memory crystal that I made with Magic Gem Production.

I also gave him a video with my proclamation of war recorded on it.

With this, I am officially waging war on those mongrels.

"Understood, Father-in-Law!" (Motoyasu)

"Should we accompany him?"

"No, you guys should help supply energy to the second tower. Otherwise we'll run out." (Naofumi)

If the slaves leave the flow of magic, then managing the defenses and the system will be difficult.

The best option is to send Motoyasu to cut down their forces.

"Sadina, you go too. Motoyasu can't hear the words of women, so use Midori as a translator." (Naofumi) "Got it." (Sadina)

"Next is... right. Why don't I present my new Raph race to them?" (Naofumi)

While waving her hand, Sadina flies off with Motoyasu through his portal.

Good, now I'll be able to offer their sought-after retribution.

The sound from the display picked up.

"For there to be that sort of gimmick... Naofumi-sama sure likes being troublesome." (Raphtalia) "How do we dispel that barrier? We'll need to destroy all of the towers to proceed, right?" (Ren) "I don't know. But..." (Itsuki)

The fakes return to the village by portal to face Motoyasu, who returned in much the same way.

“Motoyasu just naturally returned through his portal. Aren’t we supposed to be seiging them right now?” (Itsuki)

Hahaha. Fools.

If you have no reinforcements, why would you initiate a siege?

Our forces have the option of going on the offensive at any time.

Eventually, Motoyasu begins carrying out my orders. He opens his mouth.

“By Father-in-Law’s orders, I have come for battle! Now fall before me for the sake of my promotion!” (Motoyasu) “Quit messing around, Motoyasu! You’re choosing the wrong people to side with!” (Ren) “I’m not wrong. My enemies are Firo-tan’s and Father-in-Law’s enemies.” (Motoyasu)

Taking a stance with his spear, Motoyasu begins running towards the fakes.

“Ku! Like I’d let you!”

Ren steps in front of Motoyasu, and his sword collides with the spear.

“Motoyasu, snap out of it. There’s no way Naofumi would think of things like that. We should be resolving this incident as quickly as possible.” (Ren) “No, Father-in-Law’s words are absolute. Meteor Spear!” (Motoyasu)

Ren parries the spear that came flying at him.

The blast makes a large crater as it comes into contact with the ground.

“Move aside!”

Raphtalia rushes in front, and consecutively slashes at Motoyasu.

“Gufu...”

It's most likely a Hengen Musou skill that ignores defense.

Since Motoyasu can't handle Chi as well as me, he begins taking damage.

“What are you doing to my Mokun!?”

The damage itself isn't particularly high, but Kuu, Marin, and Midori step up to protect Motoyasu.

“Motoyasu-chan ran forward too fast. You need to cooperate better, or you won't even win battles where you have the upper hand.” (Sadina)

Sadina follows up close behind, and holds up her harpoon.

And from behind her, the new Raph Race specimen flies forward.

“Rafu~”

“W-what is... that?”

The fake and the heroes. Everyone left in the village points their fingers.

Hahaha. Tremble before my technology.

“It's something Father-in-Law created... A new breed of monster!” (Motoyasu)

“Rafu~”

“W-what is it...? It looks kinda cute, but it's a monster I've never seen before.”

(Ren) “I wonder. Its voice... sounds a little like Raphtalia's.” (Itsuki)

Itsuki looks at the Raph race specimen, and points at Raphtalia.

The Raph runs forward, and releases illusion magic.

One by one, illusory Raphs manifest, and cover the landscape.

“Uwah!”

“””Rafu~!””””

The illusionary Raphs begin their assault.

Since they aren't real, they don't cause any damage, but the Raph's target is only a single individual.

“There!” (Raphtalia)

Damn! The faker finds the real Raph among the illusions, and slashes at it.

“Rafu~!”

It dodges by a paper thin margin, and does a flip before landing on the ground. It points its paw at the fake.

And it loudly proclaims.

“Fake~”

“What...?”

Bio Custom

“Fake~”

“W-what exactly is this...?”

The Raph race specimen continues repeating this line. The fake is dumbfounded.

Hmph! This is the special function I installed into the Raph race.

A psychological ploy against the fake.

By the way, I haven't gotten around to teaching it any other words yet.

“Fake~”

“... Is this supposed to be some form of harassment?” (Raphtalia) “Who knows? It seems that he was trying to revive Raphtalia-chan when he made this child.” (Sadina) “How...?” (Raphtalia)

“With a strand of your hair.” (Sadina)

“Naofumi-sama——!” (Raphtalia)

With a face that seems like it would burst into tears at any second, the fake cries out.

Fufufu, the mental attack was super effective.

“And this is a message from Naofumi-chan.” (Sadina)

Sadina takes out the video crystal, and presents it to the fakes.

“It’s been a few hours, fake, and traitors. Good job getting the order of my defense towers correct. Shall I praise you for that?” (Naofumi)

After a brief pause, my image continued.

“However, don’t think you will be getting here so easily. At dawn, when I have revived Raphtalia, I’ll make mincemeat out of all of you. Be prepared.”

(Naofumi) “Ah... How should I react to this...” (Raphtalia)

The fake puts her hands on her head.

“I explained the situation to Melty-chan, and she said she would cover up the situation, but...” (Sadina) “The next time you try to invade, I’ll go all out as well.

Don’t think it’ll ever be as easy as it was tonight. Then farewell, fakes!”

(Naofumi)

And my video terminated.

“And like that, we’ve been sent to deliver the message. If you try to attack Naofumi-chan’s fortress again, we’ll shoot you out of the sky.” (Sadina) “... I see.

So do we have to fight Sadina-oneechan here as well?” (Raphtalia) “Yeah, if I

don’t fight, Naofumi-chan will get mad at me.” (Sadina) “... Understood. Then let’s fight.” (Raphtalia)

The fake tightens the grip on her weapon, and rushes at Sadina.

Sadina is at a disadvantage, as she fights while defending the Raph specimen. But she puts up a good fight.

But why isn’t she using magic?

When I asked later, she said that it would put the Raph in danger. I’ll accept such a reason.

Motoyasu exchanges blows with Ren, Itsuki, Rishia, and the opposing Filo Rials.

“Trying to win with numbers won’t get you anywhere!”

「Windmill!」

Motoyasu spins his spear, and creates a tornado.

But because of the Skill’s cooldown time, and the fact he was fighting the long ranged experts, Itsuki and Rishia, he gradually gets pushed back.

“Motoyasu-san, we’re at a disadvantage! Let’s retreat.” (Midori)

After taking blows repeatedly, Midori calls out to Motoyasu.

“But I cannot betray Father-in-Law’s expectations.” (Motoyasu) “We’ve fulfilled our objective. If we fight here and lose, then all will be meaningless!” (Midori)

“I-I see. But I haven’t convinced my lovely angels to switch sides yet.”

(Motoyasu) “It’s impossible! As long as Piyo-chan is here, they won’t listen to our invitations.” (Midori) “Uu... I apologize, Father-in-Law. I, Motoyasu, will retreat for everyone’s sake!” (Motoyasu)

“Ah, wait! Where’s Gaelion? We need to take down the Anti-Teleport barrier...” (Midori) “Rafu~!”

The Raph uses illusion magic to erase its own presence. At the same time, it created illusionary copies of Motoyasu and the others.

The fake saw through it almost immediately, but the spell was able to buy enough time.

Motoyasu, his three, and Sadina were able to take the Raph and escape out of the range of the Anti-Teleport zone.

“And that’s what happened, Father-in-Law. I offer my greatest apologies.”

(Motoyasu)

I saw the footage from the Memory Crystal I had Motoyasu carry.

“The results were satisfactory. It seems they truly intend to oppose us. They’re

a group we must eliminate if we wish to conquer the world.” (Naofumi)

There’s still some time before the barrier around the second tower breaks... I’ll increase our forces before that.

And my first day of lab construction concluded like that.

The second day.

I began my preparations to mass produce the Raph race.

I’m still doubtful as to whether they’ll be that great of an asset, but having them is better than not.

Who should I send to defend the second tower?

Motoyasu is reliable, but he’ll be at a disadvantage when taking on everyone by himself.

I should probably send Atlas, Firo, and Fohl as well.

Even so... I have my doubts.

Even if they’re rotten, they’re heroes with their parties.

“Niichan! Is the crepe tree done yet?” (Kiel)

“Ah, Kiel. I’ll do it later. I’m still busy.” (Naofumi) “I see...” (Kiel)

Kiel woke me when I was taking a short nap in the Laboratory.

Under my arm, Atlas is happily sleeping.

Fohl is also asleep.

“What will you be doing today?” (Kiel)

“Ah, today, I plan to make a powerful weapon to ready myself to defeat that fake army.” (Naofumi) “Ara? You’re planning some interesting things.” (Sadina) Sadina, who was asleep in a corner of the room, gets up and joins the conversation.

“What sort of thing are you planning?” (Sadinaa)

“I’ll modify the monsters, and create a powerful one.” (Naofumi) “Oh~! Amazing~!” (Kiel)

“There are quite a few monsters here, so there are quite a few things that I have to do.” (Naofumi)

To make a body for Raphtalia, the Shield told me I need to study the bodies of various monsters as well.

Monsters have overflowing vitality, and there are a few that can continue functioning as the undead even after death.

Gaelion is a good example.

If I study that, I’ll be able to improve my Raphs. I’ll be able to get closer and closer to the original.

Also, I promised the monsters. That I would make them strong.

As I was thinking along those lines, the monster Rat cared for dearly started banging on the walls of its container.

I think she called it Mii-kun or something.

I took the research lab as is, so I guess he was here the whole time.

“Hmm? What’s up?” (Naofumi)

I can’t really tell what he’s thinking, but I can at least read his expression.

“You want me to use you?” (Naofumi)

Rat’s monster nods with conviction.

“Fumu...” (Naofumi)

He was a monster that wished to be strong.

I guess that's fine.

"You have the resolve to go through all sorts of experiments... right?" (Naofumi)
Upon my words, Rat's monster nods.

Good.

I press my Shield to the cultivation tank containing the monster, and flip a switch.

The effect I activated was Ability Bonus: Bio Custom, Alchemic correction, and also.... Gene Modification.

Geometric Symbols and letters fly out, wrapping around Rat's precious monster.

... Strengthening it is all about imagination.

What sort of strength is he seeking? That's the most important.

Even though he isn't human, I shouldn't do any modifications he doesn't personally wish for.

"Now then, imagine what you wish to become. I'll assist you to the best of my ability." (Naofumi)

Rat's monster nods once more, and its ideal image enters my mind.

... Well then.

Rat wanted to make a monster like a dragon, with overwhelming vitality. One that wouldn't die easily.

That will has perfectly transferred itself to her precious specimen.

Perhaps their hearts are linked in some way.

However... This is a bit over the physical capacity of this monster.

If modifications exceed a monster's capacity, then my Human Experimentation and Gene Modification capabilities don't work.

In that aspect, the Bioplants have an extremely large capacity.

Of course, to activate it, a large amount of magic and SP is consumed. But with the Shield's recovery ability, if I rest a bit, it will replenish on its own.

That's just how high my current level is.

What should I do...

"Sorry, but please lower your expectations a bit. Otherwise..." (Naofumi)
Rat's monster stares at me and conveys its strong will.

Well, if I do a slightly lower modification, there are still other ways of strengthening it.

I edit the image Rat's monster sent me, and lower it a bit, before presenting it back to the monster.

This much is quite possible.

Luckily, I already have all of the necessary materials in my Shield. Though some of them were a bit rare.

"I see... So this is the strength you long for? Show me that you can withstand any pain, any curse, any suffering to attain this strength!" (Naofumi)
I activate the Gene Modification.

The modification will take a bit of time.

Something bangs against the walls of the Culture Tank, and the water in it churns violently.

"Oh... wait, how long is this going to last?" (Kiel)

"It'll take a while." (Naofumi)

"I see..." (Kiel)

I take out Magic Water and Spirit Water from my shield to recover my SP and Mana.

“Let’s move on to the next task.” (Naofumi)

Rat’s monster needs further modifications... I start framing the components.

I made it so that the monster will live in a sort of core, and can be transplanted into different bodies.

For its first body, I do large modifications on a First Generation Raph body.

The current body I’m making is 3 meters in height.

A Raph even larger than Firo floats in the tank in front of me.

It’s the body Rat’s monster will inhabit.

Eventually the modifications finish, and Rat’s monster shows its new form.

It’s a red... round crystal.

Rat’s monster has evolved to one that controls a body from a core.

In order to act as a vessel for that core, I made this giant Raph.

I take up Rat’s monster, and transplant it into the Raph.

The body shakes for a while, but eventually they synchronize. The Raph opens its eyes, and lifts its arm.

Fumu... It should be able to move like this.

I press a switch, and drain the fluid from the tank. I remove the monster from it.

“Rafu~”

“How is it, your new body? When my research progresses further, I’ll grant you one that’s easier to fight in.” (Naofumi) “Rafu~!”

“Amazing! Niichan can even do things like this!” (Kiel) “Isn’t it obvious?” (Naofumi)

“... Naofumi-chan is amazing. He’s the alchemist of the century.” (Sadina)

“Perhaps I’m of that caliber.” (Naofumi)

“Master, good morning~!” (Firo)

Firo trots into the laboratory in a good mood.

Did she wake up and go to the Dining Hall already? Her stomach is swelling out a bit.

“Who is it?” (Firo)

Firo points at the large Raph, and turns to me.

“It’s Rat’s monster.” (Naofumi)

“Ah, so this is Mii-kun?” (Firo)

“Rafu~”

As Firo waves at it, the monster known as Mii-kun returns the wave.

“He’s become large and cute now. Firo won’t lose.” (Firo) “Rafu~”

“Now then, I have an important mission to give you.” (Naofumi) “What~?” (Firo)

“Go protect the second tower with this one.” (Naofumi) “Yes~!” (Firo)

“Well, there’s still a bit of time. Go accompany this monster until it gets accustomed to its new body.” (Naofumi) “Got it!” (Firo)

It’s not like I strengthened that body too far.

It’s like a disposable shell.

I’ll need to update it to something that will become its main body later.

I explained all of that body's working functions, so... it should be fine.

Pros and Cons

Now then, on to the next one...

As I was considering my next action, Kiel started poking me.

“What?” (Naofumi)

“Umm, Niichan, could you make me stronger as well?” (Kiel) “Hmm? Well, if you wish for it, I’ll do it. If there are any other volunteers, I’ll do it for as long as they want.” (Naofumi)

I need to concentrate my attention on defending the second tower.

Reinforcing my forces is urgent.

If Kiel wants to become stronger, then granting it unto her is a simple task.

“Then do me next! I’ll fight to pay it off!” (Kiel)

“... Kiel-chan, this Onee-san doesn’t think you should rely on Naofumi-chan’s power too much.” (Sadina) “It’s okay, Sadina-oneechan. I just want to become stronger.” (Kiel) “The current Naofumi-chan is a tad bit different from the one you know, so I think you should think it over a bit carefully before you decide.” (Sadina) “What are you talking about, Sadina-oneechan? The only thing strange about Niichan is the way he speaks. He went off to save sick children with whatever power he had. Nothing’s changed at all! Niichan is always Niichan.” (Kiel) “Well, that’s true, but...” (Sadina)

“Anyways, Niichan! Make me stronger!” (Kiel)

“Fumu... understood.” (Naofumi)

“Kiel-chan...” (Sadina)

Kiel's level is actually on the higher side. But she hasn't achieved overwhelming strength like Raptalia.

She learned the basics of Chi later than the rest, so you could say she's a step behind the traitors.

As with Rat's monster, I put Kiel into a culture tank, and close the lid before activating my ability.

"What sort of modifications are you looking for?" (Naofumi) "Let's see..." (Kiel)

Kiel senses the link I made with my power, and sends the image of her desired form.

But...

"This modification will break down the wall separating man and beast. Are you okay with that?" (Naofumi) "Yeah! This is what I want to become." (Kiel)

"Fumu..." (Naofumi)

It's not outside of my ability.

Kiel's body is naturally healthy, so she should be able to withstand the changes.

However, this one would make her step out of the Demi-Human category, and tread into the monster one.

I'll... make it so that it's possible to change her back.

It's difficult, but this is Kiel's wish. For me, nothing is impossible!

"With this modification, you'll get some fatal weaknesses, so you better prepare yourself." (Naofumi) "Weaknesses?" (Kiel)

If I want to add the function to allow Kiel to turn back, this is my limit.

I could discard some parts of her, and add functions to get rid of the weaknesses, but then there would be no point.

I don't plan on attaining victory after using my own subordinate as sacrifices.

"After this modification, you'll be weak against some things. If people use that to their advantage when they attack, you'll easily lose." (Naofumi) "Is that true?" (Kiel)

"Yeah, so will you still... continue?" (Naofumi)

Unless I do the modification itself, I won't be able to determine what weaknesses will form.

However, the modification window notified me that some would form.

"Yeah! Niichan, just do it all at once!" (Kiel)

"It seems you have the resolve." (Naofumi)

"I... won't become an existence that merely takes! Using Niichan's power... I will be reborn!" (Kiel) "Got it." (Naofumi)

"Naofumi-chan. Please don't do something that you can never take back."
(Sadina)

I'm no fool; I understand what Sadina's trying to say.

I'll make Kiel stronger, while keeping her as herself.

"No problem. When I make my new world, Kiel will graciously be accepted as a member of that world. There's no way I would ever use anyone as a disposable pawn." (Naofumi)

I activate the ability.

The liquid in the tank overflows, and bubbles cloud it. Eventually they cover Kiel's form.

"This modification will take some time. Kiel, rejoice at your rebirth." (Naofumi)

Eventually, the processes concluded, and Kiel exited the culture tank.

“This is the result?” (Keil)

“Yes.” (Naofumi)

Kiel looks over her body again and again.

Her appearance hasn't changed at all.

“Nothing's changed, Niichan!” (Kiel)

“If you stopped being human, I would be troubled. I added another stage to your transformation ability. If you change to that form, you will gain great strength. The weaknesses are...” (Naofumi)

I teach Kiel her own new weaknesses.

