

THE DEATH MAGE WHO DOESN'T WANT A FOURTH TIME

– Yondome wa Iyana Shi Zokusei Majutsushi –

- Volume 4 -

THE HARTNER DUCHY VOLUME

AUTHOR

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ARTIST

Ban

[Translated by: Light Novel Bastion]

CHAPTER 67

THE FIRST MISSION – GOOD AFTERNOON, KING

Documents.

It doesn't need to be said that they wouldn't exist without materials for writing. Tree bark, branches and animal skins can be used, but Vandalieu was looking at documents made of paper created by the Golem factory that he had set up.

Looking at this, Vandalieu wondered why he had made straw paper, regretting his decision.

"Well, I suppose deskwork is necessary as well."

Things would surely be easier in the future if he got used to this now. He would be able to gain popularity and respect as a man capable of finishing his work quickly... though it seemed that strong men capable of hunting monsters were the popular ones in Lambda.

He decided to deal with the documents for now. He quickly checked over them, and as long as he saw no problems, he stamped it with a seal that he had made earlier.

"Phew, it's done, it's done!" said the many heads of Vandalieu, who had split them and his arms into multiples.

"...Your Majesty, could I ask you to teach me this method of doing deskwork?" Despite having done deskwork for much longer, Chezare requested instruction from Vandalieu.

"I don't mind teaching you, but in your case, it would be faster if I multiplied your arms and heads physically," said Vandalieu. "Should I start the surgery today?"

"No, please leave it for another time," said Chezare. It seemed that even Zombies were reluctant to undergo body (corpse) remodeling.

"So, are there new documents?" asked Vandalieu.

“No, I was hoping that you would consider the issue of currency...”

“I see.”

Various systems had been put into place in Talosheim thanks to Chezare.

Vandalieu hadn't ordered him to create these, nor had anyone else asked Chezare to do it, but he had taken the initiative and advised Vandalieu to create a government.

Because of this, the national flag had become a black and white circle using a solar eclipse as its motif, and all kinds of documents had been created.

Incidentally, laws had been created using the laws Talosheim had used in the past as well as the laws of the Hartner Duchy as references. They weren't of much use now, however.

Naturally, Chezare pressing Vandalieu to introduce currency was the next step.

“Your Majesty. It is certainly true that there are currently no problems with bartering for goods. However, the introduction of currency is absolutely necessary for the development of our nation! Even if the commercial trade that you desire with the Orbaume Kingdom becomes a reality one day –”

“Umm, wouldn't it be fine to handle trading with the Orbaume Kingdom by introducing the Orbaume Kingdom's currency? I don't really intend on making Talosheim an independent nation or anything,” said Vandalieu.

“How could this be! You would sell the nation, Your Majesty?!”

“I was thinking that Talosheim should aim to be a self-governing dominion within the Orbaume Kingdom with no diplomatic rights.”

“Your Majesty, it is madness to willingly stoop to becoming a vassal nation to the Orbaume Kingdom! Please reconsider your decision!”

Vandalieu sighed. Despite Chezare's words, Vandalieu had been aiming to become an honorary nobleman in the Orbaume Kingdom from the very beginning. After that, things would depend on what happened to Talosheim, whether the Undead and Ghouls gained human rights or not and whether Vandalieu managed to dispose of the Pure-breed Vampires, but if things went well, he intended to have Talosheim to

become a self-governing dominion of the Orbaume Kingdom.

The chances of this becoming a reality were probably quite small, but Vandalieu thought that this would provide the most benefits.

Of course, if this was impossible, the Orbaume Kingdom probably had exceptional diplomats he could make deals with while managing the nation, but... would he need dozens of experienced Undead from political families?

“Well, that’s for the future, so let’s leave it aside for now... You mentioned currency, didn’t you? I intend to depart for the Hartner Duchy before the day is over, so won’t you consider it after that?” said Vandalieu.

Vandalieu was already seven years old, and the season was summer. According to his plans, he should have already been heading for the Hartner Duchy by now.

His objective was to register at the Guild.

For underage individuals to work as adventurers, they need to enroll and graduate at the adventurers’ school. However, registration is possible even without enrolling at the school.

G-class adventurers who have just registered at the Adventurers’ Guild can only accept manual work in towns, so there is no need for them to learn at the school. Only those intending to rise to F-class and beyond enroll at the school... At least, this was true for the Orbaume Kingdom’s Adventurers’ Guild of two hundred years ago.

In the future, Vandalieu also intended to rise to F-class and beyond, gain achievements to his name and become an honorary nobleman. But right now, he intended to register, acquire a Guild Card and return to Talosheim without enrolling at the adventurers’ school.

The reason for this was –

“I want to register before my Status becomes even more outrageous than it is now.”

This sentence summarized that reason.

A registration card, commonly known as a Guild Card, would be issued when Vandalieu registered at the Guild. But Vandalieu’s Status would be displayed in full to

the Guild staff member issuing him the Guild Card.

In other words, Vandalieu's Titles of Ghoul King, Eclipse King and Taboo Name, his previously-undiscovered Jobs such as Undead Tamer and Soul Breaker, the unknown skill that was Death-Attribute Magic, his astoundingly-named unique skill, God Slayer, and even the curses placed upon him by Rodcorte, would all be displayed.

It was already looking quite bad, but there was no saying that more terrible things wouldn't appear on his Status. Thus, Vandalieu's plan was to register now before it got any worse and then make a dash back to Talosheim before an uproar occurred.

Of course, Vandalieu had another objective of investigating what became of the First Princess Levia, Borkus's daughter and the others who had escaped to the Hartner Duchy from Talosheim two hundred years ago.

Like Ghouls, Titans lived for three hundred years, so he would probably be able to find out by asking Titans in a town.

It would be nice if they were healthy, but if they were too healthy and were currently planning the revival of Talosheim, it would be problematic. Perhaps not, if they were understanding towards Undead.

"I'll bring back currency from the Orbaume Kingdom, so let's examine that and think about it then," said Vandalieu.

The Amid Empire used a unified currency issued by the Empire, but in the Orbaume Kingdom, each duchy and royal capital city issued its own currency. In other words, there were fourteen kinds of currency.

Baums, a unit of currency valid all over the Orbaume Kingdom, circulated in combination with the currency issued in each duchy. Because of this, despite all being part of the same nation, towns on the boundaries between duchies had currency exchange facilities. Peddlers working in multiple duchies had to constantly be mindful of the currency exchange rates.

In addition to the above, there had apparently been cases of older currencies being replaced by newer currencies in the Orbaume Kingdom's history. It wasn't simply a matter of the face of the king engraved on the coins being changed; the metallic ratios of the coins would change, so they would have different values as well.

Therefore, it was possible that new coins might have been created sometime in the past two hundred years.

“The Orbaume Kingdom lost one duchy in the war of six years ago, but that doesn’t change the fact that things are complicated, so we have to be careful if we’re going to create our own currency.”

It would be problematic if the value of Talosheim’s currency plummeted in the distant future due to differences in the coins’ metallic ratios. Vandalieu had learned in class that this had happened in Japan in the past.

Chezare appeared surprised for some reason. “You still intend to go to the Hartner Duchy?!”

“...What do you mean, ‘still?’” Vandalieu asked. “Of course I do.”

“But you have already postponed your departure for seven days.”

“There are various reasons for that. Various reasons.” Though Vandalieu said this, he couldn’t deny that he had continued to postpone his departure for seven days.



The ones going to the Hartner Duchy were Vandalieu, the ninja unit of Zran and Braga, and Eleanora, who was exceptional as an infiltrating spy. That was the plan.

Vandalieu would go to the city of the Hartner Duchy, take a look around and check whether there was any reaction from Danger Sense: Death. After that, he would call the ninja unit and Eleanora.

This was what he had discussed with everyone months ago, but –

The first day.

“No way, no way, I’m going with you!” Pauvina squealed.

“Go...ing!” Rapiécage groaned.

“N-no way, no way, I-I want to go with... I cannot do thiiiiis!” Zadiris wailed.

“Pauvina, I’m just going there and coming straight back, so it might not even take ten days,” said Vandalieu. “Rappie, you’d cause an uproar if you went near areas where people live, so you can’t come. And Zadiris, you don’t have to do that if you’re going to be embarrassed about it.”

Pauvina, Rapiécage and for some reason Zadiris, held him back. Pauvina and Rapiécage were quickly pacified, but Zadiris was depressed, asking herself, “How unbecoming of my age. What am I doing?” By the time Vandalieu cheered her up, the sun had already set.

Giving up on departing that day, Vandalieu spent the evening playing with Varbie, Jadal and the other children.

The second day.

Vandalieu decided that he would leave today. Suddenly, the sky became dark, and before he knew it, he was kidnapped and taken into the sky.

“OOOOOOHN.”

It seemed that Knochen, the Union of Bones, had kidnapped him from behind.

“Umm, I’m intending to leave today,” said Vandalieu.

“OOOOHN? OHN.”

“No, I can’t really bring you with me.”

Nobody in Talosheim was aware yet that a Union of Bones was a monster that would be designated as a disaster, but even so, it wasn’t difficult to imagine that there would be a huge uproar if a mass of bones went near a town.

“Once I register at the Guild, I’ll get a Familiar’s certificate for you.”

“OOOOHN!”

As Vandalieu tried to persuade Knochen into letting him down while being taken on a scenic flight, the sun set.

The third day.

Vandalieu decided that he would definitely leave today. Wondering why there was a lot of buzzing and why the sky had become so dark, he was kidnapped into the sky.

“I thought I was having déjà vu, but it’s Cemetery Bees this time.”

Several dozen Cemetery Bees had grabbed Vandalieu. They flew up to their nest that had been built in a way that made it look like a part of the royal castle.

And then they offered him honey and insects. Were they trying to dissuade him from leaving by offering this food?

“I’ll be coming back,” Vandalieu reassured them.

The Cemetery Bees made clicking noises.

“Yes, really. So please stop making me trying to eat caterpillar dangos. At least boil or fry them.”

Fried caterpillar dangos with honey on top were delicious, being crispy on the outside and syrupy on the inside. If the honey was replaced with salty-sweet tare sauce, they might make good side dishes or snacks to eat while drinking alcohol.

The fourth day.

“Will you really be alright? Perhaps it would be better if you waited you leveled up a little more... After all, you did say that your level wasn’t really increasing these days, weren’t you?”

Today, Darcia, who happened to be awake in the morning, was stopping Vandalieu.

“It’s fine, Mom,” said Vandalieu, reassuring her. “I’ve just hit a wall a bit early on. It’s

not like I've become weaker."

As Darcia said, Vandalieu had entered a phase of development where his level suddenly became very difficult to increase, commonly referred to as a 'wall.'

His progress was indeed slow, but he hadn't suddenly become weaker or become unable to do things today that he had been able to do yesterday.

And it wasn't as if his development would be stalled here forever. It was well-known that walls could be overcome. In fact, Kachia had encountered the same problem. She had now overcome that wall and was currently leveling up as fast as she once did in the past.

The thickness of the wall and the timing of encountering it vary. There are those who give up and say that this is their limit, but there are also many who surpass it to grow even further. The percentage of adventurers who give up increases with the second wall, however.

Walls are something that adventurers encounter once when they become D-class. Those quickly able to overcome this wall are determined to have talent, and they attempt to become C-class, while those like Kachia who cannot immediately overcome it experience a long slump.

Incidentally, the former A-class adventurer Borkus had encountered three 'walls', and was still attempting to overcome the fourth when he was defeated by Mikhail.

"Looking at it another way, this means that I'm as strong as a D-class adventurer right now," said Vandalieu. "I think making a little trip to the city and coming back will be a piece of cake."

Vandalieu's words were something that any D-class adventurer in this world would deny. Darcia would agree with them.

"No!" Darcia cried. "I don't want to be separated from you! Take me with you, just as you've done up until now!"

"I want to bring you as well, but it's a little dangerous," said Vandalieu.

It was possible that Vandalieu's belongings would be thoroughly searched by the gatekeepers as he entered the city. If by some chance they found Darcia's bone

fragment and somehow realized that her spirit was possessing it, it would be troublesome.

If the gatekeepers called for people or tried to purify Darcia's spirit, Vandalieu would be forced to run, even if he had to kill the gatekeepers to do so.

"It would be problematic if I had to fire Death Bullets in random directions, don't you think?"

Indeed, it would be problematic. If Vandalieu did something like that in front of the city's gates, it wouldn't be only the gatekeepers' lives at risk. The walls around the gates would turn into a mountain of rubble... in fact, it wasn't clear if rubble would even be left.

"... Fine," Darcia agreed reluctantly. "But make sure you come back safe," she added.

"Yes, of course, Mom," said Vandalieu.

And so the sun set today as well.

The fifth day.

"Huuuuuuh?" Vandalieu let out a flat-toned scream-like noise as he was kidnapped by the Immortal Ents. Judging from his limp body, it seemed that he had given up on resisting.

The sixth day.

"Kid, about the letter I gave you to give to my daughter if you see her," said Borkus. "If she's having a hard time, give her this as well."

"Holy Son, if you meet Levia-sama, please give this to her," Nuaza requested.

"This as well, Your Majesty!"

"...My luggage is already three times my size," said Vandalieu.

Sorting out his luggage took time, so his departure was delayed yet another day.

And now today was the seventh day.

“I’ve convinced everyone, and the factories will keep producing miso, soy sauce, katsuobushi, smoked food, mayonnaise and ketchup for a hundred years, even if I’m not here. I’m fully prepared. All I have to do now is move my feet,” Vandalieu said eagerly.

“Umm, Vandalieu-sama, there is something of a problem...” Eleanora said reluctantly as she appeared.

“A problem?” Vandalieu repeated.

“Braga and the others ended up going to a Dungeon yesterday. They might not return for a few days,” Eleanora told him.

It seemed that the ninja unit had been unable to endure the trip being postponed day after day and had left to do some training in a Dungeon.

“It can’t be helped,” said Vandalieu. “Let’s head out first. If I leave Undead to communicate with, I’m sure they can meet up with us later.”

Communication Undead used like familiars could be used like cellphones. The distance for making calls was small, and his voice wouldn’t be heard exactly as it was because it would be the Undead’s tongue speaking for him, but these were revolutionary Undead in the world of Lambda.

They had the appearance of shrunken Goblin heads; they had the most terrible design... using freshly-severed human heads would provide better function, but Vandalieu would be arrested if he was caught with them, so he had abandoned this idea.

“Now then, shall we go?” said Vandalieu.

“Yes, Vandalieu-sama,” Eleanora replied. “Ah, a journey with just the two of us... ♪”

“No, Eleanora. You’re going to be waiting at the tunnel, you know?”

Though this was an unlikely scenario, it would be troublesome if the town's gates had anti-Vampire defense mechanisms in place.

Even if Vandalieu didn't take this into account, he also had to be wary of the information network of the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life. He also had to be wary of things like the Magic Items that allowed the pinpointing of the owner of a blood sample.

However, he had come to the conclusion that there would be nothing to worry about this time.

He didn't know how extensive the Vampires' information network was, but they would never expect him to be able to reopen the tunnel. Also, they didn't seem to be such a large and careful organization that they would have people hiding in every town and village.

There would be some informants in major cities, but it seemed that they wouldn't have any in regular towns and villages unless there were some special circumstances. At the very least, this was how the information network was arranged in the Empire and Mirg shield-nation according to Eleanora's knowledge.

And as for the Magic Items, they were seized during the defense of Talosheim. Even if there were more of the same items, they would be running low on Eleanora's blood which was necessary to operate them.

And even if they did encounter subordinates of the Pure-breed Vampires, Vandalieu was confident that he would be able to dispose of almost any of them.

"That's how it is, so let's go," said Vandalieu.

"Have a safe trip, Van-sama," said Tarea. "Please make sure you come back to me."

"Tarea, Van is going to come back to *us*," Basdia reminded her.

"Bocchan, please use me, Sam, as your legs in your next journey," said Sam.

And so, the whole nation saw Vandalieu off as he and Eleanora departed Talosheim for the Hartner Duchy.

Three days were spent flying while being occasionally attacked by Pteranodons and

bird-type monsters, and then three more days were spent to pass through the tunnel that Vandalieu had turned into Golems in order to repair. Vandalieu ordered the Golem sealing the tunnel's exit to step aside and finally arrived in the Orbaume Kingdom that he had set his sights on so long ago.

There was nothing at the tunnel's exit other than a sparsely-forested plain with the remains of a road on it, however.

It had apparently been a magnificent highway two hundred years ago when the Hartner Duchy was trading with Talosheim, but there were only traces of it left now.

"If we travel east for three hours, the city we are headed for should be there, but... I wonder if it's still there?" said Eleanora.

"It's apparently a city of several thousand, so it probably is, isn't it?" said Vandalieu. "There should be areas inhabited by people at the very least, since the Hartner Duchy shouldn't have fallen to ruin. Well then, you wait here, Eleanora. I'll use the communication Undead to contact you."

"Alright. But... will you be fine on your own?" asked Eleanora.

"It's fine. I can do this alone," said Vandalieu.

Should he have added, "you know," to the end of his sentence? As Vandalieu asked himself this foolish question, he left the worried-looking Eleanora behind and set out walking along the remains of the road.

He was actually accompanied by a large number of spirits, so he wasn't really alone, however.

In addition, the Golem sealing the tunnel's exit was camouflaged and set to only open when the password was spoken.

The password was, "Brains flying sideways repeatedly." It wasn't something that would ever be spoken by coincidence.

And simple accommodation had been built inside the tunnel near the wall. Eleanora was to stay there and wait for the ninja unit that would be coming afterwards.



“I suppose it’s about time,” Vandalieu murmured to himself.

Walking through grass that was taller than him had become bothersome, so he was using Flight to fly over it silently.

If it weren’t for the luggage he was carrying on his back, it was possible that he would be mistaken for a ghost.

Though this wasn’t the reason, sometimes Goblins and giant ravens with 1.5-meter wingspans attacked him. Vandalieu quickly repelled them.

He didn’t need any particularly clever plans to defeat Rank 1 or 2 monsters. Of course, he couldn’t gain Experience Points because of his curse, but this was a trivial matter that he wasn’t concerned about at all.

Goblins wielding tree branches charged at him with strange cries. Vandalieu let out a strange, unmotivated-sounding cry in response as he disposed of them by throwing rocks at them using the Throwing skill that he had acquired after training with the ninja unit.

“About one in five of the Rank 2 giant ravens gives me a Magic Stone, though. If I could get them, I could at least use them to pay the toll fee.”

In the Bahn Gaia continent, it was normal for towns and villages to charge a toll fee to enter them. As Vandalieu had no Baums, the currency of the Orbaume Kingdom, he had included salt in his luggage that he thought he would be able to pay as a substitute.

He had given up on the idea of using the Magic Stones and materials of high-Rank monsters, as people might cause a fuss and wonder why such a young child would possess such things. The Hartner Duchy had no seas and no rock salt to mine, so he had brought valuable salt with him.

“If a rock salt mine has been discovered in the past two hundred years and the value of salt has dropped, I suppose I have no choice but to hunt monsters.”

Or perhaps Vandalieu would look for non-monster rabbits, which he hadn’t done in a while.

“Come to think of it, the fresh rabbit blood that Mom gave me was delicious.”

Immersed in his memories, Vandalieu beat yet another Goblin to death and pressed forward.

A distant wall made of stone came into his view.

“I can finally see it. But there’s quite a lot of moss and ivy growing on the walls, even though I heard from Borkus and the others that this was quite a prosperous city.”

This was the commercial city that had connected Talosheim and the Hartner Duchy together. It had been constructed hastily after commercial trading between the two began, so its history was shallow, but Vandalieu had heard that it had been a lively city.

Perhaps because of the commercial trade disappearing with Talosheim’s destruction, the city had gone into a decline. In fact, Vandalieu got the feeling that there were too many monsters like Goblins and giant ravens near the city... He hadn’t been near a normal town since Evbejia, so he couldn’t be sure, though.

“It couldn’t possibly be just a ruin now...” Succumbing to anxiety, Vandalieu used the Detect Life spell across a vast area. He detected over a thousand responses in the center of the city.

It seemed that the city had declined, but hadn’t become a ruin.

There were a large number of reactions that were stronger than the average person’s, but they were probably adventurers and soldiers who had been stationed there.

“Ah, that’s good.” Letting out a sigh of relief, Vandalieu set his feet back on the ground and began walking towards the city’s gates.

As he did so, the gatekeeper that noticed him began to make a noise that sounded like, “Gegyagegyah.” Vandalieu had stopped using Flight so that he wouldn’t startle them, but it seemed that this was pointless.

The gatekeeper with dark green skin, a long nose, long ears and slanted eyes –

“Hmm, let’s face reality,” Vandalieu told himself. “That’s a Goblin.”

Judging from the fact that it was raising its spear, it seemed to be a Rank 2 Goblin

Soldier. On the other side of the doorless gates, there were countless Goblins pointing in Vandalieu's direction and shrieking as they ran towards him.

There was one particularly large Goblin who was the size of an adult human among the other chest-high Goblins, letting out a shriek.

Unlike the other crudely-armed Goblins, it was equipped with proper armor, a shield and a halberd.

It seemed that this was a Goblin King.

"Wow, this is the first time I've met a King other than myself," said Vandalieu in a monotonous tone as he released Death Bullets.

And so began the battle between the two Kings, the Ghoul King and the Goblin King!



- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Taboo Name】
- **Job:** Venom Fist User
- **Level:** 20
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 184
 - Mana: 328,120,344
 - Strength: 128
 - Agility: 130
 - Stamina: 119
 - Intelligence: 761
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 2
 - Rapid Healing: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 1
 - Dark Vision
 - Mental Corruption: Level 10
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 6
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 4
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodsucking: Level 6
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5
 - Golem Transmutation: Level 6
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Control: Level 4
 - Spirit Form: Level 6

- Carpentry: Level 4
- Engineering: Level 3
- Cooking: Level 4
- Alchemy: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 4
- Soul Break: Level 5
- Multi-Cast: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Long-distance Control: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surgery: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Materialization: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Coordination: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Commanding: Level 1
- Farming: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Clothing: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Throwing: Level 3 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 2
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

SIDE CHAPTER 6

KAIDOU KANATA

Kaidou Kanata was a half-Japanese American. His real name was Kanata Kaidou.

But almost nobody believed this when he told them because both of his parents were of Asian descent, so his appearance was mostly Japanese.

This didn't cause him to suffer any bullying, nor did it cause him to become noticed by others and become popular.

His grades were average, with his athletic abilities being a little better than average. The differences in English in Japan and English in his home country actually made his grades worse.

And, he lost his life in a terrorist bombing attack during a school field trip.



"Kanata, we're reaching the drop point soon."

Kanata, who had been reminiscing about the past, came to his senses as the pilot called out to him.

"Got it," he responded as he checked over his parachute equipment one more time. In the past, he had once gotten full of himself and made a mistake that almost cost him his life during drop training, so he was sure to be particularly careful when it came to inspecting his parachute.

Magic and cheat-like abilities... People in Origin would call these 'Gifts'. During the twenty-eight years that had passed since Kanata was reincarnated in this world, he understood that these Gifts wouldn't prevent him from dying no matter what.

"Now then, let's hurry up and sterilize these terrorists," he said.

"Oi, Kanata, the mission is to rescue the captured daughter of the president," the pilot reminded him. "Don't forget that."

“I know,” said Kanata. “By the way, do you think the president would be angry if I asked his daughter for her contact details?”

“No comment. Also, Lady Hannah is only fifteen year sold. She’s half your age, old man.”

“I’m still in my twenties! I’m not an old man!” Kanata protested.

If including his previous life, he would be in his forties, however.

“Is that right? Well then, hurry up and get going, Gungnir*.”

TLN: This is the name of the spear wielded by the Norse god Odin, for those who don’t know.*

“I hate that code-name.”

Giving an exaggerated sigh in embarrassment over his code-name, Kanata jumped out of the helicopter that was camouflaged with light-attribute magic.



When Kaidou Kanata was reincarnated in Origin and awakened to his memories of Earth as well as his new powers, he became Kanata Smith. Though his last name was different, he had thought that the god had made unnecessary effort in allowing him to keep the same first name. He began adapting to his new environment.

Origin resembled Earth other than the fact that magic coexisted with science. The number and shapes of the continents were similar and even the international situation was the same. This helped him to adapt more quickly.

Though Kanata did his best not to use his cheat-like ability in order to keep them hidden, he didn’t hide the aptitude for magic that he had been given. Unlike in his previous life, he spent an enjoyable, bright childhood as a prodigy.

His parents were wealthier than his parents on Earth, and soft on their genius son, buying him anything that he wanted. He was always the center of attention at school, and by the time he entered his teenage years, there was never a period of time where he didn’t have a girlfriend.

It was truly smooth sailing. A dream-like second life. It seemed like he would have a hard time with his studies from university onwards, but if he kept extending his ability magic, he would easily continue being a famous person.

That was what he had thought.

However, as he approached his late teenage years, he was reunited with the others who had been reincarnated in this world with him.

Even the fact that I'm skydiving towards a house of terrorists with an assault rifle and combat knife, it's all because of that guy.

Amemiya Hiroto. The world's hero, the leader of the one hundred people who had been reincarnated here.

Though Kanata possessed only one cheat-like ability, *Amemiya Hiroto* possessed multiple. He was a man with an overwhelming amount of power.

He had been finding and gathering the other reincarnated individuals. He was a bastard straight out of American comics, with the ideal of using their powers for world peace.

With great power comes great responsibility? It's the first time I've heard something like that outside of a movie.

Come to think of it, how had that movie's sequel gone? For some reason, the green giant was more popular in Origin, so that hero hadn't been turned into a movie yet. Was it possible that using power alone to scatter your wizard enemies was more popular?

There had been backlash from critics who complained that there was too much emphasis on ancient magic, however.

Thinking about such things, Kanata opened his parachute and cast his magic whose incantation he had recited in advance.

He manipulated the heat and atmosphere while refracting the light around him, making him appear transparent to the terrorists on the ground. He was essentially a mirage.

“Now then, this should fool them – or not?!”

Holes appeared in Kanata’s parachute one after another. Realizing that his parachute was being shot at from the ground, he cut himself free from it and fell near the suburb ruins that the terrorists had holed themselves up in.



Amemiya Hiroto and the others who were reincarnated in Origin were, in Kanata’s eyes, the worst.

Hiroto insisted that the cheat-like abilities granted to them by the god were ‘Gifts’ and organized a rescue team that operated internationally. A team of heroes, so to speak.

They dealt with natural disasters and fought mysterious Undead monsters that appeared out of nowhere, made appearances in charity parties to sign autographs for children and went on television to give interviews.

Even Kanata acknowledged that they had the ability to do this. He worked so hard that it would be impossible to believe that he had been a NEET on Earth, kicked out by his parents and was riding that ferry in order to go and live and work in a relative’s factory.

But Kanata wished that they wouldn’t get him involved. He hadn’t admired the protagonists of adventure or action movies, nor did he want to perform hard work and become covered in sweat and dirt for the sake of people whose names and faces he didn’t know. He would have been satisfied with simply relaxing, being pampered by those around him and living an enjoyable life.

The thing that he found difficult to understand was that many of his school friends from his previous life supported *Amemiya Hiroto*. Everyone was overjoyed at becoming superheroes. They happily traveled west to provide disaster relief and east to assist in criminal investigations. They rejoiced in their lives as they were hugely popular in the media.

Of course, not all of them were happy. There were more than a few of them who found it troublesome to be exposed to the media. However, even they still supported *Hiroto*. They said that it was better to stay in a single organization so that the world’s nations wouldn’t use and exploit their special, non-magical powers in undesirable ways.

Now that the organization had been created, being widely acknowledged and trusted by those outside the organization, the common people in particular, was more important than anything. That was what they said.

Because the great majority of those resurrected here supported *Amemiya*, making objections would require courage, and apparently the governments of each nation had already been aware that Kanata possessed a special ability even before he reunited with the others.

His name, face and Mana seal, Origin's equivalent of Earth's fingerprints and retina patterns, were all already known. If he hadn't reunited with *Amemiya* and the others, it would probably have been people from the government appearing in front of Kanata instead.

Amemiya said that gathering into a single organization and appearing before the media was to intentionally keep all information open so that intelligence agencies and criminal organizations wouldn't take advantage of them. But Kanata felt that his well-being was none of *Amemiya's* concern.

In the group of one hundred people reincarnated from Earth, his exceptional affinity with magic, his great talent and Mana pool that was larger than other mages would be buried in the masses. He would go from being a genius to 'just another person.'

The only affinities with magic that Kanata had been given were his high aptitude for the fire-attribute and an average aptitude for the wind-attribute. The cheat-like ability that he had been granted was quite well-suited for being used in the field.

Because of this, he had been given the exaggerated code-name of "Gungnir", but –

"That's why I'm forced to risk my life in these secret missions without getting paid much!"

Just before Kanata hit the ground, he opened his spare parachute. Normally, it wouldn't have opened in time, but he used wind-attribute magic to force it to open and reduce the impact of his fall.

He somehow made a successful landing and rolled across the ground.

"Light, heat, Mana," he whispered as he remembered the map in his mind. In the next moment, Kanata vanished.

Well, I've only become transparent.

With his field of vision surrounded in complete darkness, Kanata pressed forward, relying only on his memory of the terrain.

Those damn terrorists. Did they get their hands on the latest Mana sensors?

Kanata suspected that his parachute descent had been noticed because the spell that he had cast triggered a sensor. That was why he had turned himself transparent to the naked eye, to heat sensors and to Mana sensors.

This was Kanata's cheat-like ability.

Incidentally, he hadn't used this ability during his parachute descent because it required Mana to use, and he had wanted to conserve as much as he could. The other reason was because he was rendered blind in this state, meaning that he could have collided with obstacles during his landing without being able to see them.

He soon reached the building in which the terrorists were holding this nation's president's daughter captive.

"Detect Organism Heat." Undoing his ability and regaining his vision, Kanata used a spell that only detected the heat of living creatures to search the entire building. It also reacted to the small animals living in the surrounding wasteland, but he ignored all of them.

There were seven human-sized heat sources. Four of them were moving around hurriedly. They were probably the ones who had noticed Kanata and fired their guns at him.

The other three were all close to each other. However, two of them seemed to be sitting down. The other one was standing tall.

"There's no way that there are two terrorist guards sitting in chairs in front of a president's daughter who's bigger than me, is there?"

Kanata had seen a photograph; Lady Hannah was a small, fifteen-year-old girl. Even if she was in her growth period, this was impossible.

"Well, for now, I guess I'll get rid of those four." Because he was unable to tell which of

the two seated people was Lady Hannah, he decided to dispose of the four that were moving first. "Structure," he whispered as he pointed his assault rifle in the direction of the heat sources and squeezed the trigger.

There was a roar of gunfire, and the bullets passed straight through the walls of the building without making any impact sounds or leaving any traces.

The terrorists, having noticed Kanata's detection spell, had already started to make a move, but then they suddenly collapsed and lay still.

They had been shot by bullets that had appeared through the walls and floors without warning.

This gunfire was truly 'Gungnir'. No matter what obstacles were in Kanata's way, his bullets would easily pierce the vitals of their target.

"It really is an exaggeration, though," Kanata muttered. "And what's the idea behind making a code-name associated with my ability? Building, metal."

Kanata passed smoothly through the wall and floor to enter the building. In the next moment, he tightly grasped his resin-handled knife and charged through a wall into the room where the reactions of the other three had come from.

"Gungnir?!" the large terrorist screamed, but the knife made short work of him.

And then Kanata quickly checked the remaining two people.

One of them was a female terrorist firing a gun freely at Kanata's back. Even in Origin, where magic existed, guns and knives were still the best options for making sudden counterattacks. Because magic needed incantations, they took time.

The metal bullets passed straight through Kanata's body and pierced the large man, however.

"You're such a pretty woman, too. What a shame," Kanata said as he used his knife to return the favor to the Caucasian terrorist woman, whose face had turned pale upon realizing that bullets wouldn't work on her enemy.

If the president's daughter wasn't here, I would have stayed in invincible-mode and given them a punch... No, the second was a pretty woman who hadn't done anything. What a

waste.

Even though this was one of the few benefits of being made to engage in fights to the death.

“W-who are you?”

“Are you alright? I am Gungnir of the Bravers. I have come to rescue you.” Kanata made his identity clear, hiding his inner thoughts and adopting a gentlemanly manner.

‘Bravers’ was the name that had been given to the team of people reincarnated from Earth after a certain incident. Their official name was the ‘Hundred Bravers.’

The ‘Hundred Heroes’ would be a terribly embarrassing name, wouldn’t it?

Now that I think about it, that was the cause for us to start accepting work that involves killing like this in addition to the rescue and support work, wasn’t it?

That was when they had gone to a secret research laboratory in a European military nation to exterminate one of the experimental subjects who had become an Undead and gone on a rampage.

They had accepted missions to exterminate the Undead that occasionally appeared in Origin, as well as animals and people who had been turned into monsters by the influence of Mana, on multiple occasions before that. But this incident was particularly memorable in various ways.

First, the ‘Oracle’ Endou Kouya*, who provided predictions on what methods should be used to complete requests, had provided a very strange method of defeating this Undead.

TLN: Unsure on the reading of this name. Japanese names are hard to read.*

They had to wait, completely defenseless, for the Undead to come out of the laboratory. They had to avoid showing hostility towards it at all costs. Once the Undead let its guard down, they would take it down with a combined, simultaneous attack.

They had questioned the Oracle’s sanity after being told to be defenseless before a dangerous enemy, but when they actually executed this plan, the Undead let its guard down and was defeated in a one-sided fashion.

Kanata had been truly bewildered, wondering what it was thinking, but things began to progress rapidly from there.

That Undead, or to be more specific, the Mana of the person who had become that Undead, had been the secret behind the new pharmaceutical products and medical treatments that the military nation had been exporting.

Death-attribute Mana, which had never been discovered before. Kanata and the other Bravers had obliterated the only source of this Mana from the face of the planet, leaving not even a single fragment of flesh behind.

Of course, the exports stopped. New pharmaceutical products and Magic Items were impossible to create, and the entire world began competing to do so. And in the shadows, with the information extracted from the remaining data and the few survivors of the laboratory as a basis, each nation desperately tried to search for... or create, a second death-attribute mage.

Kanata and the others were asked repeatedly whether they could use their 'Gifts' to recreate death-attribute magic. Kouya, the Oracle who was supposed to be able to answer this question, said, "That thing... That person was someone who shouldn't have existed in this world. In order to save him, we had no choice but to do this." And then he remained silent on the matter.

Feeling sympathy for a single guinea pig? This is why I can't deal with amateurs, Kanata had thought, but as more of the illegal research facility and its investigation on death-attribute magic was exposed, he realized just how abnormal that Undead's existence had been. If they hadn't killed it, it might have been them who would have been killed. At the very least, over half of those who had gone to the laboratory would have died.

As Kanata attended mass at the church every week, he could sympathize with the Undead a little.

If death-attribute magic was mastered, immortality would apparently become possible, but things had become a mess because of the powerful people who wanted to obtain that immortality and the religious people who refused to accept it.

That was why the president's daughter had been kidnapped by terrorists, and that was why Kanata had come to rescue her.

Huh? Why am I remembering this kind of stuff? Actually...

“Gehah?!” As Kanata suddenly turned around, blood came out of his mouth. “Y-you... how do you know... my weakness... You’re not the president’s daughter, huh...”

Hannah, who had been clinging onto Kanata, had plunged her arm deep into his solar plexus. It wasn’t something that the president’s daughter was capable of doing.

“It’s me, Kanata,” Hannah replied quietly as her appearance silently changed. The young Caucasian girl turned into an Asian woman in her late twenties.

“You... Metamorph... Why...?”

It was Shihouin Mari*, one of the people who had reincarnated from Earth, a woman who was supposed to be one of the Bravers, with the cheat-like ability to transform into any kind of person.

TLN: Again, not sure on name reading.*

Mari responded with a mask-like, expressionless face, but there was hatred burning in her eyes. “I made use of the terrorists in order to kill you. The real president’s daughter is probably being protected in another place by now.”

“In order to kill me?! Why, I don’t remember doing anything to be hated by you...!”

“To avenge my mother.”

“W-wait! Don’t misunderstand!” Kanata was unsteady on his feet and his body was reacting to his commands surprisingly badly, but he backed off and put some distance between himself and Mari.

He cauterized his wound to stop the bleeding, desperately looking for a way to survive.

“It wasn’t me who killed that woman,” he said. “It’s true that I couldn’t save her, and it’s true that it was me who stopped her heart in the end. But she was missing her head, you know?! It’s because of me that your mother is living out there somewhere-”

“If my mother was missing her head, can you explain why her cornea was transplanted into a mafia boss?” asked Mari, interrupting him. “You piece of shit.”

As Kanata tried to crawl backwards away from her, she quickly raised her hand towards his head.

This was the worst. Mari's Metamorph ability was a terrible opponent for Kanata's Gungnir ability. If Kanata was unwounded, he would still be able to somehow escape, but now that he had taken a fatal wound, it was impossible.

"W-wait! Do you think that the others will allow this?! There's no way you can keep this hidden; there's no way that that justice-loving *Hiroto* would forgive... Stop, I don't want to die yet!" Kanata begged. "That mother of yours isn't your real parent; she's just the woman who gave birth to you in this world, isn't she?! And aren't we supposed to be comrades?!"

"No. Someone like you, who cut up my mother and sold her organs, is no comrade of mine."

Kanata vaguely heard Mari's voice speak these words, but before he could reply, his consciousness was cut off.



Kanata Smith, one of the Hundred Bravers. Known as Kaidou Kanata on Earth.

Discovered with a fatal wound, he was rushed into a medical facility. Treatment produced no real results, and three days later, he was confirmed as deceased.

It was thought that the weakness of his Gift was taken advantage of during his mission to rescue the president's daughter from terrorists.

Kanata Smith was remembered by the people as the first casualty of the one hundred heroes, and his death made a shocking impact on ninety-eight of the ninety-nine remaining Bravers.

CHAPTER 68

THE HARTNER DUCHY HAS GONE THROUGH A DECLINE

『The levels of the Unarmed Fighting Technique, Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) and Bloodsucking skills have increased!』

“I see. This city had already become the Goblin King’s stronghold,” said Vandalieu.

“Still, you’re pretty impressive,” Zran remarked. “To think that you’d be able to take down a disaster-designated monster on your own.”

“I wanted to see King going wild, too,” said Braga.

“No, it wasn’t really that special,” Vandalieu told him.

That evening, he and Eleanora, who had regrouped with the ninja unit, were having a hot pot together.

After Vandalieu had approached the city, he had fought the Goblins in earnest. He used Out-of-body Experience and Spirit Form to divide himself, used the Materialization skill to materialize his body parts, fired Death Bullets all over the place and slaughtered the Goblins with his claws while running endlessly around them. It was a one-sided massacre.

He had used Golem Transformation to create Stone Golem allies from the city’s walls as well, so every single Goblin was turned into a silent corpse.

In addition, he didn’t have to think about finding female Goblins that could become partners for Braga and the other Black Goblins. The Black Goblins didn’t understand the Goblin language, and because Black Goblins resembled humans far more than Goblins, their sense of beauty wouldn’t match.

“It wasn’t anything amazing,” said Vandalieu. “It was only a thousand Goblins.”

“For normal people, that would be pretty amazing,” Zran told him. “That’s a number that even a C-class adventurer would run from if he was on his own.”

“Well you know, I’m not really normal,” Vandalieu pointed out.

“Yeah, King is amazing,” said Braga.

A thousand Goblins led by a Goblin King. The pack of Goblins under the Goblin King’s rule had still been small, but a normal adventurer or even a party wouldn’t have been able to challenge them.

Though the Goblin King’s Strengthen Followers skill was likely still low in level, it would still strengthen the Goblins beyond their normal abilities, and under the King’s rule, even cowardly Goblins would become reckless soldiers willing to sacrifice their own lives.

However, these had proved to be enemies that Vandalieu could defeat one-sidedly on his own.

He was vulnerable to enemies who possessed enough power to break through his Impact-Negating Barrier or his Magic Absorption Barrier, but he was essentially invincible against enemies who couldn’t break them.

Keeping his physical body and soul protected inside his barriers, he had left the outside fighting to his spirit-form clones. With Vandalieu doing this, it was impossible for Goblin Soldiers and Generals armed only with rusted weapons to deal him a fatal blow.

Though the Goblin Kings and Mages did their best to defeat the clones, they inflicted pain that Vandalieu considered to be tolerable, and he could simply make more clones again immediately afterwards.

With the remaining stone walls of the town turned into Stone Golem allies for Vandalieu, even escaping was difficult for the Goblins.

As a result, the Goblin King and his pack were annihilated after managing to make Vandalieu use only 10,000,000 of his Mana. Vandalieu had even recovered the majority of that 10,000,000 Mana with his Automatic Mana Recovery skill and by using Bloodsucking on the Goblin King.

“But Vandalieu-sama, couldn’t you have defeated them faster by using disease?” asked Eleanora.

If Vandalieu wanted to, it was possible to quickly produce the pathogen that caused the disease that he had used on the Mirg shield-nation’s army in the defense of Talosheim last year. If he had used this, the non-Black, normal Goblins would have instantly become unable to act. They wouldn’t have died immediately, but Vandalieu would simply have to finish off the collapsed Goblins as if he were performing some manual labor task, so it wouldn’t have even been a battle.

But there was a flaw with this plan.

“That’s true, but it would have been troublesome if there were people that the Goblins had captured,” said Vandalieu. “Well, there weren’t any, though.”

Like Orcs, Goblins sometimes kidnapped women and used them as tools to birth children. Vandalieu had taken this possibility into account, but fortunately this pack hadn’t been keeping any women captive. There had signs of life that could have been captive women, but they turned out to just be female Goblins.

“How prudent of you to consider women who might not even have been there,” said Eleanora.

“I think it’s normal to take that into consideration,” Vandalieu told her. “But don’t stop praising me.”

Delicious meals and the admiration of others is the richness of life. Physical contact would make it even better.

“Yeah, you did good,” said Zran.

“You’re great, King,” said Braga.

As the three of them patted his head, Vandalieu recovered from the disappointment of the failure of his first visit to an area inhabited by humans. He turned the Goblins that he had killed into Zombies and everyone began preparing to make camp.

Vandalieu didn’t really like the idea of using the houses that the Goblins had been living in, so he used Golem Transmutation to construct familiar-looking pit dwellings out of suitable wood and stone.

It was summer, so ten of these would probably be fine.

Incidentally, Vandalieu had broken the Goblin King's limbs and left him at death's door for Braga to deal the finishing blow. Braga did gain some Experience Points, but despite being a King, it was only Rank 4. It didn't provide enough for Braga to level up.

"Still, what a waste," said Zran. "If you'd defeated the Goblin King *after* becoming an adventurer, you would have climbed up the classes all in one go."

"Are they really that amazing, these Goblin Kings?" asked Vandalieu.

"Well, they are," Zran told him. "If a newbie who had just registered were to defeat a Goblin King on his own, I think they would be promoted from G-class straight to E-class, and they'd probably be allowed to take the D-class promotion exam right afterwards as well."

"Oh, so they're more amazing than they look," said Braga, looking impressed. "As expected of another King."

"...Wow, I feel like I just missed out on a lot," said Vandalieu as his shoulders dropped.

A newbie who had just registered at the Guild, defeating a Goblin King alone. It would be incredibly big news, an achievement that would linger in the memories of even those who weren't adventurers.

In fictional works that Vandalieu had seen on Earth, there were plots where the protagonist would suddenly achieve something great and make a striking debut. This could have been possible for Vandalieu.

If he had done it after registering as an adventurer, that is.

"I mean, we're supposed to be leaving the city quickly, right? You wouldn't even have time to sit the exam either way," Zran pointed out.

"That's right," said Eleanora. "And you defeated such a great enemy before you even registered. I'm sure you will be able to achieve something just as great soon enough, Vandalieu-sama."

"I suppose you're right," said Vandalieu, feeling a little better after being comforted like this. "But the city was beyond undergoing a decline; it had become a home for

Goblins. Why is that, I wonder? The Hartner Duchy does still exist, doesn't it?"

"Yes, there is no doubt about that," said Eleanora. "This is my first time coming to the Orbaume Kingdom as well, but something like the destruction of an entire duchy would be news that would travel to the western side of the continent. And judging from the state of the ruins, it seems that the city disappeared a long time ago."

"I've only been to this city twice as well, but... isn't it because the commercial trading with us stopped?" said Zran. "But even then, there's an even larger city to the north and a mine to the south. You'd think that it would still get by as a place where people stop in between."

"Then maybe the city became impossible to maintain because of monster rampages," Braga suggested.

"Yes, that could be the reason," said Eleanora. "The same thing has apparently happened before in the Mirg shield-nation as well."

Vandalieu had once heard from Kachia that after Talosheim was destroyed by the Mirg shield-nation, the monster population had no longer been kept in check by the Titan adventurers, so some monsters crossed the Boundary Mountain Range and caused damage to the Mirg shield-nation.

The same thing had likely happened to the Hartner Duchy. As Braga suggested, it was possible that the duke had become unable to maintain the city, leading to its abandonment.

"I see, no wonder the area around the city had turned into a semi-Devil's Nests," said Zran. "They weren't able to keep the monster numbers in check."

Incidentally, the difference between Devil's Nests and semi-Devil's Nests is the extent of Mana pollution in the soil.

Lands with Mana pollution so severe that normal plants and animals living there would turn into monsters and monsters would spontaneously appear are referred to as Devil's Nests. The presence of produce that only grows in Devil's Nests, such as Kobol fruits, is also a requirement of being classified as a Devil's Nest.

In order to convert a Devil's Nest into normal land that doesn't produce monsters, forests need to be cut down and swamps need to be filled in, things that can easily

contain Mana must be removed and clergymen from the Church are needed to purify the land.

Semi-Devil's Nests, on the other hand, are simply lands that multiple monsters have begun living in for whatever reason. For those making use of these lands, they are essentially the same as Devil's Nests, but once the monsters are all hunted down, no more monsters appear. Afterwards, they can be used just like any other forest and marshland.

With this logic, Talosheim and its surroundings was a splendid Devil's Nest, with its crops turning into monster plants. But nobody minded.

"So, what are we going to do now?" asked Braga. "Are we going back to Talosheim?"

"No, let's go and see the city to the north," said Vandalieu.

"It's more promising than the mine to the south," said Zran. "Since two hundred years have passed, it might have run dry and stopped being mined by now."

"Eh? Do ore veins run dry in this world?" Vandalieu asked in surprise.

"King, it's only ore veins in Dungeons that don't," Braga told him.

It seemed that Talosheim was in a truly blessed location.



The next day, Vandalieu turned the well water into Aqua Golems (which resembled Slimes) to remove it while the Black Goblins cleaned the well so that Eleanora and the others could wait here while he went to the city. He quickly set up some walls, watchtowers and traps with Golem Transmutation before heading towards the highway that the Goblins' spirits had told him about.

He found walking to be bothersome along the way, but unlike yesterday, he decided to build his body's strength by running on all fours, using his claws to provide grip on the ground's surface.

"Once I reeegister at the Guiiild, and becooome an adveeenturer~" Vandalieu sang this rhythmless tune as he ran along on all fours for around half an hour. He finally found the road. It was a crudely-built road that would cause carriages traveling along it to

bump up and down, but it was clearly man-made.

Realizing that this was one of the highways of the Orbaume Kingdom, he stared at it for a while. As he took his first step onto it, he raised his arms in celebration, and then froze.

“Traveling alone feels... empty,” he whispered to himself.

He had tried singing to himself and firing himself up meaninglessly, but these couldn’t fill the void. The feeling didn’t last.

Vandalieu had been alone in his previous life and the life before that, but in Lambda, there had always been someone by his side. Because of this, he had completely lost his resistance to feelings of loneliness.

There were over a thousand spirits floating about in Vandalieu’s surroundings, however. But as spirits, their personalities had gradually deteriorated. Thus, the spirits led by Vandalieu, including the Goblins that he had killed yesterday, were simply tools to use for Golem Transmutation rather than companions.

“If I don’t hurry and get to the city, I’ll probably end up making Undead just to have someone to talk to. So, from here, north is... this way.”

Using the sun as a reference to get a sense of direction, Vandalieu began running.

After he continued running for a while, he suddenly noticed a scent on the wind that stimulated his hunger.

“This is the smell of blood. This stink is Goblin blood... no, there’s human blood mixed in as well?”

It seemed that there were people and Goblins fighting up ahead.

“Alright, let’s go and help them.”

Vandalieu used Flight to float lightly into the air, and then began flying forward at great speed.

He didn’t know whether the adventurers or soldiers who were fighting were struggling, but even if the battle was going favorably for them, wouldn’t they be

friendly towards him? That was what Vandalieu thought.

As usual, he had no confidence in his ability to communicate with those who were unaffected by his Death-Attribute Charm.



Kasim stopped the club with his shield and brought it crashing down on the club's owner.

"Eat this! Shield Bash!"

The Goblin Soldier screamed as the shield slammed into his face, sending it flying backwards. However, its place was quickly taken by another Goblin Soldier.

"Oi, Kasim! When did you learn how to use Shield Bash?!"

"I just shouted the martial skill's name; it's not like I can actually use it."

"That's what I thought!"

The Shield-bearer-in-training Kasim, the Swordsman-in-training Fester and the Scout-in-training Zeno formed a three-man party. Because Goblins had been appearing more frequently on the highway between the village and the mine, this party had been hunting them to reduce their numbers.

The three of them had just graduated the adventurers' school and become E-class adventurers, but they were confident that they would be able to exterminate Goblins, even if they appeared in large numbers with three or four Goblin Soldiers.

But they hadn't expected over fourteen Goblin Soldiers to appear on a highway that wasn't even part of a Devil's Nest.

On top of this, there was a particularly problematic Goblin shrieking orders to the others. It was a Rank 3 Goblin Barbarian, one of the newbie-killers that the adventurers had learned about in the adventurers' school.

"What is a Goblin Barbarian doing in a place like this? I didn't sign up for this!"

"Everyone mistook it for a Goblin. This is why they're newbie-killers."

If examined closely, it is clear that Goblin Barbarians have more developed muscles around the neck and limbs, but from afar, they simply look like slightly thicker Goblins. And in the majority of cases, their weapons are tree branches used as clubs just like other Goblins, only a little larger.

Because of this, many newbies approach them after mistaking them for normal Rank 1 Goblins, only to be beaten to death by their overwhelming strength.

“It’s still better than a Goblin Mage, isn’t it? Those are newbie-killers as well,” said Zeno.

The contents of a Goblin Barbarian’s head are no different from a normal Goblin’s. Even the Goblin Barbarian that was in charge now seemed to not have given any orders other than, “Don’t run away,” and, “Fight.”

“Zeno, you’re right, but trouble is trouble. No matter what happens, they won’t... run away!” Fester finally managed to cut down a Goblin Soldier, but the next Goblin Soldier stepped forward immediately to take its place.

