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# **Tensei Shitara Slime datta ken**

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## **Demon Lord' Gambit Arc**

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 120 - Setting Off

Hinata returned from her attack on Tempest—which would later be called the “Templar Captain’s revolt”—having suffered a crushing defeat.

Without a single apology or excuse, Hinata resigned as the head of the imperial guard and cut all ties with the Holy Empire Ruberion.

As such, even the Empire’s representatives, the Seven Celestial Sages could not punish her. Therefore, they simply decided to continue observing the situation.

The Western Saint’s Church, however, could not stay silent.

She selfishly went off on her own and even lost. Losing to monsters is a problem in itself, but she even dared to return alive. And even confirmed that those remaining in Tempest were alive and well.

In other worlds, they came as assassins but were defeated fair and square. That’s not a mistake one can easily recover from.

In fact, had they all died, the Church could have attributed it to monsters’ wicked and cruel nature, rile up all of humanity, and....

For the Church, this is by far the worst outcome.

Even then, Nicholas was happy that Hinata returned.

But that’s a different matter. The problem remains.

And then, to Nicholas, who was holding his head, Hinata so said:

「Just say that I acted on my own. Fooled the knights and acted without the Church’s approval.

Though it will contradict the Church’s dogma that all monsters are evil, but at least it won’t subvert all of it.

After all, the weak need the Church.

We can't go around losing an organization that is willing to extend the weak a hand, now can we?」

Without any hesitation she proposed to Nicholas.

Just as before, as if looking down upon the world she presented the most logical conclusion.

If necessary, cut away one to save the whole—perfectly pragmatic.

Even if the one to be cut away is she herself, she would not hesitate.

But still, she seems to have changed a bit: no longer are her eyes filled with blind devotion to the creed.

Her face instead carries a smile of nearly divine kindness.

And this was a proposal Nicholas could not refuse.

Though her face now expresses heartfelt kindness, it did not change her nature. Her proposal is well thought out and the Church would suffer minimal damage as the result. Nicholas understood that too well.

「Hinata, did you change a bit...?」

「Have I? Can't know yourself, now can you? But I do think that I was in too much of a hurry. To save people with my own hands, so I thought. I don't think I was wrong to sacrifice the few to save the many. I can proudly say that I fought for what I believed in. But... I also don't think it's wrong to try to save everyone. I think I was too focused on the big picture and lost something important. I don't want to save just the majority—I want to save everyone. Feel free to laugh if you think it impossible. I just want to see the world, judge it with my own eyes, and pick the path I truly believe in」

「Is that what the Demon Lord taught you?」

「No, not really. A beloved teacher admonished me, and I recognized the existence of a demon lord」

「Recognized... a demon lord?」

「Yeah. It was not pure evil. Just another soul living quite selfishly」

「Is that so... Well then, I will believe in you Hinata-sama. And the Demon Lord whom you believed in」

For Nicholas, Hinata is and was everything.

Even if she lost, he could not complain if she returned alive.

If the Empire decided to punish Hinata, he fully intended to use the West Saint's Church to defend her.

This time, however, it was unnecessary because Hinata herself decided to resign from her post.

And disposing of the whole affair as the "Templar Captain's Revolt," Hinata became a stray adventurer.

One who gives hope to the weak—a Hero.

The knight who lived by the creed was dead, and instead the hope of the people was born. Nicholas understood this as well.

Thus, he did not oppose her actions. Later, he would come to regret it.

Hinata then assembled the Templars and the Blood Shadows and declared that she steps down from her post.

The Templars were content but the shadows opposed her declaration.

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「Hinata-sama has been corrupted! She has become weak from her defeat. Actually, the demon lord must have seduced her. We need to open her eyes!」

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And various other things the shadows said, troubling Hinata.

To them,

.

「In that case, that country's demon lord has created a dungeon. If you clear it you get an audience with the demon lord. So if you want to "open my eyes," go clear it first」

.

Hinata said, and the Blood Shadows, as if having received their orders, departed.

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「Is it fine?」

.

Nicholas asked,

.  
「Probably. No one dies in that dungeon.  
The Demon Lord manages it for fun.  
But it just might become good practice for them.  
Maybe they'll go mad, but it just might reforge their spirits」

.  
She said without thinking.  
Having faced Demon Lord Rimuru once before she has some trust in him.  
There's also the fact that Arnaud is there and has related enough for her to make her own conjectures.  
She also has a good idea as to how to clear that dungeon.  
Besides, perhaps only Hinata could, but those shadows would be unable to clear the dungeon.  
Blood crazed and seeing nothing but dogma, the labyrinth may only break their spirits.  
In fact, later on this became a sort of pilgrimage for forging your spirit.  
You would challenge that hell again and again, as long as your spirit doesn't break.  
As Hinata said, it became a place for those weak-willed to gain some mental strength.  
And the remaining Blood Shadows returned to the Holy Empire of Ruberion.  
Since they were affiliated with the Empire anyways, they simply swore loyalty to the Emperor.  
And upon seeing these men again, Hinata

.  
「Who would've thought...」

.  
She lamented.

.  
Their presence stank of blood.  
That she noticed one time when she was reporting a matter at the Empire.  
She concluded that their journey to the dungeon was the reason for their

much to mechanical and artificial movement.

But back to present time,

Excusing herself before the Seven Celestial Sages was a trial in itself.

If she fought would she win or lose? The thing is, they gave off magic power unbecoming of humans.

Why she had not noticed it was a mystery in itself.

(It's because her "Hero" egg has increased a level allowing her to feel their real presence, but she did not know this at the time.)

She figured that being focused on the whole made her blind to such an obvious fact.

So even though she was not wrong she simply was not right either. And this mistake too would lead to her growth.

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Holy Empire of Ruberion was most likely a temporary form.

The real form was of a city controlled by powerful, demon lord level, monsters.

A monster city undiscovered for many hundreds of years, where human thoughts are manipulated.

Not that they are being brainwashed, but undoing the teachings of the Empire is most likely impossible.

What terrifying foes they are, Hinata thought.

At this point, Hinata could not raise a sword against them.

A monster who does not wish to recognize other monsters? No, not simple lack of recognition, but outright hostility?

Either way, an enemy who hides behind a veil of humility is far more dangerous than one in plain sight.

Before, Hinata would have charged at them demanding a fight. But now she fully thinks through her actions.

Because she wishes to think through things in greater depth.

Not picking the path of least resistance but also considering the longest alternative.

So it's not like she's lost right now.

Hinata left the West Saint's Church.

Nicholas and the knights follow behind her.

She asked him to make Vice Captain Leonard the Captain and Arnaud remained as his Vice Captain.

「I hear and obey. I will do as you have instructed without delay.

However, Hinata-sama, this is also your home.

Please return to us at any time. We shall await your return」

And at Nicholas' words, other knights also bowed their heads.

Even recalling this scene now, these words warm her heart.

Though she lived discarding what she had no use for, she was able to acquire truly kind comrades.

For their sake she should not remain there any longer.

But,

「Are you okay?」

Without turning around she asked one of the people following her.

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「No problem. My spirit was broken quite a few times during that fight.

That curr (Ranga), was it...

Besides, after talking to them at that banquet, I have realized my own narrowmindedness.

Please take me along with you. Besides,

The West Saints' Church needs people, so they won't be able to spare any as your guards.

Well, I probably do for a poor guard, but please let me do it!

We probably would never meet another monster like that curr again!」

「Do as you like. What a whimsical fellow.

But thanks...

Ah! When I said do as you like I didn't mean you are free to crawl into my bed. That I won't permit」

「Wha! Who do you think I am?!

I would never dare to touch Hinata-sama!  
Besides, I would be crucified by Cardinal Nicholas」

“That guy seriously doesn’t know how to hold back, he’d seriously kill me!”  
And various other such lines Fritz mumbled, causing a small smile to break out on Hinata’s face.

Fritz saw that smile and was immediately at loss for words.

This is bad, he thought, seriously... For a second, I would not have minded being killed...

Feeling a chill, Fritz dispelled these thoughts.

Beautiful but lacking humanity. Overwhelming in strength, but lacking in feminine charm.

So was she known among people. Fritz was no exception and did not see her as a member of the opposite sex.

But, that smile blew all these preconceptions away.

This is bad, he thought, didn’t think this post would come with such a side benefit... but if others find out, I’ll have more people to compete against!

Having come down a bit, Fritz tried to order his feelings.

It’s alright, no problem. He steadied his trembling heart and oriented himself towards his normal train of thought.

Completely oblivious to his struggles, Hinata put on her glasses, leaned her head on his shoulder and looked up at him.

And with a weak smile,

「Yeah, you’ll take care of me, won’t you? Fritz」

She said.

And that was the death knell of his reason.

(Cardinal Nicholas, I’m sorry, but it’s open season now!)

This was the moment when Fritz decided to treat her not as a guard captain but as a woman to be protected.

And his feelings towards her were not of loyalty towards a guard captain but of an earnest desire to follow her.

And thus their journey began.

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Hinata was concerned about the five children Rimuru mentioned.

Nearing Kagurazaka Yuuki is dangerous but she had her anti-mind control item equipped. AND she did not intend to be reckless.

She merely wanted to confirm the situation and rescue the kids if possible.

What relationship stands between Yuuki and Chaos Lord Gazalim is a concern, but she intended to avoid any and all contact with him.

She did not think she would lose, but Shizu-san asked her to avoid him and she intended to keep her promise.

But, Chaos Lord Gazalim.

If he is manipulating Yuuki... she would not allow that to go unpunished.

Having been manipulated for over ten years it isn't something she can forgive.

In her memories Yuuki was a boy with a wide smile.

(I must confirm if that smile was genuine. And save the kids.)

If there's a will there's a way. Thus Hinata decided to act.

She headed out to Ingrasia Kingdom.

The city brainwashed by Yuuki, or perhaps by Gazalim.

Traveling by the magic circle may alert him, should there be spies, so instead she journeyed there on foot.

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And a new struggle was on the horizon...

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 121 - Hinata and the Kids

It's been a week since Fritz and Hinata reached Ingracia.

Even considering that they hitched a ride on a passing carriage, it still took time. But no: for Hinata, impatience was banned.

Using a magic circle would have been faster but would not have allowed them to grasp the state of Ingracia as a trip would have.

Fritz and Hinata decided to disguise themselves as an adventurer's daughter and a normal, spirited youth.

Hinata had equipment left over from my adventuring days, so she used that. Fritz purchased some from a travelling peddler.

But they had no qualms about their equipment. Demon Lord Rimuru had sent them modified Spirit Bracelets that could transform into full armament set upon command.

Though the quality of transformed gear did suffer as a result, it was still unique classed. Why did the Demon Lord do this she did not know, but she did appreciate it.

So even should the worst come to be, they would not need to rely on what they carry, and used it rather for disguise.

And thus they deigned these shabby clothes and ventured onward.

Oh, and they snuck into the kingdom using fake ids.

Currently Hinata is staying at a cheap inn in the outskirts of town.

For a whole week Hinata has not left her room. She's been using spirit familiars to scout the happenings of that city.

Fritz, however, is hanging around the Academy. With his own eyes and ears does he study the city.

Trying to figure out a way into the academy or if some merchant needs protection.

The Academy is a fortress, guests are not permitted.

Except, that is, entrance into Academy's Library is open to public, but it is undoubtedly being supervised by Yuuki.

Hinata is trying to find a way in without alerting Yuuki of her presence.

During his investigation Fritz came to know a number of food distributors employed by the Academy and was able to convince them to be a merchant selling food.

The thing is, the Academy has a lot of students.

They need a lot of merchants and workers just to prepare a single meal for all the students.

Thus, Fritz and Hinata were able to secure work inside the Academy helping around the kitchen.

And so another week passed. As their work continued they began investigating.

They had to move during the morning deliveries. Though the morning meals were simple they still required extensive preparation.

After observing the workplace for a week they found the best time to move.

If they were to deliver the meals while it was still dark surely they could snoop around and leave unseen.

Over the course of the week they more or less figured out the layout of the academy.

Using spirit familiars they found a source of strong light spirit energy.

And just as Rimuru has said, there was a child blessed by the light spirit.

Hinata heard the full story at the banquet. Though she once dismissed his words as utter nonsense she now felt a duty to protect these younglings.

In a way a they were her disciples too.

*(Clown's note: the reason being that they are taught in a school where she was taught in, so it's like they are her underclassmen [kouhai], but a bit more than that, because this academy is closer to a martial arts dojo. So as someone who's*

*"graduated" the academy she now feels responsible for them)*

But she was still not satisfied with his explanation for why they were summoned.

Think about it: Yuuki told Rimuru that Hinata summoned them while attempting to summon a real hero.

But leaving the difficulty and need for raising a new hero aside, neither Hinata nor the Church summoned the children.

In other words, Yuuki must have done it.

If that's the case, why did he do it? Did *he* fail at summoning and got them?

Or did he intend to summon them to begin with?

That Hinata could not understand.

Both Hinata and Rimuru had figured out during their confrontation that Yuuki was trying to pin the guilt for the summoning on Hinata.

So that question aside, the more important one still remained: why?

Perhaps he merely took advantage of a failed summoning.

But she felt that she had to know the reason for why he did it. And who said that there were only 5 children whom he summoned? And what about adults?

All these thoughts swirled inside her head causing her great anxiety.

But she decided to dismiss them all and focus on creating a plan to rescue the children.

Thus came that fateful day.

Fritz finished the preparations and Hinata went off to deliver the provisions to the Academy.

After working thus for a week Hinata has gotten rather friendly with the grannies working there.

But that thought led her to recall the fact that her current appearance is obscured by a magic item; she instead looks like an average red haired girl.

So the grannies are not talking to her, but to this red haired appearance of her. This thought made her feel strangely lonely.

But it was not the time for such sentimentalities.

Deliver the goods, wait for an opportunity, and proceed with Fritz to the source of that light. Hinata and Fritz would move as planned.

They would aim for that moment when the merchants deliver the food and

begin returning home.

She would create an illusion of herself leaving the premises and instead head for the children. Thus, the red girl would chat her way out instead of Hinata.

The magic would only work up until she would leave the premises, but that much time should be enough.

Today she merely planned to talk to the children and confirm that they were not in any immediate danger.

Ten minutes should be plenty to see how they are doing, and that would be the first step.

Of course, should things turn sour she was fully ready to blast her way out.

In that case, she would never again talk with those grannies...

And that thought did bother her, but it did not sway her resolve.

Fritz was busy with work so she decided to head off alone.

Straight for that light.

She used an invisibility spell and suppressed her presence to its utmost limits to remain undetected.

Up to the third floor, without making a single sound.

Her basic parameters strengthened by magic, she moved as a superwoman.

Unlocked a door with magic, and slipped in without as much as a whisper.

And found herself in a dimly lit classroom.

Light barely entered it: obvious, considering that it was still 6 am.

But it was nonetheless a bizarre room. There were few desks—only four.

There was a door in the back, connecting to another classroom.

There were some doors out in the hall, but could they really be called doors? They were locked not with keys but with magic, so she could not open them.

It was a strange design. This could hardly be called a normal classroom.

Pondering it all for a second, she instead turned and headed for the room emitting that light. Time was of essence, so she had to press forward.

Hinata opened the door and entered.

A dining table was being prepared; so she felt life inside the room.

Hinata carefully proceeded onward.

There was something akin a bedroom partitioned off.

Four futon lay there; so that's where the kids slept.

And then, Hinata unconsciously took a step back>

Had she not done so, she would have been hit by a wooden sword.

「Wow... you dodged that. Great! Thief?」

A voice came from a bossy child who seem to have just risen.

A weak-spirited Japanese boy, a European pretty boy.

And a blond pretty girl.

「Why'd you come? There's nothing to steal here?」

「Onee-chan, who are you?」

The Japanese boy and the blond girl asked Hinata.

The European child stood strong as if protecting the other kids. The bossy kid stood in the back.

Hinata let out a sigh and raised both hands showing she had no desire to fight.

And,

「The one with the wooden sword is Misaki Kenya, kun?」

And there's no need to be so tense, Gale-kun」

She called out.

Just as Rimuru had described them. The five children... except the black haired Chloe O'Bell; she seems to be missing.

「You know us?」

The weak looking boy, Sekiguchi Ryota asked.

「Yeah. I heard about you from Rimuru.

Misaki Kenya, Sekiguchi Ryota, Gale Gibson, Alise Rondo, right?

And one more, Chloe O’Bell... whom I don’t see here.

Just as Rimuru had said.

My name is Sakiguchi Hinata.

You may have heard some bad things about me, but I am not here to endanger you.

I came to chat, but it seems we’re out of time.

It would be great if I could get you to trust me...」

Kenya sat in a chair, his wooden sword in hand.

Without a single change in his demeanor,

「Ah, so you’re Rimuru-sensei’s acquaintance」

He said, with a relieved smile on his face.

「But isn’t Hinata Sakaguchi a name of a villain!」

「Right, the person who summoned us, had no use for us, and tried to kill us! And we’re only here because Yuuki-oniichan and Rimuru-sensei saved us」

「But she doesn’t seem like an enemy. It’s alright to trust her... no?」

While saying various things, the children sat in chairs.

Seems like being Rimuru’s acquaintance earned her some trust.

But she did not for a second confuse it with trust for her; the stories they heard about her must have made her sound like the Satan himself.

That made her frown a bit, but at least it did not cause them to attack her outright.

In the first place, those were nothing but groundless accusations.

Sadly, there was no time to explain. So she figured she'll go with the flow and give them the rundown of the situation.

「Yeah, thanks for trusting me.

I've met with Rimuru and heard of your from him.

I don't have the time for a full explanation... in short, I want to take you to Rimuru's place.

We'll explain everything there」

「Eh? Rimuru-sensei's place? I want to go!」

「But won't the church come after us... I do want to go though...」

Conversation filled the room.

「The church will not pose a problem...

I want you to listen without yelling. I am the Church's Guard Captain Hinata. Well, I was.

The one you spoke of earlier, the "Hinata who summoned us" is me.

But, to get to the point, I did not summon you.

Please believe me.

And that too will be explained in due time」

「Whhaattt?!」

「Huh? But if the church was not responsible, who was, then?

Why are we trapped in here?」

「Right... If you think about it, a stalker?」

「But this Onee-chan could be lying, you know!」

Hinata narrowed her eyes observing the children.

As she had expected, she'll have to struggle to convince them.

She had not the time to explain enough to convince them. So if this was not enough, she would have to return again.

Before she met Rimuru she would have just put them under protection and taken them from here by force.

Hinata was the kind of person who would choose the shortest and safest

path and logically put that plan into motion.

But now? Here she is trying to sway the hearts of a bunch of children.

How weak I have become, she thought.

Showing emotion would surely increase the chance of failure—that she understood.

And if the kids show hostility, then she would have failed. She would have to come again and again while avoiding detection.

But Hinata nonetheless chose to reveal her identity to them.

Forcing your thoughts on others is mere self-satisfaction.

Hinata now chose the longest path, and found that fact hilarious. But she did not regret this change.

That one thing about her did not change: she refused to regret.

「It's alright. We can trust her.

My pal, Hikaru says so!」

「Yeah! I also think so. I mean, this Onee-chan is loved by the spirits!」

「Yeah, true. I also believe her」

「In that case, it's decided. Let's go. But we should hurry. Can we go like this?」

Hinata opened her eyes wide looking at the children.

She did not expect for it to be this easy. Going now would also be contrary to the plan.

Besides,

「I appreciate the sentiment, but we can't leave just yet.

Most importantly...where's the fifth—Chloe?」

「Onee-chan... who are you talking about?」

「We don't know anyone by that name?」

What? She thought they were joking, but their eyes were serious.

There was no hint of lie in their words. They are telling the truth.

But, how...?

「I'm late!」

That's when Fritz came in.

They had too little time, there was no time to hesitate.

They have to leave now or plan it for another day.

If they were to wait, there would be new risks. Besides, the kids seem to be ready for travel, so this looks like a good opportunity.

But Chloe is not with them, and that's a problem.

And while Hinata was thus deliberating,

「There's nothing to fret about, you know? I mean, I can't let you take them  
」

A lad calls out to Hinata with a smile.

Fritz jumped back drawing his sword.

Black hair and black eyes. They were familiar with this man. And he just snuck up on a Fritz.

And not just Fritz; neither the kids nor Hinata noticed him approaching.

He was no ordinary man.

「Kagurazaka Yuuki...」

Hinata muttered.

There, before the, stood the Freedom Association Master.

「Seems like I was only able to reel in two fish with this bait (children).

Well, I guess it's fine. Guard Captain Hinata, you are no small fry.

I guess the bait served its purpose」

Yuuki said with a smile full of absolute bliss, causing Hinata to fear.

She felt cold sweat forming on her back and her senses screamed danger.

Bracing herself, she made her resolve.

“The smiling boy of her memories...”

What load of nonsense.

Her hair stood on its ends faced with such evil.

He's still smiling and he appears calm.

But what she fears is his presence.

This kind of evil she just had to immediately vanquish.

Steeling her resolve, she confronted Yuuki!

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# Demon Lord's Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 122 - Hinata and Yuuki

Confronting Yuuki, Hinata felt a strange sense of pressure. She had proceeded with the plan under the assumption that she could not be noticed.

「How did you notice?」

「Oh? A question without even a greeting! How cold, Hinata」

「Shut up. What do you mean the children are bait? Was this a trap to begin with?」

He shrugged,

「Isn't it obvious? Now that they've been stabilized, they are useless as material for a re-summon」

Yuuki smiled, as if the question wasn't anything special.

「Did you say re-summon?」

「Yeah. You know how it takes a while to summon again due to the tremendous magical energy consumption?

And how you need to keep doing it until you summon a proper pawn; well, kids are useful too, you know.

It's just, I can't use them anymore now that Rimuru-san stabilized them. As a result, we lost on a contract... most unfortunate」

He said as if it was the most obvious thing in the world.

Though his words and gestures were calculated to put a person at ease, Hinata felt as if they were dread itself.

And to Hinata,

「Hmm? You mean, you didn't know about it?  
When children explode from the unstable magic energy, the conditions for re-summoning are met.  
Using that, we could summon again.  
That's why even failed summons are not a waste.」

— Ah, but sadly even that popular hero Masayuki was just a small-fry in the end —

The words came as if from far away, but enraged Hinata.  
This guy, what do you think a human life is! Is probably she wanted to say.  
Hinata couldn't tolerate such an act: Yuuki repeatedly summoned people in order to meet an order of his business partner.

「Yuuki-oniichan, you saved us, didn't you?」

Alice tearfully asked,

「Ahaha, you finally get it? I only kept you alive because you had use.  
Alice, making such a sad face isn't going to help, you know?  
I'll kill you once your use runs out... in other words, I'll keep you alive as long as you're useful」

Yuuki responded harshly.  
A cold-blooded part awakened within Hinata, urging her to kill the man standing before her.  
This man should not be allowed to live.

「You bastard, not only manipulating me, but the children as well!  
And where's the other girl?  
Where's Chloe Aubert?  
Did you erase the children's memories?」

Hinata shouted,

「It was unfortunate, raising bugs is so much hassle, and I even got a great pawn...

And then.....

And because you had your emotions “frozen” as you clung on to the despair of being abandoned by your mother!... The expression on your face was priceless.

It truly is a pity. I completed the overly rational, ruthless Hinata with so much effort, and now all you are now is an ordinary person with a strong sense of justice.

By the way, who's Chloe Aubert?」

Those words angered Hinata.

However, Hinata calmed down and thought: Yuuki did not appear that he was lying about not knowing who Chloe O'Bell was.

What's this about? Hinata repeated whilst controlling her anger.

From the corner of Hinata's eyes she could see the teary-faced Alice.

That's enough, this man can no longer be allowed to speak so self-indulgently. Hinata thought as she drew her sword from the Bracelet form Holy Sprit armor.

At the same time, light particles warped around Hinata's body. When the wild dance of light died down, a fully armed Hinata emerged.

「Yuuki, for the sake of our old friendship I'll give you a chance to repent. Now swear you will apologize right now, confess, and compensate for your crimes.」

「Ahaha, why? What is there to apologize for?

Isn't it the law of the jungle in this world?

The ones who are weak, the deceived are the evil ones, you know?」

TN note: Law of the Jungle basically means survival of the fittest/the strong feed on the weak.

「Don't give me that crap!」

With her rage like a roaring fire, Hinata's blade flashed towards Yuuki. The main armament of the new holy spirit armament was a katana shaped blade. Previously, Hinata used a rapier that also had the ability to cut on its sides, but it's slightly thicker, with miniscule difference in weight. There isn't much difference in terms of weight and inertia control, however when using fencing techniques it is easier to wield than a broadsword. Its performance is equal or above. The new holy spirit armor that was copied and analyzed with a demon lord's ability, now has a higher level of performance than before. In short, Hinata was able to use the equipment as if she were born in it.

A single cut sliced open Yuuki's cheek as he dodged the sword flash with a clowning expression  
A red line, with a single drop of blood flowing out.  
Yuuki's previous facial expression vanished. As he looked down on his foe, his ridiculing attitude doesn't change.

「Hee..... What a surprise. I thought I completely dodged that. Hinata what happened? In such a short amount of time your strength has increased. When the parasite was latched onto you your strength growth was like any other ordinary person.」

Although he could have lied, Yuuki revealed that he was able to gauge the strength of targets whom he infected with a parasite. That was within Hinata's predictions. The problem was how close Yuuki was to obtaining the power known as the "hero's egg". As the Grandmaster of the Freedom Association, his abilities would naturally be high. He is above S-Rank adventurers. Previously, when the holy church collaborated together with the Freedom Association to subjugate an evil dragon in a united front, Hinata had witnessed a glimpse of Yuuki's powers.

Without relying on skills, he dealt a finishing blow to the evil dragon with his own physical strength. Yuuki himself claimed that the nature of his tough body was the sole thing he inherited in this world.

It would be dangerous to believe that. There's no doubt he has other hidden abilities.

Besides, is he being controlled by the Demon Lord Kazalim? It doesn't look like he is.

Although there's a reasonable possibility he had obtained a controlling ability from the Demon Lord Kazarim, Hinata found it necessary to confirm the relationship between the two.

If he is in fact being manipulated by the Demon Lord known as the "Magic King", she wished to help. She earnestly hoped that he was in fact being manipulated.

Thus, Hinata decided to perform a final check just in case.

「Yuuki, are you being manipulated by Kazalim?」

Or ..... is the one talking to me right now the "Chaos Lord" Kazarim?」

In response, an evil sneer appear on Yuuki's face while he nodded.

「Eh? Ah, Ahaha. That right, or is it?

I am, no, we are Kazarim!... Just kidding.

Ahahaha, truly, you really are interesting Hinata.」

Yuuki continued bursting out laughing as if something funny was said. His laughter reverberated for a while.

Even though that stance was full of openings, she had no intentions to attack. It was awfully distorted, and gave Hinata a bad feeling.

While continually eyeing the laughing Yuuki, she sent Fritz a signal.

Fritz also equipped his spirit armor, and his battle preparations are complete.

In response to Hinata's signal, he got into position to protect the children.

The children also felt Yuuki's strange demeanor as they huddled around Alice protectively. Even if they couldn't completely understand the situation

very well, they could still understand that they were used. Hinata was merely happy that they weren't so upset as to cry or attempt to attack him. There are no signs amongst the children that they've been brainwashed, and even if they were Fritz would still be able to handle it.

The children left in Fritz's care, Hinata was focusing on Yuuki. Suddenly, Yuuki stopped laughing and,

「Hey? Why did you think I was on the same level as that kind of small fry?  
」

With his regular expressionless face, he asked Hinata again. Without waiting for a reply,

「When I was summoned to this world, I was wondering in my spiritual body when that worm (Kazarim) came crawling to me.

When I was in the spirit world, he said some self-important things. I didn't remember any of it because I wasn't interested.

By the way, if I remember correctly, my self-proclaimed right hand Kagali assimilated with him.

Because I was interested in his ability, I took it.

He earnestly wanted to serve me, so I left him alive.

With his wealth of knowledge, he's useful in his own way.」

Ms. Kagari

She's the Freedom Association Second-in-Command.

She was a beauty with the blood of elves in her veins.

Hinata recalled that when she came to this world, she had taken care of her.

An archmage aiming at reaching the truth, she's someone who boasts the highest firepower in the Freedom Association.

That female, Kagari, could be considered as the perfect minion of Yuuki for she had assimilated with Kazarim rather than was brainwashed.

Not just simple brainwashing and thought probing, the roots that Yuuki set up had permeated deeply in her psyche.

Moreover,

These words confirmed that Yuuki and Kazarim had in fact come in contact, he was even able to show that he deprived an ability from his minion Kazarim.

However, in the end that's if you believed in Yuuki.

Hinata has determined that Yuuki's words were no lies. Even when taking into account the various possibilities, there aren't many benefits in lying. That means, worrying about Yuuki's consciousness, and worrying about returning him to normal is pointless.

That was Yuuki's intention right from the start, and we were all part of the plot.

「.....is that so. That means, that kind demeanor, and that kind smile... all of that and everything you said was just an act?」

「Ah, I see. I understand now.

In other words, you wanted to help because you thought I was manipulated by Kazarim. Was that it?

Too bad! That's nonsense. I'm the one doing the manipulation. Only I manipulate」

Yuuki answered Hinata's questioning with utmost ridicule.

Considering everything that transpired, it's as if Yuuki enjoyed seeing Hinata suffer.

As if he was having fun, his mouth curled into a cold sneer.

Hinata obtained a "Hero's egg" after she overcame deception and lies, and after she saw through all the anomalies, gaining the ability "Eye of truth". Even when viewed him through these eyes, no lies are detected in Yuuki's words. He simply revealed facts.

There was little room for talk, concluded Hinata.