If the fakes were to learn of these, Kiel would be taken out instantly.

“Now go and test your newfound powers with Firo.” (Naofumi) “Got it! Firo-chan, look at my new power~!” (Kiel)

And Kiel energetically ran off.

“... Then after looking over Kiel-chan and Firo-chan, I'm going to go on patrol again.” (Sadina) “Yeah, hop to it.” (Naofumi)

After bidding farewell to Sadina, I immersed myself in my new Raptalia creation project once more.

Eventually, the barrier protecting the second tower faded, and the fakers charged it aboard Gaelion.

The village's slaves have come by boat as well.

But this time, they won't be destroying it so easily.

With Motoyasu at the front, I've dispatched a large force there.

My numbers are greater than those invading. It's the reverse of before!

I watch the scene play out on a screen from a distance. I'll be able to direct the battle.

Oh? Is that nit Rat among the fake party?

I thought she was a non-combatant. What is she doing here?

"Breaking in from the front looks difficult." (Raphtalia) "Yeah, if I went all out, it wouldn't be impossible; but these are Naofumi's comrades. If we're careless, we may put their lives in danger." (Ren) "... How troublesome." (Itsuki)

The fake and Ren complain.

If you think that, then you could just refrain from getting in my way...

Know that as long as the battle takes place here, I can easily gather your information.

"Anyways, let's try to break through, and make this a swift battle! We're heading out, everyone!" (Raphtalia)

Upon the fake's words, the Heroes, Rishia, Rat, and the others nod.

Perhaps they infiltrated the last one like this as well.

Do you think the core is on the top floor?

Too bad, each tower is designed differently. Though the device was on top in the first one.

The barrier-forming device is around the center of this one.

... It glows, so perhaps that gives away its location.

"They're coming!" (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu stands before the invaders.

“I’ll hold down Motoyasu! Everyone go forward!” (Ren) “Ku...” (Motoyasu)

Ren stands before Motoyasu, and the rest of them proceed.

They’re both heroes, on approximately even footing. This battle will be decided by how Motoyasu’s three contribute.

“Are you up for it? This is getting to be a pain.”

“Mo-kun seems motivated, so we’ll have to do a bit of work.”

“Yeah. Or else Motoyasu-san will be troubled.”

In front of the three unmotivated birds, a certain life-form showed itself.

“Kyua!”

It seems Gaelion and Taniko will be taking on the three.

Ah, by the way, because of my barrier devices, teleporting to run is impossible.

“Motoyasu! Quit it with this farce, and help us revert Naofumi!” (Ren)

Ren releases a Meteor Sword at Motoyasu.

Motoyasu holds his spear out front, and redirects it. And continuing with that movement, he proceeds to thrust.

“Revert Father-in-Law? What are you talking about? Firo-tan likes Father-in-Law as he is now, does she not? That means there is only one thing for me to do. For Firo-tan’s sake, I will protect him!” (Motoyasu) “Stop! If you do that, do you realize what Naofumi will do when he regains his senses!? He’ll definitely be mad at you!” (Ren)

It seems I don’t have to focus on this battle.

I focus on the traitors that slipped past his defenses.

I scroll through the channels on my surveillance system.

There they are!

“Rafu~!”

“Rafu!”

“They’re coming one after the other!”

Damn! Those fakes are proceeding, whilst cutting down the Raphs I put so much effort into making.

The current Raphs can’t lift a finger against Heroes, I guess.

What the hell is Sadina doing!?

I searched the channels for her, and found her holding off another group of invading slaves.

She’s surrounded by Raphs, so she’s fighting without using magic.

Quite a number of people are getting by her.

I guess this is due to me not calling for a meeting earlier.

There’s no reason to dispatch the Raphs and Sadina to the same place.

Ah! The defensive line was broken.

The only room left is the one with the device.

This time, Atlas, Firo, and Fohl are defending it.

“Firo!” (Raphtalia)

“Oneechan, you came again? I won’t let you break this one.” (Firo) “That’s right, Raphtalia-san. Give up and go home.” (Atlas) “I will... I will make sure Atlas doesn’t get injured... for that, I will... fight!” (Fohl)

Even Fohl seems relatively motivated.

It was a good choice pairing him with Atlas.

“Just open your eyes already!” (Raphtalia)

“Oneechan is the one who’s blind. Doesn’t Master look like he’s having so much fun right now?” (Firo) “That is not Naofumi-sama! Naofumi once told me that you once prevented him from going insane when he used the Wrath Shield. Then why won’t you try and save him this time?” (Raphtalia)
Ah, something like that did happen.

To prevent my rage from going out of control, I needed the real Raphtalia, or Firo to help me.

The bundle of instincts, Firo, is siding with me.

That means I’m not going out of control.

There’s no way I’m wrong.

“Let me explain this one. That time, Firo saw that the power was corrupting Naofumi-sama’s true nature. But this time is different. Naofumi-sama’s nature hasn’t changed much. That’s why Firo and I will stand by this Naofumi-sama.”

(Atlas) “Yeah, the current master is... really happy, and... He treats Firo and everyone well. Firo is also having fun, so she likes the current master.” (Firo)

“Yes. Naofumi-sama lived in a different world from us, so no one can understand his true heart, or his values. But to reject him merely because his tone of speech changed... something like that is impossible for me.” (Atlas) “Is that something you should be saying to me? If he ever regains his senses, do you understand just how much pain and grief Naofumi-sama will go through as he reflects upon his actions? As he reflects on all of your actions?” (Raphtalia)

“Even so, I cannot become Naofumi-sama’s enemy. No matter what happens.” (Atlas) “Firo, I’m going to give Naofumi-sama quite a lecture after this!”

(Raphtalia) “But Master is Master, you know? When Oneechan wasn’t there, he cried to himself. Why won’t Oneechan understand?” (Firo) “N-Naofumi-sama did...?” (Raphtalia)

The fake’s face seems to waver for a moment.

But she soon takes up her old expression.

“... Melty-chan is angry!” (Raphtalia)

“If Melty-chan were to meet Master now, I think she would accept him.”

(Firo)

Perhaps her anger reached its peak. The fake clenches her sword, and takes a stance.

She wraps an aura around herself, showing that she’s prepared to use Hengen Musou.

Where did she learn it? Why can this fake use Hengen Musou as well?

“It appears that this matter cannot be resolved with words alone.” (Raphtalia)

“It’s good that you understand. I knew it would come to this sooner or later.”

(Atlas) “I think the current Master is happier, you know. He laughs to himself a lot! Firo decided she would protect Master’s smile.” (Firo)

Responding to Raphtalia’s aura, Firo, Atlas, and Fohl release their own.

“Hero of the Bow-san, Rishia-san, and Rat-san. Are you ready?” (Raphtalia)

“Yes.” (Itsuki)

“Fuee... I never thought I would end up fighting Firo-chan.” (Rishia) “Yes, I’m ready.” (Rat)

The moment after they exchanged glances at one another, the battle started.

Atlas and Firo rush at their own choice of fakes.

Itsuki and Rishia intercept them from afar... or at least they try to. Fohl knocks their attacks out of the air.

“I won’t let you get in the way.” (Fohl)

“Rishia-san, what should I do? If I get serious, I think I may fatally injure Fohl-san.” (Itsuki) “Fuee! That’s something we must avoid at all costs!” (Rishia)

「Illusionary Blade!」

The fake imitates Raphtalia, and hides herself.

But that is pointless.

“It’s useless!” (Atlas)

Atlas doesn’t trace objects with her eyes. She follows them by sensing their chi.

She runs after and thrusts at the hidden fake.

Firo’s also able to see through it with her feral instincts. The fake is underestimating them.

This time, Atlas was the first to strike.

“Ku... Musou Kassei!” (Raphtalia)

“That’s something we can do too~” (Firo)

“Yes, Firo-chan! Let’s do it!” (Atlas)

Atlas and Firo power up to match the fake.

For them to have to double team her... perhaps it’s due to the support fire that occasionally pierces Fohl’s defenses. There’s no helping it.

Be careful. Don’t deal any decisive blows.

The Battle for the Second Tower

Hmm? The slaves that had split off into a separate regiment are approaching the central portion as well.

I change the channel.

“Kiel-kun!”

The slaves close in, to find Kiel waiting for them, taking on an imposing stance.

“Move aside!” (Imya)

Oh? Imya’s mixed in with the group.

I’m surprised she came. She admitted herself that she was unfit for battle.

“I’m sorry, but you’re not getting past! I promised Niichan.” (Kiel)

Kiel changes to her dog form, and the other slaves raise their various weapons.

“Even if it’s Kiel-kun, I won’t hold back. In the end, it’s all for Shield-Oniichan’s sake.”

“You’re wrong, everyone. Everyone’s misunderstanding something. Niichan... Niichan granted me power. If you all ask, then you too will...” (Kiel)

Kiel jumps forward, and starts biting at the slaves.

However, perhaps due to the fact that they’re used to battle, the group is able to keep up with her movements.

The slaves with the highest level work together, and feign attacks at her.

“Everyone, get down!” (Imya)

Imya runs forward, and stabs at Kiel with a dagger.

Kiel grumbles, as the dagger stabs into her shoulder.

“If it isn’t Imya-chan. You don’t find me scary?” (Kiel) “No, not really...” (Imya)

... It seems Imya’s surprisingly fearless.

Though I agree that Kiel isn’t really scary.

No matter how I look at it, she’s cute.

“Kiel-kun, you told me this on the day I was bought, right? The place I was going to would be somewhere where if you work hard, you’ll get appropriate compensation. Is it still the same?” (Imya) “Of course!” (Kiel)

“It doesn’t look that way to me. That’s why I want the Hero of the Shield-sama to come back. Kiel-kun, I will defeat you!” (Imya)

And Imya produces a cookie from her pocket, and throws it. [\[22\]](#)

“S-sweets!?” (Kiel)

Kiel suddenly turns her attention to the thrown treat. She chases it and begins chomping on it.

“Everyone, now! Calm down; collect yourselves!” (Imya)

Imya claps her hands before one of the panicking slave’s faces.

“B-but that monster’s here! We have to escape... we have...”

... This reaction. It’s somewhat like Raphtalia’s panic attacks when she was

younger.

Ah... I see why Kiel wanted to take on that shape.

She thought something like strength = evoking fear. She turned into what she feared to obtain strength.

However, it seems that Imya coincidentally noticed her weakness...

Did Kiel and Itsuki tell her tales of the other world? Or is it chance?

The monster Cerberus lives in this world, so perhaps it has similar qualities.

I thought the same when I finished the modifications.

“If we don’t do anything here, what do you think will happen? Didn’t we get stronger as not to lose to the wave!?” (Imya) “... Right, not to lose... We’re working so we won’t have to lose any precious people anymore!”

“I was scolded by Imya-chan, haha!”

“Kiel-kun! We won’t lose!” (Everyone)

“Hah! Like I’m going down so easily!” (Kiel)

Kiel stops munching on the cookie, and starts running at the slaves.

She’s really fast.

As expected of my modifications.

She’s making a fool out of the villagers!

“Ku! She’s too fast. At this rate, we’ll never get through!”

“GAUUU!” (Kiel)

Kiel snaps at Imya with one of her mouths.

“___!”

Overcoming the pain, Imya grabs and holds down the other two heads.

“Now’s your chance!” (Imya)

“Yeah!”

... What is this?

The slaves have begun singing a lullaby.

Dammit! How do they know all of Kiel’s weaknesses!?^[23]

“Ah... Uu...”

Kiel’s jaw slackens, and she staggers from side to side.

“Uu... Not yet, I am... not done yet! Like I’d go down here!” (Kiel)

... I guess it’s time.

I open the line, and connect it to Kiel’s room.

“Kiel, retreat.” (Naofumi)

“Niichan!? But...” (Kiel)

“They know your weaknesses. At this rate, you’ll definitely lose. Just fall back for now.” (Naofumi) “Damn! Understood, Niichan.” (Kiel)

Dammit... I never expected the situation to be this bad.

I showed off my massive modification of the Bioplant. Were they able to deduce Kiel’s modifications from that?

And the monster that should have been a traumatic existence for a majority of them... Did they already prepare to overcome such a hurdle beforehand?

That’s the only thing I can think of.

Kiel obeys me, and leaves the room with haste.

I told her to go assist Motoyasu if something like this happened.

With her increased fighting ability, if she goes to assist Motoyasu, then something should change.

At that moment, the alarm rung out once more.

From the second tower's core piece, someone's accessed all of the other towers' cores. They're trying to shut them down.

I see... So that's why Rat participated in this mission.

But that's futile.

“Rafu~!”

The monster I had prepared as a final line of defense, Mii-kun, breaks through the ceiling to confront the hacker.

Some bugs were apparent when he sparred with Firo, so I didn't want to send him into combat so soon. But I stationed him above the core room just in case.

That's the place where the land's power, and magic gathers. It was perfect for tuning him. I'm lucky I placed him there.

“Ku... I was so close...” (Rat)

“Unfortunately, your efforts are pointless.” (Naofumi)

I connect my speaker to speak with Rat.

“Do you think that is enough to breach through my security?” (Naofumi)

“Marquis, just quit it already!” (Rat)

“Hahaha, I'll make you regret ever thinking of opposing me. Go forth!”
(Naofumi)

How ironic. Rat, you shall be disposed of by the monster you cherished so!

“Rafu~!”

Mii-kun swings his thick tail at Rat.

Being familiar with monsters, Rat predicts and evades his attack. She throws a syringe at him.

Again, useless. Don't think that's enough to stop a fully strengthened Raph.

“The drug isn't...”

Rat freezes as if she had seen something unbelievable. Her movements are quickly suppressed by Mii-kun.

Mii-kun pulls out the syringe, and starts walking toward his former friend.

“Rafu~!”

He raises his large arm, and lowers it with great force.

“Agu...”

It was a narrow room at the center of the tower, with various devices set everywhere.

Rat's knees give out below her, and she falls to the floor. Mii-kun raised his arm overhead, as if to give the finishing blow.

“... Rafu~”

Mii-kun and Rat exchange glances.

“... Mii-kun?”

“R-Rafu~!?”

It happened at a moment's notice.

Mii-kun grasped his head, and called out.

Ku... I guess his body's tuning is still inadequate.

“Marquis! What is the meaning of this!?” (Rat)

“No idea. It's what your precious monster wished for.” (Naofumi) “Even so... you went and did something like this...!? ” (Rat) “Rafu~!”

Mii-kun starts going out of control, and the core room begins crumbling to pieces.

Ku... This is exceedingly troublesome.

Eventually, with the sound of shattering glass, the core piece breaks.

The tower rumbles, and begins to collapse.

There's no choice.

I open all audio lines in the second tower.

“Those who follow me, the tower is crumbling. Retreat with haste. If you run to the third tower, the fakes will be unable to follow.” (Naofumi)

I change the channel to observe the Fake and Firo's battle. It seems it was put on standby due to the rumbling of the tower.

They haven't defeated her yet?

I guess the fake's got some skills.

Due to Kiel's help, Motoyasu was able to drive off Ren and Gaelion. They were heading to assist Firo's group.

They joined up with Sadina on the way. I guess I'll have to honestly admit

defeat here.

After I ordered him to return, Mii-kun took a last look at Rat, and climbed through the ceiling to escape.

“Mii-kun! Wait!” (Rat)

“... Rafu~!”

That isn't the Mii-kun you know anymore.

He's been reborn as one of my subordinates.

After that, Rat walked out of the room to meet the fakes.

At the same time, Motoyasu met Firo's group, and used his portal to teleport them away.

The last footage I saw before the tower collapsed was that of Ren and Itsuki meeting the fakes, and teleporting all of them back...

It seems Itsuki's getting over his curse. His SP recovered a bit.

That's bothersome.

Anyways, we lost the battle of the second tower.

I have to admit that.

The Second Generation

“Let’s start a strategy meeting!”

Kiel returned with a despondent look on her face. Before I could order anything, she gathered up all of my forces, and announced a meeting.

“This time, even after Niichan went to the trouble of modifying me, I wasn’t of any use at all.” (Kiel) “Kiel-kun tried her hardest. Her new form was also amazing.” (Midori)

Midori turns to Kiel, and throws some honest praise at her.

Even though he can be toxic, he’s also relatively sociable, it seems.

“I think if Kiel-kun wasn’t there, then Motoyasu-san would have still been exchanging blows with the Hero of the Sword.”

“That’s right.” (Motoyasu)

Oh? Motoyasu can communicate with Kiel when she’s Kielberus?

That’s actually a bit surprising.

I thought Melty was the only woman whose words would get through to him.

“Motoyasu, what does Kiel look like to you?” (Naofumi)

“A dog with three heads, Father-in-Law.” (Motoyasu)

“Okay, Kiel. Return to your normal form!” (Naofumi)

“Got it, Niichan!” (Kiel)

Kiel assumes her human form.

And Motoyasu's gaze changes to that of someone staring at filth. He averts his eyes.

"A dog that can transform into a pig... That's quite a dirty power." (Motoyasu)
Ah... because Kiel changed into something close to a monster, she got out of the category where gender mattered, I guess.

But Firo is recognized in both forms, and Kiel only in monster... What's going on in Motoyasu's head?

"Niichan, I'm sorry. I wasn't helpful at all." (Kiel)

"Don't mind it. They grasped your weaknesses, so there's no helping it."
(Naofumi) "Then what am I supposed to do?" (Kiel)

That's right.

Perhaps I should station her in an area that eliminates the effect of her weaknesses.

Honestly, more modifications than this will strain her body too much. It's very likely she won't be able to turn back.

"I'll provide Kiel with ear plugs, or earmuffs. The problem would be that I would have to give orders beforehand, and I won't be able to coordinate her movements." (Naofumi)

That's was one of the possibilities I considered, but I never expected the situation to call for it so quickly.

I need to somehow eliminate her weakness of being unable to look away from sweets, and being weak to lullabies.

For the latter, I can just cover her ears, but the former is difficult.

I could make sure they didn't have any treats on them... but I don't have a

concrete plan for that.