He had already cut down three of them. Goblin Soldiers were smart enough to run when they thought that their chances of winning were slim or if they thought that victory would come at too great a cost.

But the Goblin Barbarian’s head was filled with nothing but the idea of fighting. And since the Goblin Soldiers feared the Barbarian far more than Kasim’s party, they weren’t running away.

“Oi, do you still have Mana left?” Kasim asked his companions. “If I use Provocation and either Stone Wall or Stone Form, I’ll be out.”

“I can use three more martial skills,” Zeno replied. “How about you, Fester?”

“...I only have enough to use Single Flash twice,” said Fester.

It is difficult to say that non-mage E-class adventurers have abundant Mana pools. Kasim prepared himself, knowing that it would be difficult to come out of this situation alive on their own with their remaining Mana.

At least they were all fortunate enough to be men. At worst, they would all be killed here... though they would probably turn into Goblin food afterwards, they wouldn’t

feel anything as long as they were killed first.

“Zeno, Fester, I’ll draw the Goblins’ attention with Provocation. While I do that, you guys run,” said Kasim.

“Kasim, what are you trying to –”

“There’s a Barbarian on the highway! There’s definitely a large pack of Goblins nearby. You need to let everyone in the village know!” Kasim raised his shield.

The Goblins had grown tired of attacking, but they were unwilling to allow Kasim’s party to escape. The moment Kasim tried to use his Shield Technique martial skill, Provocation –

Far behind the Goblin Barbarian, there was a child carrying a large amount of luggage floating in the air.

“Eh?”

That child was silently flying closer, swift as the wind.

“– Iron Rend.”

He swept his claws across, easily decapitating the Goblin Barbarian.

“Eh?”

“Geh?”

“W-what?”

“Gyageh?”

The Goblin Barbarian screamed as its head flew off and blood spouted from its headless corpse like a fountain.

Kasim and the Goblin Soldiers stared blankly at the white-haired child that was floating in the air on the other side of this blood fountain, making it difficult to believe that this was reality.

“Umm, if you’re going to attack the Goblins, I think now is your best chance,” the child... Vandalieu, advised Kasim’s party, who were still staring at him blankly several seconds later.

“Gegyh?”

“Eh? Y-yeah!”

“Gegyah?!”

Kasim’s party used the mace, sword and knife in their hands to beat down the dumbfounded Goblin Soldiers. There were some Goblins who had regained their senses and tried to flee, but they fell before Vandalieu who casually swung his claws at them, and all of the Goblins were safely eliminated.

“Sorry I’m late. My name is Vandalieu.”

“A-ah. You saved us.”

The E-class adventurers were bewildered by Vandalieu’s polite self-introduction.

White hair, candle-wax-like skin, doll-like facial features and a clear-sounding voice. All of these contributed to his doll-like lack of presence... it was as if he had a phantom-like air about him, and he would vanish if touched.

The only vivid thing about him was the bloodstained, knife-like claws extending from his thin fingers, but these were his most unbelievable feature for Kasim and his companions.

Vandalieu had sliced through the Goblin Barbarian’s muscle-packed neck with these claws. The neck of a monster that was significantly stronger than them, feared at the adventurers’ school as a newbie-killer.

Who is this guy?

Nobody could blame them for having their minds completely occupied with this question.

“Umm, Vandalieu-san –” Kasim began.

“You don’t have to use the honorific,” said Vandalieu interrupting him. “Kasim-san, you are adults, aren’t you?”

In the world of Lambda, humans in most regions are treated as adults from the age of fifteen. Kasim and his companions looked to be in their late teenage years to Vandalieu.

In fact, the three of them were young men who had graduated from the adventurers’ school and turned fifteen this year.

“R-really? Well then, Vandalieu, what may you – I mean, what are you?” Kasim asked.

“Kasim, he won’t understand what you’re asking him if you say it like that!” said Zeno.

“In other words, he wants to ask who you are, where you’ve come from and whether you’re a person or not,” said Fester.

“Fester, you’re being so rude! To the one who saved our lives!” Zeno reminded him.

Vandalieu didn’t understand why the three of them were so flustered, but for now, he decided to answer their questions.

“I’m a Dhampir, and I lived with my mother in a forest far away from people. I don’t know where my father is or whether he’s alive. My mother died of illness recently, so I’m heading to a town with an Adventurers’ Guild to fulfil her last wish of me becoming an adventurer.”

He had no intention of honestly telling them about his past, so he told them the lies that he had prepared in advance.

“A Dhampir?!”

“Ah, it’s true, his left and right eyes are different colors and he has claws. It’s my first time seeing one.”

“H-hey. Do you have fangs as well?”

The three of them seemed to think that this explanation was enough to account for Vandalieu’s strange features.

The human rights of Dhampirs were recognized in the Orbaume Kingdom, but it wasn't as if half-Vampire children were born frequently, and even if the nation acknowledged Vandalieu as a person, whether the Vampires would accept him was another matter entirely.

Because of this, many people had never actually seen a Dhampir.

Even these three, who had attended the adventurers' school in the city, had only heard about Dhampirs' racial characteristics like their odd-colored eyes, claws and fangs.

Because of this, it seemed that they had brushed aside all of the other strange things about Vandalieu by telling themselves, "It's because he's a Dhampir."

Could it be that Dhampirs are considered rare in the Orbaume Kingdom? Vandalieu wondered.

"Yes, I do have fangs, but... More importantly, are you fine with not cutting and taking the Goblins' ears?" he asked them.

"OH YEAH!" the three of them exclaimed, suddenly returning to their senses. Kasim and Fester hurriedly began cutting the ears off the Goblin Soldiers to prove that they had killed them, while cutting open their chests to check if they had produced any Magic Stones.

They even took the handles of the Goblin Soldiers' spears as well as the Barbarian's club to use as fuel. Their greed was enough to surprise even Vandalieu, but this was normal for novice E-class adventurers.

On first glance, the equipment that Kasim's party was using seemed to be equipment suited for adventurers who had been working for a long time, but they had simply been handed down to them by senior adventurers. In other words, they were secondhand goods.

Kasim's shield was made of bronze, but his mace was made of stone and his armor was made of thick hide, called heavy leather armor.

Zeno's knife and Fester's sword were cheap products made by pouring metal into molds, and they were wearing cheap light leather armor.

Their appearance was such that if they were dirty and had lost their registration cards,

it wouldn't be surprising if they were mistaken for bandits.

In contrast, Vandalieu had done his best to make his own appearance inconspicuous. He was wearing clothes that he had spent a lot of effort in making from the civilian clothing that he had stolen from the Mirg shield-nation's fort near the tunnel's exit last year. He was also carrying luggage that looked heavier than his own body weight. At first glance, the only thing that looked to be of value was the contents of his luggage.

However, the only valuable item he had was the pair of sandals that he was wearing right now.

They were an excellent product that Tarea had created so that he could use his claws without discomfort. The soles had been made by sewing Ogre and Earth Dragon hides together, and the laces had been made from Rock Dragon tendons.

Selling these sandals would yield enough money to replace all of Kasim's party's equipment with brand-new items.

"Umm, you can take the Goblin Barbarian's Magic Stone and proof of extermination –"

"No, I'm not an adventurer yet, so please go ahead," said Vandalieu.

"No, we can't do that. A Rank 3 Magic Stone sells for a hundred Baums, and the proof of extermination is worth three hundred Baums!"

"...That thing is called a Goblin Barbarian?" It was only now that Vandalieu realized that the Goblin he had decapitated was not an ordinary Goblin.

But although the adventurers spoke to him about money, he had no idea whether it was a large amount or not.

"Well then, can you please lead me to a village or town?" Vandalieu requested. "Also, it would help if you could tell me about the places people are living and the Adventurers' Guild. I'm a little ignorant about this world, you see."

Kasim's party seemed to agree to this request.

"Alright. We'll lead you to the village we're using as our base."

And so Vandalieu got a foothold for entering a place where people lived for the first time.



- **Name:** Kasim
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Apprentice Warrior
- **Level:** 72
- **Job history:** None
- **Passive skills:**
 - None
- **Active skills:**
 - Farming: Level 1
 - Club Technique: Level 1
 - Shield Technique: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 1

- **Name:** Zeno
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Apprentice Thief
- **Level:** 65
- **Job history:** None
- **Passive skills:**
 - Detect Presence: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - Short Sword Technique: Level 1
 - Archery: Level 2
 - Trap: Level 1

- **Name:** Fester
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Apprentice Warrior
- **Level:** 71

- **Job history:** None
- **Passive skills:**
 - Enhanced Muscular Strength: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - Fishing: Level 1
 - Swordsmanship: Level 2
 - Dismantling: Level 1

CHAPTER 69

MAKING A DECISION WITH SOMEONE'S LIFE IN THE FIRST VILLAGE

Following the lead of Kasim's party, Vandalieu was heading towards the village that they were working in, the Seventh Cultivation Village.

"A cultivation village in a place like this?" Vandalieu asked in surprise. There was a city's ruins to the south, and even a mine in beyond that.

Fester was surprised himself at Vandalieu's question. "I've never heard about the city," he said. "If you go south from the village, there's only a rocky mountain with a slave-run mine in it. There is another Duchy when you go past that, though."

"No, I've definitely heard that there was a city, a hundred years or two hundred years ago," said Kasim. "Isn't that the city that Vandalieu is talking about?"

"Ah, I see. He said he had a Vampire parent, right? I suppose it wouldn't be strange for him to be told about that," said Fester.

It seemed that the Hartner Duchy had gone into a decline in the past two hundred years.

"But why on earth would such a thing happen?" Vandalieu asked.

The adventurers gave him puzzled looks in response to his question.

"Sorry, we're not really that well-educated. Each of the duchies is its own state, like a country ruled by noblemen, so people like us don't really learn about the histories of other duchies," said Zeno.

"Are you all from other duchies?" Vandalieu asked.

"Yeah, there's a long story behind that. It's a sad story to both hear and tell –" Fester began.

“I’ll tell him, Fester,” said Zeno. “First, regarding why the city disappeared, I’ll tell you what we know –”

According to Zeno’s explanation, the direct cause was Talosheim’s ruin after all.

That city had been built as a relay-point for the commercial trade with Talosheim, and when that commercial trade disappeared, the productivity of the city decreased and it became difficult to maintain it.

At the same time, the southern mine’s production had fallen as well. Since profits couldn’t be made by employing normal workers, slaves were used to carry out the mining.

With the people working at the mine not even having money to spend, the Duke Hartner of the time, who had been newly-appointed several years previously, had ordered that the city be dismantled.

Vandalieu was amazed that they would have been willing to dismantle an entire city. It seemed that feudal societies did anything that had already been decided upon. In Japan, there would definitely be disputes over such an action.

But what happened to the First Princess?

The name of Talosheim’s First Princess, Levia, didn’t appear in Zeno’s story. It might have been omitted because it didn’t have anything to do with the city.

It bothers me, but I suppose it would be unnatural for me to ask about it now.

As Vandalieu thought this, Zeno’s story skipped to more recent events.

“Actually, five years ago, The Amid Empire came attacking,” he said. “Most of the Sauron Duchy to the north was occupied. We’re from the Sauron Duchy.”

“We’re what you’d call refugees,” said Fester. “Those guys from the Empire apparently behaved themselves in towns and larger farming villages, but in small villages like ours, they did whatever they liked. My oldest aniki tried to save his fiancé, and both of them –”

“Fester, that’s not the kind of story you should let such a small child hear, is it?”

The war between the Amid Empire and the Orbaume Kingdom that Vandalieu had heard of previously. Vandalieu felt that he had suddenly caught up with what had been happening.

“Well, anyway, we’re refugees who escaped the Sauron Duchy and came here to the Hartner Duchy,” Zeno said in summary. “When the initial conflict was over, the second son of the current Duke, Prince Belton, began a cultivation project to help the refugees. That’s why we’re able to live with our families in the Seventh Cultivation Village that we’re heading to now.

“But the village isn’t exactly prospering, so we became adventurers on the third year after it was built and went to the city,” said Kasim.

“I see,” said Vandalieu. “I’m sure it must have been hard.”

Beginning a cultivation project to help the refugees seemed to be not a bad plan in Vandalieu’s eyes. Unlike Earth, there was plenty of unoccupied land. The area around here in particular had no Devil’s Nests, and even if monsters did appear, they were Rank 2 at most. There was nothing but a slave-run mine at the end of the highway, so there were apparently almost no bandits as well.

...Vandalieu had wiped out a Goblin pack led by a Goblin King just yesterday, but something like that could probably be considered similar to a natural disaster.

Kasim and his companions had been confused over the appearance of the Goblin Barbarian, which normally wouldn’t appear on the highway. But there was no doubt that the Goblin King had something to do with this. These Goblins had likely been a scouting party who had been sent out hunting.

“I suppose so,” said Kasim. “The soldiers took us away, pointed at the open land and said, ‘Build a village here,’ so we made fields, dug wells, built houses...”

“They protected the village from beasts and monsters until the village was finished, lent us tents and blankets, and although there wasn’t much food and it wasn’t very tasty, they did give us some,” said Fester. “We’re also exempt from paying taxes for five years, but it was still hard.”

Hearing them talk, Vandalieu realized that they had gone through more hardships than he had imagined. Though land upon which a village could be built had been given to them, and they had been protected and given the necessities to live while building

it, they had been made to build all of the houses, fields and infrastructure like wells by hand.

“Hey, it’s still better than suffering and looking for work every day in the slums, isn’t it? You’re going to get punished if you complain too much,” said Zeno.

According to his words, the village’s circumstances were still on the preferable side.

“And I’m sure this child has been through even harder things than us,” Zeno continued. “Sorry about these guys being so inconsiderate.”

“Not at all, please don’t worry about it,” said Vandalieu. “Thanks to my mother and other people, I didn’t struggle to eat up until now.”

There was one time where he had struggled to eat so much that he had been forced to stave off his hunger by drinking earthworm soup, but that was rather difficult to tell them.

After that, Vandalieu walked for three more hours while hearing about the adventurers’ school and Duke Hartner before he arrived at the village.



The Seventh Cultivation Village had a population of around three hundred, a village size that would be considered between small and medium in Lambda.

There were more human villagers than of any other race, as they made up about half of the village population. Among the other half, there were Beast-people, Dwarves and Titans. Elves, Dark Elves and Drakonids have long lifespans and unique cultures, so they often form groups within their own races. Because of this, while they might be found in cities, there are almost none in small villages.

This applied even after becoming refugees, so the Dark Elves and Drakonids of the Sauron Duchy had apparently approached groups of members of their own races.

And the Titans in this village were those who had been living in the Sauron Duchy, so they had no relation to Talosheim.

The houses of the village were all one-story houses and they hadn’t been built to be very sturdy, but considering that they had been hand-built by the villagers, they were

very good.

In fact, this was apparently the most-populated of the six cultivation villages in this area.

“By the way, why are there only six cultivation villages if this is the Seventh Cultivation Village?” asked Vandalieu.

“The First Cultivation Village couldn’t make any profits and turned into a ghost town,” Kasim explained.

“They did try pretty hard, too. The nearby spring dried up, and apparently water wouldn’t come out even when they dug wells,” said Zeno.

Life in human society in this world was truly difficult.

“First, let’s hurry and exchange these ears for money.”

With that, Kasim’s party took Vandalieu to the village’s only store... the general store/bar/Adventurers’ Guild branch that also acted as an inn for anyone who wanted to stay, commonly known as the jack-of-all-trades store.

It seemed that it was impossible to get by in this village without having multiple options for business.

However, judging by the fact that none of the villagers had paid Vandalieu any attention so far, it was probably surprisingly common for people to come into the village from elsewhere.

Vandalieu had found something that bothered him far more than the villagers’ reactions, a small shrine containing a stone with Alda’s holy symbol carved on it. He directed his attention towards it, but...

“UWAH! Kasim, there’s something behind you!”

The shopkeeper of the jack-of-all-trades store referred to Vandalieu as “something” and pointed his finger at him.

“...Hello.” Trying not to be discouraged, Vandalieu greeted him.

“Hyih?! It talked?! Someone call the priest-sama!”

Weren’t these words too cruel, even for a secluded village in the countryside?

“Wait, Oyaji-san*. This child isn’t a ghost!”

TLN: For those unfamiliar with this relatively uncommon term, it loosely translates to an affectionate way of saying “old man”. I’m keeping it like this because I think it loses some meaning if I do translate it to “old man”.*

“His presence is lacking, but he’s definitely alive!”

“We can explain! Calm down and listen to us!”

Kasim’s party hastily grabbed the shopkeeper and dragged him back into the store rather roughly considering that they were trying to calm him down.

The words of Kasim and his companions that made Vandalieu finally realize that his presence was as thin as air to those who weren’t affected by his Death-Attribute Charm.

It seemed that the reason the villagers hadn’t said anything to Vandalieu was because they simply hadn’t noticed him.

“Sorry about my father. He likes to say stupid things,” said Lina, employee of this Adventurers’ Guild branch and daughter of the jack-of-all-trades store’s shopkeeper.

She was a bright, simple, village-girl-like Guild employee... not really. She was a village girl who had taken an examination to become an Adventurers’ Guild employee.

Whether adventurers are present or not would greatly influence a small village’s longevity, so it had been necessary to build somewhere for them to stay, even if it was a small lodging in the village’s only store.

“Not at all. I’m used to it,” said Vandalieu.

This was a blatant lie. But even though the shock of being treated like this was still echoing inside Vandalieu, it wouldn’t appear in his expression.

“Really? Then I suppose it’s fine, but I’m really sorry about that,” said Lina as she

looked at Vandalieu's doll-like face. Although she was apologizing one more time, she let it go without noticing Vandalieu's feelings.

"Lina, more importantly, exchange these for money," said Fester.

"Yes, yes. Umm... These are Goblin Soldiers and a Goblin Barbarian's?! It's amazing that you managed to exterminate these; aren't you still E-class?!" Lina asked them, dumbfounded.

"No, the one who defeated them was –" Fester began.

"Fester, we can talk about that afterwards," said Kasim. "Just do the exchange first."

"Yes, you're right. Umm..."

Lina made the calculations rather slowly, and then she counted out the bronze and silver coins. It seemed that Guild employees in village branches were more like part-time workers than proper Adventurers' Guild employees, so they weren't expected to be particularly proficient.

In fact, with Kasim's party being the only adventurers in the village, she only worked at the branch once every few days.

But Vandalieu had noticed something else.

I only just noticed this, but how is it that the Adventurers' Guild distinguishes what kind of Goblins have been killed using just their ears?

The ears acted as proof of having exterminated Goblins. Even Vandalieu could tell from their shape and color that they were Goblin ears. But if he were to be asked what kind of Goblins they were from, he would have no hope of answering.

He would be able to understand for cases like Goblin Kings, who possessed such different constitutions from other Goblins that it was difficult to believe that they were members of the same race. But Goblin Soldiers and Goblin Mages, who weren't very different in size or shape from regular Goblins and simply had different equipment and ornaments, would be impossible to tell apart just by looking at their ears.

So how could they be told apart? Was the incantation for Appraisal recited for each one, or were skills like Monster Appraisal or Extermination Proof Appraisal taught at

the Guild?

“The extermination proof of fourteen Goblin Soldiers and a Goblin Barbarian comes to 400 Baums. The Magic Stones are 380 Baums, so the total is 780 Baums,” said Lina.

Just as Vandalieu was about to ask his questions about the Goblin ears, the monetary exchange finished taking place.

780 Baums. If a single Baum was worth a hundred yen, that would come to 78,000 yen*. To Vandalieu, this amount of money didn't seem worth fighting and risking one's own life for. But he also knew that this was just how he felt as someone from Earth, from Japan.

TLN: About \$720USD*

“Divided between three of us, that's 260 each... Yes!” Fester raised his fist into the air in triumph.

“With this, we can take it easy for a while,” said Zeno, breathing a sigh of relief.

Judging from their reactions, Vandalieu could tell that 260 Baums was sufficient pay for them.

“How much is that money worth?” he asked.

“Ah, 260 Baums? Let's see... If you were working in the slums with one of the relatively better jobs, you might be able to earn 260 Baums after about twenty-six days,” Zeno explained.

It seemed that one would need to be fortunate enough to find daily work in the slums and work without rest for twenty-six days to earn 260 Baums.

But there probably weren't welfare programs or safety nets like insurance for injuries and illness. And finding work every day wasn't guaranteed. Considering that, being able to earn this much in one day might be worth risking one's own life for.

“But even the fact that we have some leeway with this amount of money is all thanks to the fact that this Oyaji-san lets us stay here for free,” Zeno continued.

“Indeed, we'd be in trouble if we didn't have adventurers, even if those adventurers do

ogle my daughter,” said the aforementioned Oyaji-san, joining in the conversation. “Sorry about earlier,” he said to Vandalieu. “If you’re staying here, I’ll let you stay for free just like these guys, so forgive me, Ojou-chan.” He apologized with a gentle expression that made him look like a completely different person from before.

That was fine, but...

“Oyaji-san! I don’t really ogle Lina –” Fester began.

“What, Fester?! Are you saying that my daughter doesn’t suit your tastes?!” the shopkeeper demanded. “And who are you calling your Oyaji-san!”

“Stop it, Father!” said Lina.

“...Umm, I’m a boy,” said Vandalieu.

“Eh?”

For some reason, everyone present was surprised by this news.



Vandalieu did indeed feel something of a culture shock from coming into contact with a society and culture other than his own.

But the shock at the way the human society in Lambda treated me is something else entirely.

Vandalieu couldn’t have imagined that he had such a weak, ghost-like presence. And most importantly, this was the first time that he had realized that his appearance was such that he would be mistaken for a girl.

There were times when his gender was mistaken by Ghoul children as well, but he had thought that it was simply because Ghoul men had lion heads.

Vandalieu’s other companions had never mistaken his gender before.

The truth was that the Ghouls and Undead Titans had only known because Vandalieu used “俺/ore*” as a pronoun for himself, and because Sam and his daughters referred to him as “Bocchan*.” It wasn’t like they had thought that he was a boy from the very

beginning.

TLN: 俺/ore is a pronoun pretty much exclusively used by males. Bocchan is a term that means “young master” that also only refers to males.*

In a similar vein, others had also determined his gender by the fact that his pronoun for himself was “俺/ore”, because he was referred to as King, his unfeminine behavior and other things rather than the appearance of his face.

Well, I’m still only seven years old. I’m going to enter my second growth period. Once my voice changes, I grow some facial hair and gain some muscle, nobody is going to be able to make that mistake, Vandalieu told himself to recover from the shock.

If one were to ask what Vandalieu was doing right now, the answer was that he was currently offering topics of conversation.

“Huh, so this child is a Dhampir. It’s my first time seeing one.”

“Oh my, isn’t she just like a doll? Are you eating properly?”

“I touched the Dhampir!”

“Heheh, I’m a lucky guy.”

“Hey! You guys are being rude!”

He was being treated just like some kind of rare animal. It seemed that in this cultivation village that offered the inhabitants few ways of entertaining themselves, the “Dhampir that they had seen for the first time” was something of a spectacle to behold. Because of this, the villagers came into the jack-of-all-trades store’s dining area, one after another.

It was far better than being treated as a ghost. Vandalieu himself didn’t mind this treatment and responded politely when the villagers talked to him, so the villagers didn’t hold back.

“I see, so you’ve had some rough times as well, haven’t you?”

“It’s going to be hard, but you’ve got to do your best.”

The villagers generally treated Vandalieu favorably. Vandalieu figured that they could sympathize for his phase because as former refugees, they had suffered themselves, and they had the freedom to feel sympathy for others' pasts in this cultivation village. But there were two other reasons.

The first was that the villagers had seen Vandalieu's expressionless, dead eyes and assumed that he had gone through incredibly hard times.

The other was that Vandalieu was someone they could sympathize with at no cost to themselves.

If Vandalieu were a mere powerless orphan, no matter how much sympathy the villagers had for him, the things they could do for him would be limited. Most of the villagers were young and were still capable of doing plenty of work in the future, but even so, they weren't prospering.

For now, they were still exempt from paying taxes, but in two more years, this benefit would cease. The villagers wouldn't be able to take him in and raise him.

But Vandalieu was someone who was hoping to be an adventurer, and if even half of the stories of Kasim and his companions were to be believed, he already possessed at least enough strength to exterminate Goblins. With that being the case, sympathizing with him like this and treating him to a meal was plenty.

Still, this was far better treatment than the complete disinterest that he would get in a city.

"I'm telling you, it's true! This guy came from behind and cut off the Goblin Barbarian's head in one hit!" Fester exclaimed.

"Hmm, it's not like I'm doubting you," said Lina, "but it's just a little too unbelievable..."

"No, you're doubting me, right! Believe me, Lina!"

"Fester, we saw it with our own eyes and still can't believe it, so isn't it too much to ask for Lina to believe it?" Zeno pointed out.

They were talking behind Vandalieu, but considering that he could slay Rank 3 monsters without any effort, it wasn't something worth convincing anyone of, so he stayed silent.

In fact, he had rendered a Rank 4 Goblin King completely helpless without any difficulty, only yesterday. Killing a Goblin Barbarian wasn't a significant achievement compared to that.

Also, Vandalieu couldn't register at the branch that Lina managed on her own.

Apparently, the only thing that could be done here was the exchange of extermination proof parts and other materials. In order to register, Vandalieu would have to go to a proper Guild branch in the city.

Despite Borkus and the others having told him that two hundred years ago, registration had been possible even at branches in small villages.

It seemed that it wasn't only the Hartner Duchy that had gone through a decline in the past two hundred years; the Adventurers' Guild in the Orbaume Kingdom seemed to have gone through a decline as well.

"This child is the Dhampir child who saved Kasim and his friends?"

Two men entered, asking this question.

These two were the rare elderly members in this village of mostly young people; it looked like several years had passed since they were in the primes of their lives. The man at the front was wearing similar clothes to the other villagers, but the one following behind him was dressed in cotton clothes that had been properly colored using dyes, and there was a necklace with an ornament that Vandalieu hated, hanging from his neck.

"Chief, Priest-sama, has your discussion finished?" asked the storekeeper of the jack-of-all-trades store.

"Yes, it is done," the village chief replied. "More importantly, we must thank this child," he said as he took Vandalieu's hand and bowed. "Thank you very much for saving Kasim and his friends. Even if you are someone aspiring to be an adventurer, I am sure it took great courage to attract the Goblins' attention."

It seemed that the story circulating among the villagers was, "Vandalieu attracted the attention of the strong Goblin while Kasim's party made a counterattack to exterminate the Goblins."

Vandalieu was small compared to other children of his age, so for the villagers who didn't know much about Dhampirs, this was probably far easier to believe than the truth of, "Vandalieu cut the head of the Goblin commanding the small unit from behind."

"I am glad to have been of help," replied Vandalieu, not particularly interested in correcting him.

"But you mustn't do such dangerous things," the chief told him. "Adventurers must survive."

Now that I think back, I think the people here are nicer than anyone on Earth.

Vandalieu felt a little moved, thinking that humans aren't that bad. However, there was the "Priest-sama" who was smiling behind this nice village chief, so he couldn't let his guard down.

"To think that I happened to be staying in this village to preach and met such a brave little girl. This must be Alda's guidance." The priest-sama... the priest of Alda spoke in a gentle tone as he touched the cross-like holy symbol of Alda on his chest and offered a short prayer of thanks.

Vandalieu's gender had been mistaken again, but he didn't care about that right now.

"Priest-sama, this child is a –"

"Hahaha, Chief-san, there is nothing to worry about. Alda only punishes the wicked. Those who perform just deeds will not be unjustly punished, even if they are Dhampirs. I heard that you lived in a secluded forest or mountain. You have not yet been baptized, have you? Would you like me to carry out the ceremony?" the priest offered.

He wasn't releasing any intent to kill or making Vandalieu feel unpleasant, but the smile on his face looked shallow in Vandalieu's eyes. The constantly-active Danger Sense: Death gave no reaction, either.

"No thank you. Though it was an informal ceremony, my mother baptized me in Vida's name," Vandalieu replied. Even if it wasn't a trap, he didn't want to be baptized in Alda's name, so he told yet another lie.

“I see. What a good mother she was.”

With nothing more to ask regarding the baptism in Vida’s name, the priest of Alda stepped back.



The Orbaume Kingdom was a collection of smaller countries that had united in order to protect themselves from the threat of the Amid Empire.

With this being its origin, the religion of Alda, the god of law and fate, the primary religion of the Empire, was... not prohibited. The religion of Vida was allowed, but there were no restrictions placed on the religion of Alda, either. This is because there was a considerable number of people in the smaller nations who believed in Alda and his subordinate gods.

But this religion couldn’t be said to be exactly the same as the teachings of Alda in the Empire.

There were multiple groups of people who interpreted Alda’s teachings in different ways. Among them was the harmonious faction who believed that “Virtuous individuals who uphold the law should be forgiven, even if they are members of Vida’s races.” This would be considered heresy by the clergymen of the Amid Empire, but it was this faction who had allowed Dhampirs to be accepted as people in the Orbaume Kingdom.

This wasn’t particularly strange or unnatural. Everyone in Lambda knew for certain that gods existed, but those gods had only existed in the world itself a hundred thousand years ago, during the age of the gods.

Now, through Divine Messages and such, they could only convey their will with limited methods to a limited number of people.

Because of this, each god’s religion was interpreted in various ways depending on the nation, region and person, and these interpretations often had strange differences between them. The most prime example was the harmonious faction of Alda.

But then, the reason the harmonious faction spread is because there were more members of Vida’s races here than in the Amid Empire, including dukes who were

Beast-men, and the people's impressions of Alda's religion in the Orbaume Kingdom had worsened following the war, so this was probably a political decision made in order to survive.

Even on Earth, it wasn't unusual for there to be multiple religions despite originating from the same god. I don't know what Alda is thinking, but there's no way that he would descend to the world, send Divine Messages or dispatch Familiar Spirits to all of his believers and point out which of their interpretations are wrong. Well, as long as it doesn't cause me harm, I don't really care.

He didn't really like the condescending way he had been "forgiven," but Vandalieu accepted that he couldn't afford to care about things like that if he wanted to survive in society.

"Priest-sama, about the medicine you gave me... It seems to be rather ineffective."

"That medicine is best taken in large doses, so please take it in double the dose that you have been doing up until now."

"Priest-sama, could you please have a look at our fields?"

"I do not mind. Alda is also the god of life, after all."

One by one, the villagers approached the priest with their troubles and requests. It seemed that the villagers adored him quite a lot, considering how shallow his smile was.

The stories of saints and heroes told by clergymen were probably one of the few sources of entertainment in this cultivation village, and seeing that he was an educated man who could even mix medicine, it made sense that he was adored, even if he was a little suspicious.

Suddenly, there a voice came from outside.

"Priest-sama, please come! Ivan has fallen from a roof!"

It appeared that a villager had accidentally fallen from a roof while doing repairs. Judging from the tone of the voice, it seemed to be quite a serious injury. In fact, when Vandalieu used Detect Life, there was one person with an unnaturally weak reaction.

“That is not good, we must tend to him immediately,” the priest said behind Vandalieu, standing up.

Vandalieu quietly left the jack-of-all-trades store. Perhaps because their attention had been drawn to the priest, nobody noticed him leave.

If he's not dead, I think I can do something about it... Ah, it's here.

Using Flight to rush to the place where the spell's reaction had come from, he saw a man in his thirties lying limp on the ground and a woman with a large abdomen, a little younger than the man. There was also a child, smaller than Vandalieu.

“Honey! Hold on, the priest is coming now!”

“Daddy!” Daddy!”

Though his wife and son were clinging onto him, the man let out nothing but a groan in reply. His breathing looked labored. There was a thick shadow of death on his face.

This is a serious injury; it's not his bones, it's his organs... in the worst-case scenario, something might have even happened to his brain.

In such a situation, with Lambda's medical treatment, it was hopeless. Magic might be able to do something about it, but this was the edge of the village. Vandalieu judged that he would likely die before the priest arrived... though that priest would likely be able to do anything other than shake his head unless he was a first-rate practitioner.

Of course, if Vandalieu used death-attribute magic, there was a high chance that he could save the life of this man named Ivan. The wife wouldn't have to lose her husband, nor would the child in her abdomen and the child by the man's side have to lose their father.

However, Vandalieu's current objective was to “register at the Guild without attracting any attention, and then dash back to Talosheim.”

A child saving a life that could not be saved without high-level magic. That would attract plenty of attention.

To follow my original plan, or give into my emotions... It can't be helped. I give up.

“Excuse me.”

With these words, a child quickly approached Ivan’s side and touched his body.

“Hieh?!”

“Uwah! Who are you?!”

The woman and child who hadn’t noticed Vandalieu’s presence were surprised, so Vandalieu said, “I’m the Dhampir that people are talking about in this village; my name is Vandalieu,” to introduce himself as he cast Spirit Form Transformation. In a way that they couldn’t see, he produced tentacles from the palms of his hands that were touching Ivan, fusing with Ivan and extending his spirit form into his body.

It was indeed the brain that was the problem. There was intracranial bleeding, and the blood that was pooling inside his head was creating pressure on his brain.

Absorb the accumulated blood with my tentacles. Regenerate the broken blood vessels with Healing Power Enhancement. After that, repair the cracks in his skull... This person has an aneurysm in the blood vessel near his heart. I suppose I’ll fix that while I’m at it. Ah, there’s a growth in his large intestine. It seems malignant, so I’ll remove that. His athlete’s foot... I might as well cure that as well.

“Hey, what are you...”

“Mommy, Daddy’s face is looking better!”

“Y-you’re right. Could it be that you’re healing him?”

“Ah, yes. Please wait a little longer,” said Vandalieu.

The man called Ivan had been in poor health. The image of a simple, slow life being a healthy one wasn’t true, at least in his case.

Vandalieu had done all of the medical treatment he could, so he returned the tentacles back to his body and undid his Spirit Form Transformation.

“Things will be alright now. He’ll likely open his eyes soon,” said Vandalieu.

Vandalieu had even fused his own stamina and nourishment with Ivan’s and expended

it in order to heal him, so there was no way that he would stay unconscious. Vandalieu had taken up the blood that had accumulated in Ivan's skull, but he would consider that as the treatment fee.

"Ugh, what... happened to me?" Ivan opened his eyes in the next moment.

"Honey!"

"Daddy!"

The woman and child embraced Ivan. It was a moving sight. This was what a household, a family, should be like.

"What is the meaning of this? Why are you here?" Ivan asked his family.

"I-Ivan?" said a man's voice. "Just a moment ago, you were lying on the ground, looking like you were going to die! How are you looking so lively now?!"

Just as Vandalieu began feeling respect for Ivan for having built such a good household, the priest, village chief and the others had finally arrived.

Now if they could be fooled into thinking that Ivan's condition had actually been nothing serious and that the man who had called for the priest had jumped to the wrong conclusion, everything other than Vandalieu being present could be resolved.

"This child, this child called Vandalieu, healed him! This child saved his life!" Ivan's wife exclaimed.

Madam, honest women are well-liked.

"Now that you mention it, I had a dream. A scary god of death had grabbed my head... but before I knew it, there was a goddess patting my head instead. I see, so that must have been this child," Ivan concluded.

Who are you calling a goddess?

And so, Vandalieu saved the life of a villager he had never met before, attracting a lot of attention to himself.

CHAPTER 70

THE PECULIAR, SHARP-TONGUED, FLYING BEAST (7 YEARS OLD)

As a result of saving Ivan's life, having given up on not attracting attention, Vandalieu was warmly welcomed back at the village's only store, the jack-of-all-trades store.

"You saved my life, kid," said Ivan. "A little longer and I would've died a stupid death and not been able to show my second child my face. Now then, go ahead and eat, it's my treat!"

"Don't go acting so high and mighty like treating him a meal is a big deal!" said his wife.

"Not at all. I was just starting to feel hungry," Vandalieu told them as he ate. He was eating rice porridge.

It was something that had been made with long-grained rice similar to the Indica rice of Earth, edible plants, possibly for removing the peculiar smell of the rice, beans to increase the volume of the meal, and a little salt.

It really wasn't a big deal. The taste came from the ingredients... in fact, there was no taste other than the taste of the ingredients.

However, it was currently summer, the time of year just before rice would be harvested. That was probably why they could only offer this much. This Seventh Cultivation Village was blessed for even being able to make rice porridge.

If I add the dried meat and dried fish in my luggage to this porridge, it would probably increase the salty flavor and taste quite good, Vandalieu thought, but he continued eating the rice porridge without putting this idea into practice.

The concept of 'smoked food' apparently didn't exist in this world, so smoked dried meat and dried fish would become products of Talosheim in the future. Thus, he had to keep them secret.

Incidentally, the jack-of-all-trades store's bar space had no menu. The alcohol was

unrefined sake that the shopkeeper had made himself (using millet as a base), while drinking snacks were roasted or cooked beans and, occasionally, vegetables.

And the only meals available were what the storekeeper's family was eating. This was only natural, as the family made their food in large quantities and served it to their patrons.

Vandalieu had wondered whether this really worked for business, but looking at it another way, the business wouldn't work in this village unless done this way.

Each household was capable of making its own sake, and their ability to cook wasn't any different from the couple who ran the jack-of-all-trades store. Thus, the only guests who would pay money to eat and drink here were the soldiers, merchants and their escorts who passed through here as they took the highway to the slave-run mine, as well as Kasim's party.

If they set up a system to be able to cook multiple different dishes, their costs would actually increase. As a result, Vandalieu was eating this rice porridge.

"It's not very tasty, is it?" said the shopkeeper in a serious tone, seemingly aware of this.

"...That's not true," said Vandalieu.

"Nah, it's fine. Since you saved Ivan's life, I'd like to give you something that tastes better to eat, but this is the best I can do with the rice we grow here."

"Oyaji-san, we agreed not to say that, didn't we? Still, it's true that the rice we grew in the Sauron Duchy tasted better. It didn't have the smell."

Apparently, they had grown a type of rice similar to Japonica rice* in the Sauron Duchy north of the Hartner Duchy, commonly known as Sauron rice.

TLN: To my understanding, this is the typical rice eaten in Japan.*

But climate and soil of the land of the Hartner Duchy that they had fled to wasn't suited to growing Sauron rice.

With no other choice, they began growing the rice commonly cultivated in the Hartner Duchy, the Indica rice... known as southern rice in the Orbaume Kingdom.

“In other words, it’s all the Empire’s fault.” Vandalieu came to the conclusion that it was the Empire’s fault that he couldn’t eat rice similar to the Japonica rice that he was used to today.

“Yeah, it’s all the goddamn Empire’s fault!”

“That’s right, that’s right! Everything was caused by the Empire!”

Since this was a cultivation village full of refugees who had been chased from their homelands by the Empire, they were unanimous in their agreement with Vandalieu’s words.

“Still, to think that you can use magic.”

“It really surprised me. I thought you’d be a Warrior or Unarmed Fighter for sure,” said Kasim.

He and his friends were eating the same rice porridge as Vandalieu.

The priest of Alda nodded. “Yes, I was quite surprised to learn that you are so loved by Vida. The fact that you have appeared on this day on which Kasim’s party and Ivan’s lives were in danger is surely the will of the gods. Though we offer prayers to Alda and Vida, the gods who parted ways in the myths, let us take each other’s hands and strive to do good deeds,” he said, smiling at Vandalieu while placing his hand on his chest.

His smile still appeared shallow to Vandalieu, but his words seemed honest. At the very least, he was much more like a clergyman than High Priest Gordan had been.

It was possible that he was an unexpectedly virtuous person.

“It makes me happy to hear you say that,” said Vandalieu. “I’m not party of any ministry, though.”

Come to think of it, what’s the Church of Vida in the Hartner Duchy like? I’ll visit it once I get to the city.

“By the way... how is it that you are speaking so clearly while eating rice porridge?” the priest asked.

“...It’s a special skill,” Vandalieu replied.

Vandalieu had used Out-of-body Experience to create a spirit-form face beneath his clothes, and he had been using its mouth to speak this whole time.

“Ah, another helping, please,” he requested.

“You’re still eating more?! I mean, it’s fine, but that’s already your third bowl,” said the shopkeeper.

“I was quite hungry. I’m sorry.”

Vandalieu was smaller and thinner than other children his age, but he ate an amount that was impossible to imagine considering his size. This was because the amount of energy he required was already more than double that of the average adult man.

“First your strength and magic, and now even your appetite is like an adventurer’s,” Kasim remarked.

Thin people with large appetites weren’t rare among adventurers, as they had combat-related Jobs and greater physical abilities than those with creation-related Jobs. Kasim and his friends, who had attended the adventurers’ school, weren’t as surprised as the shopkeeper.

“Chief!” shouted a man, rushing into the jack-of-all-trades store. “Kyne from the nearby Fifth Cultivation Village is here, looking for the Priest-sama – UWAH?!” He was suddenly thrust aside by another man who had also rushed inside, covered in scratches.

“Priest-sama!” shouted the second man. He had certainly fallen over numerous times on his way here. “Come to our village! There’s a disease, an epidemic at our village, and everyone is collapsing! Please, come quickly!”

“An epidemic?!” the shopkeeper repeated.

“How could that be! But the sun has already set,” said the priest. “Heading for the Fifth Cultivation Village from now would be...”

The road directly connected the Seventh Cultivation Village and the Fifth Cultivation Village was essentially an animal trail. It would take four hours on foot to travel this animal trail. And night was when wolves and monsters would be active. It didn’t need to be said just how dangerous an unmaintained animal trail would be.

It was possible to go to the highway to travel to the Fifth Cultivation Village, but that would take an entire day.

“Kyne, let us leave first thing in the morning. Please rest your body until then,” said the priest.

“How can you say that!” said Kyne in protest. “Then everyone in the village, my wife, my daughter!”

“Please understand, Kyne. We cannot travel a dangerous road at night. The Goblins have increased in numbers as of late, and if we are defeated before we reach the village, then it will be meaningless –”

“Ah, how... How...” Kyne’s shoulders fell as he began sobbing.

There were some who raised their hands, moved by the ordinary man who had braved the dangers in order to come here for the sake of his friends in his village, his wife and his daughter.

“Alright, we’ll be your escorts –”

“Well then, I’ll take this Kyne-san and fly there,” said Vandalieu.

There were people willing to help, but that didn’t mean that all of them could go together.



“The stars are beautiful, aren’t they?”

“HYIIIIH!”

“The moon looks amazing tonight.”

“NOOOOOOOO!”

The only ones capable of flying in the world of Lambda are a small portion of mages, wealthy people with expensive Magic Items, those who have tamed monsters capable of flying such as dragon knights, and members of Vida’s races who have wings.

Thus, to the average person, the idea of flying through the sky is nothing more than a dream or delusional thought.

Kyne was undergoing this precious experience.

Vandalieu was using Flight to head towards the Fifth Cultivation Village, holding his luggage in his hands while carrying Kyne on his back with a safety rope securely tied between them. But Kyne was clinging to Vandalieu desperately and screaming in fear of falling, so it seemed that he didn't have the time to enjoy this precious experience.

"By the way, it's fine if I just go straight, isn't it?" asked Vandalieu.

"Y-yeah! There's a small swamp along the way; I think you can use that as a landmark!" Kyne shouted back.

"We passed the swamp a little while earlier, so I think it should be fine if we keep going this way."

Vandalieu and Kyne were flying about thirty meters above the ground. Their speed was about that of a running horse at most, but it seemed that Kyne was too terrified to even open his eyes. But then, since Kyne didn't have the Dark Vision skill, his eyes wouldn't have been able to see anything even if they were open.

"We've already passed the swamp?!" Kyne asked.

"Yes. By the way, you're kind of strangling me," Vandalieu told him.

The speed of Vandalieu's Flight was fast compared to a person running, but the fact that he could ignore terrain and fly in a straight line towards his destination was a big reason for the amount of distance that they had traveled.

They would probably reach the village within the next ten minutes.

He was expending a large amount of Mana to fly like this, however.

Thanks to my Automatic Mana Recovery skill, my Mana expenditure and its recovery cancel each other out if it's just me and my luggage, but with Kyne-san's body weight... I guess I still need more training. No, more importantly, let's ask him about the disease.

"So, about the epidemic... Can you tell me what kind of disease it is one more time?"

Vandalieu asked.

Vandalieu was curious about the epidemic that Kyne had spoken of. He had already heard the simple details, but he had thought that there was something very abnormal about it.

“I mean, I came back from hunting and saw that everyone had collapsed,” Kyne explained. “They had fevers and nausea, they were struggling to stay conscious... and there were some guys coughing blood...”

“Are there any healthy people other than you, Kyne-san?” Vandalieu asked.

“Other than me... Ah, if I’m not mistaken, Joseph-jiisan still looked alright. Also, the babies haven’t become sick yet.”

“Who is this Joseph-san?”

“He’s an old lumberjack. He’s had a terrible cold since yesterday, and he was apparently lying in bed until I got back. Right now, he’s pushing himself to nurse everyone else in the village.”

“That person isn’t sick with the epidemic?”

“Probably not. He has a fever and running nose, but it wasn’t nausea and he wasn’t coughing blood. That’s why I asked him to look after the others. Even if he can move, I couldn’t ask an old man to run to the next village, and the babies can’t be left alone for half a day, even if they’re not sick.”

In other words, excluding Kyne-san who had left to go hunting and wasn’t in the village, everyone there collapsed in illness, showing the same symptoms, other than the old man who had been sleeping and the babies. And... Kyne-san is healthy.

From the moment Kyne had barged into the jack-of-all-trades store, Vandalieu hadn’t seen the shadow of death in him. It was difficult to imagine that he was infected with a dangerous epidemic.

Just in case, Vandalieu had used Spirit Form surreptitiously to examine Kyne’s body while he was clinging to Vandalieu in panic, but he was healthy. It seemed that he would live far longer than Ivan.

After hearing the word “epidemic,” Vandalieu had used Sterilization to kill all of the harmful bacterial and viruses in the Seventh Cultivation Village before leaving just in case, but... wasn’t this a case of poisoning rather than disease?

But this would explain things if only one or two people had fallen ill; what methods could have been used to poison the entire village? And what was the motive to do so in the first place?

“Was anything different today?” asked Vandalieu.

“No, today was normal,” replied Kyne. “The only thing was that today was the day that the traveling merchant came.”

“Traveling merchant?” Vandalieu repeated.

“Yeah, he’s a respectable fellow whose store shut down, and now he’s doing his best to make his way back up as a traveling merchant,” said Kyne. “Either way, it’s helpful that he comes to a small village like ours that’s far from the highway, but... Come to think of it, he wasn’t at the village. I hope he hasn’t collapsed after he left...”

That person is probably the culprit. Well, the motive is still unclear, though.

But saving people came before solving mysteries.

“Could that be the village?”

Vandalieu, who possessed the Dark Vision skill that let him see through the night’s darkness like it was the middle of the day, saw a number of wooden houses that had been built on open land.

“I-it probably is!” said Kyne. “Please, the sick people are –”

“Well then, I’ll cure them all at once from here,” said Vandalieu.

“Eh?”

“The village is from here to there. Well, I guess it’ll be fine if I use three thousand or so? Detoxification, Disinfect.”

What appeared to be waves of black mist spread across the village.



“HONEEEEY! You were alive!”

“Daaaaddy!”

“I’m so glad! You’re cured, I’m so glad!”

The sight before Vandalieu gave him a small sense of déjà vu, but this happy, emotionally-moving scene between Kyne and his family was happening all over the village.

The villagers’ pain, fevers and nausea that had come without warning vanished completely, and their hazy minds became clear.

At the same time, Kyne’s family had been cured of the disease as well. As they celebrated, they heard voices outside. People came to find Kyne, illuminated by a blue-white flame.

At first, the villagers had thought that Kyne’s ghost had created a miracle for them, but once this misunderstanding was cleared up, things turned into a whirlpool of emotions.

“...Phew, what a relief,” said Vandalieu.

Using Flight while holding (or being held by) an adult man had consumed a large amount of Mana. It was an inefficient spell to begin with, so it couldn’t be helped.

He had spent 70,000,000 Mana. And since it was late in the night, he was sleepy. As a healthy child, he wanted to go to sleep soon, but would he have to return to the Seventh Cultivation Village first?

For now, Vandalieu decided to make Lemures and have them search for the culprit, the traveling merchant, who had disappeared. He wasn’t familiar with the geography of this area, so there was a high chance that he wouldn’t be able to find the culprit if the culprit had taken a side road away from the highway, though.

Vandalieu was under the assumption that the traveling merchant was the culprit, but as the villagers had been recovered after the use of Detoxification, it was certain that their illness hadn’t been caused by a disease. And since the traveling merchant himself

wasn't here, the circumstantial evidence was perfect.

"Ah, everyone. The poison has disappeared, but your strength hasn't recovered, so don't get too excited. Please get some rest."

"Honey, who is this child?" Kyne's wife asked.

"This child cured the disease for you guys; he's the one who saved the village! Thank you, thank you!" Kyne held Vandalieu in the air, his face drenched with tears and mucus.

Vandalieu had carelessly let the word "poison" slip, but it seemed that nobody had noticed it.

"What did you say?!"

"Oh, this is the savior of the village!"

"It's a Familiar-Spirit-sama. Al –"

"That should be Vida," said Vandalieu. The villager was about to say something extremely uncomfortable, so he had to at least firmly deny this one thing.

"Vida, the goddess Vida's Familiar Spirit!"

"No, you should be resting instead of doing this –" Vandalieu returned to his senses, but the villagers were all over him. *Don't blame me if I can't move my body tomorrow.* "I suppose I'll be staying here tonight," he whispered to himself.



The Lemures' search failed and the traveling merchant got away. If there had been casualties, Vandalieu might have been able to find him. But because of Kyne's efforts and Vandalieu's treatment, none of the villagers had died, so he had no clues.

According to the villagers, the traveling merchant apparently followed a religion of a god that they had never heard of before (that they weren't even sure existed), and it was a national holiday for followers of that religion. He had treated everyone by giving them tea that he had prepared himself and confectionary.

The confectionary that Kyne's wife and child had saved for him for when he got back from hunting had contained poison; this was certainly the source of the illness. It seemed that the traveling merchant had told them that the confectionary would go bad quickly and should be immediately eaten by those already present, but now, evidence had been left behind.

Well, Vandalieu had erased the poison with his spell, so he wasn't sure if it would be accepted as evidence. It was difficult to imagine that there would be anyone who could detect the traces of the poison that Vandalieu had erased with death-attribute magic.

It was difficult to imagine that a traveling merchant who would do something like this would be formally registered at the Commerce Guild, too.

Well, there was a chance that he had assumed that all of the villagers were dead and was now foolishly heading to the nearest town.

After comforting the villagers who were shocked to learn that they had been betrayed by the traveling merchant they had trusted, Vandalieu had stayed the night and left Lemures behind to keep watch. And as for what he was doing now...