「Yuuki ..... final question. What is your purpose in summoning?  
Why have you manipulated Clayman and caused an upheaval with the orc  
lord, then caused a war between the Church and Tempest?  
Do you understand this throws the world into chaos!？」  
「Aha. Ahahahaha. You say interesting things.  
The last, the last huh? That's right, it's the end for you lot.  
Alright, I'll tell you.  
It's because it's interesting, that's the only reason.  
What other reason could there be, really?  
I intend to completely unify the world as one.  
Angels, Spirits, Demons, I wish to rule over all of them.  
Unfortunately, is it possible to rule over the world with my current  
abilities?  
That's why, I have to work hard and diligently.」

Yuuki replied in response to Hinata's inquiry.  
Rather than world conquest, he called it domination. As an absolute ruler,  
Yuuki would declare his reign.  
The reason was something more abnormal than what Hinata thought.  
World Domination... that's just impossible. Didn't his common sense tell  
him that no matter how amazing he becomes he won't be able to dominate  
the entire world?  
This guy's a madman! Hinata began feeling an ominous chill down her  
spine.  
Deep within her trembling heart, Hinata realized she is feeling fear.  
This isn't due to his strength and the sort, but rather his serious attitude in  
proclaiming his dreadful attempt in ruling the world.  
And then,

Kotsun Kotsun Kotsun.....

The sound of walking echoed in the hallways.  
A holy presence unlike any that Hinata had ever felt.

However, the mysterious presence felt unnatural due to its lack of color and feelings, as well as its unset directions.

「Ah, she finally came.

Unfortunately for you Hinata, there's no longer any chance of victory for you.

Between you and me, you could have killed me.

As expected, you couldn't stop me.

This, is a game. A simple game.

I want to rule the world, and the world tries to prevent it.

For the sake of my victory, I'm giving it my all.

You guys should also give it your all to stop me right?

You've neglected it, that's why you lose.」

At the same time when Yuuki finished talking, a door from the side of the corridor opened, and a girl came in.

With long black hair collecting at the back of her head, she was clad in lightweight equipment completely in black.

A more compact version of Hinata's own holy armor that did not at all inhibit movement.

A very beautiful face.

She placed one hand on the sword that hung below her waist.

The girl walked in sedately.

This was the "true hero", known as the strongest.

Her eyes lacked luster as they're covered in pitch black darkness, her whole body emitting a sacred inviolable aura.

An overwhelming aura began pressuring Hinata and the kids.

Yuuki didn't even need any tricks in the beginning.

There was no need to manipulate the children, his combat ability was far greater than Hinata, this was his trap.

「Is that...the Hero.....? Why, is the hero here.....?」

Behind Hinata, Fritz muttered.

To that remark,

「Ah, Clayman had some use in the end.

Although I wanted him to awaken as a true demon lord to have him as my pawn, I already have Kazalim.

Instead, I had him gather all the demon lords.

This way, Luminas who was guarding “the sleeping hero” will not be around.

You probably don't, but do you know Luminas, who manipulated the “hero” is the true ruler of the Holy Church Ruberius?

I decided to seize her from Luminas in order to efficiently use her.

Thanks to all of your efforts, I now have complete control over the hero.

It's actually impossible to dominate the kids to such an extent, you know.

You worried over nothing.

But I must say, your fretting was enjoyable to watch!」

Yuuki Happily exposed.

Hinata also understood that there were no lies in his remark, and she felt the world disappear before her

That means, Yuuki had just said the demon lord Luminas is the true ruler of the Church.

If that's so, the Sacred Empire Ruberius has its capital governed by a demon lord.

It's no wonder why the Holy Empire Ruberius also had an unnatural feel of a monster's presence.

So, a system of dominion established for hundreds of thousands of years, the teachings of the church, were full of lies to begin with.

(That means..... I was used not only by Yuuki, but also by the demon lord.....)

However, that's not limited only to Hinata.

Those who belong to the Sacred Empire Ruberius and the Western Church, they were all being used.

Yuuki continued talking to Hinata who was wrapped in despair.

「Just do me a favor and consider this for a second: wouldn't you join me Hinata?

It seems you have obtained a "Hero's egg," and was even able to awaken it. An increase in our forces is always welcome.

Considering we're from the same country, I'll even make you an executive. How about it?」

「Don't mess with me! Bastards like you deserve no mercy. Here and now, I'm going to punish you for your sins!」

Refusing Yuuki's invitation, she gripped on to her sword.

However, contrary to her vigorous proclamation, a retreat signal was sent to Fritz.

This outcome was far worse than one could ever imagine.

Hinata would make her stand, while Fritz would secure an escape route. No matter the cost.

The opponent's strength was far above theirs and this was the best she could come up.

「Can't say I expected you to say otherwise...

Now then, I talked for a while, didn't I?

You know, revealing a secret about the behind the scenes action when being confronted as the mastermind?

I always wanted to try it once, it was splendid and fun.

Then, after exposing all this, doesn't the mastermind usually lose?

Wonder if I raised a flag?

I had just arranged and raised a grand flag, so try your best in defeating me. Maybe you might be able to awaken as a hero and defeat us?」

These were the last words exchanged between Hinata and Yuuki.  
What came afterwards was the battle.



# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 123 - Predestined Fate

(Fritz POV)

Receiving Hinata's signal, Fritz move to the edge of the classroom to protect the children.

He looked down at the school grounds from the classroom window on the third floor of the school building and he visualizes an escape route in his mind.

For Fritz, Hinata's order is absolute, he wouldn't think to defy it. Because Hinata's predictions are always right there's no failure in it except in the previous Demon Lord Subjugation War.

It can only be said that the opponent last time was too strong.

Therefore escaping with the children according to the order this time should be the correct thing to do.

Fritz can understand that bringing the children and the information back takes priority above all else, he certainly thinks that the children and himself included will just become hindrance to Hinata.

But still, to just following an order without a reason is not good, so Fritz was assaulted by an uneasy feeling. Or rather, it was Fritz's intuition that made him think so.

As the result, that Fritz and the children's escape would succeed, or so it was.....

(Hinata POV)

Hinata understood the whole layout by looking it from the sky using spatial perception.

By the window are Fritz and the four children. The subjects she must protect, she can't let them get swallowed up by an attack.

"The Hero" walks calmly from the door near the corridor to the chair in front of Yuuki.

The ability of the Hero is equal to her own ability or better than hers.

The story of the Hero sealing the storm dragon Veldora which was the "Dragon kind" she saw when she attacked Tempest was famous.

“Can I really win against that dragon?” According to Hinata’s calculation, the chance for her to win against the Storm Dragon Veldora is low.

Though there is no chance of victory, if she thinks about it, the Hero just woke up from a several decades long sleep and it can be assumed that the Hero is not in normal condition. Furthermore, because Yuuki is in control, the Hero might not be able to fully use her ability.

If it’s only to restrain her; then it might be possible. That’s what Hinata’s calculation derived.

Hinata returned her katana to its sheath at once, and takes the posture for iai. And then, she let out an attack to the front, not moving from her spot, using the extreme speed drawing the sword.

<sup>Astral Bind Slash</sup>  
「Bind Slash ![1]」 (Hinata)

The flash of the iai concealed it, countless numbers of spirit substance converge on the blade part and turn into innumerable blades that have been released as a soul restraining attack.

The spirit substance that was converted into innumerable blades has the same effect as the talisman.

It’s a technique to bind the Astral Body which is the container of the soul not the flesh, one of Hinata’s hidden attacks to seal the opponent’s movement at the same time as the shockwave from the swiftness of the batoujutsu is released.

The katana is a part of the spiritual armament, it’s an arms which was produced from the concretization of spirit’s power. Thus, the edge of the katana once again emitted a glittering brilliance.

It’s an action that’s possible without letting the enemy predict the tactics because it can substitute the talisman and the medium for converting the spirit substance. This would create a large advantage in a battle between fellow experts.

But.....

「Otto!」 (Yuuki)

「.....」 (Hero?)

His voice sounds jested, but the response doesn’t show any fret either.

Yuuki wards off the shock wave with knife[2] he holds in his hand. It's called a Snake Sword[3], a unique legend class weapon that Yuuki possesses.

This weapon is flexible, though it usable as a knife, it can extend and be used as a whip because the weapon has a trait that makes it possible to change its shape freely.

But, more than its status and performance as a legend class weapon, it has an ability to absorb a fixed amount of damage. Until it reaches its limit, the knife can nullify all attacks it receives. However, once its capacity is reached it can't be used until it recycles in one week.

This time, Yuuki used its ability as he sat down. The knife absorbed all the shock waves without fail.

「Ah? It becomes impossible to move. It can't be helped, I'll leave the fight to you.」 (Yuuki)

Although the shock wave itself is nullified, one of the blades pierced Yuuki's shadow and the restraining effect is activated.

However, there's no panic in Yuuki's expression, while sitting down on the chair, immobilized, he made an appeal, Yuuki request the Hero to fight Hinata.

Frankly his behavior is unnatural, she was sure she didn't miss anything, observing from the start.

On the other side is the Hero.

The Hero performed a defense with transcendental sword skills to intercept each of the blade pieces, even though it should be the first time the Hero sees Hinata's attack.

Without changing her beautiful expression at all, there's also no impatience nor despising feelings on her face.

「Understood. Though I will kill, is that okay?」 (Hero?)

The Hero indifferently accepted Yuuki's request.

And, in front of Hinata, the Hero asked the question as if it was a settled matter.

「It's okay. It seems Hinata will not become a subordinate. It can't be helped, right?」 (Yuuki)

「I understand. Then, at least I will kill her without any suffering.」 (Hero?)

The voice is devoid of emotion.

The answer is as if it was scripted beforehand.

The Hero reminds her of a ruthless killing machine. No, there's not even a ruthless emotion, it's just carrying out its orders, a Doll.

Hinata sees her appearance and thinks.

She also defeated her enemies without any emotion. She felt that her former self resembled the Hero who was now in front of her.

Hinata holds her katana pointing the blade at her opponent's eyes[4] and confronts the Hero. And, she prays that Fritz and the others in the rear will escape quickly.

When Yuuki appeared a while ago, she sensed a barrier was put up surrounding the school. She believes it probably has an effect to obstruct teleportation but they may be able to escape by 『Transfer Magic』 once they go out of the school.

In the worst case, if they run to the Saint's church next door, it's also possible to transfer to the headquarters using the teleportation magic formation.

Even if the barrier was set up around the school, they can escape once they get out of the school. Therefore Hinata wants them to move into action quickly.....

However, it can be said that such a chance didn't really exist.

But what Fritz and others didn't noticed was that Kagari (In other words, Kazaream) was leading her men and waiting in the school grounds. Because it's still early morning, there are few people. Although it's time for students to go to school, since the dormitory is separate from this place, it is quite deserted.

Even assuming he noticed the gathered men, they could deal with him either way. In other words, the escape route from the schoolyard has been blocked.

Fritz didn't notice it, but he hesitated to believe his own intuition and taking action.

It's only taken a several seconds.

However as a result, in the short time under a minute all conclusions are resolved.

Hinata concentrated all of her attention on the Hero.

It's no use to worrying Fritz and the others. The thing she should do now is eliminate the enemy in front of her and buy time.

Hinata crossed swords with the Hero without taking notice of Yuuki who makes a racket, still immobilized in the chair.

A natural talent and effort.

Hinata takes pride in her ability that is on a near genius level, it's a fact that she remained undefeated until her defeat against Rimuru.

That is not only in sword skill but even in magic.

「Wind Blade!」 (Hinata)

The magic is activated without chanting together with blades of wind that attack the Hero from all direction, Hinata's katana draws near the Hero. In contrast, the Hero ignores the blades of wind and receives Hinata's katana with her own katana.

Though countless wind blades hit the Hero's body, they all turned into light particles and turned into magic power. It was completely prevented because of the Unique Skill 『Absolute Defense』 that the Hero possessed.

Hinata used countless magic, but everything was blocked by the Hero's 『Absolute Defense[5]』 and didn't give any effect. And also, Hinata's swordsmanship is completely repelled by the Hero as if she could predict it. Above all else.....

Hinata's katana was broken into pieces by one flash of the Hero's katana. With this it's the third time. Is it the difference between their swords? Or is it the difference between their skills.....? Hinata's katana was easily smashed by the Hero.

Though the blade reforms whenever it breaks, it definitely shows that Hinata is in a disadvantageous position.

From what she had heard from other people regarding the Hero's abilities, there's no indication when the Unique Skill 『Absolute Severance』 is used. Still, Hinata doesn't panic.

The Hero's sword skill is higher than her. Magic also doesn't work.

Still, Hinata doesn't give up.

She handles it gently. And she waits for a chance.

Her budded "Hero's egg" and her own talents, make her spirit strong.

Above all else, because she has people whom she should protect and there is a place she must return to.

Little by little, Hinata's sword speed rises. Her concentration increases, and a crack appear on the eggshell.....

Hinata runs up to the height of the existence called Hero.

「I will not lose! Even if my opponent is the invincible Hero.  
I will defeat you and I will advance beyond you! Take this, Melt Slash!!」  
(Hinata)

Hinata challenged the Hero to a match with the fastest, strongest technique she has.

There are no petty tricks.

The exaltation makes the throbbing heartbeats not felt until now.

And, while she is exchanging blows with the Hero's sword, she realizes the increase in her sword's force.

That single blow was the strongest blow with all Hinata's strength as she broke her eggshell.

(Back to Fritz)

Fritz can't believe his own eyes.

The Overwhelming Hinata.

The Dominating Hinata.

For Fritz, Hinata is the symbol of Justice <sup>Strength</sup> he adores.

Though she was defeated by Demon Lord Rimuru, but after that he was aware that Hinata grew and became stronger than before.

The enemy is the Hero who is stronger than Hinata, begins to respond to the speed of Hinata's sword. Fritz's perception can't follow the speed of the sword anymore.

“As expected from Hinata-sama!” so his mind thought, then that happen.

「—Melt Slash!!」 (Hinata)

Hinata's attack is sent and strikes the Hero.  
The next moment.

「Hero can't lose because it's "Hero" you know. An outrageous existence is what Hero is.」 (Yuuki)

Yuuki's murmuring voice is audible to Fritz's ear.  
The voice is like a sage who attained enlightenment but merely conveyed a simple truth.

「Too bad. As I thought, Hinata can't defeat me. I wonder if it was Rimuru-san the result would be different?」 (Yuuki)

Yuuki spoke like he was talking about something faraway, as if Fritz didn't exist in that place.

Fritz can't understand it.

In front of his eyes, he saw the appearance of Hinata that collapsed while vomiting blood after her heart was pierced by the Hero's katana.

Although he sees it, Fritz's mind is in denial and refuses to admit it.

「U, uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!」 (Fritz)

Fritz doesn't realize that the screaming comes from his own throat.  
However, reality didn't waver and the situation continued without caring about Fritz.

It was just awhile before Fritz comprehended this event,

(Back at Hinata again)

Convinced of victory, hopeless reality assailed Hinata.

The Special Move that Hinata released overlapped with the Hero's. The technique was completely on the same rank as Hinata's, but the speed and power exceeded that of Hinata's.

Melt Slash.

The Hero countered Hinata's technique by using the same the technique as Hinata.

And though the execution was after Hinata's, it caught up with Hinata's sword speed and with power it broke Hinata's sword. The remaining energy of the aftershocks even cut the dimension.

The technique activated with the Hero's Unique Skill 『Absolute Severance[6]』, surpassed Hinata's strength and skill in all aspects.

And, Hinata's heart was pierced without hesitation with the single strike of the returned katana.

(—Is this the end.....? No, not yet. There's something I have to do!)

A Hero is a person whose heart not easily discouraged.

Hinata didn't give up and was trying to stand up.

However,

—*No, everything is going as destined.*

She tries to use <sup>Super Recovery Magic</sup> Extra Heal but it didn't activate.

She thought she heard someone voice.

The voice of a crying girl.

(Ah, I can still fight. At least, those children and Fritz can escape.....)

—*Yes, it's all right. Those children can escape safely.*

(Is that so? That's a relief for now.....)

For some reason Hinata felt relieved by those groundless words, Hinata vomited blood and collapsed in her place.

Although he sees it, Fritz's mind is in denial and refuse to admit it.

「U, uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!」 (Fritz)

Fritz rushes up to Hinata and embraces her while screaming.

Cold envelops her body rapidly, and Hinata notices that her consciousness is weakening and her senses are paralyzed though she feels Fritz's warmth.

“Ah, I can’t be saved”. So Hinata realized. Therefore,

「Fritz, it’s an order. Because the Hero’s attack, the space has tore.  
If it’s now, the transfer magic can be used.....  
Leave this place immediately.....」 (Hinata)

She desperately pulled back her almost gone consciousness, and Hinata spoke those words in one breath.  
Hinata can’t be saved. But, the children including Fritz can escape.  
Who was it? Though she might have just misheard it, the words that were told seem to be true.

「However.....!」 (Fritz)  
「It’s a order. Fritz.....  
I..... don’t want to die in vain..... okay?」 (Hinata)

And the children who were looking at the exchange, Kenya,

「Uooooo! Melt Slash!!」 (Kenya)

Dazzling light is generated in Kenya’s hand and is condensed to one sword’s sweep.

And the sword is swung, Kenya uses Hinata’s technique by imitating it after seeing Hinata use it.

The eyes are blinded by the light from the sword flash.

Though it was caught by the katana the Hero holds, the strike succeeded in tearing up several of the Hero’s hairs and make them flutter in the air.眩い光が剣也の手に生At the same time, Alice moved.

Their cooperation was perfect as they are connected by Telepathy, everyone is wrapped by the space manipulation magic formation that Alice invented.

Even Hinata who was in Fritz’s embrace after she received a single blow from the Hero.

Such a chain of events occurred in an instant.

.....

.....

...

What remained in the place when the light of Alice's Space Manipulation Magic Formation disappears were only two people.

It's only Yuuki and the Hero with no name.

On the classroom's floor is the red puddle of blood which didn't dry yet which vividly proved that the present event was reality.

「Ahh, I set up so much flags, so it's possible for them to escape huh?」  
(Yuuki)

The hero doesn't answer Yuuki's murmuring.

As there was nothing, her expression was not clouded either.

「Even so, is this going as scheduled? Then, since were done, shall we go back?」 (Yuuki)

Yuuki doesn't show any particularly worried expression, there's also no sign of regretting the failure either.

When Yuuki tells Kagari and her subordinates that were waiting in the schoolyard to return, as if nothing had happened, he returned to the Freedom Association Headquarters.

The Hero with no name too turns her eyes to look at the tear in space that restored in an instant.

The light of Will appeared on her iris-less eyes, the aura she gave off was as if it was the expression from a different person that has begun to appear and disappear.

「So. It started now.....」 (Hero.....?)

Nobody hears that muttering with an unknown meaning.

The Hero turns her legs, and began to follow behind Yuuki.  
Her steps don't have hesitation, and the doll-like presence she had up until now disappears.  
What was left was only a pool of blood that cannot speak.

-----

She heard the voice calling her.  
Hinata roused her fading consciousness and listen to the voice.

「—Please don't go! Hinata-sama!!」 (Nicholas)

Ah, it sounds so sad.....

I'm sorry Nicholas. Fritz too.....

I can't see anymore. I only judged it from the presence, it might not be so.

*Did you live your life to the fullest?*

— No, there's still something I left undone. Even though I found a place for me to return to after great trouble, you know?

*Do you regret it?*

— No, I don't regret it. If I regret it, I'm rude to people whom I sacrificed.

*Do you still want to live?*

— I wonder which? I don't want to die, I think? However it seems to be impossible.

My heart is destroyed, and magic is not usable.

Nicholas and Fritz. She also feels the grief from the Holy Knights who adore her.

However, there's already nothing that can Hinata do.

If she thinks about it, she was warned by her Sensei (Shizu-san), was it a mistake for her to rescue the children?

—No, it was correct. I puffed my chest with pride, so I was able to say so.

After all, this event happened only because the enemy surpassed her even if she took precautions.

My body stopped pulsing, it's already at state where vital activity has gone. Brain waves have also stopped, it has become a complete corpse. Because of this state, even if Nicholas's 『<sup>Resurrection</sup>Revival Magic[7]』 was used, revival is impossible.

Revival is only in the name, because it is still an incomplete magic. However, because she could hear their voices in the end, Hinata was satisfied. No, she must be satisfied, so she thinks.

Because she had left something undone, she wanted to search for and aid troubled people with her own eyes, but there was someone who inherited the Will.

She was blessed.

Because she didn't die while making a mistake or while her thoughts were being manipulated.

At least, in her last moments she wanted to meet her Sensei again, so she wished.

Just before the will of Hinata's soul faded away and disappeared.

*I'm sorry. Everything is just like it was destined to be. Your soul will be warmed inside of me.*

*Eventually, the "Hero's egg" that your soul possesses will surely emerge.*

— Who are you?

*I'm Chloe.*

— Chloe? The fifth child?

*Yes. Due to the Hero's waking, people who could recognize me disappeared.[8]*

*You'll assimilate into me, and will become a true Hero before long.*

*What born here is the Nameless Hero.*

*Everything is Pre-established harmony[9].*

*As for your defeat and also your death.*

— That's a somehow irritating.

*It's inevitable.*

*I recognized what it was, and so to get your soul, I leaped to the past.*

— Are the things in the future decided too?

*No, what is decided to that extent is unknown.*

*What I know is this moment now, when the True Hero awakened, only to that extent.*

*At the time I flew into the past, the Hero whose existence overlaps disappeared and is untied from all limitations.*

*That is, even though it's an existence of the assimilated me and you, it can be said to be another person.[10]*

*Even so, will you come together with me? No, I want you to come.*

—I see. It's a thing that can be refused. But, it can't be refused, huh.[11]

Because a Hero is a person whose heart not easily discouraged.

To refuse here is impossible for Hinata's personality, it meant that all possibilities would disappeared.

More than anything, she may be able to help Shizu-san and everyone once again.

Though it might be impossible, even if she calculated it with the Unique Skill 『Mathematician』, however she understood that the possibility for this is improbable.

*(But still, I can't help but pray.*

*Because to die is to give up and make the best use of my life for everyone.....)*

Hinata accepted the offer.

“Thank you,” she muttered in small voice to the girl, Chloe, Hinata and Chloe's soul mixed together as one and leapt through the barrier of time.

To a far-off past

And now, the endless journey of the girl called Chloe and Hinata begins.

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Nicholas confirms Hinata's death and wails.

No matter how many times 『Resurrection』 is used there's no reaction.

Nicholas keeps chanting the magic desperately while embracing her closely to warm the cold body that grew even colder.

Unnoticed, his two hands were restrained by Fritz, but he broke free.

“If you disturb me then I will kill you,” so he think.

Then, interrupting Nicholas and Fritz,

「Please stop it, Nicholas-sama. Hinata-sama has already passed away.」  
(Leonard)

Calmly, Leonard who took the position as the leader of the Holy Knight reported, but this is a cruel reality for Nicholas

「What, it's impossible..... It's Hinata, you know? There's no way that Hinata-sama died!!」 (Nicholas)

Nicholas screamed.

There was nobody who answered, Nicholas's words sounded out empty.  
Nicholas also understood it. He just didn't want to acknowledge it.  
In this world with magic, at this place he prays for God's miracle.  
That day, the death of the former leader of the Holy Knight Hinata Sakaguchi was confirmed.

This is the beginning of what will happen later on.  
Hinata's death marked the curtain's raise of the turmoil times in this world.

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Author's note

Previously, the egg had reached the point of hatching but not emerging.  
However, as an expression in the narrative I selected emerging, please understand it.

[1] 星幽束縛斬 (バインドスラッシュ) – Hoshiyuu Sokubakuzan (Astral Binding Slash).

[2] The kanji is Tantō短刀 which mean a short sword, while the furigana is Naifu ナイフ which is a knife.

[3] 双蛇短刀(スネークソード) – Sou Hebi Tantō(Sunēku Sōdo) Twin Snake Short Sword

[4] Seigan stance.

[5] 絶対防御 – Zettai Bougyo

[6] 絶対切断 – Zettai Setsudan

[7] 蘇生魔法(リザレクション) – Sosei Mahou (Rizarekushon)

[8] Chloe was Ret Gone from everyone memories.

[9] Gottfried Leibniz's theory of **pre-established**

**harmony** (French: *harmonie préétablie*) is a philosophical theory about causation under which every "substance" only affects itself, but all the substances (both bodies and minds) in the world nevertheless seem to causally interact with each other because they have been programmed by God in advance to "harmonize" with each other.

[10]Guro: So..... The Nameless Hero is a time-leaping Hinata and Chloe from the future that leaped to the past and became the Hero, then Hinata is killed by her future-past self which is not her but it somehow was a her that was a combined form of her soul and Chloe's that assimilated and leaped through time to the past and become the Hero but actually another person?..... Ugh my head hurts, and I hate Time Travel! XD

Sam: Pretty much that their souls exist on a plane unaffected by time due to the Hero's egg. In order to become a true hero they had to combine their souls...but Hinata had to die for the combination to happen? And the mix of their personalities pretty much formed a third persona.

[11] 断る事も出来るのか。でも、断る事は出来ない、か。 -> Kotowaru koto mo dekiru noka. Demo, kotowaru koto wa dekinai, ka.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 124 - Birth of a Hero

When Nicholas calmed down, the rest of the story was explained.

Fritz regained his composure, and explained in detail what had happened to Hinata.

The children were also brought here from Glenda, and were listening to Fritz's explanation. They should have been tired, but were they listening attentively.

They were fed in Glenda, albeit not a proper remedy for their mental fatigue. Nonetheless, without tears or complaints they recited their observations.

Their behavior made Fritz believe that Hinata's choices were not a mistake.

Nicholas was mulling over the things that were said.

Most importantly, they now confirmed that that Freedom Association's Kagurazaka Yuuki is indeed their enemy.

Though they still didn't have a clear picture on how powerful or widespread his brainwashing is, considering that the Demon Lord Kazalim is his subordinate makes him a rather dangerous threat.

Next, the reason for Hinata's actions.

Following the battle with Demon Lord Rimuru, Hinata was able to dispel the Parasitic thought manipulation, "Crystal of Curses," and decided to attempt a rescue mission to save the children, as to prevent them to be similarly manipulated.

However, Yuki had set a trap with the children as bait, and a battle started right on the spot.

Her opponent was a hero. After hiding for several decades, the hero engaged in mortal combat with Hinata. Although Nicolas was skeptical, but judging from Fritz and the Children's testimony there was no mistake. Moreover, there was information obtained from their conversations. Yuuki intended to plunge the world into chaos and become its sole ruler. Therefore he carried out multiple summons and was involved in some sort of negotiations. One should also conclude that he and his conspirators share a common goal.

Then there's the fact that Freedom Association's Sub-master is the Demon Lord Kazalim. Moreover, the Pope of the Holy Empire of Ruberius was not god's agent, but a mere marionette. Even the Western Saint's Church was obeying not the will of a True God Ruminas, but that of a Demon Lord's. In other word, the god Ruminas, was actually a demon lord..... However, he hesitated in accepting this revelation. Hinata, at least, seemed to believe it, but then there was also the many hundreds of years of peace and prosperity.

You can't just say that it was all the work of a Demon Lord and expect people to just accept it. Moreover, a hero was in the hands of a demon lord and is being manipulated by Yuuki... such sacrilege. This wasn't something they could easily disclose, and even if it did, it would only lead to a movement to free the hero. And that hero has just proven her heroism (absolute strength) in the battle with Hinata. From the perspective of the Knights, Fritz, and Nicholas, Hinata was beyond human in strength, and yet she was defeated without resorting to any special skill.

The only existence who could overwhelm Hinata who has gotten only stronger after her battle with Demon Lord Rimuru is the hero herself.

「But... to think that it was a hero...

If we were to reveal her as our enemy it would turn every country against the church.

Not a demon lord but a hero.

Can't get any worse can it... And since it's Yuuki, he'll definitely take advantage of this information」

In reply to the remark of the Holy Knight leader Leonard, the holy knights nodded with meek faces.

However, is that really so? Nicolas repeatedly thought.

Hinata had manage everything once. Nicholas only had to leave it in her hands...

Sadness and despair swirled inside Nicholas heart threatening to overwhelm him, yet he repressed it with his will alone.

「No, in that case he would have long proclaimed that Ruminas had kidnapped a hero.

Considering that he hasn't means that he currently lacks the strength to oppose us」

Nicolas said.

Hinata can't be relied on anymore. So he had to decide himself.

「However, a hero's strength was overwhelming.

Yuki may have dominated the Hero, then couldn't he counter a demon lord? Actually, just what kind of demon lord is Ruminas?」

Fritz who has actually witnessed the clash between Hinata and the Hero asked.

If the hero could overwhelm Hinata, wouldn't that mean the demon lord is

even stronger?

As per the previous question, does the Demon Lord Ruminas even exist? Nicholas, in response to that question, explored the depths of his own knowledge and memory and found an answer.

「Fumu, Well the demon lord valentine.....

There is a book within the western church which summarized ancient literatures.」

Nicolas began reciting...

Ten Great Demon Kings, originally there were three

*Guy Crimson, the "Lord of Darkness"*

*Milim Nava, "Destroy," strongest there could be*

*Ramiris of the Labyrinth, plunging all to madness*

*Their fame had spread from sea to sea*

*Stories told of burning cities and death abound,*

*Fear of them even in the legends was found.*

*As the tale had told, Ramiris had fallen from grace,*

*Once shared in the Holy Spirit, but it abandoned*

*And the warring Nava and Crimson in that place,*

*Peace between the two she demanded.*

*These three are like gods, beyond all reason*

*Against whom you'd never think of treason*

*Then came others, though unlike the first,*

*Dagruel who would shake the ground*

*Valentine who terrorized the night.*

*Such were the names these fiends found.*

*Hallowed as Demon Lords, such was their right.*

*Dagruel guarded the gates of heaven in the land of the dead,*

*Into a demon lord he mutated after magic he was fed. [1]*

These two were famous demon lords.  
As to the demon lord in question—Ruminas  
That would probably be the Vampire princess Valentine.  
As the queen of the vampires, she had overwhelming magical power. An  
evildoer with an absolutely beautiful appearance.  
The city she ruled over, a beautiful flower of the night, Night Rose, was  
burned to cinders in a battle with Storm Dragon Veldora.  
And since then no one had seen Demon Lord Valentine again.  
Since no one had confirmed whether she had perished, she was still  
considered a part of the Great Ten Demon Lords—Vampire Princess  
Valentine.