If I drew it into an underwater battle, then they wouldn't be able to use it, but that would sacrifice Kiel's improved mobility.

Anyways, I'll have to consider how to use Kiel.

And wait a second...

"Kiel, if you're fighting an enemy that you think you can beat, try your hardest to stay in your dog form. Only use your modified form when you need to."

(Naofumi) "So the only ones I should use it on are Raphtalia-chan, Rishia-nee-chan, and the heroes?" (Kiel) "Yeah, that seems to be the case. I guess you should steer clear of the Granny, and her disciples as well..." (Naofumi)

Though they don't stand out, besides Raphtalia, Rishia, and Fohl, there are some others who underwent the Granny's training.

This time, the fear from seeing Kiel's Kielberus form caused them to be unable to act. But if they meet again, Kiel will be at a disadvantage.

"I'll access the third tower... and institute a scanning feature. I'll make it so that people carrying food-like items will be unable to reach the area where Kiel's deployed." (Naofumi)

It will take up some time, but there's no helping it.

"Um..."

"Hmm?" (Naofumi)

One of the slaves I treated trembles as it calls out to me.

This one didn't participate in the Second Tower defense.

"Is there someone who's threatening the... God of the Shield-sama?"

"Yeah, this world is full of people like that. A group of them are trying to invade this place. For that purpose, the people gathered here are putting a

desperate effort towards defending this place, but the situation is turning stale.” (Naofumi)

They even managed to destroy tower number two.

The main reason for this failure was that I deployed Rat’s monster before tuning him properly.

It was my own lack of judgment.

My next plan won’t have as many risks.

“Rafu~...”

Rat’s monster, AKA Mii-kun, stands around with a dejected expression.

Though he had enough battle power, he went out of control. It seems he’s repenting.

“Then... um...”

“What?” (Naofumi)

The treated slaves look at me with determination, and step forward.

“Please modify us like you did that child!”

“... You guys just overcame human experimentation by the Three Hero Church. I don’t think you should be jumping at such notions.” (Naofumi)
It’s fine if they just help with magic supplying, and managing the lab.

Their levels and abilities are not fit for battle.

In the current situation, without the time to increase their level, I don’t find it necessary to send them to war.

“I think I said this with Kiel-chan as well, but Oneechan wouldn’t recommend it.” (Sadina) “Sadina... should you be saying that? You were also quite useless

this time around.” (Naofumi) “But I was fighting alongside the Raph Race that Naofumi-chan made with care. There’s no way I could get serious.” (Sadina) “Then you’ll be the one to finish off that faker.” (Naofumi) “That’s impossible. I mean, it’s Raphtalia-chan.” (Sadina) “That’s just a fake making a mockery of her form.” (Naofumi) “... Naofumi-chan believes that. But still, it’s hard for me to attack her, so I can’t get serious. You understand?” (Sadina) “I see.” (Naofumi)

Even though she’s evil, her appearance is the spitting image of the real one.

I guess I can understand how she would be hard to fight.

“And that’s how it is. You get it?” (Naofumi)

“... No, since you saved our lives, we would like to be of as much use to the God of the Shield-sama as possible.”

All of them seem resolute as they face me.

I get the feeling that a half-hearted refusal on my part won’t move them.

No, I can easily refuse.

But if I do, they might use that resolution to infiltrate and try to defend the third tower anyways.

Even in jest, I can’t call their levels high. They’re very low.

Using my abilities, I can forcibly raise levels, but 30 is my limit.

Over that, and the strain on the body is too high. I don’t have enough energy to expend either.

“... Promise me this. When you march into battle, you will prioritize survival over all else.” (Naofumi) “If the God of the Shield wishes it.” (All Treated Slaves)

“... Understood. I’ll modify you to your hearts’ content later. Before then, imagine your ideal form of power.” (Naofumi) “Ah, Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

At that point, Atlas raised her hand.

“What is it?” (Naofumi)

“As Naofumi-sama’s power, I wish to get stronger.” (Atlas) “What are you saying, Atlas? Do you want to end up looking like that!?” (Fohl) “Yes, Onii-sama. I’ll change into anything be it for Naofumi-sama’s sake. Also... I don’t want Onii-sama telling me that.” (Atlas)

Atlas spit her words out while emitting bloodlust at Fohl.

Perhaps she’s referring to Fohl’s beast transformation form.

“I heard about it. Onii-sama turned into a fluffy animal, and slept while being cuddled by Naofumi-sama... how envious am I.” (Atlas) “Uu... That’s wrong! I... I am...!” (Fohl)

“That’s why I want a fluffy form like Kiel-kun!” (Atlas) “So you’re completely ignoring combat ability!” (Naofumi)

The difference in these people is too great.

But... Atlas is applying herself a lot.

I don’t mind modifying her to some extent.

If I fix her eyes, then perhaps her movements will become sharper.

At the very least, if I give her a transformation ability, she will get stronger.

“Okay, then I’ll make modifications, with Atlas as my priority!” (Naofumi) “You bastard-” (Fohl)

“Onii-sama! You’re wide open.” (Atlas)

“Gefu!” (Fohl)

Atlas pricks an enraged Fohl from behind, and he falls forward.

These two are the same as ever.

“I jabbed a pressure point. For a little while, you won’t be able to muster up any

strength. Firo-chan, can you restrain Onii-sama so he won't be able to move?"
(Atlas)

Firo stands above Fohl.

Like that, even Fohl will be rendered immobile.

"A-Atlas! Sto-STOOOOP!" (Fohl)

I signal Atlas to enter the culture tank, and activate my Human Experimentation ability.

Symbols come from my shield, and bind her. A window appears before my eyes.

And as soon as I looked over it, I came to a conclusion.

"My apologies, Atlas. It's impossible for you." (Naofumi) "W-why not, Naofumi-sama!?" (Atlas)

"You have not the constitution to withstand modifications. More specifically, your body is already at its breaking point. There's no room for any more."
(NAofumi)

Perhaps due to her body, making the necessary changes will be fatal.

She was at her limit from the start. She doesn't have the caliber.

She was originally weak, and she couldn't even walk. She was always blind. Yet now that child is walking on her own feet, and even rushing into battle.

With that, she's already near her own breaking point.

What's more, this modification will require too much energy, so I don't think I will be able to complete it. I'll have to pay quite a bit of compensation for it. After this, I must conquer the world, so using that much here would be a pain.

"Give up." (Naofumi)

"Uu... If Naofumi-sama puts it like that, then I'll reluctantly give up." (Atlas)
After getting out of the tank, Atlas motions Firo to move. He lifts her up in his

arms.

“I’m glad. Atlas didn’t have anything done to her.” (Fohl) “That’s unfortunate. I thought I would at least be able to return her vision.” (Naofumi) “H-her eyes... can be repaired... you say!?” (Fohl)

Fohl glares at me in disbelief.

He truly is an excitable fellow.

“Then why didn’t you!?” (Fohl)

“I just explained it, didn’t I?” (Naofumi)

Even though he objected to it, why is he getting mad at me for not doing it?

“...” (Fohl)

With a regretful, yet glad, expression, Fohl steps back with Atlas in hand.

“Then... will Onii-sama be getting modified?” (Atlas)

“Wha-Atlas!” (Fohl)

“If Onii-sama become stronger, Naofumi-sama’s defenses will become unbreakable.” (Atlas) “Fumu... fine. Upon Atlas’s orders, I’ll grant you some modifications. Firo.” (Naofumi) “Yeah, got it!” (Firo)

Since he hasn’t fully recovered, Fohl is easily lifted into the culture tank by Firo.

“Wait! Unhand me! Something like this... I’ll never-” (Fohl) “Onii-sama...” (Atlas)

“...” (Fohl)

Good, he quieted down.

I activate my powers, and direct them at Fohl.

... What's with this?

For different reasons, I can't do anything to him.

Perhaps I should say he's already in his perfect form.

He hasn't unlocked it yet, but if he raises his own abilities, he already has another form.^[24]

He already has all of the abilities I granted to Kiel.

What is the meaning of this?

In Atlas's case... her screen had a vestigial remnant of something similar. Does it have to do with their blood?

The Hakuko seem to be such a race.

"Atlas, what do you want me to do to Fohl?" (Naofumi)

"Please make him less fluffy." (Atlas)

That has nothing to do with battle. Rejected.

Ah, now that I think about it, when Kiel saw Fohl's beast form, she got really excited, and kept calling him, 'cool'. How long ago was that?

"If he concentrates harder, he can get another form much like the one I gave to Kiel." (Naofumi) "For reals? Fohl-niichan is amazing!" (Kiel)

Kiel excitedly praises Fohl.

But Fohl doesn't care for any words apart from his sister's. He ignores it.

"R-really?" (Fohl)

"... What sort of form is it?" (Atlas)

“It seems to be a larger white tiger. Though his weaknesses increase, his abilities rise. It requires a lot of discipline to achieve. Actually, it seems to be impossible.” (Naofumi)

I mean... there's too much. Fohl's raised his level quite a bit, but he hasn't even fulfilled half of the necessary requirements to unlock it.

The Hakuko race can climb up to level 120, but... he needs to be at least 180 to use it.

Anyways, I can't modify him further.

Ah, right. The messenger from Silt Welt could transform too.

The feeling he gave off was kinda like that of a monster. Is that related to this...?

The Hakuko blood's already been modified to its fullest.

“Anyways, until the third tower's boost runs out, I'll modify you all into whatever form you want. Of course, like Atlas over there, there may be some who cannot be changed. Prepare yourselves for that.” (Naofumi) “Yes!” (Treated Slaves)

Good answer.

I guess I may be able to count on them a bit.

“Then everyone else, review your shortcomings, and prepare for tomorrow's battle.” (Naofumi)

I signal the group to disperse.

You know, I actually have a mountain of things I have to be doing.

This time, I made improvements on the Raph race, and made my next creation. I had just finished my Tali race, and now this.

The second generation Raphs were made with fixing the low abilities of the first generation in mind. Their base abilities and intelligence were increased.

Their appearance is as of yet the same, but they'll be more powerful than the

first generation.

The Tali race was made in a form closer to that of humans.

I made it so they were bipedal.

As I was resting to recover energy to modify the slaves, Firo came with the other monsters.

“What’s up?” (Naofumi)

“Well, you see, these children asked when it was their turns to get modified.”
(Firo) “Ah, so that’s it. What sort of shape do you want?” (Naofumi)

As I asked, the monsters turned to the Raph and Tali race specimens in the tanks, and cried out.

“They want to be of the small oneechan race. In a way different from with Mii-kun.” (Firo) “I see...” (Naofumi)

What an advantageous proposal.

If they wish to aid in my experiments, then my research will progress.

And these monsters were of relatively high level too.

Combined with the Raph Race’s power, they’ll become much more useful than the mass produced models.

“If that’s the case, then it’s simple.” (Naofumi)

I’ve already established the foundation.

I’ll just have to implant the Raph race genes into them to whatever extent they wish it.

Based on the results of their changes, my research will advance.

“Well, I’ll leave it up to you guys to what extent you want to keep your original

ances.” (Naofumi)

Today will be a busy one.

Until the third tower became vulnerable, I poured my efforts into modifying the slaves and the monsters.

By the way, Firo left to invite Melty over, and returned in failure.

It seems that the princess is rejecting my plan.

I was going to purify all of the trashy nobility in Malromark, and spare only her, yet this is how she reacts...

She’s a stubborn lass.

“Ah, Firo. Do you want me to add anything to you?” (Naofumi) “Um, you see, Firo is...” (Firo)

I heard out Firo’s request as well.

“Let’s see. I’ll try to take care of it when I find time.” (Naofumi) “Yay!” (Firo)

She was depressed after being rejected by Melty, but she regained some vigor.

How selfish a bird.

“Ah, Naofumi-sama...” (Atlas)

As always, Atlas is sleeping near me.

Fohl failed in dragging her away.

War Reversal

The third day.

I granted the modifications to the slaves that wished for it, but...

To complete the modifications, a large amount of energy was required. By the time the Third Tower's boost ran out, I could only finish a couple of slaves and monsters.

The number of boats on the Faker's side increased by a bit.

"I won't let you get in the way of the God of the Shield-sama's plans!"

The Third Tower Defense front is a maelstrom of discord.

It's an all-out war.

However... for some reason, they were able to make use of all of my new modified slaves' weaknesses, and we faced a stream of defeats.

"As God-sama ordered, we have to run!"

"Yeah!"

Taking into account what happened in the second tower, I made secret escape passages to prevent capture upon defeat.

Just by entering the various escape ways within the tower, my subordinates can achieve safety when at a disadvantage.

Now then...

Those on the front lines are the monsters I modified to have the appearance

of Raphs and Talis. The sight of them sent Rat and Taniko into a frenzy.

“Marquis! I’m definitely not forgiving you for this one!” (Rat)

“Yeah! I’ll make you regret it!” (Taniko)

Both of them are quite mad, but it’s not like I care.

It’s something the monsters wished for.

More importantly... those guys aren’t saying anything about the new slaves assisting our forces...

Well it’s an emergency situation, so perhaps they got used to it.

... I’ve been thinking this for a while, but isn’t our information getting leaked?

I need to deal with this immediately.

Oh? Even Melty’s participating in this invasion.

Even though they were against it, I organized the group of Atlas, Firo, Fohl, and Motoyasu to guard the core.

Everyone else engages with enemies within the tower whenever they find them.

The situation is unfavorable. My forces are often pushed into unavoidable retreat.

“You came again, Raphtalia-oneechan... Can’t you let master be free already?”

(Firo) “What do you mean free!? Wasn’t Naofumi-sama planning on returning to his world? Why does he need to conquer this world, anyways?” (Raphtalia)

“Firo-chan! Stop it already.” (Melty)

“Ah, Melty-chan. Melty-chan will follow Master, right?” (Firo)

Firo tilts her head as she asks.

But unfortunately, Melty cannot return Firo’s smile.

“Firo-chan, there’s no way that I could do that.” (Melty)

“Is that so?” (Firo)

“Of course. I haven’t met him yet, but he began scheming for world domination, started producing strange monster legions, and began modifying the children from his own village. I can’t leave him be!” (Melty) “Master is, you see, he has a great smile. Firo rarely ever saw master so happy before, you know.” (Firo) “Really? I kinda wanna see that... No, that doesn’t matter. Firo-chan! Please help us stop Naofumi!” (Melty) “Eh~? Even if it’s Melty-chan’s request, I won’t do this one.” (Firo) “... Firo-chan. Once Naofumi returns to normal, he’s going to scold you severely. You better be prepared for that.” (Melty) “I won’t let you~” (Firo)

And the battle commenced.

Or it should have. Motoyasu, who was being silent until now, addressed Firo.

“By the way, Firo-tan. Did you not call that pig over there Raphtalia-oneechan just now?” (Motoyasu) “Mu! Don’t talk to me!” (Firo)

Firo bluntly shows her dislike of him, and rejects conversation.

As I thought. This battle party is no good.

“Oy, fiancé over there! Did Firo-tan really call that thing Oneesan?” (Motoyasu)

“Who’s anyone’s fiancé!? Are you still believing Naofumi’s bullcrap?” (Melty)

“Yeah, she definitely said that.” (Midori)

The one who supplemented the info was Midori.

And wait, that was unnecessary.

“Motoyasu, don’t mind it.” (Naofumi)

I address him from a distance.

“Is that so, Father-in-Law?” (Motoyasu)

“Don’t just brush it off so easily!” (Raphtalia)

“Oya? I thought you were merely a pig, but you can speak human tongue.”
(Motoyasu) “Words are...?”

Mu... due to some strange reason, the fake’s words entered Motoyasu’s ears.

Besides Filo Rials, Melty was supposed to be the only woman he could hear.

“Melty-chan! Please try telling the Hero of the Spear that I am Firo’s sister.”
(Raphtalia) “Oneechan, prepare yourself!” (Firo)

Firo directs kicks at the fake.

The fake sidesteps them, and gives a request to Melty.

“Ren-san!” (Raphtalia)

“Yeah!” (Ren)

Ren steps in front to confront Firo.

“Move, sword person.” (Firo)

“I’m sorry, but I can’t do that. I’m fighting to repay my debt to Naofumi here.”
(Ren) “Mu!” (Firo)

“I can’t go around accepting that Naofumi. No, this time, for his sake... I’ll fight to return the home he made to normal!” (Ren)

As if resounding with his cry, the sword in his hands changes shape.

“Growing power...? This is...”

The double edged sword in his hands changed shape to that of a katana.

Could this be?

“It leveled up... and turned into the Spirit Turtle Katana?”

Ren swings it a few times in front of him, and turns it in his hand, before taking a stance.

All of a sudden, the enemy unlocked a new power. It doesn't feel good to be on the receiving side of these situations.

“Mu...” (Firo)

Ren and Firo begin glaring at each other.

They both understand that a single move could be fatal. Neither of them can budge. That means one side needs to get support, or this won't go anywhere.

What is Atlas doing? I look around, and find her intercepting Rishia. She's not letting any support fire get in.

That fake! What is she plotting?

She has Ren and Itsuki and even Rishia for support.

Should I call the slaves who escaped and Kiel to help?

No, a large portion of the tower is already occupied by the slaves from the village.

I'll need to free up Firo's group to swiftly deal with them.

Ku... at a time like this, Sadina is... hard at work fighting the villagers.

She's using magic this time, but perhaps due to her opponent's speed, she's not hitting with it. I can't count on her as a reinforcement.

“And Fohl-kun, what the hell are you doing?” (Raphtalia)

“M-me!? But...” (Fohl)

“From the journey we had together, I can understand just how important Atlas-chan is to you. However... you’re just silently watching your precious sister going down a dangerous path... Is that really something a caring brother should do!?” (Raphtalia) “Uwah... I am... I am always Atlas’s ally!” (Fohl)

Fohl swings his fists at the fake.

But before the blows reach her, the fake slaps Fohl strongly across the face.

Haha, what’s with that attack? It had no power behind it.