“Theeey weeere aaall~”

He was flying through the sky while singing in a flat pitch.

He was going around to see if yesterday's traveling merchant was trying to do something in the other cultivation villages.

Of course, he could have ignored the merchant and prioritized his goal of registering at the Adventurers' Guild, but if there were other villages where people had been poisoned like the Fifth Cultivation Village and all of the villagers were on the verge of death, he would have an uneasy conscience.

They do say that even chance meetings are due to fate, and that good you do to others is good that you do to yourself.

TLN: These are both Japanese phrases.

Vandalieu felt uncomfortable receiving money as a reward, so he had decided to have the villagers create a shrine for Vida in the village. Though it was a shrine, like the shrine for Alda, it was just a large stone with a holy symbol (a heart, in Vida's case)

carved on it and a simple roof built over it. But because it was so simple, it was something that Vandalieu could easily ask for.

He was being treated more and more like an incarnation of Vida's Familiar Spirit as a result, but he didn't really mind.

"Haaated~ ... Oh?" Vandalieu was currently on the way to the Sixth Cultivation Village when he noticed that there were several dozen silhouettes on the ground.

When he looked closely, he saw a group of men wearing worn-out leather armor with a grimy air about them, proceeding along the animal trail that led to the Sixth Cultivation Village.

He took out and checked the map that Kyne had drawn for him on some tree bark; there was no mistake.

He called the spirits that were floating around behind them and listened to them. These men were apparently bandits. He asked numerous spirits the same question and they all gave him the same answer. It seemed that these men really were bandits.

It was time to get rid of them.

"Listen up, you bastards," said the man who appeared to be the leader of the bandits. "Once we get to the village, kill all the men, and once you have your fun with them women, kill them as well! But the good-looking ones who look like they can sell, don't you put one scratch on 'em! You good with that?!"

"No, I'm not."

"What?! You bastard, you're going against -?! Who is this brat?!" The bandit leader turned around to see Vandalieu there. Floating silently in the air.

"B-boss, this thing is a monster!"

"Suddenly coming down from above... It's definitely a ghost or something!"

"No," said Vandalieu in response to the frightened bandits. "I'm just a flying seven-year-old child who happened to be passing by."

In this world, normal seven-year-old children do not fly.

“Tch, he’s underestimating us! Kyne*, use your superhuman strength to dispose of this thing!” the leader ordered.

A skinhead with the best physique among the bandits stepped forward with a smile on his face.

TLN: Yes, this bandit has the same name as the villager Kyne.*

“Boss, can I play with it a little before I kill it?” he asked.

“Still into kids, huh... Do what you want!” said the leader.

“Hihih, I’ve got permission!” Kyne screamed in delight, his eyes gleaming in anticipation as he swung his war-hammer in an intimidating manner.

“Boss, aren’t we supposed to be attacking the village?” another bandit asked.

“It’s not a problem,” replied the leader. “Kyne’s definitely gonna break that kid quickly.”

“I suppose you’re right.”

“Oi, kid, if you stay still, I’ll just smash your arms and legs and then play around with you a little,” said Kyne. “But if you resist, I’ll smash your arms and legs and then turn you into my toy!”

“...Wow, it’s an idiot,” Vandalieu said in exasperation.

“WHAT?!” screamed Kyne. “Being called an idiot is the thing I hate the most! Don’t you know that?!”

“There’s no way I could know that, is there?”

“Damn it! You’re making me out to be an idiot!” Turning red with anger, now resembling a boiled octopus, the bandit Kyne thrust his war-hammer towards Vandalieu. “One swing from this war-hammer is enough to deal with kids like you!”

I mean, if you were facing anyone who could withstand more than one blow, you wouldn’t be able to do anything, would you? From the looks of it, you’re just relying on pure strength as you swing it; your movements are those of a person who doesn’t have the Club Technique skill.

Instead of voicing all of these retorts, Vandalieu stuck out his tongue. "This tongue is enough to deal with small-fry like you."

"You br –"

Before Kyne could finish screaming his words, Vandalieu's cheeks puffed out. Now that he did this, he could be considered quite cute despite his expressionless face.

But his cheeks returned to normal as he blew something out of his mouth with a small spitting sound.

Kyne stiffened and then toppled backwards like a rotten tree. His left eyeball had turned into a red puddle of blood, no longer a bloodshot eye with a pupil.

"Eh?"

"K-Kyne? What's wrong?"

As the bandits stood there dumbfounded, a soft, red, snake-like thing emerged from Kyne's left eye.

"Hyih?!"

Right before the terrified bandits' eyes, the red snake slithered out of Kyne's eye socket with blood dripping from it, and then rose into the air, straight into Vandalieu's mouth.

"...This is an original martial skill, Sharp Tongue," said Vandalieu. "It seems to be quite powerful if I fire it while secreting deadly poison. I suppose its flaw is that if I don't retract my tongue or grow another one, I can't talk."

It was a martial skill of the Unarmed Fighting Technique skill where he used the effects of Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) skill, Spirit Form Transformation on the root of his tongue to separate his tongue from his body and the Long-distance Control skill to fire it as a projectile.

Of course, the only person capable of coming up with and using such a martial skill was Vandalieu.

"Well, I suppose I can use it if I keep it as my last resort?" he said to himself.

“W-what the hell are you?!”

“Now that the only Kyne left is the Kyne that’s a good-willed hunter, I’ll dispose of the rest normally,” Vandalieu decided.

“R-run! This kid is really a mons... w-what the, my legs won’t move...?!”

“M-my legs are shaking too... W-why, WHY WON’T THEY MOOOOVE?!”

Vandalieu glided towards the bandits as they struggled desperately. The claws at the tips of his small fingertips were more than enough to slit their throats.

“I just spread some poison,” Vandalieu told them. “Didn’t you notice that I’d called out to you from upwind? Now then, you’ll answer my questions, won’t you? Though I’ll ask you one more time after killing you anyway.”

CHAPTER 71

IF THERE'S NOTHING TO EAT, YOU CAN EAT GOBLINS, CAN'T YOU?

“...I don't know... I really... don't know...” the bandit leader whispered with the eyes of a dead fish, saliva dripping from the corner of his mouth.

Vandalieu gave a small groan. “You really don't know. Considering that, your timing is quite strange, isn't it?”

The day after the traveling merchant's attempt to poison the villagers, bandits had tried to attack another cultivation village. It was too strange to be a coincidence.

But none of the bandit leader's subordinates had any information that could be clues, either.

The bandits had apparently been moving territories, bought the locations of the cultivation villages for cheap from the information broker in the closest town to this place, a town called Niarki. They had learned that the villages were easy to attack as there were no adventurers in any of the villages other than the Seventh Cultivation Village, so they had come out here.

The information broker that had information on the internal affairs of the cultivation villages that only a small portion of people ever traveled to, such as the traveling merchant in question, seemed suspicious. But nobody had known the bandits' names, and their faces had been concealed by cloths below the eyes.

With this, there would be no way to chase the bandits.

“I suppose I'll try pouring a little more, just in case,” said Vandalieu.

“S... stop... please...”

“If you've ever stopped killing, raping and selling innocent people, I'll take that into consideration. So, have you ever quit?” Vandalieu asked.

“N... no...”

“That’s what I thought.”

Vandalieu placed his claws, which had a liquid dripping from their tips, into the gaping mouth of the bandit leader. The fluid being secreted by the claws dripped out.

That fluid was what is commonly referred to as truth serum, secreted through the Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) skill.

The Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) skill that he had acquired with the Venom Fist User Job was a skill that allowed venom secretion, just as its name suggested, but unlike the Ghouls’ skill, the poison he could secrete wasn’t limited to paralyzing venom.

Before acquiring the Venom Fist User Job, Vandalieu had the idea that he might be able handle poisons and drugs better, so he tested this idea after acquiring the Job. He found that toxicity of the venom he created was weaker than the poison he created using death-attribute magic, but he gained the ability to secrete toxic drugs with various effects from his claws, fangs and tongue.

And so Vandalieu had become a living pharmacy who could create truth serum, antiseptic solution, anesthesia, digestive medicine, sunscreen, eye drops and even vitamin pills.

...But it did have the flaw of using the nutrients in Vandalieu’s body rather than Mana, so he couldn’t use it consecutively like magic.

One more time, Vandalieu asked the bandit leader the questions he had already asked, but before he could answer, the bandit leader began convulsing and then died.

“So, what’s the answer to the question I just asked?” Vandalieu asked the bandit leader’s spirit, as if nothing had happened.

“I don’t know... I really... don’t know...”

Not discouraged by the fact that the answer hadn’t changed, Vandalieu grabbed the corpse of the recently-deceased bandit leader’s corpse and bit into its neck.

And then he used Bloodsucking. He was also sucking up the truth serum components

remaining in the bandit leader's body, but with his Status Effect Resistance skill, these would have no effects on him at all.

"Phew, I've been hungry for animal protein since yesterday, so that was perfect. Now then..."

He quickly searched the bandits' pockets, took their money and collected their weapons while he was at it. He then threw their corpses into a hole he had created with Golem Transmutation and used Decomposition to make their bodies decay into bleached skeletons before burying them.

"All done." Vandalieu used Flight once more to head towards the Sixth Cultivation Village.

There didn't seem to be anything unusual happening at the village. The villagers gathered in surprise to the white-haired Dhampir that had descended from the sky. Vandalieu heard what they had to say and decided to perform some medical treatment on some of them before heading towards the next village.

"Please wait, Familiar Spirit-sama! I cannot let you go without thanking you for healing my father's eye!"

"No, it wasn't a big deal, you know?" Vandalieu told the villager.

All he had done was perform a simple surgery with Spirit Form Transformation, secrete eyedrops and create a small bottle to contain them with Golem Transmutation.

"Thank you for healing my son's burns! Thanks to you, my son's fingers, his fingers!"

All he had done was perform a simple surgery with Spirit Form Transmutation and fuse with him to heal the burned fingers back to normal with Rapid Healing.

Well, in this village without a doctor (village without a healing mage), it was probably a big deal. But Vandalieu still felt awkward about receiving payment. This cultivation village seemed poorer than the Seventh Cultivation Village and even poorer than the Fifth Cultivation Village.

"Well then, please build a shrine to Vida when you're not busy with work. Carving a stone with her holy symbol and building a simple roof over it is enough," Vandalieu told the villagers.

And then he headed for the next cultivation village.

『The level of the Surgery skill has increased!』

Though the next village was poor, it was a good village where the villagers spent every day working as hard as they could.

“Buggyugyugyuh!”

“Bufuuuuh!”

“Bugigigigigih!”

Or at least, it had been until three Orcs broke down the crude wooden walls surrounding the village and made their way inside.

“R-run, it’s Orcs!”

“Hyiih!”

The villagers ran for their lives. Orcs, a familiar enemy for adventurers, were great threats for poor villagers who were former refugees.

If it was only one Orc, perhaps the hunters and village’s young men would be able to surround it and somehow chase it away, but with three of them together, there was nothing to be done.

If all of the men in the village attacked them together, it might be possible for them to send them back, but including the farmlands, the village was quite large. It was impossible to swiftly gather all of the men from all over the village, arm them with farming tools for weapons and have them attack these Orcs who had appeared without warning.

The Orcs casually lumbered through the village, looking around at the fleeing villagers as if evaluating them.

“Kyah!”

Right in front of them, a young girl fell down. It seemed that it would take her another year or two to reach adulthood, but she was plenty old enough to satisfy the Orcs’ twisted lust.

“Bufufuh.”

The three Orcs all scrambled towards her.

“Beth! I’m coming!” A Beast-person boy of the same age as the girl, with the ears and tail of a wolf, ran towards her with a hoe in his hands.

“Morris! It’s too late, you can’t help me! You have to run!” the girl shouted.

“No way! I’m not going to hand you over to those Orcs, Beth!”

The boy had broken free of the grip of the male wolf Beast-person who appeared to be his father in order to run to his childhood friend, who was probably the girl that he loved.

“Morris, you can’t come here!” Beth was also trying to stop him.

She knew that he wouldn’t be able to defeat Orcs. Of course, Morris knew this as well.

If a child like him could defeat Orcs with a hoe, adventurers wouldn’t have trouble against them. He would certainly be beaten to death by the Orcs’ clubs, only delaying Beth’s violation by a few seconds.

But even so, Morris couldn’t stop himself from taking these actions. “You guys, your opponent is me!”

Seeing a boy raising a hoe to face them, the Orcs welcomed him with a derisive laugh. Right next to the female was a young male who looked like he had tender meat.

“Buhohoh!”

An Orcs raised its club, looking to quickly kill the boy and turn him into meat.

“UOOOH!”

Morris's hoe was repelled by the surface of the Orc's body, failing to pierce its thick fat and the muscle beneath it.

Despair appeared on Morris's face.

Suddenly, blood sprayed through the air.

Thinking that this was Morris's blood, Beth shut her eyes. Morris himself thought that he had died.

"That's one. Next, Heavy Fist."

But the villagers saw what had happened. A white child had descended from the sky at an incredible speed and burst the Orc's head with a single attack.

"Bugiiih?!"

An Unarmed Fighting Technique martial skill that was easy to avoid, yet had the power to make up for this weakness, struck the second Orc's head and killed it.

"Bugoh?!"

The third Orc regained its senses and raised its club, but in the eyes of Vandalieu, who had completed training with Braga and the other Black Goblins, this movement was far too slow.

Vandalieu's claws pierced the Orc cleanly, administering more than a lethal dose of neurotoxin.

The Orc convulsed several times before collapsing as its knees gave out.

"H... huh?"

And then Vandalieu turned around to speak to the boy who was staring at him blankly. "That was questionably reckless, but people can be taken over by their emotions, so I can understand your actions. I have memories of doing such things, too. What I'm trying to say is, I'm glad I could save you."

"Y-yeah, thanks." Morris instinctively thanked the blood-soaked, smoothly-speaking boy floating in the air with his arm bent at an odd angle.

“So, please don’t be scared of me.” Vandalieu still had no confidence in his luck with interacting with people. He was anxious that even though he had saved people who were being attacked, they would scream and think he was just another monster.

“Umm, your arm...”

As Morris pointed out Vandalieu’s arm, which had broken after being unable to endure the speed of his descent and the attacks that he had beaten the Orcs to death with, Vandalieu used his other arm to casually straighten it and used Spirit Form Transformation on the parts that were concealed beneath his clothes. He rearranged his bones and blood vessels into their correct positions so that they would heal quickly.

“It’s fixed,” said Vandalieu.

“I-it is?” said Beth.

Her eyes were open wide in surprise as well.

“More importantly, won’t you take the Orcs apart? With three of them, all of the villagers would be able to eat until they’re full.” Vandalieu’s words caused both Beth and Morris to regain their senses completely.

Though Morris and Beth being nearby was one reason, Vandalieu had avoided using magic in order to kill the Orcs in a way that their meat could be used afterwards. It would have been a waste if they couldn’t be eaten.



When Vandalieu asked the Orcs’ spirits why they had attacked the village, they replied that their boss had told them to go on a rampage and do what they wanted in this village.

“So, what happened to that boss?” Vandalieu asked.

“He sent us here and then went somewhere.”

“The boss is an Orc?”

“No, a human.”

“Do you know his name and what his face looks like?”

“He called himself, ‘Boss.’ His face, his nose looked like a human’s.”

“His ears weren’t pointed. He was blacker than you.”

“He didn’t have horns or wings.”

Turning into spirits hadn’t made the Orcs any smarter, so this was all they knew.

From this information, Vandalieu figured that it was probably a human tamer who had sent these three Orcs to this cultivation village for some reason. He sent Lemures to look for signs of any suspicious people in the vicinity, but they didn’t find anything.

Isn’t there some place that sells information about the terrain? Vandalieu wondered as he dismantled an Orc’s body with his claws.

Vandalieu didn’t have the Dismantling skill, a skill that most adventurers who worked alone would possess. However, he had the Cooking and Surgery skills instead, so he could accomplish more or less the same thing as with the Dismantling skill.

Finishing the dismantling of his Orc faster than any of the villagers, he decided to start cooking with the organs that would rot the fastest.

But apparently water had been in rather short supply of late, so the villagers had told him that he couldn’t use large amounts of water to cook. That would make preparation of the organs impossible. But he didn’t want to see the villagers seeing him use death-attribute magic or the Golem Transmutation skill.

That was why Vandalieu went to the back of the house, away from the eyes of the villagers, and used Golem Transmutation to dig a well.

He searched the ground with Out-of-body Experience and found a cave with a source of underground water at a depth that would be difficult to dig by hand. He made Earth Golems and Rock Golems using the earth between the ground surface and the underground water and made the Golems move into the cave to get to the water.

And once Vandalieu had solidified the inner surface of the hole with Rock Golems, the well was complete. Of course, he hadn’t checked whether the underground water was suitable to drink yet.

“Huh, there’s a well in a place like this~”

Acting like a child playing detective, Vandalieu led the villagers to the well.

“That’s impossible, there’s no way there would be a well... it’s a well! There’s a well?!”

“What?! H-how could this...?!”

“What about the water?! How’s the water?!”

The villagers rushed in. Vandalieu took the water he had already drawn and returned to cooking.

And then he carefully prepared the organs.

“No matter how much I use Sterilization and Disinfect, it’s not like the contents of the organs physically disappear.”

People wouldn’t want to eat the organs of an Orc, even if they were harmless to the body. The same applied for Vandalieu.

“Thank you very much, Familiar Spirit-sama! Not only have you saved my sons, but you have given us such an abundant well! How could we ever thank you for this...!”

“Thanks to you, this village can prosper for many years, many decades to come! Thank you, thank you!”

Incidentally, as to be expected, the villagers had realized that the well had been created by Vandalieu.

But then, Vandalieu hadn’t expected that he would be able to fool them completely anyway. What was important was that the villagers didn’t know that he was using unknown magic and skills. Earth-attribute magic and water-attribute magic alone would be sufficient to dig a well.

“Err, I’m in the middle of cooking... Umm, creating a shrine to Vida would be more than enough repayment,” Vandalieu told them.

“Understood! We shall build a Church once the village is prospering!”

“No, a shrine is enough.”

The village’s water shortage had been more severe than Vandalieu had expected. Apparently they would have had to think about abandoning the village within the next few years if the situation hadn’t improved.



“So, Vandalieu-sama, where are you headed now?”

“The last village, the Second Cultivation Village.” Vandalieu was using Flight to travel while talking to Eleanora and the others through the communication Magic Item, the shrunken Goblin head.

“Pardon me for asking, but why are you helping the cultivation villages, Vandalieu-sama?” Eleanora asked. “Your objective is to register at the Adventurers’ Guild, isn’t it?” She seemed to be unable to understand why Vandalieu was going around helping the cultivation villages.

“Don’t say that,” said Zran. “Helping people is a good thing, isn’t it?”

“You’re doing great, King,” said Braga. “By the way, my encounter –”

“If you stand out too much, you will be noticed by the Vampires who worship Hihiryushukaka,” said Eleanora. “I think you shouldn’t do anything unnecessary.”

Zran had always thought favorably of the people in the Hartner Duchy that had done trade with Talosheim. To be more precise, the people of the cultivation villages were originally refugees from the Sauron Duchy, but he didn’t seem to be interested in making this distinction.

But Eleanora was advocating that Vandalieu should quickly register at the Adventurers’ Guild.

Vandalieu shouldn’t endanger himself to help people who weren’t even citizens of Talosheim at no benefit to himself. This was an extremely sensible viewpoint.

In fact, most people passing by would think, “Oh my, how troublesome,” and then be on their way. Of course, mages capable of using healing magic might have saved Ivan in the Seventh Cultivation Village.

But would a mere passer-by with no obligations to do anything, who wasn't even an adventurer, have gone to the Fifth Cultivation Village afterwards? And would they have thought about going around to the other cultivation villages after that?

The reality was that Vandalieu gained nothing of use from helping the people of the cultivation villages. He gained the thanks and respect of the poor people, lodging and meals at crude inns, and verbal promises that shrines would be built in Vida's name. None of these contributed towards the accomplishments of his goals at all.

Registration as an adventurer could be done without getting involved with the people of the cultivation villages, and his registration wouldn't be rejected because he hadn't helped the people before registering.

Popularity among the lowest commoners wasn't really taken into account for people becoming noblemen, so not having such popularity wouldn't be a problem at all.

Helping the people wouldn't be of any help for resurrecting Darcia or getting revenge on Heinz and the others, either.

That was why Eleanora thought that rather than gaining anything in return, he was actually simply increasing the chances of being noticed by enemies, the Vampires who worshipped evil gods.

"That's true, but if I am able to help them, it's better to help them, isn't it?" When Vandalieu was asked to explain it, this was what it came down to. "It's said that the good you do to others is good that you do to yourself. If I do good deeds like this, I'm sure it will come back to me and good things will happen for me as well."

"I-is that how it is?" For Eleanora, with her sense of values and previous experiences, Vandalieu's reasoning could be said to be the reasoning of a foolish, softhearted person.

But Vandalieu was firm in his response. "That's how it is."

He believed in the unsightliness, foolishness, evil intentions and wickedness of people. He even thought that these were what made people people, and he couldn't deny that he had these qualities as well.

However, unsightliness had a counterpart in beauty; foolishness in wisdom; evil intentions in good intentions; wickedness in virtue. These concepts came into

existence because their counterparts also existed. If the entire world was unsightly, foolish, filled with evil intentions and wicked, words to describe these wouldn't exist. All of these negative qualities could simply be described as, "Normal," "Ordinary," "Common," and "Average."

That was why people having beauty, wisdom, good intentions and virtue was a fact that could not be doubted.

Therefore, it could also be said that Vandalieu believed in the beauty, wisdom, good intentions and virtue of people as well.

"I don't intend to say that it's the responsibility of people with power, or anything like that. I dislike that way of thinking as well. All I want is to become happy, so I'm simply making others a little happier as well."

"But what about the Vampires...?"

After hearing all of this, Eleanora interpreted Vandalieu's way of thinking, the idea that "If everyone is smiling, that will make you smile as well" that a young child might be taught, was something that would only be applied to those other than enemies.

If that was the case, she would be able to understand to some extent. She would still think of Vandalieu as softhearted, but she herself had originally been an assassin sent to kill Vandalieu. She was only alive and present here because of that softhearted way of thinking.

Even so, Eleanora expressed that she would still like Vandalieu to think more about the danger of being noticed by the Vampires, but Vandalieu gave her a carefree response.

"It's still alright. Even Gubamon and the others who worship Hihiryushukaka, the most influential Vampires in this continent, wouldn't have the organizational capability to have informants in recently-constructed cultivation villages. It will be a while before traveling merchants start coming to these villages, and even longer before news of me reaches the towns."

"Then I suppose that's fine, but..."

"Then should we come close to those cultivation villages as well?" asked Zran.

“Hmm, please make sure you aren’t seen by the people of the village,” said Vandalieu.

“King, my lov–”

“Also, make sure you ask about our descendants and Levia-sama if you can,” Zran reminded Vandalieu.

“Okay. But I don’t think the people in the villages would know anything about them.”



When Vandalieu arrived in the final village, the Second Cultivation Village, there was no traveling merchant trying to poison the villagers, bandits trying to sneak inside, Orcs sent by a tamer or anything of the sort.

However, instead of a sudden crisis, a long-term crisis had apparently been ongoing for a long time.

“The first year was good, but the amount of rice we harvest has been decreasing year after year. We have been improving the land and such, but... At this rate, not only will we be unable to pay taxes in three years’ time, but we may even have people die of starvation in this year’s winter. O Familiar Spirit-sama of Alda, please save this village.”

Following the lead of the Dwarf chief of the village, the masses of villagers lowered their heads towards Vandalieu. Was it really appropriate that they had begun treating him like a Familiar Spirit right away simply because he had descended from the sky just as they were offering prayers for an abundant harvest?

“Well, I’ll do what I can, but... Also, I’m a Dhampir who believes in Vida. I’m not a Familiar Spirit of Alda,” Vandalieu told them.

Like the other cultivation villages that Vandalieu had visited, there were only shrines to Alda in the Second Cultivation Village. Had that priest of Alda in the Seventh Cultivation Village been particularly zealous with his missionary work?

Leaving that aside, with the problem simply being a poor harvest, the things that Vandalieu could do were limited. First, he went to have a look at the fields. Incidentally, the fields were unflooded, dry fields*.

Having a rough look with the knowledge and instincts from his Farming skill, the rice

plants did indeed look weak to Vandalieu.

There was plenty of water, and the plants didn't look like they were affected by disease. As Vandalieu went to lick the soil and examine the soil's composition by taste, there was a weak reaction from his Danger Sense: Death spell.

"Could it be poison?" Vandalieu wondered. "Disinfect."

The reaction disappeared from the soil immediately. It seemed that there were substances harmful to the body present in the dirt. The Detoxification spell worked on the rice plants, so it seemed that this really was the cause of the poor harvest.

"But why is there poison in the soil?"

This was strange. The soil of this village seemed to be the same as the soil of the other cultivation villages. If the poison had mixed into the water used to irrigate the fields, Danger Sense: Death would have reacted to the irrigation channels as well.

"Have you been using a special fertilizer?" Vandalieu asked, but everyone, including the village chief, shook their heads.

"We're using compost made from plant and wood ash and human waste. But the other cultivation villages should be doing the same," said the chief.

"Oyaji, there was one time where the gentlemen from the Knights' Order came to train and brought some insecticide for us as well, wasn't there?" said his son.

"Now that you mention it, you are right. That was the Knights' Order led by the duke's eldest son, Prince Lucas, was it not? But he apparently delivered the same insecticide to the other cultivation villages..."

The conversation between the Dwarf village chief and his son, who couldn't be told apart other than by whether their hair and beards were black or white, didn't make anything clear.

Well, the insecticide was suspicious no matter how Vandalieu thought about it, but he couldn't think of a reason for the Knights' Order spreading poison only on the fields of this cultivation village.

As long as there weren't any strange familial conflicts happening, anyway.

If I recall, the cultivation project was started by the second son, Belton, and the leader of the Knights' Order is the oldest son, Lucas. The traveling merchant, the bandits, the tamer and this village's fields... I have a bad feeling about this.

Even if there was a familial conflict, why were there conspiracies targeting poor people like these on the edge of the region? It would be better off if they would just have bloody conflicts between family members in their own castles and mansions.

“For now, I’ve erased the poison in the soil of the fields and the rice plants,” Vandalieu told the villagers.

He might have erased the evidence as well, but the culprit would likely have the backing of an influential person, so it would probably be pointless to preserve the evidence anyway.

The villagers cheered, but Vandalieu questioned whether this was really a great achievement. Even with the poison erased, if there was a poor harvest due to cold weather, pests or disease, there would be no change to the fact that people would die of starvation in the winter.

Wasn’t there some way to improve the food situation of the village? If he spread his Mana into the fields, the beans planted in the ridges between the rice fields might turn into Monster Plants, so some other method.

As Vandalieu thought about it, he suddenly had an idea. Perhaps because there had been a Goblin King, there were more Goblins near the village than usual. And if he looked for Gobubu grass, he could quickly obtain some.

“Now then, everyone, I’ll teach you a way to make Goblins not taste terrible, so you can use them as food in emergencies,” he announced.

He would create the emergency rations of Ghouls, Gobu-gobu.

CHAPTER 72

THE MAN WHO WANTS A FOURTH TIME

“One person, to start things off,” whispered Rodcorte, who had been watching events in Origin.

Kaidou Kanata had died. With his death, unrest had begun to stir among the reincarnated individuals gathered under *Amemiya Hiroto's* leadership; it was likely that some would begin to leave his organization soon.

And soon, at least a dozen of them, perhaps even up to half of them, would lose their lives.

Rodcorte had taken a lot of things into consideration so that they wouldn't die easily, but he hadn't made them invincible or immortal. There could be incidents where they would die at each other's hands like Kanata had.

At the very least, Kaidou Kanata and Amamiya Hiroto wouldn't be the only two who were unable to live out their natural lifespans in Origin.

“Hmm...? This is... Shit! That damn Mari, she actually killed me, didn't she?!” shouted Kanata, having appeared before Rodcorte and regained his senses.

Come to think of it, he was shouting when he came here, too, Rodcorte remembered.

“Hey, god!” said Kanata, calling out to Rodcorte. “I'm begging you, give me one more chance! I hadn't even turned thirty yet... Wasn't that life just too short?!”

It seemed that Kaidou Kanata was more rational. He was asking Rodcorte to give him another life.

Rodcorte thought that Kanata's two lives of over forty years when combined wasn't that short, however. There were those who died immediately after birth, or even before birth, after all.

And it was almost certain that there was no small number of people under the age of thirty who had been killed by Kanata himself in Origin, including the terrorists he had

killed right before his own death.

“Please! I’ll do anything!” Kanata begged.

“That cannot be done. It has already been decided that I will have you live a third life,” Rodcorte told him as he instantaneously communicated knowledge about the world of Lambda and the circumstances requiring people to be reborn there, just as he had done with Vandalieu.

Kanata stiffened in surprise for a moment, but then began speaking dejectedly. “God, I did ask you to give me another chance, but can’t you give me one in some other world?” he asked.

“Do you not like Lambda? It is a world of swords and magic that you all love so much. There are even Dragons,” said Rodcorte.

“No, there’s no way I’d take a liking to a world officially recognized by a god to be an inferior world, is there?” said Kanata. “I’ve had enough of being extraordinary in Origin. And ‘development of the world?’ I don’t want to do something as difficult as that, either.”

“Hmm... If you make use of your power, you should be able to live life like royalty and nobles, and even acquire a harem,” Rodcorte told him. “Do you still feel that way, despite this?”

“Even if I live like royalty and nobles, there’s no electricity or internet, is there? I’m not interested in a harem. I’d be satisfied with playing around with a single woman multiple times.”

Kanata was more disinterested in being reincarnated in Lambda than Rodcorte had imagined. With that said, he had no choice; his reincarnation could not be prevented at this point.

“Hmm? Wait, does that mean Mari is going to be reincarnated in Lambda as well?” asked Kanata.

Strength had suddenly returned to his voice, but Rodcorte had a bad feeling about this.

“...Yes.”

“Then this time, I’m going to kill that woman! I’m not going to let my guard down; I’m definitely going to have my revenge!”

So, this is how it turns out in the end, Rodcorte thought in exasperation. With the memories and personality of previous lives preserved, the grudges of the previous lives seemed to follow them as well.

With that said, if either their previous memories or their personality was erased, their minds would become unstable. If both were erased, there wouldn’t be any point in reincarnating them at all. Something as skillful as erasing only the memories of the grudge was difficult for Rodcorte to do. He was a specialist of the soul, not the mind. Although minds and souls are intimately connected, they are deceptively dissimilar.

As Rodcorte had programmed the series of reincarnations when the one hundred people had died on earth, it wasn’t even possible for him to take his time to erase memories now.

However, this might be perfect. Unlike Vandalieu, Kanata had only one target for revenge, and Rodcorte had a problem that needed to be taken care of swiftly. Perhaps it would even be easier to request this of Kanata *because* of his overflowing murderous intent.

“Before that, I have something I want to request of you,” said Rodcorte.

“What is it, god? I, Kanata-sama, first casualty of the Bravers, will do anything you wish for, as long as it isn’t troublesome.”

“No, you are not the first to perish among those who reincarnated in that world,” Rodcorte told him. “The first casualty was Amamiya Hiroto.”

“*Amemiya Hiroto**? That guy died?!”

TLN: Remember that **Amemiya Hiroto** is actually pronounced Amamiya, exactly like Vandalieu’s Japanese name, but I’m just spelling it this way to make them easier to distinguish.*

“No, not him. Not *Ame*, but Amamiya.”

“...There was a guy like that?”

This was the extent of Kaidou Kanata's perception of Amamiya Hiroto. They had been in different classes in high school, and Amamiya Hiroto had always been alone, with as much presence as empty air. Kanata didn't remember him at all.

"Ah... Come to think of it, I did hear that there were two people who declined to be reincarnated and one of them had a similar name to *Amemiya Hiroto*. I think his woman had forgotten about it for a while."

Naruse Narumi. As she had been popular in her class, even Kanata had remembered her despite being in a different class. She had approached *Amemiya* thinking that he was the reincarnation of Amamiya, and they had apparently quarreled once they realized that it was a misunderstanding, but after various events, they had ended up together and gotten married.

Remembering the beginning of their relationship, Kanata realized that Amamiya Hiroto was the 'guy with the similar name.'

"I will give you information regarding him," said Rodcorte.

"No, I don't really want it – UOH?! That guy was that Undead?! Jesus!" Kanata shouted.

"What is it?"

"No, not you!"

TLN: I'm not sure why Rodcorte assumes Kanata is addressing him when he shouts "Jesus" (in English). I guess it's because they're both "gods".

Receiving a direct stream of information from Rodcorte once more, Kanata couldn't help but scream as he realized that the Undead in Origin, the only being in the world capable of using death-attribute magic, was Amamiya Hiroto, and that he had already been reincarnated in Lambda.

At this rate, wouldn't he killed for revenge before he could take his own revenge?

"Oi, cancel this reincarnation! There's no way I can win against a monster like that on my own, is there?! Or at least wait until the others die and come to this place!" said Kanata.

That Undead, Amamiya Hiroto, was such an abnormal being that Kanata had

completely changed his views and taken back his words.

First of all, Amamiya could permanently surround himself with barriers that nullified physical and magical energy while still allowing him to attack from his side. It wouldn't be anything like the comics where a hole in the barrier would appear while he was attacking, either.

And he was even constantly releasing lethal poison, disease and mold. It would be impossible to approach him without something like a spacesuit.

If this was all, Kanata could penetrate these with his cheat-like ability. But in the laboratory in Origin, guards who had tried to run had gone mad and begun clawing their own eyeballs out while laughing, research assistants had been turned into mummies instantaneously and a female researcher who had begged for her life was eaten from the inside out by insect-like creatures. Amamiya Hiroto possessed numerous methods of attacking that were still unknown. Without knowing what needed to be penetrated, Kanata's ability would be useless.

Amamiya Hiroto was a being that couldn't be described as anything other than a natural enemy to the living.

Despite that, there were records that he had conducted a strange rescue mission where he kicked down the doors of the confined rooms of the other experimental subjects and destroyed the control devices that had been implanted into their bodies.

Considering that he had acted like he wanted to be killed by the Bravers in the end, that Undead might have still had some humanity left in him. Though this was accurate, it wasn't the complete truth, either.

That Undead, like Kanata and the others, had been reincarnated from Earth.

"I want you to kill Amamiya Hiroto, who calls himself Vandalieu in Lambda," said Rodcorte.

"I'm telling you, it's impossible!" Kanata protested.

"Currently, he is weaker than when he was an Undead in Origin," Rodcorte explained. "You should be able to defeat him, even on your own."

"...Are you serious?"

Rodcorte told Kanata everything he knew about Vandalieu. But as it was clearly inadvisable to tell a mortal being about the existence of the circle of transmigration system, he kept quiet about Vandalieu's ability to break souls. He decided to use the fact that Vandalieu wanted to kill all of those reincarnating on Lambda as the reason he wanted Vandalieu dead.

Also, it would be problematic if he feels afraid again upon hearing that his soul could be broken.

This was part of Rodcorte's calculations as well.

Kanata, on the other hand, after hearing the gist of the situation though not the whole picture, began to think, "Is this guy an idiot?" regarding Rodcorte.

Instead of doing troublesome things like cursing Vandalieu and trying to drive him to suicide, why hadn't he tried to calm him down after he died in Origin? At the very least, that was what Kanata would have done.

There should have been various other options, such as having Vandalieu reborn into a prosperous family, giving him proper cheat-like abilities this time or offering him a harem like he had offered Kanata.

In any case, Kanata understood the situation. He wasn't particularly enthusiastic about it, and he felt sympathy for Vandalieu. But at the same time, he thought that this was a chance for himself.

"Hey, I don't mind disposing of this Vandalieu, but only on two conditions," he told Rodcorte.

"Conditions?" Rodcorte repeated.

"Isn't it obvious? I'm cleaning up after your mistakes, after all," said Kanata.

"...I believe that this is also for your own protection as well, is it not?" Rodcorte pointed out.

"I don't really mind begging him to spare my life. I'll lick his shoes or feet and say, 'I didn't know anything; nobody could go against what *Amemiya Hiroto* and Endou Kouya's orders. I'll tell you anything you want to know, so please just spare my life.' If I do that, he'll probably forgive me, right? He seemed quite kind, too."

Vandalieu had rescued the other experimental subjects; no matter how Kanata looked at it, he was probably a softhearted person. Upon hearing Kanata say this, Rodcorte stayed silent for a few moments and then prompted Kanata to continue.

“What are your conditions?” Rodcorte asked.

“First of all, I want a reward,” said Kanata. “If I dispose of Vandalieu successfully, reincarnate me on Earth or another world with a similar scientific civilization, a world without magic or monsters, with my current memories and personality. Of course, I mean excluding Origin. Make it so that I’m born into a rich, blessed family. Also, I want to be a man with unrivaled handsome looks this time.”

“So, you are asking me for a fourth life?” Rodcorte asked. “But does that not mean that you have to die on Lambda?”

“Then I just have to die, right? After I dispose of Vandalieu, I’ll just hurry up and die as well.”

I have no interest at all in living a life in an inferior world. Once I do my job, I’ll kill myself right away, be reincarnated in a pleasant world similar to Earth, be a son of a rich, distinguished family and live an enjoyable life until I die. I’ll take my sweet time, while the others are doing their hardest to live in a piece of shit world.

These thoughts of Kanata’s were clear to Rodcorte, but Rodcorte had little interest in his thoughts and didn’t feel the need to blame him for having these thoughts, either.

This was because Rodcorte knew that Kanata hadn’t contributed much to the development of Origin, so he wouldn’t be of much use in Lambda either.

Kanata was simply a single disposable card with nothing other than his abilities in battle; as long as he could solve Rodcorte’s problems, his life was a small price to pay.

And the reward that Kanata desired was the kind of reward that Rodcorte could easily give him.

“Very well,” said Rodcorte. “I promise you that reward. So, what is your other condition?” he asked.

“Your backup, of course,” said Kanata. “Make it so that I’m reincarnated in Lambda in an adult’s body.”

“Instead of reincarnating normally?”

“Of course. How many years are you planning to wait before having this job completed?”

Even with Kanata’s abilities in combat, including his particularly exceptional ability when fighting other humans, it would still be impossible for him to complete this request with the body of a baby or infant. It would take over a dozen years for him to become able to move and act freely away from his parents, possibly even up to fifteen or twenty years.

But if he had an adult’s body to begin with, he would have an advantage over Vandalieu who was still a child. He wouldn’t have any troublesome parents, so he would be able to act freely.

And having to live for over a decade in such an inferior world was something that Kanata wanted to avoid.

“Very well,” said Rodcorte. “I will have to use some of my power, but it is not impossible.”

Even considering the aforementioned benefits, this would cause problems for Rodcorte and he would normally be reluctant to do it, but there was no choice.

“Well then, I’ll need resistances against poison, disease and the death attribute as well,” said Kanata. “Also, if by some tiny chance I get killed, recover my soul quickly so that I don’t become an Undead.”

“Things have been arranged so that the souls of you people, those that I reincarnated, will always return to my side,” said Rodcorte. “Amamiya Hiroto’s transformation into an Undead was an exception caused by his own magic. I will make it so that you can acquire resistance skills against poison, disease and the death attribute. As a resistance skill against the death attribute is normally impossible for humans to acquire, the maximum I can give you is a level 5 skill, however.”

“Skills?” Kanata repeated.

“In Lambda, there are skills and Jobs, and you can see these displayed on your Status,” Rodcorte explained.

“What the hell is that? It’s just like a game, isn’t it?” said Kanata. “Isn’t it because you’re playing around like that that the world isn’t developed?”

“...So, is there anything else you need?” Rodcorte asked, ignoring these words.

“Equipment, I suppose. A gun, a knife –”

“Wait,” said Rodcorte. “It is impossible to take things that do not exist in Lambda.”

“Are you serious? I can’t even take just one sniper rifle?”

“Why did you think that I would allow this?”

“Tch!” Kanata clicked his tongue loudly, having thought that it would be easy-mode with a long-distance sniper shot. But even Rodcorte had no choice but to refuse this request.

In the first place, if such a thing was even possible, he would have sent items from other worlds to Lambda in large quantities long ago. He wasn’t doing so because it was impossible with the power he possessed.

In the end, Rodcorte was nothing more than the god of the circle of transmigration.

“Then can I at least ask for some clothes?” said Kanata. “Surely you’re not going to tell me to be reborn completely nude?”

“...Everyone is normally born naked,” Rodcorte pointed out. “But I understand, I will adjust things so that they work out. Now then, you must encounter Vandalieu, so your destiny must –”

“Stop right there!” said Kanata, interrupting him. “Adjust that destiny thing, too. Give me something like a radar so that I don’t encounter him at a time that I would never expect.”

So many requests, Rodcorte thought, but he acknowledged this request anyway. In fact, an adjustment like this wasn’t very difficult to make.

“A radar that detects the owner of powerful death-attribute Mana, and an altered destiny so that you encounter him. I shall make that adjustment.”

“Alright, there are no more problems now,” said Kanata. It seemed that he was out of requests.

“Now then, I shall have you reborn in Lambda,” said Rodcorte. “After you are reincarnated, I recommend that you register at the Adventurers’ Guild or some other Guild, acquire a Job, and learn how to use skills while increasing your level and Attribute Values.”

“I’m telling you, I don’t need to play around with that stuff. I’ll get rid of him quickly even without doing that,” said Kanata as he was reincarnated.



In front of the people of the Second Reclamation Village, with various items prepared in front of him, Vandalieu began cooking. He felt like he was teaching them how to prepare three-minute meals.

“The first things you need to have ready are Goblin meat and Gobubu grass,” Vandalieu told them. “You can use any part of the Goblin, whether it be the chest, legs or the heart, and you should try to have at least one whole Goblin’s worth. Ah, their livers are fine as well. As for the Gobubu grass, an amount equal to about half the weight of the meat you’re using is just right.”

As he pointed to the mountain of Goblin meat and Gobubu grass, the villagers let out groans of disgust. Although the meat of humanoid monsters such as Orcs was eaten in Lambda, Goblins and Gobubu grass weren’t even considered low-quality products; they were simply garbage to be thrown out. The villagers couldn’t be blamed for reacting this way.

“Next, grind the Gobubu grass,” Vandalieu continued. “During this process, the grass lets out bad-smelling juices that leave stains on clothes, so take care not to dirty yourself. I have prepared a special mortar for crushing the Gobubu grass in this case, so I will be using this.”

There was a stir in the crowd as Vandalieu brought out a mortar that he had made during the night using Golem Transmutation. They were surprised at the fact that this mortar that even an adult would have a hard time carrying around was being lifted easily by Vandalieu, a child. But Vandalieu interpreted this as his mortar being popular.

He mashed the Gobubu grass, the unpleasant-smelling juices gathering in a bucket that he had placed beneath the mortar.

“After that, cut the Goblin meat into appropriately-sized pieces. I don’t have a blade, so I’ll be using my own claws, but I’ve cleaned them properly so rest assured,” said Vandalieu, cutting the meat with his claws. The villagers groaned once more.

“After the meat is cut, place it in a barrel with the grass juice,” he continued. “In this case, let us take care to make sure that the meat is submerged in the grass juice. Place a lid on top, leave it for a day and it is complete. For this demonstration, I have prepared the completed product.”

“Eh? When did you do that?” a perceptive villager asked.

“I used my Familiar Spirit powers to prepare it,” Vandalieu replied. He couldn’t tell the villagers that he had actually used the Inanimate Aging spell to turn it into a one-day-old state, so he deceived them forcibly. “This is the finished Gobu-gobu,” he said. “Please go ahead and try some.”

He opened the barrel and placed some of its contents, which resembled purple meat, onto plates. Seeing this, the villagers instinctively took a step back. This was the normal reaction for anyone being told to eat purple meat.

“I-is this really edible?” the village chief asked.

“Of course,” said Vandalieu. “Shall we eat it together?”

“N-no! Itadakimasu.” The village chief took a piece of Gobu-gobu and shut his eyes tightly as he bit into it. But as he continued chewing several times, his frowned eyebrows began to relax. “This is... not delicious, but it is not unpleasant and there is no stink,” he commented.

Hearing the village chief say this, the villagers timidly placed the Gobu-gobu into their mouths.

“Indeed, as Oyaji-dono says, this flavor is not inedible.”

“No, isn’t this much better than the tree bark dango and grass soup that we ate during the winter?”

“You’re right. This is much more delicious than those.”

They’ve had some crazy diets in the past.

Hearing the villagers say that the Gobu-gobu wasn’t bad and that it was actually delicious, Vandalieu felt sympathy for them from the bottom of his heart. But the substitute meals that they had eaten during the winters with poor harvests... the nutrient-devoid things that they had eaten to stave off their hunger were indeed far more unpleasant-tasting than Gobu-gobu.

“Yeah, it tastes far better than eating Goblin meat as it is,” said a villager who, in his hunger, had apparently eaten the meat of a Goblin he had exterminated before. Struggling with poor harvests, these people had really barely managed to survive. If a slave trader had visited the village, they might have even sold their children to avoid letting them starve to death.

It was at this point that Vandalieu had come and taught them how to make preserved food from Goblin meat, which they normally had no choice but to throw away, and Gobubu grass. As it did contain meat, it should provide far greater nutrition than tree bark.

There was no way that the villagers wouldn’t be happy about this.

“Umm, if you just build a shrine to Vida now, I’ll throw in twenty mortars and wooden barrels, as well as salt that will improve the taste if you apply it before submerging the Goblin meat in the grass juice,” said Vandalieu. “What do you say?”

“Gladly! We shall devote ourselves to Vida!” a villager exclaimed.

“No, you don’t have to go as far as devoting yourselves –” Vandalieu began.

“To think that you would even give us precious salt. Truly, thank you very much!” said another villager.

One villager was in tears. “I held myself back from building a shrine because of the lord and the priest-sama, but I have still been praying for a long time. My prayers really did reach Vida-sama.”

Out of sympathy, Vandalieu had gone and taken out the salt that he had brought from Talosheim to use to pay toll fees. There was still rock salt available there and he had

already acquired coins from the bandits, so it probably wouldn't be a problem, however.

Incidentally, Vandalieu had asked the villagers about this, having felt curious about their words, and apparently, in the Sauron Duchy, Vida's religion had been more prominent than Alda's. When he looked at the people of the cultivation villages, he had seen more humans than any other race, and there had been no Dark Elves. But there was quite a number of Beast-people and Titans in the villages.

However, in the Hartner Duchy that had welcomed them, most of the noblemen, including the duke, were believers of Alda and his subordinate gods, and it was the Church of Alda that was flourishing in this duchy. The shrines that had been built by the soldiers in the cultivation villages were shrines to Alda, and it was a priest of Alda, the one in the Seventh Cultivation Village, who came to this area to preach.

While it wasn't expressly forbidden, the people had felt pressure and decided not to build shrines to Vida and other gods as they had done in their lost homelands.

I've learned another unpleasant truth.

This weighed a little heavy on Vandalieu's mind, but what he was more anxious about was the First Princess Levia who was supposed to have evacuated Talosheim as well as the other refugees, including Borkus's daughter.

Would they still be living in this duchy, where the religion of Alda had become so powerful?

Or perhaps they had relocated to another duchy? It would be best to quickly head to the city and investigate.

I'm worried about these cultivation villages, but... I suppose I'll station Lemures around them. Also, I'll bury some Stone Golems nearby. If I carve Vida's holy symbol on their chests, the villagers will think of them as allies... I guess?

This would probably be fine.

"I've finally caught up to you!"

After Vandalieu had spent several days mass-producing Lemures and deploying them to every village, Kasim's party and the priest approached him with haste. They had

been in the Seventh Cultivation Village; what were they doing in the Second Cultivation Village now?

"I hadn't thought that you would be going around every cultivation village..." said Kasim.

"Come back; everyone's been worried about you," said Fester.

"The day after you took Kyne and flew off, we headed to the Fifth Cultivation Village," Kasim told him.

Was their friend who had come from the Sauron Duchy like them safe? What about the person who had saved their lives? Kasim's party and the priest, the four of them, had hurried to the Fifth Cultivation Village to find out.

What they had found was Kyne and the other villagers, discussing where in the village a shrine to Vida should be constructed.

"After that, we heard that you'd flown off to another cultivation village and chased you... Seriously, who the heck are you? You're too incredible," said Kasim.

"That's right; we'd been worried that you and Kyne might have fallen down somewhere along the way, but in the end, it turned out that you'd gone around to all of the cultivation villages," said Fester.

"And you did incredible deeds to save people in all of the villages," said Zeno. "We were wondering if we were chasing a saint or something. Right, Priest-sama?"

"You are absolutely right," the priest agreed. He was wearing a strangely stiff expression as he wiped the sweat from his forehead with his sleeve. He showed more human weakness than when he was wearing his shallow smile. "The day before yesterday, I said that we should strive to do good deeds together, but perhaps I should be the one asking you for teachings," he said. "How in the world did you cure all of the villagers' of disease, heal a burn that would be difficult to treat even with specialist healing techniques and dig a well in the blink of an eye? I have also heard that diseases were cured by holy droplets produced by your hands. Please tell me."

Wow, I did some amazing things, didn't I? Vandalieu thought, now that the priest was asking him all of these questions. He did think that calling the eye drops that he had secreted from his claws "holy droplets" was an exaggeration, though.

But how should he respond? He couldn't imagine that he could fool the priest by telling him that it was the power of a Familiar Spirit, but he had no intention of telling him the truth, either.

Vandalieu decided to tell one part of the truth, but keep the rest a secret.

"I possess a few special skills," he replied.

The priest and Kasim's party opened their eyes wide.

"By special skills, could you possibly mean Unique Skills?!"

In this world, there are Unique Skills, such as Vandalieu's God Slayer skill. They are various kinds of special abilities and talents, and they are extraordinarily rare. To put it in a ratio, about one in ten thousand people possess one.

The priest and Kasim's party had misunderstood, thinking that Vandalieu's various deeds had been possible through such a characteristic skill.

"W-what kind of skill could that be?!" the priest asked, leaning forward in excitement.

But Vandalieu shook his head. "I'm someone who is planning to establish myself as an adventurer, so I can't tell you," he said.

"Do not say that! Please tell me!" the priest insisted. "I will keep your secret!"

"You can't, Priest-sama!"

Kasim and his friends stopped the priest from persisting in his questioning.

"For us adventurers, we make money through our bodies," said Fester. "Forcibly asking someone to divulge their skills is a breach of etiquette."

"That's right," said Zeno. "I understand that you're curious, but trying to force Vandalieu to tell you his skills after he saved everyone goes against our morals."

Indeed, as they said, the information displayed on an adventurer's status is that adventurer's weakness as well as his strength. If the adventurer himself is unwilling to divulge that information himself, trying to force it out of him is equivalent to saying, "Tell me your weaknesses."