「In other words, Demon Lord Valentine is playing the role of God Ruminas.  
There is another ancient demon lord: a fallen angel, but its name we do not  
know.  
As for the rest: the slayer of many, Lychan King Karion and Heavenly Frey,  
and the Golden Leon make up the new demon lords.  
There was also the manipulator Clayman, but he was destroyed by Demon  
Lord Rimuru....」

Having heard Nicholas' explanation the group came to the conclusion that  
the god Ruminas was none other than Demon Lord Valentine.  
Situation so dictated and the Templars did not voice any opposition.  
Thus this heavy revelation began to sink in.  
They had long worshipped a demon lord.  
That's not something you can just laugh off. But there was also no use in  
getting angry or violent.  
Sitting in the Cathedral chamber Hinata established, those present honestly  
faced the truth.  
But not even Nicholas nor Leonard could accept it just yet. It was just  
beyond all reason.  
They would have been much happier if this all happened to be another of  
Yuuki's attempts to control their minds.

But this thought only reveals the underlying problem.

Yuuki is their enemy. There was no question about it, and Nicholas would never forgive that bastard.

But...

「Though she wasn't one of the original demon lords, Valentine was an ancient one...

But... a hero would probably win anyways.

In other words, if Yuuki controls the hero, there's no reason for him to fear the demon lord, right?」

Leonard stated, only increasing Nicholas' headache.

That's right. Even as he was explaining it, Nicholas thought the same thing.

Whether Yuuki would win is dubious, but a hero would definitely win. After all, she sealed the Storm Dragon who defeated Valentine.

In that case...

It just wasn't the time to scatter the Empire by revealing the demon lord behind the curtain.

Now that Hinata was defeated, there was no one to unify the Church. If the word of Ruminas' true nature got out, it would spell doom for that entire country.

Whether Yuuki had read this far is unknown, but now he knew, and Nicholas was left without a card to play.

Everyone present realized this fact and silence enveloped the room.

「The Freedom Association Master's next move will be bold, eh」

Nicholas murmured but no one answered.

And then,

「W-what is this?! What an ominous presence!! Friends, take arms!」

Leonard shouted and everyone drew their weapon.  
And then before everyone, the space distorted and beings appeared before them.

Seven beings wearing faceless masks.  
And when they kneeled, another walked between them.  
A beautiful girl.

Her eyes were a beautiful heterochroma, lit in a blue and red light.  
She was discussed by them just a second ago.

Queen of the Night, Nightmare of the Night, Ruminas Valentine.  
She transported to the chambers using 『Spatial Movement』 .  
And to the people reflected in her bewitching eyes,

「Stand down」

She said in a low yet reverberating voice.  
For the knights, even if the one before them was the Pope himself, none would profess to have thought it a good time to relax.  
But before this Demon Lord's presence none could disobey.  
Strength gone from their bodies, they dropped their blades and bowed before her.  
Seeing this, her mouth curved in a small smile revealing a pair of white fangs. She was indeed the Vampire Princess.  
And when her adorable mouth opened,

「He who underestimates us. Thee means to say that we be vanquished by the hero... nay, perhaps I could see Chloe accomplishing that... by Yuuki?」

She declared.  
Nicholas felt his heart stop from her overwhelming presence and could no respond.

(So t-this is a Demon Lord! S-she's too overwhelming!!)

Fear nearly ripped his heart asunder, and everyone there felt the same.

「Be that as it may.

Ye have discovered our place in the Holy Empire of Ruberion, we gather.

'Tis so, we are the God Ruminas.

Perhaps a shame, but if that country falls apart there is no reason to stop it.

However,

We shall not be looked down upon. Besides, Chloe is ours.

We shall bathe in Yuuki's blood.

What will ye do? If ye swear loyalty to us, I shall bless you with a chance to battle」

Nicholas considered it.

There was no benefit in being enemies. Not that they could win.

He had heard of Demon Lord Rimuru's divine strength. The being before him was comparable.

Actually, she is an ancient.

So he should be even more wary of her.

So should he swear loyalty? His heart opposed that choice.

And not just him, but everyone else present felt the same.

They would only swear loyalty to Sakaguchi Hinata.

Perhaps Ruminas was stronger than Hinata, but the heart could not be so easily controlled.

「Unfortunately, Demon Lord Ruminas,

Our loyalty is to Hinata alone.

We have no wish to fight against you, but we ask you to understand that loyalty is a different matter entirely.

We humbly beg your forgiveness」

Nicholas said while looking Ruminas in the eye.  
Her eyes glittered,

「Oh? You would retain loyalty towards a corpse?」

Before Nicholas could respond,

「Don't go killing me off that quickly...」

The words came from behind Ruminas, the entrance to the chamber.  
Long black hair gathered in the back, wearing light equipment.  
A beautiful girl.  
The Hero stood there.

「Chloe!」

Ruminas declared happily.

「Sorry Ruminas, I'm not Chloe right now. Right now it's Hinata.  
Well, the strength of my soul is already lost so it's just a greeting.  
On the way out, you see」

Hinata said with a beautiful smile.

『Hinata-sama!!』

As if they were suddenly cured of paralysis, the knights ran up to Hinata,  
and Nicholas ran up to hug her.

「Right, you are Hinata right now. How about Chloe?」

「Chloe is asleep. When we fought we were able to truly waken.  
My skills were integrated and power assimilated.  
Though it took a while, we seem to have fixed all distortions.

You see, before I was summoned into this world, this body slept in Ruminas' care.

And then Yuuki went ahead and awoke it, causing there to be two bodies for poor Chloe, reducing her to an unrecognizable spirit.

Ruminas you yourself forgot the hero's name, didn't you?」

While hugged by Nicholas Hinata asked.

And when Nicholas finally let go,

「So we had Chloe kill the me of this world

This was a predestined future that just had to happen.

Hero Chloe would now awaken as a true hero.

And I, assimilated into her, would use the spirit of time's power to leap back in time and raise the "Hero's egg."

Not at time of strife, but in time of peace.

That is the Hero's Program.

And now that my soul has been absorbed by the Chloe of today, the me who has journey for so long with Chloe has awakened.

Unfortunately, I am an extra existence and would soon disappear.

Which is why I came to say goodbye to you worrywarts.」 [2]

Hinata said with an expression full of affection.

.....

.....

...

Thus Hinata, Ruminas, and Nicholas talked for a bit.

Since time was of essence, they discussed the current state of Hero Chloe.

Chloe was under Yuuki's control.

Moreover, she was bound by a contract upon awakening, so releasing her would prove difficult.

Hinata herself was unable to undo the contract.

This news greatly unnerved Ruminas.

And to Ruminas,

「But, there may be other options when we awaken as a hero.  
According to our contract we will be released when Yuuki makes three wishes.  
We cannot oppose him until he makes these three wishes.  
There's no problem in revealing things like this though. There are things I can't mention though.  
Once he makes the third wish, we can rip him to shreds.  
Which is why he won't make the third wish, you see?  
In other words, he can't go around using the hero as he pleases.  
However, that man is bizarre.  
He seriously wishes to enjoy destroying this world.  
When I'm freed, his plan will fail.  
However, he is dangerous. So do stay wary of him.  
Now then, it's time to go」

Having so said, the Hero (Hinata) stood.

「H-Hinata-sama」

Please don't go, Nicholas wanted to say, but knew he couldn't.  
Choking on his words, he understood he would never again see her.  
But raising his fist,

「Be well!」

He declared with a smile.

「Fufu, be well, huh. You too Nicholas.  
All of you. Don't be reckless. And if you need anything, go see Rimuru.」

Thus Hinata said her final farewells.  
Soon her spirit would be devoured entirely by Chloe and disappear.  
Nothing could be done about that.

Hinata completed her duty of raising the Hero's Egg inside Chloe.

So she was satisfied.

With her own arms and legs she saved many people and repaid her debt to Shizu-san.

Her wish had come true. Anything beyond that would be pure greed.

Now she only had to wait for the end to come inside Chloe...

And to Hinata,

「Wait!」

A cold voice was heard.

Ruminas stopped her.

「Thee are fortunate.

We shall test 『Asmodeus』 upon thee.

'Tis a skill that rules over life and death, and while 'tis impossible to recreate a lost soul, you have a soul and a body gathered here.

We shall not fail.

Are thee not a hero who would never give up?

We shall not allow thee to give up!」

Hearing her words, Nicholas, Fritz, and the Knights started earnestly pleading with Hinata.

Assailed by their puppy-eyes, Hinata was completely at loss.

「Fufu, hahahahaha!」

She laughed.

「Sorry. I just recalled that I hated giving up.

Even to the point of clawing at my enemies. To think that I'd be convinced

by a demon lord!

Well, even if you do succeed, I have already lost my original power...」

She said with a troubled smile,

「Strength! In that case, I shall protect Hinata-sama, guide us!」

「This time I shall not fail in protecting you! I will not be defeated!」

「We need you!!」

Responding to their will, she nodded to Ruminas.

Ruminas.

Why did she suddenly suggest to do this, Hinata did not know.

But now the fate of a single person was changed.

「Rebirth!!」

Ruminas shouted, and two parts of Hinata's soul, from the hero of future and past, came together and were joined by Asmodeus.

Asmodeus, the King of Lust.

And thus Hinata was reborn and Hero Chloe was born without a foreign soul inside of her.

A Hero with long black hair and eyes of divine beauty.

Hinata and Chloe were now perfectly separated.

They were once one and now walked separately.

And with this miracle the Hero's Egg inside of Hinata was passed down to the Chloe of the future.

Thus was the true birth of the Hero Chloe O'Bell. [3]

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Clown Notes:

Hey folks some notes:

[1]: The author did not make this part rhyme, but I felt it was appropriate for the general mood and language used. So sorry, this is a bit of creative license. If you all hate it that much, I can strip down the poetry...

[2]: I don't get it and raws were not very clear, that's the best I could do.

[3]: Again, no idea. Souls mixing, etc, lots of those kinds of verbs. Did my best.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 125 - The Memories of the Hero

The birth of the "True Hero" Chloe O'Bell.

It should have been an event that occurred at the same time as Hinata's death.

However,

That Fate was rewritten due to the intervention of the Demon Lord Ruminas.

But, was that really the cause?

Chloe who woke up and knew that Hinata was able to revive safely was glad enough to shed tears.

They would talk calmly, the three: Hinata, the Hero and Ruminas moved to the parlor. In there, they spoke with the awakened Chloe.

Because the string of tension was gone, the children were sleepy, and Glenda had taken them to rest in another room.

The other Holy Knight seemed to have decided to rest as well after Hinata's revival made their tension disappear.

Under pressure they had held the conference since morning and before they realized it, the day had turned to night.

Although it was important to determine their future objective, with the appearance of the Demon Lord Ruminas, their hostility to the Holy Empire Ruberion now vanished during the talk.

Even though they couldn't help but see the Freedom Association as an enemy, they never predicted that Yuuki had consolidated his power in each nation of Human Alliance.

Nevertheless, Hinata's revival wiped out their despair and dispersed the heavy mood.

For that reason, they would hold a real conference tomorrow.

After guiding the three people, Nicholas instructed the maid to prepare the tea, and he embraced Hinata from behind, seeming like he doesn't want to be separated. Even if Hinata told him to go away,

「Because I don't want to part with you again.」 (Nicholas)

But there were no islands to hold on to.

Eventually, Hinata ran out of patience and continued the conversation as if Nicolas didn't exist.

Hinata's face turned red, but Nicholas can't see it. Chloe and Ruminas kindly turn a blind eye, and Hinata herself was happy.

「I'm glad, Hinata.... You are safe. As Hinata's soul disappeared, I thought you died....」 (Chloe)

「Ah, Chloe. I was surprised too. I never thought that Ruminas would come and assist in my revival.」 (Hinata)

「Fumu. Speaking of which, the information network of the church hath expanded as well.

'Tis was for the sake of finding the one who durst steal Chloe from the Sacred Coffin[1] under mín protection.

And, after knowing Chloe's revival, from the information besought, I cameth here.

When This One arrived thither, the revived thee was not present.[2]」

While hearing the exchange, Chloe was in thought.

Her expression was filled with wonder, as it wasn't a trivial matter.

When Hinata and Ruminas who noticed this, they worried and tried to speak to her,

「I remembered. No..... I could remember.

Apparently.....

I saw my demise in the future.

I'll be defeated by Yuuki and be killed in the future.

It'll become a one-on-one fight with the Demon Lord Guy Crimson, using that opportunity Yuuki pierced the two of us together.....

However, on the verge of death, my Astral Body that holds the property of the spirit of time was thrown to the past.

For the sake of sharing my knowledge and experience.....

As a result, the <sup>current</sup> past I, received help from Rimuru-sensei, and the rampaging was prevented during the spirit fusion.

Therefore, this maybe my second life?

Though I may have actually leapt many times.....

Perhaps, even if I leaped many times in this world, I think I cannot learn everything.

Unfortunately, the Hero's Astral Body that fused with me couldn't remember the knowledge and experiences of the future.

Even now, because I can only remember the last life's memories, this may not be the second time.

When I compare it with my memory, Hinata still being alive now is a miraculous thing.

It's just probably....for one thing, I succeeded in taking a different action from last time.

Though, it's just a trivial action.

As a result, time has now begun to follow a different route from the future that I remembered.

What will happen in this world's future? I will witness it with my own eyes. And, I wish to save this world.」

Chloe spoke while taking a sip of the black tea that had been prepared by the maid.

The "Remembered Past and Future[3]" that she know.

Last time, or the time she leapt so many times.

Even with the fragment of the Hero's last bit of power that fused with Chloe, she can't convey the knowledge to herself at the time of Spirit Summoning by Rimuru.

The ability she obtained was, Unique Skill 『Time Travel[4]』, the power to do a limited leap to the past.

It's a one way trip, and the conditions to use this ability are complicated and its use is limited.

Last time (Or every time), Chloe killed Hinata and leapt to the past.

When she returned from the long time-travel and woke up, she killed Hinata.

It should have been a fate that was repeated without changing.

However, it's different this time.

Up until now, Hinata didn't revive and Rimuru was dead.

Hinata fought against Rimuru not only once.

When Rimuru parted with Chloe and others in the Royal Capital, Chloe always clung to Rimuru in tears and detained him in his return to Tempest.

As the result, some time was wasted, and Rimuru return to Tempest with 『Spatial Transfer』 in hurry.

Hinata who was performing an ambush outside of the Royal Capital always missed meeting with Rimuru and the encounter between them never happened.

It might be said that Yuuki's expectations always came off.

However, this time Chloe didn't detain Rimuru

She endured it as she wanted to be considered an adult by Rimuru. As a result, it can be said that the situation has greatly changed.

First of all, the detained Rimuru returned to Tempest without encountering Hinata, and succeeded in protecting his subordinates.

However, Tempest will be defeated by the hostile allied forces of the Western Saint' Church and Farmas Kingdom.

The Holy Knight Order led by Hinata boasted an unparalleled strength, no matter how many of Rimuru's monster subordinates were stronger than a high rank devil, it was impossible for them to surpass that wall of strength. In the end, Rimuru fought Hinata in single combat and was completely annihilated on the spot.

After getting a large quantity of souls from that war, Clayman awakened as a True Demon Lord.

With the joint cooperation of Milim and Frey, Clayman's hosting of Walpurgis was approved. Naturally Ruminas also attended that conference. During that window, Yuuki began his move to steal the Sacred Coffin.

When Hinata returned, by the order of the raging Ruminas, the Sacred Coffin Recovery Operation was accomplished in every time's flow.

Chloe obtain Hinata's soul here and leap to the past, but because Hinata's soul was ruined due to the effect of Yuuki's Thought Control, "Crystal of Curse", only the energy of her ability and her soul passed to Chloe.

They didn't share their knowledge and feelings, Chloe gathered power by herself and she would go through a long time-travel.

Therefore Hinata's ego returning when she awoke as the True Hero was unexpected.

When Hinata fought the Hero, Ruminas was also in the middle of a fight.

By the order of Clayman, Milim invaded.

Or rather than an order, it was a suggestion.

Clayman's cajolery was based on the advice from Yuuki that Rimuru's death was because of Ruminas's incitement.

Deceived by those words, Milim raged.

With Milim as the opponent, Ruminas was at disadvantage. She would be defeated by Milim after fighting for 3 days and 3 nights.

However Milim can't be said to have been left unscathed, she would be

killed in her weakened state by the awakened Hero under Yuuki's order.

Even if it became a slightly different future, if Milim knew the truth about Rimuru's death, Chloe couldn't do anything.

The fact that Chloe knew was only that Milim killed Ruminas.

However, with this result, the fighting force of the Demon Lord's side greatly decreased.

Milim, Ruminas, Karion. These three people disappeared.

Karion who was hiding, protected by Frey was eventually killed after the disturbance.

The East Empire started the invasion, the fight started against the Demon Lords due to Clayman.

As a result, the world was wrapped in chaos.

In the middle of the chaos, Chloe went to subjugate Guy by order of Yuuki and lost her life.

This was the flow of events that Chloe knew until now, so it could be said that the current situation was vastly different.

Finished hearing Chloe's story, silence descended in the room.

The subject was too important to be ignored; therefore the girls felt that they wanted some time to think about this.

They couldn't confirm whether there were multiple time iterations; however they couldn't disregard the story about how the last world fell apart.

「Then the result where I was able to revive is really a coincidence.....」

Hinata muttered in one go.

Actually, since her fight against Rimuru at the Royal Capital, Rimuru analyzed Hinata's ability to some extent and was able to take measures. If their first match was an all out battle where they couldn't retreat then there was no doubt he would have been defeated.

And as a result, his return to his country was delayed because of his encounter with Hinata, and it led him to awaken as a Demon Lord, his awakening brings change to the flow and influences it greatly, in a way that Chloe couldn't even imagine.

It's a completely different route from last time.

Thanks to Rimuru dispelling the curse from Hinata, she was able to return alive without her soul destroyed.

For Ruminas too, the worst case in which Milim raided didn't happen, thus she was pleased as she can reunite with Chloe safely.

In the past, the Hero saved Ruminas's life in her fight with Veldora.

And so she became her first friend, for Ruminas she was her loved one.

In promise with Chloe, the protection of the Sacred Coffin with Chloe sleeping inside was entrusted to Ruminas.

Though she raged when the Sacred Coffin was stolen and went mad, still it was a fortunate that Ruminas carried it out without any trouble.

This time, it can be said that everything is miraculous because it followed a good flow.

「This One is glad that Chloe art safe above all else.

Of course, if Hinata is a part of Chloe, Hinata returning alive also a joyous thing.」

「Yes, thank you. However, when thinking about this, the route of Fate is altered, it's a miracle.」

Everyone agrees with Hinata's words.

Those words hold a big meaning, big simply because her Will is a part of the Hero and Hinata was walking together with Chloe for a long time.

The things she can do are limited even if she remembered the last memory from the Hero's Astral Body.

Since it had been decided, there was nothing that could change the confirmed past.

That is, in other words, until the moment of the Hero's birth in the future, any kind of attack cannot affect the Hero, and so she could be called Invincible.[5]

The Chloe who flew to the past, her soul would be trained safely without any tremor.

Since the result is fixed, it is protected from anything until it reached the event.

It's just like the self defense of a cocoon that waits for the time of its emergence as a butterfly.

In the previous world, she needed to abide until the destined time when she developed into the Hero

Therefore, it was impossible to kill the past Yuuki to change the future.

Since Yuuki met with the child Chloe and said to take care of her was a "Confirmed Event", until then Yuuki couldn't die.

The rule that protected the Hero's body applied to all events that the child Chloe recognized.

It's the effect of the ability that is the pivot of "Hero Upbringing Program[6]".

It's a compound effect of Unique Skill 『Infinity Prison[7]』 and Unique Skill 『Time Travel』 .

Time has an absolute compelling force that keeps it following in a decided manner which can be referred to as Time Prison. That is how Chloe traveled through time.

Therefore.

Even if Chloe had the future memory, the things she could do were nearly none, as her own ability was restrained.

After uniting with the Hero's Astral body in front of Rimuru, she could only fly back into the past to become her duplicate existence who had woken up, so there was no time where Chloe could do something.

As for its significance, it can be said that the influence of the action of not detaining Rimuru showed the highest effect.

The result in a world where Rimuru was detained, is Rimuru's death and Hinata's disappearance.◦

The result in a world where Rimuru was not detained, is that Rimuru awoke as a Demon King and Hinata acquired "Hero's Egg".

Certainly as Hinata had said, it's a coincidental result.

However, that coincidence brings too convenient a result.

Even acquiring Hero's Egg, properly speaking, was something that could only be born after Chloe received the energy flowing from Hinata's soul. Even in that aspect, the present Chloe is strong when compared to past Chloe.

Because she went to the past together with Hinata's Will, Chloe didn't taste solitude. And under the tutoring of Hinata, an excellent teacher, she was able to learn all the skills that Hinata had known.

Because of that the foundation was made.....

—She awoke the Ultimate Skill 『Space-Time King (Yog-Sothoth)[8]』 —

Thanks to this ability she was able to recall the future memory.

It's a thing that Chloe from previous iterations was not able to do.

Originally, Hinata's 『Mathematician』 and 『Usurper』 were unified with 『Absolute Severance』 and 『Infinity Prison』 and she acquired Ultimate Skill 『Hope King (Sariel)[9]』 .

This time, she absorbed the energy from Hinata's Soul without a problem, so she could remain without being mixed, and Hinata's soul could be revived in pure form.

What it brought was an absolute power that rules over time and space.

It was the awakening of two abilities called Ultimate Skill 『Space-Time King (Yog-Sothoth)』 and 『Hope King (Sariel)』 .

Chloe who awoke this ability and obtained an ability to memorize and repeat the time she spent on this moment again and again.

During combat, she was able to start over again after she saw the enemy's attack.

That absolute superiority Chloe had, made Hero Chloe becomes the strongest existence.

And.....

Chloe understood the awakened ability.

The existence released from the Law of the World, people who possess Ultimate Skills.

Ruminas in front of her.

Rimuru that Chloe loves.

And she realized that Rimuru's existence was necessary to rewrite destiny.

Perhaps, because Rimuru obtained an Ultimate Skill, he slipped out from the Law of the World, and so he might be the reason of the current miracle?

No, more than that.

In the last time, if by chance Rimuru survived, wouldn't he have awakened an Ultimate Skill?

Such a question appeared in her mind.

If Rimuru survived after his companions were killed and he was in despair and anger.....

By some means, he helped Chloe, so that she might interfere the past?[10]

(No, even if it's Sensei, that's not possible)

Chloe shook off her imagination and stood up.

「I has stayed for too long, though it's not necessary for me to be always near Yuuki.」

Chloe said so and prepared to return.

Despite obtaining an Ultimate Skill, Yuuki's control, "The Order (Wish) of Three[11]" is still effective.

She guessed this is because Yuuki also has an Ultimate Skill.

Chloe can't attack Yuuki.

Therefore, even with the strongest ability, she can't attack Yuuki.

Since his wish is to bring chaos to the world, it's necessary to defeat him someday.

When she tells this to Hinata and Ruminas,

「Don't be reckless, you know?」

「Yes. Yuuki is an enemy to This One. Chloe, don't do a dangerous thing, okay?」

「Ufufu, It's all right! I can't lay my hand on Yuuki, similarly Yuuki cannot do so to me.

If he turns his hand on me, his control is released.

Therefore, I'm safe. Because, unlike the former world, this world is stable.

But, if you want to be careful..... it will be the movement of the East Empire.

Yuuki's subordinates have already prepared it, it's necessary to push forward preparations so that this side responds to it too.

If it's possible, you should tie the neighboring countries of the Great Jura Forest in a large alliance.]

「The Empire in the East? Fie, an enemy of This One——」

「It's no use, Ruminas. Overconfidence is prohibited!

For the East Empire, Summoners ruled, so there were many 'Otherworlder[12]'.  
People who have high combat ability that Yuuki summoned belong to the army of the East Empire.

It's not a war potential that can be trifled with, and there are many people who are stronger than a high rank devil.

Above all else....In that country, there is the "Scorching Dragon Velgurind[13]".

You must never let your guard down.]

Chloe warns Ruminas.

Ruminas also changed her thinking after hearing Chloe's words.

If the Empire has a reliable force that organized and begins a military campaign, it's surely a threat.

「Then as expected, the very best thing is to visit Rimuru and suggest an alliance right?」

「Yes. I think that Sensei will surely help.

Or rather, I think that Sensei has the key to save this world.]

Chloe agreed to Hinata's words.

Though Ruminas envied Rimuru a little, she decided to endure it and agreed.

The Monster's Country Tempest and the Western Saint' Church. And also the Holy Empire Ruberion.

In the girls' discussion, the objective to conclude an alliance was decided. After it is realized, it would later be called the "Saint-Demon Alliance."

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Author's Note

Explanation time. I wrote it and was confused.

I notice that the consistency was sketchy and I couldn't write freely when I began to think about the concept of time.

Though it almost got mixed up several times, but is it alright?

I pray that there will be no fatal mistakes found in there.

This time Chloe succeeded in moving the world's time-line!

Isn't the world's time-line volatility change by about 1%?

By the way, she acquired Reading Steiner too this time![14]

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Translator Note

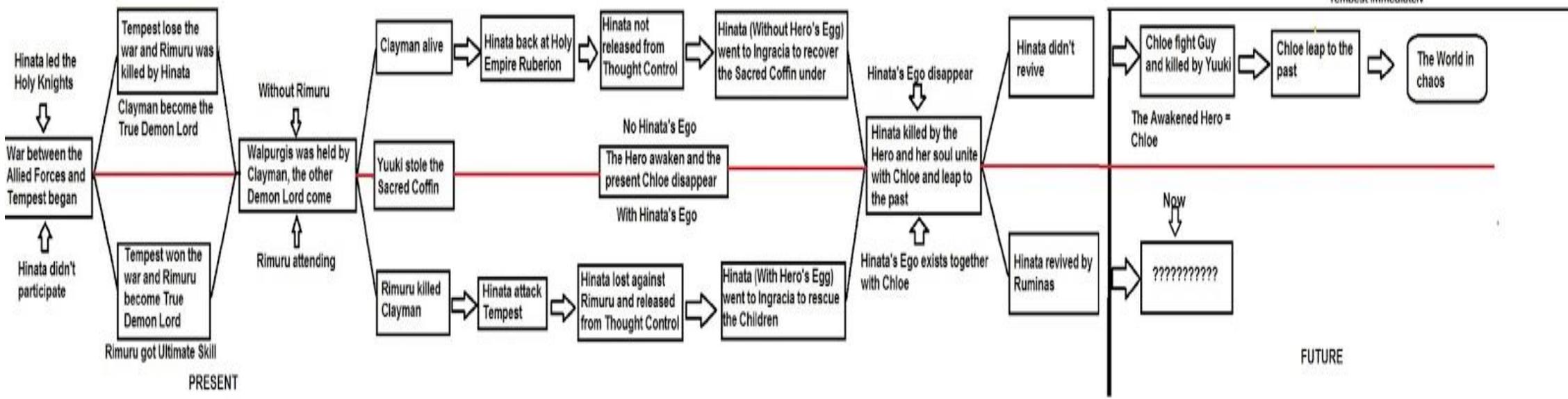
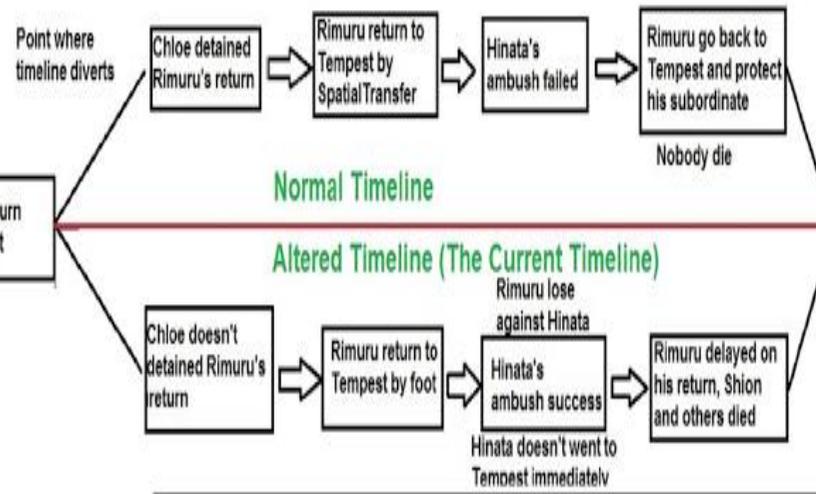
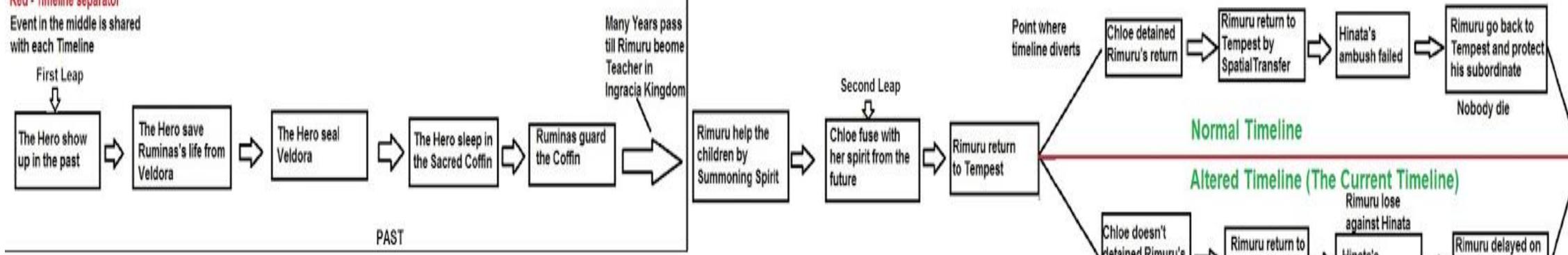
I'm very sorry if you are confused by Chloe's explanation about her time leaping experiences.

Feel free to ask questions.\

Here the Resized version

Note:

Red - Timeline separator  
Event in the middle is shared with each Timeline



[1] 聖櫃Seihitsu – Sacred Coffin Lit. Sacred Chest. Can also mean the Ark of the Covenant or Tabernacle.