“If Naofumi-sama starts doing bad things, then like now, I will do my best to set him on the right path. But what are you doing? You just act like a tumor on her side... like that, nothing will be resolved. This will end with... Atlas-chan getting with that strange Naofumi! Is that the result of your care for your sister?”

(Raphtalia)

With eyes as if he just had an epiphany, Fohl looks over the fake.

“... That’s right. I am... I treasured Atlas too much, so I never thought about her. I had approved of him a bit, but when he’s like that, I can’t be handing Atlas over to him!” (Fohl)

Through a turn of events, Fohl turns. He fires a skill in Atlas’s direction.

Seeing through it, she barely dodges.

“... Onii-sama, what sort of joke is this?” (Atlas)

“It’s no joke! I’ll use all of my power to prevent you from straying down the wrong path!” (Fohl) “So you will betray Naofumi-sama?” (Atlas)

“Yeah, that guy isn’t the one I know of. The one I know doesn’t have such an ominous smile, and he had a kind of clumsy kindness. If it’s that... clumsy guy, I think I would be fine with entrusting you to him. Just a bit.” (Fohl)

Ku... The traitor Fohl starts battling Atlas.

What the hell is Motoyasu doing!?

“Hey, you’re going to attack me? If you lay hands on Firo’s fiancé, you know what’s going to happen, right?” (Melty) “Mu~. Melty-chan, you’re going to get hurt. Go home!” (Firo)

Firo doesn’t want to see Melty injured, but she also doesn’t want to look at Motoyasu. She speaks without taking her eyes off of Ren.

“Gu...”

But Motoyasu isn’t able to take on Melty’s willpower?

Aren’t you supposed to be a Hero?

Why is your heart losing to a little girl?

“About your previous question, you’re right. Raphtalia-san is the person who fulfills the role of Firo’s sister. From Naofumi’s perspective as well.” (Melty)
Melty points to the fake as she answers.

The fake sticks her chest out, and glares at Motoyasu.

“T-that was the case!?” (Motoyasu)

“Can you hear my words now?” (Raphtalia)

“O-of course, Firo-tan’s beautiful sister, my Sister-in-Law!” (Motoyasu)
This one... he begins praising the girl he had referred to as a pig moments before.

He looked to women as pigs, and lusted after birds. But just how rotten are his eyes?

“Then Motoyasu-san. Please help us stop Naofumi-sama. It’s a request from Firo’s sister.” (Raphtalia) “Don’t listen to her words, Motoyasu. Just kill the fake

already.” (Naofumi) “Naofumi-sama, please stay out of this.” (Raphtalia)

“There’s no way I could. I am-” (Naofumi)

The fake threw her sword at the Bioplant I modified to act as a speaker.

It will take 30 seconds to regenerate. What shall I do?

“The current Naofumi-sama has become strange due to a curse. Since you were with him, did you feel something off?” (Raphtalia) “Is that so? I get the feeling that Father-in-Law always gave off that sort of feeling.” (Motoyasu) “... Your bad point is that you can’t look at others at all. You only think about yourself! Naofumi-sama will never give Firo away to someone like that!” (Raphtalia) “No way! Then I am...” (Motoyasu)

“It’s not too late. I heard about it. When Firo turned strange, you worked hard to help her. Like that time... for now stop Firo, and then let’s stop Naofumi-sama. All will be fine!” (Raphtalia) “Understood Sister-in-Law! I, Motoyasu, will shed tears as I make an enemy of Firo-tan and Father-in-Law!” (Motoyasu) “When Naofumi-sama turns back to normal, he will definitely praise you for your hard work. I promise you that.” (Raphtalia) “MUUUUUU! Oneechan is mean!” (Firo)

“Ara, Firo? Now your hated person won’t be so close to Naofumi-sama.” (Raphtalia) “Ah, I see. Oneechan, thank you!” (Firo)

“Don’t thank her!” (Naofumi)

I scream out of the fixed speaker.

Fohl and Motoyasu, for what have they reached the same consensus?

If they pull out, our already-meager forces will suffer a heavy loss.

“Master, what’s wrong?” (Firo)

“Look around you.” (Naofumi)

“Eh?” (Firo)

Atlas is fighting Fohl, and Firo's been drawn into fighting both Ren and Motoyasu. What's more, Melty is still there.

I'll also add on that making an enemy of Motoyasu means making an enemy of his army of three.

The battle immediately reversed.

Like this, we don't even have a 10000 to 1 chance of victory.

"Firo, lie all you want. Persuade Motoyasu to come back." (Naofumi) "Okay. Please save Firo, spear person." (Firo)

"I'm sorry Firo-tan. That will have to wait after I stop Father-in-Law with Sister-in-Law." (Motoyasu) "How mean!" (Firo)

"This is also for Firo-tan's sake, Ah... I, Motoyasu have awoken to my mission of love." (Motoyasu) "Mu~! The result is fine, but I can't stand that bitch!" (Motoyasu's Three)

As always, the three Firo Rials mouth off as they side with their Motoyasu, and glare at Firo.

These guys are idiots, but their presence can greatly alter the flow of battle.

If I don't order the retreat, it'll be dangerous.

"... We've been put at a bit of a disadvantage." (Atlas)

"But Firo will work hard~!" (Firo)

"No. At this rate, we'll be made into hostages. Naofumi-sama, please grant permission for retreat." (Atlas) "... There's no choice. Granted!" (Naofumi)

Following my orders, Atlas brushes off Fohl's hands, and activates an emergency escape passage.

Ku... my plans were crumbled all at once.

Now I fear for tomorrow, and the day after.

“Eh? ... Firo hasn't lost.” (Firo)

“But you will soon.”

“Mu... I won't lose tomorrow!” (Firo)

This is what you call numerical advantage.

Surrounded by the fake party, Firo stamps her foot in frustration. She kicks the floor hard enough to open a hole, and makes a run for the emergency exit on the lower floor.

“Wait, Firo-chan!” (Melty)

“Firo-tan!” (Motoyasu)

“That barrier blocks pursuit, so it's impossible. For now, let's destroy the tower.” (Raphtalia)

You bitch... fake, you twisted your words to take Motoyasu and Fohl.

How could this... like this, I'm at an extreme disadvantage.

As expected, the third tower was destroyed, and I only had five left.

“Now then... for a strategy meeting.”

In my main base lab, an exhausted Kiel gathers the modified slaves and monsters.

“Following this incident, Fohl-Niichan and the Hero of the Spear-sama were taken by the other side.” (Kiel)

Those goddamn traitors.

... Ah right, there should be one more traitor.

“Even though we worked so hard.”

“Why were they able to learn our weaknesses so easily?”

“That’s something I’ll explain.” (Naofumi)

I touch a stone tablet, and bring up a certain image.

That image was of the individual who was relaxing even in the strategy meeting.. The one who looked after everyone.

“Sadina, isn’t that your fault?” (Naofumi)

“Ara? Why do you think so?” (Sadina)

“You have no motivation when fighting in the towers. Also, you were there most of the times I spoke of the weaknesses. There’s also the fact that you go on patrol a lot.” (Naofumi)

I did have a vague suspicion.

But I never thought someone would plan betrayal in front of me. Especially not someone as skillful as her.

No, as we both lost Raphtalia, I thought we were sharing sadness.

However, in truth, she was leaking information to the opposition.

My doubts led me to confirmation.

I would have let this slide had it not been for today’s result.

Perhaps it was my fault for not monitoring. For her to have sworn her life to Raphtalia, I didn’t want to think that she was a traitor.

“Are you sure it’s not a coincidence?” (Sadina)

“If you wanted it to appear that way, then you should have fought in such a manner. Unfortunately for you, I sentence you to confinement within my laboratory. If the slaves I modify for next time don’t have their weaknesses taken advantage of, you’ll be confirmed as a spy. As my research material, you’ll be subjected to much harsher experiments than the other slaves.” (Naofumi)

“Ara...” (Sadina)

Sadina reaches behind her back, and reaches for her harpoon, but...

“If you try anything funny, I’ll be your opponent.” (Atlas)

“Firo too.” (Firo)

Before she can, Atlas and Firo appear behind her.

“Arara, then should Oneesan surrender peacefully?” (Sadina)

Sadina raises her hands above her head.

“Why would you do such a thing?” (Naofumi)

“Because the child that Naofumi-chan thinks of as a fake is the real thing.”
(Sadina) “Hah! How foolish.” (Naofumi)

That fake is real?

The real one is already gone!

That’s why I’m reviving her, isn’t it?

“Throw her in a cell!” (Naofumi)

The cells I made are of material even Sadina can’t break. There’s a device nearby that absorbs magic, so she won’t be able to use any. I can control the output on it, and this time, I’ll set it to suck every fiber of magic out of her body.

Within the cell, I made her change to human form, and hung her arms up in shackles.

“Repent in here for a while.” (Naofumi)

“Ara...” (Sadina)

If you really turn out to be a spy, I’ll be giving you hell after this.

“And so, we should expect some results next time.” (Naofumi)

“As expected of Niichan! But Sadina-nee-chan, how mean.” (Kiel) “Right. If this proves to be true, we’ll be torturing her for a bit when this is over.” (Naofumi)

“A penalty game, right? Will you send her to be sold in Zeltburg or something?” (Kiel) “No, torture.” (Naofumi)

How peaceful this dog’s brain is.

Our side lost our fighting force, Motoyasu, you know.

Even though he’s rotten, he’s a hero. The modified slaves are at a disadvantage... I see, doesn’t Motoyasu have plenty of weaknesses?

“Firo.” (Naofumi)

“What?” (Firo)

“Charm Motoyasu. If possible, make him swear loyalty. Like that fake did, you’ll have to convince him to come over.” (Naofumi) “Eh...?” (Firo)

Firo clearly seems to hate the notion.

“The spear person doesn’t listen to words at all.” (Firo)

“Ah.” (Naofumi)

Yeah, that’s right. I’m surprised the fake managed to sway him.

Even I don’t have that much confidence in my ability to talk to him.

For now, I’ve been able to use Firo as an intermediate, and things have worked out.

I thought I could have Firo persuade her, but now that he has a twisted goal, I'm not sure if we can stop him.

If I make Firo open her legs and seduce him... no, that's not happening. That's not enough to stop the idiot.

Damn... what should I do?

"Niichan, everyone here decided to follow you. Don't worry about it alone. Let's work hard together." (Kiel)

The slaves and monster look towards me with fiery gazes.

... That's right. I'll just have to try what I can.

"Then shall we commence the modifications?" (Naofumi)

I also need to devote time to researching the real Raphtalia.

I've proceeded quite far in Mii-kun's tuning, so I'll just have to give it my best.

I'm in the middle of using the data I got from the monsters to complete a third generation.

"First, let's start with Firo's powerup." (Naofumi)

"Yay!" (Firo)

I take Firo, and return to my lab.

I let Kiel and the others simulate a battle in the fourth tower.

For the slaves that had their weaknesses known, I told them to fight without transforming. To nullify enemy attacks before attacking.

The newly modified slaves are going to be a large fighting force next time.

If the fakes manage to grasp their weaknesses, Sadina is guilty. Otherwise, she goes free.

“Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

Atlas follows me around.

“In tomorrow’s battle, you’ll have to stop your brother.” (Naofumi) “Yes. Even if it costs me my life.” (Atlas)

“If it seems impossible, retreat. Don’t risk your life. If we sacrifice too much to win, then I can’t call that victory.” (Naofumi) “Understood. But are you sure that’s fine?” (Atlas)

“There’s nothing I can’t solve with my new intellect. As long as the last tower remains, I’ll be able to do something. Before that, I must perfect my Raph race for the final battle! Once completed, a single one of them should be able to hold off the lot of them.” (Naofumi)

Right... Raptalia’s revival hasn’t been granted yet, but research progresses.

I must do whatever I can.

I put Firo into the culture tank, and activate my abilities.

“W-what!?” (Naofumi)

Before I could proceed with her own modification, I was surprised by her information window.

There are traces of experimentations like the ones I’m doing on the Raphs.

This is like the time I tried to modify Fohl.

“What’s wrong?” (Firo)

“No, don’t worry about it.” (Naofumi)

Oh? There’s even a security program like mine.

I made it so that if anyone other than me raises a Raph, it won’t grow as

normal.

With this, it is impossible for anyone else to properly raise a Raph.

At best, they would be able to bring out one third of their true potential.

A system like that has been implanted into Filo Rials.

The coding seems cobbled together, and the important parts are blurry.

It's like the codes from my first and second generation were mixed together. I worry whether or not this would make for good reference.

I want some specimens other than Firo. If I have a couple of Filo Rials, my research should make leaps and bounds I had a few other than Firo among my subordinates. Should I take some samples later?

I also want some data from the treacherous Filo Rials. I'll think of how to capture them.

For now, let's copy Firo's information, and store it.

"So Firo, you said you wanted to be able to fly, right?" (Naofumi) "Yeah, I don't want to lose to Gaelion! The only one master rides is Firo." (Firo) "Fumu, understood." (Naofumi)

I look at her modification screen, and read over the individual entries.

Hmm? There's a strange, disconnected portion.

Looking at the modification tree, there a branch that I barely have the necessary materials to unlock.

If I connect this, what will happen?

It seems to have some relation to wings.

There's a high probability that it's a function the race lost over time.

In the storehouse, Melty had a treasure, that appeared to be the fossil of a flying Filo Rial.

If I tamper with this, she should be able to revert to her ancestral form. This strand, I should be able to connect it.

The materials are really rare. I only have one in my storehouse.

This may turn into a big problem later.

“What’s wrong?” (Firo)

“Firo, how do you want to fly?” (Naofumi)

“How?” (Firo)

“Do you want to use your wings, or use magic to propel yourself? Do you want to make footholds in the air, or store up gasses within the body to float?” (Naofumi)

In the open tree, I can implant any one of those concepts.

By the way, for personal reasons, if she chooses the last one, I’m changing her name to Balloon Firo.

It’s based on Firo’s choice, but I recommend that one.

I feel a strong affinity for balloons.

If it’s Balloon Firo, she should be able to defeat Motoyasu.

I just get that feeling.

“I don’t want to just float.” (Firo)

“... I see. Then wings or magic. The first one requires physical strength, the second magic.” (Naofumi) “What about Gaelion?” (Firo)

“I haven’t confirmed it, but it’s probably the later. With wings, you can fly for a while, but if you don’t lighten your own body, your all-around abilities will drop. With magic, you can use only magic to propel yourself, but you have a lower flight time.” (Naofumi)

In truth, Gaelion’s flight time isn’t that long.

He glides for quite a bit, and I bet he recovers magic while doing so.

And doesn’t Firo have ways of recovering magic?

“I think the latter will be easier.” (Naofumi)

“Then that’s fine.” (Firo)

“Got it.” (Naofumi)

The materials are scarce, but if it’s to power up Firo, I’ll gladly use them.

With a cracking sound, Firo regained one of the powers of her ancestors.

“Now Firo won’t lose to Gaelion~!” (Firo)

It will take a while until the modification finishes.

I use my Filo Rial research data, and that of the other modified monsters to create my third generation Raph Race... I also construct the concept for my Riya Race.

I also want to use a dragon for reference now.

“Once your modification finishes, I have a job for you.” (Naofumi) “Got it!” (Firo)

After the modification finished, Firo flapped her wings. They left light afterimages behind as she lifted off of the ground.

“WaaaAAAH! I’m really flying, master!” (Firo)

In great excitement, Firo reports this to me.

“Yeah, but you’re using magic to fly. It will be difficult to fly for long periods of time.” (Naofumi) “Got it!” (Firo)

“Then let me give you your mission.” (Naofumi)

“What is it?” (Firo)

“Well...”

—

“KYUA!”

“Why do I have to go get Gaelion?” (Firo)

“I wanted to use him for reference, and he’ll provide some force.” (Naofumi)
I know Gaelion wanted to come to my side.

That’s why I sent a flying Firo to infiltrate, and invite him.

“... Why did you invite me?” (Gaelion)

True Gaelion surfaces.

“The one I invited was not you. I said this before, but I’m replenishing my forces. Instead of following the fake, the child Gaelion wanted to follow me.” (Naofumi) I give Firo another job.

She nods, and flies off again.

“Gu... Don’t come out, just quietly... Kyua!” (Gaelion)

It seems the personalities within Gaelion are at war.

Fumu...

“Gaelion, you wanted power, so you went to Rat for modifications, did you not? Am I no good?” (Naofumi) “No, you’re fine. But I cannot stand being of the same position as that Filo Rial.” (Gaelion) “Fu... Kogaelion. If you work hard, I’ll modify you as you wish.” (Naofumi) “Gunu! Sto-won’t you stop!?” (Gaelion)

Gaelion holds his head for a while, and cries out, but eventually, he raises his face.

“KYUA!” (Gaelion)

Child Gaelion was able to hold the older one down.

“What sort of modification do you want?” (Naofumi)

I'll also see just how far along my research will be aided by studying a dragon.

To say the result, Gaelion wanted fast legs, even when pulling the carriage.

Firo wasn't the only one thinking of her rival.

Gaelion was quite troubled over his slow speed on land.

So along with my investigations, I increased his leg strength.

Of course, on the promise that he would follow me.

After that, I sent Firo out a few times, and got most of the traitor's Filo Rials to join our side.

How?

Piyo was the one holding us back, but upon seeing Firo flying freely through the sky, very few Filo Rials chose not to follow me.

Now onto the results of the fourth day.

For all of the other heroes to oppose me was a fatal error.

But there's something I was able to determine.

They were unable to pinpoint the newly modified slaves' weaknesses.

And that's that.

Right before the fourth tower was destroyed, the faker even asked me.

‘What became of Sadina?’

“Sadina, as expected, they were unable to pinpoint my slaves’ weakpoints.”
(Naofumi) “Ara...” (Sadina)

I attach handcuffs on her, take her out of her cell, and force her into my lab’s cultivation tank.