As Vandalieu had declared that he would become an adventurer in the future, this applied to him as well.

“That is... true. My apologies,” said the priest. Being held back by Kasim and his friends, he reluctantly stepped back.

“Not at all. It’s fine as long as you understand,” said Vandalieu.

“But if you are capable of such things, I believe that there are many paths of employment to take without having to become an adventurer,” said the priest.

...Why could Vandalieu see a strange look of ruefulness on the priest’s face? He doubted that a traveling priest would have the connections to mediate offers with employers.

“That might be true, but I’m still inexperienced,” said Vandalieu. “Even if I were to enter employment, I want to do it after first becoming an adventurer, expanding my horizons and gaining experience.”

If he were employed by some noble family or merchant, he would become a vassal or servant and it would become difficult to attain a court rank. Also, he wouldn’t be able to quit easily if things became inconvenient, either.

He wanted to avoid this.

“I see. Expanding your horizons is indeed important,” the priest agreed. “Despite your youth, you have considered this...”

“Yeah, at the very least, he’s doing a lot more thinking about his future than Fester,” said Kasim.

“Why are you suddenly mentioning me?!” Fester protested.

Having settled things without having to lie (as his Death-Attribute Magic was indeed a skill), Vandalieu accompanied Kasim and the others back to the Seventh Cultivation Village in a good mood.

Suddenly feeling the sensation of having a physical body with no prior warning, Kaidou Kanata felt a deep sense of satisfaction and excitement.

He felt strength filling the limbs that had previously been powerless, as if he had been in a dream, and he could feel his own heartbeat deep in his chest, full of life.

“I did it!” he shouted as he opened his eyes, but a moment later, he let out a scream.
“I’M NAKED AFTER ALL!”

CHAPTER 73

SCUM APPROACHING FROM AFAR AND A SCOUNDREL LURKING NEARBY

“I’M NAKED AFTER ALL!” Kanata shouted, having been reincarnated in Lambda stark naked. But immediately afterwards, he regained his composure. Though he hadn’t wanted it, he was a man who had received standard training in an army. He hadn’t forgotten the danger of making noise over trivial things when in an unknown situation.

Although, if he was really a capable man, he would have kept his composure from the beginning.

Leaving that aside, Kanata looking at his surroundings to examine the situation.

Judging from the height of the sun in the sky, it was a little before noon. He was surrounded by a grass-covered plain with a thicket of shrubs, and there didn’t seem to be any dangerous creatures, humans included, nearby.

“They’re called ‘humans’* in this world, right? It really is like a comic, for there to be sentient races other than humans,” said Kanata, examining his own body once more.

TLN: A different Japanese word, which typically means “mankind”, is used to refer to humans in Lambda. This is a translation headache so I’m translating case-by-case based on context.*

Though he couldn’t see the fine details as he had no mirror, it seemed to him that there had been no change from how he had been in Origin right before his death, other than the fact that the fatal wound in his solar plexus had disappeared. Everything was the exact same, from his trained, lean body to his moles.

And as he had shouted just a moment earlier, he was standing there completely naked, but... as he looked at his surroundings, something caught his eye.

A dead skeleton that had fallen to pieces and its luggage, lying on the ground.

“Could it be that this was what that god meant when he said that he’ll ‘adjust things so that they work out?’” Kanata wondered.

It seemed unclean and he wasn’t pleased with it, but he didn’t like the idea of going to kill Vandalieu equipped with a grass skirt and club made from the nearby plants, so he had no other choice.

He searched the luggage to find numerous pieces of clothes, though they looked old, and a single rusty knife. He also found some silver and bronze coins. The owner of these belongings was probably killed by a lion or something.

“Ah, it feels absolutely terrible on the skin,” Kanata complained to himself. “It’s not cotton, is it... It doesn’t have any weird fungi growing on it, does it? Now then, Vandalieu is –”

【This message has been set to play automatically after you have been reincarnated in Lambda.】

“Uwah?! What is this?!” Kanata, surprised to suddenly hear Rodcorte’s voice speaking, leapt away from the spot he had been standing on and raised his knife, but the god was nowhere to be seen.

A moment later, he frowned as he realized that he had heard the voice inside his own head.

“Is this supposed to be a game’s tutorial or something?”

【Now then, first of all, take some clothes and the money that will allow you to get by for the time being from the nearby corpse’s belongings –】

“I mean, I’ve already got those.”

It seemed that Rodcorte’s voice was something that had been recorded beforehand, so it wouldn’t answer Kanata’s questions or change its words based on his actions.

【Next, check your own Status. To do this, simply think about seeing your Status.】

“Status, huh?” Kanata wasn’t pleased with the fact that he was being treated like a character in a game, but as instructed, he opened his own Status.

- **Name:** Kaidou Kanata
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 29 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** None
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** None
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 650
 - Mana: 42,000
 - Strength: 95
 - Agility: 157
 - Stamina: 204
 - Intelligence: 270
- **Passive skills:**
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 10
 - Death-Attribute Resistance: Level 5
 - Fire-Attribute Resistance: Level 4
 - Augmented Stamina: Level 5
 - Augmented Mana: Level 5
 - Mental Corruption: Level 5
- **Active skills:**
 - Fire-Attribute Magic: Level 8
 - Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 4
 - Mana Control: Level 5
 - Archery: Level 5
 - Short Sword Technique: Level 5
 - Throwing: Level 5
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
 - Coordination: Level 5
 - Survival: Level 3
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
 - Horseback Riding: Level 6
 - Lifesaving: Level 4
 - Assignable Active Skill: Level 5
- **Unique skills:**
 - Gungnir: Level 10
 - Target Radar: Owner of over 100,000,000 Death-Attribute Mana
 - The God of Reincarnation's Fortune

“...Hohoh, so this is me, huh.”

It was the first time Kanata had had his abilities, skills and experience quantified in numbers since he had received report cards in school. The first time since he had died on Earth, as things had been given letter grades in Origin.

As for his impressions on his Status... He didn't like how his Job and Job history displayed “None,” as if he was a NEET, but he did like that his Title was blank as well.

As for his Attribute Values, he didn't think much about them. Unlike Mana, things like physical strength and agility weren't quantified in numbers in Origin.

Like on Earth, one's abilities were quantified by things like how many seconds it took them to run a hundred meters, how many push-ups they could do and how heavy the barbells they could lift were.

His Mana was the same number as it had been when he had it measured in Origin, so he assumed everything else was the same.

As for his skills, the Disease and Poison Resistance and Death-Attribute Resistance were the protective measures that he had requested. However, he had nothing but questions regarding the active skills that were displayed after them.

“I understand the magic-related skills, but... Why the hell do I have Archery and Horseback Riding?” Kanata wondered. “I've never used a bow or ridden a horse. Short Sword Technique and Unarmed Fighting Technique is probably the training I received using a knife and military-style unarmed fighting techniques, though. And what on earth is Arbitrary Active Skills?”

【Your skills and experience with things that do not exist in Lambda, like the use of guns and driving automobiles, have been replaced with things like the Archery and Horseback Riding skills. Arbitrary Active Skills is the remainder of those. You can assign them to the skills you think you need at a time of your own choosing.】

“I suppose I might have more opportunities to use them than completely useless skills, but...” Kanata found it disagreeable that his extensive training and real combat experience in using guns and operating cars, helicopters and boats had been replaced without his permission. “I suppose I'll get on with killing Vandalieu and being reborn in a suitable, Earth-like world,” he decided.

All of the things he was dissatisfied with were transient things that would only last until he was finished with his work.

If he used Gungnir and the Target Radar, the items listed under his unique skills, it probably wouldn't take that long. Though he didn't have much faith in it, he even had the God of Reincarnation's Fortune.

"Err, how do I use the Target Radar... Ah, I just have to think about it."

The direction and current distance of Vandalieu's location were displayed in Kanata's head. According to this, he wasn't that far away. If he had a helicopter, no, even a car, he could get there in a single day –

"Ah, I don't even have a car, let alone a helicopter. It'd be pretty rough to travel that far on foot. Should I steal a horse or something? Hey, God, I did say that I didn't want to encounter him unexpectedly, but you didn't have to fling me into this place so far away from him, you know?"

Realizing that he had limited methods of transport, a crease appeared between Kanata's eyebrows. It was possible to fly with wind-attribute magic, but he didn't have enough Mana for that.

And if Kanata were to encounter an enemy while using magic to fly, his methods of attacking would be limited. It would be a different story if he had a gun.

【Unlike your skills, your Attribute Values are not particularly high compared to those holding combat-related occupations in Lambda. It would be best if you first go to a city, register at an Adventurers' Guild, acquire a Job, prepare your equipment and learn about martial skills.】

In response to the voice he heard in his mind, Kanata shook his head, thinking about how complicated this all was.

"Like I said, I have no intention of doing these things that have been taken straight out of a stupid game," he said.

But the one thing he did agree on was that he should prepare his equipment. He wouldn't be able to complete this job in the next few days, and with that being the case, he would need food.

【If you go straight east from the place you have been reincarnated, you will come out onto the highway. You should find the means to accomplish these objectives there.】

“Well, I suppose I’ll obey those instructions,” Kanata decided. He didn’t intend to hunt while looking for edible grass, so he began walking east as he was told.

Before long, he heard a scream.

When he dashed towards the scream to find out what was happening, he saw armed men who appeared to be outlaws at a glance, attacking a carriage.

“Hannah, HANNAAAH!”

“Father, run!”

“Alright! If you don’t want the daughter of your employer to die, throw your weapons aside, all of you!”

It seemed that the bandits had taken the daughter of the traveling merchant hostage. Now, they were instructing the adventurers who had been hired as guards to disarm.

“...Uwah, what a cliché,” Kanata murmured to himself.

Was Kanata supposed to learn the direction of the nearest city and gain transport, food and money here? At least, Kanata himself interpreted it this way, so he quickly began reciting an incantation.

“The daughter and the items that the humans are wearing. Great Incineration!”

TLN: When Kanata uses Gungnir, I’ll italicize his designated targets from now on so that there’s hopefully less confusion.*

Flames burst forth from the pentagram that had appeared in front of Kanata’s hands, engulfing all of the bandits as well as the girl who had been taken hostage.

“H-HANNAAAH!”

The bandits screamed as they were burned alive, as did the girl.

“H-huh? It’s not... hot?”

Though the flames surrounded the girl, they didn't inflict any damage on her. There wasn't a single mark on her clothes or even the equipment the bandits had been wearing.

Only the bandits' bodies had been burned.

"It seems that my Gift, Gungnir, is just as easy to use as it was in Origin."

The cheat-like ability that Kanata had received from Rodcorte, Gungnir. It was an ability that allowed penetration of selected targets. It allowed him and people and objects in contact with him to penetrate physical objects and energies.

To use it, Kanata had to designate targets for penetration.

When using this ability before dying in Origin, he had made the bullets he fired penetrate the building to hit the terrorists and made bullets and knives pass through him, making himself invulnerable to their attacks.

Now, he had designated the girl and the equipment on her and the bandits' bodies as targets for the ability, scorching only the bandits' bodies into burnt, black matter.

The greater the range of targets for Gungnir, the more Mana it consumed. Thanks to his Mana pool of over 40,000, this wasn't a problem as long as Kanata didn't use it excessively.

But the problem was that it also had a weakness. His attacks could penetrate any physical or magical defenses, and he could use the ability to avoid any attacks towards him. But by looking at him, one could easily tell what weapons they should use to attack him.

Obviously, if he had designated bullets as Gungnir's target, then he wouldn't be able to use a gun, and if he had designated knives as the target, then he wouldn't be able to hold a knife.

If he designated light as the target and became transparent, he would be blind as his eyes couldn't receive light. If he designated heat as the target, he would rapidly lose body heat.

And if he designated human bodies as the target, he wouldn't be able to touch others. That was why the moment he had rescued the president's daughter who had been

held captive, it was certain that a bare-handed attack would definitely hit him.

In fact, I was attacked by Metamorph's hand... her body.

Kanata's weakness had been completely taken advantage of. He decided not to get in range for close-quarters combat with skilled opponents from now on.

"Oh, it's just like a miracle... Hannah, Hannah!"

"Father!"

"Thank you so much for saving my daughter!"

Kanata, who had been painfully immersed in the memories from his previous life, came to his senses as the merchant called out to him in delight at his daughter's safety.

"Hey, I have a question. Which way do I have to go to find a city?" Kanata asked, realizing that they were speaking Japanese.

"A city?" the merchant repeated, blinking in confusion at Kanata's attitude and the fact that he hadn't even introduced himself. "The closest one is Tia City, down the highway in this direction..."

"This way? I just have to go down this highway? The road doesn't branch at all?" Kanata asked.

"There is a small branched road that leads to a village, but you can reach the city by following the larger one..." said the merchant. "Did you happen to lose your way?"

"No, I'm not lost anymore," said Kanata. "I've acquired transport, equipment and enough food and money for now, after all."

"What do you mean –"

"I'll start with this. *Man.*"

The merchant felt a dull impact.

"Kah... Gofuh?"

Before he could understand anything that was happening, his beloved daughter opened her eyes wide as blood spurted from her mouth.

“Ha... HANNAAAAH?!”

A rusty knife had been thrust deep into the chest of the merchant’s daughter who was supposed to be safe in his arms.

“Oh, it pierced deeper than I thought,” Kanata remarked. “Is this what these skill things are?”

“Hannah-san?!”

“What do you think you’re doing?! Why would you do such a thing?!”

Kanata casually watched the girl who had started spasming with her eyes still wide open in disbelief and her father who was giving a heartbroken scream. Astonished, the adventurers raised their weapons towards him.

“Why, you ask... Hmm, because her name is Hannah,” Kanata replied. “It’s the same name as the president’s daughter that Mari disguised herself as, so it’s an unpleasant name to me, and since this is something that the god set up for me, I’m distracting myself. In other words, I’m just venting my anger, I suppose. Haha, how pitiful~♪”

“W-what are you saying?” asked an adventurer in response to Kanata’s words that made absolutely no sense to him, looking afraid.

On the other hand, the other adventurer seemed to have decided that Kanata was an enemy to be disposed of.

“Die, you lunatic!”

Kanata evaded the spear thrust at him by the adventurer with the absolute minimum movement required, closed the distance between them and easily reached into the adventurer’s pocket.

“What, if this is all you have, won’t my bare hands be enough? But just in case, *weapons, armor.*”

“Wha -?! GAHAH!”

Unfortunately for the adventurers, the level of Kanata's Unarmed Fighting Technique from his training in the army was equivalent to a C-class adventurer's. The two of them, who were a D and E-class adventurer, couldn't overcome this difference in ability.

Kanata was even being cowardly enough to use Gungnir, slipping through the resistance that the adventurers were trying to put up with their weapons and armor, attacking them one-sidedly with punches and kicks that made contact directly with their bodies.

Before long, the two adventurers were lying on the ground with the whites of their eyes showing.

"Even if that girl's name was Beth or Hanako or something instead of Hannah, I would have disposed of her after raping her anyway. So if you're blaming yourself and thinking that she died because you named her Hannah, you don't have to worry about it," Kanata told the merchant.

The merchant's daughter had already died due to the knife puncturing her lung, and he was still holding onto her in a daze. Of course, he wasn't thinking anything of the sort.

"Th-this... Do you think you can get away with this?! Eventually, the day will come where you will be judged!" he shouted.

"Come on, you're just a character in this game-like world; don't get so serious on me," said Kanata. "I'm telling you, it's fine. The god Rodcorte will probably have her reborn as somebody somewhere else. I'm intending to do the same before this judgment or whatever comes to me, anyway."

Giving a light laugh at the grief and anger of the father who had lost his daughter, Kanata burned the merchant's body and turned him to ash without damaging his clothes, just like he had done to the bandits.

"It's my first time riding a horse, but with the Horseback Riding skill, it'll probably be fine," Kanata said as he threw the belongings and equipment of the merchant, adventurers and bandits into the carriage, got inside and rode towards the city. He equipped the merchant's knife with lightning-bolt-shaped patterns carved into its handle, which seemed to have been his lucky charm, at his waist.

Rodcorte's careless selection of who to reincarnate was the greatest failure he had ever committed.

While reincarnating those who had died in the explosion on the ferry, he had indeed excluded the evil terrorists. However, as for the crew and passengers, he had simply asked whether they would accept his reincarnation or not, and had made no effort to select them.

Their personalities, dispositions, mental strength and sense of morals. Rodcorte hadn't examined any of these.

The criteria of whether they were evil or not at the moment of their death on Earth was far too simple a criterion; it couldn't even be called an examination.

Despite that, despite taking some things into consideration, he was forcing the mental burden of being reincarnated in foreign worlds upon them, multiple times.

As a result, there were some who had made brilliant achievements in Origin such as *Amemiya Hiroto*, but there were also those like Kanata.

Rodcorte hadn't expected Kanata to perform such acts of violence, either, but... Kanata had already been reborn in Lambda. Rodcorte was no longer able to control his actions, nor could he rely on unstable Divine Messages to convey his will.

"This isn't why I had you reborn in that place, but... No, this is but a trivial problem," Rodcorte told himself.

With Kaidou Kanata's abilities, unlike Vandalieu, he wouldn't cause more than a thousand deaths with the acts of violence he committed along the way. Despite being underdeveloped, even Lambda wouldn't be significantly influenced by these.

"But is he really not planning to acquire a Job, increase his level or learn about martial skills?" Rodcorte wondered. "Even if Lambda is inferior in culture and civilization, the people's individual skills in combat are greater than those of people of Earth or Origin..."



Froto had never been blessed with luck, but considered himself to be outstanding. That was why he had believed that with just a little luck, everything in his next plan

would go well, he would receive the reward he desired and be added to the ranks of mages employed in the Hartner Duchy.

But what the hell is this guy?!

As Froto walked towards the Seventh Cultivation Village with the three adventurers, Kasim and his friends, he glanced at Vandalieu.

There was currently a common familial conflict occurring in the Hartner family of dukes. The head of the family was still alive, but he was bedridden with illness, causing him difficulties with his official work. He had two sons who possessed the right to succeed him.

The eldest son Lucas's mother was the duke's concubine. He was an extraordinary man with bravery and tactical genius who was currently serving as the leader of the Knights' Order, and he had tremendous support from the Hartner Duchy's army.

The second son Belton's mother was the duke's legal wife. He was talented in dealing with domestic affairs, had the support of many civil officials and had connections with the central government. He was expected to make further developments in the Hartner Duchy if he were elected.

Normally, it would be ideal if Belton succeeded the family of dukes as he was the son of the duke's legal wife, while Lucas made use of his tactical genius in directing the army, whose presence had increased due to the Hartner Duchy becoming the frontline in the war against the Amid Empire.

However, the way of thinking that each brother possessed did not match the other's.

Belton, the second son, believed that defenses against the Amid Empire ought to be strengthened while efforts were put into domestic affairs, prioritizing defending the duchy against the Empire's weapons. That was why he had sent the troublesome refugees in the cities, who were the primary cause of the deteriorating public order, to remote regions under the pretense of cultivation, while in fact this was little more than a project set up to leave the refugees to fend for themselves. This had caused a sharp drop in the refugee numbers inside cities.

He had sent the inhabitants of the cultivation villages that had failed to the slave-run mines to squeeze out the rest of the dwindling supply of metal while enacting policies to maintain forts and strengthen garrisons.

Lucas, the eldest son, advocated that efforts should be placed in retaking the Sauron Duchy in the name of justice, piercing the Amid Empire's shields and gaining glory for the Hartner Duchy. For this reason, he believed that the refugees, the primary cause of the deteriorating public order, should be conscripted and used as disposable, low-grade troops while sinking funds into the army's budget to increase the number of regular soldiers, leaving the maintenance of public order to the guards and adventurers.

The two plans were polar opposites of each other, and because each brother believed that their own plans were for the good of the Hartner Duchy, they were having a dispute. This had caused a division within their supporters and those who stood to benefit from the execution of either plan into separate factions.

Froto's viewpoints were far-biased towards Lucas's side. He had suffered defeat in a power struggle within the Mages' Guild, one day, one of the members of Lucas's Knights' Order had called out to him while he sat pitifully by a window, having been forgotten by everyone. The knight had told him that they were looking for someone to infiltrate the cultivation villages, pretending to be a priest of Alda.

Despite being a plan to simply leave the refugees to fend for themselves, Belton's cultivation project was going unexpectedly well. Only one of the seven cultivation villages had been abandoned, and though there were differences in prosperity between the other six villages, it seemed that they would last for at least five more years.

If a cultivation project that had been designed to failed ended up succeeding, those of Belton's faction would praise his ability in managing domestic affairs even more, advocating that he, who possessed the blood of the duke's legal wife, would manage the duchy far better than his boorish older brother.

This alone wouldn't end the familial dispute, but for Lucas's faction, it was best for Belton to have as few achievements and as many failures as possible.

This was where Froto had come in. He had begun masquerading as a priest of Alda years ago and traveled to a different village from one of Lucas's spies who was disguised as a traveling merchant, leaking information to Lucas's faction.

Gaining the trust of the villagers had been simple. Priests didn't have Guild Cards like adventurers, and there were plenty of wandering priests, so even the church in the

city wasn't aware of his actions.

Unlike proper priests and high priests, clergymen of his position didn't have qualifications or anything of the sort, so they didn't serve in churches and there were no records of them.

To take an extreme example, anyone could become a priest as long as he dressed like one and possessed the scriptures or memorized enough of them to preach them. If he could even use magic other than of the light and life attributes and was cultured and knowledgeable, it would be even more perfect.

The Clergyman skill exists in Lambda, but it is a skill that represents the ability to conduct rituals such as those of purification and the ability to preach. If one could feign these abilities, it is surprisingly simple to masquerade as a priest.

It probably wouldn't work in cities where multiple proper clergymen worked, but what the people of small villages want from traveling priests is medicine, knowledge, education in reading and writing, preaching and ways to pass the time, such as stories of heroes and saints.

And thanks to the information that Froto and the others had gathered, plans to empty the cultivation villages had finally been executed. Though the number of candidates to be conscripted as low-grade troops would decrease somewhat, reducing Belton's achievements even by a little was more than enough of a benefit to do so.

But... this guy interfered with everything!

All of the plans had been crude, far from meticulous. Froto and the others weren't experts in conspiracies and subversive activities to begin with. If such experts were used, it would be noticed quickly by those of Belton's faction, which was why people like Froto were being used in the first place.

But even so, those plans should have been more than enough to inflict devastating damage to these small villages.

Vandalieu saved the lives of Kasim's party and Ivan. That didn't really matter. It had been decided that the Seventh Cultivation Village, which was close to the highway, would be destroyed sometime in the future anyway.

But misfortune befell the spy disguised as a traveling merchant, who distributed

poison to the Fifth Cultivation Village to wipe the villagers out. He failed to poison the hunter named Kyne. The spy had been told a date where there was no hunting planned, but Kyne had changed his plans or perhaps the spy had simply gotten the date wrong... Either way, Kyne came to the Seventh Cultivation Village where Froto was, seeking help.

Even so, Froto had no way of helping him cure the villagers, nor would he even have made it in time. If Froto arrived at the village the next day when all the villagers were dead and declared that it was an epidemic, the mass-poisoning incident would have been hushed up without incident.

But Vandalieu flew to the village with Kyne on his back, saying that he could cure them.

Kyne had been doubtful, but Vandalieu had already healed Ivan. Because of this, everyone in the Seventh Cultivation Village assured him that Vandalieu would be able to save the villagers, leaving Froto unable deny his ability or stop him from going.

It was a fool's errand; even if he did manage to save anyone, it would be a few villagers at most. No, it was reasonable to assume that he would run out of Mana and fall out of the sky before even reaching the village.

That was what Froto thought as he insincerely expressed worry for Kyne and Vandalieu, headed out to see what had become of the Fifth Cultivation Village... and to his surprise, found that all of the villagers were alive. They looked somewhat exhausted, but that was the extent of the damage.

Though this was an unbelievable nightmare, he somehow managed to look happy and exclaim that this was a miracle as he chased after Vandalieu, who had headed for another village. Froto heard of Vandalieu's deeds, wondering if he really was having a nightmare.

He cured diseases without reciting any incantations, healed burns and wounds and created medicine from his fingertips (actually, his claws).

He flew down from the sky to defeat the Orcs sent by Froto's companion, a tamer, in a single attack, saving the life of a boy who was supposed to die. When nobody was looking, he had even created a well that could be used as soon as a pulley and bucket was installed.

Even villages that had been supposed to be wiped out by bandit attacks were still

going strong. There was no doubt that Vandalieu had something to do with this.

And in the Second Cultivation Village, Vandalieu purified the poisoned fertilizer distributed by Froto's superiors and even taught the villagers how to use Goblins as emergency rations.

There was no other way to describe this as anything other than divine work.

Who on earth is this Dhampir? Could he be a spy from Belton's side? No, if that were the case, he would be Belton's trump card. Someone capable of doing these things wouldn't be an improvised spy like me. There is no way that such a trump card would be deployed to a place like this, so... is he really someone who was simply passing through?

Froto timidly looked towards Vandalieu, only to accidentally make eye contact with him.

This guy?! Does he actually suspect me after all?!

"...Is there something wrong?" asked Vandalieu.

Froto felt himself breaking out into a cold sweat as he saw his own terrified face reflected Vandalieu's eyes, which were looking at him as if they had seen through everything.

"N-no, it is nothing," Froto replied, barely managing to prevent his voice from breaking.

"I see," Vandalieu said as he directed his gaze elsewhere.

Th-this guy is too dangerous! Froto thought. *I must report him to Karcen-dono.*

Karcen was a man of the Knights' Order, the one giving instructions Froto and the others, the one who had taken command of this operation.

Unlike the spy disguised as a traveling merchant, who had left the village behind without even staying to confirm the results of his work, the tamer was probably already heading back to make his report, but that wasn't enough. Once Froto returned to the Seventh Cultivation Village, he would have to leave within the same day and head to the city to make his own report.

Despite Froto being so wary of Vandalieu, Vandalieu didn't suspect Froto at all.

Danger Sense: Death couldn't detect people's intentions other than those intending to kill him or cause him injury, and Vandalieu himself wasn't sharp enough to see what people were truly thinking just by looking at them.

Even when Froto had thought their eyes met, Vandalieu had simply been staring vaguely at the sky and happened to look at Froto by coincidence.

Expressionlessness is often mistaken for anger, but Vandalieu's expressionless was completely empty, like the face of a doll. Because of this, everyone who looked at him interpreted his expression differently.

If looked at with friendly eyes like those of the villagers, then he appeared friendly. If he was stared at with eyes of suspicion like Froto's, then he appeared as if he was suspecting the viewer.

What Vandalieu was currently thinking was something that everyone has thought at least once.

I want to become a bird; someone, please give me wings.

Why did he have to make the effort of walking for an hour when he could use Flight? Of course, he understood that Kasim, his companions and the priest wouldn't be able to keep up with him.

If he tried to carry them like he did Kyne, this many people would definitely be over the weight limit. It would use too much Mana. And Vandalieu wasn't large enough to have four people riding on top of him. If a strong gust of wind blew or they were attacked by a monster like a giant raven, someone might fall off.

That was why there was no choice but to walk on the ground's surface. Vandalieu had been staring at the sky, thinking that he wouldn't have to go through this trouble if he could use a spell that allowed him to fly while carrying multiple people.

And then something suddenly occurred to him.

Huh? If I want wings, I can just grow them, can't I?

Indeed, if he wanted wings, he could simply grow them. Having thought of this, Vandalieu wanted to try it out right away, but he restrained himself.

It would be impossible to convince these people that it's light-attribute magic. I'll try it out after I reach the Seventh Cultivation Village and head for the city with Eleanora and the others.

CHAPTER 74

SMOOTH FLIGHT THROUGH THE SKY, EATING VARIOUS THINGS IN THE CITY

Eleanora frequently thought about how right she was in her firm belief that this small Dhampir was far more fearsome than Birkyne and the other Pure-breed Vampires.

She was thinking the same tonight as well, but at the same time, as she thought about the policies of her master, the most fearsome being in this world, she asked herself, “Why?”

By selling the Goblin-head-shaped communication devices, Vandalieu could easily acquire a fortune and the position of baron, so why was he so fixated on the process of becoming an adventurer, gaining achievements and becoming a nobleman?

Even without the communication devices, he could use Golem Transmutation to change the shapes of gemstones or even Magic Stones, combine them and turn pebble-sized gemstones into large ones worthy of shining in the crown of a king. Wouldn't he be able to easily gain the status of honorary nobleman if he demonstrated this ability?

For Magic Stones, only Magic Stones from monsters of the same race with the same Rank could be combined due to issues with Mana compatibility, but even so, Vandalieu would be able to combine Magic Stones to create larger ones when previously the only improvement possible was to polish them.

These were Eleanora's thoughts, but Vandalieu had told her, “I can only see a future where influential people turn me into a slave or something and simply extract my Mana for their own use.” Indeed, Eleanora didn't believe that all influential people were virtuous. In fact, she believed that over ninety percent of them were conspirators or villains.

But at the same time, she believed that unimaginably foolish influential people would make up less than ten percent.

I think that as long as they are not unimaginably foolish, they would realize that turning Vandalieu-sama into their enemy would lead to their ruin, but...

Enormous, black wings flapped gently. The wings that had grown from the back of her master.

“It feels nice to fly like this,” said Vandalieu. “Everyone, how does the ride feel?” he asked.

“Things are great here, too!” replied Zran. “The wind is strong, but it’s perfect for a hot summer’s night!”

“You’re amazing, King!” said Braga. “The humans making camp on the ground look like ants!”

Eleanora gave a vague smile as she glanced sideways at Zran, Braga and the other Black Goblins who were shouting excitedly.

“Vandalieu-sama... The ride is comfortable, but... Why have you changed... no, evolved, just for a method of transport?” Eleanora questioned.

“Hmm? I just grew some spirit-form wings; I haven’t done any changing or evolving,” replied Vandalieu.

With three pairs of wings protruding from the neck of a bird consisting of only a torso, he resembled a very ominous bird indeed.



Vandalieu had returned to the Seventh Cultivation Village, said farewell to the priest who had left for the city in a hurry, killed time doing training and such with Kasim and his friends, and spent the night at the jack-of-all-trades store. In his room, he had informed Eleanora and the others that he was heading for the city tomorrow.

Incidentally, the room in the jack-of-all-trades store was nothing but a room with eight people’s worth of crudely-made bunkbeds of straw. It didn’t rely on its income as an inn in the first place, so the bunkbeds had apparently been made by the owner himself. There was no disadvantage for him to have Vandalieu stay there in addition to Kasim and his friends.

The owner was quite shrewd; he had decided that this made them even for having mistaken Vandalieu for a ghost.

Leaving that aside, Vandalieu had regrouped with Eleanora and the others and immediately began trying to execute his idea.

Using the Spirit Form Transformation spell, the Spirit Form skill and the Materialization skill, he began trying to grow wings.

Now that he thought about it, Bone Bird, who was now a part of Knochen, had used spirit form feathers with its bone wings to fly.

Also, Vandalieu had been using Spirit Form Transformation to grow extra limbs and heads and even branched them out into tentacle shapes.

With that being the case, wouldn't he be able to grow something like wings fairly easily? And wouldn't he be able to use these wings to fly?

That was why Vandalieu tried it.

He used Spirit Form Transformation on part of his back, used the Spirit Form skill to change its shape the way he imagined it in his mind and stretched it out. He materialized it here and there using the Materialization skill, adjusting the skill's intensity depending on the spot.

And so, Vandalieu acquired enormous wings.

Each of the wings was as long as a wing of a jumbo jet, and the torso was large enough for Eleanora and the others to ride on with room to spare.

Perhaps because they were made of spirit form, or because he had used an owl's wings as a reference, or perhaps because his death-attribute magic's Erase Presence was active, the wings made almost no noise despite their size.

He was flying at a height where arrows wouldn't reach, at a speed equivalent to a racehorse sprinting at full speed. Though the wings' black color was inconspicuous in the night sky, if people on the ground did notice Vandalieu, perhaps they would faint in terror.

"Vandalieu-sama, are you planning to go beyond creating legends and start creating myths?" asked Eleanora.

"It's nothing as exaggerated as that," said Vandalieu. "There are lots of flaws, too."

“As a method of transport, it is indeed inferior to the Teleportation spell of the space attribute,” said Eleanora. “But even so –”

“No, even Knochen could do this much,” said Vandalieu. “At the very least, it would be able to fly while carrying everyone here.”

“Th-that’s true, but...”

“And you know, even if you consider the fact that no other people could do this, it doesn’t give me any additional options in the future other than spending my days running a delivery business.”

Indeed, since no other person was capable of this, even if one were to tell Vandalieu to do it in a way that other people could replicate it, it would be impossible.

“And there are flaws to this. To fly like this, I need multiple instances of Parallel Thought Processing and High-speed Thought Processing, and it consumes a lot of Mana,” Vandalieu explained. “And since I can’t handle tight turns, fighting in the air is impossible.”

He had only tried it out as a method of transportation in the first place, so he supposed that this was how it was.

“But it consumes much less Mana than the Flight spell, so it’s not unusable,” he added. “Ah, we’re almost at the city, so I’ll be descending now.”

And so, Vandalieu and his companions made the journey between the Seventh Cultivation Village and the city, which would normally take three days, in a single night.

Of course, they had passed by Froto, the man disguised as a priest of Alda who had left the village before them, along the way.

Incidentally, Kanata was currently using his stolen carriage to head towards a city to the north, past the duchy’s capital. The next morning, he would be surprised to see that the distance between himself and Vandalieu displayed by his Target Radar changed significantly within a single night.

『The level of the Spirit Form skill has increased!』

The city of Niarki.

Until the cultivation project began, it had been a city on the southern tip of the Hartner Duchy for over a hundred years, and currently, it had returned to being the southernmost city. It had a population of ten thousand. Its lord was Viscount Niarki; this city was the capital of his region.

There was a young, white-haired boy wearing a crude eyepatch made of cloth, walking around among the crowd in this city's marketplace.

He looked at his surroundings with an unimpressed-looking gaze before suddenly approaching a store that his eyes had stopped on.

"An apple," he said.

"They're one Baum each," said the middle-aged woman standing in the store with rows of fruit.

The boy searched the inside of his cloth bag, seemingly unaccustomed to doing so, before finding a silver coin and handing it over.

The woman stared at the silver coin without blinking, and then snorted. "This is fake, isn't it? There is no way that a brat like you would have silver coins. I don't know if you're a refugee or an orphan, but get lost," she spat. But despite her words, the woman pocketed the silver coin that the boy had handed her. It seemed that she had no intention of giving it back. "What are you looking at? Hurry up and get lost! Do you want me to call the guards?!" she shouted.

Her voice caused owners of other stores and people going back and forth around the marketplace to look towards the boy, but none of them had any compassion in their eyes. They looked at him with irritation, scorn and disgust.

The boy's expression didn't change at all despite receiving such gazes, and he left the store quietly. He turned his body around in a natural manner and vanished.

"Hmph, what a weird brat," said the woman who had acquired a fifty-Baum silver coin

as the corners of her lips rose in a smile. She hadn't noticed that there was now one less apple in her store.

The boy, Vandalieu, was biting into the apple in a place away from public attention. He didn't believe that he had stolen it, as the woman had received fifty times the correct amount in payment.

"This city is wild," he murmured.

He had thought that his appearance wasn't dirty, but the cloth that he was wearing over his eye to conceal the fact that he was a Dhampir apparently gave the impression that he was a refugee or an orphan with no parents.

It was possible that his long hair covering his pointed ears only further strengthened that impression. Well, even if his ears were seen, people might assume that he was a half-Elf orphan.

The thing that shocked him was that the refugees were hated in the city more than he had imagined. It seemed that the people of the city blamed the refugees for the things they were dissatisfied about.

Indeed, ever since the refugees had come from the Sauron Duchy, the economy had worsened, the taxes had become harsher and public order had deteriorated. There were more positions for day-to-day work than before, and the refugees were competing for these jobs with the people who had always lived in the city.

Vandalieu had no intention of unconditionally taking the refugees' side; he did think that the deteriorating public order and competition over work was problematic for the people who had always lived in the Hartner Duchy.

However, the reason for the economy being worse and the taxes becoming harsher was because the Hartner Duchy was putting effort into increasing its military presence, as it was now the frontline in the war against the Amid Empire since Sauron Duchy had been captured.

If the people were dissatisfied with that, they shouldn't be blaming the refugees but the politicians who had lost the war and the Amid Empire who had attacked.

It wasn't logical for them to blame anything else.

“The youngsters of these days are quick to torment the weak.”

“That bitch, that woman at the fruit store, I’ll curse her to death! So give me Manaanaa!”

“Anyhow, the lord of the region has been acting strange lately; it was only yesterday that... Huh? Perhaps it was actually ten years ago?”

“The password is, ‘ale and moba bean stirfry.’ They’ll tell you that they’re out, but ignore them and repeat the same order one more time. Then you’ll be able to meet the people from the Fangs of Dark Nights.”

“Hihihi, if you want to have good dreams, I recommend the ‘Indigo Legs’ to the west; they have plenty of good prostitutes there.”

“I see,” said Vandalieu. The moment he asked to hear more about this city and the Hartner Duchy, the spirits had begun talking noisily.

As he listened to them, Vandalieu thought about the discrimination against the refugees, which was to the point that human rights organizations and the media would have a field day if it was happening on earth. *Why do people feel the desire discriminate against other people of the same nation?* he wondered. It was a problem that had been present on Earth and in Origin as well, but –

“Ah, I see. For the people of the city... for the people of the Hartner Duchy, the refugees from the Sauron Duchy aren’t people from the same nation.”

In this world, where making journeys was dangerous even if using highways, it was common for people to spend their entire lives in the villages or cities that they were born in. For them, their societies *were* those villages and cities. People coming from outside those villages and cities were essentially ‘outsiders,’ equivalent to being foreigners.

And the Orbaume Kingdom was a nation that was made up of a collection of smaller nations. Each duchy was one of the nations that had existed since the Kingdom’s foundation.

Because of this, even for those involved in politics, their fellow countrymen were only the people of their duchies, and those from other duchies were foreigners.

To the people of the Hartner Duchy, the people of the Sauron Duchy were not people

from the same nation.

“At this rate, the people of the cultivation villages will have a hard future ahead of them,” said Vandalieu.

Even the apple that Vandalieu was taking his second bite of shocked him.

To summarize its flavor in one word, it was ‘disappointing.’

It did taste like an apple, but it wasn’t good enough to be put on the shelves in the supermarkets of Earth. It was neither sweet nor sour; even its texture was lacking.

It was a failure when compared to a Kobol fruit.

But it wasn’t that this apple was inferior. It was that the Kobol fruit was outstanding.

The flavor that Vandalieu remembered was the flavor of apples in Japan, on Earth. Despite nobody having given Kobol fruits any assistance, they contained flavor in their flesh that could rival the flavor of apples that farmers had spent a great deal of effort in selectively breeding.

Considering that, Vandalieu now understood why Kobol fruits sold for ten Amids each, or ten Baums in the Orbaume Kingdom.

“Leaving that aside, I’ll sneak into the Mages’ Guild tonight and look for an old spirit,” he decided. “There are apparently items with history in the Mages’ Guild, commonly known as cursed items. There should at least be one old, evil spirit or vengeful spirit.”

Ah, I’ve been talking to myself a lot. I shouldn’t be acting alone after all, Vandalieu thought as he walked off, still munching on the disappointing apple.

Somewhere along his way, he got into a fight with a hoodlum who had followed him after seeing him produce a silver coin in the marketplace, but the hoodlum didn’t know anything about Princess Levia and the other Titans, either. The hoodlum’s blood did taste better than the apple, however.



In the archives of the small Mages' Guild branch of the city of Niarki, there was a magical tome that had been sealed away, feared to be a 'cursed, forbidden tome.'

It was a cursed item, said to contain forbidden knowledge that granted power to those who read it, but at the cost of their sanity, changing them to have cruel personalities.

According to one theory, the tome contained not forbidden knowledge, but an evil god whose powers had been robbed from him, sealed inside the tome, entering the minds of those who read the book and brainwashing them in an attempt to remove the seal.

That theory was ninety percent true.

"Hihi, it seems that another fool has opened me."

Buburdura, the Evil God of the Magic Tome whose power had been robbed from him, felt joy stirring in his heart. In the past, he had been defeated by Farmaun Gold and lost his power. He transformed himself into a book and now, he was seeking 'readers' in order to restore his power.

By possessing and manipulating the 'readers' that opened and read him, he absorbed their power like a leech to regain his own.

"I have finally recovered half of my power. Tonight, I shall seize the body of this fool, turn him into my possessed servant and use him as a foothold towards my full recovery," he told himself.

With a thud, the pages fluttered open. Not letting this moment escape him, Buburdura flew into the mind of this 'reader.'

"Now then, I shall manipulate you, just as I have done to all of the foolish prey who have come before you!"

The body of Buburdura's will, which resembled an ugly combination between an arthropod and a mollusk, extended its tentacles into the center of the mind of the 'reader.'

Resistance would be completely impossible; Buburdura's mind would violate the reader's mind in an overwhelming manner. At least, the evil god had assumed that this

would happen, as this was how things had gone up until now.

“Muh? What is the meaning of this; I cannot reach it?”

No matter how much Buburdura extended his tentacles, he couldn't reach the memories and personality that he wanted to tamper with. Flustered, he extended his tentacles as far as they could go, but even so, only a few of them barely managed to touch something at all.

And the thing that he touched caused him deep bewilderment as well.

“What is this? Why are things like this? Impossible; why does it have this structure? Is this really someone from this world?” he wondered.

Buburdura had invaded the minds of hundreds, thousands of people. In a way, he was an expert when it came to minds. To his knowledge and experience, there were no people with minds like this.

It was unsystematic.

Things that were supposed to be in certain places weren't; instead, there were things with completely different shapes that weren't supposed to be there at all.

If comparing it to a person's body, it was as if a small intestine in the shape of a liver had been packed into the place where the brain was supposed to be; it was completely incomprehensible.

It was as bizarre as a castle forcibly built from random junk.

As Buburdura came to this conclusion, a terrifying possibility rose in his mind.

“That is right; I have heard that after the Demon King-sama broke the souls of the four champions, some god gathered their fragments together and forcibly joined them into a single soul. If something were to break that soul again... Hyih?!”

Buburdura realized something, mid-sentence. There was a deep opening above his head. And as the opening moved, he let out a scream of terror.

The opening widened a little, revealing an enormous eye.

Buburdura saw himself reflected in its dull, mud-like pupil.

“ –...”

TLN: There is a censored, three-syllable word here in the raw.

A noise that sounded like fragments of metal scraping against each other echoed from behind him.

He turned around immediately to see that there was a deep crack there as well. A tongue far thicker and more terrifying than Buburdura's tentacles extended from the crack towards him.

He screamed again.

The tongue wrapped around Buburdura, the Evil God of the Magic Tome, and crushed him.

Buburdura finally understood the meaning of the noise that he hadn't been able to hear properly. It had said, "How itchy*."

TLN: This is the previously censored three-syllable word.*

And so, the evil god whom Farmaun Gold had failed to defeat, who had hidden for a hundred thousand years while slurping up the minds of his victims and was finally about to make a recovery, was destroyed by a certain 'reader' who had made a casual attack, as if merely brushing away a winged insect that had stopped on his neck.



Having turned the ground into Golems and used Golem Transmutation to dig a tunnel in order to infiltrate the Mages' Guild from underground, Vandalieu investigated inside, searching for spirits. He found some spirits. But unfortunately, they were old and on the brink of being extinguished, had no interest in anything other than magic even after death, or had gone mad, becoming unable to speak in coherent sentences. None of them knew about the First Princess Levia.

The spirits in the city didn't know anything either; would it be better if I asked people who are alive? But it's questionable as to whether the people of this city would give me honest answers.

Though he was worried about this matter, he was also searching the archives for any forbidden techniques that could be used for Darcia's resurrection. Suddenly, a mage's spirit informed him that there was a single forbidden tome in the archives.

It was apparently an evil tome that granted those who read it great power, in exchange for also bestowing upon them a destiny of ruin.

Intrigued, Vandalieu used death-attribute magic to remove the seal that had been placed on the tome and tried holding the tome in his hands.

"...I do feel an ominous presence, but it's not really that big a deal?"

Though he could feel Mana, there was only a feeble reaction from Danger Sense: Death; he could only think of the book as unimportant.

It was such an unthreatening forbidden tome that Vandalieu wondered if it was the metal reinforcements on its corners that were supposed to be dangerous.

Thinking that there wouldn't be much to expect, Vandalieu opened the forbidden tome to find that its pages were filled with figures resembling geometric shapes rather than written characters.

"Huh, I can't read this. I don't think that these would grant power... Hmm?"

As Vandalieu thought about this, he suddenly felt an unpleasant, itching sensation.

『Your Mana has increased by 50,000,000!』

『The Mental Corruption skill has transformed into the Grotesque Mind skill!』

『You have acquired the Body Expansion (Tongue) and Mental Encroachment skills!』

『The levels of the Superhuman Strength, Rapid Healing, Magic Resistance, Soul Break, God Slayer, Body Expansion (Tongue) and Grotesque Mind skills have increased!』

For some reason, Vandalieu gained additional Mana, new skills and his skills leveled up.

“Eh?”

Though he was surprised, he checked his Status to find that everything was as the announcer in his head had said.

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Taboo Name】
- **Job:** Venom Fist User
- **Level:** 20
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 184
 - Mana: 378,120,344 (Increased by 50,000,000)
 - Strength: 128
 - Agility: 130
 - Stamina: 119
 - Intelligence: 761
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Healing: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dark Vision
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 6
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 4
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 4
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 1
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 3 (NEW!)

- **Active skills:**

- Bloodsucking: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surpass Limits: Level 5
- Golem Transmutation: Level 6
- No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
- Mana Control: Level 4
- Spirit Form: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Carpentry: Level 4
- Engineering: Level 3
- Cooking: Level 4
- Alchemy: Level 4
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Soul Break: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Multi-Cast: Level 5
- Long-distance Control: Level 6
- Surgery: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
- Materialization: Level 4
- Coordination: Level 3
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
- Commanding: Level 1
- Farming: Level 3
- Clothing: Level 2
- Throwing: Level 3

- **Unique skills:**

- God Slayer: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Grotesque Mind: Level 2 (Transformed from Mental Corruption)
- Mental Encroachment: Level 2 (NEW!)

- **Curses**

- Experience gained in previous life not carried over
- Cannot learn existing jobs
- Unable to gain experience independently

“I see, I definitely acquired power, but...?”

If simply reading the book was enough to grant 50,000,000 Mana, it certainly was great power for normal people. It was the equivalent to the Mana pools of five thousand first-rate mages; it wouldn't be strange for them to lose themselves in it and

bring ruin upon themselves.

The unique skill called 'Grotesque Mind' seemed dangerous.

But why had the Soul Break and God Slayer skills leveled up? The Mental Corruption skill had transformed into a unique skill for some reason as well.

"And most importantly, what is this 'Body Expansion (Tongue)'? I can expand my tongue? Ah, it expanded."

Vandalieu tried sticking his tongue out of his mouth to find that it could stretch outwards. There wasn't any pain or unpleasant, stiff sensation. As naturally as bending and stretching his limbs, Vandalieu could stretch his tongue to a length of less than a meter, but longer than his arms.

He could even move it with complete freedom.

He could bend it like a snake or extend it quickly, like when a frog used its tongue to catch insects. He could probably even wrap it around a pen and use it to write. It was as if he had gained an extra hand.

"...Sharp Tongue."

He tried using the 'martial skill' that used his tongue to pierce the target to find that it functioned normally. Its range was far shorter than when he had sent his tongue flying, but with this, he would be able to use it multiple times in quick succession.

Vandalieu didn't know what the Mental Encroachment and Grotesque Mind skills were, but he had indeed gained power. He didn't know what would become of the destiny of ruin that he was supposed to receive along with it.

"All of the people who have read this forbidden tome, did they all gain the ability to extend their tongues as well? If that caused them to be treated like freaks and made them fail in their relationships with others and their work, that really would be a destiny of ruin, I guess?"

On Earth, someone with the ability to stretch their tongues to a length of a meter would be considered freaks, and many would think they were creepy. Making a note of being careful of this happening to him, Vandalieu returned the forbidden tome to its shelf.

It would take Vandalieu a long time to realize that the soul of a foolish evil god had essentially thrown himself into his stomach, granting him the evil god's Mana and a part of his power.

But not as long as it would take the Mages' Guild branch of Niarki to notice that the forbidden tome had turned into an ordinary bundle of paper.



Skill explanation:

【Grotesque Mind】

A skill that represents having a different mental structure from normal people. Spells, special abilities and drugs that affect the mind are completely ineffective against those who possess this skill.

But this skill doesn't mean that the person possessing it is emotionless.

Among people, Vandalieu is the only one to possess this unique skill. A portion of beings that came from other worlds, such as evil gods, as well as those extraordinarily similar to them, also possess this skill.

【Mental Encroachment】

A skill that allows the user to affect the mind and alter the personality, perceptions and memories of the target. In order to use it, some kind of communication, such as direct contact, conversation or eye contact, is required.

Using this skill through indirect methods, such as having the target read a written letter or hear a recorded voice, is also possible.

In Buburdura's case, the condition for the skill's activation was the target reading the pages of the forbidden tome that was his body.

Vandalieu is currently unable to use this skill against living people like Buburdura, who could directly enter the target's mind and soul to conduct his brainwashing.

However, he is able to exert tremendous effects on the dead.

【Body Expansion】

A skill that allows the user to stretch or shrink a part of the body or the entire body. The distance the body part can be stretched depends on the level.

Level 1 in the skill allows extension to twice the original body part's length; level 2 allows four times the original length and level 3 allows eight times.

Though the body parts can stretch and shrink, they do not gain rubber-like properties.

There are no people who possess this skill.

CHAPTER 75

CHARGE! THE LOCAL CRIMINAL SYNDICATE

Naturally, criminal syndicates exist in the nations and cities of Lambda.

Exchanging stolen goods, smuggling of contraband products such as drugs and cursed items, illegal slave trading, contracts for murder. They are far more villainous than the Thieves' Guilds that appear in the fantasy works of Earth, and there are those that could never be called a necessary evil.

Such a criminal syndicate existed in the city of Niarki as well.

An organization with several dozen members, the 'Fangs of Dark Nights.' It was a criminal syndicate that had recently taken advantage of the economic slump in the Hartner Duchy to profit through slave trading and dealing drugs.

Its leader was a feared man, known as 'Torn Ear' Zagi. When he was young, he had been subjected to torture by an opposing organization, during which his ears had been torn to pieces, but he hadn't let out a single scream.

Zagi was currently glaring at a beautiful woman with red hair and red eyes.

"You bitch... What are you after?"