[2] Ruminas use Warawa (妾 or Mekake) to refer herself, it's used by a female (archaic) that have a higher position than the one she's talking to (Boa Hancock use this pronoun too). Ruminas uses Sonata to refer Chloe, it's an archaic form of anata.

[3] 思い出した過去と未来OmoidashitaKako to Mirai

[4] 時間旅行Jikanryokou

[5] YukkuriOniisan: For the one's who are confused (so was I), it was because the world is try to prevent a paradox. Because the Hero (future) needed to kill Hinata so that the Hero (past) appears, the Hero (past) will be invincible, since you know if Hero (past) was killed then she couldn't be the Hero (future) who will kill Hinata so she can become Hero (past)... So to... Hey, then how the Hero appeared in the first place??? Huh? Huh? My head hurts....

[6] 勇者育成プログラムYuusha Ikusei Puroguramu.

[7] For those who forget, 無限牢獄Mugen Rougoku

[8] 時空之王(ヨグ・ソトース) Jikuu no Ou (Yogu・Sotoosu). Now we got Cthulhu theme named Skill after the Angel and Seven Deadly Sin theme name.

[9] 希望之王(サリエル) Kibou no Ou (Sariel)

[10] Wild Mass Guessing by YukkuriOniisan: Ah... This is maybe the start of the second timeline. I think I need to read the LN if it someday reach this point (hopefully there will be a timeline chart).

[11] Like the Genie one.

[12] 異世界人IsekaiHito. Otherworlder is more appropriate for this.

[13] 灼熱竜ヴェルグリンドShakunetsu Ryuu Vuerugurindo – What do you think about its title? Is Scorching Dragon cool enough? Also which one do you prefer Velgurind or Velgrind?

[14] A really clear references for Hououin Kyouuma/Okabe Rintarou from Steins;Gate.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 126 - The Rebellion's Beginning

Once Chloe parted with Hinata and Ruminas, she returned to Yuuki's side. Upon departure she took off her bracelet and handed it to Hinata.

「This is...?」

「A piece of my equipment. It was passed down to me when our souls were one... So it's yours to begin with, is it not?」

The spirit equipment bracelet.

That bracelet which Rimuru made by copying the destroyed spirit equipment and gave to Hinata.

Because it was linked to Hinata's soul, upon merging with Chloe it was also sent to the past.

And though even at the beginning it was called a legendary piece of equipment, it had further evolved by feeding off of Chloe's power during her travels.

Now it was a Divine piece of equipment; Chloe's personal piece.

Hinata considered accepting the bracelet.

Indeed, when they were one Hinata was able to use it. However, this piece of equipment has shared many years with its master Chloe.

Moreover, Hinata who has lost much of her original strength was simply no longer able to sustain the equipment's summoning even for a moment.

Thus, with a sigh,

「It is yours, Chloe. I can no longer use it.

Besides, this was made by your teacher, Rimuru.

It fits you better」

Hinata said with a warm smile, and returned the bracelet.  
Chloe took it in her hands and held it close to her heart.

「Huh... sensei made this? Is that so...  
So sensei has been protecting me for so long...」  
「When I meet Rimuru I'll tell him that you're doing fine and holding onto  
that bracelet.  
So use it. Or is it called a Hero's personal garb for naught?」  
「Thanks... I'll treasure it」

Chloe responded with a smile and nodded.  
Hinata nodded in return.  
The two souls who have fought together for so long would no journey  
separate.  
Chloe bowed in gratitude, silently opened the door, and disappeared.  
Without a word to the other children.

For Chloe the four kids are irreplaceable.  
She truly wants to call out to them and throw her arms around them.  
But now is not the time.  
When the world's destruction is avoided, then she could do it. Then she  
would finally be released.  
So Chloe will no waver.  
She will not meet with Rimuru and will not call out to the kids.  
For she was yet cursed by Yuuki.  
At the very least, until she was released from this curse she could not let her  
guard down.  
Meeting old friends will certainly consume time. Though she is permitted  
some freedom of movement, she should not stay separate from Yuuki for  
long.  
Yuuki's three commands are powerful chains binding her.  
Although he is obligated to give her specific commands, she must still obey  
his orders.

Chances are, Yuuki is now aware that Chloe has awakened as a true hero. Though Yuuki never gives out orders without carefully thinking of the consequences, he just may order her to fight Ruminas. Which is why she must move only after considering every possibility. Upon exiting Chloe dispelled her spell. Though no one has noticed, Chloe has been slowing time the whole while. Since Hinata and Chloe awakened only three minutes in the world have passed. Chances are that Ruminas noticed, but did not mention it. This only shows how wary Chloe is of Yuuki. The world's destruction was caused by Yuuki's actions. The forces in this world have been altered and a resistance force has sprouted. Even Chloe's strength is far above what it used to be. (I will defeat you this time! No, this time I will protect it!!) She recalled the future where she was powerless to protect anything. This time she swore to defeat Yuuki and protect the world. She said her prayers and set off. She was the one who was called the true hero. Having thus been born, awoken, and with her resolve set, The Hero Chloe began her rebellion.

\* \* \*

A young lad relaxing in an expensive cahir,  
Behind him is a beautiful elf preparing tea.  
In the chamber of the Freedom Association's master appear Yuuki and Kagali.

「Hero Chloe seems to have completely awoken.  
Hasn't she obtained some seriously ridiculous power?  
Though it seems we are still able to control her thanks to the restraints placed upon her  
But we won't be able to use even half of her power.

Seriously, nothing is going well.  
Claymen's awakening failed, Rimuru-san is still alive.  
There should have been more chaos by now.  
What do you think, Kazalim?」

Clearly amused the lad called out behind him.  
Turning towards the inquirer,

「You ask me that?  
Haven't you already come to a conclusion?  
The plan is a failure.  
Cutie-pie Clayman is dead, too.  
There's no way to sow discord among the demon lords now.  
Though we could denounce the Western Saint's Church's ineptitude, there's  
people among us who oppose that action.  
The countries surrounding Jura's forest are also moving differently than we  
wanted.  
The destroyed Farmas Kingdom is being brought back together by a  
people's hero.[1]  
He's got to have some terrifyingly smart friends to have managed things so  
fast.  
He stabilized the country and reeled in neighboring violence.  
Even the monster's activity has been stifled by Tempest.  
The Jura Forest counties are enjoying a time of never-before-seen peace  
and prosperity.  
In short, it's complete opposite of what you had expected」

Kazalim replied with a bored expression.

「Hey, why did you choose a pretty girl but are talking with so crudely?  
Is that your type?」

「Don't mess with me. It's cause I am Kazalim!  
*'Tis a matter of appearance, Master」*

Kagali suddenly finished the sentence.

For Kazalim, no, for Kagali these things did not matter.

Strength was everything and Kagali's master possessed it. Therefore, all was well.

Human society despises cooperation and is fraught with grief and death.

So Yuuki had said, but his plan seems to have gone poorly.

So he's mumbling things like "Isn't the difficulty setting set too high?!" and such while Kagali is making tea.

Expression and tone aside, mastering one's limbs was not a matter for a single day.

In the first place, Kazalim was not a being who understood gender, but was affected to some degree by possessing Kagali.

One of those effects was to gain a cooking and tea brewing skill.

So playing her role as Yuuki requested, Kazalim, no, Kagali spent her time learning to interact with people.

「You... for someone who doesn't fight, you're surprisingly good with your hands.

Well, whatever.

But seriously, to have things go so poorly... breaks my heart.

I feel like blowing off some steam」

「Don't do that!

Actually, do that when I'm not here!」

「Aren't you crafty.

So weak and helpless, but sly to the end」

「What do you expect?

I, with my 『planner』 ability, am not fit for combat.」

「And considering that we use your ability and my wisdom, I wonder how we ever fail!」

「True.

I have a hypothesis: I fear there is a superior calculating ability at work here」

「Really? In that case it's time.

We're heading east. Everyone will depart from the headquarters」

「Is that fine? Even though we had built such a solid foothold here?」

「It can't be helped. If we don't cut our tracks now who knows how much we'll lose.

Besides, this is not the end.

We have secured the "Hero" who could have killed me」

「That's right... that is true

Understood. I will prepare proper personnel to be left behind.

The rest will follow us east. Would that be all?」

「Yeah. That's fine.

Though I even had a plan to go Demon Lord hunting and to mess with Saint Church's Ruminas.

But that's too dangerous for now.

And using the hero here would be a waste. So we move」

Thus Yuuki made the order to evacuate his chambers.

The ten years he had spent building up trust to rise to this position.

Without a doubt, Yuuki did it solely to advance his goal.

Now that his plan was facing failure after failure, he had no choice but give up some things.

Kagali received his order, and departed to make it happen.

Watching her leave with cold eyes,

「But damn, Chloe, to think you would become that much stronger than I am.

A waste, but I fear I'll have to order you to never use your abilities against me」

He muttered.

That a proclamation that bore the full knowledge of the difference in their power.

Wearing a smile of utter delight, Yuuki began to think.

A trump card, but also a joker which could kill him.

(How exciting it is!)

He thought.

Completely ignoring his recent failures, Kagurazaka Yuuki was enjoying the current situation.

And by thus abandoning the post of the Grand Master and disappearing into darkness, he brought great calamity to the world.

Thus the bringer of chaos was released...

\* \* \*

When the kids awoke Chloe was already gone.

The one most upset at her was Alisa.

「Chloe grew up first!

I bet the only reason she did it was to get Sensei's attention!」

She grumbled furious; the other children were upset for another reason. They were upset because she left without saying goodbye, but the three boys decided to console Alisa instead.

Watching those kids Fritz's only thought was relief that he didn't have to deal with them.

But in the end,

「Fritz, we're headed to to Tempest. I want you to come along」

Hinata said, implying that he would be babysitting them from now on.

“So it's come to this,” he sighed and gave up.

But not all was amiss.

She said come along, so that means Hinata would also be going.

Cardinal Nicholas cannot leave the Western Saint's Church. So, this was a chance to make some more memories with Hinata!

Fritz thought and smiled.

Hinata who (was? now appeared?) nicer felt even more womanly and truly

became an unattainable flower for the templars.  
Fritz could not possible allow Nicholas to monopolize that flower.  
For Fritz who was in his twenties, Nicholas (30s) was an old man. To allow that old man to have Hinata would hurt Fritz's Templar pride.  
They have already formed an alliance to get ahead of Nicholas.  
Feeling their earnest support (Actually, deluding himself into believing they supported him), he accepted her request.  
Nicholas was pouting due to being again separated from Hinata.  
Oh, and Hinata did ignore the fact that someone's hand was injured.  
That someone, with a pretty face, was staring intently at Fritz.  
(Fritz, I forbid you from laying a hand on Hinata!)  
(Fufu, Nicholas-san, though you may be my superior here, this matter is one of man to man! I will not obey that order!)  
Ah, well, that's the conversation they did not have, as they were silent, and clearly cannot communicate with their thoughts.

「Nicholas-sama, what would that injury be?」

Fritz asked noticing that Nicholas was desperately trying to hide the injury.  
The injury he located as if by smell. Perhaps Fritz developed that skill when avoiding all those attacks from Ranga.

「Umph! Th-this doesn't matter.  
More importantly, absolutely protect Hinata this time!  
Do not fail me a second time!」

Nicholas avoided the question.  
The truth of the matter is this: last night when Hinata, Chloe, and Ruminas were talking Nicholas was hugging Hinata the whole time...  
Then he got particularly bold and touched her chest.  
With a smile, Hinata crushed his hand. Of course he could not say this to anyone.  
Just when he had intended to use her return as a pretext to invite her to his

chamber!

He himself ruined the opportunity.

As a child he just couldn't contain his desire any longer.

And attempting to hid this disgrace he strongly commanded Fritz to protect Hinata.

In reality, they will be traveling on a carriage prepared by Demon Lord Ruminas with her hand picked guards guarding them. So there should be no problems.

But still, Nicholas was worried.

「We'll be fine, Nicholas. I'll be back!」

In the end, Hinata departed with a smile, and Nicholas could express his worries in no more than

「Be careful!」

And the other knights too watched depressed as Hinata departed.

Thus the kids' group set off for Tempest.

The time of the great Saints-Demons alliance would be coming soon.

But that alliance also signalled the beginning of great chaos.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 127 - Excuse and Reflection

One adventurer fell down in a red shower of blood. His eyes were opened wide in surprise; he might not even have understood what had happened to him.

「Uwahahaha! Don't let down your guard, you damn fool!」

Milim's joyful voice rang while the five remaining adventurers nervously huddled together. However, it was in vain.

「Oh wind that blows, spin into a Tornado and cut down my enemies! Tornado Blade!![1]」

Huddling together was a mistake .

The Tornado Blade I threw chopped them up as if sneering at the wary adventurers.

Tornado Blade was a spherical version of the Wind Blade magic. Though it consumes more magic power, it becomes possible to cut through several enemies in a fixed range at the same time. It's a convenient magic for group battles.

Milim performed a surprise attack against the first person to scout for traps. It was a quick death. And before my magic arrived, she had quickly moved to our rear.

Without making a blunder, like hitting Milim, my magic only hit the adventurer that huddling together.

Before we could be sensed by the enemy group, I activated invisibility magic[2].

Once our side began attacking, the invisibility magic was canceled, but the enemy's numbers were already decreased by one or two people. In addition, they had lost their attacker[3] and the healer[4] from the rear support.

「It's bad, it's the <sup>Red Meteor</sup> Scarlet [5]! Be careful!」

「Damn it, Marja and Nadja were killed by magic. Jean isn't breathing either! 」

「Shit, you guys! How dare you!!」

They confirmed our identities now that they could see, and the vanguard came at us burning with anger, but.....

「Kuahahahaha! How naïve!!」

「Oooooohooohoo! I can't let you pass!」 (You shall not pass! Lol)

Veldora and Ramiris stopped the vanguard's charge in high spirits. I could perceive the bright red bar above the warriors' heads decreasing by half when I looked at them with analysis.

「Those fellows' HP are below half. You guys can deal with them right?」

Yes, the red bar above the warriors' heads expressed their HP= Stamina[6]. I used this display rigorously. It made it easier to understand by making things look like a game.

Since I've gotten used to the display, it became possible to quickly confirm the situation and give out appropriate instructions.

Currently, it's a pattern of a certain victory.

Beginning with a surprise attack, we managed to kill some of the enemy explorers without alerting them to our presence. That way we could take out the rear support members with low HP early via magic. It would be another story if it was a stronger enemy that capable of activate a continuous barrier.

However, in this case this party's lineup was easy to defeat, so our victory was already decided.

As expected, Veldora and Ramiris made a bloodbath out of the three warriors acting as vanguards.

It's was an easy victory.

Part of our certain victory tactic is for Milim's surprise attack to kill the scout while I take out the rearguard with magic like earlier.

Oh well, we have been hunting Adventurers indiscriminately lately, it seemed like the amount of people taking counter measures had increased a little.

Though it still hadn't become a situation where they steered clear of us.

Even if that happened, I'd merely switch to a different strategy.

We were within the 24<sup>th</sup> floor of the Labyrinth. Moderately strong people would arrive here; it's the perfect hunting ground for us.

「We did it! Even the likes of them, weren't a match for us.」

「Uffuffu. That's right! We are invincible. The strongest!」

「Kuahahahaha! They're merely small fries, they're not even a little worthy of us!」

My companions uttered such cocky words.

Yes, we were a set party of 4.

Eh, what were we doing?

Of course, we were researching how the ways the adventurers fight, we learnt many things.

I operated a Ghost, a Wizard[7] fluent in magic with a body clad in a bluish-white flaming aura.

I've learned several magics since we began, and I've become able to clad my body in Fear Aura[8].

Veldora was a skeleton but his bones somehow turned golden by using a special alloy called <sup>God's Shine Metal Steel</sup> Orichalcum [9] that I had manufactured.

Orichalcum is mix of Demon Steel and Gold, in addition, it's a special alloy refined by injecting dense magic power.

Veldora started by saying that a golden skull was good, but then I made a whole skeletal structure golden.

As long as there was a core, anything seemed fine for making bones, so the conversion was done easily and a golden Skeleton was made.

The current strength couldn't be compared to that of the bones from before, it became pointlessly high spec.

Milim was feared as the Red Meteor.[10]

Because she moves at an abnormal speed, she leaves a red afterimage that looks like a meteor.

As an Assassin, with her way of eliminating her presence and leaping at the target after approaching unnoticed from the ceiling, she boasted a high success rate for assassination.

She threw away all abilities except agility. Her battle style relied on speed and critical, it seems she become a fearsome legend.

Ramiris was part of the Fighter faction.

She wields an axe with all her strength as if she mocking the powerlessness of her original body.

Her combat style was to go all out, making her popular as the <sup>Moving Heavy Armor</sup> Living Armor [11] that wields a <sup>Grim Reaper's Great Axe</sup> Death Axe [12] insanely.

Perhaps, it was stronger than the original body..... No, it's nothing.

Such a thing doesn't matter.

Making such an impression, we had become a source of fear known as the <sup>Death Bringer of the Labyrinth's Will</sup> Dungeon Dominator[13]”.

Because we were stronger than an unskilled boss, we were the pinnacle of badness.

It could be called a natural reaction.

As I mentioned earlier, our main purpose was to research the ways the adventurers fought.

We weren't playing at all. That point shouldn't be misunderstood.

We make an effort every day and do nothing but research day after day.

Such an honest effort may be useful someday.

And so, we saw a rare adventurer that used a never before seen extra skill, and used an original magic. We gained a splendid amount of knowledge.

Right now I can analyze extra skills just by seeing them.

Such an ability was useful since it influenced our avatars.

With a pseudo soul as a core, the avatars made with magic power completely matched the main body's soul. It was very convenient.

The skills that were obtained by the avatar could be used by the main body. If the avatar grew to a certain extent, it seemed possible to use an ability from the main body.

They seemed to be more linked than I thought.

I kept researching with such feelings every day. We have proved various things.

.....I'll say it once again, we weren't playing around, so please don't misunderstand.

It was difficult to arrive here.

In the beginning, we were defeated by adventurers in the upper floor.

Also, an unamusing situation where we were annihilated by the traps from our own labyrinth occurred.

Angry, it was a good idea to prepare a magic item that would keep the labyrinth's traps from activating.

Ramiris was the one who triggered the trap, but the one who was swallowed by it was Veldora.

I was floating in the air and Milim was clinging to the ceiling. Since she'd never fallen into a pitfall, Ramiris was careless.

But, Ramiris.....

"What are you doing, falling into your own trap?" I think that everyone wanted to tsukkomi.

We spent the troubling times having such feelings.

The adventurer in front of me whom I had just defeated turned into particle of light and disappeared.

This was a familiar scene.

Once we got cocky and tried to defeat the boss of the 30<sup>th</sup> floor.

The boss was Gozurl whose power was sealed by a magic item.

As a result, we suffered a crushing defeat.

With our current abilities, Gozurl was a tall obstacle in our way.

We who believed ourselves too weak to defeat him, trained ourselves in the 25-29<sup>th</sup> floors.

No that's wrong, it's not training but learning.

It's not playing.

Truly, please don't get it wrong!

「It was an easy victory.」

The three people nodded to my opinion.

Well then, let's keep going at this pace! When I thought that, I received a message from my emergency-communication-duty clone in the office.

What's going on?

Is what I was thinking when I received a message that 『Hinata and Demon Lord Ruminas seemed to have talked regarding an alliance』 .

Apparently, it's not the time for me to study (play).

Because it couldn't be helped, I switched on the avatar's pseudo soul's Automatic Mode, and we decided to go back to the office.

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When we returned to the office, Ruminas and Hinata were waiting.

With them was a woman I had seen before. The former Demon Lord Frey sat down on a chair.

She glanced at me when I entering the room, then she looked to Veldora, her glance stopping on the entering Milim.

And then a sweet smile floated on her face.

I wonder why? I felt that smile was very ominous.

「Ah, Milim. You were in here?

By the way, what happened with the homework I gave you?

The guards fell down and were rolled up in a bamboo mat, but you can give an explanation about what happened, right?」

Scary.

Even though I wasn't involved, for some reason I felt an unbearable sensation.

Yes, a friend should play after finishing their homework, but in reality the homework was completely untouched. I happened to catch a similar scene to when lies were exposed to the parent, making them mad.....

It's such a nostalgic feeling.

「Gee! Fr, Frey!! It's, it's not that. There's a good explanation!」

Milim became flustered as soon as her eyes met Frey's.

This is..... So it's over, Milim.

Though I said it daringly, the matter had no relation to me, no, to us did it?

「Haha, Milim. If you have work, you better go back.

Because you delaying something, you should finish your work quickly!」

「Yeah, like he said. Sorry to get you involved with our long-drawn research.

Although you should have told us you had work to do.

But, it seems we should have paid attention to that. Let's apologize!」

「Th, that's right! Like he said. Don't be reserved, if you had told us about it we wouldn't have detained you!」

As expected.

Veldora and Ramiris who read the situation backed up my words.

With this we established our ignorance, and furthermore, it stated that we were unrelated.

Though I saw Milim's eyes watering, I'm sorry there seems to be no way to help you.

Give up and bind yourself with a rope[14].

Thus, Milim was caught by Frey.

「It's, it's different. The story, listen to the story, Frey!」

So Milim screamed to the end, but it failed before Frey's iron smile.

Resistance was futile.

Sadly Milim was caught and carried away like a cat[15] back to her own country.

Phew, that was scary.

I thought I going to be dragged into it, but it seems like I was able to make it through safely somehow. When I thought so,

「By the way Rimuru-sama, What have you been doing in all this time?」

Shuna stood at my back without any presence, and threw a sharp question at me.

I felt sweat which couldn't flow appear on my forehead.

No, we're safe, it's alright.

We never played. Yes, research! Because we were researching.

「It seems like we have become a hindrance to you. Let's perform the magic research in my room.

Because sorcery is deep, it grants me with wisdom」

Veldora turned his back with a favored <sup>Manga</sup> book in his hand while saying such a thing.

Is he going to run away!?

When I was going to detain him,

「The, then, I should accompany you too〜」

Ramiris betrayed me too and left, running away together with Veldora.

How cruel!

However, right now was not the time to be thinking about those cruel friends.

I think it was a little weak to keep insisting it was a research.

Hinata and Ruminas stared in my direction with suspicion-filled eyes, it seemed like a poor excuse would destroy me.

As I let Veldora and Ramiris's escape go, my brain cells operated at full strength searching for the optimum solution.  
It's no use, a good idea won't come. Since it came to this, I went with my last resort.

(Raphael! Help me find a good excuse to safely get through this situation!)

Yes, the crystallization of my wisdom, <sup>Raphael</sup> Sensei should be my ally.  
There's nothing to be afraid of.

《Solution. Explanation is unnecessary》

What? Explanation is unnecessary!?  
What does that mea.....

「Ah, you were here? I've been looking for you, Danna!？」

Such a nostalgic presence, it was Fuze.  
I see, that's what it meant!

「Oh, Fuze-kun. The matter I asked you about, how did the investigation go?」  
Let's hear about it inside.」

It was a godsend.  
It's seems like I was able to survive because I used Fuze to investigate Yuuki.  
Nevertheless, as expected from Raphael.  
Was the timing of this and Fuze's arrival already predicted? You don't say.  
Still it's impossible.  
But, there's no doubt that I was saved. I'm glad I didn't carelessly make a weird excuse.  
I enter the room and invited Fuze inside.  
Then I absorbed my communication-duty clone, and sat in a chair.  
I seemed able to deceive her somehow or another.

「A secret investigation was it? As expected of Rimuru-sama!」

So Shuna nodded with a satisfied smile.

The crisis had passed.

However, to not forget this lesson, I swore to stop playing too much.

Because I felt guilty, I became unnecessarily flustered.

You should do things within reason.

I reflected in my mind to be careful from now on.

- [1] 竜巻斬(トルネードブレード) Tatumakizan (toruneido bureido).
  - [2] 不可視化(インビジブル) fukashika (inbijiburu).
  - [3] 魔法職(アタッカー) Mahou shoku (atakkā) – Magic job.
  - [4] 回復職(ヒーラー) Kaifuku shoku (hīrā) – Recovery job.
  - [5] 赤い流星(スカーレット) Akai Ryuusei (Sukāretto).
  - [6] 体力Tairyoku can also mean endurance/physical strength.
  - [7] 魔術師(ウィザード)Majutsushi (wizādo) - Majutshushi = Magic Master.
  - [8] 青白い鬼火(フィアオーラ)Aojiroi Onibi (fuiāōra) - Bluish white demon/ghost flame (Fear Aura).
  - [9] 神輝金鋼(オリハルコン)Kamikagayakinkou (Oriharukon).
  - [10] Milim is a three times faster than a regular slime! In case you didn't get the reference. Char Aznable from Gundam was nicknamed Red Comet and always painted his MS in red color (except Hyaku Shiki).
  - [11] 動く重鎧(リビングアーマー) Ugoku Omoyoroi (ribingu āmā).
  - [12] 死神の大斧(デスアックス) Shinigami no Dai Ono (desu akkusu).
  - [13] 死を齎す迷宮の意思(ダンジョン・ドミネーター) Shi o otarasu meikyuu no ishi (danjon dominētā)
  - [14] Expression: Just resign yourself.
  - [15] 首根っこ Kubinekkō – Milim was carried by Frey like a cat on her lapel.
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# Demon Lord's Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 128 - Alliance of Three Kingdoms

Hinata and Ruminas were in chairs awaiting our arrival.

From the looks on their faces, something must have happened.

Well, I guess it's a good thing they don't know I've been just playing around the whole time. It certainly wouldn't go over well if they knew.

「Fuze-kun, come on in」

I said, having Fuze join us in the reception room we prepared.

Without me needing to say anything, Shuna had already prepared tea.

She really is a well-disciplined Ohime-sama. Completely different from a certain regrettable secretary, but that secretary does get serious when training the subordinates and the guards.

But considering that I've been slacking off lately, I have no right to complain.

No, actually, I haven't been playing around! I was studying!

Can't be getting this distinction wrong myself; or else someone will find out.

Alongside Fuse, I sat on the sofa whilst facing Ruminas and Hinata.

A cushion made with material of the highest quality gently caught my body.

「Hey Hinata, it's been a long time. Ruminas-san, nice to meet you... no, we have met before. It's been a while.

This is Fuse-kun. He's the Freedom Association Branch head in Burmund.」

I introduced Fuse to the two ladies.

「N-nice to meet you! I, within the Burmund Kingdom, work as the head of its Freedom Association branch.

To be able to meet Hinata-sama today, the highest tactician of the Western

Church, I am truly honored.

And to this beautiful lady, it's the first time we've ever met, but you must be someone of illustrious prestige.

I am uneducated in these matters so please forgive my ignorance!」

Greatly nervous he greeted them.

Completely ignoring him, however,

「Rimuru, was it? 'Tis been a while, since Walpurgis that is. Glad to see you healthy. But, that man must not remain here. Freedom Association is the enemy. Or have you not noticed?

The identity of he who manipulated Hinata.

Knowing this fully well, why do you still associate yourself with someone from the Freedom Association?」

*(Translator's/Editor's note: the word Ruminas uses to address Rimuru is 貴様 kisama which in modern time is an insult, commonly translated as "bastard." Centuries ago, however, it was used to address a person politely, and this translation Clown feels fits better with Ruminas' mannerism)*

One of the primary Demon Lords—Ruminas asked with an accusatory tone. She is a cute young girl silver hair, and heterochromatic eyes giving off a gold and silver shine.

Why is one of the Octogram here?

It's also strange that she's by Hinata's side; the worst thing I could do here though is act hostile and make her an enemy.

Besides, forging an alliance with the Western Saint's Church will probably allow Tempest to fully integrate into human society.

And that's something I earnestly want to achieve. Hinata and Ruminas's relation is yet uncertain, but perhaps its best to speak openly rather than keep secrets.

But considering that Ruminas probably knows everything Hinata knows, perhaps it's better to keep certain things hidden.

But first, let's get them to trust Fuse.

Right when I needed it, Shuna entered the room with the tea prepared. Shuna handed out the tea, and left the room after taking a bow. I glanced to the side and confirmed,

「Hmph. Now then, doubling as an introduction to Fuse-kun earlier, I would like you to have a look at the report」

After saying so, I beckoned Fuse. With that alone, the endlessly anxious Fuse seems to have caught on.

「Understood. Apparently, it would seem that I am under suspicion. So as to clear myself from that suspicion...」

Saying such, he begin explaining the current internal situations of the Freedom Association.

Fuse's report was simple and concise.

Yuuki has taken over 90% of the Ingrasia Headquarters.

The female Submaster Kagari is also under his direct command.

In addition, High ranking adventurers with abilities on par with Branch heads has also sided with Yuuki.

And thus, with the Organisation currently so, it would prove difficult to denounce Yuuki. However, it would appear that those outside the headquarters are not affected.

Since it seems that his brainwashing and thought manipulation isn't omnipotent—something we can be happy about.

Better yet, the citizens do not appear to be under his influence.

The only thing they have been convinced of is that monsters are the cause of most calamities and are the enemy.

If it's to this degree, and considering my current progress, building a relation of mutual trust not impossible.

I mean, think of the satellite city built around the labyrinth—there orcs, goblins, monsters, and adventurers are able to sit in a pub and share a meal. We're certainly making progress towards building trust between us; I have

proven that it is possible for humans and monsters to understand each other.

「However, any further investigation is impossible. The person who went to investigate the Submaster Kagari alone, had his memories erased. He was crippled and wandered the town as if protecting it. He even forgot his own name.

There's no proof that Kagari did it, but considering the situation it's pretty obvious.

Besides, she probably knows that we've been investigating her; I have no excuses, I have failed there」

It seems anything outside of this is out of his hands.

However this is enough.

If that's the case, then that would make saving the children a problem.

If I make a move, there would be the problem of it being pinned as a kidnapping by the demon lord. However if I ask Masayuki then there's probably no problem. Fortunately, there's a convenient reason to every one of his actions, making him suitable.

Since it's absolutely impossible for Yuuki to control him, there's no need to be reserved.

After rescuing the children, I'll immediately dissipate the effects of any mind control. But I can't have them think that I've been playing around here the whole time, so I should make it look like I've done a lot.