“I wonder what shall become of me.” (Sadina)

“I wonder. First, I’ll cover your smooth skin in hair. The color will be brown. I’ll make your tail striped in black and brown. So that whenever you enter water, it will soak into the fur!” (Naofumi) “Oh my. How scary.” (Sadina)

“After that, I’ll give you two large fangs, and make people wonder whether you’re a whale, walrus, or seal! You’ll become a completely unidentifiable lifeform!” (Naofumi) “Kya how frightening. While you’re at it, can you increase my alcohol tolerance? I’d also like some gills, so I can spend all of my time underwater.” (Sadina) “... You sure are calm!” (Naofumi)

How impudent! When you’re nothing but a traitor!

I’ll do modifications painful enough that your life will hang in the balance!

But as I activate my ability on Sadina, I lose my ability to speak.

W-what?

I look at Sadina’s screen, and find myself at a loss for words.

It’s fundamentally different than Atlas, Fohl and the other children.

Traces of modification, vestiges of magic, there was nothing of the sort. There was only data for her physical form.

Perhaps I should compare it to a sheet of paper.

Fohl, Atlas, Kiel and Firo were colored from the start. What’s more, they had various things glued to them.

I wouldn't be surprised to find red where I was expecting blue.

But Sadina's sheet was that of a pure white Demi-Human.

The real thing... Are these the words that I should be using here?

"You... really, what are you?" (Naofumi)

"Ara? What do you mean by that?" (Sadina)

"There's something different about you from the other Demi-Humans."
(Naofumi) "Ah, so that's it. Oneesan's family, you see... is a long-standing
bloodline, with exclusive blood. Could that be it? Ah, this is a secret, but
Raphtalia-chan's the same." (Sadina) "Raphtalia too!?" (Naofumi)

That means... What sort of existence are Demi-Humans? The amount of
mysteries increased by one.

... If I don't understand the concept, reviving Raphtalia will be impossible.

"But this is this, and that is that." (Naofumi)

I activate a painful modification on Sadina.

This is the punishment for betrayal!

But as she's Raphtalia's guardian, I made it borderline, within the scope
where I could revert her to normal.

After she loses fighting spirit, I can implant a core into her to make her follow
my orders, and have her fight the fakes.

"Ara, how stimulating, Naofumi-chan. Oneesan is almost going to..." (Sadina)

"Just how carefree are you!?" (Naofumi)

I did enough that a normal person would faint from the pain, but Sadina
remains calm throughout the process.

In order to fill the hole left by Motoyasu and Fohl, I tried to do some recruiting in the village, and plenty of other things, but... On the fifth day, True Gaelion betrayed, and with our forces crippled again, we faced yet another defeat.

Sadina destroyed the core I implanted to control her, and she joined the fake's camp.

From the fourth to the seventh day, I had nothing but defeat.

—

And on the eighth day.

“Niichan! We can't hold them back any longer!” (Kiel)

The fakers destroyed the eighth tower core, and the barrier surrounding the laboratory collapsed in its entirety.

I have not the time to erect it once more.

I thought about it before, but since tuning the equipment is difficult, moving the base would mean abandoning the lab.

I finally made the eighth generation Rafu Race, Tali Race, Riya Race, Rafuta Race, Taria Race. Even though I'm so close to reviving Raphtalia. [\[25\]](#)

If I work to the very last moment, I will be unable to avoid death.

Also... I've already completed my ultimate weapon.

... If instead of making the Raph Race, I put my energy towards making perfect weapons of mass genocide, then perhaps I would have won.

But I should dispose of such thoughts.

My goal was to conquer the world alongside Raphtalia.

She's more important than the domination.

I have no regrets.

“Niichan! We need to get out of here quickly! They’re coming, everyone’s already been captured.” (Kiel)

The fake and the heroes have infiltrated the lab. Without a place to run, my followers who risked their lives on the frontlines were all captured by the enemy. I saw all of the footage from here.

I guess this is a good time as ever.

“I’ll go with you, so Niichan, we have to run away.” (Kiel)

“So we surrender this to them... ah right, Kiel.” (Naofumi)

“What? If you don’t hurry, we won’t make it.” (Kiel)

“You told me to make you a crepe tree before, right?” (Naofumi)

I hand a modified bioplant seed over to Kiel.

“See, this here is a seed for a crepe tree. Its weak point is that it has no reproductive capabilities. You can’t grow more than one.” (Naofumi)

“Niichan...” (Kiel)

“No matter what happens, you have to survive. You got that?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah! I’ll work hard for Niichan’s sake!” (Kiel)

Saying that, Kiel ran out.

“Naofumi-sama.” (Atlas)

Atlas comes, together with Firo.

“Ah, so it’s you... go with Kiel to the final battle. There are still things I must do.” (Naofumi) “What about master?” (Firo)

“In the case that you guys lose, I’ll activate my last resort.” (Naofumi)

I point towards a large tank, and display my final weapon.

“It’s not like I have no ways to defend myself. Fight without worry.” (Naofumi)

“Okay, got it.” (Firo)

“In order to serve as Naofumi-sama’s shield, I’ll stake my life on this fight.”

(Atlas) “I’ll leave it to you.” (Naofumi)

“Those words alone are enough motivation for me.” (Atlas)

And Atlas and Firo left.

... Well the basic concept is already accommodated in the seventh generation.

Even without my input, if I increase my amount of Seventh Generations, an eighth will be born.

No matter how long it takes, I will revive Raphtalia.

I couldn’t give her the ability to transform, and I don’t have the time now.

No, it’s more like this is the limit of my technology...

With as much time as I have, I need to increase the amount of Seventh Generation Raphs as much as possible. Then perhaps Raphtalia will one day be revived.

The probability is low, but the current me has no other option.

The final battle commenced.

Research Result

“... Good of you to come all the way here. Perhaps the result of the war has already been decided, but I will not step down here.” (Atlas) “Atlas, just give up already!” (Fohl)

Just in front of my lab’s final line of defense, Atlas, Firo, and Fohl wait for the fake party.

And Fohl screams at Atlas.

“Onii-sama? No matter what sort of disadvantage they face, the Hakuko race is not permitted to run. That’s something I thought you of all people would understand.” (Atlas) “... I see. Then Atlas, for your sake, I will harden my heart, and discipline you.” (Fohl) “Kiel-kun, Firo. When this is over, I’m going to give a hell of a lecture to Naofumi-sama, so you’d better be prepared.” (Raphtalia) “I’ll be the one to protect Niichan!” (Kiel)

“I definitely won’t lose.” (Firo)

The person to make the first move was Atlas.

“TeEEEEEEEEEEI!” (Atlas)

Atlas uses her hand like a sword to slash at Fohl and the fake, and Firo rushes at Ren and Motoyasu in the style she’s accustomed to.

Finally, Kiel closes in on Itsuki and Rishia with an irregular step pattern, and begins her assault.

“Fast!”

“Atlas-san... we fight every time, but it seems you’re progressively getting stronger.” (Raphtalia) “I need strength... Getting stronger is my greatest desire. I still... need to become stronger to defend Naofumi-sama!” (Atlas) “Atlas... You’ve grown up well... But still, I won’t accept that man as he is right now!” (Fohl)

Atlas presses the fake and Fohl with questions as she keeps a low stance. She dodges and parries their blows, waiting for an opportunity to strike.

The battle is so tense, that you don’t get the feeling she’s at a disadvantage, even when it’s two on one.

In that regard, Firo’s battle is the same... no, Firo’s at a greater disadvantage.

Her opponents are two heroes, and three Filo Rials.

「High Quick!」 (Firo)

「Spiral Strike!」 (Firo)

Her battle experience and actual level are high, and she has gotten an understanding of both magic and Chi. She casts acceleration magic, and hits Motoyasu’s groupies, sending them spiraling off.

“Gu... Over this week, I’ve fought you a couple times. But once more, I must say you’re quite an amazing child.” (Ren) “Firo-tan! Amazing! Even though I used the strengthening methods, you can push me back this far!” (Motoyasu) Without dodging, Ren and Motoyasu lift their weapons, and block the blows of Firo’s onslaught.

“Atlas-chan is the same, but why do so many fighting geniuses gather around Naofumi?” (Ren) “Because Firo is the one who will protect master!” (Firo) The effects of High Quick wear off. Firo flaps her wings, and releases traces of magic as she hovers to the ceiling, kicks off it, and sends her foot on a straight course for Ren.

Ren narrowly dodges it, and swings her sword at her as she passes; but Firo kicks the flat of the blade, redirecting its path.

Aiming for that moment, Motoyasu let loose a skill. The spear in his hand changes to... Sadina's harpoon.

Perhaps he borrowed it from her, and made a copy.

「Triaina!」^[26]

A single bolt of lightning flies at Firo, and shockwaves course through her plumage.

“KYAN! ... No, I won't fall.” (Firo)

She was blown away by Motoyasu's skill, but she rolls before hitting the ground, and recovers her stance.

“Woof woof! Rishia-oneechan, prepare yourself!” (Kiel)

Kiel continually assaults Rishia and Itsuki in her Kielberus form.

“FUEeE! Kiel-kun, just give it up already!” (Rishia)

“No way! Niichan is... even if it's just us, we'll always protect Niichan!” (Kiel)
“... Kiel-kun, I'll apologize beforehand. I'm sorry, but you'll be sleeping for a bit.” (Itsuki)

Itsuki... aims a skill at Kiel. He pulls his bow fully, and creates an arrow of light.

“As if an attack like that can hit!” (Kiel)

With a grand gesture, Kiel dodges Itsuki's arrow... or she should have, but as soon as it passed her, it turned around and returned, as if connected by some

invisible wire.

Kiel frantically sweeps away the returning arrow with her tail.

... But...

“Splash Arrow... ability, Sleep Arrow.” (Itsuki)

When the arrow comes into contact with Kiel’s tail, it bursts open.

“Kyan! Uu... not yet...” (Kiel)

“No, unfortunately... you’re done for.” (Itsuki)

“Eh... Ah...” (Kiel)

Kiel’s expression turns blank. Eventually, the whites of her eyes reveal themselves, and she collapses on the ground.

“As I guessed you would dodge like that from the beginning, I shot a Splash Arrow with a sleep effect. For a while, your conscience will not return...” (Itsuki)

“Kiel-kun... You really cared for Naofumi-san, didn’t you.” (Rishia) “Well then, the battle still goes on. Let’s assist.” (Itsuki) “Yes!” (Rishia)

Itsuki and Rishia set their aim on Atlas and Firo, and each unleashes their own skills.

“Kyah... No, I’m still standing.” (Atlas)

“GYAN! Uu... Firo can’t lose!” (Firo)

Even though they get sent flying, and take various attacks, Firo and Atlas refuse to admit defeat. They continue fighting even when blood starts erupting from their mouths

“Atlas, just stay down.” (Raphtalia)

“I-I still have fight left in me!” (Atlas)

“I see...” (Fohl)

Fohl clenches his fist, and thrusts it into Atlas’s abdomen.

Up ‘til now, Atlas had been easily avoiding his attacks by bending backwards and spinning. She had gotten here with minimum damage.

But this time the attack landed exactly on mark. Atlas cries out, and goes limp.

“Atlas... this time, it’s my victory. Your brother is full of nothing but praise for you.” (Fohl)

Holding the unconscious Atlas, Fohl mutters in an emotionless voice.

Last is Firo...

At this point, I activate my final weapon.

We’re outnumbered. With just Firo, we have no chance to grasp victory.

They’ll arrive in the next room soon enough.

I’d like to see this battle through to the end, but I need to use the last bit of energy left.

I’m sorry Firo. Please buy me just a little bit of time.

Eventually, my weapon begins its activation.

“Rafu~”

Out of a large tank, I drain the liquid. What emerged was a fully armed battle-ready body controlled by Rat’s monster Mii-kun.

Not only was his body bigger than the last one I made, I also bestowed various abilities unto him.

In the worst case, I’ve given him a self-evolving function, so perhaps he will become an Eighth Generation Raph. I’ve buried my research reposts somewhere around his core.

After I die, perhaps someone will pick up my research. If only they follow my reports, Raphtalia will revive.

This one has done quite a bit in the battles up until now.

Of course, due to my own failure in tuning him, he's gone berserk numerous times. This time, we have no time for something like that.

The battle data I loaded onto him is a compilation of that of all the Raphs I've made until now, and I've even given him the ability to change to liquid in case of emergency.

If the core piece gets damaged, it will endlessly regenerate. With this monster, I can force the fake party into an endless battle.

I guess a weakness is that its aerial abilities are below Firo's.

By sending magic to its tail, he can float, but it's only able to carry him for short amounts of time.

"You get it, right? You are the last line of defense. Wait for the fakes in front of the protective equipment in the next room, and defeat them!" (Naofumi)

"Rafu~!"

A large sound echoes with every step, and Miikun exits the laboratory room.

Next is... I'll just have to accept what happens.

After activating Mii-kun, I used the energy that recovered to observe Firo's situation.

... As I thought, Firo was beaten as well.

She's been captured by the fakes, and is lying on the ground.

And... the Fakes confronted my last defensive mechanism: Mii-kun.

"Rafu~!"

"T-this child is..."

Hmm? Rat joined them while I wasn't watching.

They've encountered numerous times, but besides his first breakdown, they've fought without much problem.

Even if they encounter now, I doubt anything will change.

"Rafu~!"

Now! Annihilate the Fake and her Heroes!

"Rafu~"

Mii-kun beckons them forward with his hand, and surrenders the road to the fakes.

"What the hell!" (Naofumi)

He kindly destroys the defensive devices for the fakes, forcefully opens the door, and even begins guiding them around the building.

"Um... what is this child doing?" (Raphtalia)

"Ah... Mii-kun. Could it be that you were using the Marquis, and you were waiting for an opportunity to join our side from the beginning?" (Rat) "Rafu~"

He nods, and gives a bright smile at Rat.

DAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAMMMMMMNNNNN IT AAAAAAAAAALLLLLLL!

I thought he was working diligently, but he was using me from the beginning!?

I won't forgive this one!

Just in case something bad happened, I made it so I could modify him from a

distance. How lucky.

I use a stone tablet, and activate my ability from a distance.

“Rafu~”

Mii-kun spits out the remote control core I implanted, and stomps on it.

Ku... Perhaps giving it the ability to turn parts of its body to liquid was my error. I didn't properly manage the parts his core could control.

DamnitDamnitDamnitDamnit! Sadina, Gaelion, and you all had no intention of serving me!

This isn't even a joke anymore.

I guess it's time to activate the self-destruct function.

However, there are still a few slaves in this facility that have yet to evacuate.

... For an emergency escape, there isn't enough energy.

The reason is that I put too much of it towards making the eighth generation.

I could use the portal to run alone, but after destroying the defensive armaments, Gaelion cast his Dragon Sanctuary, making that impossible.

At this point, I have no regrets.

That means there's only one thing I must do.

“I've finally found you, Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)

The fake bursts into my lab, with her heroes, and various others she picked up along the way.

Hmm? Motoyasu's spear's shape has also changed.

“How good of you all to come and visit me, fakers.” (Naofumi)

I activate my second final weapon.

It's something I made out of Bioplant. A vehicle form Plant Golem.

The ground rumbles, and the Golem appears under my feet. I settle into the cockpit, and begin controlling it.

It has a skull motif, and I've granted it a flight ability as well.

I clear away the lab's walls, and rise to the ceiling. I unload my main armaments on them.

I haven't tested the firepower, so that factor is an unknown.

Though I did set it to be something quite formidable.

"Now shall we start our final battle, fakes?" (Naofumi)

"Ah... Raphtalia-san, what should we do?"

"Let's destroy all of the defenses devices protecting him. If we don't, I doubt he'll even listen to anything we say." (Raphtalia)

The heroes all charge their various skills with EP and SP.

「Gravity Blade!」

「Triaina, new form Brionac!」

「Splash Arrow!」

「Tornado Throw!」

"Uguuuuu..."

The window in front of me notified me of the damage to various parts of the body.

I truly am outnumbered.

Losing even the ability to float, my Plant Golem falls to the ground. I move it to prepare for ground battle.

“Naofumi-sama, grit your teeth.” (Raphtalia)

“Who would ever grit their teeth for a fake!” (Naofumi) “... I’m at the limit of my patience. Even though you may be Naofumi-sama, I’m going to get a little bit violent.” (Raphtalia)

The fake quickly approaches me while brandishing her sword.

“Take this!” (Raphtalia)

I move my Shield to take on her sword.

I hear a foreboding snapping sound.

At the same time, pain raced through my head.

And... I feel something passing through my body.

“...?”

With a perplexed expression on her face, the fake thrusts her sword at me again, and again.

Her speed has dropped considerably from the first blow.

However, every time, something within me... I feel Chi coursing through my body with every strike.

Manipulating Chi, was it? I can’t remember how I was able to do that.

“Naofumi-sama, could it be...” (Raphtalia)

With her unarmed hand, the fake slaps my cheek.

It wasn’t a hard blow, but my body was contorted quite a bit.

“UGUHAAH!”

I taste blood inside of my mouth.

This is bad. Did something in me break?

“As I thought.” (Raphtalia)

“What’s up?” (Ren)

“This Naofumi-sama has absolutely no defense. If any one of us were to seriously attack him, he’d die.” (Raphtalia) “W-what!?”

Ku... She saw through me.

That’s right. As she stated before, my current Defense stat is... 0.

In exchange for all of its splendid abilities, this is the price for the New Seven Sin Series. It has absolutely no defense.

Or else there’s no way I would stay holed up in my base the entire time.

“Why is his defense so pitifully low?”

“It may be due to his curse.”

“Uwah... that’s no joke.”

“Rafu~”

“Marquis... isn’t it time for you to surrender already?”

“Fu, who the hell would surrender!? I will continue fighting until I succeed in reviving the real Raphtalia!”

At this point, I’m simply desperate.

After I beat these fakes, I’m going to rule the world. There are plenty of curse skills I haven’t dared testing yet. I can’t go out here.

If I use a Curse Skill on the Castle Plant... right, I’ll make those who oppose me into fertilizer for my base.

Curse Skill-

“I won’t let you!” (Raphtalia)

Before I can even begin chanting a spell, the fake grabs me by the collar, choking me.

“Owowowowow.” (Naofumi)

The pain prevents me from collecting my thoughts.