He had been forced to sit on a sofa inside his base, which was filled with the lingering scent of blood. In front of him was a white-haired child sitting on the opposite sofa and the beautiful woman standing beside him.

Zagi's nearby henchmen were either lying on the floor bleeding or cowering and trembling in the corners of the room along with the women who poured his drinks.

"What I'm after is –" the child began.

"I'm not asking you. Shut the hell up, you shitty brat," said Zagi, interrupting him, still talking with the tone of an important person. "Oi, Nee-chan, I don't know what kind of joke this is supposed to be, but if you thought you could trick me into thinking that this kid is your master, you've failed. There's no way that a woman who could dispose

of my men in the blink of an eye would be serving a brat like this –?!”

The beautiful, red-haired woman grabbed Zagi’s collar and raised him into the air with one hand.

I’m being lifted up by a woman’s thin arm?!

In the next moment, the woman who had lifted the astonished Zagi into the air slammed his back into the floor.

“GAH?!”

The floor made a noise of destruction. Zagi was winded from the impact and began writhing in pain on the ground. The woman added a kick to his abdomen.

Zagi gave a scream, as if the precious little air in his lungs had been squeezed out. As the woman moved to deliver yet another attack, she was stopped.

“Eleanora, calm down,” said the child.

“But Vandalieu-sama, such inferior creatures who dare speak careless remarks about you do not have the right to breathe,” the woman protested. “He must be tormented and killed as soon as possible.”

“Your words are contradicting themselves,” the child pointed out. “It would be problematic if he dies, so let’s calm down.”

“...Yes.” The woman turned back to Zagi. “You should be grateful for Vandalieu-sama’s kindness, human.”

“Ah, it’s not good to use the word ‘human’ like that,” said the child. “Me, Eleanora, Zran, we’re all ‘humans*,’ after all. Everyone is human, you know.”

TLN: Refers to all races known considered ‘people’ in Lambda, not specifically the human race.*

“Th-that’s right. Everyone is human, everyone is human...” The woman turned to Zagi again. “Be grateful, you scum.”

“Yes, yes, like that,” said the child.

From the conversation between the two individuals who were holding hands somewhere over his head, Zagi, who was still unable to breathe, realized that the child really was the superior one in their relationship. And on the inside, he felt relief at the fact that the child seemed to have no intention of killing him.

Considering the ability that Eleanora had demonstrated a moment ago, Zagi knew that even the members and bodyguards of the Fangs of Dark Nights who weren't present wouldn't be able to cross swords with her. In fact, within his field of vision, he could see the organization's most competent bodyguard, a former C-class adventurer, defeated with a sword piercing his stomach.

Now that it comes to this, I have no choice but to buy time until the Master comes.

Zagi's only hope was for the true 'Master' of Niarki's underworld, the one who supported the organization, to come running to the scene of this bizarre occurrence. Zagi could feel the presence of the Master's familiar, so he firmly believed that the Master would come to this place.

The question was whether that would be while Zagi was still alive or after he had already died.

"Guh... So... what is your objective?" he asked the child. "Did someone pay you to do this? Or do you want drugs? Surely you're not going to tell me that this is someone's plan for vengeance."

"It's the last option, vengeance," the child replied. "I'm just acting as an agent, though."

Though Zagi's heart almost fell upon hearing that this really was an act of vengeance, he smiled to himself, realizing there was a chance if the child was an agent.

Those after revenge often have a broken sense of benefits and losses. An avenger who would stumble over money and women wouldn't have done things to this extent against the boss of a criminal syndicate.

However, if he was merely an agent of revenge, then it was a different story.

"Then what did you ask for? If it's money, I'll pay as much as you want. Won't you turn to our side?" Zagi asked.

"No, I intend to take all of your money after I kill you," said Vandalieu.

“Wha –?! W-wait a second, didn’t you say that your objective was vengeance?!”

“That’s right. And I’m planning to take your money and organization while I’m at it.”

The way Vandalieu spoke these words with such a casual tone caused Zagi to shudder. And if what Vandalieu said was true, the fact that Zagi would be killed had already been decided. Zagi couldn’t understand this at all.

“Wait, whose vengeance did you come for?” he asked, now desperate. “Hasn’t there been some kind of misunderstanding? I’m definitely a bad person, but I don’t kill people without reason. I have no other choice but to do it to survive. Plenty of the people I killed were real scoundrels, too. In the underworld, there’s a thing called the underworld’s virtues –”

“If those words are lies, you’re going to see hell, you know?” said Vandalieu, though he was almost certain that Zagi’s words were indeed lies. He had already heard various things from Zagi’s recently-deceased subordinates. “And as for whose vengeance I came for... Do you remember a bar by the name of, ‘Scarlet Dreams?’”

“...What are you talking about?” Zagi asked, bewildered. He had no recollection whatsoever of a bar named Scarlet Dreams.

“I’ve come for the vengeance of a woman who was deceived by a swindling, traveling bard who was singing at that bar fifteen years ago,” said Vandalieu.

“H-huh?! What the hell is that?!” Zagi shouted, eyes wide open in disbelief. “Fifteen years ago?! A swindler’s prostitute?! Why the hell have you come for such a worthless vengeance?! How stupid do you – GEGOH?!”

Eleanora delivered yet another kick into the side of his body.

“Please refrain from making further careless remarks, scum,” Eleanora warned him.

As Zagi rolled on the floor, throwing up a mixture of blood and vomit, Vandalieu spoke once more.

“As for why, actually, this afternoon –”



Something big was going to happen.

Old Lady Milan, a Spiritualist who had made a living in divination for a long time in the city of Niarki, had been certain of this since the previous night.

It was a clear omen that anyone would notice if they had the basic powers granted by the Spiritualist Job that she possessed.

“So, you have come,” she said, addressing the customer who had opened the door to her small store. “Business has been terrible because of you.”

“What do you mean?” asked Vandalieu, the white-haired child who had come through the door.

The expression on Old Lady Milan’s wrinkled face changed as she laughed. “Are you questioning how I knew that you would come? Or why business being terrible for me is your fault? You would know the answer to both of these if you gave it some careful thought,” she told him. “Now that every spirit in the city has been taken away, even the spirits of the mice and insects, what is a Spiritualist like me supposed to do? And if you’re taking such a large number of spirits around with you, it would be noticeable even from outside the city.”

The eyes of Old Lady Milan, the eyes of a Spiritualist, could see the countless spirits surrounding Vandalieu. Their numbers were far beyond the hundreds or thousands; they swarmed around him like insects.

She was honestly unable to comprehend how the boy in front of her had managed to maintain his sanity.

“Some of the spirits told me that you were knowledgeable regarding the past,” said Vandalieu.

“I suppose I am. I am an Elf, so I really am as old as I look,” said Old Lady Milan, lowering her hood to reveal her long, pointed ears. “I’m not really trying to hide it. It’s just that a mysterious old woman who has been here for decades attracts more customers than a simple old Elf, you see.”

It seemed that the atmosphere and impressions left on the customers were important

for fortunetellers, even in fantasy worlds.

“So, what did you want to ask me? I’m not an information broker, but if it’s just stories from the past, I’ll make it cheap for you,” she said.

Those with the Spiritualist Job are capable of a little fortune-telling, hearing the voices of the dead and seeing spirits. Other than being able to learn who committed a murder or hear from people of secret intelligence organizations who had been silenced in crude manners, it is nothing outstanding.

This is because the memories and personalities of spirits become unstable over time. Their memories of everything other than fixations they had in life or people they hate collapse as if dissolving, eventually disappearing completely.

This can happen in the space of anywhere between a few days to several decades.

And even if they do possess the memories and personalities that they had in life, there is no guarantee that they will not lie. There have been tragic occurrences in the past where criminal investigations based on the words of Spiritualists resulted in innocent people being executed. It is not uncommon for the victim to protect their murderer when the victim is the murderer’s relative.

But as Old Lady Milan was an Elf with a lifespan of five hundred years, she remembered many things about the past herself, and she remembered stories told by spirits right after they died, even though they had died long ago.

“Please tell me what happened to Princess Levia of Talosheim and those who were with her, around two hundred years ago,” said Vandalieu.

“Why would you want to know about something like that?” Old Lady Milan asked. “Do you have some relationship with that nation of Titans? ... No, I suppose I won’t ask.”

“I don’t mind telling you, though?” Vandalieu offered.

“Never mind; those spirits around you are giving me frightening looks,” said Old Lady Milan. “Now then... I think this will be unpleasant to hear for you, but listen, and don’t get angry.”



When the tunnel through the Boundary Mountain Range was discovered two centuries and a few decades ago, the head of the Hartner family of dukes at the time was a war-obsessed, zealous believer of Vida. As Talosheim was a nation of Titans that believed in Vida, he conducted trade with Talosheim in a proactive manner.

This trade brought wealth to the Hartner Duchy, leading it to having a favorable reputation and people praising it for having outstanding economic policies despite having an image of being an unrefined duchy before that.

However, the new head of the family after that was a zealous believer of Alda. He believed that the one who would bestow their divine protection in harsh battles was not Vida, who had been defeated, but Alda, the victor.

Even so, there would have been no problems for Talosheim if the duke was part of the peaceful faction, but he was actually a fundamentalist pretending to be part of the peaceful faction.

But he was not simply a fanatic and as ruler, he had the power of judgment. He maintained the trade with Talosheim for as long as it remained profitable, despite his unpleasant feelings about it.

That was when the Mirg shield-nation's expedition to Talosheim happened. The head of the Hartner family utilized that expedition. When Talosheim sent requests for reinforcements, he made excuses, delayed his responses and left the Titans to die. When the First Princess Levia led fifty refugees to the Hartner Duchy, seeking aid, he tricked them into thinking that he would accept them.

He had her bodyguards poisoned and had the princess executed after falsely accusing her of trying to kill him and instigate a coup d'état to take the Hartner Duchy for herself. He acquired the national treasures of Talosheim that the Titans had brought to ensure that they didn't fall into the hands of the Mirg shield-nation... precious Magic Items such as a box that generated endless products.

He sent the remaining Titans, which were only children and elderly individuals, to the slave-run mines as criminal slaves.

He had the city of people who were knowledgeable about Talosheim, the city that was the contact point for the trade with Talosheim, abandoned. Since the trade was now

impossible, it was unable to sustain itself as a trading city anymore, so this was convenient for him.

As the tunnel had been sealed, there was no need to worry that the Mirg shield-nation would give pursuit, either.

As a result, the Hartner Duchy acquired national treasures of Talosheim and a labor force of Titans equivalent to several hundred workers without losing a single soldier to the Mirg shield-nation.

Considering the alternative of sending reinforcements to help fight the Mirg shield-nation and losing the battle, this was an extraordinary profit.



“But two hundred years ago, wasn’t Talosheim supposed to be considered on the side of justice in the war between the Orbaume Kingdom and the Amid Empire?” asked Vandalieu.

If Old Lady Milan’s story was true, there were some inconsistencies. At the very least, with her version of events, there would have been problems in considering Talosheim to be on the side of justice.

But Old Lady Milan simply gave a shrug. “I am simply a Spiritualist, boy,” she said. “I only speak the words of the dead; investigating and making conclusions is not my specialty, nor is it my job. But you are right...” She paused. “The only ones who know the truth would be the duke’s family and their close aides, as well as a very small number of the Kingdom’s rulers at the time. They likely tricked the world with a substitute for the princess. A short while after the war, they would have announced that she had died of illness. It is a method that even an old woman like myself could think of.”

There were fewer Titans than humans, but there were quite a number of them living in the Orbaume Kingdom. Though it would have taken some effort, it wouldn’t have been particularly difficult to prepare a substitute.

And though Princess Levia was known by everyone in Talosheim, the number of people who knew what her face looked like in the Orbaume Kingdom was limited.

The people would be informed of a magnificent war and where it was occurring, told that the pitiful refugees had been 'taken under protection.' Everyone would be satisfied with this and not think to find out what was really happening. A few years later, the people would be tricked in the same way in regards to the princess's whereabouts.

This was a conspiracy made possible if several influential people joined forces.

"...So, are Talosheim's refugees still in the mines?" Vandalieu asked.

Old Lady Milan nodded. "Most likely. Titans are sturdy, and though they are criminal slaves, they are actually more like illegal slaves, so they should be still being made to work without being allowed to live or be killed," she said. "Perhaps not the elderly, but those who were children back then should be still alive, though probably not all of them. Apparently, it is something like a village of slaves managed by the army. It is something that I heard from one of the spirits near you."

Vandalieu thought for a moment before asking another question. "... The Titans that were Princess Levia's bodyguards, where were they buried?"

"Let's see. It would be unusual indeed for a spirit that would know such classified information to wander into a city in a remote place like this," said Old Lady Milan. "But there is an underground cemetery that would be ideal for burying such a dark history. There is a legend that one of the champions sealed away a part of the Demon King there. It is said that thanks to him, evil cannot escape that place, even now."

"Where is that?" Vandalieu asked.

"Somewhere beneath the duke's castle," Old Lady Milan replied. "Be careful."

"Be careful?" Vandalieu repeated. "You're saying that as if you know that I'm going to go there."

Old Lady Milan gave an exasperated sigh. "As you can see, I have been in this business for a long time," she said. "By looking at the spirits around you, I can see that you are struggling to contain your anger."

Exactly as Old Lady Milan was pointing out, Vandalieu was on the verge of exploding in rage. The nearby spirits were trembling in fear of his wrath.

If Old Lady Milan's story was true, how could he possibly remain calm? How could he not curse the events of the past?

He even felt a murderous impulse to go outside and begin indiscriminately tearing apart every living thing that entered his sight.

But Vandalieu's logical side persuaded him that that wouldn't make him happy, nor would there be any meaning to doing so.

It was true that the people of the Hartner Duchy had abandoned the refugees of Talosheim who were exploited. Nobody, not even the old Elf woman in front of him, had tried to advocate that they should be helped.

But the Orbaume Kingdom was a feudalistic nation as well. The average citizen wouldn't think of starting political movements. There was almost nobody left who knew about the circumstances of two hundred years ago, anyway. There was no internet and no journalists in Lambda. There were few ways information could spread, and the methods people could use to travel were limited as well.

And with regards to punishment, the mindset of Talosheim, the mindset of Nuaza, Borkus, Zran and the other Titans, was that "the sins of the father are not the sins of the child." Vandalieu agreed with this as well.

It would be wrong to punish the people who were currently alive for the sins committed in the events of two hundred years ago.

Indeed, at least for the sins of 'two hundred years ago.'

Vandalieu exhaled. "... Another question. If someone were to attack the slave-run mine and all of the slaves were to disappear somewhere, someone would investigate. Can you sell me information on the people who would investigate such an incident?"

The thing that needed to be done right now was not accusations or retribution, but the freeing of the Titans who had been turned into slaves. Vandalieu didn't care about the laws of this land.

But he wouldn't merely free them. He had to appeal to them and have them come to Talosheim. He needed to gain power and support, attack with enough force to be considered excess and deceive Duke Hartner and those serving him into thinking that it was some kind of accident.

“...No. I value my life more than a few coins,” said Old Lady Milan. “Out of concern, I will tell you that revenge is... No, never mind. These words are nothing more than an unrealistic ideal. I learned that soon after I became able to see spirits, too.”

The idea that the dead don't wish for anything, or that they only want the living to be happy is nothing more than a terribly foolish delusion.

There were spirits following this unrealistic ideal, but if those they hated while alive fell to ruin, they would laugh and feel truly happy from the bottom of their hearts. Old Lady Milan knew that such spirits existed.

The idea of speaking of this unrealistic ideal, to Vandalieu of all people, was laughable.

“I'm leaving the city tomorrow. Is there any kind of reward that you want?” Vandalieu asked, as if nothing had happened. He had managed to suppress his anger.

“Payment for the information? Despite the appearance of my store, I do have savings,” said Old Lady Milan. “I have plenty to retire and live out the rest of my years, but... Let's see, can I ask one favor of you?”

As long as all of the spirits in the city were following Vandalieu, her business as a Spiritualist was doomed. As such, Old Lady Milan had intended to close her store for a while. She had even considered moving to another city, depending on how things went.

That was why she decided to voice the one regret that remained in the corner of her memories.

“Actually, you know, this was about fifteen years ago. One of my customers got involved with a bard who was singing at a bar called ‘Scarlet Dreams.’ I told her that he was a swindler and warned her to give up on him, and she said that she would break up with him, but –”



“Three days later, the woman's spirit apparently came back with a sad expression, and disappeared soon after. The old lady told me that she wanted to know the truth about this woman. And then I heard from a reliable source that you're the one responsible,” Vandalieu explained.

Zagi's body couldn't stop sweating in terror.

In other words, this brat that I don't know anything about is about to do something crazy in this duchy. And he just decided to kill us all while he's at it?!

"No, quite a lot of you are alive," said Vandalieu. "Other than your bodyguards, only a few people were killed. The others are bleeding a little, but their hearts are still beating."

Did this guy just read my mind?!

Zagi was too astonished to speak, but actually, the spirit of one of his bodyguards had cheerfully told Vandalieu, "He's probably thinking something like that. What an idiot, right?"

"So, do you remember her?" Vandalieu asked.

Though Zagi didn't respond, he did indeed have some idea of what Vandalieu was referring to. To be more specific, he had remembered while Vandalieu was talking.

It was fifteen years ago, when Zagi was at the bottom of the organization. Back then, he had already been blessed with villainous qualities, skill in committing crimes and good luck. Even the boss of the organization at the time remembered him.

One of the jobs that he had been entrusted with was punishing a traveling bard who had been cheating people out of their money without making any offerings to the organization.

However, Zagi allowed the swindler to make a narrow escape. In order to cover up his failure, he kidnapped the woman that the swindler had marked as his target, killed her in an unimaginably gruesome way and dumped her corpse in the room that the swindler had been using.

He killed the woman and made it appear as if the swindler had fled in fear.

He bribed his companions as well. He took the money of the woman that the swindler had failed to escape with, gave it to the boss and told him that it was the money that the swindler had offered in apology. That was supposed to be the end of this incident.

I-if I tell the truth here, I'll be killed! Damn it, as if I'm going to die because of that woman

that nobody gives a shit about!

“I don’t know, it was someone else... Probably the dead bodyguard over there,” said Zagi. “He was a crazy bastard who loved killing women, you know?”

“He’s lying! I killed about five people, but they were all men!” shouted the bodyguard’s spirit.

Though Zagi was making various efforts in order to survive, they were futile and rather humorous attempts for Vandalieu, who could see spirits.

Damn it, isn’t the Master here yet?! Ah!

The door was opened from the outside with a bang. A man with red eyes and white skin entered, along with a Titan with his face hidden by a black mask and several small-looking people.

“Master! Thank you for coming!”

The male Vampire leading the group was a spy who had been stationed here by the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life. He was the one who had been supporting Zagi.

By becoming this Vampire’s hound, Zagi had been able to act like an important figure in the underworld of this city of ten thousand, without any other organizations rising to power.

Zagi had never seen the Titan or the small men following the Vampire before, but he assumed that they were probably his Subordinate Vampires.

“Now then, Master, kill this shitty brat and his bitch! I’ll definitely repay the favor!” shouted Zagi.

“Zagiii... You are a loyal man who served me well. I valued you highly...”

The Vampire stepped towards Zagi, as if responding to his request. But then, he walked straight past Vandalieu and Eleanora and looked down at Zagi.

“YOU FUCKING MONGREEEEL!” he roared. “DON’T YOU DAAAARE SPEAK BADLY OF THESE PEOPLE!” He drove the hard sole of his boot into Zagi’s chest.

“GUAAAAH!” Zagi screamed as he heard his ribs cracking. “M-Master, what are you – ?!” Suddenly, he noticed that the clothes of the man he called ‘Master’ were stained dark red.

“I still have plans for him, so leave it at that,” Vandalieu instructed.

“Yes... Goshujin-sama.” The Vampire lowered his head respectfully towards Vandalieu and kissed his feet.

Seeing this, Zagi understood everything now. The ‘reliable source’ that Vandalieu had mentioned earlier was this Undead Vampire.

Zagi’s last hope had been disposed of even before the attack on his organization had begun.

“Th-this, this can’t be happening... Just because I killed that woman that nobody cares about, the kind of woman you could find anywhere, my organization is... I’m...” With his hope extinguished, Zagi began whispering to himself with a face looking more like a dead man’s than that of an actual dead man.

Vandalieu gave him a perplexed look. “Just like how she was the kind of woman that you could find anywhere, someone you didn’t really mind killing, you’re the kind of villain that I could find anywhere, and I don’t really mind killing you,” he told Zagi. “Isn’t that just how it is?”

And so, Zagi, the boss of the ‘Fangs of Dark Nights,’ died. The next day, however, he was found in perfect health, still giving orders to his subordinates.

Zagi, whose personality had become strangely cheerful, began ruling the underworld much more reliably than he had before. It would be some time before a certain adventurer’s actions revealed that he was, in fact, an Undead.

“King, I finally got a lover!” Braga announced.

“Eh, when did that happen?”

CHAPTER 76

TO ADVENTURERS AT THE ADVENTURERS' GUILD –

After being betrayed by her stepfather and sold to a slave trader, Marie was stricken by despair.

Marie's real father had died while she was young and her mother had remarried before dying of disease. Deciding that he couldn't raise a daughter that he wasn't related to, he ignored Marie's mother's final wish and sold Marie.

Betrayed by someone she had loved like her real father, Marie gave up hope in living.

A girl in her early teenage years like her wouldn't be purchased by a brothel unless she had been blessed with exceptional looks. It was common for such girls to be bought at cheap prices and worked to death performing harsh manual labor in a mine.

Nobody could blame Marie for falling into despair.

"Fufu, what a beautiful bride. Please tell me your name..."

That was why she actually felt relieved to learn that she had been given to a Vampire as payment, thinking that it would all be over soon.

Even if by some miracle she was blessed enough to be purchased by a good buyer and set free one day, she no longer had a family that cared about her.

Living out her remaining decades in such sadness would bring her nothing but pain.

"So, you are unable to speak... It matters not. I will soon be able to taste everything with these fangs and this tongue."

As the Vampire's fangs were revealed, his well-featured face twisted into a beast-like expression.

As those fangs closed in on Marie's neck –

The window, which contained glass unlike most other windows in the city of Niarki

other than the windows of the lord's house, shattered and glass scattered across the floor.

"What?! Guah!"

Black shadows flashed past his back and his sides, each of them causing a spray of blood to erupt from his body.

Marie simply stared blankly at this unbelievable sight. The being in front of her was a Vampire, an embodiment of evil that was supposed to be defeated by champions or heroes. Someone was tearing such a being into pieces in a one-sided fashion.

"Damn you, you coward!" the Vampire cursed. "Wounds like this will soon...!"

"They won't heal," said a voice. "These are kunai that apply the Holy Son's Healing Negation."

"There's also deadly poison on them that works on Vampires," said another.

"W-what?! That can't... be... Gobuh!"

With blood spraying from his mouth as if he were a fountain, the Vampire stopped moving.

The Vampire that was supposed to grant Marie an end to her life had perished.

His corpse had even been carried away by a masked Titan.

Vaguely wondering what would happen to her now, Marie was overwhelmed with fear. Instinctively, she picked up a sharp fragment of glass.

"Wait."

Before Marie could bring the piece of glass to her throat, the smaller assassin had grabbed her arm.

"Why are you stopping me?!" she demanded. "I'm begging you, please let me die!"

"No!" said the assassin. "It would be problematic if you were to die!"

“Why?” she asked. “You can find people who can replace me if you look just about anywhere!”

“There’s nobody who could replace you!” said the assassin, with a forceful tone to his voice.

“– Eh?” Marie instinctively let the strength flow out of her arm.

Braga used this opportunity to seize the piece of glass and throw it aside.

And then he began to treat Marie’s hand that had been cut by the glass.

“Everyone cares about you,” he told her. “Don’t go and die so easily.”

Braga and the others had been asked by Vandalieu, their king, to protect as many of the Vampires’ victims and captives as possible.

That was why they had been careful to protect victims like Marie and keep them safe.

Braga wasn’t lying.

But in this moment, for the brokenhearted Marie, he was like a prince on a white horse.



“So that’s how it is, King. This is my lover, Marie,” Braga announced.

“Please give your blessings for our marriage.”

You really never know where you’re going to meet the one, Vandalieu thought as he looked at the proud-looking Braga and the girl standing next to him, who looked to be around twelve or thirteen years old.

“I don’t really mind giving my blessings, but... Braga is a Black Goblin. Are you alright with that?” Vandalieu asked.

Black Goblins were far more human-like in appearance than regular Goblins, and they had good personalities like Braga’s. Though Vandalieu could understand being friends, he had to wonder, wasn’t there still a barrier that would make most normal

people hesitate to choose a Black Goblin as their spouse?

“Of course,” Marie replied, despite Vandalieu’s doubts. “The only one who cared about me is my mother, who passed away. I’m sure it’s destiny that Braga and the others saved me from being killed by that Vampire!”

“I-I see,” said Vandalieu. “You won’t be able to come back to this country for at least ten more years. Do you still feel that way?”

“I don’t mind!”

“Then I don’t have anything to do other than give you my blessings and say, ‘congratulations.’”

If Marie herself was satisfied, then it was probably fine. In fact, Braga, the vice-captain of the ninja unit, was the most successful of the Black Goblins and a fine individual. There was nothing to object to.

And Marie would probably be able to live a more luxurious lifestyle if she came to Talosheim.

“Ah, Holy Son, about the prostitutes that the scoundrels held captive and the women working for them...” Zran began. For some reason, his words were rather inarticulate.

As Vandalieu turned to look at him, it was clear even through his mask that he was feeling troubled.

“What is it?” Vandalieu asked. “I’m planning to use the Mental Encroachment skill to keep them quiet, give them some money and then release them.”

He only planned to use the Fangs of Dark Nights that he had taken over for a few months at most, so he had no intention of continuing the management of their businesses like their brothels. He was intending to pull out right away, so he was planning to dispose of the wicked female management pretending to be prostitutes and silence the rest before releasing them.

“About that,” said Zran. “After seeing Marie-jouchan, they seem to have misunderstood and are under the impression that they won’t be killed if they suck up to us... They’re having a mass marriage interview over there with the Black Goblins.”

“...Wow.”

“And none of them are used to women, so things have turned out quite interesting.”

“...Women are sturdy, aren’t they.”

“So, Vandalieu-sama, what will we do with those women?” Eleanora asked.

Indeed, what should Vandalieu do with them?

“First of all, let’s conduct interviews and physical examinations,” he said.

“Honey, you have to tell him about me as well,” said a woman.

“Ah, that’s right. King, I have a lover, too,” said another Black Goblin.

“...Congratulations,” said Vandalieu.



Around the same time, those who had conspired to destroy the cultivation project led by the next lord of the Hartner Duchy, the second son Belton, had gathered to report the situation.

“So, you mean to tell me that our plans have come to nothing because of this Dhampir boy?”

“Precisely, Karcen-dono!”

Karcen, a knight of the Hartner family’s eldest son, Lucas, seemed to doubt the report of Froto, the man who had been disguising himself as a priest of Alda. “That is what you say, but... No, I do not mean to say that I distrust you people. But still, it is a little...”

Nobody could blame Karcen for stroking his goatee with a suspicious look in his eyes. The contents of the report of Froto and his companions were simply too bizarre.

A Dhampir had flown through the sky towards the Fifth Cultivation Village to save all of the villagers from the poison that had been distributed there.

In addition to appearing from the sky barehanded to defeat a group of Orcs attacking

the village, he created a well in the blink of an eye, providing an abundant source of water to the village that had been suffering from a water shortage.

Karcan himself had ordered the knights under his command to deliver poisoned fertilizer to the Second Cultivation Village; it was supposed to become a ghost town by next spring. But apparently the Dhampir had come and taught the villagers how to use Goblins as emergency rations.

And Froto claimed that there was no doubt that the Dhampir was involved in the fact that the bandits dispatched by the spies in the city had gone missing.

Karcan's men were reporting that all of this was done by a single Dhampir boy.

It wasn't unreasonable for Karcan to think that all of this was 'suspicious.'

"At the very least, Karcan-dono, I saw the incident with the Orcs myself. With these very eyes, I saw the Orcs I sent being defeated by the Dhampir in an instant!" said the man who had tamed the Orcs.

He was a Beast Mage – a Job that allowed the creation of mental bonds with monsters through magic in order to control them.

Considering his words in addition to Froto's, it was difficult to believe that these reports were lies.

"And to counteract the poison that I distributed... That poison takes time to kill its victims, as it is designed to look like a disease, but it cannot be counteracted by normal anti-poison spells or antidote Potions. That Dhampir's skill is not superficial by any means," said a young man, the spy who had used makeup to disguise himself as a middle-aged traveling merchant.

The men's words were too unnatural to assume that they were simply making excuses for failing in their work. Thus, Karcan decided to take their reports as truth.

He was in charge of an entire order of knights. He had seen with his own eyes that there were men who could achieve unbelievable things despite their age and appearance if they served as knights for long enough.

"That child was a Dhampir, was he? As difficult as it is to believe, if he is indeed a Dhampir, it is a feasible story," said Karcan. "But in other words, it simply means that

there was a capable healing mage with the strength of a D-class adventurer in those villages,” he concluded.

The fact that the Dhampir had defeated three Orcs was impressive, but he had essentially defeated one with a surprise attack and used his momentum to defeat the other two. This would likely be possible for anyone with the strength of a D-class adventurer.

“Most importantly, he is not using the village as a base for activity like the refugee adventurers. You said that he was simply passing by towards the city to become an adventurer, didn’t you? In other words, it simply means that we must get things done while that child is not in the villages,” said Karcan.

“Will that really be alright?” Froto asked.

Karcan laughed. “You worry too much. Even that Dhampir wouldn’t do something like setting up guards to watch over the villages,” he said.

“I suppose you are right.”

In reality, Vandalieu had stationed his Familiars, Lemures, as well as dozens of Stone Golems in each cultivation village.

“If that Dhampir child is intending to become an adventurer, he should be forced to attend the adventurers’ school for at least a year,” said Karcan. “During that time, we will pretend to be bandits and destroy the cultivation villages... I will lead the men myself.”

The men stirred at Karcan’s announcement that he and his men would act as bandits.

“Is that really alright? If it were to be discovered, even if our victims are mere refugees, we will be hanged or turned into slaves!”

“We must be willing to take at least this much risk,” said Karcan. “Everything is for the sake of exterminating these shamelessly disgraceful fools from the Sauron Duchy who are eating away at our Hartner Duchy like parasites, for the sake of the people and for the sake of Lord Lucas!”

As Vandalieu had thought, Karcan didn’t acknowledge the refugees who had escaped the Sauron Duchy, including those living in the cultivation villages, as people of his

own nation.

The ‘people’ that he referred to were the people of the Hartner Duchy; those from other duchies such as the Sauron Duchy were essentially foreigners.

With that said, Karcan’s true motive was that he was impatient because he hadn’t achieved anything meaningful in Lucas’s name, so even if Lucas did succeed the family, Karcan wouldn’t achieve the social status he wanted.

“My company is due to go on an expedition next month,” said Karcan. “At that time, we will start with the Seventh Cultivation Village and then go on to attack the rest of the cultivation villages. Froto-dono, I will have you join us as well.”

“M-me?”

“To ensure that we do not leave anyone alive, we need you, Froto-dono, as you know your way around the villages from pretending to preach to them. If this succeeds, you will become a vassal of the duke’s house, too. I’m counting on you.”

“O-of course.”

Despite the ominous feeling that he got from becoming involved in a deeper conspiracy than he had counted on, Froto couldn’t turn back now.



Vandalieu, who had inadvertently put a stop to all of Karcan’s plans, was passing through the marketplace and heading towards the Adventurers’ Guild.

His objective was, of course, to register as an adventurer.

Things have changed after I learned various things, but now is the perfect opportunity to register.

Now that it was clear that the Hartner Duchy had betrayed Talosheim, Vandalieu had a new objective of rescuing the Titan slaves from the slave-run mines, where they were still being exploited.

He had already contacted Talosheim regarding this; Borkus was apparently so furious that he wanted to invade the duchy right this moment.

How reliable he was.

The reason Vandalieu was still registering as an adventurer despite this was because if he let this chance pass him by now, the next opportunity to do so might be years away.

Vandalieu had also disposed of the Vampire that had been stationed here by the Pure-breed Vampires worshipping the Evil God of Joyful Life, turning him into an ally. Even the criminal syndicate controlling the city of Niarki had become his puppet.

I'll quickly register, leave the city right away, regroup with Eleanora and the others, wait for night to fall and then fly towards the duchy's capital.

Either way, Vandalieu needed to wait for nightfall before flying, so there was no problem with this.

It would be problematic if he had a clichéd encounter with delinquent adventurers, though.

“Still, it’s good that I learned that there are a lot of things I need to work as an adventurer. To think that I’d at least need a house.”

Normally, adventurers wouldn’t need a house to work as an adventurer. New adventurers used cheap lodging houses, while many veteran adventurers used inns that they were familiar with as their bases.

However, Vandalieu had circumstances unlike those of other adventurers in that he had Borkus, Zadiris, Sam and Eleanora to worry about.

They wouldn’t be treated as “people.” They were “monsters” that Vandalieu had tamed. As such, Vandalieu couldn’t use an inn.

It was similar to restaurants and boarding houses on Earth that didn’t allow their customers to bring pets. And in this case, they weren’t pets, but monsters that were feared more than wild beasts.

If they were small monsters like Pixies, there probably wouldn’t be any problems, and for those like Eleanora and Zadiris who looked like normal people at first glance, things might work out at certain inns. But it would certainly be impossible for Knochen and Bone Man.

Of course, there were adventurers who were tamers, but when they used inns, they left their monsters in barns. Whether they were Goblins, Kobolds or even Ghouls, they would have to stay in barns.

Because of this, if Vandalieu wanted to use an inn, Borkus, Bone Man, and even Eleanora and the Ghouls if they weren't allowed to use a guest room, would have to be treated like horses and kept in a barn.

Truly savage behavior.

Though after realizing this last night, Eleanora had prepared herself for this, thinking, "To humiliate myself in such a way before anyone other than Vandalieu-sama... But if it is for Vandalieu-sama's sake."

"In order to work as an adventurer, I need to attend the adventurers' school, but even before that, I need to take money from bandits and criminal organizations, gather treasures from Dungeons and buy a big house," said Vandalieu. "Huh, isn't it normally the other way around?"

It was strange to think that in order to become an adventurer and make achievements for himself, he needed to become rich and acquire a house. But if he worked alone, he couldn't acquire Experience Points due to his curse, and he wouldn't be able to endure the loneliness.

On top of that, he had no confidence that he would be able to gain companions to form a party at the adventurers' school.

A house was necessary after all.

"Even if I do use money to buy a house, I can't walk around cities publicly with everyone unless I receive collars and necklaces that prove that I've tamed them. Becoming an adventurer is so troublesome," Vandalieu thought aloud as he passed a deserted Church of Vida and arrived at the Adventurers' Guild building.

It was a two-story building built in an area so large that the branch in the Seventh Cultivation Village, the entire jack-of-all-trades store, could fit inside it dozens of times over. Excluding the buildings of the region's lord, it was among the five largest buildings in the city of Niarki.

The buildings for Guild branches in cities really are big. Even Vandalieu, who normally

lived in the royal castle of Talosheim, was impressed.

He gave a short prayer, hoping that he wouldn't get into a fight with some delinquent adventurer.

"Let's go."

He gathered his resolve and opened the door to the Guild. The time of day where the Guild would be packed with adventurers looking for requests to accept had passed, so there were few adventurers present. There were receptionists sitting at the reception counter, and behind them, there were other employees doing paperwork.

Vandalieu proceeded silently and managed to reach the counter. Without getting into any fights.

It seems my prayer has been heard, Vandalieu thought, but he was mistaken. It was simply that most of the adventurers hadn't even noticed him, and even if they did notice him, there weren't many who would pick a fight with a child like him.

Most children who come to the Adventurers' Guild are either newbies coming to register, G-class adventurers or students of the adventurers' school.

And if someone were to say, "You think a brat like you can be an adventurer?!" and pick a fight with a G-class adventurer who did work like manual labor in the city and cleaning the Guild, they would receive only scornful laughter.

Things would only be more tragic for them if they were to pick a fight with a student enrolled at the adventurers' school. Positions as instructors at the adventurers' school are popular for adventurers who have retired from the front lines. If people pick fights for no reason and try to threaten others, they would only anger their seniors and make it harder for themselves to be reemployed in the future.

So, the cliché scenario of the "boorish senior adventurer who picks fights with newbies" only occurs when new adventurers graduate the adventurers' school and begin their real adventures. Alternatively, it is often the child who starts the fight.

There are indeed people in all lines of work who are so hopelessly low that common sense is lost on them, but... they wouldn't be present in every Guild branch at every hour of the day.

Perhaps in the sense that there were no such people currently in the Niarki branch of the Guild, Vandalieu's prayer had indeed been heard.

"Excuse me," said Vandalieu, calling out to a receptionist. "I want to register as an adventurer."

"! A-ah, yes." It seemed that the receptionist hadn't noticed him; she looked surprised for a moment before quickly giving him a businesslike smile and handing him a pen and a paper form. "Please fill out your name, age, race and specialties if you have any. Do you need someone to fill it out on your behalf?" she asked.

"No, it's not a problem," said Vandalieu. "But what kind of things should I write under specialties?"

He had heard about the application process for the Adventurers' Guild of two hundred years ago from Borkus and the process in the Mirg shield-nation from Kachia, but things were different in different time periods and different nations. It was best to make sure he was filling out the form correctly.

"For specialties, you should write things like any training you have received from former adventurers, affinity for attributes, your qualities and any unique skills you possess," said the receptionist.

"Even my unique skills? Don't you find out my skills when you issue my Guild Card?" Vandalieu asked.

"Yes, that is correct, but your skills that are revealed when you register are kept confidential, so they will only be known to the staff member in charge of your registration. When you write your unique skill in the specialties field of the form, it is a declaration of your intent to make that unique skill public and make use of it in competing requests," the receptionist explained.

For example, if an adventurer possessed a unique skill that granted the ability to deal extra damage against certain species of monsters, such as Goblin Slayer or Dragon Slayer, the Guild would set up requests suitable for that skill and introduce appropriate clients to that adventurer.

But if the adventurer wanted to keep the skill a secret, it would basically be sealed within the mind of the staff member.

It seems like there would be exceptions, though... like they would actually tell the Guild Master, or something like that.

The Adventurers' Guild was run by people after all, so it was probably best not to rely too much on their confidentiality policy.

In fact, though Vandalieu was unaware of this, a Guild Master of the Adventurers' Guild in the Mirg shield-nation had fraudulently promoted the Green Wind Spear Riley at Earl Thomas Palpapek's demand.

Of course, there were some Guild Masters who managed their branches in a wholesome manner, but there were also those who did not.

In that case, I can just leave the specialties field blank.

Vandalieu would dash out of the city after registering. He submitted the form after filling in only the fields for his name, race and age.

"This is..." For some reason, the receptionist opened her eyes wide as she took the form and then gave Vandalieu a pitiful look. "According to what you have written in this form, you are a seven-year-old Dhampir. Is that correct, Vandalieu-san?"

Even if Vandalieu tried to deceive her, his real name, age and race would be revealed once his Guild Card was issued. So, of course, he had filled in the form with complete honesty.

"Yes, that's right," he told the receptionist.

I suppose Dhampirs are rare after all, Vandalieu thought as he removed the cloth concealing one of his eyes, showing her that he really was a Dhampir.

"Then... I'm afraid you cannot register," the receptionist said with a grave expression as she saw his crimson and purple odd-colored eyes.

Vandalieu blinked a few times, bewildered by this unbelievable response. But the receptionist's expression didn't change, nor did she correct her statement.

"Why is that?" he asked. "I thought that those under the age of ten registering to become adventurers just need to take a simple test?"

If the examination was passed... If the applicant was able to demonstrate that they possessed the intelligence and decision-making ability equivalent to that of a ten-year-old child, they would be registered as a G-class adventurer. As for whether they could become F-class or higher, just like other underage adventurers, it would be decided after they graduated from the adventurers' school.

At least, that was how it was supposed to be, but –

“Under the joint signature of Lord Belton and the Guild Master of the Guild headquarters of the Hartner Duchy, the rules have been changed. Children under the age of ten who have mixed blood including blood of Vida's races that originate from monsters such as Lamias and Centaurs do not have the right to sit the examination,” the receptionist told him. “Of course, this includes Dhampirs.”

The system had changed so that Vandalieu couldn't register as an adventurer in the Hartner Duchy until he reached the age of ten where he would be able to attend the adventurers' school – another three years or so.

Kasim and his friends hadn't mentioned it, but they hadn't intentionally kept it from Vandalieu. They were all humans; the only ones affected by this system change were Beast-people, Titans, Dark Elves and people of mixed blood of those races. Beings like Vampires or Lamias were considered to be monsters. Children born between humans and such beings with their human features being more prominent than their monster ones were a minority.

Kasim and his friends couldn't be blamed for not remembering the change.

And now that he thought about it, Vandalieu realized that he had never told them that he was seven years old. Because he had decapitated a Goblin Barbarian and used advanced life-attribute magic (or at least, Kasim and the others believed this) to heal Ivan, it wouldn't be surprising if they had assumed that Vandalieu was older than he looked.

“I... see.”

“Yes. And rumor has it that the rules will change again this year so that such individuals will not have the right to enroll at the adventurers' school...” the receptionist wore a regretful expression as her words trailed off.

If what she said came to pass, Vandalieu wouldn't be able to become an adventurer for

another eight years, never mind three.

“I... see...” said Vandalieu, trying to suppress his shock in order to think.

It was unpleasant that Lord Belton and the Guild Master had made a change to the system and rules that seemed to target him specifically. Including the way that Talosheim and the Titans had been betrayed, Vandalieu would never forget this.

But there would be no meaning in protesting here. It was best that Vandalieu give up and leave the city.

And once he dealt with the matters at hand, he would simply need to look for an opportunity to register as an adventurer in another duchy.

He wouldn't wait eight years. It would be fine to register next year or the year after. Normally, it would be difficult for a child living in this world to go to another duchy (which was essentially another country), even if that child was in a trading city near a border between duchies. But Vandalieu would be able to do so easily by flying through the sky.

This wasn't a large problem. Yes, it was unpleasant, but it wasn't a large problem.

But someone behind Vandalieu raised his voice. “Hang on a second, will you?”

The receptionist in front of Vandalieu and even the other employees and adventurers started to stir in commotion as their attention was drawn to the voice's owner.

Vandalieu opened his eyes wide without turning around.

He had heard this voice somewhere before.

CHAPTER 77

ABANDONING THE DUCHY, UNABLE TO FORGIVE THE ENEMY

“Hang on a second, will you?” said the adventurer, casually approaching the reception counter that Vandalieu had frozen stiff in front of. “It’s the first time I’ve heard of this rule change. Can you explain what you mean?”

“Y-you’re troubling me. I’m currently dealing with this child –” the receptionist began.

“I have something I want to say about how you’re dealing with him. Can you call the Guild Master for me?” said the adventurer.

“You’re troubling me,” the receptionist repeated. “If you want to make an appeal to the Guild, then, when it is your turn, please tell one of us staff members at the reception counters first.”

“I am the A-class adventurer Heinz. I’d like to request a face-to-face meeting with the Guild Master once more, under the authority of an A-class adventurer.”

Heinz. It was Heinz.

Vandalieu turned his head as if it was on a creaking hinge, looking at the adventurer standing next to him.

He was a well-featured, strong-willed young man with blonde hair and blue eyes. He was in his early-to-mid-twenties. It was clear from one look at his appearance and equipment that he wasn’t an ordinary person.

Though it had changed a little, he had the same voice that Vandalieu had heard in Evbejia, and he matched the physical description given by Riley.

Mom’s enemy, the Blue-flamed Sword Heinz!

He was one of the people whom Vandalieu absolutely needed to kill. Vandalieu had heard that Heinz had crossed over to the Orbaume Kingdom, but he hadn’t imagined

that Heinz would be staying in the Hartner Duchy, nor had he imagined that he would encounter him at this moment.

The resurrection of Darcia was something that was absolutely needed for Vandalieu's "pursuit of happiness." And those who interfered with that needed to be eliminated. That was why he would kill Heinz.

Selling his mother to a fanatic worshipper of Alda had simply been another request for Heinz. It didn't matter if his actions were completely normal and legal in that nation.

It didn't matter what Heinz was thinking and doing now.

The problem was the future, what lay ahead. He had sold Darcia to a religious fanatic once. What reason did Vandalieu have to believe that he wouldn't do the same again? If he had already changed his viewpoint once, who was to say that he wouldn't change it again?

In order to reduce those possibilities to zero, Heinz needed to be killed and destroyed.

Now was a good opportunity to do that.

Of course, Vandalieu couldn't do anything flashy in a place like this where people were watching. He knew that. He could simply poison him or infect him with a disease.

Should he turn his breath, a small amount of his saliva or the substances secreted by his skin into poison? Should he 'accidentally' touch Heinz and infect him with pathogens?

Vandalieu started coming up with these plans, but every time he thought about them, he heard the warnings of Danger Sense: Death in his head.

If he tried to poison Heinz, he would be killed. If he tried to infect Heinz with pathogens, he would be killed.

Either way, the one who would die was not Heinz, but Vandalieu.

Impossible, is this guy invincible or immortal or something?!

He was far too different compared to when he had worked for High Priest Gordan.

Vandalieu was astonished at this change, but he couldn't deny the reality in front of him or the death-attribute magic spell that had saved him up until now.

I see; this is an A-class adventurer worthy of becoming S-class like Mikhail, the one who was powerful enough to slay Borkus and the others in an instant.

Someone who would defeat A-class adventurers, who were supposed to be superhumans, with ease. A superhuman that transcended superhumans.

Heinz was far too different from Riley, whose soul had been broken by Vandalieu after his defeat at Borkus's hands. And it was even said that Heinz was far more blessed when it came to allies than Riley had ever been.

Vandalieu moved his eyes and looked far past Heinz to see that there were five more people standing there. Two of them matched the descriptions that he had heard from Riley.

The female Dwarf Shield-bearer with blue hair, Delizah. The male Scout with black hair and black eyes, Edgar. The other two were perhaps new party members, a female Elf with a mace and priest's garb, and a young woman who appeared to be an unarmed fighter.

Heinz wouldn't have chosen them just for their looks, so they were probably A-class and B-class as well, C-class at worst.

This must be the new 'Five Colored Blades' with two new members taking the place of Riley and the female Elf Spiritual Mage who apparently perished in a Dungeon.

The fifth additional member, a girl of Vandalieu's age or even younger who was half-hiding behind Delizah, was probably not a party member. Was she someone's younger sister?

Ah, how troublesome. They're the worst kinds of enemies for me.

Even excluding the girl, he could tell by looking at the other four. It was because of these people that Vandalieu didn't even have a fraction of a percent of a chance of killing Heinz.

They were watching Heinz with wry smiles and exasperated expressions, muttering words like, "Good grief," and "Here we go again." But if anything were to happen to

Heinz, they would back him up with swift speed and precision.

If Heinz were to fight Vandalieu with these party members with him, there was no doubt that he would utilize his ability to coordinate with them and deliver a blow capable of piercing Vandalieu's barriers.

Poisoning them or infecting them with pathogens would be futile. Unlike the soldiers of the Mirg shield-nation's expedition army, they were equipped to deal with high-Rank monsters that inflicted status effects with their attacks. They were different even from the self-conceited Riley.

They were ridiculously strong. Their Mana pools were irrelevant. If Vandalieu was an enormous elephant, they were ants capable of killing such an elephant.

I have no choice. I have to endure this humiliation for now. I mustn't die; there are things I need to do. I'll be satisfied with being able to see these guys' faces directly. I'll regroup with Eleanora and the others, and... Huh? What are these guys... What is Heinz doing?

Vandalieu, who had even been using his High-speed Thought Processing skill to immerse himself in his thoughts in an attempt to endure the feeling of powerlessness and humiliation that tormented his entire body, was suddenly startled as he began processing the information from his ears.

"Please wait, the Guild Master is currently out of his office –"

"Then a Sub-Master should be here. The rules state that when the Guild Master is absent, one of the two Sub-Masters will always remain inside the Guild. Or was that rule changed as well?"

Heinz was currently arguing not with the receptionist, but a male staff member who appeared to be her senior. But the situation was looking worse for the staff member.

"That is..."

"I know that there's no point in saying this to you," said Heinz. "The same goes for the Guild Master of the Guild's Niarki branch. But there's something I want the Guild Master to write. I want him to write a letter of introduction to meet the Guild Master of the Adventurers' Guild headquarters of the Hartner Duchy."

"I-if our Guild Master writes something like that, doesn't that mean that he is

endorsing you?!" said the staff member.

Heinz pressed the staff member further. "So, he can't do it? Even though he can approve of such a meaningless rule change?"

"Th-this isn't something that can be decided by a mere staff member!" the staff member protested.

"Any Guild employee would know that this meaningless rule change is a non-committal decision made by Lord Belton in order to gain the support of the churches, including the Church of Alda, because he can't gain the support of the duchy's army in his familial dispute," said Heinz. "It's something that even I could figure out right away, after all."

Apparently, many of the current important figures in the Hartner Duchy's Church of Alda were fundamentalists rather than members of the peaceful faction.

"Children with monster blood are dangerous, so they can't be judged through a single examination. They could lose their self-control at any moment, so letting them into the adventurers' school is also dangerous. Do you guys really believe these things?" Heinz asked.

The more Heinz spoke, the paler the male staff member's face grew and the more he struggled to maintain eye contact. It was likely that he secretly agreed with Heinz's words. It seemed that the same went for the other staff members and receptionists.

The other adventurers present voiced their agreement.

"What's the problem? You just have to deliver a message!"

"That's right, that's right! The doors of the Adventurers' Guild are wide open, aren't they?!"

"You're not planning to keep us Beast-people out soon, are you?"

And then the male staff member seemed to come to a decision. "I understand," he said. "But the only thing I can do is pass the message onto the Guild Master."

"I know," said Heinz. "That'll be enough."

“I will warn you... As an A-class adventurer, you already possess more influence than a lower nobleman,” the staff member told him. “Your intentions will be known to the lords. But please do not forget that it is up to the lords as to how to interpret your intentions.”

“I know that, too,” said Heinz. “Not as a member of Alda’s peaceful faction, but as an adventurer, I believe that the Guild shouldn’t obey the will of politicians. That’s all I wanted to say. ‘The doors to adventure are open to members of all races’... We shouldn’t ignore the words of the founder, should we?”

“I like those words too,” said the staff member. “Now then, I will send a messenger the Guild Master, so excuse me. You’re lucky, aren’t you?” he said, smiling at Vandalieu.

With the staff member’s words, Vandalieu’s brain finally started functioning again.