However, about the erased memories. It's troublesome... but if it's me, then I might be able to restore it.

「Fuse, I'll try to heal those who had their memories wiped.

If their soul and their brain is intact, I might be able to somehow.」

「What? Is that true? Please, do it somehow!」

In response to my offer, Fuse looked at me with expectant eyes.

They have been acting by my order so they are essentially my subordinates.

If there's a way to cure them I have an obligation to do it.  
He had a happy look on his face and readily accepted the proposition.  
But to think he trusts me so much to accept a deal with a demon lord!  
Makes me kind of happy.  
And so, overlooking our exchange,

「Rimuru, do you really think that you can coexist with humans?  
Human are creatures whose thoughts cannot be read simply through their  
words.  
'Tis it not better for them to be controlled by us?」

Ruminas gives me a cold look.  
That girl seems to have thought over this, however her opinions conflict  
with my own.  
Considering all the risks, it's certainly an option, but—.

「“Oi oi, young lady. In spite of your beautiful face, you say some terrible  
things  
Control humans, who do you you are?  
Even if you are a noble, isn't it bad to look down on ordinary people?」

Fuse got angry and snapped at Ruminas.  
Oh right, I still haven't introduced her to Fuse. Well, I guess his ignorance  
led him to step on a landmine.

「Now now, Fuse Kun, Calm down.  
This person is Ruminas.  
One of the Octogram Demon Lords.  
This is my second time meeting her, and the first time we've spoken to each  
other.  
First thing first, let's leave behind all truculent behavior and have a  
constructive talk.  
And, this is Hinata.

But you should know more about her than I. She's the Knight Leader of the Western church.」

I've briefly introduced the two.

Ruminas and Hinata, after listening to Fuse's report as per my request, had judged that he was no friend of Yuuki's.

However, putting Hinata aside, Ruminas didn't seem trust in humans in general rather than Fuse himself.

「Eh, what? Demon Lord? Who?」

Looking back and forth between Ruminas and I, Fuse was in a state of confusion.

Remembering his earlier belligerent remarks, his face instantly paled. I feel slightly sorry for him, and responded.

「Ruminas, this man is my companion.

Firstly I want to establish some trust.

I don't agree with your opinion on humans, and please don't force it onto me.

If you do, you will be judged an enemy.」

「What was that? Are you trying to lecture us despite being a newcomer? If you seek a war then shall get it.」

Ruminas stood up, and took up a stance with both hands.

I had planned to diffuse the situation but now I feel like taking this outside.

How should I put this, contrary to her appearance, she's rather short-fused.

Times like this constantly remind me that all demon lords are selfish and whimsical.

But I'd rather not fight in this room, though...

「Stop this Ruminas, didn't we came here for an alliance?  
Why are you adding to our enemies?」

Hinata coaxed Ruminas with a hint of irritation.

「Hmph」

As if she was never serious to begin with, Ruminas's anger dissipated.  
And she sat back in her chair,

「True, we do not wish to increase our enemies.  
Our aim for coming today, is to propose an alliance between Tempest, Holy  
Empire of Ruberius, and Western Saint's Church.」

She declared with a thin smile on her lips.  
Clearly she was trying to gauge my reaction.  
It's hard to imagine that she was a demon lord with a bad personality from  
her appearance.  
Putting that aside, we have introduced ourselves once more, and began  
examining the details of the alliance.

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That means, Ruminas was the ruler of the Holy Empire Ruberius?  
The conversation continued after we calmed down, but was a revelation!  
It seems this was too much of a surprise for Fuse, and he looked as if his  
soul had flown out of his mouth.

*(TN Note:...I hope most of you seen enough anime to know what that means. If  
you haven't I recommend those from the slice of life genre.)*

Well, that's to be expected.

The Holy Empire Ruberius where the sacred ones reside, where the Pope of  
the Western Church lives.

Who would have imagined that it was all under control of a demon lord!  
In that case, who is the pope?

「Old man, they seem to be wondering about the pope」

In response to Ruminas's words, the butler behind her bowed respectfully.

「If I'm not mistake, the current pope is currently 47 years old.」

I thought he muttered, and the butler transformed into a youthful figure.

「This is the first time we've met. I am the current pope, Gilles Lila Ruberius.」

In this youthful (... nah, he's still middle aged) appearance, he turned into a butler clad in pure white, radiating a divine aura.

His figure has become a man in his prime. In terms of human years, he would be around mid 40s.

So... this butler has pretended to be the pope of every past generation?

Looking at Fuse with a glance, he was stunned with his eyes wide opened.

This guy's a skillful one, I'm actually impressed.

「Hey, isn't this weird! Why's the pope a follower of the demon lord! What the hell is this?! Are you a monster? Why do I feel a divine presence?」

Uh oh, instead of fainting, Fuse acted as if a switch has been pressed as he started causing a ruckus.

「Fu. Gilles, explain.」

Ruminas instructed,

「As you command, milady」

The pope, no, Gilles the butler nodded respectively.  
Since it feels really weird I'd much rather he stop these extravagant butler behavior, but I'll keep my discomfort a secret.

It began thousands of years ago, before the creation of the Holy Empire of Ruberius.

When the evil dragon Veldora destroyed the Vampire Kingdom, without killing anyone, though.

It was then, that Ruminas and Chloe met, so it seems they've been through a lot.

Even though she protected Chloe, even if she hadn't, she probably would not have been injured anyways.

To Ruminas, Chloe was probably the embodiment of idealized beauty.

Oh, and though Veldora probably thought it was a friendly squabble, in reality it was just a one-sided rampage.

However, being done in would be unpleasant, so the survivors hid and lived on in silence.

However, there's the Demon Lord Ruminas.

She wasn't interested in simply hiding, and built an underground empire.

And on the top she created an empire to sustain her underground empire.

At the time, due to poverty caused by the conflict between angels and demons, there were few mighty nations. And the eastern empire had barely taken form.

They couldn't even send forces to protect the people from the threat of monsters.

Naturally, almost everyone was a refugee or a bandit, and the world was even more confused and in turmoil.

Precisely because it was such a time that she, with the power of a demon lord, was able to control monsters and easily control humans.

Those who sought salvation came to her.

Ruminas granted mercy to those who gathered under her. Using blood (Life) as bait, she granted them protection.

And so, all within Ruminas's calculations, a country was formed this way.  
And thus it appeared, the Holy Kingdom Ruberius.  
Thus, allowing humans to live freely would lead to endless war—the reason  
behind Ruminas' opinions was history itself.  
I don't think I can refute her. But that doesn't mean I agree with her.  
If they want to fight, let them fight; if they want to rampage let them.  
Then they could reconcile and seek to create peace.  
But this kind of outcome could not come about through a controlled  
experiment. And precisely because this was voluntarily, it was interesting  
And that's how it is.

Now that country was born it would inevitably be controlled by some  
ambitious or greedy man—the cause of Ruminas' next worry.  
Therefore, the Greater devil Gilles acted as her right hand.

Butler Gilles is not only a vampire, but also a first-class holy sorcerer thus  
making him someone who can walk under the sun.  
It seems that including Ruminas and Gilles, there were few others who  
could walk under the sun despite being a vampire.  
At the time, since Gilles was such an individual, it was inevitable for him to  
become the priest.  
So he used clones and played many roles all by himself all to manipulate the  
empire... it must have been difficult.  
Well, and thus, Gilles who acted as the pope that was also said to be the  
incarnation of light, had obtained a unique ability  
It is the unique skill "Hierophant".  
— An ability that allows a patron to dominate the will of those who seeks  
salvation and protection —  
In an sense, this was a ridiculous ability that is nothing but high level fraud.  
And so the people were able to live peacefully without any suspicion thanks  
to his ability.  
To be frank, for a dark-dwelling monster to gain a light based ability is  
ridiculous in itself.

Whilst listening to all this from the side, it was interesting how Hinata made a bitter face.

“The creed is everything!” I guess it sounds cool, but then you learn the dark history behind it.

When I looked at Hinata while grinning, our eyes met.

I was looked at with a cold stare that made me think I was going to be killed.

Scary... I guess I shouldn't tease her about it.

I guess I'll just pretend I know nothing about it at all.

And so, ended Butler Gilles's description with such feelings.

And Hinata's turn followed, explaining why she sought an alliance.

About her bold plan to save the children, and her fight with Yuuki.

Her death, and the awakening of the hero.

And Hinata's resurrection by Ruminas, and the meeting between the hero Chloe and Ruminas.

As well as the need for the alliance due to the hero's current situation as well as a countermeasure against Yuuki.

I see.

It seems Hinata had went to rescue the children in my stead.

It is a welcoming story.

「So, what happened to the children?」

「They are wandering around Tempest sight-seeing. Kenya, though desperately wants to catch up to Chloe's strength.

They are all rather upset that Chloe left without saying anything.」

I am satisfied with Hinata's explanation.

However, I can sympathize with Chloe.

It must have been painful, not only being forgotten, but being the only one who's an adult.

As a hero, when the experience of the past awakened in her body, she would become an unrecognizable existence that would be swallowed by the

shadow of the hero.

Only those who have reached the pinnacle of power—an ultimate skill—could recognize her existence.

She must have felt completely lost.

With the power from Hinata's soul, the journey to the past. How much struggle and how harsh the journey must have been.

「Rimuru, the copy of the Sacred armament that was given by you. It was given to Chloe. It came along us to the past, protecting us. The armor has helped greatly. Thank you.」

Hinata looked straight at me, and thanked me.

I'm feeling embarrassed so please stop.

But, is that so.....

「So you too, had traveled to the past alongside Chloe. Thank you for looking after her.」

「Please stop, there's no need to thank me. It was natural for me to do so.」

Hinata sidestepped my thanks.

After handing over the energy of the hero's soul, all that's left now are the residues — even so, I still think that Hinata too is a hero.

Hinata lost in the battle, which I must say was a little sad, however I do not believe Hinata's heart is weak.

Unlike before, she had acquired true strength; she also has grown.

I could not even imagine such a long journey.

Hinata's explanation has also ended.

But damn her story sounds real dangerous.

With Hinata undergoing such ordeals, I couldn't possibly say I've been playing around.

I'm glad I was able to cover it up well.

I mean, I don't think it would be a big deal even if I did appear to be playing

as long as I actually got serious when I needed to, but considering that I appeared to seriously be doing work when they came, I think I was able to fool them.

Good thing I decided not to disclose everything.

Now then, we began thinking about the contents of Hinata's explanation. And the most unbelievable part of the explanation is, Chloe seems to have become a hero.

However, she was being manipulate by Yuuki, and had her freedom bounded until three commands are given.

According to her explanation, her abilities could be considered as the strongest. She may not be able to manipulate time, however she can come close to stopping it.

In order for the strongest hero to be born, she traveled through time, huh. Moreover, the world is heading towards destruction, and I died in that timeline.

But, I wonder?

Certainly, if it was the initial fight with Hinata, defeat is guaranteed. There's no doubt.

However, I could have survived.

If that's the case.....no, lets stop.

Conjectures on this topic would not help the current situation.

Anyway, Chloe's safe. Our priority should be to rescue her.

Ruminas's purpose was also to rescue Chloe; I will not hesitate to form an alliance to that end.

The rest of the children were also brought here, so there's no need to worry anymore about the Ingrasia kingdom.

There's now nothing stopping us from waging open war against Yuuki.

「Yosh, I now understand the situation.  
We too would like to form an alliance」

In response to my worlds, Hinata and Ruminas nodded.  
Fuse appearing quite disheveled,

「Oh my god.....this just became insane.  
Besides, how come every time I came it's always this kind of impactful  
serious talk.  
Each and every time, this isn't funny.  
I'm just a simply branch head.....  
This isn't something I should be taking on with such low pay!  
What terrible burden now weighs on my mind...」

He grumbled as his face kept turning paler.  
Come to think of it, he does take on this role every time.  
I can understand your feeling, but lets pretend we didn't hear it just now.  
He still has a lot to do in the future.

Thus, ignoring Fuse's wailing, the tripartite alliance of the holy kingdom  
Ruberius, the Western church, and the Monster Country Tempest has been  
formed.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 129 - Yuuki Subjugation Raid

A declaration of alliance between Holy Empire Ruberius, Western Saint's Church, and Tempest was formalized on paper, and a declaration of the same was sent to every country.

These kinds of formalities are normally truly tedious, but having the leaders calling the shots makes it all much easier.

Hinata is also a representative of some sort... I mean, everyone recognizes her power. So with all the signatures thus gathered, that matter was closed. The alliance declares equality of its members.

The matter of trade restrictions we basically left it to the marketplace: the merchants and countries will just have to fight it out. In short, I won big on this contract.

Hinata and Ruminas are uninterested in matter of commerce. So they agreed to leave it up to market itself to figure the rules out—as I had wanted; a free market would be beneficial for international trade.

(Translator's note: Do we have any economy majors who can comment on Rimuru/author's claim that removing trade restrictions completely will be so beneficial?)

(Smoggy's notes: Well, if there is no trade protectionism, Consumers will be better off due to a larger diversity of goods, and potential at higher and cheaper prices since firms will have to compete even harder in the larger market in terms of quality and productivity. While infant firms will face problems, large successful firms such as Rimuru's will benefit from the wider range of consumer, as well as the lack of taxation needed when trading within the trading bloc. On a side note, government revenue will be

lowered due to the decrease in revenue originally generated from tax, but should enjoy the beneficial GDP growth from the boosted economic activity. P.s. if they all use the same currency, no need to worry about currency appreciation)

We might even create a self-sufficient system and enjoy a time of never-before-seen wealth.

Currently the top brass (me, myself, and I) live in luxury, but we can still improve the quality of life of the lower class citizens.

And in order to obtain the ingredients to accomplish this I could hope for no better opportunity than trade with the Holy Empire Ruberius. It's one of the largest agricultural countries in this world, after all.

Oh, and Ruminas isn't oppressing her citizens. On the contrary, she protects them most passionately. To the point that they grow all the food they need as to not starve.

Which is why if we start trading and exchanging products we could turn stagnation into abundance.

And that's how I'll get to manipulate the market all I want.

I'll research the climate and introduce appropriate produce.

Perhaps Ruberius will manage potato while we'll focus on cultivating rice.

As for the rest, I would imagine that on the technological front Tempest would dominate. Rare metal and mineral trade is also likely to end up to our benefit.

I'm sure Myormiles-kun would be able to handle that question without any oversight.

The vast lands to the west, compared to those of the Eastern Empire are terribly infertile.

A battle between demon lords took place there, and the magical energy released eroded the nutrients in the soil.

But, if you think about it on the flip side, you could actually use the land to grow special products that require such magical energy density.

And if we leave it as is, these sands are bound to swallow up Ruberius eventually. Ruminas seems to be of the mindset that she'll just up and leave for another land, but I can't say I support her plans.

Isn't it better to put the land she already has to its full use and seek true coexistence?

When I pointed this out and offered to send some agricultural specialists there,

「We do not mind. Something so trifling we can leave fully to you」

She replied as if she didn't care.

I imagine her under-dwellers won't accept my interference so readily, but the citizens above ground don't particularly mind.

So, I requested her to make a formal written request.

And thus Tempest gained an official way into human society.

But, she did insist on one condition.

I was to allow Vampire nobility to participate in the research conducted with the Dwarfs and Sarion.

From what she said, although the above-ground dwellers are rather ignorant, her underground citizens are quite advanced.

「After all, being targeted by angels is particularly annoying.

Accordingly, we conduct the most important research underground.

We are biased, but 'tis true: among the demon lords we are the most educated」

She said.

Even more than the elves, Vampires have extremely long lifespans.

Moreover, particularly high vampires don't even need to suck blood but directly consume human life energy.

And with so much time on their hands the Vampires can't help but spend it doing and researching what they enjoy the most.

So, I'm pretty certain that even if they participate in our research, it will be mostly on a whim.

Few of them, those called Nobles, can stand sunlight, these Nobles will be able to continue their research in just about any facility.

Thus, it seems I will be able to allow those Nobles to participate without any

problems.

Well, considering the horse that Ruminas rode to get here, I can attest to their technological skill. I think this will be beneficial to both parties.

As both of us were satisfied with these terms, we exchanged promises on this matter.

As for the Western Saint's Church,

Obviously their creed is the main problem.

For now, notices were sent out to all those currently outside of the capital notifying them that I was by no means a dangerous existence.

It's actually kind of surprising how much money and power this organization has. It's a big deal to get their backing.

Currently there are rumors going around that Tempest had fought with their knights. However, thanks to us utilizing enough funds to appear appealing to them, we were able to prevent total collapse of diplomacy.

The fact that we hadn't killed a single knight also helps.

So instead we manipulated the rumors to be thus: we didn't fight the knights; they came over, we talked, they realized we weren't a danger, and left content.

In short, we changed their background from invaders to ambassadors.

Those few who know the truth must be scratching their heads right now.

「I got it, I got it!

You actually want me to go around spreading such rumors, don't you?!」

Fuse exclaimed, quite distraught.

Thank goodness he understands quickly.

But seriously, Fuse just has the perfect timing. I don't even need to call him—he'll appear when and where I need him just in time.

Maybe I should treat him to a meal.

「Can I ask you to do this? I would be very grateful」

Hinata looked at Fuse and added.

「O-of course! Please leave it to me; I will carry out your request with haste. I will show you that you were not mistaken in placing your trust in me; you were definitely correct in trusting me!」

With a bright red face, passionately grabbing his chest, Fuse replied.

So... why was he being so redundant? Is it so important that he had to say the same thing twice?

I'm pretty sure anyone would have understood his response.

I bet he has already fallen for her. Well, his target is so high it's unattainable.

「Thanks; I'll leave it to you」

Fuse was raring to go after hearing her response.

What a simple guy. I guess I don't need to treat him to a meal now.

Well, in short, that's how we established this alliance; figuring out the minor details I left to Rigurdo and Myormiles.

It'll be easy to expand militarily now, so this is grand progress.

The problem before us, however, is how we should deal with the Freedom Association.

No, let me be clear: how should we conduct this Yuuki subjugation raid.

「Now then, we can leave the matter of the alliance at that.

The problem before us, is how we should deal with the Freedom Association」

「Right; considering that almost every country has a Freedom Association branch, the question is how far does the Headquarters' influence span?」

「With regards to that, allow me to explain」

Fuse said and began his explanation.

Every country's, big or small, relation to the Freedom Association's

headquarters. Though we more or less understood from his previous brief explanation, I decided to have him go into more details.

According to him, there are observers in every guild making communication between Central and the branch easy.

Of course, these observers also make carry out Yuuki's will. As for others potentially controlled, based on personal experiences and lack of any other person working in the branches for Central, there ought to be a few.

「In the end, we believe that he can only use mind control if he directly meets a person」

Fuse concluded.

Thought guidance, the simpler skill, merely obstructs some thought patterns or suggests others. It's a skill that is slightly superior to that of a swindler.

As such, we could protect against further dissemination should we have an opportunity to study the skill... but considering that people will always be swindled, we really can't protect ourselves against it with absolute certainty.

In other words, we really can't solve this problem right now. So let's get back to it later.

The problematic skill: mind control, requires an implementation of a "Curse Crystal" into its target.

The "Curse Crystal," in turn, binds the target on its very soul. I wonder though: could a person thus bound then infect others?

「Impossible. I who was similarly controlled can testify to that extent. His power is by no means omnipotent. Were it so, all the templars would have long been his servants」

Hinata refuted that hypothesis.

Fuse was surprised at the sudden revelation, but said nothing and instead took out some files.

「Now then, this is the list of every official who has met with Yuuki.  
Please do not forget that, as in my case, direct meetings with Yuuki do not  
guarantee brainwashing」

The file mentioned just that.

True: Fuse had met with Yuuki, but was not brainwashed.

Was he ignored because his country is small? No, there's probably some  
limit to mind control.

Moreover, back then he was struggling to control Hinata, whereas he must  
now control the mighty Chloe. And he can't even manage that completely.  
If so... isn't his power rather pathetic?

«Solution. That hypothesis is presumed correct.

Due to expanding his power to control the hero, he most likely lacks ability  
to dominate another person»

Actually, now that I think about it, Masayuki had this bug on him. A bug so  
pitiful I unconsciously squashed it.

It got on him before he started his heroic travels. So I'm pretty sure it's no  
big deal.

Besides, Raphael is never wrong.

「Alright, I get it. We can probably not worry about his mind control for  
now.

As for those who honestly adore Yuuki... we can't dispel that adoration.

And while we can go around cleaning up branch by branch...

How about we just go and take out Central in a single swoop?」

Let's put association branches aside for now.

Decide central, and Yuuki while we are at it.

Even if there's a hero, we have Ruminas and I. While I occupy Chloe, she'll  
murder Yuuki.

Hinata can hold off Kagali (Kazalim) for a bit.  
Three is plenty. Or so I thought,

「Wait, I can't fight as I had before.  
Not even equip spirit armor; and though I could accelerate my thoughts, my  
spirit strength is yet lacking.  
Truly high speed combat I could only maintain for a few seconds.  
Unfortunately, I don't have the strength of a hero any longer」

Hinata confessed ashamed.  
As I had feared: her presence felt smaller because it actually was smaller.  
But it's best we strike sooner rather than later. A big part of that is a desire  
to save Chloe... but I also just hate the idea of letting Yuuki continue for  
much longer.  
Most of my problems until now can be attributed to him.  
Even with Hinata out of the picture, we have enough strength to crush  
Central.

「We too support crushing Central.  
But why should we not handle the branches simultaneously?  
With my servants, your men, and the templars should we not just crush it  
all?」

What an extreme thing Ruminas says!  
I had considered it, but then we won't be able to avoid chaos...  
But Ruminas' subordinates present an excellent opportunity. Maybe we  
should just go with it.  
Actually, create chaos? Who cares!  
And thus, we again reconsidered our battle plan.

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Our consideration concluded when we had decided squad formation. First, Central was given to Hinata. She would relate information from every squad. Next, Apprehension Corps: those who would confirm and secure any suspicious targets at the branches. That would be handled by Fuse's men—the guides, and Souei's group. We also included seven of Ruminas' nobles in that corps. We'll ignore the tiny nations and focus on securing the observers in the larger countries. And, most importantly, Central Raid Party. Of course Ruminas and I lead it. Diablo and Shion will come along. Benimaru and Gerudo will stay to protect Tempest. Ruminas will be accompanied by the Seven Celestial Sages. We'll have Veldora in the skies to destroy the barrier protecting Ingracia and erect a barrier preventing their escape. We'll invade once our barrier comes up. Moreover, we have Gabil, Hakurou, and Gobuta in the reserve troops. Ranga's also raring to go within my shadow. No matter how strong Yuuki is, all we need to do is pin Chloe down for a minute—just enough to bring him down. And our war strength is great. Defeat here would mean that we would have to wage total war.

「Ku fufufufu. A real war after so long! I am trembling in excitement!」

「Ufufufufu. Diablo, I ain't letting you hog all the fun」

Diablo's and Shion's conversation is rather scary. These two should be more than enough to handle Kagali. Ruminas has declared that Yuuki is her prey alone, but Shion and Diablo will join in to help after they defeat Kagali. I will fight Chloe. I don't want to hurt her, but her actual strength is unknown.

Underestimating her could lead to my defeat.  
According to Ruminas,

「Though we don't want to admit it, she is probably stronger than We.  
If you let your guard down, even you could perish」

She said.

Though I can't help wondering just how strong she is, all present are certain that with some tactics I could keep her occupied long enough.

Besides, killing Yuuki solves all the problems.

I would have wanted to talk to him briefly before killing him, but sadly we don't have the time to chat.

In order to save Chloe we need to kill him real quick.

If Chloe is stronger than I expect, I'll have Veldora and Ranga join.

I won't let my guard down.

And we'll slaughter Yuuki and save Chloe

Having thus decided on our battle plan, we swiftly moved to implement it.

And, after so heroically constructing a plan...

It failed.

No, the entire plan did not fail; Yuuki simply had fled from Central.

By the time Veldora set up a barrier and we had invaded, Yuuki was long gone.

Surprisingly, he abandoned Freedom Association headquarters and fled.

A position of power he spent 10 years creating he abandoned without a second thought.

It just shows how capable of an enemy he is. Since the point was to prevent any of his further manipulation, this plan was a failure.

Of course, we could not save Chloe either.

But it was not a total waste. Though even the observers had fled by then, we made sure no royalty or ruler was under his thought manipulation.

Those who were we rescued.

And thanks to Templar presence, we could quickly pin all evils and crimes

on Yuuki.

As a result we were able to quickly contain chaos and return every nation's guild to working order.

Thus, although the plan failed, we completely eliminated Yuuki's dominion. Furthermore, we were able to lay foundation for Tempest embassies in more countries.

That is: we cleared the infected regions and strengthened ties with them.

And, the Western Saint's Church very conveniently filled all the vacancies in the Freedom Association with our people.

Though it wasn't what we planned for, we didn't lose anything either.

Other than letting Yuuki escape, we actually did pretty well.

For the time being, Ingracia Kingdom and other Council nations may be slightly chaotic.

But, as things settle down and Yuuki's crimes are revealed to the public, more and more nations rise in anger against him.

That I must completely attribute to the power of faith in the Western Saint's Church.

We have also been officially recognized; though not as a Council nation member, but certainly we've been accepted.

In other words, we now negotiate with many more countries than we did before.

Since we aim to coexist with humans, this is big step forward for us.

In the future, when we fight the Eastern Empire and Yuuki the nations surrounding Jura forest will probably be involved as well. So, I want to seal some military alliances with them.

Though we let Yuuki escape, we improved our ability to oppose the Eastern Empire.

Eastern Empire advances by forcing other countries to assimilate; there's a need to oppose that force.

To that end, other countries won't be able to ignore Tempest.

Thanks to this incident, these countries are bound to use newly developed diplomatic ties to create a mighty military union.

Wealth, Technology, and Power.

Tempest is fated to rise to be the epitome of these; but that's a story for later.

For now, I only grieve that our Yuuki Subjugation Raid failed.



# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 130 - A sudden Invitation

The operation to subjugate Yuuki ended in a failure.

But taking advantage of what we could, we reestablished the Freedom Association in our favor.

Thanks to our efforts in removing Yuuki and his observers, the transition was smooth.

In the end, a single templar was left in each branch, and thus a new control system was created with the Western Saint's Church at the head.

And the Church beginning changing its language and structure to more of a "spirit worship."

Then there's the Free Arbitration Committee.

A new organization Freedom Association and the Western Saints created. Unlike the Council—the International Council, I mean—which operates by electing delegates, the Committee—Free Arbitration Committee—is composed of Freedom Association guild masters.

Once it was established it became a method for countries to negotiate on neutral grounds.

Sakaguchi Hinata was appointed as the first Committee Chair.

And since the Church and Templars refused to run for this office, her appointment was rather welcoming.

Furthermore, according to the information the templars collected, there were no visible dissenters at the moment at the branches. I mean, we demon lords—Ramiris and I in particular—tend to operate behind the scenes, but there's a surprising lack of opposition even when we act openly.

Thus, after establishing this organization, we were able to join the countries surrounding Jura forest with two unions—the Council and the Committee.

You need strong bonds between nations in a large union.  
That was the state of the world a month after the failed subjugation attempt.

Of course, while everyone was busy establishing these new organization I was not just playing around.

Three days after the failed subjugation attempt he appeared.

Ripping through Ingracia Kingdom's barrier, clad in silver armor, he appeared,

Silver Knight Alrose.

Introducing himself as a servant of the Platinum Devil Leon Cromwell, he handed me a letter.

It was an invitation.

As he had promised, he invited me over.

But... why now?

「My master wishes to discuss matters regarding the “Hero” with you, Rimuru-sama」

After Alrose said so, I got an idea of what was in store.

The letter came after the hero was fully awakened—surely that was the cause.

Perhaps Leon knows something about Chloe. It seems they crossed blades once, so perhaps there is something he knows that we do not.

I decided to accept the invitation. In any case, I've yet to complain on Shizusan's behalf.

Though it all depends on his intentions from now on.

「Alright. I'm accepting the invitation」

「Your kind words are wasted upon us. My master shall be most pleased. Please, this way」

Alrose had a helmet on the whole time so I have no idea what kind of face he was making, but he certainly sounded happy about it; oh, and he teleported away.

Instant teleportation can be used by many high level devils. Even if he was using predetermined coordinates, it's still a big deal.

By the way, those who can teleport to any place (even those they haven't visited) are overwhelmingly high existences. Even among my subordinates only Diablo can do it... probably. It's not a skill you can use unless you've got a spiritual body.

The way it works is: Shadow Step -> Spatial Transfer -> Teleport.

You could also move using magic circles, but the previous three are skills, not magic.

I have been using skills and magic interchangeably so I didn't even notice, but seems that there is a difference. I mean, Hinata said there was, and she must be right.

Spatial transfer requires you to open a door and step into it to travel. It's not something you can use during combat. As for Teleportation magic, it instantaneously creates and executes a magic circle allowing for instant travel. It can be used to avoid enemy attacks and such, so those who can use teleport are rather strong.

But since it's usually only limited to your starting point and a previously visited location, this skill by no means decides the opponent's skill.

By the way, even the lowest spatial magic should be pretty instantaneous, so one can't let his guard down.

The second Silver Knight Alrose disappeared a magic circle appeared where he stood. In other words, that's what I needed to use to get there.

Magic knight, spatial magic master, and I bet he's pretty damn skilled with his teleport abilities.

Damn you Leon, you've got good subordinates.

I guess I should go and bestow teleporting on Benimaru, Shion, and the rest. As I am now I feel I could bestow skills without a problem, and it may increase our war potential.

So I thought while as Alrose disappeared.

As a side note, Hinata can also teleport. But, since it uses so much magical energy, she can't at the moment.

But considering her ability to do so chantlessly: I can finally appreciate her actual strength.

Although she can no longer use her 『Mathematician』 ability, she's still a genius magician.

She did become weaker, but not as much as she herself claims... though that's a secret for now.

\* \* \*

And thus I came.

The land Leon rules is more of a continent than an island. It's surprisingly wide, and has towns divided into districts.

Forest, Field, Lake, River, and Mountain districts.

Every sector is protected via a magic circle.

An artificially created land of nature and tranquility—a magic city.