“Naofumi-sama, please surrender. If you do so, we’ll be able to think of a way to free you from that cursed shield on your arm.” (Raphtalia) “Hmph, I refuse! You false idol!” (Naofumi)

“Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)

She shakes my collar violently, and I break free.

I prepare to use a Curse Skill again.

“Naofumi-sama! Please just quit it already!” (Raphtalia)

With teary eyes, the fake leaps at me.

She pushes my head to her breasts.

“Please remember. Naofumi-sama, I said this before, right?” (Raphtalia)

The imposter takes a deep breath.

“Please believe. I know that Naofumi-sama never committed any crimes. He shared his precious medicine, and saved my life. He’s the Hero of the Shield-sama, the man who taught me how to live, and how to fight... I am your sword, no matter what path you choose to tread down, I will accompany you... For me,

and everyone else who chose to follow you, please come back home.”

(Raphtalia)

Eh?

Eh?

EEH?

What? These words are... I am... I am...

“Firo, Atlas-chan, and Kiel-kun. I understand why they chose to serve you. Even when under a curse, your base nature did not change. However, I... want you to turn back.” (Raphtalia)

A familiar rhythm beats out near my ear.

And the warmth of this chest...

But how could I accept this.

If this is so, then my... reason for existence... everything I strived for... gu...

“The Naofumi-sama I believe in is quiet and unsociable. Because he has a trauma regarding women, he is incapable of loving someone else. He laughs at other’s misfortune. While he’s kind, he’s also strict. Yet there are many parts of him I have yet to come across.” (Raphtalia)

Ku... Let me go! Don’t touch me anymore!

Is what I want to say, but I cannot speak.

“You are definitely one of those sides of Naofumi-sama. You lamented so much over my loss. I can tell by looking at the monsters you made. I understand just how much you trusted me. That’s why I must offer my words of gratitude.”

(Raphtalia)

In front of me, the... fake...

“Thank you. Because you came out, I was able to understand yet another part of Naofumi-sama’s heart.” (Raphtalia)

Her face is red as she kindly looks over mine.

After speaking, she takes something out of the bag hanging on her waist.

It's a ball made out of balloon skin, and a small flag.

"I brought these to make Naofumi-sama remember. To him, perhaps these were merely cheap goods, but for the current me, they are priceless treasures."

(Raphtalia)

And... the fake... no, Raphtalia puts her lips to my cheek.

"I really don't want him to return to his original world! However... more so than this world that does nothing but hurt him, I think it would be better for him if he went back." (Raphtalia)

At that moment.

Something shattered. The outside of my shield falls to pieces, and the New Deadly Sin tree disappeared.

And then I remember losing consciousness.

... I see.

From the start, I was never Naofumi Iwatani. I was merely a personality created by the New Seven Deadly Sins series. Merely a false identity made with his mind as the base. A false mind with false aspirations.

"UGGUUUUAAAAAAAAHHH...!"

Along with my scream, I feel my sense of self disappearing.

No, I'm merely returning. As part of the mass known as Naofumi Iwatani.

That may be... for the best.

I am... already satisfied.

I no longer care about the fate of the world.

Raphtalia is alive. She's living here. She's thanking me.

That's enough for me.

The ground shakes, as the Castle Plant begins to collapse.

The Castle was controlled by my Shield. My Shield was its centerpiece.

With a normal shield equipped, there's no way it could maintain its form.

“Rafu~!”

Mii-kun signals everyone to evacuate.

“Raphtalia-san.”

“I know!”

Raphtalia starts to run, carrying me on her back.

It's... already time for me to go, it seems.

If the world grants me one last wish, then I wish that Raphtalia and the others get out of this laboratory safely. I wish with all of my heart.

Hey, that is the Hero of the Shield. The real Naofumi Iwatani.

You are... you should realize your true feelings already.

Otherwise... you will definitely regret it.

Now, I'm going to become one part of your heart again... the part of your heart that loves Raphtalia.

But still, I do regret it.

For me to call her a fake this entire time, yet be a fake myself.

There's little time left until the next wave.

Was this a complete waste of time...?

“I see... so that's it...”

With my fading consciousness, I come to a single conclusion.

Based on my eight days of existence, I realize that the waves are a fight for_____.

This pointless phenomenon will perhaps _____, but the world will _____.

I remember my enemy's words.

Why is he with Raphtalia...?

Damage Restitution

Uu... what is this?

I'm in pain. It feels like I've been forced to watch a strange nightmare over and over again. My head is spinning.

"Naofumi-sama!"

Raphtalia's voice returns consciousness to my body, and my eyes open, signaling the end of the dream.

Before my eyes is Raphtalia, who's carrying me with a worried expression on her face.

"This is...?" (Naofumi)

I look around and find Ren, Itsuki, Rishia, and various others gazing in our direction. We're in front of what appears to be ruins, near the ocean.

I think I was supposed to be in Melty's manor...

"Raphtalia, where exactly are we? Why have I collapsed...? I think I unlocked a curse..." (Naofumi) "It's Naofumi-sama! Right now, the one who's here is definitely Naofumi-sama!"

"Hah? What do you mean?" (Naofumi)

I pick myself up, and I examine my surroundings once more.

The roar of the sea echoes in my ears, and I can easily understand that I'm not

in the village.

From what I see, it's the island that makes up Sadina's secret base... yet still, something's strange.

Some sort of structure had collapsed and turned into ruins.

Is it some sort of plant?

What I saw next, is a nearby cage containing Firo, Atlas, and Kiel.

“Why are Firo and the others locked up?” (Naofumi)

“Do you not remember anything?” (Raphtalia)

“About what?” (Naofumi)

“I see... Firo and the others took advantage of a commotion and acted up a bit. They'll be in there for a while as punishment.” (Raphtalia)

For some reason, those three are looking at me with a sad expression.

“Rafu~”

“Wha?” (Naofumi)

When I look at my feet, I see what seems to be a mix between a small raccoon and a tanuki. A strange monster.

Its size is around that of a small dog, I guess.

What could this be?

“Fake~”

It lifts its paw at Raphtalia and calls out.

“Be quiet!” (Raphtalia)

Even though she rarely gets mad, Raphtalia shouts at the monster and shoos it away.

Upon hearing her voice, the monster immediately flees.

What is the meaning of this?

Hmm?

Rat is glaring at me angrily.

Behind her is a tanuki-ish raccoon, larger in size than Firo's Filo Rial form. It looks like a bigger version of that other monster.

It has quite a sleepy expression on its face.

"Raphtalia, what happened here?" (Naofumi)

"You truly do not remember anything?" (Raphtalia)

"Yeah." (Naofumi)

I have a bad premonition as I nod.

"Let me tell you exactly what happened. Listen carefully." (Raphtalia) "Are you really Naofumi?" (Ren)

Ren comes over and asks me.

"What's that supposed to mean... did an impostor of me appear, or something?" (Naofumi) "Well... I'm not sure if you could call that an impostor." (Ren)

Now that I think about it, I feel strangely refreshed.

It's a strange feeling, like that I had when fighting the Wrath Dragon.

... I'm getting a really bad premonition now.

"Um... Naofumi-sama had his consciousness stolen by a cursed shield. Because

of it, he became unable to use the slave crest... though that turned out for the best.” (Raphtalia) “... I see.” (Naofumi)

I have a vague feeling something like that happened.

My memory goes up to unlocking some strange series.

I believe it was the New Seven Deadly Sins.

“So what exactly did I do?” (Naofumi)

“What, you ask!?” (Rat)

Rat angles her eyebrows as she retorts.

What? What did I do to make Rat this angry?

“Yeah, please tell me in detail.” (Naofumi)

“Marquis, for some absurd reason, you occupied my laboratory, arbitrarily transferred it to this island, and on top of that, you went around modifying my precious Mii-kun to your whim!” (Rat) “Rafu~”

In response to Rat’s scream, the large... raccoon?... behind Rat cries out.

“Mii-kun was the monster you cared for in the test-tube, right? I modified him?” (Naofumi) “Not only that. You preached about how you were going to purify the world, carried out questionable research, and proclaimed you were going to dominate the world.” (Rat) “What!?” (Naofumi)

“... Luckily, before you did anything you couldn’t take back, everyone worked together to stop you. It didn’t turn into anything serious.” (Rat) “I see.” (Naofumi)

“Melly-chan proclaimed that the Hero of the Shield-sama was doing special training for the wave, so he was using unique powers to release monsters. The messengers from Silt Welt also came to our assistance.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia explains as she looks at Firo.

Firo starts shaking in fear as she extends her hand to me.

“Master... Firo wanted to protect that smile.” (Firo)

“Yes, no matter what happened, we stayed with you until the last moment.”
(Atlas) “It was really fun playing with Niichan.” (Kiel)

The three in the cage let out their opinions.

Smile? There’s no such thing. Don’t protect it.

“Master, you talked about Raphtalia-oneechan the whole time.” (Firo) “Why Raphtalia?” (Naofumi)

“At the start, you approached me with strange mannerisms and invited me to join you in conquest. But after I refused such an offer, you came to the conclusion that I was a fake and ran away.” (Raphtalia) “Strange mannerism?” (Naofumi)

“First of all, you used ‘Thy’ and ‘Thou.’” (Raphtalia) “That sure is strange.” (Naofumi)

What the hell is ‘Thy’?

I don’t get what that’s supposed to mean.

No, the same can be said for all the ones I’ve seen under the influence of a curse.

To summarize, I was not an exception. My head turned strange.

“Next, it was something about how the world was rotten. About how before the wave did its work, you would purge it. You asked for my cooperation as well.”
(Taniko)

From the sky, Taniko comes aboard Gaelion. She gets off and says as such.

“And after taking that old lady’s laboratory, you took all the monsters with you as well. You carried off quite a few of the village children while you were at it.” (Taniko) “Is there no end to this?” (Naofumi)

“Firo, Atlas-chan, and Kiel-kun rode the wave and followed you. Next, you erected a huge Bioplant castle on top of Sadina-neesan’s house. I believe you called it the Castle Plant.” (Raphtalia)

Wow... what exactly was the cursed me thinking?

Could it be that I directly acted out my various dark feelings against this world’s nobility...?

I must’ve been an unreasonable fellow.

Though there are some personal matters mixed in with these complaints.

“By the way, how much time did we waste taking me down?” (Naofumi) “A little over a week.”

“What was that!?” (Naofumi)

Wait a second, it’s already been more than a week!?

I use status magic to view the countdown to the next wave.

Uwah!

It’s true. There’s only a week and a half left.

“... I performed human experimentation on that group?” (Naofumi) “Yes. Kiel-kun.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia stares at Kiel, and she curls her tail into a ball in fear.

But sensing her intent, Kiel changes her form.

... It’s a small puppy with three heads. Cerberus?

But since Kiel is the base, I get more of a Kielberus impression from it.

“Eh?”

“When I begged him for it, Niichan happily did it for me.” (Kiel) “No matter how strange I was, that’s going too far.” (Naofumi)

It’s human modification, you know... Though she can turn back.

Did she plan to make her a disposable pawn?

“Niichan, your choice of words was strange, but you constantly worried about me, and you never hurt me. You made whatever changes that weren’t too dangerous for me!” (Kiel)

With a regretful expression, Kiel begins letting out tears.

She truly adored that person, but though it was me, it wasn’t me. I have no memory of it.

It feels like she’s complimenting a stranger.

“That person, while being Naofumi-sama, wasn’t Naofumi-sama!” (Raphtalia)
Raphtalia cries out, and Kiel shuts up.

“Firo, you see, was given the ability to fly by Master.” (Firo) “What...?”
(Naofumi)

In the cage, human form Firo bats her wings. Something glitters, and she begins floating.

She’s really flying...

But how would she lift off her normally huge body?

She seems built to run on the ground. It’s unsettling to imagine her flying around in the sky.

“FUOOOOOH! Firo-tan!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu assaults the cage with his overwhelming emotions.

“Mu! Go away!” (Firo)

With an extremely unpleasant face, Firo rejects him. Atlas thrusts at Motoyasu and drives him away.

“What about you, Atlas?” (Naofumi)

“You told me that it was no good... that I couldn’t be modified.” (Atlas) “I see.” (Naofumi)

For Firo and Kiel to have been experimented on to this extent... I turn my head towards Raphtalia, while a bad feeling fills my stomach.

“What about the others?” (Naofumi)

“... The slaves undergoing treatment in the lab all became your test subjects, and...” (Raphtalia)

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

I did something I can never take back.

There’s no way I ever planned on doing anything this inhuman.

“They all underwent complete recoveries. After that, you modified them as per their own request, and they rushed into battle against us.” (Raphtalia) “...

What?” (Naofumi)

“At the moment, like Firo’s group, they are under our protection.” (Raphtalia)

“Ah, I see.” (Naofumi)

Per their own request... what exactly happened?

“Your charisma while under that curse was amazing. Everyone desperately tried

to protect you.” (Ren) “... That’s right. For some reason, Naofumi-san is always the target of everyone’s affections.” (Itsuki)

Ren and Itsuki answer.

Itsuki is expressionless, but I feel that he’s healing in a different direction from the past Itsuki.

Now that I think about it, since a week’s passed, has his curse healed to some extent?

“Itsuki-sama.” (Rishia)

“It’s alright. The current me can understand that they moved for Naofumi-san’s form of justice.” (Itsuki) “Ah, also, there’s something that’s been bothering me for a while.” (Naofumi)

What exactly are those Raccoon-Tanuki hybrid monsters staring at us from the shadows of the ruins?

They all seem slightly different, and there are a couple of distinct varieties.

But without fail, each and every one of them looks like some sort of mix between a Raccoon, Red Panda, and Tanuki. Some of their parts seem vaguely familiar.

I point my finger at them.

“They’re the last remaining traces of the monsters that chose to follow you, mixed with a completely new race of monster you created, of course. They’re the first generation Raph race.” (Rat) “Say what!?” (Naofumi)

Eh? Those are the monsters from my place!?

“Yeah. Everyone turned out like that, and they came to pick a fight with us.” (Taniko)

Taniko speaks with an irritated expression.

She definitely holds a grudge!

But she did hold the monsters quite close to her heart. I can't really complain.

"And, like, why do they look like that?" (Naofumi)

There's a bit of resemblance with Raphtalia's tail and ears.

Their cries also sound something like: 'Rafu~' and 'Tari~' and 'Ri~ya~'.
Connecting them gives a certain name.

Each and every one of them seems to have a conditioned reflex where if they see Raphtalia, they raise their arms and...

"Fake~"

Call out those words.

When I ask that, Sadina comes over, waving her hand. She gives a muffled laugh.

... Why is she brown? She's also become relatively fluffy.

"After Raphtalia-chan rejected Naofumi-chan, you came under the impression that there was no way Raphtalia-chan would betray you. You started calling her a fake and started using her hair to try and revive the real Raphtalia-chan."

(Sadina) "Why!?" (Naofumi)

"Even I can't tell you that one. After my spying was exposed, you made me look like this." (Sadina) "Are you alright?" (Naofumi)

"According to Rat-chan, it's fixable. I'll be fine." (Sadina)
Muu... what exactly was the other me thinking?

"And, in the end, what are we going to do with those monsters?" (Naofumi)

"They themselves wished for those forms, so... can't we just introduce them to the world as new races?" (Rat)

Rat replies with a defeated expression.

“By the way, the strange Marquis named them Raph race, Tali race, Rafuta race, Riya Race, and Talia race, or something like that, it seems.” (Rat)

I truly can't understand what that guy—me—was thinking!

What exactly was he planning on doing by making these strange life forms?

“Wait a second, you called those the first generation, right? Is there a second?”

(Naofumi) “Of course there is. It goes all the way up to seven. You remade a new generation every day, Marquis. What's more, you made battle models, final weapon models, and some other specialized ones. They got closer and closer in appearance to Raphtalia-san, and it got harder for us to fight them.”

(Rat)

Taniko presents a specimen to me.

“Rafu~”

“This is the seventh generation.” (Taniko)

An SD^[27] Raphtalia-esque lifeform greets me.^[28]

If I change my viewpoint, I guess she looks a little like Raphtalia when she was small.

But even in this form, all she says is Rafu~.

“I don't know what became of the eighth generation. There may be one exactly like the original walking around.” (Rat)

Uwah... That would be quite a development.

When I put my hands on my hanged head, Raphtalia places her hand on my shoulder.

“Naofumi-sama.” (Raphtalia)

“W-what?” (Naofumi)

“What happens after we overcome the wave?” (Raphtalia) “I go home?” (Naofumi)

“... Yes.” (Raphtalia)

Raphtalia puts on a sweet smile and nods.

“It’s alright. Though we had a late start, we can still get back on track. Let’s work hard together.” (Raphtalia) “That’s right... GUHA!” (Naofumi)

I vomit blood all of a sudden.

“W-what is this!?” (Naofumi)

“I bet it’s the curse.” (Ren)

Ren scratches his head as he mutters this.

Curse?

“You used your newly found intelligence to modify everyone using the minimum amount of your abilities, but it seems there’s still a bit of an after-effect.” (Ren)

Well, yeah...

Looking at Firo, Kiel, the Raph Race, and all the others I modified, I am aware that I must have done a lot.

I look at my status to find that my wounds are not healing. It’s a very minor curse.

I think I can just cover this one with medicine.

Next is... my EP isn’t recovering either. I can recover it through normal means, though.

I also found this out later. In daily intervals, the EXP that I got was taken away.

The taken EXP went towards feeding the new Raph Race.

If I just fight, I can make up for it.

There may be more, but at present, these are the curses I've identified.

"Though you yourself, when under that curse, was quite weak." (Ren) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"Yes. Your defense was fatally low, and you didn't strengthen that shield."
(Ren)

Muu. In the end, that may have saved me.

"Anyways... the one who's going to be compensating for all the damage done in this incident is me, right?" (Naofumi) "Yup."

Ah... I feel that I'm going to be losing all the fortune I reaped in the festival. I may even go into debt.