Lucky? Why? Because he had been able to see how his enemy’s appearance and a part of his power? No, that wasn’t it...

Could it be... Heinz is helping me? Impossible!

As Vandalieu directed his gaze towards Heinz to see him giving Vandalieu a nod with a reassuring, reliable smile. As if to say, “Leave it to me.”

However, rather than being reassured, Vandalieu was going mad.

Why do I have to be helped?! Don’t mess with me!

Is it some kind of trap?! There’s another side to this, there’s another side to this, there has to be!

There’s something fishy about this, it’s strange, I’m not convinced!

Feeling an unpleasant sensation that felt like his brain, spirit and even his soul were turning into mush, Vandalieu was unable to gather his thoughts. The Parallel Thought Processing and High-speed Thought Processing skills served only to further increase his confusion; he couldn’t calm down.

“Good grief. Who was it that said he’s not interested in politics? The moment we finish our escort request and arrive in the city, this happens. And now you’re planning to complain to the next duke and the Guild Master of the duchy’s Guild headquarters,”

said Heinz's male party member.

"But Edgar, he's been saying it all along, hasn't he?" said another. "That Alda's teachings should be changed to be more peaceful. And even going as far as to split up with Riley to come to this country was Heinz's –"

"I remember hearing that this party's objective was to completely clear the wandering Dungeon, 'Zakkart's Trials,' though," said a third party member, a woman.

"Please don't say that," said yet another party member. "Or do you mean to say that you think that Heinz's words are mistaken, Jennifer?"

"...That's not what I meant," said the woman called Jennifer.

Vandalieu could hear Heinz's companions conversing as if these things couldn't be helped, though none of them showed any signs of opposing Heinz's words.

"Hey, is Heinz the one who belongs to Alda's peaceful faction?"

"That's right. I heard that in the Mirg shield-nation, he witnessed the tragedy of a certain Dhampir and his mother, and that's why he came to this country."

"Huh. So that's why he's helping a Dhampir now. A-class adventurer-samas really are something else."

Vandalieu could hear the voices of other adventurers.

In summary, Heinz and his companions changed their views when they saw Mom burned at the stake after they captured her and handed her over. Now they're part of Alda's peaceful faction and work in the Orbaume Kingdom. So that's why they're helping a Dhampir? Helping...

"It's alright," said the little girl who was with Heinz's companions. She was right in front of Vandalieu, who, despite his inner thoughts, appeared to simply be standing there motionlessly.

She took his hand as she continued speaking.

"Heinz-oniichan is going to help you. Just like he helped me!" she said, laughing. One of her eyes was a blood-red color that didn't match her other eye.

“Ah...”

Vandalieu’s hand trembled.

“Uu...”

Nausea, a headache and a sense of discomfort, the likes of which he had never experienced in his third lifetime, ran through his body.

“Kyah?!” the little girl cried in surprise.

Unable to stand it anymore, Vandalieu had shaken her hand off. In doing so, he had kept his claws withdrawn and controlled his strength so that he didn’t injure her.

That was the limit of how much he could hold back.

“Hey, you?!” Startled, Heinz reached out towards Vandalieu.

But Vandalieu put all of his effort into putting as much distance between himself and Heinz as possible. He used all four limbs to propel himself along the floor and used Flight in a way that excessive force was exerted on his internal organs.

“O-oi! Wait a second!”

“What’s wrong?!”

Ignoring the surprised voices of Heinz’s companions and other adventurers, Vandalieu used his shoulder to smash through the door to the Guild and fled!



Vandalieu was sitting on the ground, staring at his trembling hands.

He was already outside the city of Niarki; probably inside a nearby forest or thicket. It was unlikely that he had traveled very far.

He had no memory whatsoever of how he exited the city after leaving the Guild. It was possible that he had created a hole in the outer wall to escape.

“Ah... Guh... oh...”

Vandalieu's mind was in so much chaos that he didn't have time to worry about such things. He felt as if his entire body would rot away with the anger, humiliation and powerlessness that he felt.

He had been completely unable to defeat his enemy. He knew without even challenging him that it would end in utter defeat. He had previously imagined that this would be the ultimate humiliation.

But an even greater humiliation existed. Being pitied by his enemy, by Heinz. Vandalieu was almost helped by him.

It was an action that trampled over Vandalieu's pride.

But the thing that Vandalieu found most unforgivable was the reason that Heinz had tried to help him.

Heinz had tried to help him because he was a Dhampir.

Heinz had changed his way of thinking and become part of Alda's peaceful faction after seeing Vandalieu's mother, whom he had captured and handed over to a fanatic as part of a request, tortured and burned alive in public.

"Don't... fuck... with me!"

Logically, it made sense why things had turned out like that. Heinz was probably unaware that Vandalieu had survived. He was under the assumption that Vandalieu had died long ago.

Vandalieu's existence was known only to very few – some individuals in the Mirg shield-nation and Amid Empire, as well as the Pure-breed Vampires. It wasn't strange to think that Heinz didn't know that he was alive.

That was why he was atoning for his past deeds. It was a common story that could be found in both fiction and non-fiction books on Earth.

In order to apologize to the people they had killed, they would live on and atone for their sins.

They would save as many people as they had killed.

Feeling guilt over the innocent civilians of enemy nations they had killed in war, they would spend the rest of their days atoning.

It wasn't unusual or anything.

The examples that Vandalieu remembered best were indeed from works of fiction.

Someone's mistake would cause the death of another without it being punishable by law. Despite remaining free, the person would feel tormented over it, and then the protagonist of the drama or manga would tell that person, "Keep helping others until the day comes where you can forgive yourself."

Protagonists would tell former villains, "Atone for your mistakes with your future deeds."

Heinz was atoning for the wrongs he had done to Darcia and Vandalieu. He was putting the peaceful teachings he believed were correct into practice, and he had saved that little girl, the Dhampir.

Nobody had asked him to atone, and yet he was atoning in a way that was completely unrelated to Darcia and Vandalieu.

"Don't mess with me...!"

So, was Vandalieu supposed to forgive him? Was he supposed to stop blaming him? Was he supposed to stop trying to kill him?

It was out of the question. There was no way that Vandalieu would even consider accepting something so unreasonable.

Imagine if there was a foreign serial killer who killed numerous people in a certain country and then saved a number of people in his own country equal to the number of people he had killed. If Vandalieu was supposed to forgive Heinz in this situation, then the bereaved families of the people killed by the serial killer would have to forgive him as well, wouldn't they?

If Vandalieu saved as many people in the Orbaume Kingdom as people he had killed in the Mirg shield-nation, would the bereaved families in the Mirg shield-nation forgive him? Certainly not. There was no way that they would.

There wouldn't be thousands of unusual people who would forgive him.

But if everything was made clear, every single person in the Orbaume Kingdom would tell Vandalieu that he should forgive Heinz.

They would tell him to forgive Heinz because he had saved many people, because he had achieved great things. Because he was a hero.

Because from now on, he would save many more people, ease the unhappiness of thousands, of tens of thousands. He would make the people happier.

Heinz's existence was beneficial for the nation.

They would tell this single Dhampir who hated him for killing a single person, his mother, to forgive him.

This would be considered normal and undeniably correct in any world.

The fact that Darcia was killed, the hatred boiling up within Vandalieu, everything would become details in the moving tale of Heinz. Forgiving him was the correct thing to do.

Forgiving Heinz, who went around saving Dhampirs like that little girl without being asked, was for the sake of everyone's happiness.

And even that would become another detail to be added to Heinz's story.

...How could Vandalieu forgive him!

『The level of the Grotesque Mind skill has increased!』

『You have acquired the ■ab■■■st■■on』 skill!』

But Vandalieu would endure for now.

Heinz believed that his deeds were done in atonement, but even those were

achievements that he used to gather more popularity. However, Vandalieu was currently unable to defeat him.

Even if he used death-attribute magic and all kinds of skills, even if he asked Eleanora and the others to work with him, no matter what he did, he couldn't win.

This was vengeance. For Vandalieu, this vengeance was a process necessary for accomplishing his own happiness. It wasn't the result.

『The level of the Grotesque Mind skill has increased!』

『The level of the ■ab■th■str■on skill has increased!』

But this hatred couldn't be suppressed. The fire of hatred couldn't be extinguished; Vandalieu felt as if his heart would freeze in place with the chill of fear!

“Oi, there! It's this one!”

“Hurry up and capture it! That brat had silver coins; there should still be some left!”

“Leave it to me, Oba-san.”

That was why Vandalieu had run away from that place. That was why he had left the city and come out to a place like this.

He had made sure that nobody would get involved.

“To think we'd find it this quickly. We've finally run into some luck!”

“I'm sure it's because we've been behaving well every day. Don't think badly of us. Because of the economic slump, selling fruit isn't enough to feed myself and get by. You don't need to worry; with your looks, I'm sure whoever we sell you do will take good care of you.”

“Is this brat a boy or a girl? If it's a girl, she's not old enough to sell for much, you know?”

“No, she has odd-colored eyes. If we tell the buyer it’s a Dhampir, won’t we get paid more?”

“Don’t even bother. What are we going to do if that problematic A-class adventurer-sama gets involved?”

“Now that you mention it, the Savior has come to this city. His name was ‘Heinz’ or something, was it?”

Heinz, the one Vandalieu hated so much was Heinz!

“Cut the chatter. Quick, tie the kid up and take him back to the city!”

The middle-aged woman who had been selling apples in the marketplace approached Vandalieu, who was kneeling in the dirt, completely motionless.

『You have acquired the Scream skill!』

“Ah...■■...■...”

Surprised by the unintelligible noise that Vandalieu was making and thinking that it was some kind of incantation, the woman and the men who were with her hastily tried to grab him.

At this moment, if they had done everything they possibly could to escape, they might have been able to survive.

“■■■■■■■■■■■!”

A fearsome scream was released from Vandalieu’s mouth.

『The levels of the Scream, Mental Encroachment and Labyrinth Construction skills have increased!』

At that moment, Eleanora descended from the sky and forcefully lifted Vandalieu up into her arms.

“Ah, yes. I don’t have much Mana remaining, though. By the way, what exactly happened here?” Vandalieu asked.

“That is what I want to ask!” she told him. “You said that you would be finished quickly so we hid and waited only to see you rush out of the Guild, fly over the outer walls and disappear somewhere! We couldn’t even get in contact with you! Do you have any idea how worried we were?!”

“I’m sorry... for making you worry,” said Vandalieu, letting his body weight rest on Eleanora, who was holding onto him tightly.



After using the Goblin head communication device to contact Braga and the others who had been searching elsewhere, Vandalieu explained everything in chronological order.

“Vandalieu-sama, let us conquer and destroy this realm.” These were Eleanora’s first words when he finished. Her eyes had taken on a glassy appearance; she didn’t appear to be joking.

“No, we can’t win against Heinz right now,” said Vandalieu. “And even if we could, we can’t conquer and destroy the realm.”

Zran, as well as Nuaza and Borkus who were talking through the communication devices, were in agreement with Eleanora’s suggestion. It was unlikely that Sam or Zadiris would object, either.

“Why not?! Let’s slaughter them!” said Zran.

“Holy Son! They are not humans! They are mere piles of excrement in the shape of people! Living incarnations of evil!” Nuaza exclaimed.

Borkus roared. “Let’s butcher all of them, kid!”

Borkus and the other Undead Titans had learned of the Hartner Duchy’s betrayal of two hundred years ago. It would be an understatement to say that their previously

favorable opinions of the duchy had plummeted into the ground. It seemed to have pierced the heavens* in the negative direction.

TLN: This is “天元突破/tengen toppa” in the raw, which means “pierce the heavens.” It could be a Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann reference.*

“I’m happy that you’re all willing to get angry on my behalf. But there are about as many good people as there are bad ones in the Hartner Duchy,” said Vandalieu. “Right, Braga?”

Taken aback, Eleanora and Zran looked at the Black Goblins and their partners that were with them.

“W-we have already abandoned our homeland,” said Marie.

“Please do not be concerned about it,” said another girl.

Vandalieu had explained to them that he would release them with enough money to live for several months as long as they kept his secrets, but they had decided to follow Braga and the other Black Goblins.

They felt grateful to Vandalieu from the bottom of their hearts, as he had cured them of their drug addiction and removed their slaves’ collars and tattoos with magic.

Of course, they had their own interests in mind, and perhaps they simply couldn’t believe that Vandalieu would really release them.

But they had chosen to come to Talosheim, and unlike those of the Mirg shield-nation’s expedition army, it was definitely possible to make peace with them.

As such, these girls who had been born in the Hartner Duchy were now citizens of Talosheim... Well, a third of the girls who had been working in the brothel were actually former refugees from the Sauron Duchy, but that wasn’t something to be concerned about.

Saying that everyone in the Hartner Duchy should be killed and that they were all incarnations of evil in front of these girls would cause them to feel uneasy.

“...My bad,” said Zran. “I lost my cool there.”

“Indeed, I’m sorry,” Eleanora said to the girls. “It is not like I was unaware that many of your circumstances are out of your control, either.”

“No, I couldn’t say anything, either. Thanks, King,” said Braga.

“It’s nothing,” said Vandalieu. “After all, I made a mistake after losing my cool just a short while earlier, too.” Seeing that everyone seemed to have cooled off for now, he stood up. “But if we simply keep allowing ourselves to be treated like this, we’ll be nothing more than prey to be eaten by beasts. We will have our flesh picked at, our organs gouged out and our bones sucked clean. We must take back what has been stolen from us and make them think it was an accident. As for Heinz...” He paused. “We’ll leave him be for now. We’ll gather strength and wait for an opportunity. Ah, and I’ll give up on the Hartner Duchy,” he added.

Everyone stared at Vandalieu blankly in response to his last sentence.

“I’ll give up on registering as an adventurer in the Hartner Duchy, working here and conducting trade with it in the future,” he said, elaborating.

That was how much the Hartner Duchy had rejected the Titans. If they were going to reject Vandalieu and Talosheim so strongly, then he would return the favor and abandon them.

“Ah, excluding the cultivation villages,” Vandalieu added.

Everyone other than the Goblins’ partners laughed, muttering, “I knew it.”

“By the way, Vandalieu-sama, what is this?” Eleanora asked. “Has this boulder always been here?”

“It’s... certain that this is no natural boulder,” said Zran.

They were looking at an enormous boulder that towered upwards behind Vandalieu. It was far larger than a tree in a forest.

But its shape was stranger than its size.

It was shaped like a huge skull, and its gaping mouth was large enough to fit a carriage inside.

The inside of that mouth seemed to be connected to something. Warm air was flowing out from inside, as if the skull was breathing.

“...At the very least, it’s something that’s harmless to us,” said Vandalieu.

『The levels of the Labyrinth Construction, Scream, Automatic Mana Recovery, Death-Attribute Charm and Surpass Limits skills have increased!』



- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Taboo Name】
- **Job:** Venom Fist User
- **Level:** 20
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 184
 - Mana: 379,120,344
 - Strength: 128
 - Agility: 130
 - Stamina: 119
 - Intelligence: 761
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 3
 - Rapid Healing: Level 5
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 3
 - Dark Vision
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 4
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 3
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 1
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 3
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodsucking: Level 7
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Golem Transmutation: Level 6
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Mana Control: Level 4
 - Spirit Form: Level 7

- Carpentry: Level 4
- Engineering: Level 3
- Cooking: Level 4
- Alchemy: Level 4
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
- Soul Break: Level 6
- Multi-Cast: Level 5
- Long-distance Control: Level 6
- Surgery: Level 3
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
- Materialization: Level 4
- Coordination: Level 3
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
- Commanding: Level 1
- Farming: Level 3
- Clothing: Level 2
- Throwing: Level 3
- Scream: Level 3 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 3
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 4 (NEW!)
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

Skill explanation:

【Scream】

A skill that produces effects through an emitted sound. Bats' ability to see things through their cries and special sense of hearing (or at least, this is how it is commonly interpreted in Lambda, though it is actually sonar), the effects of Mandragoras' cries and Banshees' screams come from this skill.

Because Vandalieu uses this skill simultaneously alongside the Soul Break and Mental

Encroachment skills, in addition to dealing damage to Mana and the sense of hearing in a wide radius, he is also able to perform an attack that causes its victims to die a most terrible death in insanity if they lose the mental battle with themselves.

It can also simply be used to make one's voice travel further, without losing any clarity. This allows the user to perform a speech (without the need for a megaphone or microphone).

CHAPTER 78

THE DEPARTING OMINOUS BIRD COVERS ITS TRAIL AND SECRETLY THREATENS THE CAPITAL

“I understand it’s harmless, but... what do we do with it?” asked Eleanora. “It resembles a Dungeon.”

“We leave it,” Vandalieu replied.

“Seriously? We’re not going to try going inside?” asked Zran.

“This is too close to the city,” said Vandalieu. “It would be troublesome to run into adventurers coming to investigate as we come back out, wouldn’t it? Also, more importantly, we need to look for Princess Levia.”

“That’s true,” Eleanora agreed.

Vandalieu decided that they would discuss his Labyrinth Construction skill later. It wasn’t a skill that he could investigate near the city, anyway.

The day after the small incident where a Dhampir child fled the Adventurers’ Guild for some unknown reason, the city of Niarki was experiencing an ordinary day as usual.

Other than the absence of addicts buying drugs and men going to the brothel that they were familiar with, it was supposed to be just another day like yesterday.

Daene’s life had been a series of small misfortunes; things had never gone her way. Her father injured himself, forcing her to work to support her family. As soon as her father recovered and became able to work again, he forced her to get married.

Her mother-in-law worked her like a servant, and soon after that mother-in-law died, the man Daene had married died as well. Life remained busy for her.

Just when she thought that she might be able to be at ease as her son got married, her son turned out to be a thankless child, taking his wife and leaving, showing no sign of wanting to make life easier for his parent. The only one who would listen to Daene's words was her foolish nephew.

Nothing good happened after that, either... An endless cycle of growing apples and selling them...

Daene was walking at the front of the group as if dragging her legs along the ground.

That day, she had been selling apples in the marketplace as usual when she saw a kid with money passing by –

But you know... I never expected that I would be able to keep going after I died... To think that that person would entrust me with this after my death... I'm sure that I lived my entire life for the sole purpose of dying yesterdaaaay... That's why I was booorn...

Daene felt a sense of fulfillment that she had never managed to experience while she was alive. She even felt proud at the fact that she could be a part of something bigger.

Daene emerged from the dark, comfortable passage into a forest. This was a forest that she remembered; this was the forest where she had died.

If she passed through here, she would reach the city of Niarki. Daene could guide her 'companions' through this place while whispering the important mission that she had been entrusted with.

"... ill... ein..."

"Kill... hei..."

"KILL HEINZ!"

Daene, who had been selling apples in the marketplace up until yesterday, was walking forward as a part of a group of over a thousand Undead.

A Dungeon had suddenly appeared in what had been a normal forest up until yesterday, and a large wave of monsters overflowing from it, mainly consisting of Undead, was closing in on the city of Niarki.



“I am a cheerful mercenary-sa~an. Today’s going to be cheery, heart-skipping fuuun~” a certain individual sang as he plowed the dirt with a hoe and spread fertilizer across the ground. “Eh? You want more broken shells? Leave it to me, honeeeey~♪”

Flark, who had once been a criminal slave owned by the Green Wind Spear Riley, was happily obeying the instructions of the Monster Plants.

Now that he had turned into a Zombie, it was impossible for his heart to be skipping. But for some reason, this was how he always was now. He even sang at night, so he was even shunned slightly by his Zombie companions.

Incidentally, it was a complete mystery as to how Flark could accurately and immediately interpret what the Monster Plants wanted despite the fact that they had no eyes or mouth to communicate. Flark gave a different answer each time he was asked, so nobody knew the truth. The most common answer that he gave was that he was able to hear the voices of fairies.

“Oi, Flark! We’ll leave the fields to you guys!” shouted an Undead Titan whose entire body was radiating fury.

Apparently, the Undead Titans of Talosheim were about to initiate a plan to take back the children that had been stolen from them.

Flark didn’t know the exact details of the plan. But he had no qualms with that.

“The Holy Son told us to leave the Monster Plants to you, so don’t let us down!” the Titan told him.

“Of coooooourse!” Flark shouted back.

For some reason, Vandalieu trusted him and held expectations of him. Hearing this was enough to blow Flark’s fatigue away.

Not that Zombies like him felt fatigue in the first place.

Skipping around the field, he harvested vegetables, used a Tractor Golem to harvest wheat and checked up on the Immortal Ents.

“Lookie here, lookie here~♪”

In the Immortal Ents’ forest, there was a wooden gate made of numerous plants twisted together that certainly hadn’t been there yesterday.

For some reason, a Dungeon had appeared.



Kanata, who was sitting in his carriage and traveling along the highway, was slowly approaching Vandalieu’s location that he knew through his Target Radar, but... there were things that frequently bewildered him.

“What kind of tricks has that Undead bastard used?” he wondered.

Thanks to the Radar, Kanata knew the exact details of where Vandalieu was. It told him not only the distance, but even the difference in height between Kanata’s position and Vandalieu’s.

According to the Radar, Vandalieu had been traveling about three hundred meters above the ground last night. Kanata didn’t have a clock, so he couldn’t be completely accurate, but making a rough calculation based on the distance and time that Vandalieu had traveled, his speed was around sixty or seventy kilometers per hour.

He had traveled in this manner for several hours before finally coming down around sunrise.

As Kanata didn’t have an accurate map, he could only make a rough guess, but it was likely that Vandalieu had stopped in the Hartner Duchy’s capital.

The problem was not the place Vandalieu was in, but how he had traveled there.”

“The fact that he has some crazy amount of Mana that’s over 100,000,000 was included in the information that the god gave me, but he shouldn’t be able to use any magic but death-attribute magic. How is he flying in this world that has no planes or helicopters?” Kanata wondered.

According to the information that Kanata had been provided, Vandalieu should have been unable to use any magic other than death-attribute magic. And what Kanata

knew about death-attribute magic was the knowledge detailed in the documents that had been left behind in Origin and the incomplete information that Rodcorte had given him.

Kanata had analyzed that information to conclude that contrary to its title, death-attribute magic was specialized for use in medicine. He believed that he could deal with it as long as he had a way to block poison and disease, that it was the kind of magic that would be a seasonal exclusive ability in a game.

According to his analysis, there was no death-attribute spell that would allow the user to fly through the sky like a bird.

“He hasn’t acquired an affinity for any other attributes. What method did he use to fly? Surely, he isn’t going to tell me that he’s created an airplane, is he?”

Kanata wondered if Vandalieu had used his knowledge from Earth to build a vehicle, but decided that it was probably too difficult to accomplish this after all.

In the army, Kanata had received all kinds of training and learned about advanced technology. If he wanted to, he could probably gather materials and create a glider or, with his magic, a hot-air balloon.

But it would probably be impossible to travel that distance at that speed with nothing but a glider, and doing it with a hot-air balloon was out of the question.

That was why Kanata thought that it must be an airplane, but he knew that it was probably impossible to build one, even if Vandalieu did have the knowledge required to do so.

No, it might be possible in theory, but... it would require all the tools to be built by hand, not to mention every single screw, and the airplane would have to be designed before being assembled. An airplane-otaku might be able to build a propeller plane given a few years, but it was difficult to believe that Vandalieu had been an airplane-otaku when he was still known as Amamiya Hiroto.

“Ah, come to think of it, this is a fantasy world, isn’t it?” Kanata remembered. “Not simply a world in a primitive era. The god said something about Dragons, too. He might have tamed a monster or Undead that can fly around while carrying someone. Say, what do you think?” Kanata turned to ask the half-naked women lying in the carriage.

After stealing the merchant's carriage, Kanata had stocked up on food and equipment in the city. With that said, he hadn't really felt like wearing leather armor made of the hides of monsters that he wasn't familiar with, and he couldn't even stand the sight of heavy-looking metal armor. In the end, the only armor he bought was a pair of boots and some gloves made from the hide of a wild beast.

To make up for that, he bought a silver-coated knife as a countermeasure against Undead, a bow and arrows among other things as weapons. He also bought a short staff, which would be helpful as a medium to channel his magic, while complaining that in Origin, there were items like rings, gloves and arm implants that had the same function.

He also wanted a crossbow, but apparently those couldn't be purchased in the Hartner Duchy without identification papers, so he gave up on that.

He thought to recuperate his strength with a delicious meal and a clean bed, but no meals or beds of the kind that Kanata demanded were to be found in a city of Lambda with a population of just a few ten thousand people.

He didn't particularly want to eat the bizarre meat of monsters.

Deciding that he would have women instead, Kanata headed to the red-light district, only to be presented with Beast-person, Dwarf and Titan prostitutes.

"Does this world have nothing but trash?" he wondered.

Apparently, it just so happened that no human prostitutes were available, but Kanata decided that he wasn't interested in paying money to buy low-quality products and put the red-light district behind him.

The next day, he happened to see the Adventurers' Guild, remembered Rodcorte's words and decided to try registering, thinking that he would be able to buy a crossbow if he did.

Things went well until partway through. He was even calm enough to look at the Elf receptionist and think, "Come to think of it, I never got to watch the last movie in that trilogy about the ring."

But before he knew it, he was surrounded by soldiers and adventurers.

Apparently, among the goods that Kanata had sold, there were products that were only sold by the merchant that he had robbed. This had put the authorities on his track.

“Flame,” Kanata whispered, unleashing a fire-attribute attack against the threatening soldiers around him. As the soldiers and adventurers who had assumed that Kanata was a simple bandit and the receptionists who were unlucky enough to be there were engulfed in flames, he used Gungnir to slip through the building, the ground surface and the outer walls of the city to make an escape.

They were probably still under the assumption that Kanata was inside the city and conducting a futile search.

And then Kanata traveled along the highway and encountered another merchant’s carriage, which he attacked and robbed.

The half-naked women in the carriage now were the adventurers who had been guarding that carriage.

“It was surprising to me, but the Adventurers’ Guild wasn’t anything special,” said Kanata. “I suppose it’s only natural, since I’m still one of the Bravers despite being a degenerate.”

Kanata’s Attribute Values were equivalent to a D-class adventurer’s, his skills to a C-class adventurer’s and his magic to a B or A-class adventurer’s. He wasn’t invincible by any means. If he didn’t have Gungnir... No, even with Gungnir, if he had stayed in the city and continued his rampage, he would have been defeated by the C-class adventurers and knights the moment he ran out of Mana.

He didn’t know any martial skills or no-attribute magic, and he was unaware of the effects of many skills.

“By the way, aren’t you going to respond?” he asked the women. “Oh, come to think of it, I’ve already killed you. Man, I don’t remember killing that woman there, but... Ah, I guess I didn’t stem her bleeding properly when I cut the tendons in her limbs to make sure that she couldn’t resist.”

The female adventurers whom Kanata had briefly enjoyed were all dead. Because he hadn’t paid for them, he had even been able to enjoy the Beast-person and Dwarf woman to some extent.

It was certain that Kanata was already being searched for as a dangerous criminal. He had cast an advanced fire-attribute spell and killed many people inside the Adventurers' Guild, after all. To regain its honor, the Guild itself would be hunting him down even more zealously than the soldiers. Even if he used Gungnir, he would probably be caught and killed within a few years.

But how could Kanata behave like this despite this fact? How could he carry out such senseless violence without feeling any guilt or fear of being punished?

The answer to these was that Kanata had essentially been 'transferred' here, and he couldn't even perceive any value in this third life of his.

Vandalieu had previously thought that *Amemiya Hiroto* and the others reincarnating with him wouldn't be able to lay a hand on him without trouble because when they reincarnated in Lambda, they would be born to parents giving birth to them. They would have family and friends in Lambda, a society that they relied on. They would have to live in Lambda until they died. If they did anything reckless, they would simply be tightening a noose around their own necks, and they would even cause trouble for their family, friends and lovers in Lambda.

But someone transferred here directly from another world wouldn't have any bonds to the world of Lambda. To take extreme examples, such a person could vent his anger and kill innocent people, rob others because he doesn't have money and rape women for his own enjoyment before killing them as long as he ensured his own escape, since he would have no concerns for anyone other than himself.

Even if he was caught and punished, he wouldn't cause any trouble... there wasn't a single person that he wanted to avoid causing trouble for in this foreign world, so nobody would be troubled.

Kanata was technically someone who had been reincarnated and reborn, but he had come to Lambda with a physical body of the same age as the one he had in his previous life. There was essentially no difference between him and someone who had been transferred here directly.

Thus, he didn't have the common sense and ethics of this world that someone reincarnating and doing things over from childhood would learn. Such a person would – for better or worse – understand that the inhabitants of this world were humans, just like them, but Kanata hadn't learned that. Nor did he have any intention to.

Most importantly, for Kanata, this third life in Lambda was nothing more than a connection to his fourth life. He was also treating the people of this world with utter contempt. To him, they were primitives living in a world inferior to Earth and Origin.

No, he might not even consider them to be living beings. Statuses, skills, Elves, Beast-people, Dwarves – to him, Lambda felt like a very realistic game; he couldn't think of this world as reality.

"He's not going to fly off to somewhere else if I head for the capital now, is he? It would be a real pain to have to figure out a way to cross the mountain range," Kanata murmured to himself.

The information that Rodcorte had given him was full of holes, so although Kanata knew that Vandalieu's stronghold was beyond the mountain range, he had no idea how Vandalieu had crossed the mountain range, nor did he know anything about the stronghold itself.

"Well, if I have this 'destiny' or whatever, I'm sure I'll be able to kill him. Ah, but before that, I have to dispose of this carriage and these corpses."



The marketplace of Nineland, the capital city of the Hartner Duchy, was full of liveliness under the hot summer sun.

As the duchy was located inland, most marine products were dried, salted or pickled; there were only a few fresh products from the sea as they required Magic Items to preserve them as they were transported. But other than that, there was an abundant assortment of products available for purchase.

"That spice, I've never seen it before," said Eleanora.

"Yes, it's a special product of this country! It's not sold in other duchies!" the shopkeeper told her, ogling at her without any subtlety.

"Well then, may I have some?" Eleanora asked with a smile.

"Yes! Thank you," said the shopkeeper. "But wouldn't you prefer to have the powdered stuff?"

“It’s fine; please give me the fruit,” Eleanora requested.

“You’re quite the connoisseur for a first-time buyer. Here you are.”

After receiving a bag of the spice, Eleanora headed towards another store.

“Hey, the pretty lady over there,” an accessory merchant called out to her. “Won’t you come and take a look?”

Eleanora paid no attention to him. The task that Vandalieu had entrusted her with was the collection of spices, vegetables and fruit.

“Fufufu, your prided special products will lose their exclusiveness to Vandalieu-sama’s magic!” she said to herself with a laugh.

With death-attribute magic, it was possible to prevent plants that were difficult to cultivate from dying. Although water was still needed, it was possible to grow alpine plants in deserts. Despite this, in Origin, even if the plants grew, it was difficult to make them produce flowers and fruit in such harsh conditions.

But organisms mutated much more easily in Lambda than in Origin. It was certain that if these plants were planted in Talosheim, they would turn into Monster Plants or Immortal Ents and produce fruit.

As soon as the bag in Eleanora’s arms was handed over to Vandalieu and taken to Talosheim, the Hartner Duchy would lose its industrial strength!

...Although, that would only be meaningful once Talosheim began trading with other duchies.

Eleanora herself didn’t actually really understand just how much suffering her actions would cause the Hartner Duchy.

“It sounds a little empty to say aloud,” Eleanora murmured. “Vandalieu-sama did say that he would cause a ‘calamity,’ so he should be causing a proper calamity.”

Eleanora and everyone else, who had traveled a distance that would take a month on foot in a single night with Vandalieu’s spirit-form wings, knew nothing of the assault of the monsters that had appeared in the city of Niarki a few days ago.

“Now then, next is... That fruit, I’ve never seen it before.”

“Are you a traveler, Ojou-san? This fruit is a special product of this duchy; it can’t be cultivated anywhere else. It’s the pride of my birthplace!”

“I see. Then I suppose I’ll take some.”



“In the end, I do have to reject the society of this duchy.”

“Is... that... so...”

“That’s right.”

“Is... that... so...”

Though he was facing the Guild Master of the Mages’ Guild, who was twitching with the whites of his eyes showing, Vandalieu was having a conversation that was very close to a monologue.

As for why the Guild Master of the Mages’ Guild had entered a vegetative state, the reason was that he was an individual with connections to the Pure-breed Vampires.

Vandalieu, who had learned this information from the Vampire he had turned into an Undead in the city of Niarki, had attacked the Guild Master on the morning of his arrival in Nineland.

He had asked the Guild Master’s whereabouts from the countless spirits that approached him the moment he arrived in Nineland, and assaulted his mansion.

He had covered the entire building in a Magic Absorption Barrier that ran along its walls before defeating the Guild Master. The Guild Master would probably have been a powerful foe if allowed to use magic, but inside the Magic Absorption Barrier, he was nothing more than an old man. Well, after having flown such a long distance with his spirit form wings, it had cost Vandalieu the rest of his remaining Mana to create the barrier, though.

Braga, Zran and Eleanora had used physical attacks to defeat the mages who couldn’t cast magic and the Guild Master’s guards.

After that, Vandalieu had thought hard about how to interrogate the stubborn Guild Master who possessed Poison Resistance, and decided to try using the Mental Encroachment skill.

With that said, all he had done was make additional heads and stare directly into Guild Master's eyes while whispering into both of his ears. For a mere hour.

As a result, the Guild Master had entered a vegetative state. Vandalieu had wondered whether it was alright to simply kill him after extracting information from him.

"Well, he did do a lot of bad things in order to learn forbidden knowledge from Ternecia, so I don't feel sorry for him at all," said Vandalieu.

"I... am... sorry."

"Hmm, the Mental Encroachment skill is powerful but hard to hold back with. I have to practice properly with it," said Vandalieu.

Strictly speaking, the effects produced by the skill were more due to the fact that Vandalieu himself had a personality of not forgiving his enemies rather than due to the special characteristics of the skill itself, however.

"I suppose it's fine since I got my hands on the forbidden archives, though," he decided.

Vandalieu had used Spirit Form Transformation on his entire body, used 'Possession' on the broken Guild Master and manipulated his body to successfully gain access to the Mages' Guild's forbidden domain.

Possession was a death-attribute spell that he had recently invented; rather than 'taking over' someone it was more like sharing their body. Normally, it wouldn't allow Vandalieu to steal control from the body's owner. However, he had been able to manipulate the body of the Guild Master whose will had collapsed.

Thanks to this, he had gained forbidden knowledge at a bargain sale price.

"Well, it doesn't seem like he has any knowledge that will be immediately useful, though," Vandalieu said to himself.

"Ah, I've found a way to create Homunculi," reported one of Vandalieu's clones. "But it seems that having a contract with an evil god is a requirement."

“A spell that controls the minds of others... Its procedure is troublesome, so it’s unnecessary considering I have the Mental Encroachment skill,” said another.

“This poison is... inferior to the poison I can already create, isn’t it? Its Mana cost is needlessly high, too.”

Just because it was forbidden knowledge didn’t mean that all of it was useful. Much of the information here were things that Vandalieu was already capable of or inferior versions of things he could already do.

Well, it probably couldn’t be helped considering that death-attribute magic had many spells that would themselves be considered forbidden techniques.

“But to think that spells artificially creating mutant variations of monsters would be considered forbidden... Wouldn’t I be arrested if people found out about the things I’ve done in Talosheim?” Vandalieu wondered.

“No, I suppose it’d be fine as long as I’m not a member of the Mages’ Guild. Well, it just means that I can’t join them,” one of his clones added.

“To have to consider how narrow each Guild’s doors are... How sad.”

Of course, the Adventurers’ Guild here was the same as it was in the city of Niarki.

Admission into the Mages’ Guild required the approval of an instructor or a letter of recommendation from a member of practitioner rank or greater, as well as from a nobleman. Alternatively, it required one to possess qualifications certifying graduation from a mages’ school.

The Workers’ Guild required applicants to perform manual labor under an instructor or supervisor.

The Commerce Guild required applicants to be prepared to conduct business and to pay an admission fee.

The Tamers’ Guild required applicants to study under other members, have a recommendation or otherwise prove that they could indeed tame monsters to a Guild staff member.

Though their names differed a little, all of the Guilds required the same things for

registration.

Among these, the one that Vandalieu could probably apply for was the Tamers' Guild, but if he were to show off the fact that he had tamed monsters like Eleanora, a Noble-born Vampire, he would be noticed by the Pure-breed Vampires' subordinates who were still in Nineland. If he were to show off his Zombie Ninja (Titan), Zran, or Braga and the other Black Goblins, he would cause an uproar.

There was also the option of simply creating a Golem to demonstrate his ability, but then he might simply be called an Alchemist.

"Registering at an Adventurers' Guild elsewhere after things have settled down is the most realistic option after all," Vandalieu concluded. "I'll think about registering for the Tamers' Guild and Commerce Guild after that."

"Well then, let's withdraw for now," said another of Vandalieu's clones.

Vandalieu, who had cloned himself to search the forbidden archives, gathered all of the forbidden tomes and cursed items that appeared to be of value and began preparing to leave with them in hand.

He had already used the allies of the Pure-breed Vampires, the high-ranking members of the Mages' Guild, as practice dummies for Mental Encroachment and turned them into vegetables.

Still using Possession on the Guild Master, he had summoned the mages one by one, telling them that there was something to discuss, brought the Guild Master's mouth close to their ears as if to whisper something confidential, undid the Possession over the Guild Master and extended his narrow tongue into the mages' ears to administer poison and capture them.

After that, he had used Mental Encroachment until they entered vegetative states.

"I always imagined mages to be mentally strong, though," said Vandalieu.

Ordering them to carry forbidden tomes and cursed items outside of the forbidden archives hadn't been difficult. They were all important individuals, after all.

"I've finally learned the whereabouts of the underground cemetery, so I suppose I'll start digging a tunnel tonight," Vandalieu decided.

CHAPTER 79

FANNING THE FLAMES IN THE UNDERGROUND GRAVEYARD

“GAAAAH...” groaned the final monster, a Rank 7 Poison Zombie Giant that was a combination of multiple Poison Zombies.

Heinz, the man wielding the magic sword enveloped in blue flames that had cut the monster open, sighed as he confirmed that there were no more enemies.

The monster, whose core had consisted of a middle-aged female Zombie, had been conspicuously more powerful than the other monsters.

“It seems that the monsters’ rampage has ended. Is everyone alright?” Heinz asked.

“Yeah, no problems here. I am tired though.”

“I’m not hurt, either... but I’m tired, too.”

Heinz’s party was severely exhausted. Most of the monsters that had appeared were Rank 4 or 5, and the only Rank 7 monster was the Poison Zombie Giant that had been finished off a few moments ago. There had been just over a thousand of them, a smaller number than the average monster rampage.

They hadn’t been enemies that the Five-colored Blades, an A-class adventurer party, would have had trouble with. In fact, they were small fry that would simply be scattered aside in a one-sided fashion. Even if there were over a thousand of them.

That was the power of an A-class adventurer party.

However, the monsters that had closed in on the city of Niarki were not ordinary monsters.

Seventy percent of the swarm of monsters had been Undead, while the other thirty percent consisted of plant-type and insectoid monsters. And the monsters that possessed the body parts required for speech had been repeatedly groaning, “Kill

Heinz,” as if these words were some kind of incantation.

A group of monsters led by a mighty commander with the title of King would move like a single creature, but this was a completely abnormal situation.

With that said, this could actually be considered fortunate. The monsters hadn't been fixated on entering the city of Niarki. The guards, knights and adventurers had hastily formed a defensive force and risen to meet the monsters in battle, but the monsters had ignored the city and charged at Heinz, who had been standing at the forefront of the defense.

Despite wounded, immobilized knights and completely exhausted adventurers being within their reach, they had continued aiming for Heinz.

But all of the monsters had been more individually powerful than their Ranks would have suggested, and no matter how many times they were defeated, they kept attacking endlessly.

Defeated insectoid monsters had turned Undead, mold and fungi had grown on the remains of defeated Undead to spawn plant-type monsters such as Poison Mushrooms and Venom Molds, and the remains of plant-type monsters had spawned insects which turned into monsters.

Thanks to this endless monster chain, Heinz and his companions had actually been forced to fight against over ten thousand monsters.

“Still... they seem to have hated you quite a lot. What have you done?” asked Jennifer, the unarmed human fighter.

“Us adventurers have defeated a countless number of monsters, so there could be any number of reasons as to why we could be hated,” said Diana, an Elf priestess of Mill, the Goddess of Slumber. “But that was completely out of the ordinary, wasn't it?”

The two of them had joined Heinz's party after they moved to work in the Orbaume Kingdom.

Before responding to either of them, Heinz turned to look in the direction of the city of Niarki.

Because the monsters had only been aiming for the Five-colored Blades, for Heinz, the

city's outer walls were unharmed and although there were some among the defense force who were severely wounded, only a few truly unlucky individuals had perished.

"If I had to make I guess, I'd say it was that Dhampir boy," said Heinz.

"The one who suddenly ran out of the Adventurers' Guild? Do you remember doing something that would make him hate you?" Jennifer asked.

"No, there isn't any connection between that boy and this monster rampage, is there?" said Diana.

Heinz paused for a moment to figure out how to phrase his thoughts correctly before opening his mouth again. "I don't think there is, either. But... His name was Vandalieu."

Jennifer and Diana blinked, not knowing what Heinz meant. Heinz wasn't sure of his own theory, either.

But the name of the Dark Elf 'witch' whom he had captured in the Mirg shield-nation was Darcia. That was an event that had occurred about seven years ago.

TLN: Reminder that Vandalieu's name contains a part of Darcia's name in the Japanese spelling.

And what had been written on the registration form left on the counter in the Adventurers' Guild, which had now been disposed of after it was rejected, was the name 'Vandalieu' and an age of seven.

"It's possible that he was –"

"You're overthinking it, Heinz."

"Edgar?"

"No matter how you look at it, that Dhampir wasn't the child of any Dark Elf," said Edgar. "With how white his skin was, there's no way, right? You're just being too conscious of your sin, which is what's making you believe that."

"That... might be true."

The visible special characteristics of a Dhampir are eyes with different colors, one of

which is blood-red, as well as fangs and retractable claws. Other than these, their characteristics are those that they inherit from their parents. If one parent of a Dhampir is a Dark Elf, it should be impossible for that Dhampir to have white, candle-wax-like skin.

And there was no way that a baby that was not even a year old at the time could have survived on its own in the wilderness. And how could it have crossed the Boundary Mountain Range to escape to the Orbaume Kingdom?

“I guess I’m overthinking it. And to think that I would suspect that Dhampir to be connected to this monster rampage. It seems that I’m more tired than I thought. It’s not like he’s the second coming of the Demon King or anything like that.” Heinz gave a wry smile as he mentioned a rumor that was being whispered at the Church of Alda recently.

“That’s right,” said Edgar. But despite his words, he made a note of investigating Vandalieu further once he returned to the city.

If I recall, the information broker in the city of Niarki is run by an organization called the ‘Fangs of Dark Nights.’ I suppose I’ll try asking them.

Edgar’s actions would later bring an astonishing incident to light, revealing the fact that the organization had continued to operate after its leader and high-ranking members had become Undead.

“More importantly, after we get back to the city and have some rest, we need to go and find the Dungeon that these monsters came from,” said Jennifer. “They came from a completely different direction from any known Dungeons, so a new Dungeon must have appeared. It might be Zakkart’s Trials.”

Zakkart’s Trials. A Dungeon that first appeared a hundred years ago. It appears somewhere on the continent without warning, only to disappear again about a month later. It is the world’s only confirmed moving labyrinth. It is impossible to categorize its class and nobody has ever entered and lived to tell the tale other than Heinz’s party, the Five-colored Blades, who managed to escape at the cost of one of their members. It is said that a treasure left behind by Zakkart rests in its deepest chamber. According to another story, the Undead form of Zakkart himself awaits those worthy of challenging him, and the hero who defeats him will become a successor to the champion Bellwood.

“If that’s true... We’ll clear it for sure this time. For Martie’s sake, too. But you’re right. First, we need to go back to the inn where Selen is waiting,” said Heinz, thinking of the Dhampir girl who was awaiting their return.

“No, the report to the Guild comes first... Yeah, yeah, I’ll do it. Don’t complain that I’m having the receptionist nee-san’s attention all to myself,” Edgar said with a wry smile.



“Haah... I see... That’s terrible... Unforgivable. Worthy of death,” said Vandalieu.

“Vandalieu-sama, what is this all of a sudden?” Eleanora asked.

“It’s the members of the adventurer party, the ‘Western Calm,’ the receptionist Aria-san, Hannah-san and Hannah-san’s father.”

Vandalieu was currently digging a tunnel from the mansion of the Guild Master of the Mages’ Guild to beneath Duke Hartner’s castle by turning the ground into Golems and using Golem Transmutation to form a passage.

He had left the Black Goblins and their lovers in the mansion, while the Guild Master and his subordinates who were now in vegetative states prepared a ‘parting gift.’

Incidentally, the Guild Master’s mansion had contained valuable items such as first-class staffs, but Vandalieu was still unarmed. If he, who possessed a monstrous amount of Mana, were to use a staff designed for humans, he would have to exercise extreme care in casting spells, or the staff could explode, rot away or turn into dust.

In order to use a staff that assisted with magic, Vandalieu would need to concentrate as if he were writing kanji in miniscule letters, so he didn’t use them. Weren’t there any staffs somewhere that were designed to be used by beings more powerful than humans?

Leaving that aside, Vandalieu had begun talking to himself in the midst of creating this tunnel.

But the eyes of Zran, who was Undead, could see that Vandalieu had been surrounded by spirits in tragic states.

“They’re part of the countless spirits that gathered around him when we came here,”

Zran murmured to himself. "The ones near him now look like they've all died recently, though."

Just like when he had arrived at the city of Niarki, all of the spirits in the capital city had flooded towards Vandalieu when he arrived here. There were so many of them that Zran couldn't hear what they were saying.

However, the spirits that were currently speaking to Vandalieu looked a little different.

"Eleanora, Zran, if a black-haired, black-eyed man in his thirties by the name of Kaidou Kanata appears, please leave things to me until I give you further commands," said Vandalieu.

"Kaidou Kanata?" Eleanora repeated. "... Could it be?!"

"One of the scum who killed you in your previous life, Holy Son?! That bastard. This is a great opportunity. Let's kill him, turn him into a Zombie and hear everything he has to say!" said Zran.

Vandalieu had already heard information regarding Kaidou Kanata from the spirits of his victims.

According to them, Kanata had already come to Nineland, and although it was unclear as to how he knew where Vandalieu was, he was drawing closer.

According to the other information given by the spirits, for some reason, swords, spears and spells hadn't worked on Kanata, while his attacks had passed straight through their armor to strike their bodies. He was a user of the Unarmed Fighting Technique and Short Sword Technique, as well as high-level fire-attribute magic and wind-attribute magic.

The penetration ability must be the cheat-like ability he got from Rodcorte. He must have improved his affinity for the fire-attribute and wind-attribute in Origin. Unarmed Fighting Technique and Short Sword Technique... is from his experience in Origin, I suppose? Jeez, so this is how it is for people who don't have curses.

Considering that Vandalieu had relearned everything from scratch through hard work, he thought that it was rather unfair that Kanata possessed all these abilities. But for now, he prioritized pacifying Eleanora and Zran, whose expressions had become bloodthirsty. Their abilities in combat couldn't be matched by the average adventurer

or knight, but cheat-like abilities were dangerous enough to overcome such differences in strength.

That was why they were called cheats, after all.

“Like I said, leave things to me,” said Vandalieu. “If we’re going to kill him... no, he’s been indulging in unforgivable acts of violence, so I’m definitely going to kill him, but I want to do it myself.”

“I can tell he’s quite the scoundrel just from looking at those spirits, but... is it really that bad?” Zran asked.

“Quite,” Vandalieu replied. “To the point that I question his sanity.”

But Vandalieu felt more bewilderment than hatred upon learning about Kanata. To summarize Vandalieu’s thoughts, he was basically wondering, “What the hell is he doing?”

Kanata’s acts were so cruel that they couldn’t be considered the acts of a human, but more importantly, they were too reckless. He would simply kill, rape and steal if things became inconvenient or he thought that doing things that way would be quicker.

If he kept doing such things, even with a cheat-like ability, it would be impossible to live for very long.

Vandalieu was far more curious about this than the fact that Kanata had a far more adult-like appearance than him despite him having been the first to die in Origin, or how Kanata knew where he was.

Rodcorte probably had something to do with those, after all.

“For now, it seems certain that he has come to kill me, but... Let’s make a habit of casting Detect Life periodically from now on,” said Vandalieu.

The “work” that Kanata had apparently mentioned was probably the task of killing Vandalieu.

Vandalieu didn’t really care, but why had he come to interfere now, of all times? It was good that he was aiming directly for Vandalieu rather than Braga and the others who were standing by in the Guild Master’s mansion, though.

“If I recall, those people were acting like allies of justice, weren’t they?” said Eleanora.

“That’s how allies of justice are,” said Vandalieu. “They’d be considered heroes from the point of view of the followers of Bellwood or Alda, but from our point of view, they’re not.”

“Indeed, you’re right,” Eleanora agreed.

As they were conversing, Vandalieu and his companions arrived in the deepest part of Nineland.

There was a dark stone corridor before them, and casting Detect Life ahead revealed no signs of human life. But Vandalieu’s Danger Sense: Death was giving a response.

“Is it a trap?” asked Zran.

“No, with this shape, it’s probably a barrier,” said Vandalieu. “It’s said that the champion left a barrier behind, too.”

Continuing from the tunnel into the corridor, Vandalieu fired some weak Death Bullets into ahead into it.

A wall of light appeared in a spot that previously had nothing there, emitting flashes of light and noises as it repelled the Death Bullets.

“This is the barrier left behind by the champion Nineroad...!” Eleanora murmured.

“It repelled the Holy Son’s Death Bullets!” Zran exclaimed.

“Well then, I’m going to remove it now,” said Vandalieu.

“Eh?” Eleanora and Zran said in unison.

That quickly?

Right before the eyes of a surprised Eleanora and Zran, Vandalieu used his death-attribute Mana to steadily remove the champion’s barrier.

He wasn’t doing anything difficult. He was simply applying huge load that the barrier couldn’t withstand, all at once, to break through it by force.

Nineroad's barrier resisted for a few dozen seconds, but in the end, it fell apart with a sound similar to the noise of glass shattering.

"Phew, it was harder than Ice Age's ice," said Vandalieu. "I used 300,000,000 Mana, too. Ah, give me one of the obentos, please," he requested.

"S-sure," Zran said with an astonished expression as he took out a flask from the luggage. It contained the fresh blood of the protégé bodyguard of the Mages' Guild's Guild Master.

He had apparently benefited plenty from the fact that his employer was working with the Pure-breed Vampires, so his blood was particularly delicious.

"Phew, having a drink after doing some hard work really is something," said Vandalieu.