That is the land of Demon Lord Leon Cromwell—El Dorado.

「Yo... this is kind of amazing」

I muttered.

「Hahaha, you are too kind. My master will be pleased to hear such praise」

Alrose replied happily as he guided us.

Right now, his helmet is off and beautiful silver hair falls on his back.

Though he looks like a girl, it's a guy. He is the Captain of the Magic Knights.

So it's no small wonder Leon trusts him so much.

But, this country truly is build wonderfully. The streets glimmer as if made of gold.

Every building was placed with care, and a spiral castle reaches into the

heavens.

If you looked from above, you would notice that a giant magic circle is created using the city itself. In other words, other than those who can look from above, the circle is invisible.

The circle is supplied with energy from the citizens themselves. Such careful construction tickles my pride a bit.

No question about it: Tempest is a beautiful country. But we did not incorporate magic into the land itself.

And that bothers me a bit now.

「Rimuru-sama, what is so amazing?」

Shion walking behind me asked.

Even though she should have an overhead view, she has not noticed. Just shows how elaborate this construction is.

「This city creates a single giant magic circle.

The city is blessed with “Counter Magic” and “Enemy Radar” as a result. It will alert them if there are any intruders. Though it seals magic attacks, that which enters it probably bounces back.

Just imagine being attacked with large scale magic: it’s an automatic win for the city.

I wonder if we should copy it in Tempest?」

「Oh? That does sound amazing, though I don’t really get it」

「Hahaha, as expected. Though you have not looked from above, you have noticed so much.

Nothing could be hidden from your eyes. You are correct; this city prides itself in its absolute magical barrier」

Alrose proudly replied.

Shion seriously doesn’t get it. I guess she just doesn’t recognize magic. So it’s not surprising that she can’t understand it.

I wonder how hard it was to create a city that encompassed two magic

circles.

Just creating one would have certainly been a pain, but here they have two; and he had to account for future development too. It's too amazing.

But, this is a way for me to have some fun. I will definitely implement the same in my country.

Once we left the magic circle room, the hallways were made of glass.

The distant scenery was filled with flowing rivers and waterfalls in beautiful designs.

Damn him! This city is pretty.

I can't help but accept it, but it does make me jealous—which then fuels my creativity!

And after walking ten minutes,

We were guided into one of the rooms in the Royal Palace.

The items are clearly luxury ones, and certainly of good quality. Color pattern is white and gold.

Certainly not poorly designed—he's got good taste.

I guess it's meant not to intimidate people into a heart attack. And just as the exterior is decorated in beautiful gold, so is the interior.

In short: it doesn't make a visitor nervous, and that's something I feel I could easily imitate.

As for Shion: the moment she walked in, she sat down, started munching on snacks and sipping tea; completely unaffected.

Hmm? Shouldn't it be the other way around? Shouldn't I be like that?

Ignore that. If you notice that kind of thing you lose.

「Rimuru-sama, these sweets are really good. And not poisoned, please have some!」

Shion said handing me some sweets.

To think that *that* cook Shion would be talking about poison... what irony. Besides, poison doesn't affect me.

And like that we waited for 10 minutes,  
Until this country's ruler, Leon Cromwell appeared.

「Did you wait long? Thank you for accepting an invitation on such short notice」

He said and sat in a chair in front of me.

He's dressed even rougher than I remembered, and he speaks plainly.

Crossing his legs, he certainly looks like he belongs in a movie.

Though Alrose is certainly handsome, Leon can only be described as beautiful.

Of course, that doesn't please me too much.

But leaving the matter of his manhood aside, let's return to the main question.

I told him about Shizu's last moments.

「Is that so... She lived longer than I had predicted」

Leon replied plainly.

But that did not infuriate me. Perhaps because I had noticed something,

「Hey, did you have Ifrit possess her to save her life?」

「Who knows? I may have done something of the sort; I don't remember」

Leon replied closing his eyes.

But it's clear that he's a crappy actor.

「Hmph... whatever. I got it.

Oh, and Ramiris mentioned something interesting: you're a crybaby?」

When I said so, Leon's face twisted in despair.

「That damn brat... next time I'll rip her wings off」

He said angrily.

Well, seems like it wasn't a lie.

「I'll let her know.

Oh, and you said something about summoning a special individual, is that right?」

That's when the room got silent.

After some time had passed, Leon gravely opened his mouth.

「That is so.

And that matter is connected to the reason I asked for you today」

Leon said and glanced at Shion.

I nodded,

「Shion, this conversation is a little complicated.

Please go help out Alrose with something, could you?」

I said asking Shion to leave.

「By all means. Shion-san, please help me in the preparation room」

Leon directed Alrose to say so with a glance.

Shion silently nodded and followed Alrose out of the room.

And thus I was alone with Leon in the room.

After confirming this fact,

「Do you know a little girl named Chloe?」

Leon asked.

Yup, everything is connected.

I wasn't surprised that Leon said this name.

Perhaps I had predicted such an outcome after listening to Hinata and Ruminas.

That explains who requested Yuuki's services for the summoning and why the conditions were as they were.

That is, why children were being summoned and why most were girls>  
He was looking for Chloe from the very beginning: Shizu-san and the rest were simply a by-product.

But what came afterward from Leon's lips completely blew my mind.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 131 - Demon Lord Leon

While looking at Rimuru that sat in front of him, Leon recalled the old days. With an appearance of a shoujo, a genderless Demon Lord.

Even though it belonged to the weakest race the slimes, it evolved into a demon lord with a vast magic capacity.

It was a unique existence, with the appearance of Izawa Shizu, a girl whom he once saved.

And he was someone who knew this girl, whom Leon was looking for.

When you think about it, this is quite the peculiar twist of fate.

Although a visitor from Earth, he came as a “reincarnator” with the memories of his previous life—an unbelievable occurrence. Moreover, he reincarnated as a monster.

Such was Demon Lord Rimuru: a being who met with this world’s strongest species, Dragon Kind, who was fated to deal with Leon, and who attained absolute power.

But doesn’t this all appear as if it were all connected, as if someone was leading it?

He thought.

This all just may be pre-established harmony.

*TN Note: Pre-established harmony is the idea that while substances only affect themselves, god programmed the way they interact and harmonize with each other...just look it up.*

However, Leon disregarded the idea and began talking about the girl Chloe. About 300 years ago, Leon came to this world.

Rather than being summoned, the cause of this was being caught in the accidental occurrence of a dimensional distortion.

Veldora has already been sealed then, and the great Jura Forest has already been established as a inviolable zone.

Despite the relative peace which the world had finally welcome, Leon was thrown into it.

At the time he was less than 10 years old.

However, there was someone who he had to protect. There was a young girl who fell along with him. That girl, was Chloe O'Bell.

She was a childhood friend of Leon, a best friend. An existence he loved like a sister, his everything.

That's why Leon, even as his body was being destroyed by rampaging magic, he forcefully suppressed the destruction with his willpower.

With a strong will and feelings, a boy who was less than 10 had managed to control the magic that dwelt within him. As a result, he had obtained the unique skill "Guardian".

From his desires to protect the girl younger than he, the power to protect has awakened within him.

Moreover that wasn't all. By obtaining a "hero's egg", a portion of the remaining rampart energy was obtained.

Even at a young age, Leon had the qualities of a Hero.

「It's alright. Because I will protect Chloe」

Leon cheered up the young girl, who was crying endlessly, with a smile

However, the girl in Leon's embrace suddenly vanished. Despite the power to protect had just awaken with Leo.....

And so, Leon began the journey to search for Chloe.

Despite the passing years Leon never gave up searching for Chloe.

Perhaps, she had returned back to their original world. So he considered.

Even in their original world, however, Chloe had no relatives. If Leon didn't protect her, who would?

In that case, all he had to do was to summon her here again.

He learned of magic that could summon a specific person through appointing time and space.

With his exceptional intelligence, Leon learned magic at an absurd pace. All to summon a single girl, and to protect her.

However, his attempts ended in failure.

Even the genius Leon could not exert magical power in a world beyond this one.

Yet he did not give up and continued his research.

An extreme magic that could only be attempted once every 66 years, for success he traveled the world.

He learned from the fairies the method to be certified a hero, but they were so useless that it merely infuriated him.

He seized from them 8 great spirits, and because it did not seem to have caused any great problem, he continued his journey.

Having reached the pinnacle of human wisdom, he left into domains of the demon lords.

Leon's thirst for knowledge was boundless; he would not hesitate to do whatever it takes for the sake of summoning Chloe.

Thus, he continued living while destroying high ranking devils and taking their wisdom for his own.

There were also those who wish to join as his subordinate, who were allowed to do as they pleased so long as they did not interfere.

As time went by, the number of subordinates under Leon gradually grew in size, and he even came to own a small territory.

Leon never named himself, but soon the name "Platinum Devil" began to spread.

Before long, that name came to be associated with the name of a Demon Lord, but Leon paid it no mind. That sort of thing didn't matter to him.

Rather, taking knowledge from the wise devils who came to fight him was most important.

And for the first time, an existence that could be called a threat attacked Leon.

“Curse lord” Kazalim, was offended by Leon’s nickname of demon lord, and paid a visit to purge him.

Even for Leon, the genius with a “Hero’s egg”, the “Curse Lord” Kazalim was a formidable foe.

Superficial attacks will not work on Kazalim, king of the undead. With Leon’s abilities specializing in defense, he couldn’t inflict a fatal strike on Kazalim.

On the other hand, Kazalim too found Leon a difficult opponent. Breaking through the iron wall-like defense was tough, and all his curses were null and void.

With both sides lacking a decisive factor, the battle that unfolded extended for several days.

However, the ending was a disappointing one.

His egg hatched.

Absorbing his pure feelings within the inner soul of Leon, the “Hero’s egg” had hatched.

Leon has awakened and became a true hero.

He who reigns as the demon lord, he who is the true hero. And that, is Leon Cromwell.

He awakened an ability, the ultimate skill “King of purity Metatron”.

An ability which draws purest energy possible from power, magic, aura, and skill.

For Kazalim who uses complex skills this was the worst possible match-up.

With cursed blood of hex and blood, rotten flesh of sludge and microorganisms, bones of magic water.

The parts that constitutes Kazalim’s body, was dismantled under the pulsating divine light of the ultimate skill “King of Purity Metatron”.

Without being able to put up any resistance, the “Curse lord” Kazalim has been destroyed before Leon.

By an ironic twist, Leon who has overthrown a demon lord was recognized as a demon lord in name and in reality. And Leon took it as a good thing.

In the castle where Kazalim resides, an experimentation facility was established.

In addition to it being used as an experimentation facility, he began considering his place of residence.

When Chloe was successfully summoned, he needed to give her a place to live. So Leon thought, and decided to get his own territory.

And he discovered new lands to the southwest.

Extreme magic was used without holding back to reform the very ecology itself.

And thus, the golden town El • Dorado was completed. However, Leon has conducted research exclusively in Kazarim's residence in the demon continent until...

His summoning has failed, and Izawa Shizu was summoned.

Her condition could be understood with a simple glance.

Unlike Leon, this girl with burnt raven black hair has suffered grievous injuries and would soon die.

Due to his failed summoning, this girl's body may soon collapse under the rampaging magic.

However, age wise it was a success. Which pleased him. Furthermore, if it wasn't for his summon, this girl would have burned to death.

Leon was slightly troubled. Calling this helping would be presumptuous.

After all she was summoned for his own convenience.

If the girl was saved as a result, this was due to her own luck, and not Leon's efforts.

And so he thought.

And that's why,

「Although I thought you were trash, you seem compatible with fire.」

After saying so, the “Flame Giant” Ifrit was summoned, and possessed the young girl. The high ranking spirit stolen from Ramiris’s dungeon now proved useful.

The girl was stabilized, and snatched from the jaws of death.

After that all depends on the girl’s luck.

It is not a result of his actions, but the girl’s own: for she should be the one to strive to create her own path.

In addition, Leon could not afford to get involved with the girl.

Leon was Leon, the girl was the girl; and she had to figure out her own life.

It may seem cold, but such is the law of the jungle.

Leon had thoroughly considered this, and he had no reason to carry the heavy burden of the young girl’s fate.

At that time, Leon had not noticed his whimsical actions would create such a twisted tapestry of fate.

And thus, the weaver of fate had spun yet another pattern.

Before Leo, a young boy has appeared.

The Young boy called himself Kagurazaka Yuuki.

The young leader of the Freedom Association has told Leon that his organization would be useful to him.

He seems to have heard about Leon’s search for the “Otherworldly” Young girl through illicit means.

Confidently, he boasted he could help Leon find the girl he seeks.

On a whim, Leon permitted it.

Either way, he would not be harmed if Yuuki had failed.

No matter how many years it took, he was determined to successfully summon Chloe with his own two hands.

After deciding to giving it a try due to no potential loss, the characteristics of Chloe was conveyed, and the proposal was accepted.

When you think about it, that was his biggest blunder.

Kagurazaka Yuuki had successfully summoned

Chloe O’Bell.

He had succeeded.

Not from another world, but rather from when Chloe and Leon first came to this world.

In other words, if he hasn't relied on Yuuki, fate might have turned out differently.

Chloe was summoned by Yuuki, met the monster called Rimuru, and traveled to the past alongside Hinata.

Trapped in the laws of the perfect world, Chloe had awakened her own ultimate skill whilst repelling all external interferences.

If it wasn't for Yuuki, Leon's summoning might have actually succeeded.

However, that was something that already could not be determined.

Whether Leon would eventually succeed in his otherworld summoning or not, there was no long any point in speculating about this.

Because the problem now was what to do in the future.

\* \* \*

Leon's story finished.

The black tea has long cooled. While we were talking, time has slipped by. Or rather, the fact that Leon has been trying to summon Chloe was unexpected.

When the hero attacked his facility, he had this strange unexplainable feeling he should avoid confrontation.

And so, he decided —Even though he wouldn't say it— to leave Shizu san in the care of the hero who came, and said he would withdraw.

When you think about it, it was easy to explain.

Although there's no way Leon could have known, this was all a pre-established harmony created by Chloe's ability.

I, to complement Leon's memories, told my side of the story.

My encounters and farewells with Chloe, as well as Yuuki's actions.

In addition, what Hinata and Ruminas told me about the current hero Chloe. Leon had believed the words I said, and shared information that would only

be known to Leon.

After the last of the cold tea was drunk,

「In other words, Chloe's currently under the control of Yuuki.

Due to the unique curse "Three absolute orders" Chloe could not go against Yuuki.

Ruminas and I had tried to subjugate Yuuki, but unfortunately he was one step ahead and he escaped.

From now on, when Yuuki makes his move, we will be fighting against him.

Our objective is also to free Chloe, do you think it is possible for us to cooperate?」

I got to the point.

I thought about asking Demon Lord Leon to join forces against Yuuki, or so I did but,

「Hmph, I don't particularly mind cooperating.

My wish was to summon Chloe was a wish to protect her happiness.

However, if there were any hindrances isn't it natural that they be eradicated?

Let's leave the question of whether Chloe really is the strongest aside for now.

And, how do I even know you'll be at all useful in this?」

It seems we must first have a proper grasp of each other's abilities.

Alright. If that's what he wants, then I'll present him with a blow as previously requested by Shizu san.

*TN Note: he meant Shizu san's will to give Leon a beating. Chapter 25ish.*

「Okay! I understand.

I'm fine with ending this bothersome conversation. You should prepare yourself.

Unlike Ramiris, my punch isn't all talk!」

「Fufu, come at me!」

We laughed at each other, and stood simultaneously.

We headed for the training grounds. Where Shion and the silver knight Alrose had previously headed.

Lead by Leon we ventured into the palace. Sculptures and corridors of good taste from his hobbies decorated the halls, while glass walls allowed overlooking the view outside.

This is a fantastically elaborate palace. Of course I don't say so and quietly follow behind Leon.

We arrived to the training grounds.

A magic formation was carved into one side of the wall, which seems to serve the purpose of absorbing and diffusing the energy absorbed within.

With this in place, a bit of violence wouldn't be a problem.

So I thought as we entered unto the grounds.

「Ah.....」

Inside, Shion had an uncomfortable look on her face.

And that person over there that looks like a dust cloth rag constantly twitching and convulsing seems to be the silver knight Alrose.

I sudden felt cold sweat running down my spine.

「I-it's n-not what you think!

He was earnest! And so in response I too got serious.

However, while he was evading with teleport, I felt a tingling feeling and attacked.....

When I noticed, Alrose-dono was in this state!

What the hell was that, I too am deeply troubled about this!!」

Is that meant to be an excuse?

I wanted to seriously look into the matter, but now's not the time.

I quickly took out a full potion, and sprinkled it over Silver knight Alrose.

Afterwards, I had Alrose drink another bottle after he was finally conscious enough to drink.

「T-that w-was my defeat. I did not expect Shion-dono to be so skillful.....  
I am sorely lacking in training.....」

Apparently, he seems fine.

Now that's relieved, there's the problem child Shion.

「Oi, Shion.....」

When I called, Shion instantly shrank and sat in Seiza.

「Did you properly understand our purpose for coming here?」

「Ay, of course. We're here to... “forge fwiendly relations with Demon Lord Leon” right?」 [1]

Does she really understand? For some reason, I have a budding suspicion otherwise.

Well, any degree of friendship I would happily accept, but a hostile relationship is certainly undesirable.

We came here to negotiate, and yet you beat the other party's comrade black and blue, what were you thinking. No, you probably weren't thinking of anything.

Choosing Shion as an escort was a failure on my part.

I don't think it was the wrong choice leaving the competent Diablo behind in the Ingrasia kingdom, but that left me with no choice but to bring Shion. I think I lucked out considering the fact the other party was still alive.

「Ah, Leon. My apologies, my subordinate seems to have beaten up your subordinate.....」

I apologized evasively,

「No, that was simply my subordinate acting immaturely. No need to worry.

However.....that really killed the mood.」

Yeah, it did.

I originally intended to serve Leon a single strike, but this really killed that intense mood we've built up.

「I'm, not in the mood to fight. Let's save this for another day.」

「Fufu. All right then. You and I are even, is that fine?」

「Ah, thank you.」

Even, huh...

It would seem that fellow Leon, doesn't intend to finish this with just one hit. It was this kind of feeling.

It seems, he's the kind of person whose actions don't always match what he speaks.

That's why Shizu-san too.....

However.....if that's the case, this concluded without a fight because of Shion's... efforts.

So if this is the birth of our friendship, things have ended pretty well, actually.

In the end, we were able to exchange useful information, and gave our consent for future cooperation.

That said, this is only a verbal agreement that needs to be revised and memorialized.

Even so, I think I will still proceed with Shizu san's promise.

Even though I didn't hit Leon, I think Shizu san doesn't really wish for me to beat up Leon.

The invitation was sudden, but I'm glad I accepted.

After having a heart to heart conversation with Leon, I was able to get a

grasp of his personality.

Achieving one of my purposes, I returned to my own country satisfied.

For Rimuru, this talk is a day's work over.

However, for Leon this isn't the end.

Rather, the girl he has been searching for years, Chloe has been found. He began taking action as soon as he could.

He commanded the Silver Knight Alrose, to gather all the main knights.

And so, to reclaim Chloe, the demon lord Leon moves out.

Lying in wait, Kagurazaka Yuuki

The day when these two forces clash draws near.

And that battle means that the fight between two bearers of Ultimate skills will occur anew.

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Editor's notes

[1] Shion is basically quoting what Rimuru said but in a way that would suggest she has no idea what she's saying.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 132 - Kagurazaka Yuuki

After leaving the Ingracia Kingdom's royal capital, Yuuki's group was leisurely traveling along the Great Kanat Mountain Range towards the East Empire.

The safer route to the empire's territory passes through the Dwarf Kingdom and would reveal their location to Rimuru and co.

Since Yuuki had never travelled to the east before, he couldn't transfer there with magic.

「Well now, mountain climbing can be fun every once in a while.」

Yuuki spoke in a carefree tone while he tore apart a low-class dragon that had come to attack them.

Kagari responded by shrugging her shoulders while Yuuki's supervisors, who he'd formerly dispatched to several countries, and were his trusted retainers remained silent, observing their surroundings quietly.

Yuuki, bored by their response, looked up at the summit.

The route Yuuki's group was following was one that passed above the Dwarf Kingdom and was rarely traversed.

The wild dragons that inhabited the area were a high-class life-form that could understand human speech if it became a higher species.

They were uninvited guests on these mountains so it would become troublesome if they were discovered by a King Class dragon.

Aware of this, Yuuki and co. advanced carefully.

Compared to Yuuki who seemed to be having fun, shadows of fatigue could be seen in his subordinates.

It wasn't surprising since they had been attacked by lower-class dragons once every hour. Up to five dragons have attacked at once. If they went through the safer route commonly used by merchants, they wouldn't be attacked like this and dragons would rarely appear.

The route that Yuuki and co. were traversing wasn't a route approved by the Dragon King.

Maybe because of that, they were extremely cautious. Yuuki had chosen this route without hesitation.

At that time,

「Oh? A call from Leon. Recently, he was mad and said that he would cancel our deal, does he still have complaints?」

While saying that happily, he took out a necklace with a small crystal from his breast pocket and charged it with magic power.

And somehow the conversation with Leon occurred,

「It seems like Leon will come here. Since it'll take him approximately an hour to get here, shall we take a break and wait for him?」

He informed Kagari and the others before he immediately sat down on a sturdy and comfortable rock.

「Leon...? The Demon Lord, Leon? Will it be alright?」

「Is there a possibility that it's the Demon Lord Ruminas and co?」

「Is it fine for our location to be given that easily?」

So his subordinates and Kagari questioned.

「Eh, it should be fine. After all, he was a regular client. Besides... even if the Demon Lords unite and come along, there's still Chloe.」

He replied optimistically.

Kagari and the subordinates realized that it was useless to even say anything now.

And so, after an hour, they would face Leon.

.....

.....

...

A meteor emitting golden lights appeared in the sky.  
Though it was daytime, the golden lights were clearly visible.  
It might have been guided by a detection series magic as it flew straight to Yuuki and co. without wavering.  
It was the Demon Lord Leon and his Knight subordinates.  
Leon was wearing a golden armor, and his colorful knights wore silver, black, red, and blue.

「Did I keep you waiting?」

Said Leon as soon as he landed.

「No, it was a nice rest. By the way, it seems to be urgent business, what is it?」

Yuuki answered with a radiant smile.

「I heard you were lying to me and could not be trusted.\* I came to find out whether or not it was true.」

Yuuki answered Leon's question with a smile.  
Invisible sparks flew between them, the tension around them instantly growing.

「You, did you think you could use such a lie against me, a Demon Lord?」

「Ahahaha. As expected, was my lie exposed?」

Even so, if you wanted to realize it, you should have realized it sooner.  
You're already too late, you know?」

With those words as a catalyst, the rock Yuuki sat on instantly melted into lava. It was the effect of a Scorching Magic attack.  
Yuuki left the spot quickly. The opponent's reaction to his response was as expected.

In the middle of the conversation, Yuuki hadn't neglected to analyze Leon and his subordinates' strength. The problem was whether or not Leon would be attacking by himself.

Were there reinforcements from the other Demon Lords? Was Leon just a decoy? Or was he alone?

Depending on the answer, it would be necessary for Yuuki to switch strategies. Yuuki had expected this development since he'd received the call.

Leon, as a high-ranking Demon Lord, he was not an opponent whose strength he could make light of.

If that Demon Lord decided to join ranks with the other Demon Lords in a united front, it would even be difficult for Chloe to handle them by herself. Therefore, he chose this place.

「Hey, hey, it's not gentle to attack suddenly.  
Your important Girl is over here, do you know the word Hostage?」

He called out to Leon in an attempt to agitate him, but...

「Don't worry, if you die, she'll be released right?  
What I requested was a girl, around eight year old with black hair, named Chloe O'bell.  
She's already grown up and is standing right there!」

Leon ignored Yuuki and denied his words strongly.  
Hearing Leon's words, the girl with black hair, Chloe, opened her eyes.

「Eh, Leon-Oniichan? You're alive?」

She murmured lightly in surprise with a voice full of nostalgia.

「Tch, it can't be helped if it was exposed.  
I kept quiet about having kept Chloe-chan as a trump card against the Demon Lord, however...  
Somehow, for a certain period of time, I had forgotten about it. When I remembered, she had already grown up as a Hero.」

Yuuki mocked Leon. Furthermore, he continued,

「Even so, it can't be helped right? You are a wicked Demon Lord.  
To exterminate you is the Hero's task, right?  
If you think about it, it is a pleasant miscalculation that Chloe grew into a  
Hero.」

So Yuuki declared.

Without letting his heart be disturbed by Yuuki's response, Leon said...

「Fu, is that the only thing you want to say? Then you shall die satisfied!」

Leon started attacking Yuuki with a high output magic.  
And so, the battle between Leon and Yuuki began.

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The heat wave from the magic closing in on Yuuki raged to violently burn his body.

Yuuki looked at the heat wave with a refreshed expression, and a small grin floated on his face.

Mostly, it was just as planned.

But it wasn't going exactly as he'd wanted.

He had considered the possibility of an attack from several Demon Lords, but judging from the current situation, it was only Leon.

Hypothetically, in case the three Demon Lords, Rimuru, Ruminas, and Leon came to attack him together, the probability of winning would be small, even if he let Chloe participate in the battle.

But it was an assumption that Rimuru and Ruminas would unite and attack him. It was unexpected that Leon would participate in the battle, but since

Chloe was involved, it was certain he would have become hostile sooner or later.

If he thought about it, it was unexpected that the girl, who Leon had entrusted to him, had become a Hero.

Ever since he'd learned of it, he had always been aiming for an opportunity to snatch away the "Sleeping Hero" enshrined by Ruminas.

This was for the sake of obtaining a trump card against Ruminas.

Rimuru was a suspicious reincarnated person from the same country as him and had shown an uncertain growth. He had planned to quickly get rid of this irregularity.

But it ended in failure, Rimuru became a Demon Lord.

Since it became like this, he had planned on making the children his trump card. He was going to gather trump cards against each Demon Lord so that he could take care of them with ease if he had to fight with them.

His ultimate target was the subjugation of Demon Lord Guy Crimson.

He was going to make as many Demon Lords abide his orders as possible in order to subjugate that absolutely strong person.

Working vigilantly and cunningly, the Demon Lord didn't stand a chance at all. Millim was also an absolutely strong person, but she seemed easy to trick and couldn't be labeled as a threat.

In other words, as long as he could defeat the Demon Lord Guy Crimson he would consider what to do afterwards, but.....

In reality, such an unexpected thing had occurred, it was interesting!

Yuuki felt a pleasant, exhilarating feeling in his heart when the plan didn't go as he'd expected.

Kagurazaka Yuuki was a genius.

When he was still in the former world, he had harbored dangerous dreams of destroying the boring everyday life. It was just that, in the former world, he hadn't held a fascination for the world's destruction.

Earning money wasn't a problem for him either, if he wished for it, he could obtain it, but for him, there was already nothing he really wanted.

When Yuuki had just become an elementary school student, his parents were killed in an accident. His parents hadn't made a mistake, they collided

head-on with a truck whose driver had fallen asleep at the wheel, and died instantly.[1]

Only Yuuki who was sleeping in the rear seat survived.

Yuuki had thought that it was unreasonable.

The world was too unreasonable[2], and he was too powerless.

Thinking about revenge against such an unreasonable world had become amusing. But he quickly grew tired of that.

He was a genius that could accomplish anything that he wanted.

If he seriously wished for it, it might really have been possible to turn the destruction of the world into reality.

It's uninteresting. This world is really boring.

He didn't lie about his true feelings.

But, it could be said that his rampage was suppressed because of that.

While it was a good fortune for Yuuki to have crossed to this world, it had become a misfortune for others.

Kagurazaka Yuuki crossed worlds and acquired the power that his soul had wished for. He who wanted all, in reality wanted nothing at all.

Therefore he obtained the "power" itself.

The "soul power[3]" to freely alter essence[4] as Yuuki wanted.

The name for it is, —Unique Skill 『Creator[5]』 —

The power was a miscalculation for Kazaream who had summoned Yuuki.

No, in the first place, that the summoned was Yuuki meant that it was a failure (fate) for Kazaream.

Kazaream who was a "Drifting Soul[6]" took several hundred years to prepare for his own revival, to increase the covenant with the summoned target.

Failure was not allowed in the ceremony, but just in case, he engraved a curse crest implementing his control ability and did the summoning.

The summoned target couldn't keep its consciousness and Kazaream had planned to destroy its spirit and kill it. Afterwards he was going to snatch the power of the soul and take over the body in order to revive. The covenant that should have been perfect was easily broken by Yuuki, the summoned target. With the power of the soul that Yuuki had obtained, the curse mark was reflected through reverse analysis.

With his own skill overturned, Kazaream easily surrendered to Yuuki.  
And so Yuuki went to another world.  
In this world, powerful enemies existed; it was a world without boredom.  
Yuuki rejoiced, he knew the meaning of his own existence in this world.

Let's bring destruction to this world. If you want to stop me, then show me if you can!

It was Yuuki's code of conduct.  
A warped retribution against such unreasonable world.  
Therefore Yuuki doesn't get impatient. It doesn't even matter if he fails.  
In case he succeeds, then the world will be destroyed and he may die in highest pleasure and joy.  
Perhaps he would create a new world and become its god, but...Yuuki hasn't thought that far ahead.  
His desire is to challenge the world. It's to fulfill his warped desire.

Yuuki understood the world's structure with his genius.  
First of all, he grasped the principle of summoning in the world and created the Unique Skill 『Summoner[7]』 .  
After that, from Kazaream's skill, he created the Unique Skill 『Ruler[8]』 .  
He created the ability after spontaneously comprehending the structure and changing it so that he could use it.[9]  
After that, he would learn the skills he liked from the people he met and acquired a great number of abilities.  
Fitting for his status of a genius, he didn't need a lot of time to obtain overwhelming power.  
He obtained the Unique Skill 『Plunderer[10]』 from Hinata.  
Her 『Mathematician』 skill wasn't necessary for him. The reason was that his thought speed was better. If it was in the former world, his impossibly quick calculation speed could have burnt his cerebral nerves, but that wasn't an issue in this world.  
The reason is that when he was summoned to this world, his entire physical constitution was renewed and changed his body into a type of spirit life-form.  
Thus, Yuuki exceeded the limits of this world.  
Yuuki was convinced that his power would be equal to a Demon Lord in 10 years.  
However, he couldn't be careless.