"Luckily, a portion of the research the strange Naofumi-sama conducted was picked up by Rat." (Raphtalia) "It was full of things I wanted to do. With this, my own research should take great leaps. Though I feel a bit regretful for using it."
(Rat) "Rafu~"

Mii-kun... was it?... puts Rat on his shoulders and begins walking off.

"If you didn't lend this child power, I still think he would have fought. You gave him a first generation Raph body, but he begged you for further strength, so you made him a special 'Final Weapon' body." (Rat) "I see... didn't you want his body to function on the same system as Dragon cores? Something about versatility?" (Naofumi) "It appears that you already did that." (Rat)

"Oh, really..." (Naofumi)

"He was the lead actor in the end. If he didn't turncoat in the end, I think we

would still be fighting him right now.” (Ren)

Ren supplements some information.

Ah, for the love of... What exactly was I doing!?

... Mii-kun, was it?

The word of his betrayal irritates me.

In Sadina’s case, she stood by as Raphtalia’s ally and worked with her to stop me. Looking at the wider picture, I can’t really call that betrayal, and if I was in her position, I would have done the same.

And if I did regain sanity for a brief moment, that would be what I would request.

However this one made use of my insanity to strengthen himself.

From the start, he was an ally of Rat and no friend to me. It’s understandable, but unsatisfying.

“Rafu~”

What?

Mii-kun starts Rafu-ing in Rat’s ear.

“Eh? What? He made you a test subject, and asked for experimental consent, but never asked you to swear loyalty?” (Rat) “...” (Naofumi)

What sophism.

Does that mean that if I had asked him to swear loyalty beforehand, he would have refused?

It’s the same sophism that I use every day.

Since I was the one at fault this time, I can’t complain. But still, how irritating.

To summarize, he wasn't an ally from the start, so it wasn't betrayal.

Because betrayal means to fool those who you think of as allies.

I just went and modified him, so he just quietly withstood it, is probably what he'll try and argue.

I have no memories of the incident, but based on their testimonies, I was the cliché villain, and Raphtalia the main hero.

That truly does seem to be the case.

Don't they appear a lot in fiction? Boss characters that get betrayed and attacked by their subordinates?

In manga, after betraying the antagonist, the protagonists would welcome them onto their side.

It's not like I hate characters like that.

In literary production, that is.

When you're on the affected side, it feels quite unpleasant.

How disgusting.

Though that wasn't me.

Ah, right. I think Rat told me before that he was greedy for power.

It was the other me's fault for not understanding his personality.

But... I guess I just don't like him on a personal level.

I think I'll be ignoring him from here on out.

"Rat-san appears to be angry at Naofumi-sama, but she's truly quite thankful."

(Raphtalia) "I see. I hope all's well that ends well, but..." (Naofumi)

... I'm going to unload a few things.

It seems I went too far in various things.

Just modifying the Bioplant and displaying avarice was enough to awaken a

curse series?

By the way, the current me cannot even bring up the New Seven Deadly Sins Shield. I can't even remember what sort of shield it was.

And like this, the curtain closes on my recklessness.

“By the way, where's Fohl?” (Naofumi)

“ANEKI [29]!” (Fohl)

From a distance, Fohl runs towards Raphtalia.

Aneki?

“Did it go well?” (Fohl)

“Yes. Because Fohl-kun was able to stall the collapse...”

“The moments afterwards were quite hectic. The castle started crumbling on us all. But we were able to guide and evacuate everyone.”

When Fohl notices me, he starts glaring at me.

“Aneki? Did you start calling her that during the journey?” (Naofumi) “No, during the current incident. When Atlas-chan went to Naofumi-sama's side, Fohl-kun reluctantly followed her and became your subordinate. I... encouraged him, and brought him over to our camp.” (Raphtalia) “Yes, Aneki told me this. If you truly cherish your little sister, then as a big brother, you shouldn't pamper her so!” (Fohl) “I see...” (Naofumi)

How should I say this? It seems that quite a soap opera played out when I wasn't looking.

The rebellious Fohl now is this obedient to Raphtalia.

Will they marry when they grow up? I don't approve of it, by the way.

“... Naofumi-sama? Are you thinking something sinister right now?” (Raphtalia)

“About what?” (Naofumi)

“No, there’s no problem, but...” (Raphtalia)

“My eyes were blinded. I was pulled around by the selfishness of my sister, who recently started getting better. However, love must also be strict. That’s what Raphtalia-aneki taught me.” (Fohl) “Ah, I see...” (Naofumi)

He clenches his fist tightly. It was something I warned him about daily, but he was afraid of incurring his sister’s hate. I mean, Atlas even occasionally says she will curse him one day.

“It’s all your fault!” (Fohl)

“Yeah, that’s fine...” (Naofumi)

I mean, it’s true. I feel kinda tired.

“I definitely don’t approve of you, you know!” (Fohl)

“Ah, yes, yes.” (Naofumi)

Anyways, it seems Fohl became Raphtalia’s younger brother (Follower).

... But I think her real age is lower than his.

Limited Time Offer

With this and that, we returned to the village and began the days of improving our levels until the waves came.

Within that time, I went on an expedition with the high-leveled Raphtalia and the other slaves.

Ah~... Speaking of which, it's about the events of the night we returned to the village.

I tried my daily work of compounding with the mortar.

“Huh?” (Naofumi)

After a moment of grinding, the herbs became a blackened waste and gave off a foul stench.

It's not at a level I should fail.

The more I grind, the more the waste increased.

I was only infusing the herbs, so I'm puzzled about why they would change into charcoal.

“Naofumi-sama. Is something wrong?” (Raphtalia)

“My compounding is...” (Naofumi)

When I try compounding something else, it always fails.

....It seems like I've become unable to compound because of the curse's influence.

This is like Ren's Item Creation system being destroyed.

I take a break from working, and go to bed early that day.

Ah, for the Atla issue, I have slaves deployed near the house and have made a perfect defense, so she can't come.

Well, Fohl is locking her in unsparingly, so it should be fine.

In addition to that... the so-called Raph species are keeping a watchful eye in the village.

Raphtalia begins swinging her sword outside for the sake of nighttime training.

"Rafu~" (Raph)

The tanuki-looking, raccoon-type monsters known as the Raph came inside the room without anyone noticing.

Come to think of it, they also can use the same illusion magic as Raphtalia.

It's quite convenient.

And yet, they came in a large group.

"Oh? I think you were the first generation Raph species, right?" (Naofumi)

Their appearance is relatively cute.

It seems there are generations of various types, but that part was pretty ambiguous, so I didn't really understand it.

"Rafu~" (Raph)

The Raph extends its paw forward and strikes the ground seven times with a digit.

They're the seventh generation Raph species? Or I should say, they've got a

modest attitude.

They seem to understand human language in some respects and are greatly different from those noisy birds.

In terms of liking or disliking them, I think it would be more on the liking side.

The Raphs who entered the room were small, and they cry out while approaching me.

“Ra-Raphtalia-san. E-everyone of the Raph species! Onii-sama, I just want to go where Naofumi-sama is! Please move aside.” (Atla) “You cannot.” (Raphtalia)

“You can’t.” (Fohl)

“””Rafu~!””” (Raphs)

...For some reason it’s noisy outside.

While they’re talking, I casually stroke the Raphs.

Their feel isn’t bad.

Apparently I made this when I was crazy, but...unexpectedly, I did a good job with them.

Hm? There are some shed hairs.

...What will happen if I insert them into the shield?

I insert some as a test.

You have unlocked the requirements for the Raph Shield!

You have unlocked the requirements for the Tali Shield!

You have unlocked the requirements for the Lia Shield!

You have unlocked the requirements for the Original Raph Shield!

You have unlocked the requirements for the Battle Raph Shield!

....etc

To have a shield from a creature of a new species, what is this?

Well, if I think about it, there's also evolution on top of the monsters currently existing, so it's not strange that the entries continue to increase.

...I investigate the Raph Shield.

Raph Shield 0/20 C

Ability Sealed....Equipment Bonus, Raph Species Growth Correction (Small), Raph Species Attack Designation 1, (Limited Time Offer) Raphtalia's Ability Correction (Small) Proficiency 0

.....err.

I don't know which I should comment about.

What is that Limited Time Offer thing?

Is that like raising an ability with their individual limits or something? What kind of ability is it?

Well, Raphtalia is the one I trust the most, so I won't be dissatisfied if she gets stronger.

Or rather...

"Rafu~" (Raph)

Is it just my imagination? I feel like this releasing method and pattern vaguely resembles the Filorial System.

The Shield Tree also unlocks with a similar feeling.

"Rafu~?" (Raph)

"Is this a kid or an adult? I think there was a large one, right? How about you?" (Naofumi)

That Mii-kun fellow, how should I put it, he's like a neighborhood sprite from the countryside, and I feel like trying to nap on his stomach one time.

That fellow doesn't want to approach himself, so he won't want to, but an unfamiliar Raph might be fine.

Ah, that kid is a female. It seems there are male specimens.

Those were originally of a different kind of monster though.

"Rafu~!" (Raph)

With a *poof* sound, the Raph I was hugging became slightly bigger.

It's just the right size for a body pillow.

And then I unreservedly throw myself onto its stomach and lie down.

...I want to try touching it a little.

While I stroke it, I lie face up as if it was a pillow.

Somehow, it smells like Raphtalia.

Ah~... somehow, I feel a strange sense of security.

Even afterwards, I raised them with a lot of physical contact, and they've become considerably attached to me as a response.

They're pretty cute.

They're like the ideal pet I've always wanted.

"Rafu~" (Raph)

"Naofumi-sama! It's almost time for...." (Raphtalia)

The door of the room opens and Raphtalia enters.

"...What...are you doing?" (Raphtalia)

"Hm? It kind of came to play, so I'm just keeping it company though?"

(Naofumi) "Fake~!" (Raph)

“Be quiet!” (Raphtalia)

Somehow Raphtalia’s tail puffs up, wary of the Raph.

“Ah...” (Naofumi)

Raphtalia seized the Raph by the nape of its neck and drove them out of the room.

I unconsciously reached out with my hand, reluctant to part.

That sensation when I was stroking it.... even though it was fine.

I thought it would have made a perfect body pillow.

“Naofumi-sama, please don’t play with the Raph species so much.” (Raphtalia)
[30]

“Is that so? I’ve always wanted this kind of pet though. To be honest, it’s my type of monster.” (Naofumi) “It’s a promise with me!” (Raphtalia)

“Why do you hate it so much?” (Naofumi)

Well, it’s not like I don’t understand.

It’s probably like an Otaku giving their girlfriend a model figure they made as a present.

Moreover, to be freely caressing it in front of their eyes...

If I think about it properly, am I a hentai otaku!?

No, she’s not a girlfriend. Instead, she feels more like a daughter.

I doubt people sleep on their daughter’s stomachs though.

Well, when I check their status afterwards, they’re pretty exceptional.

I saw that their levels were low, but their potential was quite high.

I think it might be equal to the Filorials’.

The subspecies are also quite diverse.

There’s a specimen that can pull carriages like the Filorials too.

Those were originally Caterpillands though.

Looking at their integration, I’ll have them take on a role in combat or peddling.

Yeah, like they said, the guys in the monster hut originally wished for the modification.

“Umm... how should I say it, it’s embarrassing to watch.” (Raphtalia) “So it’s that kind of thing.” (Naofumi)

I understand her feelings.

Even I would dislike it if a clone of me was made and was caressed by Raphtalia.

By the way, the ability that was in the shield before, the Attack Designation 1 allows me to direct the Raphs to focus their attacks on the monster I indicate.

Also, a variety of other instructions appeared.

Furthermore, there’s even a strange skill like ‘C’mon Raphs’... the things this shield has...

When used, I can summon the Raphs by portal.

....Somehow, Raphtalia makes a complicated face whenever I use it, so I’m worried about whether I should seal its use.

Incidentally, the Raphs that turned wild extended their influence and now they’ve created an ecosystem in my territory, but that’s another story.

The next day.

“Now then, Naofumi-sama. Please scold Atla-chan, Firo, and Kiel-kun and

punish each of them.” (Raphtalia)

Atla, Firo and Kiel were kept in the village plaza and I was told to scold them by Raphtalia.

In reality, I was the one who went crazy and they were just taking my side, so I think the fault should be mine.

I feel like I'm in no position to assign punishments.....

Or rather, I should be the one receiving a punishment instead.

It didn't become a big deal thanks to Melty making the necessary arrangements, but I caused quite a loss.

It seems I came to harass the village and town occasionally and caused some destruction.

Apparently it was covered for by using the profits from the Reconstruction Festival though.

I heard that I also assaulted the merchants in my territory.

According to Firo, I didn't have enough materials, and so Firo raided those possessing what I needed from the sky or something.

Well, they were recompensated, and they were told not to approach the location beforehand, so the merchants who did approach were at fault.

Furthermore, Melty collected all the evidence in the area, so there shouldn't be any false reports.

Honestly, I want to be forgiven for this kind of incident.

That being the case, let's obey Raphtalia's instructions if anything happens next time.

To be frank, I feel guilty about Sadina's brown coloring. The person herself doesn't care and is just happily drinking alcohol though.

That her drinking ability has increased is comforting, but it's my fault that it

became such an outrageous situation, and I do my own self-reflection.

If I am sternly cautioned by Raphalia nowbut then those three won't get the message.

"Atla." (Naofumi)

"What is it, Naofumi-sama?" (Atla)

"...Why did you join me?" (Naofumi)

She was asked before, but I'll ask her again.

"Because that person was still Naofumi-sama, and I will always be by Naofumi-sama's side." (Atla) "Firo too~" (Firo)

Firo spoke after Atla did.

"You know, Master. You had a really great smile." (Firo)

And then she cries with flowing tears....oh Jeez.

Just how attached was she.

Were you that pleased about being able to fly in the sky?

"That wasn't me. It was something that possessed me." (Naofumi) "Eh~ that's wrong~" (Firo)

"That's right." (Atla)

"Yeah! Nii-chan was nice!" (Kiel)

I was an arrogant villain! I wasn't nice!

Or so I could respond, but....it seems like I might step on a land mine, so I'll stay silent.

“Then....” (Naofumi)

For a punishment, I must assign something the person will hate so that they'll reflect.

In Atla's case, she might conversely be happy with whatever I order her to do.

Alright.

“Fohl.” (Naofumi)

“...What?” (Fohl)

“To drive Atla away, you'll be sleeping in my room.” (Naofumi) “You wouldn't!” (Atla)

“The thing your Atla hates is?” (Naofumi)

“Ughh...Onii-sama, if you do that—” (Atla)

Atla emits a negative aura towards Fohl.

“I-I got it! Nii-chan, I'll work hard in order to punish Atla.” (Fohl) “Raphtalia is also fine with that, right?” (Naofumi) “Ah...yes... Fohl-kun. Please protect Naofumi-sama from the Raph species as well.” (Raphtalia) “I got it, Aneki.” (Fohl)

That Fohl, he now obediently obeys Raphtalia.

Damn. Raphtalia doesn't need you!

Or rather, what the hell am I thinking?

“So next is Firo.” (Naofumi)

How should I punish Firo?

It seems like going three days without food or something will be enough for

her to reflect. I can probably use the Monster Crest to reinforce it as well.

The problem is... it's dangerous because there's the possibility that Firo may lose judgment from hunger and cause an outrageous incident though.

"Father-in-Law!" (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu starts addressing me.

He'll probably talk about something indecent again.

Let's ignore him.

"Ah, Naofumi-sama." (Raphtalia)

"What is it?" (Naofumi)

"The Hero of the Spear is...that is, he was very cooperative during this last incident. Please give him a reward somehow." (Raphtalia) "Why so sudden?" (Naofumi)

"I promised him...." (Raphtalia)

Grr... speaking of which, I heard the whole story.

At first he was a subordinate of the crazy me, but he was told by Melty that Raphtalia was someone related to Firo, and so he recognized Raphtalia as a person and not a pig, and finally was persuaded to cooperate and such.

I hadn't concealed my surprise at him being able to converse with a female other than Melty, but it's related to Firo again.

So Melty is her fiancé and Raphtalia is her older sister.

As I expected, all the women are pigs except for those with a relationship to Firo.

When I think about it, it's an inevitable result.

Nevertheless, Firo's punishment and Motoyasu's reward, huh.....

Alright!

“Firo.” (Naofumi)

“Wha~t?” (Firo)

“Go on a date with Motoyasu for the day. You must always stay within thirty metres of him.” (Naofumi)

I activate the Monster Crest and made it so she would suffer if she violated it.

“No~!” (Firo)

“Really, Father-in-Law?!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu’s eyes shine!

Don’t bring your face so close, it’s disgusting.

“Yeah, however, I absolutely won’t forgive a relationship beyond that of dating, like forcefully pressing her for a kiss, or trying to have sex and such.” (Naofumi)

“Yes! Now then, Firo-tan. Let’s go on the date.” (Motoyasu) “”“Buuuuuuuuu!””””
(Kuu, Midori & Marine)

Motoyasu’s three followers protest while releasing bloodlust.

I don’t care. If this much isn’t done, then it won’t be a reward nor a punishment!

Motoyasu untied the rope Firo was bound with.

When he does, Firo struggles and starts flying in the sky.

“No~! Master, save me!” (Firo)

“Sorry. I’m not in a situation where I can defend you.” (Naofumii)
I’m the one who gave the punishment though.

“NOOooo~!” (Firo)

Flapping her wings, Firo flew at quite a fast speed.

She barely stopped within thirty metres.

“Hahaha, is it a rendezvous in the sky? Firo-tan!” (Motoyasu)

Motoyasu ran and chased after her.

“Don’t come near~!!” (Firo)

Firo fled while flying.

Is that a date?

It’s fine since Motoyasu seems very delighted.

Yeah. With this, they won’t come back for a while.

“That female’s owner, what a reward! I definitely won’t forgive him!” (Kuu)

“Yeah! Unforgivable.” (Marine)

“Let’s curse him.” (Midori)

Those three are annoying.

In that case, you guys should go claim Motoyasu yourselves.

By the way, apparently Firo and Motoyasu spent the day chasing one another.

Motoyasu reported back happily, but I could only wonder if that was enough.