"Vandalieu-sama, that –" Eleanora began.

"Sounded like something that a middle-aged man would say?" Vandalieu asked.

"No, it was like a child trying to do his best to push himself past his limit, so it was rather adorable."

"I see..."

With his shoulders dropping a little at Eleanora's words, Vandalieu started walking forward again without waiting for his Mana to recover. He knew that Kanata was heading this way, but thanks to the Automatic Mana Recovery skill, he was recovering more than 10,000 Mana every second, so it wasn't a problem.

Past the barrier, the corridor ended in an unimaginably enormous underground cemetery. There were holes of various sizes containing bones and shells. It was a sight that made it difficult to call this a holy place.

The air lingering here was full of an unpleasant moisture and somehow felt sinister. Though there shouldn't have been any signs of life here, there were quiet noises that sounded like groans coming from somewhere.

"Hmm, the princess isn't here," said Vandalieu.

"Oooi! Levia-sama!" Zran called out. "It's me, Zran! You can come out now!"

But Vandalieu couldn't see any vengeful ghosts or evil spirits. Nor could he see the First Princess Levia.

"There might still be another barrier. It is not uncommon for there to be two or three barriers when something needs to be sealed inside," said Eleanora.

As they heeded her words and looked around, they found something that did indeed resemble a barrier.

A silver coffin bound by whips. This was likely the barrier's core.

"...I wonder whose idea it was to do this," said Vandalieu.

"Ah, Nineroad was apparently a user of the Whip Technique," said Zran. "Doesn't that explain it?"

"By the way, what do you think is inside the coffin?" asked Eleanora. "If it is a Pure-breed Vampire, then they might become a powerful ally... or perhaps not. It might be a Vampire who turned to the evil gods, after all."

"It would indeed be problematic if I were to undo the seal and someone we couldn't handle were to come out," Vandalieu agreed as he tentatively tried beginning to remove the seal, but there wasn't really any reaction from Danger Sense: Death. "Is it empty inside? It seems fine, so I'm removing the seal," he said.

And then he began removing the barrier in the same way he removed the outside barrier earlier.

Before he had even finished removing it, the whips snapped as the coffin opened forcefully from the inside.

"Vandalieu-sama!" Eleanora cried.

She and Zran tried to grab Vandalieu and retreat, but the red amoeba-shaped thing that had flown out of the coffin raised its head and looked down at Vandalieu, approaching him with incredible speed like a venomous snake!

Gargle, gargle, gargle... gulp.

It was swallowed by Vandalieu.

“...Eh?” Zran and Eleanora said in unison, dumbfounded.

Vandalieu finished drinking the coffin’s contents, put his hands together, lowered his head and said, “Gochisousama.”

“V-Vandalieu-sama? What was that?” Eleanora asked. “More importantly, why did you swallow it?!”

“Why, you ask... it *did* enter my mouth,” Vandalieu replied.

“No, you’d normally spit it out, right?!” Zran exclaimed.

“But I don’t think it’s good to leave food unfinished,” said Vandalieu. “Well, I suppose you wouldn’t normally refer to blood that a champion sealed away a hundred thousand years ago as ‘food.’”

“So at least you know – wait, so that thing you just swallowed was blood?!” Zran shouted.

“Then could it possibly have been part of the Demon King?!” asked Eleanora.

It was a well-known story that the champions had defeated the Demon King Guduranis, taken his body apart and sealed each part away individually. It was just blood, but considering that it had been sealed away, they couldn’t think of anyone it could possibly belong to other than the Demon King.

In fact, the announcer in Vandalieu’s head had said, 『You have absorbed the blood of the Demon King!』 He had been wondering whether he should tell Zran and Eleanora, knowing that it would shock them.

『The Bloodsucking skill has reached level 10! It has transformed into the superior skill, Bloodwork!』

『The level of the Bloodwork, Death-Attribute Magic, Superhuman Strength, Rapid Healing, Automatic Mana Recovery, Magic Resistance, Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue), Body Expansion (Tongue) skills have increased!』

『You have acquired the Title, ‘The Second Coming of the Demon King!’』

Vandalieu wanted to strongly protest to the last part, the Title that he had gained. Who was the announcer calling the Second Coming of the Demon King? But –

“Vomit it out, you have to vomit it out, Holy Son!”

“Vandalieu-sama, spit it out, spit!”

Zran had grabbed Vandalieu’s legs and was now shaking him while holding him upside-down, so he didn’t have time to think about this.

“No, I mean, but, I’ve, already, absorbed, ah, hello.” As Vandalieu was being shaken up and down, perhaps because he had removed the champion’s seal, he could now see countless Ghosts. Upside-down.

Ghosts. Unlike the powerless spirits that could only be seen by Vandalieu, Undead and Spiritualists, these are beings that have turned into monsters without physical bodies.

They are Rank 2, and although most physical attacks are ineffective against them, they have no physical power of their own. But most of them still possess incomplete versions of the personalities and memories that they possessed in life.

“Who is it? A pawn of the Hartner family? ... No, this presence that is both terrifying and comforting, just what could it...?”

“Look at that Titan. It’s an Undead.”

“Why is an Undead here? The barrier has been broken... Are we going to be set free?”

The semitransparent Ghosts with blurry outlines, whose legs were missing below their knees, were whispering amongst themselves. Vandalieu couldn’t feel any hostility from them, but he could sense that they were frightened.

Zran unconsciously let go of Vandalieu’s legs and began shouting in the Ghosts’ direction. “Levia-sama, is Levia-sama here?! I’m Zran of Talosheim!”

Vandalieu, who had quickly been caught by Eleanora, saw a female Ghost with long

hair extending past her waist, floating to the front.

“Levia-sama!” Zran exclaimed.

“Zran... I remember you. A Scout warrior, the most proficient in the use of short swords among our race.”

Zran hadn’t been intimate with Princess Levia, nor had he served in a position close to her. But in the city of Talosheim, with a population of only five thousand and society with loose hierarchies, exceptional warriors would have had opportunities to meet the princess in person.

Zran was a Scout, the kind of fighter that Titans lacked most, so it seemed that he had been easier to remember than others.

“You remained in Talosheim with Zandia and the others to fight until the very end, so why are you here?” asked Levia. “Ah, but now that you have been sealed in here, you are prisoners like us. We are forced to wander this place, unable to return to the goddess’s side or rid ourselves of our regrets –”

“Ah, I’ve removed the barrier,” said Vandalieu.

“Indeed, as long as the two barriers that have been set up are not removed...” Levia stopped speaking for a moment. “They have been removed?”

“Yes. I’m sorry for the late introduction. I’m Vandalieu, the current king of Talosheim.”

And so, Vandalieu introduced himself, still being held upside down in the position that Eleanora had caught him in.



After hearing Vandalieu’s explanation and seeing the rock salt originating from Garan’s Valley that he had brought from Talosheim, Levia completely believed in his words.

It would have been problematic if she had refused to believe him, so Vandalieu felt relieved.

“I see,” said Levia. “Everyone who stayed behind in Talosheim was valiant until the

very end. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for leading Borkus and the others, and for protecting my homeland. But despite that, I was unable to protect everyone..."

"It's not your fault, Levia-sama!" Zran exclaimed. "The ones at fault are those traitors of the Hartner family!"

When Princess Levia and her small escort force escaped from Talosheim into the Hartner Duchy, they had been warmly welcomed by Duke Hartner and the inhabitants of the city that was now in ruins.

But Duke Hartner poisoned the meal that had been prepared for the Titans.

None of the Titans, who had believed that the Hartner family was a sworn ally, doubted the duke. They ate their meals, swallowed the poison. Although they tried to resist after that, they were captured by the duke's knights and the mages who served him, and Princess Levia's guards were slain on the spot. Princess Levia herself was accused of plotting to kill the duke and burned at the stake.

And then her remains had been buried beneath this underground barrier.

"I learned of what happened after that from those who were buried here like us and gained a good understanding of things," she said. "The knights and mages who killed us were also killed and buried here to ensure their silence, you see."

Apparently, the duke at the time had been exceptional when it came to conspiracy; he hadn't left anyone involved alive. Perhaps Old Lady Milan of the city of Niarki had heard the story from the wandering spirits who had managed to escape before being imprisoned here.

"So, about what comes next," said Vandalieu, changing the subject.

"It does not even need to be said by someone who no longer belongs in this world. The right to Talosheim's throne is yours. Please save everyone and guide them." Levia lowered her head towards Vandalieu. Each of her movements was so elegant that it was difficult to believe that she didn't have a physical body.

And yet, there was no trace of pride in her actions.

So, this is what a graceful princess is like, Vandalieu thought. She was a Titan, so she was still two meters tall despite having half of her legs missing, however.

Her appearance was blurred now, but she had probably been a beautiful princess when she was alive.

“With this, we can all return to the goddess’s side,” she said.

“Ah, please wait.” Vandalieu stopped her, though this beauty wasn’t the reason that he did so. “I need your help to save everyone at the slave-run mine,” he said.

“My help?” Levia repeated. “But I am not capable of doing anything significant as I am now.”

“We don’t need you to,” Eleanora told her. “What is important is for you to cooperate with Vandalieu-sama and be seen doing so.”

Of course, the Titans being held captive in the slave-run mines knew nothing about Vandalieu and the current Talosheim. Most importantly, Death-Attribute Charm wouldn’t work on them, so even if Vandalieu were to tell them, “I’ve come from Talosheim to save you,” there was a high chance that they wouldn’t believe him.

Even if the Undead Titans like Zran and Borkus convinced them, they would still have their doubts. They might believe the words of their families or relatives, but if they weren’t closely related to the Undead Titans, they might simply think that the Titans had gone mad after becoming Undead.

The teachings of the goddess Vida said that Undead should be treated with open-mindedness, but not that Undead should be befriended without question.

Of course, there was the option of ignoring the feelings of the captive slaves and dragging them to Talosheim by force before explaining things, but if they resisted unexpectedly and there were injuries... or casualties, it would leave a bad aftertaste. It would be possible to turn them into Undead, but if it was possible to prevent them from dying in the first place, that would be best.

That was where Princess Levia came in. She had led the Titans two hundred years ago. Even though she had turned into a Ghost, her words would probably reach them.

“At the very least, you should be able to make them listen to us,” said Eleanora.

“But why would they listen to the words of someone who failed to protect everyone...? And I no longer have any regrets or grudges needed to bind me to this world,” said

Levia. "My heart has already been saved. Your son will surely be able to free the slaves and –"

"S-son?!" Eleanora repeated. "No, I'm not Vandalieu-sama's parent –"

"Is that alright with you?" asked Vandalieu, interrupting Eleanora who seemed to have been mistaken for his parent because he was a Dhampir.

"What do you... mean?" asked Levia.

"Are you alright with simply forgiving them? The ones who killed you, killed your guards and warriors and shut you in here for two hundred years. The ones who unjustly took your people as captives and continued to exploit them for two hundred years. Are you alright with the decision of not releasing your anger, resentment and hatred?"

"Th-that is..." Levia's voice trembled. The Titan Ghosts behind her appeared to waver as they trembled as well.

When they had been killed two hundred years ago, when they had learned that their people had been taken to the slave-run mines, they felt anger, resentment and hatred towards the Hartner family, just as Vandalieu said.

They had cursed their betrayal, screamed that they would never forget this grudge and seethed with hatred. To the point that the tiny amount of the Demon King's Mana leaking from the seal had reacted to it, turning them into Ghosts.

"But vengeance is –" Levia began.

"A reasonable act," said Vandalieu, interrupting her. "Especially in this case. I'm not telling you to take your hatred of two hundred years ago and take it out on the people living today," he continued, looking directly into the eyes of Levia and the other Ghosts. "I'm only telling you to use your current hatred and take it out on today's people."

Vandalieu conveyed to them the anger, resentment and hatred that he felt, awakening their own anger, resentment, hatred and regret.

"It's only natural to be angry, to resent, to hate. It's normal for any person. Someone you trusted betrayed you, showed contempt for you and robbed you of your lives. People important to you were unfairly turned into prisoners and exploited for two

hundred years. If you feel nothing towards those who did this, I can only say that you have gone mad,” said Vandalieu.

“Natural... Normal...”

“What did you feel when you realized that your food had been poisoned, when your guards were killed, when you were burned alive?” asked Vandalieu.

“I... Ah! Back then, I!”

“Inside you, there should be resentment, anger and hatred. Let it burn once more.”

“Inside... me...”

“Our anger...”

“My... resentment...”

Even Ghosts that were completely unrelated were stirring, but Vandalieu took no notice of them as he continued.

“Please lend me your strength,” he said. “In order to take back what was taken from us.”

As he finished speaking, there was the sound of an igniting spark as light and heat spread across the underground graveyard that had been in complete darkness a moment ago.

“I’ve remembered, my anger, my resentment!” Levia cried. “Moving on without ridding ourselves of this hatred is impossible! Isn’t that right, everyone!”

Princess Levia was burning. Not metaphorically, but literally.

Her unreliable-looking spirit-form body was now shining red, and her outlines and the details of her face were now clearly visible. She looked just like a goddess of fire, with hair and a dress made of flames.

『You have acquired the Dead Spirit Magic skill!』

“That’s right, that’s exactly right!”

“We cannot disappear until we deliver a calamity upon the Hartner family that has scorned and tormented us!”

“They’ll feel my wrath for playing around with us and throwing us away! Don’t underestimate a maid! KYIIIIH!”

There were some Ghosts getting fired up who were not among the victims of the Hartner family, but Vandalieu took no notice of this.

All of the Ghosts in the underground graveyard were burning, as if surrounded in flames.

“Did their Ranks increase?! But just how...?” Zran wondered. “No, I suppose it doesn’t matter. In any case, it seems that Levia-sama and everyone else is going to stay to help us.”

Vandalieu had used the Mental Encroachment skill to share his feelings of defeat with Levia and the others, setting alight the feelings of defeat that they themselves had once felt.

Influenced by Levia, who had been burned at the stake, they had become Rank 3 Fire Ghosts while Levia herself had become a Rank 4 Flame Ghost.

It was a phenomenon that would cause an uproar if witnessed by researching mages and scholars of the Mages’ Guild.

“Vandalieu-sama has become an even greater figure,” said Eleanora. “Isn’t that just fine?”

“I suppose you’re right,” said Zran.

And so, this phenomenon was brushed aside just like that.

Well, Vandalieu himself was also very surprised at the way Princess Levia and the other Ghosts had gotten so fired up. He had shared his feelings of hatred and anger that felt like they were burning his body, but he hadn’t expected them to actually burn.

He wasn't surprised enough to forget about everything else, though.

"Now then, let's get going and save everyone!" said Levia.

"Sorry, but there's a matter that I have to deal with first." Instead of taking Levia's burning hand, Vandalieu turned around to look towards the corridor that he had come through.

There was a man in his thirties with black hair and black eyes standing there, his empty hands raised in the air.

"Wait! Listen to what I have to say! I'm sorry for what I did back then, please forgive me!" said Kaidou Kanata. He kneeled before Vandalieu, pressing his head against the dusty floor.



Title Explanation:

【Second Coming of the Demon King】

A Title that indicates the second coming of the Demon King. One must not only be recognized as such, but also be able to perform the same feats as the Demon King Guduranis, in order to gain this Title. For example, breaking souls, generating new races of monsters and creating Dungeons. It is also possible to gain this Title by taking in, absorbing or being taken in by a part of the Demon King.

Those who acquire this Title gain bonuses to various techniques that are considered forbidden techniques and evil knowledge, as well as to the aforementioned acts that are part of the conditions of gaining the Title.

The ability of creating and altering new races of monsters receives a particularly large bonus. Princess Levia and her companions becoming a Flame Ghost and Fire Ghosts is another example of this.

However, this does not allow unconditional creation and alteration of new monsters; there are fine conditions and affinities for this that need to be considered.

CHAPTER 80

THE MAN WHO COMES TO AN END WITH HIS THIRD TIME

Kanata, who knew that Vandalieu was headed for the area beneath the castle through his Target Radar, clicked his tongue in frustration.

In an underground area with limited space, he couldn't use his abilities to their full potential.

If he were to release his magic with full power, his own life would be endangered by a cave-in. Even if he used Gungnir to pass through the dirt, he wouldn't be able to do anything about the lack of oxygen.

And the gun that he was so proficient with... in Lambda, it had become Archery, but he could imagine that it would be difficult to fire underground, where there would be many obstacles. He could use Gungnir to make the arrows he fired pass through such obstacles, but his eyes wouldn't be able to see through them.

That was why he had used infrared scopes and detection spells to identify his targets' locations in Origin, but... infrared scopes didn't exist in Lambda and if he recited an incantation for a detection spell, there was a chance that Vandalieu would sense it and Kanata would be the one being located.

Thinking that there was no other choice, Kanata had given up on sniping Vandalieu from afar and started to think about a close-range assassination.

He had decided to continue with the plan of attacking Vandalieu here rather than waiting for another opportunity with better conditions for the assassination or creating a better plan to create such conditions. He knew that Vandalieu's mobility was superior to his so there was a chance that Vandalieu would simply run away, but the bigger reason was that he wanted to get this job over and done with so he could begin his fourth life.

And in order to purify the spirits haunting him (although at this point, they had already left him to go to Vandalieu), he had poured holy water, which he had obtained

from one of the female adventurers he had raped, over himself.

The moment he had on Target Radar and used Gungnir to pass through the walls and floor to get underground, he had realized that Vandalieu had noticed him.

It wasn't a skill that told him this. Despite being a degenerate individual, he was an experienced combatant who had been through countless battles to the death; it was his instincts that told him that he had been noticed.

"Wait! Listen to what I have to say! I'm sorry for what I did back then, please forgive me!"

Having revealed himself faster than he had planned, Kanata kneeled on the ground.

He's bigger than the information that the god gave me would suggest. And he's got so many monsters with him that I have no information about. What are those things that look like flaming people?

Kanata performed a desperate-looking apology. But Vandalieu, who seemed to have gained many pawns, was being held in contempt in Kanata's mind for having an interest in such bizarre creatures.

"...What are you playing at?" Vandalieu asked.

Kanata could feel his heart applauding the fact that Vandalieu had chosen to engage in conversation rather than attacking. *He's naïve after all*, Kanata thought.

"D-don't you remember what happened in Origin? I'm Kaidou Kanata; I was one of the students from the same high school as you," said Kanata.

Of course, Vandalieu, who had already heard Kaidou Kanata's name from the spirits, had a good idea of who he was. There wouldn't be anyone in Lambda with the surname "Kaidou," after all.

Even if that weren't the case, everything about Kanata's words and actions were too strange, so Vandalieu hadn't been able to imagine that Kanata was anything but someone who had reincarnated from Origin.

"I'm one of the people who accidentally defeated you at the research laboratory back then," Kanata continued.

“...Ah, come to think of it, I do get the feeling that you were there,” said Vandalieu.

He was hearing this for the first time. Back then, his eyes had only been looking at Naruse Narumi and the more familiar-looking among his former classmates; those whose names he hadn't even remembered, like Kanata, hadn't lingered in his memories.

Kanata was a little bewildered at Vandalieu's reaction, which had been weaker than he had expected, but he began speaking more smoothly now. “We didn't know that you were one of us back then. I'm really sorry, so please forgive me,” he said. “If you can't forgive me, then I don't mind being killed by you. But won't you at least spare the others?”

“Sure,” said Vandalieu.

“I'm begging – eh?”

“I mean that I'm accepting your apology for killing me in Origin.”

Kanata raised his head without thinking and saw Vandalieu's emotionless eyes.

“The one at fault is Rodcorte, and as long as they apologize like you're doing now, then I'm alright with that,” said Vandalieu. “As long as they don't interfere with me or my companions, I won't get involved with them. I have a mountain of things that I want to do and things that I need to do, so I don't have time for that.”

Even now, he had to go and save the Titans that were being made to work in the slave-run mines. He didn't care about the others who would reincarnate from Origin as long as they didn't harm them, apart from Kanata. These were Vandalieu's true thoughts.

In fact, being invited to be their companion or them becoming his allies would be more troublesome. No matter how Vandalieu thought about it, their senses of values wouldn't match. He would consider it if they were willing to acknowledge each Zombie and Skeleton as an individual and respect them as such, however.

It was probably impossible, though. On Earth and in Origin, raising the dead as Undead was generally considered to be “desecration of the dead.” In many stories, including the stories told by every religion, there were only tragic endings unless the undying were buried immediately.

Situations were frequently seen in the movies and games of Earth where characters would say, "That's not the real him anymore," as they fired a bullet into the Zombie's head. Such situations would likely become reality if the others were to try to join Vandalieu.

Wouldn't they only accept the use of Undead as weapons at best?

Such people would be too dangerous to allow near Talosheim.

"I-is that... right?" said Kanata. "Alright. I'll make sure to tell everyone else, too. Anyone who interferes with you is – *barrier*."

Kanata quickly pulled the trigger of the crossbow that he had been keeping hidden inside the floor with Gungnir. No matter how Vandalieu answered, Kanata had been planning to find an opening and shoot him to death anyway.

The bolt fired from the crossbow passed straight through the barrier that Vandalieu had put up instinctively, grazed his ear and bounced loudly off the wall behind him.

The bolt hadn't missed. Vandalieu had dodged it.

"I see," he said. "Your cheat-like ability is penetration... Not only through physical objects, but it can even penetrate my barrier."

Kanata had been certain that his surprise attack would go well, but now his face stiffened at how easily Vandalieu had avoided it. But Vandalieu's Danger Sense: Death had been reacting long before Kanata had even bowed before him.

That was why Vandalieu had been staring intently at Kanata. Kanata had only thought that there was an opening because he had been unable to read Vandalieu's expressionless face.

And Vandalieu had actually heard from the spirits that Kanata's cheat-like ability was a penetration ability, so he'd already had a good idea of what was coming.

At the very least, he had known that Kanata wasn't an enemy that he could let down his guard against just because there were obstacles and barriers between them.

Kanata clicked his tongue again. "Dance, sash of flames!" Recovering from his shock, he conjured flames to obstruct the view of Vandalieu and his allies.

“Bastard!” Zran shouted.

“Zran, Eleanora, just like I said earlier, leave things to me... because I want to know what kind of power I can expect from those who reincarnated from Origin like me,” said Vandalieu. “Also, I have to test my new skill.”

Vandalieu instantly extinguished the raging flames with Heat Leech. He used his tongue and claws to secrete a highly volatile poison that wouldn’t work on Undead like Zran or those with the Status Effect Resistance skill like Eleanora, and then chased after Kanata.

“Floor, ground.” Kanata used Gungnir to hide inside the floor, realizing that Vandalieu was faster than he had expected.

But Vandalieu instantly turned the floor around Kanata as well as the ground beneath into Golems. “Move out of the way,” he ordered them. “Death Bullet.” He fired Death Bullets at Kanata’s location, which he had determined with Detect Life.

“GUAH?! H-he’s fast!” Though Kanata was astonished as the ground surface that he was using as a shield moved, he moved out of the way. The Death Bullets grazed him, but he managed avoid a direct hit.

Considering that the Death Bullets contained enough Mana to cause instant death even with a graze, Vandalieu felt a little surprised to see Kanata still moving around quickly.

And it seemed that his poison was ineffective.

“Judging by the speed of your movements and the power of your spells, your Attribute Values seem to be around the same as mine or a little higher; you don’t look like someone who would possess an unimaginable amount of Vitality,” said Vandalieu. “Did Rodcorte give you some resistance skills or something?”

“Great Burning Destruction, *Mana!*” Without answering Vandalieu’s question, Kanata cast a large-scale fire-attribute spell. It was a spell that produced high temperatures to incinerate everything within its large area of effect.

You’d normally be able to block it with that barrier and his heat-leeching spell, but I even used Gungnir after casting this spell! You can’t block this scorching heat, so stay quiet and turn into ash along with the pieces of trash behind you!

Certain of his victory, Kanata held his breath. Once the flames had subsided to some extent, he undid Gungnir and used wind-attribute magic to create air to breathe. As long as Vandalieu was dead, his Job was complete, so he was intending to commit suicide in order to live the fourth life that he would be rewarded with. But he wasn't thoughtless enough to die without confirming that he had accomplished his mission.

"To think that you would even get caught up in your own spell. You're making some bold moves."

Vandalieu was standing there with a calm expression. Still surrounded in flames.

"Jesus!" Kanata shouted. "What kind of sorcery is this?!"

"It's just that these ladies protected me," said Vandalieu.

"These ladies?!" Kanata didn't understand, but as the flames surrounding Vandalieu died down, he could see the silhouettes of several women.

Their faces looked familiar to him.

"Those bitches! Damn it, I poured holy water over myself for nothing!" Kanata cursed.

The women whose bodies were made of flames, including Hannah, were those that Kanata had killed after reincarnating in Lambda.

"You never made those Undead in Origin or this world!" Kanata shouted.

"I just became able to make them a short while ago," said Vandalieu. "I suppose I'll name this, 'Embrace of the Flame Spirits.'"

Behind Vandalieu, Zran and Eleanora had also been protected by the Fire Ghosts.

They had expressions of agreement on their faces.

"Someone like him isn't even a worthy enemy for Vandalieu-sama," said Eleanora.

"You're right about that," Zran agreed. "I feel foolish for panicking about him."

As they said, what was happening between Vandalieu and Kanata could no longer be called a fight to the death. Vandalieu was one-sidedly driving Kanata into a corner.

“Can you do it like this?” Vandalieu asked.

“Leave it to us!” Obeying the will in the Mana that Vandalieu transferred to them, the Fire Ghosts... the dead spirits of flames, attacked Kanata. Some of them became flaming spears, some crawled like snakes and others still transformed into giant skulls, moving to scorch Kanata with their dark red flames.

This was the effect of the Dead Spirit Magic skill that Vandalieu acquired a short while ago. One might assume that Dead Spirit Magic would be similar to the skills that allowed him to manipulate dead bodies and turn them into Zombies and Skeletons. However, it was effectively a skill similar to Spiritual Magic.

Just as Spiritual Mages would transfer their Mana and their will to spirits, allowing them to cast spells more efficiently than simply using magic of one of the attributes, Vandalieu transferred his Mana and his will to the dead spirits and had them cast spells on his behalf.

The Fire Ghosts, which had been charmed by his Death-Attribute Charm, attacked their enemy, Kanata, with no mercy.

Kanata tried to avoid them at first, but the Fire Ghosts had all changed their shapes to become spears, snakes and skulls made of flames. No matter how much he avoided them, they chased him persistently.

“F-flames, Wind – GAH?!” Kanata’s incantation was interrupted by his own scream. *“Why can’t I pass through them?!”*

Unable to withstand the persistent chase of the Fire Ghosts, Kanata had tried to pass through them with Gungnir and attack with wind-attribute magic, but against his expectations, the dark red flames had wrapped around his body and begun to burn him rather than passing through.

“Ground!”

Kanata tried to escape beneath the ground’s surface, but his legs didn’t sink at all.

“W-what the hell?! Why isn’t my Gungnir activating?!”

“It is,” Vandalieu told him. “But it’s just – it’s called Gungnir, is it? – That penetration ability just can’t pass through ‘spirit form.’”

Kanata's Gungnir was an ability that allowed him to penetrate anything he designated as a target. If he designated weapons as a target, not only would his enemies' weapons pass through him, but his own weapons would slip through his fingers and fall to the ground.

Vandalieu had more or less figured this out from what the spirits had told him. Kanata had apparently fought barehanded when he had designated 'weapons' as the ability's target, and there were numerous similar examples in his use of Gungnir as well.

That was why Vandalieu used the one thing Kanata couldn't slip through. Spirit form.

Spirit form was something that resided within the bodies of all living creatures, including humans. If Kanata were to use Gungnir to pass through it, this would be an act equivalent to his physical body discarding his spirit and soul. It would be no different from committing suicide; it was something that Kanata's instincts prevented him from doing.

That was why Kanata couldn't avoid the attacks of the Fire Ghosts, whose spirit form bodies themselves were burning. And Vandalieu had used Spirit Form Transformation on a part of his physical body, extended it behind the walls, floors and ceiling and used Materialization.

"Ah, I have some other attacks that you can't pass through, too," said Vandalieu. "For example... ■■■■■!"

Vandalieu pursed his lips and released a Scream directed in Kanata's direction. Kanata, who was struggling to withstand the Fire Ghosts' attacks with his Fire-Attribute Resistance and Wind-Attribute Resistance and somehow trying to make a counterattack, took a direct hit and let out a scream as he covered his ears.

"M-MY EEEEEARS!"

His Mental Corruption mostly blocked Vandalieu's Mental Encroachment, but Scream was a skill rather than a spell. Thus, it was impossible for Kanata to block the direct attack on his sense of hearing, the harsh noise that sounded like fragments of glass being grinded against each other.

This was another of Gungnir's weaknesses. If Kanata were to designate sound as a target, he wouldn't be able to recite any incantations himself. He couldn't designate sound as a target for Gungnir if he intended to cast spells.

“Also, your final weakness is –” As Kanata suffered with blood pouring out of his ears, Vandalieu approached him defenselessly.

“Guh, *Mana!*”

Kanata drew his knife with his burnt, blistered hand and threw it at Vandalieu as his only way to recover from this hopeless situation.

Vandalieu effortlessly deflected it with his claws.

“No matter what kind of attacks you use, you can’t designate your enemy’s body as a target for your ability. If you did, you wouldn’t be able to harm them, after all,” said Vandalieu. “That’s why I can just use my physical body to protect myself. Of course, my claws –”

“*Claws!*” Kanata shouted, throwing another knife.

This time, Vandalieu struck it down with his extended tongue.

“Even if you designate my claws as a target, I can simply use parts other than my claws to defend,” said Vandalieu. “Well, I wouldn’t die from a knife of that size hitting me, anyway,” he added, speaking with his tongue extended out of his mouth and twisting around. As his skill had leveled up, he was now able to extend it even further.

“...?!” This time, Kanata was lost for words.

“Well, in summary... you showed off your cheat-like ability too much, when you’re supposed to use it to kill the enemy the first time he sees it,” Vandalieu concluded. “Also, why aren’t you using martial skills? If you did, you might have been able to put up a better fight.”

If Kanata hadn’t killed anyone or used Gungnir before attempting to kill Vandalieu, he probably wouldn’t have suffered such an utter defeat.

If he had used martial skills, there might have been a chance for him to kill Vandalieu. At the very least, he wouldn’t have had his knife deflected by Vandalieu’s tongue.

Truly exasperated, Vandalieu transferred his Mana to Levia and all of the Fire Ghosts, including Kanata’s victims.

“I don’t mind stabbing him with my tongue to finish him off, but... can you do it?” he asked them.

“Yes, everyone, aid me!” Levia cried. With her dress of dark-red flames expanding, she closed in on Kanata.

“Gih?!”

Levia’s appearance changed in an instant; she turned into restraints that bound Kanata down in a crucified position. Starting from his legs, the dead began crawling their way up his body.

An unsightly scream came from Kanata’s mouth.

“Burning Funeral... You seem to possess Fire-Attribute Resistance, but it appears that it is working against you now,” said Vandalieu. “It’s extremely painful and agonizing, isn’t it? But you won’t be able to die so quickly.”

This isn’t what I was told! Kanata screamed in his mind as his entire body burned little by little. Why is this guy stronger than me when I was forced to go through harsh army training in Origin?! Why can he dodge my knives so easily? He doesn’t even feel any unrest or fear?! He’s a guy who spent twenty years in Origin as a guinea pig! Weakened, my ass! Isn’t he way more troublesome than when he was an Undead?! I have a body that can’t be affected by disease or poison, but I’m still so powerless against him!

Kanata had assumed that he had known everything about Vandalieu from using his own common sense to interpret the information that Rodcorte had given him, but this had turned out to be a mistake.

The information that Rodcorte had given Kanata was only information that applied at the time he had gathered it. And that information had been gained by looking through the eyes of others. He had essentially watched a documentary with no commentary; it wasn’t information that he had gathered firsthand.

Vandalieu had continued growing after this, and he had undergone much harsher experiences after reincarnating in Lambda than Kanata ever had.

Meanwhile, Kanata hadn’t put in any effort after reincarnating in Lambda. He had no Job and his Attribute Values were just a little above those of the average individual who has leveled one common Job from level 0 to 100.

Kanata's Mana had already run out; he had no means of escape. He had no choice but to simply wait until he became a burnt corpse. But even so, Kanata didn't think back and regret his actions. For him, this wasn't the end.

"Damn it!" he screamed. "But don't get so full of yourself, you necrophile bastard! You thought you'd be able to turn me into an Undead and make me talk, right?! Hihi, too bad for you!"

"...What are you talking about?" asked Vandalieu.

"Those of us who are being reincarnated here, even if we die, we can return to the god before you can turn us into Undead! No matter how many times you kill us, there'll be no end! We'll just have the god reincarnate us over and over, and we'll definitely kill you!" Kanata screamed.

Kanata had no intention of dying quietly and giving up on his reward. He intended to request Rodcorte for another chance to get revenge on Vandalieu, who was looking down on him despite being a dropout of a reincarnated individual, and next time, he would certainly receive his reward, the fourth life that he had been promised.

"I won't let my guard down next time!" he shouted. "I won't face you alone, either! I'll cooperate with the others and we'll torture you before we kill you! The god promised a fourth life full of luxury to anyone who kills you, so everyone will be aiming for you! Even *Amemiya*, even Naruse!"

Vandalieu's tongue, which had still been extended outside, loosened and returned to the inside of his mouth.

Taking this as a sign that Vandalieu's mind had broken, Kanata felt such joy that he forgot the pain of his body being burned.

"PREPARE YOURSEEEELF! After I kill you, I'll kill those women around you – kaheh?!"

"– Sharp Tongue."

There was a wet-sounding noise that was lost in Kanata's scream of resentment, as well as the sound of a crack appearing in a hard object.

From Kanata's point of view, it appeared as if Vandalieu's tongue had pierced his chest. But there was no blood. Confused, he wondered whether he had accidentally used

Gungnir, but Vandalieu returned his tongue to his mouth and continued speaking.

“I just used my spirit-form tongue to break your soul,” he said. “It’s my first time doing it with my tongue, so I couldn’t break it into pieces with a single attack. But I put a deep crack in it, so I’m sure it will break soon.”

“Eh? Huh? M-my soul?” Kanata repeated blankly.

“In other words, you are finished here. There won’t be anything after your death, no reincarnation, no fourth life.”

“Y-you’re lying! There’s no way such a thing – GAAH!”

Kanata’s face turned pale for the first time as he was consumed by a pain completely different from that of his body being seared by flames. The pain was intense, but he couldn’t tell which part of his body was hurting.

“The god, GAAAH! Didn’t mention... anything about...!”

Kanata’s body was still resisting the flames, but the crack in the important thing that made up the being ‘Kaidou Kanata’ grew deeper and wider.

“So, you didn’t know about it after all,” said Vandalieu. “If you did, you wouldn’t have said the stupid things you said just a moment ago. Well, even if you didn’t say them, I did intend to break your soul anyway.”

Kanata had been panicked and flustered up to this point, but he hadn’t felt the raw despair that his face was filled with now.

“No, stop it, how, how can you do such a horrible thing?!” he cried. “To think that there’s nothing left in the future for me... I-I still have a lot of things I want to do! I don’t want to die, please spare me!”

Kanata screamed, feeling the terrifying sensation of his very being collapsing steadily.

Vandalieu gave a deep sigh. “Everyone thinks that,” he said. “Including the people that you’ve killed and even the people that I’ve killed. Life isn’t a game that you can reset, you know? You should have faced reality a little more.”

For Vandalieu, who was doing his utmost to live his third life in Lambda because he

didn't want a fourth one, the way Kanata lived was worthy of scorn.

Kanata felt anger take over his entire consciousness as he realized that there was contempt for him somewhere in the depths of Vandalieu's expressionlessness.

"DAMN IIIIIT! I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME, YOU SHITTY FAILURE OF A BASTARD!"

Using the Assignable Active Skill* in his Status that he had made fun of for being like something out of a game, Kanata acquired the Surpass Limits skill at level 5.

Using this to overcome his limits, Kanata tried to deal Vandalieu a blow in return, but –

"– Pyuh." Letting out a comical noise, his head went limp and fell back against the ground. Though his heart was still beating, he was now completely motionless.

"Princess-sama," said Vandalieu.

He transferred Mana to Levia, who used it to burn Kanata's head clean off.

Kanata's decapitated head with a scorched, black neck rolled across the floor.

Not only Levia, but Vandalieu, who had been making little progress lately, suddenly leveled up with this influx of Experience Points.

『You have acquired the Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed (Small) and Enhanced Physical Ability (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) skills!』

『The levels of the Enhanced Agility, Commanding, Dead Spirit Magic and God Slayer skills have leveled up!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 ,

【Taboo Name】

- **Job:** Venom Fist User
- **Level:** 100
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 344
 - Mana: 379,120,344
 - Strength: 188
 - Agility: 251
 - Stamina: 159
 - Intelligence: 784
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Healing: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dark Vision
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 7
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 4
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed (Small) (NEW!)
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 2 (Transformed from Bloodsucking!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6
 - Golem Transmutation: Level 6
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Mana Control: Level 4
 - Spirit Form: Level 7
 - Carpentry: Level 4
 - Engineering: Level 3
 - Cooking: Level 4

- Alchemy: Level 4
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
- Soul Break: Level 6
- Multi-Cast: Level 5
- Long-distance Control: Level 6
- Surgery: Level 3
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
- Materialization: Level 4
- Coordination: Level 3
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
- Commanding: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Farming: Level 3
- Clothing: Level 2
- Throwing: Level 3
- Scream: Level 3
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 4
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 3
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 4
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

Despite having a degenerate nature, Kanata was someone who had been granted cheat-like abilities by the god of reincarnation. It seemed that such beings yielded an amount of Experience points that couldn't be compared to normal monsters or humans.

"Vandalieu-sama, there are ninety-nine remaining, aren't there?" said Eleanora.

"Even cheat-like abilities are no match for the Holy Son," said Zran. "At this rate, won't you eliminate them all before you need to become a nobleman?"

"We will be your arms and legs and fight for you, our new king!" said Levia.

Everyone was excited over the fact that Vandalieu had so one-sidedly defeated someone from another world with cheat-like abilities, who was supposed to have been a powerful foe. But Vandalieu himself remained calm.

“No, I won’t necessarily be killing the other ninety-nine,” he said. “There might be people who don’t want to fight me, after all.”

“But this scum said...” Eleanora muttered.

“We can’t trust the words of such scum,” said Vandalieu.

Among the things that Kanata had said, Vandalieu didn’t really believe the parts about the others who would reincarnate here.

Vandalieu didn’t know what kind of social position Kanata had in Origin, nor did he know of his relationships with the others reincarnated by Rodcorte. But judging from his actions and words, it was difficult to believe that he had been an important figure. Even if he did have some close friends, they were probably few in number.

The others who would reincarnate here would probably already know, or soon know, about Kanata’s demise and the fact that Vandalieu was the one who had caused it, but... Wouldn’t there be some who changed their opinions given this information?

Other than keeping quiet about my Soul Break, I think Rodcorte is underestimating me when he tells the others about me. With that being the case, the fact that I’ve destroyed Kanata should be enough to make the others reconsider coming after me.

Of course, there would be some among them that would criticize Vandalieu for having broken Kanata’s soul. Even if he told them about the inhuman things that Kanata had done, there might be some with flowery ideals in their heads insisting that Kanata was still a human.

It was unlikely that all of them would be like that, however.

“For now, we’ll deal with the others reincarnating here with the same policy as we’ve done up until now... but what should we do if they all reincarnate here with adult bodies?” Vandalieu wondered.

If they were all to start in this world with no bonds with other people, the efforts that Vandalieu was planning to make in order to become an honorary nobleman, gain

societal fame and create circumstances where it would be difficult to lay a hand on him...

“It won’t be pointless, will it?” said Zran. “If you become great before them, Holy Son, even if they act like heroes and try to find faults with you, those around you will be your allies.”

“Indeed,” Eleanora agreed. “Even if they have incredible skills, if it comes down to choosing between people whose identities and origins are unknown and a well-known person, people will normally support the well-known person, won’t they?”

“Eh? You already rule Talosheim, yet you want to become even greater?” asked Levia. “You are an unexpectedly ambitious individual.”

“Our new king intends to reign supreme over this world...!”

“No wonder there’s a god sending assassins after him.”

“We have already perished. If we can become the cornerstones for our king’s rule, nothing would make us happier!”

Princess Levia and the Ghosts of her bodyguards were stirring in excitement. It seemed that Vandalieu needed to discuss things with them a little more.

“Wait, I don’t have any intentions of reigning supreme or ruling the world,” he said. “For now, we’ll destroy this place so that people don’t make a fuss over the seal on the Demon King’s blood being removed, make it look like this guy on the ground here was the one who did it... and I suppose we’ll stop by the treasury where the treasures stolen from Princess Levia are being kept before we return.”

It would be bad if it became known that Vandalieu and his companions had infiltrated the castle and removed the seal on the Demon King’s blood, but with that said, slaughtering everyone in Duke Hartner’s castle wasn’t a good idea, either.

Vandalieu decided to be satisfied with these measures.

“Well then, tomorrow night, let’s fly to the city ruins near the tunnel where Borkus and the others are headed,” he said.

After retrieving the coffin in which the Demon King’s blood had been sealed and the

remains of the whips that had bound it, Vandalieu and his companions put Duke Hartner's castle behind them.

CHAPTER 81

THE SUNKEN HOUSE OF THE DUKE AND VISITING THE CULTIVATION VILLAGE AGAIN

That morning, there was a somewhat restless atmosphere around Duke Hartner's castle.

The current Duke Hartner was completely bedridden, conscious for perhaps only a few hours a day.

But the conflict was deepening between the two brothers competing to be the heir who was to act in the duke's stead.

The domestic affairs party advocating that the most important thing was protecting the Hartner Duchy from the Empire and that the duchy's army was nothing more than a shield for that purpose. It was led by Lord Belton, the duke's second son, born to his legal wife.

The advocates of war arguing that the Amid Empire should be attacked and the Sauron Duchy recovered in order to bring even further prosperity to the Hartner Duchy. They were led by Lord Lucas, the duke's eldest son, born to his concubine.

Normally, Lord Belton would be overwhelmingly favored in this dispute, but with the Hartner Duchy having become the frontline in the war against the Amid Empire, Lord Lucas's influence had grown significantly with the army's support.

Before, the people had thought it ideal if Belton acted as the head of house and made use of his shrewdness for managing domestic affairs while Lucas used his tactical genius to lead the army. But now, though their numbers were still small, there was a growing number of people saying that Lucas should act as the head of house and take bold actions with the army, with Belton staying in the duchy and supporting him.

Normally, it wouldn't matter what the masses said; once the current head of family named his heir, the dispute over who would succeed him would end. But the current Duke Hartner said something different every time he opened his eyes; despite appearing conscious, it was questionable as to whether he hadn't gone senile, so even

his vassals were at the end of their wits.

As a result, the duchy was divided into Belton's faction and Lucas's faction, as well as a third faction in the middle comprised of people who simply did their daily work without being concerned, as they didn't stand to gain or lose anything no matter who succeeded the duke.

Of course, this had created a strained atmosphere, but the situation had been ongoing for a long time, so the servants were all completely accustomed to it by now.

"Belton-sama, I have a little something I would like to discuss."

Lord Belton, who had been heading towards the dining hall to eat an early breakfast, was called out by Baron Ikus, one of his trusted confidants. Baron Ikus was an honorary nobleman serving as a civil official. Though he was a subordinate of the finance minister of Lucas's faction who was trying to use the war to stimulate the economy, Ikus himself was on Belton's side.

Of course, this was only true because he was expecting a promotion and an increase in his court rank once Belton became duke.

"What is it, Baron Ikus?" asked Lord Belton.

"It seems that the Mages' Guild has been behaving strangely as of late," Baron Ikus reported. "The Guild Master Kinarp and several of the higher-ranking members are always inattentive no matter what people try, and it appears that several of their guards have gone missing."

"Oh dear," Lord Belton whispered quietly. The Mages' Guild was one of his bases of support. Although each Guild took an official stance of political neutrality, the support of the Mages' Guild, which was developing all kinds of Magic Items and producing exceptional mages in large numbers, couldn't be ignored given the current situation.

Belton's policy was that the maintenance of public order and the extermination of monsters should be left to the guards and knights, so he was particularly unpopular with the Adventurers' Guild. Bribing the Guild Master of the Guild headquarters was proving effective, but it was still true that there were many in the Guild branches of each region who held animosity towards him. Belton did want to maintain his support from the other Guilds and the Churches in order to compensate for this, however.

“Is this Ani-ue’s* doing?”

TLN: For those who don’t know, this is a fancy/polite honorific for “older brother.”*

Had Lord Lucas’s subordinates bribed them? Or were they being blackmailed in some way, perhaps? This was what Lord Belton was asking with his brief question.

“That does not appear to be the case,” Baron Ikus replied. “We were not able to confirm any movements from Lucas-sama’s subordinates. But we have been receiving some curious reports. I believe I can provide further information on these once they have been confirmed.”

“I understand,” said Lord Belton. “Baron Ikus, I am sorry for making you work so hard, but I will be counting on you.”

“Yes, sir.” Baron Ikus left with a bow.

He was a man who excelled at gathering information using spies. No matter what happened, he would be able to thoroughly investigate matters and provide good reports.

Lord Belton watched as Baron Ikus walked away, holding high expectations of him.

Suddenly, without warning, Lord Belton felt a small tremor at his feet.

“An earthquake?” he wondered.

It is small, but earthquakes are rare. No sooner had this thought crossed his mind, the tremor grew larger, accompanied by a thunderous noise.

A large hole appeared in the floor right below Baron Ikus, and he screamed as he fell into it helplessly.

“B-BAROOON?!” Lord Belton shouted.

“Belton-sama, it is too dangerous, please get back! Please get back!” One of Lord Belton’s servants, who had been accompanying him silently like a shadow, hastily stepped forward to pull him to safety.

On this day, Duke Hartner’s castle sank slightly, in a physical manner.

『The levels of the Carpentry, Engineering and Golem Transmutation skills have increased!』

Kinarp, the man serving as the Mage's Guild's Guild Master, was startled as he regained consciousness.

"W-what on earth have I been doing?"

He looked around him to see the higher-ranking members of the Mages' Guild, wearing similarly astonished expressions... Among them were some of his accomplices who had connections to the subordinates of the Pure-breed Vampire Ternecia, though he wouldn't call them his comrades.

"Kinarp-dono, where is this place?"

"W-what were we doing? I-I cannot remember anything."

"Calm down, everyone," said Kinarp. "This is my mansion."

Kinarp had almost no memory of the past few days. However, he hadn't lost sight of what he was supposed to do.

"Remember, everyone. There is something that we must do," he said.

"Something that we must do... That's right, there is!"

"We cannot stay here; we must hurry!"

"Wait, we must not be hasty! If we are not careful, everything will be put to waste!"

"Now then, everyone, gather all of the necessary evidence and entrust them to those you trust," Kinarp instructed. "You must not give them to the subordinates of Belton-sama or Lucas-sama; they could hush it all up."

"Indeed, even if they are in conflict with each other, they would cooperate to conceal anything that would put a stain on the Hartner family's name."

“Then should we take them to ambassadors of other duchies?”

“There are no other options. Now then, get moving!”

After that, Kinarp and the others gathered all evidence of their crime and underhanded dealings and hurried to the embassy, where ambassadors from other duchies were working.

They were obeying the command that had been burned into their minds: “Confess your evil deeds and reveal them to the world.”



An investigation was carried out to discover the cause of the incident where Duke Hartner’s castle sank and caused serious injury to Baron Ikus. Some time later, it became clear that it was the collapse of the underground space beneath the castle, commonly known as the “underground cemetery.”

Why had this place, which had existed since over a hundred thousand years ago, long before the construction of the castle, suddenly collapsed? It was determined to be the work of the man whose corpse was found there, the one known as “Kaidou Kanata.”

This man had stolen from merchants and released an advanced fire-attribute spell in the Adventurers’ Guild, causing many casualties. Considering his unusual actions, it was concluded that he must have been a subordinate of an evil god.

Plotting to resurrect the Demon King, he had somehow broken the champion’s seal. But he had died, probably due to a conflict with his allies or some accident that occurred when the seal was removed.

Perhaps due to anxiety, the current Duke Hartner’s condition worsened upon learning of this incident. He had been waking up at least once every few days, but now he had been reduced to incoherent muttering. At this rate, it was unlikely that he would live to see next year’s spring.

In addition to this, some of the high-ranking members of the Mages’ Guild that had been supporting Lord Belton, including the Guild Master Kinarp, had run to ambassadors dispatched from other duchies with evidence of the various crimes they had committed and evidence of their collaboration with the Pure-breed Vampires who

worshipped the evil gods. This had caused great shock to the important figures in the Orbaume Kingdom.

Prominent supporters of Lord Belton, who previously had a ninety percent chance of being named the successor of the Hartner family, had revealed themselves to be traitors to humanity. And thanks to the evidence that Kinarp and his subordinates had handed to the ambassadors, it had become clear that Baron Ikus, who had yet to regain consciousness, had connections to the Vampires as well.

Lord Belton himself had testified that he hadn't known about this, and there was indeed no evidence proving that he had connections to the Vampires, but now, not only the noblemen of the Hartner Duchy, but all of the influential noblemen of the Orbaume Kingdom, had begun to doubt Lord Belton's leadership abilities.

Also, someone had broken into the duke's treasure storage room and stolen several treasures, but due to the aforementioned matters being of greater concern, it had been dealt with too late and the investigation wasn't carried out properly.

Incidentally, some had testified to seeing an enormous, ominous bird flying through the night sky, but none had taken them seriously, assuming that these people had simply gotten drunk and seen things.



Alda, the god of law and fate, was facing multiple difficult problems. The biggest of them was that Vandalieu, whom Alda had thought would spend at least several years hiding in the southern region of the Bahn Gaia continent, had crossed the mountain range and appeared on the eastern side.

Well, it seemed that he was doing some honest missionary work rather than plotting some large-scale conspiracy, however.

"Alda-sama, what could this person be thinking? I do not believe it likely that he truly wishes to become an adventurer."

"I do not know... Is he trying to create a base for his activities in the Orbaume Kingdom?"

The intelligence network for Alda and his subordinate gods were the believers who

worshipped them. Thus, it was impossible for Alda and his subordinates to know what these believers did not know. Normally, they would do things such as dispatching Familiar Spirits to the world's surface more frequently, but many of the gods had lost their power during the battles against the Demon King and Vida and had not recovered. Though they were not short by many, there were not enough gods to maintain the world.

The gods' numbers had increased with those of the new generation, such as Mill, the Goddess of Slumber, but there were still not enough.

Also, Familiar Spirits were spiritual beings. If they were dispatched to monitor Vandalieu, there was the danger that they would be discovered and their souls would be broken. This would be impossible for a normal human, but that Dhampir would do so without hesitation.