Even if he was certain of his power, when he noticed that his figure hadn't changed at all, Yuuki had already noticed that his lifespan was no longer of concern.

It was unnecessary to get impatient. He would advance surely and carefully. Yuuki pushed his plan forward as slowly as he personally wanted. He may be able to defeat the Demon King, but he wasn't certain. Therefore, first of all he procured trump cards.

Against Leon was the girl Chloe.  
Against Ruminas is the Sleeping Hero.  
Against Rimuru are the Children.

However, the girl Chloe was the Sleeping Hero.  
He also lost Hinata, who had been under his control. However it couldn't be helped.  
He made a contract with the Hero Chloe.  
Against the Hero who had just awakened, he attempted to control her using all the power of his Unique Skill 『Ruler』 .  
Yuuki concentrated all his energy into that one skill. Even though he did that, it was an existence impossible to completely control.  
He stopped all his plans and decided to control the Hero.

「Soon, Hinata will come to rescue the children.  
At that time I will fight Hinata. Therefore, I want you not to interrupt.」

It was a mistake to bet against the Hero Chloe who said could predict the future.  
According to Yuuki's prediction, the one who would come was Rimuru who had become a demon Lord.  
When Rimuru came, he was going to let Chloe fight him and at that time he intended to gain control over him.  
But, Yuuki realized the optimism of his own thought as the bet resulted in failure.  
The Hero Chloe, was likely an existence outside of the World's Law.  
Even with his ruling ability, she was an existence that couldn't be completely dominated. She was an existence he couldn't fathom, even with analysis.  
However, fortunately, he succeeded in engraving the "Curse Seal" on her.

Even when he used all of his “soul’s power” it was still impossible to control her.

Even so, he could command her for three orders. Still, this girl had immeasurable potential.

But the plan failed completely.

Even so, obtaining this Hero still had some potential significance.

Above all else.....

It was a mess; it had become very interesting!

The Demon Lord Leon was before him.

It was certain that this man was superior to him.

Even with Yuuki’s ability, he was an opponent that couldn’t be read.

With Yuuki’s ability, he could analyze a normal Unique Skill right away.

If he couldn’t read it, then the opponent’s rank was higher than Unique Skill.

According to Kazaream, she said the attack was a current of light that destroyed all.

It reminded him of the “Disintegration” that Hinata used.

It was the strongest Holy magic.

But Leon didn’t need to chant; it also seemed that he could activate it instantly and without limit.

Just thinking about it made him tremble with excitement.

And...

《Confirmed. Acquisition of Ultimate Skill 『Greedy King Mammon[11]』 · · · Succeeded》

The Voice of the World echoed.

On this day, at this moment, in this place,

The worst Devil was born.

- [1] Truck-san ga kita!
  - [2] Can also mean Unjust
  - [3] 魂の力 Tamashii no chikara Power of the Soul/Soul power/Spirit power.
  - [4] 本質 Honshitsu, can also mean substance, nature, and reality.
  - [5] 創造者 Souzousha, so his Unique Skill make him technically a god.
  - [6] 漂う精神 Tadayou Seishin
  - [7] 召喚者 Shoukansha
  - [8] 支配者 Shihaisha
  - [9] He uses the original skill as the base and modifies it to his use.
  - [10] 強奪者 Goudatsusha
  - [11] 強欲之王(マモン) Gouyoku no Ou (Mamon). King of Greed/Ruler of Avarice etc.
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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 133 - Leon vs Yuuki -Part 1-

The ultimate skill 『Avarice King Mammon』 is an ability specialized in depriving.

As expected, the most heinous character was bestowed with the evilest ability.

A moment prior, Yuuki was in an overwhelmingly disadvantageous position. Perhaps had Chloe joined the fight the tables could possibly be turned, but Yuuki wished to avoid that.

The number of times Chloe could be commanded was set at 3 times.

Moreover, an order was consumed via his first command “Do not interfere with me”.

This was the greatest command he could achieve against Chloe's ability. If he wished for her to serve him faithfully, even all of the wishes would not be enough.

Simply commanding Chloe not to turn hostile exerted him to his utmost. Nevertheless, he had taken countermeasures to against the possibility of Chloe awakening from this Curse of Dominance.

Yuuki had to use every ounce of his soul to maintain this soul contract.

And now, even though Yuuki's own Ultimate skill has awakened, he decided to abstain from using her power.

Chloe's specialty is combat. Even so, Yuuki did not fail to consider the possibility that Chloe was seeking to annul the contract every moment she was with him.

After all, she almost succeeded a second ago.

「I see... I thought she was awfully quiet, but she was trying to cancel the contract with me, huh?」

Yuuki said, shrugging.

Chloe remained silent, with a bitter expression.

Setting aside whether the attempt would have succeeded or not, the fact remains that she tried.

Well, that's a given, thought Yuuki. Unless you're an idiot, it's unnatural for someone to simply obey.

「Well whatever. Looks like I made it in time. Now then, Leon. Shall we continue?」

Yuuki nodded in regards to Chloe's reaction, and faced Leon.

Leon scowled at the blissful expression on Yuuki's face.

With both sides now possessing an ultimate skill, Leon had already lost his advantage.

But situation wise, Leon still had the advantage.

Yuuki may have awoken to his ultimate skill, but his energy has not yet recovered.

He was still stuck with whatever was left over from dominating Chloe.

But still Yuuki refused to deploy his trump card. He wanted to win with what he already in hand.

Yuuki continued to think, but his current situation remained unfortunate.

The Silver Knight Alrose was currently fighting face to face against Kagali.

Both sides were evenly matched.

At the same time, Leon's strongest subordinate the Black Knight Claude, alongside the red knight and the blue knight were fighting against Yuuki's subordinates.

The Black Knight Claude displayed overwhelming might in battle.

Yuuki's Subordinates, who originally numbered more than 10, were now reduced to mere 5. And even now, another one was felled by his strike.

And then there was 4. They planned to assist Alrose in the fight against Kagari after cleaning up the small fries.

「Wait a moment, Yuuki-sama! At this rate wouldn't we be killed?!」

Becoming rather desperate-looking, Kagari continuously evaded Alrose.

Looking at her struggle,

「You really are weak aren't you」

Yuuki answered Kagari with disgust.

「But I guess having this be a one-sided slaughter does bug me, so how about I go on the offensive?」

He slipped behind the red knight.

And while avoiding the sword slashing towards him,

「Life steal」

And then, a palm rested on Red Knight's chest.

As soon as Yuuki lifted his palm, the Red Knight crumpled on the spot.

[The editor just came to the realization that these knights are based off of power rangers...]

「Red Knight?」

「Nee-san!」

Red Knight didn't respond to Black Knight Claude's and Blue Knight's screams.

Or rather, she couldn't. The reason being that she was already dead.

「It's useless to beckon you know? That's because, I just took that person's life」

Looking like his power restored a little, Yuuki stated the fact with icy cold words.

This, was no longer a battle.

Only the Depriver, and the deprived.

Between the two, there was a hopeless gap.

Defeating all of Yuuki's subordinates, Blue Knight rushed towards Red Knight to confirm what he had proclaimed.

His sister did not show signs of movement. she was without a doubt, dead.

「You Bastard!」

The Blue Knight was enraged,

「Oi oi, this is a battle, isn't it?

You've been killing my subordinates too weren't you, isn't getting angry over this a bit unreasonable?」

TN: This guy...

In response to Yuuki's words, their killing intent intensified.

As for Leon, after looking at Yuuki's ability he realized the graveness of the situation.

Even if it had just awakened, Yuuki's already completely mastered the ability. In the first place, leveling the playing field was something outside of his calculation.

Leon did not underestimate Yuuki. Yet, he concluded that Yuuki must be exterminated before was is given a chance to grow because of how unpredictable and dangerous he was.

Certainly he wanted to save Chloe as soon as possible; however, circumstances as they were dictated against solo action.

Therefore, he decided to retreat.

All of Yuuki's subordinates have been eliminated; all that was left was the woman known as Kagali. Although he was worried about that vicious glare, strength wise she didn't seem like that much of a problem.

But with an ability that steals an opponent's soul without resistance through touch, Leon judged that Yuuki was far too dangerous for Leon and his companions.

「Withdraw for now」

Leon decided, and immediately ordered.

「Leon-sama, allow me to be the rearguard ! 」

The Black Knight Claude cried out, and appeared in front of Leon, by the wall facing Yuuki.

「Ara? Leon are you escaping? I wouldn't allow such a thing you know?」

Yuuki revealed a beaming smile, manipulating the surrounding trees and blocked Leon's retreat path.

However, something of this degree couldn't possibly block Leon. Light of the ultimate skill "King of Purity Metatron" gathered in his palm, Leon forcefully destroyed the trees and opened the way.

Although Leon tried to trigger transfer magic, his attempt merely resulted in confusion.

「"Ha ha, you can't use transfer here you know? Didn't you know? One of the reasons I chose this place was because it seals off any attempts of escaping via transfer」

Yuuki said, happily.

Then, without missing the opportunity from the failed transfer

「Overwrite」

Yuuki's hands touched Black Knight Claude's shoulder.  
Despite being caught off guard for an instant, Claude took evasive measures.  
Thanks to that, he didn't fall like the Red Knight.  
No, something was off, and when Leon noticed,

「Yuuki-sama, my name is Claude. What are your orders!」

The Black Knight Sir Claude, kneeled towards Yuuki.  
The worst development had come about.  
What Yuuki can deprive was not limited to someone's life.  
Their life, ability, and even their mind.  
No matter how deeply their loyalty is embedded onto their soul, by re-writing the information in their soul, it's possible to instill loyalty onto himself.  
Such is the ability of Yuuki's ultimate skill "Avarice King Mammon".

「Ahaha, now excluding Chloe, it's finally a 3 on 3! We're finally even, eh?」

Yuuki laughed happily,

「As expected, you have a really fine personality, Yuuki-sama.....  
But, Leon. Seeing you making that face fills me with endless joy.”

A joyful smile appeared on Kagali (Kazalim).

「You bastard, what did you do to Claude?」

Leon asked,

「I just took your subordinates. Isn't everyone fine with it?  
If the target swore loyalty to no one, this skill wouldn't have worked.

Overwrite is an ability that allows me to re-write at whom the loyalty is directed.」

Yuuki who answered cheerfully turned to examine Claude to ascertain his feelings.

From the looks of Claude he has succeeded,

TN Comment: \$20 dollars betting anyone that this ability will fail to affect Shion when they do fight.

「But this ability is surprisingly useful」

He laughed, satisfied.

Perhaps it was best to call this power evil incarnate.

The higher their level of loyalty, the easier it is for them to fall into the hands of Yuuki.

Kagali was overjoyed at Leon's dire situation, and the Black Knight Claude who had betrayed naturally pointed his sword towards Leon without hesitation.

As Yuuki claimed, excluding Chloe this has turned to a 3 on 3 battle.

Moreover, the situation has become overwhelmingly disadvantageous for Leon.

But even amidst this disadvantageous situation, Leon's heart did not waver. Considering Yuuki's personality, one ought to have expected him to set up some sort of trap.

He doesn't seem to have activated the trap yet, however Leon has already understood the nature of this trap.

TN Note: Leon's name hasn't appeared, but I took the liberty to make it flow a bit better.

A magnetic field that interferes with transfer magic, drifting miasma.

Uncharted mountains where mostly dragons dwell and humans seldom come, a mysterious place.

Intelligence has mentioned something akin to this place in their reports. It

was ...

But even if his assumption was correct, and the trap had indeed been sprung, it would not cause Leon any inconvenience.

(In that case, Rimuru and Ruminas, who focus on the magical attribute, would be really troubled if they fought him)

He murmured to himself.

Her eyes sparkled for a moment when his gaze met Chloe's.

Don't despair under these circumstances, her gaze conveyed her intention strongly.

Looking at Claude who was once a loyal subject then looking back at Chloe once more, Chloe nodded faintly.

(Something can be done, is that it? Well... Red Knight probably can't, but... )

Yuuki must have thought that these circumstances were truly inconvenient to Leon, but he misunderstood that Leon really didn't care about his subordinates that much. He used them as long as they were useful; he had no duty to protect them.

No matter which of his subordinates you ask, not one would expect to be protected by him.

In fact, every single one of them would be joyful at an opportunity to perish as his shield.

(Even so, that doesn't mean they want to die)

At one point he thought of retreating because his subordinates were a hindrance.

Whenever Leon gets serious, people around him get caught up in it.

Precisely because of this, he refused the work together with Rimuru and Ruminas.

And when he thought to retreat, his subordinate Claude was stolen.

This no longer was a situation he could allow to continue.

Leon looked at Red Knight, and gently killed off the anger in his heart. Leon is a king, to waiver at the death of his subordinates should not be something present.

The enemy, were Yuuki and Kagari.

Claude may be Leon's strongest subordinate, but he knows him like the palm of his hand. He's not Leon's enemy.

Kagali seems like a female devil that uses a familiar trick. She seems to hold a serious grudge towards Leon, but he couldn't recall.

His heart isn't big enough to remember the grudges of each and every small fry. She seems to be good at using curse spells, but not at a level worthy of calling a threat.

It'd be fine to ignore this woman, thought Leon.

In that case, the only enemy here is Yuuki.

Yuuki is a real pain, having awakened an ultimate skill here. He truly is a man who gains strength in the face of adversity.

But.....

Leon had a thin smile.

「Did you know? Ultimate skills are not equal—there could be a difference between them as great as between heaven and the earth!!」

「What?」

「I've changed my mind, I'm not withdrawing, I'm going to bury you here」

Leon's ultimate skill is the apex of the light class, an existence that could be called the bane of being of magic origin.

And, Leon knows someone else who holds an Ultimate Skill.

He tried confronting him once, and his defeat was so overwhelming it couldn't be called a fight at all.

—“Lord of Darkness” Guy • Crimson—

The strongest of the Demon Lords.

Leon made full use of his Ultimate skill, and attacked with full force. The result was a complete defeat.

After defeating Kazalim, Guy • Crimson aimlessly visited to issue a challenge. If he won he would be allowed to do as he wished, if he lost Leon was to become Guy's companion.

Leon came with the intention to kill, and Guy simply defended all his attacks as if he were toying.

The experience of defeat had made Leon strong.

After all, in a battle between Ultimate skill wielders, the key to victory is to understand the opponent's ability first.

If a person couldn't comprehend what had happened, then his defeat is inevitable. For Leon, Guy was a person capable of overwhelming others so. Then, for a person without an ultimate skill, prevailing against those with one is impossible. Going as far as preparing a number of things to prevent confrontation.

It was outside of his calculation for Yuuki to come here and then awaken an ultimate skill like he did, however this wasn't enough to determine Leon's defeat.

Over the course of hundreds of years, Leon familiarized himself with his skill. Since Yuuki has just awakened, his grasp of his skill is yet imperfect. And, that is good. If he were to awaken his abilities in the dark, he would certainly become troublesome when Leon would have faced him.

(The sprouting bud of a threat should be plucked here and now)

In front of Leon, the evil youth Kagurazaka Yuuki, has finally been recognized as an enemy that must be eradicated.

Yuuki perceived, that the atmosphere of the handsome blond man in front of him, Leon · Cormwell, had changed.

What, what is that.....? He thought.

In a flash of light—Leon himself, Yuuki could only watch as Claude was blown away.

With an intense blow from Leon's bare hands, the jet black armor of Black Knight Sir. Claude was half-destroyed, rendering him unable to battle.

While looking at Claude who was blown off into Chloe's vicinity, he clicked his tongue,

「Chloe, can you heal that guy? I'd rather have a comrade I made after a lot of effort than a dead subordinate」

He called out to Chloe.

「Sure, why not」

Was that a command? No, and there is an explanation for that.

If the curse wasn't used, it would be treated as Chloe's own will rather than a command.

The exchange, which has been ongoing for a few days now, led Yuuki to be able to fight without much effort at this point.

But Leon's current attack speed was at a level where Yuuki could barely react.

It seems, the demon lord Leon is seriously enraged.

(So he was this strong! Even with my abnormal strength, catching that would be dangerous.

I deliberately tried to anger him... but I guess I failed?)

TN Note: Oh no, it was a success. It was a little too big of a success in fact.

In fact, even in this situation Yuuki is thinking playful thoughts.

「You guys, return first. And then, inform the Ruminas and Rimuru as to what happened her.」

Silver Knight Alrose and Blue knight could only nod at Leon's instruction.

If Leon who was their master fought seriously, they noticed that they would only be a burden. Moreover, they feared to cause him trouble if they were stolen by the other side.

Even though his sister was killed, Blue Knight didn't fail to calmly comprehend the current situation. They quickly withdrew without a complaint.

Confirming the two that are swiftly preparing their escape,

「I won't allow that!」

Kagali tried to interfere with her puppet trees,

「You bastards seem to be underestimating me」

Under the light that Leon released, all the trees crumbled and disappeared.

「Geh, geeh!!」

Noticing that Leon's attack was directed at her, Kagali quickly darted behind Chloe.

「Wait, wait a moment Chloe-chan. You're protecting me too right?」

Imprudently, Kagari tried to muddle into Chloe's defense barrier.  
And much to everyone's amazement,

「I don't particularly mind...」

Answered Chloe,

「Well! As expected, Chloe Chan truly is kind. As expected of the hero!」

Kagali looked happy and joyfully rubbed Chloe's cheek with her own, Chloe pushed her away with disgust.

「Oh well, the order of things have merely changed」

Said Leon,

「Hey, hey, Yuuki-sama! Can't you hear what he's saying?  
Do you seriously think you can win?」

Remembering the traumas of defeat, the frightened Kagali cried out. She clearly abandoned any hopes of appearing composed. After all, even after several hundred years there stood Leon's figure. He had mentally scarred Kagali

「You.... You really have a wonderful personality, you know...?  
Just shut up and watch how I win this」

In reality, Yuuki was not sure he had the ability to say that. When Leon's subordinates escaped, he considered giving chase but Leon's current state dissuaded him. Clearly, there's time to spare for Leon, and ignoring him would be a suicidal act. Kagali was careless and still alive only because she wasn't being directly targeted.

No, perhaps he merely returned the favor of Yuuki having overlooked the escape of his subordinates. And probably, that light released from Leon's skill is an attack that would engulf surrounding people in it.

He merely avoided using it to not hurt his own subordinates. That's probably how it was.

(Now I've done it; I feel like I've tread on the tiger's tail)

TN Note: It's a Japanese idiom, meaning he's taken a great risk.

Even as Yuuki was thinking such things, a smile crept onto his face.

Truly, if he had asked asked Rimuru and Ruminas for reinforcements, Yuuki wouldn't have stood a chance.

He would have to use his trump card and even then he would likely fall.

And even if he played this card now, Leon would be defeated, but Yuuki was also lose.

Now then, what could he do?

With Chloe the battle would be won quickly. But to use her to kill a single person Leon would be a waste. And perhaps he could somehow manage against a single demon lord.

In that case, all he had to do was to try  
He has finally acquired an ultimate skill; it would be a waste not to test it.

「Now then, Leon. You are more dangerous than you appeared.  
Even so, victory will be mine.」

「Say as much bullshit as you want. You, underestimated a demon lord.  
Time to face reality」

Their auras clashed creating lighting which flashed between the heaven and  
the earth.

No more conversation could be had.

Naught but battle remained.

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 134 - Leon vs Yuuki -Part 2-

The battle between Leon and Yuuki began.

The air flickered with light, and the ground was blown away by the shock. Even Chloe who hadn't moved was hit by the aftermath of the shock. Kagali who hid behind Chloe, ducked her head and opened her eyes wide.

「Time,time out! What in the world is happening here!?!」

It was a high-speed battle, too quick for Kagali to perceive, she could only see traces of it.

Which side has the advantage? The result is unknown.

「At a glance, the situation seems even. However.....」

「——however?」

「I see that Leon Onii-chan's still holds the advantage and has lead the situation as he desired.」

*I'm not very good at analyzing,* Chloe spoke while thinking that, as they watched the fight.

「Haa? That's a bit vague. Then, which side will win?」

Chloe remained silent for a while,

「If the conditions remain just as they are now, Leon Onii-chan will win」

She declared.

「Hmm. Whatever. Although I will declare something too, Yuuki-sama will not be defeated. Definitely.」

Kagali forcefully made an assertion.

Chloe glanced at Kagali and neither denied nor confirmed her assertion.

The Black Knight Claude said nothing and put down his held up hand.

Claude, who had been seriously injured by Leon's blow, was now fully healed. He was amazed that even the black armor was completely restored.

Gently putting her finger over the wide-eyed Claude's lip, Chloe slightly shook her head. With just that she drove Claude out of her mind and Chloe returned her focus to Leon and Yuuki's fight.

The Black Knight Claude stood up beside Chloe without saying anything.

「Hey, can you see the fight between those two?」

Kagali asked Claude who had stood up.

However, Claude only answered with a nod instead of words.

「Tch. You seemed to be monstrous enough to be capable of following such a fight with your eyes.

Well, it's ok. After all, it will be a victory for Yuuki-sama, you should ascertain the victory of your new master as well. 」

After saying that much, Kagali sat down on a convenient rock with an uninterested expression.

Of course, she sat in a spot where Chloe could still act as a barrier and protect her.

Their level of combat was far above what she could perceive, and Kagali didn't even have the slightest bit of experience necessary to comprehend the fight anyway. What's more, this girl fully believed in Yuuki's victory, so she didn't have any interest in watching the battle.

Claude, unlike Kagali, was still bewildered by his current situation.

However, after being admonished by Chloe, he didn't dare foolishly reveal his current state. Actually, his consciousness, thanks to Chloe, had returned to the him still pledging his allegiance to Leon.

Chloe's ability was not to recovery. The true nature of it was rewinding time.

She rewound time to make it so that the situation where Yuuki did the Overwrite never happened. Without changing the surroundings' time, it was possible to use the ability to affect only limited number of people. This ability was the ultimate power. It is not limited to erasing damage, but even abnormal status—in other words, fatigue or even death— will become nonexistent.

However, it's unfortunate that the Red's revival was impossible. Because Yuuki used his depriving ability, there was no way to interfere.

Although it was an absolute power, it was not almighty.

Chloe knew that well. Besides, she had just acquired the ability and could not wield it fully.

Her wish to revive the Red Knight was difficult to fulfill.

There was no one that would condemn her, however she looked at the Red Knight with a sad expression.

There was nothing that she could do, since she couldn't move without permission.

While letting out a sigh, Chloe focused on the fight.

Leon and Yuuki. The fight between those two had just begun.

However, as Chloe's eyes focused, she saw clearly that the state of the fight had changed greatly.

Yuuki felt a deep regret for his erroneous impression.

He had underestimated his opponent.

Leon Cromwell, a newcomer Demon Lord.

A former Human, the Demon Lord who defeated Kagali=Kazaream.

Because Kagali was too weak, it could be said that he had estimated Leon's power as being low.

Fortunately, thanks to the fact that an Ultimate Skill had awakened in him, he could continue fighting. He was certain that if he hadn't acquired the skill he would have already been defeated.

*(Or rather, I didn't think that he was this strong)*

He kept thinking as warding off the blow from the light that was unleashed towards him.

He could feel that his energy was reduced by a large amount when warding attacks. If this situation continued, his defeat was merely a matter of time. Yuuki's ability specialized in stealing things. Its main use was to take the enemy's energy. With this ability, he could recover his power while he attacked, so normally this ability could be called omnipotent in attack and defense.

That's the case when the opponent is not Leon.

The attribute of Leon's ability is Light=Purification. This attribute specialized in purifying demons, in other words, it's an ability fitting for a Hero.

Because this person was a Demon Lord, Yuuki couldn't help but feel that the ironic situation was a great big joke.

Though there was no use in complaining, Yuuki's acquired ability was part of the demon series[1], meaning it had a demonic attribute[2]. Every time he attacked, he received purification, meaning he received damage.

Much of the energy that he'd stolen had been purified. Furthermore, he couldn't evade the opponent's attack and he can't help but to notice the large amount of damage he received with each encounter.

(This isn't good, right? I will lose if this situation continues.)

He thought about his next plan optimistically.

In the worst case scenario, he could involve Chloe. However, he wished to avoid that. It would become difficult to lead the world to destruction if he did that.

The reason was simple. It would become impossible for him to defeat the strongest entities in this world known as Guy Crimson and Milim Nava. And Rimuru as well.

Yuuki's intuition told him that the Slime he met was an abnormality. Its growth speed was abnormal, and his gaze was impenetrable. That gaze felt uncomfortable, so he had judged that it was impossible to ignore Rimuru. (—I never thought that Rimuru-san could see through my true nature...Still, I get the feeling it will be dangerous if I don't get rid of that person quickly.) For such a thing, it was preferable to use Chloe.

Two strong people and one dangerous person.

Yuuki had judged Milim was someone that could easily be deceived.

Therefore the real problem was Guy and Rimuru.

Yuuki felt uneasy leaving Guy as Chloe's only opponent. Therefore he was going to get rid of Rimuru.

After that, he would make Chloe fight Guy, it was a plan to get rid of the two of them at the same time.

It seemed it would be difficult to defeat Rimuru later if he used Chloe now.

Feeling such a premonition, Yuuki didn't give Chloe an order.

Well then, what did he need to do right now?

The best he could do in the contract he made with Chloe was for her not to disrupt Yuuki's decree. However it wasn't a problem for petty orders. Chloe probably was a good natured person, so if he requested it of her, she might listen.

But withdrawing from here would still be impossible even if she protected Yuuki and the rest.

(If it had been Rimuru and Ruminas that had come over, it would have gone just as planned...)

Yuuki let out a sigh and decided to discard his hesitation and use his trump card.

He regretted that he had misunderstood Leon's strength, and after he escaped he needed to reflect on this. He needed to make a decision soon, since his eminent defeat wouldn't be a joke.

「Haha, Leon. I'm sorry. I underestimated you too much.

Therefore, I've decide to use my trump card!」

「Fu, do as you like. It will be useless.」

「After putting up such a bluff, please don't say something cowardly okay?」

Yuuki activated the combined ability of 『Summoner』 and his Ultimate Skill 『Avaricious King Mammon』, and a very large magic circle began to appear on the ground. Within the circle were numerous corpses composed of Yuuki's subordinates and the Red Knight. Their bodies began to expand and became lumps of flesh. Then the wriggling, wicked thing that crawled out of Yuuki's magic circle mixed with the lumps of flesh...  
It let out a roar in fury.

In the past, the originator of the dragon race, "Star King Dragon Veldanava," had given his daughter a dragon as guardian (pet)[3].

The dragon possessing great power had fallen into a trap and was killed by a certain kingdom.

When the girl, it's master, evolved, its body was changed into a chaos dragon, full of fiendish power.

Unfortunately, it lacked a soul, making it transcend beyond the confines of good and evil into an incarnation of destruction.

It was said that the girl, grieving over the sad twist of fate, sealed the dragon where nobody would find it.

However, after many years and months had passed, miasma[4] was released from its body, running the surrounding nature. Naturally, the Freedom Association received requests to investigate the cause of the wicked miasma.

「Awaken, Chaos Dragon! Your true master is me!」

Using the awakened dragon, he was going to get rid of the pursuing Demon Lord.

In his original plan, he was going to escape while the dragon rampaged.

However, it was different now. Right now, by using the Ultimate Skill

『Greedy King Mammon』, the Chaos Dragon's master was Yuuki.

The Chaos Dragon that had just awakened, released an overwhelming pressure, and absorbed the surrounding magic power to build up its own power.

As a direct descendent of the dragon race, its total length exceeded 20m.

Right now, the strongest dragon moved according to Yuuki's will.

The roar and miasmatic breath it spouted corroded the rocky surface and the arbor, from the hillside to the summit, crumbled.

This was the Chaos Dragon's ability, Chaotic Breath.

Yuuki sported a proud smile and Kagali turned pale.

Though it wasn't visible in Claude's expression, it looked like he believed in his master Leon.

Chloe clenched her fist. If by any chance Leon was defeated, she decided she would destroy the Chaos Dragon with her own hands.

「Hahaha! What do you think? This is something that you can't deal with so easily.

Right now, if you swear fidelity to me, I will gladly make you my companion, how does that sound?」

Leon laughed scornfully at Yuuki's proposal.

He had predicted this development. Furthermore, he hadn't obstructed the summoning.

That was because...

「As expected, it was a Chaos Dragon—」.

You're a fool, to revive a revenant from ancient times, do you wish to incur the wrath of the Dragon Princess Milim?

It will be transmitted to Milim as soon as I cut the soul's connection.  
It the end for you, Kagurazaka Yuuki.]

「.....I see. You realized it and didn't let me do as I pleased.  
Even so, won't you already be dead before Milim arrives?」  
「Fufu, do you want to try and see?」

Erasing his expression, Yuuki gave an order to the Chaos Dragon.  
*Kill the enemy before you!*

The Chaos Dragon was certainly strong. Its power was second to the  
“Dragon Kind” and seemed to reign as the strongest monster that appeared  
in nature.

However, this mindless monster didn't have any wisdom. It was an  
incarnation of violence that just rampaged and attacked without reason.  
In case the previous Demon Lords hadn't awakened, it might have exceeded  
them in brute force and overwhelming energy. However...

Leon was a genius, moreover his attribute was Light=Purification.  
His existence was such that could be called the natural enemy of the Chaos  
Dragon.

「I will say it once more. You are underestimating me.  
The reason I deliberately gave you time for the summoning was to show the  
difference between our powers and that what you have done today, in this  
place, is fruitless.  
I will show you a piece of my power!」

Leon was wrapped in a golden light while he talked.  
Golden Wings, constructed with pure light energy, appeared on his back.  
His wings resembled the wings of the angel race, but in reality his wings  
were totally a stream of light itself.  
And, he held the Flame Pillar (Holy Flame Rapier)[5], which had manifested  
in his right hand.  
It was a Mythical class (Gods)[6] rapier, the strongest sword in Leon's  
possession. A pattern of beautiful bluish white flame stood out on its  
flexible, thin blade.  
Leon held a Golden Circle (Golden Round Shield)[7] in his left hand and the  
rapier in his right.  
It was a legend class shield as good as armor, but it had high defense ability  
because it was mixed with Leon's Holy Aura. In reality, the shield could

suppress the damage from an attack of demonic attribute by reducing up to half of it with purification.