Crepe Tree

“Next is Kiel, huh?” (Naofumi)

“Niichan. I want to quickly go to that tree’s side, so please hurry up!” (Kiel)
What’s with that attitude?

Do you even realize that you’re being scolded right now?

Well, I’m also a perpetrator so I can’t speak so harshly, but I do feel a little irritation.

By the way, that tree Kiel was referring to is a seed she planted in the corner of the village and raised into a tree.

That seed grew very quickly, and was bearing fruit or something.

I haven’t looked around much because it was still early morning, but I notice a sweet smell.

Or rather, there was a tree that was producing bread in the middle of the village.

What’s with that? Stay within the limits of fantasy; what happens if someone gets sick from eating that!?! But when I complained in astonishment, I was told that it was something I made when I was crazy.

Ah jeez....

Kiel probably had me make something for her as well.

“Then should I chop down that tree as punishment?” (Naofumi) “Niichan! Even if it’s Niichan, I’ll never forgive you!” (Kiel) “It’ll grow back anyway.” (Naofumi)

“Niichan told me it can’t regrow.” (Kiel)

“The Bread Tree appears to have reproduction capabilities though?”
(Naofumi)

Kiel transformed into her Kielberus form and growled.

Well, she’s tied up so she can’t move, and my slave crest should keep her quiet.

Hmm..... all the same, I can’t bear to do something she’d hate so much.

Assigning a punishment that goes beyond reflection is just abuse.

“Well then, Kiel.” (Naofumi)

“What, Niichan?” (Kiel)

“Take the form of an ordinary girl from now on. Loincloths are prohibited. And you must wear the clothes that Imia provides.” (Naofumi) “Eeehhhh!?”
(Kiel)

Kiel raised a fuss with all her strength, seeming very reluctant.

This much shouldn’t be considered abuse.

“And go peddling like that. Your assignment is to gather as many fans as Firo has, and you’re to remain as a girl until you do.” (Naofumi) “I-I get it, Niichan.”
(Kiel)

“Is this much fine?” (Naofumi)

“I think that’s a little soft.” (Raphtalia)

Is that so?

I intended to provoke her with this quite unreasonable demand to reach Firo’s scale though.

Honestly, the degree of difficulty is higher when compared to Firo and Atla.

However, Kiel’s peddling records are good.

If I send her out, she might be able to achieve it.

“But that’s how Naofumi-sama is.” (Raphtalia)

It seems like I’ll be self-destructing if I butt-in awkwardly, so I’ll just agree.

In reality, I feel reluctant to scold them harshly while having faults of my own.

Of course, I wouldn’t feel anything if it were a complete stranger, but even if they’re bad, I won’t be so heartless as to go so far with my subordinates.

Yeah, I’d feel ashamed.

“God of the Shield-sama, what’s the matter?” (Slave)

“!” (Naofumi)

It’s this.

The slaves who were originally undergoing medical treatment in the laboratory, every one of them call me God.

Because of this, the damage to my heart every time they say it....

“Hey, please call me the Hero of the Shield if you can. Or, you can call me Shield-niichan like the other guys.” (Naofumi) “What are you saying? The great God of the Shield-sama, we cannot do such an awe-inspiring thing.” (Slave)

Ugh... a refreshing smile pierces me.

To be called a God like this is painful.

“Next up is for Naofumi-sama to punish himself.... that’s it, isn’t it?” (Raphtalia)

“Maybe.” (Naofumi)

....That’s right.

I don’t have any memory of it, but I’m aware that I caused quite a disturbance.

“I’ll restrain myself from more of my miserly actions. I don’t want to have to do much self-torturing though.” (Naofumi) “You do have a point. Sorry. Naofumi-sama has the task of fighting the waves, so let’s not do too much. I will inform everyone.” (Raphtalia) “Thanks.” (Naofumi)

I feel like it’s not really fair that I’m the only one not punished, but the only ones I punished for following the crazy me are Atla, Firo, and Kiel so.... it’s fine.

“However...” (Naofumi)

I surveyed the village.

It’s become rather big thanks to the population and monsters increasing on a large scale.

It’s already on its way to becoming a town.

“It’s been developing, hasn’t it?” (Naofumi)

“Yeah...” (Raphtalia)

The slaves recuperating in the laboratory were also able to recover, so in the end... it was all good, or so I justify and console myself.

“Alright! Let’s go raise our levels today as well and prepare for the waves.” (Naofumi) “Okay.” (Raphtalia)

Well... Firo is on a date with Motoyasu so I needed another monster to be our transport, but when I request it, Firo’s number one subordinate comes forward, pushing away the modified Raph species and Filorials.

I want to decline if I can, but somehow I’m in an awkward situation and there’s unspoken pressure compelling me to bring her.

It's not like she did anything bad in particular.

Just that... I wonder what it is. The way she looks at me bothers me.

"Hey Raphtalia." (Naofumi)

"What is it?" (Raphtalia)

"Kue." (Piyo)

I point to Firo's number one subordinate who was resting at a distance and ask Raphtalia.

"That guy's acting rather weird, but do you know anything about it?" (Naofumi)

"Let's see.... all of the Filorials in the village went to follow Naofumi-sama, so..." (Raphtalia) "Is that so?" (Naofumi)

"Yes. In the beginning they accompanied us, but after that child was abducted.... somehow she became strange after that." (Raphtalia) "Kue...." (Piyo)

Don't look at me with such passionate eyes.

It's a vivid reminder of Firo when she was in heat, so it's somewhat unpleasant.

"Did she fight?" (Naofumi)

"Yes... she was caught at the seventh tower." (Raphtalia) "I see..." (Naofumi)

Is she in heat?

"Kuee." (Piyo)

Firo's number one subordinate, who defeated the monsters, approached with

her head lowered as if wanting to be praised.

You speak, don't you?

"Yes yes, alright." (Naofumi)

I stroked her appropriately, but for some reason she endeavored to have me stroke the base of her throat.

Huh? Didn't this guy used to know when to quit?

Somehow she's changed a little.

"Kueeee...." (Piyo)

She looks like she's in an extremely good mood.

Well, it's fine to stroke her since it doesn't feel bad, but this guy is that cutesy kid, so I don't really like it.

And when I find a good time to part, she cries out very reluctantly.

What's with that?

That mystery was established at noon the next day.

When Firo told us drowsily, having finished her one-day date.

"Hey Firo." (Naofumi)

"Huh~... wha~t?" (Firo)

"Subordinate Number One's behavior is weird. Isn't she aiming for your position?" (Naofumi) "What do you mean~?" (Firo)

I point to her number one subordinate, who was staring at me from in hiding.

“Ah, Piyo-chan? It’s alright~ That was, you know~ just her madly in love with Master~” (Firo) “.....” (Naofumi)

So that guy was called Piyo.

I had forgotten her real name. I feel like I’ve even been told before though.

Or rather, hey.

“.....Wait, you’re saying something very ominous.” (Naofumi) “That’s right. Why is that child madly in love?” (Raphtalia) “You see~ it was after Firo became able to fly. Master, you see. You told me to go abduct Piyo-chan so I brought her, and then... Master, with Piyo-chan—” (Firo) “Wh-what did he do?” (Raphtalia)

I also nodded to Raphtalia’s question.

I’m worried about what it means by that cutesy kid becoming so clingy.

“...Firo was very envious, but when I said to do it to me as well, Master said, ‘You’ve already pledged your allegiance to me so no, and I only did it because it’s effective on this guy.’” (Firo) “What did he do!?” (Raphtalia)

I don’t understand Firo’s explanation!

It can’t be helped. It’s regrettable, but let’s try asking Atla.

I head towards Atla’s place, who was irritated about Fohl being a hindrance.

“Ah, you! Why is it your side that’s coming!?” (Fohl)

Fohl said in a displeased voice as I approached.

Yesterday was.... well, he was an unrefined body pillow.

I want to ask something unreasonable of Raphtalia and invite a Raph.

“Sorry. There’s something on my mind that I want to ask Atla about.” (Naofumi)

“Well, I wonder what it is. Naofumi-sama? If it’s now, I’ll do anything for you.”

(Atla)

You’d do anything even if it wasn’t now; I don’t need you to tell me that.

That is to say, it was already broadcasted...

“So Firo’s subordinate, Piyo. What did I do to her?” (Naofumi) “It was personal grooming.” (Atla)

“Personal grooming?” (Naofumi)

“Yes. That is... the already captured Piyo-chan exposed her hostility, and thanks to her pledging allegiance, changing her fury to affection after a rich personal grooming, the Filorials converted to Naofumi-sama’s camp.” (Atla)

“Rich?” (Naofumi)

“Yes. I cannot remember how many times Piyo-chan raised her voice in pleasure.” (Atla) “Naofumi-sama!?” (Raphtalia)

“He has no memory of it!” (Atla)

Eh? Is this a metaphor?

Was I raped by Subordinate Number One or something?

“Firo, was I assaulted by Subordinate Number One?” (Naofumi) “Trying to conceive children? You’re wrong~” (Firo)

Apparently I’m wrong.

Or I should say, don’t talk about conceiving children.

“Firo also wants to be caressed like that~ ...I was envious..... to say something similar, it’s like the feeling he had when Master stroked the little Onee-chan today, almost to the point of ecstasy~” (Firo) ^[31]

“Naofumi-sama? When did you....” (Raphtalia)

Geh.....

Actually, I was stroking the concealed Raph.

I really like the feel of them.

But Raphtalia gets upset when I stroke them, so I had been doing it in hiding.

Why am I being treated like I've been unfaithful?

Anyway, to stroke them with that kind of feeling.... so it was having them pledge allegiance.

I don't understand what the pledge means.

"Tell me if you saw me! Or rather, if the Raph are no good, then Raphtalia! Let me stroke your tail!" (Naofumi)^[32]

What am I saying? It's turning into sexual harassment.

It's a case of reversed anger. ^[33]

"Eh...ah...uhh. I-I understand. It's fine to stroke the Raph as long as it's within my eyesight." (Raphtalia)

As I expected, it's better than stroking her tail. ^[34]

I don't know which is proving fortunate.

"Then how do I make Subordinate Number 1 be obedient?" (Naofumi) "I think it'll be fine if you do it for a while, Piyo-chan~? About Master, I said before that Firo's love is different." (Firo) "Ah, right." (Naofumi)

"But stroke me occasionally." (Firo)

Sigh... Filorials are very weird.

As expected, the Raph are best.

They aren't vulgar.

No, it might just be that I haven't confirmed it yet.

Or rather, I'm probably too pleased with them.

"Ah, they said Kiel-kun's Crepe Tree is bearing fruit, Master! Let's go eat." (Firo)

"Wait wait, what Crepe Tree?" (Naofumi)

I've heard about the Bread Tree, but.... so it's what Kiel was talking about when she was being punished.

That was also made by me, huh.

"Naofumi-sama, me too." (Atla)

"You're not allowed." (Naofumi)

"Aww...." (Atla)

Atla really is a dangerous fellow.

She agrees no matter what I do.

Despite this, I know that it'll turn bad if she continues to obey.

If possible, I'd like her think for herself and not depend on me.

In the past, I said this to Raphtalia.

<From an objective point of view, you and your companions need to be careful.>

Right, it's an objective point of view.

We must sharpen ourselves to be seen as splendid from a stranger's perspective.

I'd want put in great effort and chase my ideals together with my partner, and have them acknowledge my current self, instead of depending on them.

Furthermore, I followed those words.

<You can't believe that you can do anything just because you are a companion of a hero. Try not to inconvenience anyone.>

I don't care about the world after the waves.

However, Raphtalia will remain in this world, so I must secure a place for her to belong.

I will make a world where Raphtalia can be happy even without me.

One way or another, a problem is emerging with the slaves here being dependent on me.

From now on, I will have them rely on Raphtalia and the others first, and if it still isn't resolved, then I can make my appearance.

...Huh? Isn't that no different to how it was before I turned crazy....?

Yeah, it's because Kiel, who should have been assisting Raphtalia, went on a rampage.

So I have no choice but have the slaves who are motivated, with the exception of Kiel, work hard.

"Raphtalia." (Naofumi)

"What is it?" (Raphtalia)

"Of the guys originally born in the village, please aid and train those who have leadership like Kiel. If possible, the guys who aren't too attached to me."

(Naofumi) "...Okay." (Raphtalia)

Kiel showed hostility from the start, but she's now become too attached.

In the beginning, I somehow destroyed the ruins of the home she originally lived in, so how can she be so attached to me?

There's also the effect of food, but she's a charismatic person by nature.

And she doesn't think too deeply but acts on her instincts like Firo, so I want

an intelligence faction.

Piyo is like that but Firo is her superior, so that's also troublesome.

And, as we were talking, we — — became speechless.

“Wh-what is this!?” (Naofumi)

Firo called it the Crepe Tree, but it really is a crepe tree!

There were flower-like things which were round dough pieces blooming, with fruit wrapped in their center, and they changed shape as they ripened.

Bugs or something seemed to be gathering, was that alright?

Then again, the nectar-filled depressions, where the bugs were gathering, were in various parts of the tree.

Somehow, when I peer inside... inside the depressions were carnivorous plants and inside, it seems the bugs were being converted into nourishment.

It was ripening with nutrients from this bug?

Ugh... it's quite a disgusting tree....

“Ah, Niichan!” (Kiel)

Kiel addressed me, picking crepes off the tree.

In her hand she grasped crepes intended for us to eat.

“Will Niichan eat too?” (Kiel)

“No... give me a break.” (Naofumi)

“Is that so? It's super yummy though? But it doesn't have as much flavour as Niichan's handmade food.” (Kiel) “I've also become unable to cook because of the curse.” (Naofumi) “That's why this tree has the tastiest deserts right now.” (Kiel)

Kiel answered with confidence.

As I expect, it'd be impossible for this guy to be a Sub-leader.

Her actions are too erratic.

“Kiel-kun. One of the villages said this, but is it true that you won't separate from this tree?” (Raphtalia) “That's right! Cos I never know when a thief might come!” (Kiel)

So Kiel has always been sleeping by the Crepe Tree ever since we returned to the village?

She must treasure it a lot.

“Keep it moderate, okay.” (Naofumi)

“I've got it Niichan. Ah, does Firo-chan also want a crepe?” (Kiel) “Yeah!” (Firo)

Firo stuffed her cheeks with the delicious crepe.

That....is a crepe produced with nutrients from bugs, right? I've lost my appetite....but let's not say that aloud.

Firo would be indifferent about eating bugs and stuff anyway.

Incidentally, Kiel started living in a kennel that was established next to the tree, so I constructed a temporary dwelling using a Bioplant to stave off the wind and rain.

Kiel... you said you were going to protect your precious house, didn't you? The house you neglected will cry.

Or, has it become House = Crepe Tree? Please stop with the jokes.

Afterwards, Kiel poured her efforts into looking after the Crepe Tree, and the Crepe Tree also grew as if responding to her affection.

Subsequently, the legendary Crepe Wood became a local specialty, and the moment of its birth... just kidding.

“I’d like you to not get carried away with any jokes.” (Naofumi) “That’s right.”
(Raphtalia)

Raphtalia replies while giving the Raph a sidelong glance.

I understand it. I’d feel the same if there was a copycat who resembled me.

Translator note

1. ↑ TL: Melty uses a word to describe good racing horses here.
2. ↑ TL: It's stuff you wear when you wanna get lucky.
3. ↑ T/N: Think typical shrine maiden costume.
4. ↑ T/N: Pottery & stoneware made in Shigaraki, Japan. Tanuki figures are a popular product.
5. ↑ T/N: Racehorses have weird names.
6. ↑ T/N: Kueee!
7. ↑ Translator Note: What the hell, those results were real!?
8. ↑ T/N: Naofumi changed the way he refers to himself. 俺 ⇒ ワシ (Btw, idk if it's important, but it's the same way Trash addresses himself)
9. ↑ T/N: It's too much of a surplus though....
10. ↑ T/N: Fun fact~ Alchemic Correction can also be read as Ren-Money Correction ;)
11. ↑ T/N: Will take too long cos there's so many abilities....so OP >_>"
12. ↑ T/N: Dear author, you just repeated the same thing twice. I think this sentence was unnecessary.
13. ↑ T/N: Kernel = the most basic level or core of an operating system, responsible for resource allocation, file management, and security.
14. ↑ T/N: Questioning Naofumi's weird speech.
15. ↑ T/N: She's talking about Naofumi's new way of addressing himself.
16. ↑ T/N: That proposal XD
17. ↑ TL: Naofumi calls Piyo a Burikko. Go to Oniichanyamete to learn more about the term.
18. ↑ TL: I think these are the people Naofumi got from the Brainwashing incident.
19. ↑



TL: Raccoon, Tanuki, and Red Panda, from left to right.

20. ↑ TL: This pun isn't in the original, instead, Naofumi says Cerberus in Hiragana instead of Katakana, downgrading the name's effect. I'm not sure how to convey that in English.
21. ↑ TL: Remember, the thing that assaulted the village was...
22. ↑ TL: The Trojan Aeneas was able to pacify Cerberus with drugged cake.
23. ↑ TL: The Hero Orpheus was able to get past him by putting him to sleep with his lyre. Also see Fluffy.
24. ↑ TL: Insert obligatory this isn't even my final form.
25. ↑ TL: I'm kinda glad he didn't make a Futa Race.
26. ↑ TL: It's trident, just not in English.
27. ↑ TL: SD is 'super deformed'. It's an art style, pretty much the one you may recognize as chibi, with large head and small body.
28. ↑



TL: This is the original author's sketch of child Raphtalia. I guess you could call it a SD Raphtalia, but SD is to an even greater extent.

- 29. ↑ TL: Older sister, occasionally female leader
- 30. ↑ T/N: Somebody's jealous~
- 31. ↑ T/N: Little Onee-chan = Raph Species
- 32. ↑ ED Note: He might as well have just proposed sex on the spot...
- 33. ↑ T/N: Being angry at someone who would normally be angry at you.
- 34. ↑ T/N: Raphtalia doesn't want her tail stroked no matter what.