Fully armed, Leon glanced at Yuuki who'd lost his smile and then moved his eyes to Chaos Dragon as though he had lost interest in Yuuki.

And then,

「It seems I will incur Milim's hostility if I kill you. Since that's the case, I will only make you fall asleep again!

Oh Holy spirits, flutter! Triangle Pyramid (Sacred Tetrahedron Demon Sealing Barrier)[8]!!」

A small tetrahedron with four pillars made from crystallized spirits grew large and in accordance to Leon's will, it wrapped around the Chaos Dragon. This was the ultimate holy attribute barrier that even surpassed Holy Field. The Barrier that Leon had constructed was given the [effect : eternity], where the captured person was confined. It was a high-class sealing technique that rivaled 『Infinite Prison』. No, the effect may even surpass 『Infinite Prison』 if the target had a demonic attribute.

With the existence of this barrier, Leon could possibly win against Guy just once. Of course, if it was Guy, he would instantly sense the danger of the barrier, and not get caught by it. Therefore, not to bedisparaging, but the success rate against Guy was only about 1 in 1000 attempts.

However, if the target was a mindless monster, it couldn't defend against this technique.

The poor Chaos Dragon struggled to break the seal, but its resistance was futile.

Furthermore, when the barrier's effect activated, it sucked the magic power from the Chaos Dragon and used it to reinforce the barrier's strength. When it came to this, its movements were already sealed.

It wasn't like the lifecycle barrier that Milim had erected, no matter how much energy the Chaos Dragon possessed, as it was, it could vanish before 100 years had passed.

In this matter, Leon thought that Milim could possibly resent him for this, but if he released the seal and handed it over to Milim then it would be fine.

It would be troublesome to incur Milim's wrath, but it wasn't really something that he should be thinking of right now. He modified the barrier settings, so that it would immediately be buried under the ground.

In the end, the Chaos Dragon was sealed again in instant by Leon.

.....

This could not be called a battle, it was an event symbolizing Leon's overwhelming strength.

「Well then, did your trump card end with this? If it's over, it's my turn now.」

Leon looked at Yuuki and spoke mercilessly. Leon had completely settled the situation in his favor and Yuuki's chance of victory could be deemed as nonexistent. But,

「Ahahahaha! I never thought that a Demon Lord was amazing, to this degree! Honestly, I underestimated it. Even so, I already took the source of that dragon's power, I don't need it anymore. I have restored the damage I received from you. Then, should I get serious now? 」

Exactly as stated by Yuuki, his both hands were covered with dragon scales, his body is was covered by the same miasma that had covered the Chaos Dragon not long ago. It was almost like it had transformed into an ominous black armor resembling the scales of dragon. Leon recalled the buried barrier to himself,

「You bastard!」

He shouted at Yuuki. The Chaos Dragon became bone, it weathered and then crumbled. It was the result of the dragon losing its power. Just as Yuuki had said, he had deprived it of its very core. *With this, Milim's wrath is!* The moment Leon thought about that—

「Do you think now is the right time to worry about that?」

Yuuki leapt behind Leon's with a speed incomparable to before.  
And delivered a strong kick to Leon's back.  
Yuuki, who had taken the power of the dragon, had become a Dragon  
Warrior. He put more effort into the fight,

「Don't get cocky, you insect!」

Golden lights were emitted intensely and completely dyed the area pure  
white.

Inside the torrent of light that blinded people's eyes was Leon who stood  
glaring angrily at Yuuki, his body wrapped in white-gold armor.  
The 36 pairs of 72 wings appeared once more on his back. They had  
vanished when he had used barrier before, but it manifest again when  
Leon's virtually unlimited holy aura was released.

Light Angel Leon vs Dragon Warrior Yuuki

The fight was settled in an instant.  
Leon, who burned with anger, delivered intense attacks towards Yuuki  
without giving him the chance to counterattack.  
With a flowing elegant thrusting speed that approach the speed of light,  
Leon's Flame Pillar made Yuuki's entire body instantly became bloody.  
The ominous black armor that was the crystallization of the Chaos Dragon's  
power was smashed to pieces, unable to withstand the sword endowed  
with the power of purification.

As for the difference in power, the gap was vast, like that between an adult  
and a child.

*(Damn, it can't be... to this extent...)*

Yuuki, felt his own ego weakening, seemingly disappearing.  
If this situation continued, it would not be not good. If things kept going like  
this, his defeat was certain.

Above all.....

—Well then, will it be my turn soon?  
(Not yet, I'm not defeated yet!)

Yuuki gathered up his disappearing consciousness,

「Didn't I said it would be useless? You are not even capable of following my movement」

Yuuki lost sight of Leon, who was standing in front of him, and his left arm is cut by Leon's Flame Pillar and flung away.

An acute pain attacked Yuuki, and his control of the power had already become unsteady.

He fell to the ground and crouched down. His severed arm stopped bleeding, and he glared at Leon who hovered over him, looking down at him.

The outcome was already determined. Yuuki seemed to have misunderstood Leon's overwhelming strength.

The difference between the strength he took from the ancient dragon, the power of the Chaos Dragon, and Leon's was not good.

It was just like Leon had said, even if he awoke an Ultimate Skill, the difference in the ability was like heaven and earth.

「It's the end」

Just as Leon declares the ultimatum, a multi-layered 3D magic circle formed with Leon in the center and took in Yuuki.

The magic circle kept radiating and flickering in a radiant color, and then it was completed in an instant.

「Perish, “Holy Breakdown (36<sup>th</sup> Style Annihilation's Light of Holy Spirit Purification)[9]”!」

Twinkling lights radiated from his 36 pairs of wings.

When the lights collided with the layered barrier, they were reflected irregularly and filled the inside of the barrier with light. It was a wild dance of photons that broke down the things it touched. It was Leon's greatest and strongest wide area annihilation ability. The annihilation percentage inside the limited space covered by the barrier was 100%, it was an inescapable technique. Yuuki who was still crouched down on the ground with his severed left arm, had his body mercilessly pierced by the lights. When the inside of the barrier is filled with lights, photons are generated, and the ability concludes. This ability generates energy several thousand times greater than the "Disintegration" that Hinata had used, and all objects within the barrier are disintegrated. And then, the inside of the barrier was filled with lights. A flash. When the magic circle disappeared, the lights calmed down. There's was only one person standing on the ground. However, that person seemed unhappy,

「So, he escaped, huh」

He muttered.  
So.  
Standing on the ground alone was Leon. Yuuki who had confirmed Leon's overwhelming strength and realized his own defeat, had decided to retreat when his left arm was cut off. At that moment, he had made the full use of his maximum strength and earned a little time with Thought Guidance. The perfect chance to escape appeared when Leon was concentrating on the constructing the barrier. However, one ought to praise Yuuki. His stubbornness deserved appreciation, he didn't surrender until the end of the fight. But, that didn't change the fact that he ran away. Leon, had promised to cooperate with the two demon lords, and when he thought about the possibility Milim would turn her rage towards him, he felt depressed.

「Good grief, I must be more serious.」

It seems that the goal of obtaining Chloe's freedom would be delayed a bit longer, since Yuuki had escaped. This strategy was a complete failure. It could be said that the moment Yuuki succeeded in retreating, he had strategically won the war. Leon had won the battle but lost the war. As Leon thought of the future, there was a complete lack of the taste of victory, and he sighed.

- [1] 悪魔系 Akuma Kei – Demon series/system.
  - [2] 魔属性 Ma Zokusei – Demon/Devil/Evil/Demonic/Magic Attribute/Property.
  - [3] 護衛竜(ペット) Goei Ryuu (Petto) – Guardian Dragon = Pet. This dragon will get more role later (Spoiler! XD).
  - [4] 瘴気 Shouki – Miasma, Noxious gas. Players of Tales of Series will know what this is.
  - [5] 聖炎細剣(フレイムピラー) Hijiri Honoo Hosoken (Flame Pillar). Hosoken can mean thin/slender sword = Rapier (Asuna from S\*O use this as her weapon).
  - [6] 神話級(ゴッズ) Shinwa Kyuu (Gozzu).
  - [7] 黄金円盾(ゴールドサークル) Ougon Entate (gōrudosākuru)
  - [8] 対魔封三角錐聖結界(トライアングル・ピラミッド) – Tai Ma Fuu Sankakusui Hijiri Kekkai (Toraianguru Piramiddo) can mean Tetrahedron-shaped Holy Barrier to Seal the Demonic Being.
  - [9] 36式聖浄化霊子撃滅光崩(ホーリーブレイクダウン) 36 Shiki Hijiri Jouka Reiko Gekimetsu Hikoruihou (Hōrībureikudaun).
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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 135 - After the Incident

Leon's subordinate, a knight clad in silver, Alrose suddenly appeared before me.

Without dallying even a minute after his arrival,

「Leon-sama is engaged in mortal combat with Kagurazaka Yuuki.  
We beg for your assistance!」

He exclaimed.

Umm? Leon you bastard, you slipped out before we agreed on a formal alliance?

I mean, I don't really have an obligation to assist, but...

Oh well.

I guess this gives me a chance to steal Leon's prey...

Besides it would suck if Leon just kicked the bucket from hubris. And I wouldn't want to let Yuuki slip away again.

That kind of dangerous guy needs to be killed as soon as possible.

I guess I might as well go.

「Alright. Lead the way」

「Ay! Right this...」

I decided to interrupt Alrose, and said

「Actually, I'll just tap into your memories for a bit」

I entered his mind without waiting for approval.  
And easily established a thought-link. He did consent to it... afterwards.  
I then contacted Benimaru and Shion and had them begin Yuuki-subjugation preparations.  
Even as I was communicating with them, I was already stepping through space towards the battlefield.  
This is the first time I rely on others' coordinates to make the jump.  
Even though I am slightly anxious, I have faith in Raphael's support.  
Thus, without a single blunder, we successfully appeared in the skies above the battlefield. Shion was surely running late.  
But I have Ranga in my shadows, and I can just summon Veldora if need be.  
First things first is to save Leon...  
Is what I thought.  
But by then Yuuki had already escaped. What. the. hell. Seriously?

Now then, these is the current state of affairs.  
The land was deformed, reflecting a wonderful battle. Pieces of the mountain were gouged out, and the nearby forests rotted.  
The grounds itself reeks of death, and a single (beautiful) crater was in the center of it.  
The size of the crater basically tells me that this was a typical battle-manga style battle.  
But wait... aren't we over the Dwarf's Kingdom? Though there's a lot of rock between the top and the kingdom itself, with the battle at this scale I wonder if they caused any earthquakes.  
By the looks of it, I can expect at least magnitude four? I can't see below, but I guess there might be some casualties.  
This isn't a volcano, but if an earthquake is bad, people might have died.  
We should check the kingdom out. Just when I thought so, Shion appeared.

「Hey, go see the Dwarf's Kingdom  
If there's lots of casualties help out. And tell the king I said hi」  
「Ay, understood. What about the enemies?」

「Oh, they already ran away. It's not dangerous anymore, so don't worry.  
And please try to be polite」

「Ay!」

I sent Shion off.

Shion's entourage follow suit. She trains them well.

Wait, don't I recognize three people with her. Aren't those Demon Lord Dagrul's sons?

Is that fine? To bring another Demon Lord's sons to battle?

...what do I care? I'll just pretend I didn't know. I'm not responsible!.. Not how it works, you say? Nope! If it bothers you, you lose.

So let's pretend I never thought any of this. Rather, let's go talk to Leon.

「Well, well, well. Leon, care to explain?」

Leon is sorting through some meat.

Seems like he's digging out a red lump of... oh, it's parts of a woman clad in red armor...

After locating the woman, he cleaned up the rest of the flesh with a purifying light.

When he was finished, he finally looked at me.

「It's as you see」

He said, with a look of "don't you get it?"

I do get it~!

I wanted to scream at him,

「I want to hear it from you」

I responded with a smile.

Did I just see a vein pop on his head?

Is this silent gentleman mad at me?.. If I were a girl would he still be mad at

me?

...I guess he would. Definitely.

「We too like to hear an explanation. Of course, in grand detail, Leon.」

Wonderfully timed, Ruminas.

She dropped from the sky with her seven sages.

Seems like Leon sent for Ruminas as well. And she actually came to help!?

She actually came when called by a person she barely knows?

「Hmph. So you came. I thought I could handle that human Yuuki.

My bad, I let him get away. I underestimated him」

Leon confessed when we both pressed on.

But before he explained what had occurred.

In the midst of gouged earth and rotting forests, an elegant tea set.

The Seven Sages began preparing tea. As Ruminas was lying relaxed on a sofa they set, and Leon was sitting in an elegant chair.

Hey... just how comfortable are you going to get?

「Please, here」

A sage with a young voice directed me into a comfortable chair. And I sat.

It was really comfy. What a fine chair it is.

Another sage was fanning Ruminas. Our tea party would have seemed eerie to onlookers, but I guess I shouldn't mind it.

「Well then, explain」

Ruminas said, and Leon began explaining.

In short, after my visit Leon decided to attack Yuuki alone. And the result is as we see here.

There's two reasons why he didn't invite us.  
He underestimated Yuuki and didn't want to reveal his power.

「In other words, if we fought together would you fight at full strength?」

Ruminas and I had trouble responding to Leon's question.

「Why, of course we would. We trust thee」

Ruminas responded with a smile.

What a blatant lie. Wait, weren't monsters unable to lie?!

I remember that our existence gets erased or something like that

<<Solution. Beings who have surpassed the bounds of flesh, those who achieved spirit bodies are able to lie>>

Ah, I see.

I guess Milim can also lie without a problem.

So if you're strong it's alright. Whether that's right or not, who knows, but let's proceed on this assumption for now.

As for Ruminas' lie—well, maybe it's not a lie, maybe she would have fought with all her might—whether we came here or not may not have changed the outcome at all.

After Yuuki had awakened his ultimate skill, we might have just hid our powers and managed to stall him.

Frankly, I too was willing only to reveal Gluttonous King Beelzebub, and hide the rest.

We are fellow Demon Lords but are hardly friends. No, we are allies, but that doesn't mean I can trust them with my life.

I had no choice but accept Leon's words.

In the very end, Leon lost a subordinate and Yuuki escaped death.

But fortunately, the Black Knight Claude was able to sneak into Yuuki's

camp.

Yuuki had brainwashed him once, but Chloe set him straight. Her methods are unclear, but we should be fortunate that she can reverse mind control.

Yuuki probably did not notice, so Claud will continue to spy on him.

And yet we must stay vigilant against Yuuki's ability.

Steal life, steal one's heart. And convert another's energy into one's own, what ability could it be?

<<Solution. He likely possess ultimate skill Greedy King Mamon>>

Huh? You know that much?

Seems like Raphael was able to arrive to an answer in a second. Seems like it is a higher level steal ability, and Raphael does not think it dangerous to me at all,

Among skills of our level it is the weakest.

...where does Raphael get all that confidence from?

And is it just me, or did Raphael seem really smug when dissing Mamon?

Well, we should be fine as long as we don't let our guard down.

After listening to Leon's explanation we decided to wait for Claude to contact us.

The only problem remaining is the fact that Milim's pet dragon was resurrected.

And it's a big problem.

This really will be a pain for us to solve...

「Hmm? Oh, you are friends with Milim right? I'm glad to have you here」

Leon said with a bright smile on his face.

Why did he suddenly become so happy?

Wait, this bastard isn't planning...

「Well, we have heard enough, and 'tis time for us to bid you adieu」

Ruminas is ready to dash.

How devilish!.. Well, she is a demon lord. So I guess I am the one at fault for expecting her cooperation.

Though I could never hope to be forced to clean up this mess...

Hmm? Alrose and Blue are kneeling in front of Red Knight.

They can't possibly think her to still be alive?

I looked closely. She is 100% dead. Normally that would be it, but...

「Hey, Ruminas. Can't you reverse death?」

「Tch. Do not spout other's secrets, plebian!」

「Ah, my bad. But hey, look 'ere」

With an empty apology, I called Ruminas over.

Ruminas came over, despite preparing to leave a second ago.

「We see, she may be dead, but she may live agani」

Ruminas pronounced her judgment after looking at the girl.

This girl still has her soul. Two souls to be exact.

「Really?! Sis is alive?!」

「Nay, she is not alive. Nor is she dead.

Death is but a state of the body; true death is the vanquishing of the soul.

This girl still has her soul. So she is not dead」

「But this is strange. Why did her soul not disappear upon death?」

Normally, a soul disappears when its vessel is destroyed.

Beings like I can survive death of the flesh, but normal monsters and people are different.

So how could this be?

<<Solution. Mamon's ability brings one's life to absolute zero, but this is the merely the state of apparent death>>

I see, thank you Raphael-sensei.

Now then, why does she have two souls? Did you catch on already?

«Solution. I have, Chaos Dragon's soul is mixed in with hers.

Nor is it in its cursed state, but rather has been purified»

...S-Seriously?!

If there's no curse, we can revive them both. More than avoiding Milim's wrath, we would attain her eternal gratitude!

「Hark, you all. We must resurrect this girl at all cost.

I have caught on something amazing, and wish for you to listen」

And thus I told them about Raphael-sensei's conjectures.

Judging by Blue's words, they must be related to this red one. He seems like he wants to say something, but Alrose is preventing him from doing so.

When Demon Lords converse mere servants have no say. But it's his own sister, so he can hardly contain himself.

I'll keep his thoughts in mind when we make a decision.

We can separate their souls. I have a jewel to plant the soul into as well.

Using it as the core, we would be able to resurrect the dragon. But it would greatly weaken—which is the problem.

But Milim will probably be fine with it. I don't think she would want him for his strength.

To that end, we need to resurrect Red. So Ruminas' help is needed.

Doctor Ruminas, it's time you reverse death itself!

She probably doesn't want to show us this skill. With a face full of displeasure, she eventually gave in.

I guess she also doesn't want to see a mad Milim; or maybe she's just nice.

「Ruminas, you aren't a tsundere by any chance?」

Say it again and you're dead, was her response.  
Since it seems a bit dangerous, I think I'll end the teasing here.  
Red was revived, resulting in Blue crying in thanks to Ruminas and I.  
Just leave me alone, I didn't do anything.  
Thus the post-battle clean-up concluded.  
I deposited the jewel into my stomach. As for Milim, it was unanimously decided—without a single word—that I'll be handling it.  
Well, that's to be expected.  
No one would want to face that degree of danger.  
Leon and Ruminas promised to let the rest know before acting in the future.  
They'll be using me as an intermediary between them, so thus the Demon Lord Yuuki Subjugation Group was formed.  
Human Countries and Demon Lords.  
Many powerful allies surround Tempest.  
These relationships will continue to develop from now on.  
Even as a turbulent storm was approaching...

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# Demon Lords' Gambit Arc

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## Chapter 136 - Eastern Empire

The Eastern Empire.

One of the oldest countries.

It's official name is Sovereign Alliance of the Naska-namrium Ulmeria Empires. (SAN-NUE)[1]

People say that it has been two thousand years since the records first speak of nations managed by San-nue .

Managed under its overwhelming strength.

And for two thousand years, San-nue did not allow a single rebellion to go unpunished.

Under its sole emperor, Ludora Nam Ul Naska.

Who ruled with an iron fist.

And thus the empire eventually came to be called simple Eastern Empire.

Eastern Empire is a homogenous state.

They rule through power, conquer and pillage, complete battle maniacs.

Their only creed [Power is Everything] allows anyone to achieve greatness as long as they are powerful.

There's only one reason why this empire has yet to invade the Jura forest—they are in the middle of preparations.

Three-hundred fifty years ago, they attempted to subjugate Veldora and lost a city because of it. A whimsical dragon destroyed it before they could as much as regret.

Around a hundred thousand lives were lost that day, and that was a city fortified to be the gateway for invading the forest. They have built it up

over a hundred years.

“Build up your forces, conquer that forest, and expand our dominion.” That was the Empire’s burning wish since then.

Expand beyond the Jura forest—their failures pained them for a hundred years.

But why would a country as bountiful as the Empire need to expand?

Only because the Emperor wanted it to be so.

That was the only reason, but no one complained.

And as the invasion plan progressed, the Empire build up its forces and weapons.

And hundreds of years ago they announced its invasion plan.

Who would have thought that a single foolish idea that commanders had would cause that plan to crumble?

The forest needs a master. Those lizards are no threat to us!

This foolish thought let them to their doom.

They hardly know what actually happened. The books, the record keepers, and anyone who knew was reduced to ash.

Their dreams, their ambitions, were reduced to ash.

And time passed.

The Empire continued with an additional creed: “Never invade Jura Forest.”

Veldora’s anger left it’s scars; his power revealed how wide the world really is; the Empire could never as much consider an invasion.

There were those who resented Veldora, but not one of them would disobey a superior—each of whom forbid an invasion.

As such, voices of young warhawks never reached the upper echelons. As such, the army solidified even further, regaining control superior to before the invasion.

They could not allow the second invasion to fail.

For them, this was an opportunity to prove their loyalty to their Empire.

And two years prior, they received those news.  
Storm Dragon Veldora disappeared.  
The Empire rejoiced. The time has come! Drums of war beat now even in the hearts of the commanders.  
These were not brash youth; they were hardened soldiers, so the fires in their chests burned all the brighter.  
Moreover, they could hardly allow their Emperor to wait any longer.  
And the Emperor blessed them with a single word,

「Prepare」

The Empire was ablaze in activity.  
The Empire, you see, has a Political and Military branches. Both are managed directly by the Emperor.  
No one else has any real power there.  
There are nobles, but their only boon is a fancy name and ability to enter the parliament without an election.  
Perhaps some of them do own and manage property, but such would be a rare and special person.  
In other words, the Emperor has absolute power.  
This Feudalistic state listens to the wishes not of the people but of the Emperor. Every soldier pledged his loyalty to the Emperor.  
Even Imperial Guard is but a position that is rotated between various troops.  
Can you believe it: a single person is managing every aspect of such a large nation.  
But regardless of how bizarre it may seem, the truth is thus: the Empire has enjoyed many years of prosperity.  
And the Emperor gave his orders.  
Surely everyone was elated to hear them, but no one rushed—they meticulously carried his orders out.  
And soon the preparations were complete.

A single carriage was heading towards the capital.  
Inside, among the baggage, an armless man lay and two women sat.  
The carriage was driven by a knight clad in black.  
Yuuki's entourage.

「By the way, shouldn't we restore your arm?」

Kagali asks Yuuki the most obvious question in the world.  
A loss of body part, albeit significant, could be treated with a high level  
potion. Even Kagali's magic could restore that kind of wound.  
There's hardly a reason to remain armless, at least no reason Kagali could  
think of.

「Hmm? It's fine, no problem!

They say the blacksmiths are awesome in the empire, so I was thinking of  
getting myself a metal arm!」

「Haaah?! The hell you dare to say, after losing to that bastard Leon!

What? "I'll surely win!" you said?

Instead you suffered a terrible defeat and we barely escaped with our lives!  
」

「Ahaha. For you to be that angry. He was stronger than I thought, so what  
could I have done about him?

Besides, it's not a loss if you live to see the morn! \*snicker\*

I got an ultimate skill and stole the power of a Chaos Dragon.

Also took that Red Knight's teleportation power, so what's the big deal?」

Yuuki casually responded to Kagali's grumbling.

He's totally not reflecting. Realizing that, Kagali decided to give up.

The fact is, Yuuki suffered a crushing defeat before Leon.

His trump card was useless, and the abilities he gained were not worth the  
loss.

Luckily, when the Chaos Dragon's power was taken it disrupted the  
magnetic field in the atmosphere allowing Yuuki and the rest to escape by

teleporting away.

Even so, Kagali could not bear to see Yuuki remain as he was, so

「Yuuki-sama, are you sure you would not like me to lend you a hand?  
Leon was far stronger than I remember him.  
As such, I must take responsibility for my mistake, but I must ask...  
Why did you hold back against him?」

When Kagali finished the sentence, Chloe opened her eyes and glanced at Yuuki,

For but a moment, Chloe was able to “see” into Yuuki’s actual strength.  
Since it was but a moment, Chloe was unable to measure his actual strength  
and could only curse her inadequate analysis abilities.  
Even so, it was clear that he had another ultimate skill.  
And this was not something Chloe could ignore.

「Ahahaha, what did you expect? I can’t go around parading my power in  
front of Chloe.

We’ll fight eventually, and, although she may suck at analyzing, she could  
always just let Demon Lord Rimuru know—who clearly excels at it.

I mean, I have to keep at least one hand in check, right?」

「Oh, I see... just a beaten dog making excuses, huh」

「Hey! That’s mean, Kagali!」

Always hiding his true intentions under the guise of a clown.

But this time he may have spoken his mind, so thought Chloe.

He truly is an enigma—Kagurazaka Yuuki.

His words are fraught with lies and deceit.

Like that time with the kids,

『Oh, did you not know?』

When a child’s body is on the verge of collapse the energy it releases is just

right for another summoning.

In other words, you can just try redo the summoning! 』

Without a question, that was a lie.

Yuuki the 『Summoner』 –such is one of his unique skills– has no need for that energy.

He can continue summoning as long as he wants. Well, considering the necessary requirements he would have to wait a month, but still..

There's no need to recycle the kids.

From the time Chloe observed him, she has noted how bizarre he really was.

He hopes for the world to crumble, but handled his Guild duties admirably.

He said he was exploiting the kids, but he built them a nice school.

He doesn't hesitate to do evil, and would probably go all the way without any hesitation. Even when opposing the Demon Lords, he causally used hostages and stole Claud's heart...

Even so, if he truly desires to destroy this world, his method is haphazard at best.

Moreover...

「Hey, why didn't you take that Red Knight's life?

If you wanted to, you could have taken the energy of her soul, right?」

Without breaking her gaze, Chloe asked Yuuki.

「Huh? What do you mean? I took everything.

If any was left that would be because I can't use the skill very well, yet.

Damn, I guess I should have pulled more」

Yuuki replied, laughing cheerfully.

Chloe concluded that getting a straight answer out of him was impossible. If so, she could do naught but continue observing him.

An enigma–Kagurazaka Yuuki.

If he truly desired to destroy the world, then he was, without a doubt, Chloe's enemy. For that reason she would continue to watch him. Rimuru, Leon, Ruminas, Hinata, and the kids. She had many people she cared about. If Yuuki sought to destroy their world, she would mercilessly slaughter him. But what if he sought something else? Before she finished thinking, the city they would stay in came into view. The Capital of the world's strongest military state, Naska. Chloe again closed her eyes. There was a lot to consider, and Chloe was bad at thinking things through. She would observe first and think later. About Yuuki, and about his goals. In the end, Chloe could only observe.

Empire's military was split into three divisions.

The Armored Corps—a marvel of technology by Imperial engineers. They ride modern tanks and symbolize the Empire's technological prowess.

The Beast Corps—from the four corners of the world, the Empire brought beasts of wonderful strength and forced them to obey. They symbolize the Empire's strength.

And the Mixed Corps—a group of engineer rejects and beast exiles. These members are too powerful and too smart to work as a single organization. If their power was combined they would become the most potent threat. They represent the Empire's heart. Young as it may be.

Their armies are not something one could achieve without otherworld's influence.

Otherworld's technologies and skills are interwoven to create an army of never-before seen prowess.

The Empire did not just collect beasts from the four corners of this world. People with various skills and knowledge.

The Empire welcomed world travelers with open arms, and most of them by far reside there.

Which is why their influence changed the empire so.

Of course, there being many in the Empire who possess a unique skill, these too have been assembled into an army.

The Empire has grown too strong.

And behind the scenes another army is protecting the Empire.

But calling it an army is too much, it is at most a unit, but its strength is far beyond that of the three armies'.

In other words, they are powerful enough to be called an army despite being a single unit.

The Empire is founded upon the maxim that strength is everything.

There are two beings of absolute power who have authority over the rest [2].

The Emperor himself, the generalissimo is one.

The other is the de facto commander over the armed forces, the being whom the Emperor himself trusts. That being also has the duty to protect the Emperor with the Guardsmen.

That being is so powerful he is said to surpass the demon lords, and has ensured the Empires safety for hundreds of years.

Next, there are three generals. These three command each of the three armies.

These four men are the pillars of the Empire.

Each has been given the Empire's treasured God-tiered equipment.

Equipment of unbelievable power.

The strongest equipment before which no man can be an equal.

And then the Guardsmen.

A hundred individuals of great power join the Guard; their strength is legendary.

Of course, many of them are from another world.

The Empire does not discriminate against world travelers, and recognizes only strength.

To these one hundred the Emperor bestowed legendary equipment. These one hundred are the Empire's strongest force.

But how are the one hundred selected?

Through inter-army duel and combat.

A system where the young may usurp the seat of the elder. Though forbidden during marches, any member of the army could challenge a superior to a duel..

If they were defeated, they would have to wait a year before they were permitted to challenge him again. As such, everyone continuously sharpened their skills.

Such was the best system for a country where strength was everything. In place of a captain, Guardsmen would serve. As a result, if you wanted to rise in status, you would wait for an opportunity to defeat them.

And...

A general was replaced for the first time in many decades.

A single lad had made history.

This lad reached the pinnacle of the Empire.

With a metal arm, Kagurazaka Yuuki became a General of the Mixed Army in the shortest time.

A warrior of legends.

In a blink of an eye he built up support for himself; and though there were already some who supported him from the beginning, no one seemed to mind.

And now,

The Mixed Army consolidated under a single will.

The legend will go down to say that the Empire's invasion began on the day Yuuki gained power.

[1] Played around with acronyms. What do you guys think?

[2} I know this seems contradictory, I think so too... probably will be edited out in the Light Novel.

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**END OF THE DEMON LORD' GAMBIT ARC**

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## **Credits**

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Author : Fuse

Illustrator : Mitz Vah

Translator : The Clown, Wuxia, Guro ...

Editor: AncientKaiser ...

PDF compiled by: Kiri

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