And though this wasn't necessarily the next largest problem, a strange incident had occurred.

The incident itself had been nothing in comparison to the size of Vandalieu's deeds. A merchant and his daughter had been killed along with the adventurers escorting them and their belongings had been stolen. It was pitiful, but also a tragic incident that occurred in great numbers in Lambda.

"Who is this man?"

The strange thing was the criminal responsible.

According to the information brought to Alda by the other gods, his name was Kaidou Kanata. He was a man in his thirties with black hair and eyes, which would normally not be seen in that region, and he had possessed a unique skill that had never been confirmed to exist in Lambda, as well as the ability to cast advanced fire-attribute magic. And there were no records of him prior to this incident.

This lack of records was the strangest thing about him.

None of the gods knew of this man called Kanata, nor did they have any records of him. This was strange. In Lambda, the people knew of the gods' existence. Thus, every person, no matter how impious, had prayed to someone at least once.

Perhaps there are some who have never even made a single prayer in their lives, but

it is completely impossible for that to be true of every single person near such people.

At the very least, if they have ever stayed in a city or village, they would have exchanged words with someone and been seen by them.

Even if that has never occurred, as long as they are humans, they should have definitely have parents who gave birth to them.

The man named Kanata didn't even have parents. He had suddenly appeared and, just as suddenly, committed acts of violence.

It was a complete mystery as to where he had lived up until that age and where he had trained his skills to such a level.

If one were to accept very far-fetched theories, it was possible that there was a community nearby where people worshipped only gods who didn't work for Alda, and Kanata was a member of that community. But there was no sign of such a community existing in the area in which Kanata had appeared.

If he had used some lesser-used road to stay hidden while journeying from afar, then the senseless violence that he had committed after that wouldn't make sense.

"Fitun, it seems that you have an idea as to who this man named Kanata is," said Alda.

"Yes, Alda." Fitun seemed rather hesitant to offer his report on Kanata. "Actually, the man named Kaidou Kanata was a man whom I had set my sights on and bestowed my divine protection," he said.

"What? Curatos, the God of Records, has no record of this," said Alda.

"Indeed. This man named Kanata is a man who was born from a pregnant woman who died in a monster attack while she was journeying on a stagecoach to meet her husband... After that, perhaps on a whim or to save him as emergency rations later, he was raised by monsters. I believe that is why there is no record of him."

Indeed, if Kanata had been born under such circumstances, it wasn't strange to think that Curatos had no records of him.

"I happened to notice Kanata's existence, took a liking to his talent and qualities, and bestowed him my divine protection," said Fitun. "But it seems that this is what

corrupted him.”

“...So, you are saying that his unusual unique skill also originates from your divine protection?” Alda asked.

“Yes. There is no mistake.”

“It seems that some among his victims were your believers, however.”

“Yes; it seems that my divine protection and the fact that I was safeguarding him twisted this man’s nature and led him to depravity.”

“Why did you keep this man a secret even from Curatos?”

“That is... I believed that some would oppose to me granting him my divine protection and safeguarding him. I was imprudent.”

Alda couldn’t erase his suspicion of Fitun’s answers, but without concrete evidence, he couldn’t press Fitun further.

“I do not know why his body was discovered in the sacred underground area where a seal of the Demon King was, nor do I know why he left me, but...”

“Enough,” said Alda. “I understand. We must enquire Ninelord about the broken seal.”

Ninelord, the champion chosen by Shizarion, the god who had been destroyed by the Demon King. She had become a goddess, replaced Shizarion and was now managing the gods of the wind attribute. She was even more short of hands than Alda, but as the seal in question had been created by her, it was necessary to request her cooperation.

“Now then, I will excuse –” Fitun bowed and attempted to take his leave, but Alda asked him one final question.

“Wait. The man named Kaidou Kanata has a strange name. He wouldn’t be someone who came from another world, would he?”

Alda was suspicious of the surname “Kaidou,” a name that sounded foreign to him.

But Fitun didn’t seem to understand why Alda was asking him this question. “No, it seems that he was randomly given that name by a monster... Perhaps he was named

Kaidou because they encountered him on a highway, and Kanata because he came from somewhere else...”

TLN: 街道/Kaidou means “highway.” Incidentally, this isn’t the correct kanji spelling for Kanata’s surname; it’s actually 海藤 which means “ocean wisteria.” かなた/Kanata means something like “over there/other side/far away.”

“I see... I am sorry for stopping you,” said Alda.

“Not at all...” Fitun took his leave.

“I suppose I was overthinking things,” Alda murmured, shaking his head. “Now that I think about it, since Zuruwarn has not regained his power, summoning someone from another world to this one would be impossible. There are none among the Demon King’s surviving subordinates who possess that much power, either.”

Only Rodcorte, the God of Reincarnation, would be able to do such a thing. He repeatedly advocated the importance of development, but among all of the gods that Alda knew of, he was the one who had stockpiled the most power. With his authority, it wouldn’t be difficult for him to reincarnate the inhabitants of other worlds into Lambda.

“But still, the actions of this man named Kanata are simply too foolish,” Alda muttered.

He had killed several dozen people, robbed, raped and, though this was still only a suspicion at this stage, removed one of the Demon King’s seals. His actions didn’t contain a trace of the “development” that Rodcorte advocated.

It is probably my imagination after all.

The more important matters at hand were dealing with Vandalieu, who was making mysterious move after mysterious move, and the locations of the sealed fragments of the Demon King.



Fitun, who had left Alda’s side and returned to his own Divine Realm, celebrated the fact that he had fooled Alda successfully.

“HAHAHAHA! I did it! Now things will become interesting!”

It was good fortune that had allowed Fitun to be the first to notice the man who had been reincarnated from another world. One of his weak believers* had died, but this didn't matter; in fact, that believer was worthy of being praised for dying and giving Fitun this information.

TLN: Here, —匹/ippiki is used to indicate “one of his believers.” This counter is typically used for animals rather than people, while 一人/hitori which means “one person” is more commonly used indicate a single person. It's basically a sign of Fitun's contempt for his followers (considering them to be inferior/insignificant like animals, rather than respecting them as people). Included this TLN because this subtle nuance doesn't translate well to English.*

“There really was a monster attack on a pregnant woman around thirty years ago. Though I say so myself, I am quite brilliant for thinking of fooling Alda into thinking that a child had survived the attack,” Fitun gloated to himself. “Now then, Rodcorte... The Vandalieu whom you wish to kill so desperately is still alive and well. When will you send your next assassin?”

The moment Fitun became aware of Kanata, he had scraped off some of his own flesh to create a spirit clone of himself to monitor Kanata. He also managed to succeed in learning various things about Vandalieu that Alda didn't know about. Fitun also knew that none other than Vandalieu would have been capable of removing the Demon King's seal.

That was why he was concealing this information.

Fitun had been a god for over fifty thousand years. His days of extreme boredom were finally coming to an end.

“Now then, my beloved enemy who might be capable of killing me. Keep growing just as you are now. Now then, Rodcorte. Reincarnate someone to this world who, unlike that piece of waste matter you sent previously, is worthy of receiving my divine protection and sending my spirit clone to. Kufufu, KIHAAAAAAAAAAAAHA!”



Early in the morning, Kasim, Fester and Zeno were training hard behind the jack-of-all-trades store.

“Hngh, HAH!”

“Fester, keep your voice down.”

“Ah, sorry.”

They had been doing this training for a long time. However, it was only recently that they had become so enthusiastic about it... when Vandalieu had stopped by in this village and given them a training session.

Vandalieu had accomplished various unbelievable, miraculous things, but the thing that had surprised Kasim and his friends the most was the strength that he possessed despite his appearance.

Though it was only in the Unarmed Fighting Technique and Throwing, Vandalieu’s ability was far greater and more solid than those of Kasim’s party. With the Unarmed Fighting Technique in particular, he had properly learned the techniques rather than simply relying on his physical strength. He was like one of the instructors at the adventurers’ school.

“But you know, I couldn’t help getting so focused. Stuff like, ‘keep your arms closer to your body,’ and, ‘pay more attention to your feet.’”

“Yeah, I was told to keep my arms closer to my body as well.”

“I was told to improve my stamina.”

Vandalieu’s advice had been accurate.

He had engaged in practice battles with each of them, identified their problems and encouraged them in an unforgettable way, telling them, “I was advised about things like this before as well, so I think you can learn to do what I do, too.”

“But come to think of it, I wonder what kind of person his mother was?”

“There’s no doubt that she was an amazing person. She taught him magic and unarmed fighting, so... Vampires are amazing after all.”

Kasim and his friends did have some misunderstandings, however.

“I wonder what Vandalieu is doing now?”

“Umm, I suppose it’s been around a week since he went to the city. Wouldn’t he already be living in a dorm of the adventurers’ school by now?”

“But he’s a special case; it wouldn’t be strange for him to become a D-class adventurer without going to the school. He has a unique skill, but not only that, his magic and martial skills are ridiculous as well, right? Wouldn’t the school’s instructors have nothing to teach him?”

“In fact, *he* could probably teach *them* a lot of things.”

“But he wouldn’t become D-class right away. There’s an exam, right?”

In order for one to become promoted to D-class, it is necessary to take an examination to practically determine whether he or she can kill a person. This would probably be criticized as inhumane on Earth, but the adventurers of Lambda have to exterminate bandits and protect clients that they are escorting.

If adventurers hesitate to kill in such situations and allowed their enemies to escape, causing further victims or allowing their clients to be killed, there would be no point in hiring them.

That is why one cannot become a D-class adventurer without being able to kill people.

“I wonder if he can do it?”

“We need to catch up to Vandalieu before we can worry about him. He is our senpai as an adventurer, after all.”

“You’re right. We need to show him a thing or two the next time we meet –”

“Excuse me.”

“Oi, oi, what are you... Uwah, Vandalieu, why are you here?!”

Vandalieu hadn't been called out to (or noticed) by the gatekeeper, so he had entered the Seventh Cultivate Village, found the three of them training behind the jack-of-all-trades store and approached them.

"Didn't you become an adventurer in the city? Did something happen in the city? Oyajisan was worried because the traveling merchant that was supposed to come is late."

It seemed that news of the monster rampage that had happened in the city of Niarki hadn't reached the cultivation villages yet.

"No, the rules have changed so that Dhampirs below the age of ten can't register, so I've given up on it for now," said Vandalieu.

"Eh, the rules have changed?!"

"Forget that! You're less than ten years old?!"

It seemed that Kasim and his friends had indeed mistaken Vandalieu's age. Different races developed differently, so they couldn't really be blamed for that.

"There is also a rumor that within the year, Dhampirs will be disallowed from entering the adventurers' school, so I'm thinking of looking for an opportunity to register as an adventurer in another duchy," said Vandalieu.

Some A-class adventurer somewhere would apparently do something about it, but Vandalieu didn't want to get involved with him right now, so he certainly wouldn't rely on that happening. Thinking that he could become an adventurer thanks to that guy was something that he absolutely did not want to do.

"Look for an opportunity, you say... it takes a month to reach another duchy. Well, you can fly, so it might only take you a few days."

"Yeah, you can fly, after all."

Aware that Vandalieu had used Flight to travel between the cultivation villages, Kasim and his friends didn't really try to dissuade him from this idea.

"Well then, if you don't mind, won't you join our party until then?" asked Kasim.

Vandalieu blinked. "I'm a civilian, though," he said.

“There’s no rule saying that you can’t add a civilian to your party!” said Kasim.

“Normally, it wouldn’t be something that would need a rule,” said Zeno. “But you’re stronger than us, and... he asked in a self-important kind of way by asking if you’d join us, but it’s more like ‘please make us your disciples.’”

“It’s just as Zeno says,” said Fester. “We’re weaker than you, but we can at least be a hindrance for you!”

“Fester, that’s the worst thing to say, even if it is a joke... and it’s true, so it isn’t funny...”

It seemed that Vandalieu had become idolized by his senpais. For a moment, he thought that it would be good to form a party of adventurers and a civilian, but there was something that he needed to do.

“I don’t mind,” he said. “But I am thinking of making a return to where I was raised.”

He couldn’t tell them that he was planning to attack the nearby slave-run mine and rescue the slaves, so he decided to deceive them using the same story that he had told them before.

“I see... then next time you have a chance, can you train us again?”

Vandalieu nodded. “Of course.”

Kasim and his friends didn’t look like they were particularly doubtful of his story, and Vandalieu could feel his heart, which had hardened due to the events in the city, softening. It seemed that these three were a source of comfort for him.

“So, are you going to leave soon?” Kasim asked. “In autumn, we’re going to build the shrine and have a harvest festival, so make sure you come and visit around then.”

Each time Vandalieu had saved the people of the cultivation villages, he had asked for the construction of a shrine to Vida as his reward. It seemed that they would be complete in autumn.

He hadn’t requested for one to be built in the Seventh Cultivation Village, however.

“In this village?” Vandalieu asked.

“Yeah, Oyaji-san of the jack-of-all-trades store and the village chief are building it. They said it’s a good opportunity to do it, and it’ll bring good luck, too.”

“Ivan was really excited about it. He was a stonemason before we fled to the Hartner Duchy.”

“He said he’d build a stone statue of you, too.”

It seemed that Vandalieu had become a figure of power or something without even realizing it. The fact that Vida’s religion was becoming more active was something that Vandalieu and his companions should welcome, but was a statue of him being built such a good idea?

Rudely hoping that the statue wouldn’t resemble him much, Vandalieu asked another question. “Umm, what are the other cultivation villages doing, then?”

A statue of him was being built in this village just because he had saved Ivan. How were things in the other cultivation villages?

“The other villages? Umm... Well, at churches, it isn’t rare for stone statues of saints and heroes to be built as well as statues of the gods.”

“That’s right. And even though we say statues, they’re not really that impressive. They’ll be just a little bigger than you actually are, won’t they?”

It seemed that Vandalieu would go down in the history of these villages.

『You have acquired the Title, ‘Guardian of the Cultivation Villages!’』

This was even reflected in Vandalieu’s status. He was happy about this one, as it was a Title that would be accepted in society without needing him to make an effort to explain it.

“Ah, and I want to borrow your Job-changing room today,” said Vandalieu.

“That’s in the village chief’s house.”

Job-changing rooms were facilities that were usually installed in Guild buildings, but it wasn't only adventurers, mages, soldiers and knights who needed them. Even farmers and hunters working in farming villages needed the Farmer and Hunter Jobs.

As such, Job-changing rooms were often installed in the village chief's house in small villages.

Vandalieu visited the village chief's house, offered the wine that he had randomly taken from the wine cellar that had been in the mansion of the Mages' Guild's Guild Master as a present and entered the Job-changing room.

And then he touched the crystal ball that was far smaller than the one in Talosheim.

『Jobs that can be selected: 【Insect User】 【Archenemy】 【Zombie Maker】 【Tree Caster】 【Corpse Demon Commander】 【Disease Demon】 【Spirit Warrior】 【Whip Tongue Calamity】 【Vengeful Berserker】 【Dead Spirit Mage】 【Dark Healer】 【Labyrinth Creator】 【Demon King User】 【Madoushi*】 』

TLN: This is usually translated to "Sorcerer" but a reader who has read ahead in raws has advised me to leave this untranslated for now. The kanji is 魔導士, something like "evil/magic guide."*

"There's a whole bunch of new ones again."

Perhaps Vandalieu would never have problems with Job-changing for the rest of his life. No, his lifespan was somewhere between three thousand and five thousand years, so perhaps it wasn't to *that* extent.

Was Whip Tongue Calamity read 'Benzetsuka*'? It had probably appeared because Vandalieu had been fighting with his tongue.

TLN: Kanji reading. The three kanji are literally 'whip', 'tongue' and 'calamity.'*

What could Vengeful Berserker be? Vandalieu imagined that it would have something to do with his new skills like Scream, Mental Encroachment and Grotesque Mind.

Dead Spirit Mage was a Job that would work with the Dead Spirit Magic skill. It might let him draw more power out of Princess Levia and the other Ghosts.

Dark Healer would probably provide bonuses to the Surgery and Venom Secretion skills. Had it appeared because of the medical deeds he had performed in the cultivation villages?

Labyrinth Creator was there because he had created a Dungeon, and Demon King user because he had consumed the Demon King's sealed blood.

But what could Madoushi be? Vandalieu's curse was supposed to prevent Jobs that had been previously discovered from appearing; it sounded like the kind of Job that one would normally be able to acquire. Was it different from the Mage Job? ... It seemed suspicious. Wasn't it some kind of trap?

"First of all, Labyrinth Creator and Demon King User will make people think I'm dangerous if they see it, so I'll leave them for later... the same goes for Dead Spirit Mage, but Madoushi is suspicious... so, that leaves a choice between Insect User, Tree Caster, Spirit Warrior and Dark Healer, I suppose." Vandalieu sighed. "If I'd managed to register as an adventurer, I wouldn't have to worry about it so much."

Since his Status would be seen as he registered, he couldn't acquire Jobs that would be problematic if seen yet. Or perhaps he should have registered at the Mages' Guild after he had brainwashed the Guild Master? But it would have been problematic in the future if he had registered under the recommendation of someone who was about to lose his social standing... it was almost certain that he would be executed, or at least imprisoned for life.

"Alright, let's go with Insect User," Vandalieu decided.

『You have acquired the Insect Binding Technique skill!』

『The levels of the Long-distance Control, Mana Control, Insect Binding Technique and Enhanced Physical Ability (Claws, Fangs, Tongue) skills have increased!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Taboo Name】
- **Job:** Insect User
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 344
 - Mana: 379,120,344
 - Strength: 188
 - Agility: 251
 - Stamina: 159
 - Intelligence: 784
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 4
 - Rapid Healing: Level 6
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 7
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 4
 - Dark Vision
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 7
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 6
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 4
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 4
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 2
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 4
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Small
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 2
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6
 - Golem Transmutation: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Mana Control: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)

- Spirit Form: Level 7
- Carpentry: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Engineering: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Cooking: Level 4
- Alchemy: Level 4
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
- Soul Break: Level 6
- Multi-Cast: Level 5
- Long-distance Control: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surgery: Level 3
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
- Materialization: Level 4
- Coordination: Level 3
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
- Commanding: Level 2
- Farming: Level 3
- Clothing: Level 2
- Throwing: Level 3
- Scream: Level 3
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 2
- Insect Binding Technique: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 4
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 4
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 3
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 4
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

“Insect Binding Technique? Not manipulating, but binding? Well, I’ll examine it later... I suppose I’ll go and wait for Borkus and the others at the city where the Goblin King’s village was. If it seems like they’re going to take some time, I could fly to the slave-run mine to have a look at things first, too.”



Job explanation:

【Venom Fist User】

A Job one can acquire if he meets the Attribute Value requirements and possesses the Unarmed Fighting Technique skill at level 2, in addition to being knowledgeable in regards to various drugs, having learned their effects, being able to actually produce them and produce antidotes for them.

Because it requires accurate scientific knowledge, nobody in Lambda currently possesses this Job other than Vandalieu.

It becomes possible to acquire the Venom Secretion skill, which allows the secretion of various drugs from the fangs, tongue and nails of every limb, as well as an Enhanced Physical Ability skill that enhances the fangs, tongue and claws. It also provides a bonus to skills such as Unarmed Fighting Technique, making it a Job suited for fighting on the frontlines.

This Job makes it easier to increase Vitality, Stamina and Agility, while providing few increases to Mana and Intelligence.

Title explanation:

【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】

A Title that one can acquire by saving inhabitants of cultivation villages and solving their problems, causing over ninety percent of the villagers to acknowledge him.

Cultivation projects involving someone who possesses this Title have a much greater chance of success. Also, when danger approaches the cultivation villages, it becomes likely that the person with this Title will happen to be present and deal with it.

There are Titles with similar effects, such as ‘Goddess of Cultivated Land’ and ‘Savior of Cultivated Land.’

CHAPTER 82

THE SHADOW GNAWING AT THE SLAVE-RUN MINE AND THE APPROACHING THREAT

After completing his Job-change, Vandalieu left the Seventh Cultivation Village and used Flight to catch up with Eleanora and the others, who had gone ahead of him.

But there were a lot of giant ravens around today and flying over the trees would be troublesome as he would run into them, so he was flying at a height below the trees' branches, weaving in between the trees.

Suddenly, there was a plopping sound and Vandalieu felt an unpleasant sensation on the back of his head.

"Hmm?"

Thinking that bird excrement or a tree's fruit had fallen onto him, he stopped and ran a hand through his hair, but there was nothing there. But it felt as if there was something crawling around. Even though he tried tracing the sensation with his finger and using Out-of-body Experience to look at the back of his own head, there was no sign of the object that had fallen onto him.

"...Well, whatever."

Danger Sense: Death wasn't responding, and though it was ticklish, it didn't really bother him. He decided to leave it be.



Rodcorte became aware of the destruction of Kaidou Kanata's soul before the circle of transmigration system raised its alarm.

Although there was no chance that Kanata would turn into an Undead, Rodcorte had already realized that there was a chance that he would have his soul broken by Vandalieu or be turned into a member of one of Vida's races.

Of course, this would have been a needless worry if Kanata had been able to dispose of Vandalieu, but in the end, he had been defeated. And it wasn't just a mere defeat.

"The situation is one step away from being the absolute worst it can be," Rodcorte murmured to himself.

It was unfortunate that Kanata's soul had been broken, but the reward Rodcorte had promised Kanata if he was able to defeat Vandalieu... This reward was to reincarnate him into a world with no magic or monsters, similar to earth, as the peerlessly handsome son of a rich family. Because Rodcorte had already removed Kanata's soul from the system to prepare to grant him this reward, his soul's destruction hadn't caused large damage to the system.

The problem was that Kanata had blurted out to Vandalieu that the rest of the people reincarnating from Origin would be coming to kill him, and that even if they were killed in Lambda, they would be reincarnated again right away.

This had caused Vandalieu to become warier and made him think that the people trying to kill him would reincarnate endlessly unless he broke their souls.

"In reality, things are not going that well."

Even after Kanata had reincarnated in Lambda, three of the reincarnated individuals in Origin had died. The fact that Shihouin Mari had killed Kanata, and the fact that she had done so because of the evil deeds he had been doing in the shadows, had become clear. Because of these events, there were fewer casualties than Rodcorte had expected, but it seemed that the group of reincarnated individuals had been disbanded.

Although they had all been reincarnated from the same Earth and been riding on the same boat, they were a group of people who didn't necessarily all share the same views. And within three years of reincarnating in Origin, there would have been changes to their sense of values.

The reason they had been part of a single group up until recently was likely due to the great presence of *Amemiya Hiroto*, whose ability was far above the others.

The problem was that the three who had died hadn't been happy about Rodcorte's request.

They had been surprised that the Undead they had killed was someone who had been reincarnated from Earth like them, but when asked to kill him again in Lambda, they had shaken their heads. Rodcorte had tried offering them rewards similar to the ones that Kanata had asked for, but they had still declined.

They had told him that they had no intention of killing Vandalieu even if they were to begin life again normally as children, let alone being reincarnated as adults immediately to work with Kanata.

“I’m tired of killing others. I want to live a normal life.”

“He has no way of telling us apart from everyone else, right? In that case, I don’t want to get involved with him.”

“Work with Kanata? Is that a joke? Even if he was our former comrade, I went through hell because of what he did.”

The first refused to engage in any fighting whatsoever, the second refused to get involved with Vandalieu and the third refused Rodcorte’s request because Kanata was more deserving of hate than Vandalieu.

Like in Origin, Rodcorte had given those reincarnating in Lambda destinies so that they would meet each other again, but it was unclear as to how they would act once they met Vandalieu.

They could do as they said and try not to get involved, but the opposite was also possible. If Vandalieu were to become someone who caused great harm to the countries and cities that they reincarnated in, they wouldn’t be able to ignore him.

They might even try to become his allies, but considering the disgraceful behavior Vandalieu had shown directly after his death in Origin, Rodcorte couldn’t imagine it likely that Vandalieu would accept them.

“Well, I do not know what will happen until I see things unfold,” Rodcorte said to himself. “I cannot predict what Vandalieu is truly thinking. To think that he would remove the seal on a part of the Demon King and even go as far as to absorb it.”

In Lambda, there were some who were making use of fragments of the Demon King... But no matter how much Mana Vandalieu had, he should have been taken over by the part of the Demon King he had absorbed and lost his sanity.

“Well, it matters not. I can use this as something to convince the others who will reincarnate in Lambda.”

Rodcorte would tell them that Vandalieu was a dangerous individual who was removing the seals on the Demon King. He could not afford to tell this information to the gods of Lambda, however.

If Alda and his subordinates were to learn of this, they would start hunting not only Vandalieu, but the rest of those reincarnated in Lambda as well.

Rodcorte had been worried that Kanata’s thoughtless behavior had caused Alda to sniff out Rodcorte’s actions, but it seemed that Alda and his subordinates were still oblivious to the existence of those reincarnated from Origin.

Perhaps they had assumed that Kanata was simply a criminal with a unique skill, or perhaps they were busier than Rodcorte had imagined and simply didn’t have the time to look through the records from a few of their followers.

“Either way, I suppose I should tell the next ones to reincarnate there that Vandalieu can break souls, that he has regained the power he had in Origin and that he has even surpassed his old power in some aspects.”

Rodcorte had kept these facts from Kanata, thinking that it would be problematic if he became fearful, but as a result, he had underestimated Vandalieu and attacked him with no sense of apprehension and no plan whatsoever, leading to his defeat.

If he told them about the danger of having their souls broken, they would be vigilant. There would probably be many who would decline his request as a result, but this would still be better than losing a great number of them pointlessly.

“It appears that the discord in Origin has settled down. Now then, I shall wait a while,” Rodcorte decided.



The ruins that had been occupied by the Goblin King were completely different now. The outer walls remained the same, but there were now many buildings built in rows on the inside, and watchtowers had been built as well.

It was as if the city had been restored.

But if one were to see the individuals gathered in this city, they wouldn't think that it had been restored at all.

"Ah, everyone... though I am no longer alive, I am able to meet all of you again..." a woman murmured in the city's center, her voice full of emotion. She was a beautiful Titan woman with dark skin, abundant curves, and hair and eyes of a color resembling flames, wearing a flame-like leotard.

But her legs stopped just above her knees, and she was floating in the air. Her flame-like hair and leotard were actually made of flames.

Levia, the former First Princess of Talosheim, had become a Rank 5 Blaze Ghost after defeating Kaidou Kanata.

"Princess!"

"Levia-sama, we...!"

"Curse you, Duke Hartner!"

Princess Levia was surrounded by hundreds of Undead Titans.

"I'm sorry, everyone! We couldn't protect a single thing that you entrusted us with!"

"Don't say that! It's the traitorous Hartner family that's at fault! They're sons of bitches who killed you and burned Princess Levia at the stake!"

Borkus roared in rage. "Kid, let's go and raid that slave-run mine right now, save those guys and then overrun this duchy!"

"There, there," said Vandalieu, pacifying the enraged Borkus as well as the other Titans. "Let's calm down. I said it before, but overrunning the duchy is dangerous because Heinz and his party are here."

In fact, it was indeed possible to inflict enormous damage to this duchy with the forces that Vandalieu had available to him.

Any castle wall would crumble with a single sword swing from Borkus, a powerful Rank 10 Undead. Soldiers and knights wouldn't even work as meat shields against him.

The other Undead and Vandalieu himself would be accompanying him as well.

They would spread deadly disease and poison around, kill men and women of all ages, turn them into Undead and repeat the cycle of slaughter. It would be an army of the dead that increased in numbers for each victim it claimed.

But there would be Heinz, an adventurer with ability worthy of S-class, and his party, the Five-colored Blades. There would be other A-class and B-class adventurers as well. And if things got bad, there would be support from the other duchies of the Orbaume Kingdom as well.

In that case, Vandalieu's army would lose.

"So, let's settle for only attacking the slave-run mine for now," said Vandalieu.

"That's fine!" said Borkus. "Let's get going!"

"I'm telling you, you can't," said Vandalieu, stopping him.

It wasn't that he was scared of failure. With the combat prowess of Borkus and the other Undead Titans, they would effortlessly defeat the soldiers guarding the slave-run mine that wasn't even on the frontline of the war, and easily reduce their watchtower to rubble.

"It would be terrible if all of the slaves got caught up in it and died, wouldn't it?" Vandalieu pointed out.

If the Titans attacked forcefully, there was no telling what circumstances would arise from the panic they would cause. The disordered soldiers might try to use the slaves as shields or decide to rape female slaves before their impending deaths.

And there was also a chance that the slaves would think that Borkus and the rest were simply monsters who had come to kill them rather than those who had come to rescue them.

If they decided to kill themselves, thinking that it would be better than being eaten alive, that would be problematic... though Vandalieu didn't want to mention this to Borkus and the other Undead Titans.

"With that being the case, we'll infiltrate first and make them understand that we're

there to save them,” said Vandalieu.

Borkus made a dissatisfied noise. “... There’s no other choice. But what are we going to do about the duke’s family?” he asked.

“I’ve made a scandal go public, sunk their castle and taken back some of the treasures they stole, so let’s leave it at that for now,” Vandalieu replied.

He had destroyed the underground graveyard and sunk the castle in order to conceal the fact that he had removed a seal of the Demon King. This was something that would cause anyone’s face to pale if they learned of it, though he wasn’t aware of this because of how simple it was for him to build, repair or even move buildings with Golem Transmutation.

The castle probably wouldn’t collapse anytime soon, but it was a national symbol for the Hartner Duchy and, in times of war, a point of defense.

It was therefore necessary for a new one to be built, but this would probably require a vast sum of money. As long as Vandalieu didn’t help them, anyway.

“By the way, Bocchan, about the treasures you took back...” said Saria.

“Yes, I’m holding onto them right now,” said Vandalieu.

He had taken about half of the stolen treasures back from the castle; the rest of them had been scattered and lost. They were items that had been given to noble families as rewards, Potions that had been consumed or treasures that had been donated to the Orbaume Kingdom’s central region (sold for support under the pretense of donation).

What remained was mostly jewelry rather than precious, expensive Magic Items like the Item Box. According to the spirits that had been haunting the duke until recently, the Item Box was still around, but it was being used for transporting goods to a military base connected to the former Sauron Duchy.

Borkus’s magic sword that was broken by Mikhail had also been a national treasure given to him by Talosheim’s king, so there had been fewer Magic Items among Talosheim’s national treasures to begin with.

Other than a few like the Second Princess Zandia, the Titan race wasn’t suited for magic and Talosheim had been isolated for a hundred thousand years, so excluding

the relics left behind by Zakkart, it had been a magically underdeveloped nation.

“But let’s have Braga and the rest take them back for us,” said Vandalieu.

Braga and the rest of the Black Goblin unit were planning to return to Talosheim with Marie and the other girls who were their lovers. Vandalieu had asked one last time to make sure that the girls really wanted to do this, but their decision hadn’t changed.

“I think it will be hard, but I will consider myself reborn and live with this person.”

“I’m sure it will be fine. This person isn’t a human, and yet, he is far kinder to me than any man has ever been.”

“I’ll treasure these two.” Braga had become the husband of two of them and suddenly appeared mature.

This must be the presence of a popular man, Vandalieu thought, but Braga turned on him and glared at him with half-closed eyes.

“King... I don’t know what you’re thinking, but you’re way more popular with the women than I am,” said Braga.

“...It’s not like I’m not aware of that,” said Vandalieu, who was currently being embraced from both sides, buried in abundant valleys.

“Phew... seeing Bocchan for the first time in a while feels really good,” said Rita, a look of ecstasy on her face.

“Uu, you’re right,” said Saria, looking shy and yet unable to disobey her desires. “I know it’s wrong, but I really can’t be separated from him.”

Both of them were embracing Vandalieu. He was now at the age where he was starting to become conscious of the opposite sex, so he wished that they would stop doing this in front of others, though.

“You two, stop clinging to Vandalieu-sama already,” Eleanora said to them.

“You’re fine because you’ve been with him this whole time, Eleanora-san! We’ve been staying in Talosheim!” Rita protested.

“Eleanora-san, us maids suffer withdrawal symptoms if we are separated from our master for more than three days!” said Saria.

“...I’m not sure if being a maid is really that kind of occupation?” Vandalieu said calmly, but for some reason, it seemed that Eleanora had accepted their points.

“It cannot be helped,” she said. “But make sure you do not tire Vandalieu-sama out.”

Apparently, it couldn’t be helped.

“Yes!” said the sisters in unison.

Rita and Saria loosened their grips slightly, making it a little easier for Vandalieu to breathe. Since their bodies were made of spirit form other than their armor, they provided a coolness that was perfect for the summer heat, so being embraced by them was actually comfortable as long as they let him breathe.

“Bocchan, all of the Ghouls, Rapiécage, Pauvina-chan and, most importantly, Darcia-sama waiting for you in Talosheim, so... you should prepare yourself while you still can.”

“Wow, I’m super-popular, aren’t I.”

It seemed that Vandalieu would be embraced passionately once he returned to Talosheim. His heart, which had splintered from the events in the Hartner Duchy, would be repaired.

Am I secreting something from my body? Vandalieu wondered. Something like Vandanium, vitamin V or Van acid.

There were no scanning devices in Lambda so he couldn’t be sure, but it was possible that some unknown nutrients and minerals existed.

Suddenly, he heard a small, grinding noise.

“Ah, Bocchan, there’s a large centipede in your hair.”

Large centipedes. They were Rank 1 monsters, centipedes around the size of medium-sized snakes. Their diets consisted mainly of small animals such as mice and insects, and they didn’t harm produce. As such, they were often considered to be useful

creatures. However, sometimes they climbed into trees and grabbed onto animals that passed beneath them in order to transport themselves around.

“Come to think of it, you said you underwent a Job-change to Insect User, didn’t you? Have you already tamed this one?” Saria asked.

“Huh, looks like I did, without even knowing about it,” said Vandalieu.

After crawling around the surprised Vandalieu’s head, the giant centipede disappeared beneath his hair again.

“I wonder just what it’s like in my hair? Well, it seems to be harmless so I don’t really mind,” he said.

“Is it really harmless?!” Eleanora was frantically searching for the centipede inside Vandalieu’s hair, but she seemed to be unable to find it.

“It’s fine,” Vandalieu told her. “It doesn’t hurt, anyway.” He did feel a ticklish sensation that felt like an insect was crawling beneath his skin, however. “I’ll call him Pete,” he decided.

Now that he thought about it, he had the feeling that there was a Japanese god who had concealed centipedes in his hair. Which god was that, again?

As Vandalieu suddenly tried to dig up his past memories, Princess Levia approached him smoothly and called out to him in a shy-sounding voice. “U-umm, is it alright if I...?”

But the one who responded wasn’t Vandalieu, but Rita.

“You too, Princess?”

“Yes. For now, going beyond holding hands with Your Majesty is... but I believe it is natural for things to go that way,” said Levia, whose flames grew brighter. Judging from her expression and behavior, it was probably a sign of embarrassment, similar to one’s cheeks growing red.

“Natural for things to go that way... Well, I suppose you are right,” Eleanora agreed.

“The daughter of the former royal family and the new king... Historically, it is not

unusual. Though the majority of such cases are tragedies or political marriages,” Sam added.

According to these two, Vandalieu and Levia ending up in that way would be a natural course of events.

“Wow,” said Vandalieu. “Everyone is coming to an agreement.”

That was how things were apparently going to go. Vandalieu wasn’t particularly dissatisfied with it, and Princess Levia was essential for using his Dead Spirit Magic skill, so it would be convenient for her to be with him.

Emotionally speaking, he was also happy to be adored by a beautiful woman. Thanks to his physical age, Vandalieu’s desires of *that* sort were still questionable, but it was only natural for him to prefer people he thought were beautiful.

He had already been entrusted with the left hand of Princess Levia’s younger sister, Princess Zandia, as well.

“Alright, go ahead and marry her, kid! I didn’t think you’d paint Princess Levia with your colors before Zandia-jouchan, but that’s how a man is!” said Borkus.

“Borkus, where did your anger and hatred from earlier go?” Vandalieu asked.

“That’s that, this is this,” he replied.

“I understand. Let us support Bocchan together,” said Rita.

“Thank you very much,” said Levia.

“We were born and died in different places, but we stand together after death,” said Saria.

“I have not died yet, but if you are devoted to Vandalieu-sama, then we are companions,” said Eleanora.

“By the way, that item of clothing you are wearing... is that supposed to be competing with us?” asked Rita.

“No, this is made of my flames,” Levia explained. “I can make them more like a dress,

but making its surface area greater requires more Mana, so I am being more efficient.”

It seemed that the women had reached a conclusion.

“Please take care of me for the many years to come,” Levia said to Vandalieu. “And you too, if possible, great sisters,” she added to Rita and Saria.

Being embraced by the beautiful Titan who would have been more than 2.5 meters tall if she had legs, Vandalieu felt as if he had been completely surrounded.

“I have a long future ahead of me,” Vandalieu told her. “I’m going to live for millennia, after all.”

Incidentally, Levia and the Fire Ghosts could control their heat, allowing them to lower it to the same temperature as a bath.

Though Levia’s flames were warm, they weren’t enough to burn. She gave a giggle as she covered Vandalieu in these flames. “So you say, but our lifespans are unlimited. We are already dead, after all.”

“You got me there,” said Vandalieu.

Eleanora and the Undead blessed the quiet couple, but there were also those who felt a sense of danger.

“Honey, could it be that Vandalieu-sama is the type who uses anyone he can lay his hands on?” asked Marie. She and the other lovers of the Black Goblins felt anxious about the way the king of the nation they were about to move to handled his relationships with women. They had almost no knowledge of politics, but it had been said that the philandering of kings of the past was the greatest among the causes of their nations’ demise.

“That’s not true, King chooses his women properly,” said Braga, reassuring them.



Although the Hartner Duchy was adjacent to the Boundary Mountain Range, its mineral resources were limited. This was because even underground areas of the mountain range were danger-zones where monsters ran rampant, making it impossible to work there, and because no promising veins of ore had been discovered

in other mountains.

Thus, the Hartner Duchy had been dependent on several Dungeons as well as the mine on the southern tip of the duchy for its mineral resources.

But the ore yielded by that mine had decreased drastically around two hundred years ago and had never recovered. When the duchy had still been conducting trade with Talosheim, they had continued importing metal while searching the mine for new veins of ore, but these efforts had been given up now.

The miners had vanished from the mine and been replaced by walls like those of a prison, soldiers and slaves.

Now, it wasn't normal miners, but mostly criminal slaves who were mining and smelting the ore.

But in the mine's earlier days, it was run not by criminal slaves, but the women of children of Talosheim who had been made criminal slaves on false accusations, so they were handled differently from how one might normally expect.

Although the exterior looked like a prison, there was a village of slaves on the inside. The criminal slaves would normally be treated worse than horses or cattle in a mine, but the duke of the past had apparently feared that some might have survived the destruction of Talosheim.

It had been unknown as to whether the A-class adventurers, the Sword King Borkus and the Saint Jeena, as well as the Tiny Genius Zandia, were alive or not.

The reality was that the three of them had been killed by Mikhail, but subordinates of the Pure-breed Vampire Gubamon had stolen Jeena and Zandia's remains, while the third subordinate ran into and engaged in mortal combat with the fatally-wounded Mikhail. Thus, the Hartner Duchy had no accurate information on these heroes.

That was why the duke had needed hostages, just in case they had survived against all odds. Princess Levia would have worked as well, but if he had left her alive, it was possible that the other duchies would have used her as a symbol to put the blame on the Hartner Duchy rather than the Amid Empire.

Also, Titans had robust bodies, and even their children were capable of greater physical labor than an adult human. That was why they had been used in the mines

while the utmost care was taken to ensure that they were not worked to death.

As time passed, this treatment of the Titans had become normal and the slaves of the slave-run mine were granted a living environment that would allow for living there for longer periods of time than other mines.

There was a city of soldiers who managed a family who had essentially been born as slaves. That was how things were in the mine.

In this slave-run mine, there was a pair of soldiers amusing themselves with idle talk as they watched over the miners who were working with collars on their necks.

“I’ve heard about it, but they don’t know when new ‘goods’ will arrive,” one of them said.

“Yeah, something about a monster rampage occurring at the city, right? I’m sick of hearing about that,” said the other.

The traveling merchant who had transported supplies of food and such to the mine, who had arrived yesterday and left this morning, had delivered news that a monster rampage had occurred at the city of Niarki. This news had spread throughout the entire mine.

Soldiers who had been born in Niarki had given the merchant letters to deliver to their families. But the two soldiers who were talking in this spot had been born elsewhere, so the monster rampage wasn’t any of their business.

“But that means that there won’t be any noisy new recruits, so isn’t it a good thing?”

“Well, that’s true... From time to time, we get guys who hesitate to kill Goblins and throw up, too.”

The soldiers assigned to this slave mine were largely divided into two different kinds. There was the ‘retired’ group, who were made up of those who couldn’t work on the frontlines due to age or injury but had been assigned here because they would go hungry or turn to crime if they were fired. The other group was made of new recruits, who had been sent here to perform exercises and training because this was a vast region with only weak monsters such as Goblins.

This pair of soldiers were a part of the former group, and when new recruits were sent

here, these soldiers would have to take care of them and their workload would increase. Those from noble families born as the third or later son had a lot of pride, so they were particularly troublesome.

They were merely new recruits in rank, but at the same time, they were noblemen and future government office candidates, so they had to be treated carefully.

If the soldiers' superior officer had things together, this would be easier, but... the current governor of this slave-run mine was Viscount Besser, an honorary nobleman. He had been a nobleman of Lord Lucas's faction who was involved in military affairs, but he had made a blunder that caused him to be demoted. He was someone who believed that noblemen were superior beings, declaring that "only noblemen were real humans."

It didn't need to be said who Viscount Besser favored more between the commoner-born soldiers like these two and the young men who were frail, but still born from noble families.

"Still, the 'goods' not coming is... We've had nothing to hunt but Goblins these days, too."

"Now that you mention it, there are a lot of Goblins for some reason. There have been less of them more recently, though. I wonder if a King has appeared nearby?"

"Stop that, it's ill-omened to say stuff like that. What I'm trying to say is, with no 'goods' and no tasty things to eat, there's no enjoyment in our everyday lives."

"Well, we are in a place like this."

The slave-run mine wasn't an adequate workplace for these soldiers. If they wanted to eat something tasty, they had to go out and hunt. Of course, there were no theaters, show tents or street performers to ease their daily boredom.

For these soldiers, their only sources of pleasure they had were the supplies provided by the traveling merchant and a little shopping. That, and the 'goods.'

"For now, we have the 'goods' that were brought yesterday, right?"

"Haven't you seen it? There wasn't a single quality person among the 'goods' that arrived yesterday..."

“You’re just being too greedy. They’re just slaves being brought to the mine; it’d be stranger if there *were* any quality ones, wouldn’t it?”

The ‘goods’ that the soldiers had been talking about were slaves. Of course, they weren’t provided to the soldiers in order to provide enjoyment by putting on performances.

“There was that female bandit that became a criminal slave and was brought here, wasn’t there?”

“Well, her face was nice, but she had no chest. Her mind seemed a little broken, too. And that was years ago, man.”

The slaves being brought to this mine were the slave trader’s stockpiled unsold products who had become a burden on him; in fact, most of them were criminal slaves, the kind that nobody wanted to buy. But of course, some of them were women.

Those women became playthings for the soldiers.

“There are always the Titans, right?”

The women among Talosheim’s refugees were treated the same way as well.

“Unlike some people, *I* happen to not like giant women. It kind of feels like they’re looking down on you. And if we do it too much, *we’re* the ones who are going to get punished, so you can’t go too crazy. Ah, man, won’t those cultivation villages hurry up and become ghost towns?”

“No, we get punished if we do it too much with the other slaves, too. There was the time we went crazy and some of them died, remember? The viscount was screaming at us not to reduce our working force for no reason.”

“You’re right. It can’t be helped; I’ll just choose one at random for now... that one will do, I guess.

One of the soldiers’ eyes had stopped upon a white-haired child slave who was wearing a cloth over one eye. The child’s dead-looking eyes weren’t unusual to see among the slaves working at the mine, but perhaps the soldier had been attracted to her white skin that looked as if it hadn’t ever seen the sun.

“Oi, isn’t she too small for that?” his partner questioned.

“It doesn’t matter, right? She won’t even survive until next month anyway. What I do is just going to shorten her already short life by a bit.”

The soldier called out to the white-haired slave who was pushing a cart full of ore, pulled her away and took her away somewhere.

Of course, they were still on duty, but this kind of thing had been occurring for a long time, so Viscount Besser overlooked it as long as the soldiers didn’t do it in front of the new recruits. Naturally, the other soldier overlooked his partner’s actions as well.

However, his partner returned less than twenty minutes later. Thinking it strange, the soldier called out to him.

“Oi, that was unusually quick. What happened to that slave? If she died, did you at least dispose of her body properly?”

Though the slave was a child, the soldier didn’t consider her life precious for a moment. But he knew that it wouldn’t be good to leave her corpse alone. There would be insects everywhere and if there was an outbreak of disease, he would be at danger as well.

As the soldier called out to his partner, his partner moved only his eyeballs to look at him.

“Everything is fine. There is no problem,” replied the soldier’s partner. His face was as expressionless as a doll’s.

TLN: Parts of this dialogue is in katakana, which I would interpret as stiff/robot-like speech. I can’t really think of a way to convey it in translation, though. I’ll italicize this kind of speech.*

“...Oi, are you really alright?”

“I am really alright. I am perfectly normal.”

“No, you’re not looking fine at all. Go and have the priest-dono take a look at you.” The soldier grabbed the shoulder of his partner, who was clearly not behaving normally, and tried to take him to the priest, who also served as a doctor. He called out to another

soldier as well. “Hey, this guy’s acting strange. I’m going to take him to the priest-dono and have him checked out,” he said.

The other soldier that he had called out to approached, as if wanting to help out.

“Is everything alright? I shall help out as well.”

“Yeah, thanks. Oi, get a hold of yourself.” Not even looking at the third soldier, the first soldier walked away, looking at the face of his colleague, who was also his friend, with a worried expression.



Seeing the two soldiers return and continue working as if nothing had happened, another soldier called out to them. “Are you alright? You look a bit pale...”

“Yes, we are fine. It is just a lack of sleep.”

“After visiting the priest-dono, we feel better.”

“How about you go and visit the priest-dono too. You will feel brighter.”

“I-I see. I’ll sit out on that one.” The soldier who had called out to the pair stiffened his expression at their eerie behavior as he returned to his post.

A child slave with white hair and skin pushed a cart past him, but it seemed that the soldier was more concerned about the strange behavior of his colleagues.

The empty eyes of several soldiers stared at his back.

『The level of the Mental Encroachment skill has increased!』



- **Name:** Levia
- **Rank:** 5
- **Race:** Blaze Ghost
- **Level:** 0
- **Passive skills:**
 - Spirit Form: Level 5
 - Mental Corruption: Level 5
 - Heat Manipulation: Level 6
 - Flame Nullification
 - Materialization: Level 5
 - Augmented Mana: Level 3
- **Active skills:**
 - Housework: Level 5
 - Projectile Fire: Level 5
 - Possession: Level 3

Monster explanation:

【Fire Ghosts】 【Flame Ghosts】 【Blaze Ghosts】

These are monsters created when evil Mana contaminates the spirits of victims who were burned to death or criminals burned at the stake with deep hatred in their hearts.

Many of them are evil monsters who have gone mad with the pain of being burned to death, losing their previous memories and even their ability to reason, simply attacking the living in order to have them join them.

When criminals burned at the stake are buried, they are revived as these monsters and try to attack people. They progress from Fire to Flame to Blaze in terms of how dangerous and powerful they are.

Their main method of attack is to employ body-slams and unarmed attacks with their burning bodies, while those that have preserved more of their intelligence are capable of using long-ranged attacks by firing the flames that make up their body as projectiles.

But the most dangerous is their Possession. Unless exorcised, those possessed experience the agony of being burned alive until they suffer the worst death in absolute madness.

Physical attacks are mostly ineffective unless they use the Materialization skill; they cannot be defeated without martial skills or magic of attributes other than the fire attribute. Despite having spirit form bodies, they produce Magic Stones, but as they do not provide any other materials, they are unpopular monsters to hunt among adventurers.

The Ghosts of Levia and the warriors who were her guards transformed into these monsters after Vandalieu's Mental Encroachment skill caused them to remember the feelings of defeat they felt when they were killed, so they possess most of their former memories.

Also, these monsters normally look like moving, burnt corpses, but Levia and her guards mostly resemble their appearances of when they were alive other than missing their feet, knees and half of their thighs, wearing clothes made of flames.

They can exert their power beyond their limits due to Vandalieu's Dead Spirit skill and vast Mana pool.

CHAPTER 83

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAKING REQUESTS AND MAKING A SELECTION

In the residential area for the slaves inside the walls of the slave-run mine... in the village of slaves, the most important, decision-making figures among the Titan slaves had gathered together.

Normally, there would be eyes observing the residential area and the Titans would never be allowed to gather together unless instructed, so that they couldn't plot rebellions. But all of the soldiers that were posted as guards right now were behaving like dolls.

"Levia-sama... isn't that Levia-sama?"

"Yes, she looks a little different from how I remember, but there is no mistake. How could I mistake Levia-sama for anyone else?"

"So, it was true that you would bring Levia-sama here..."

Seeing the Titans' eyes open wide in blank amazement with tears streaming from them, Levia's flames flickered in her happiness, but at the same time, her hand was placed over her chest in sadness.

"Everyone... Thank you for staying alive until this day. I failed to protect you and made you suffer," she said.

For Titans, who had lifespans of three hundred years, two hundred years was a long time. Those who had been elderly individuals during that time had perished long ago, and most of the adults of the time were also gone. Those who had been children back then were now adults.

Until the age of fifteen, Titans age at about the same rate as humans, and after that, they age slowly, their bodies reaching their peaks at around the age of two hundred. From the age of two hundred and fifty onwards, they start growing physically old. For this reason, few Titans actually have an aged appearance.

“It’s fine; everything is Duke Hartner’s fault, the one who betrayed us. Levia-sama, you kept us in your thoughts even after you died, didn’t you? That is more than enough for us.”

“And you’re helping us like this now. That’s more than enough. Nobody, not my mother, not my grandfather, not my younger brother, would blame you, Levia-sama.”

The Titans were all extremely thin and had bad complexions. Many of them still had whip-marks and burns remaining on their arms, legs and faces.

Their treatment at the mine had been somewhat mild compared to how other criminal slaves were treated, but they were still treated cruelly; the soldiers had done whatever they wanted, thinking, “It’s fine as long as they don’t die,” and, “It doesn’t matter if one or two of them die.”

In fact, all of the elderly had died early, and quite a few of the women and children had also died because they were unable to endure this treatment.

Their spirits hadn’t been sealed away magically by anything like a champion’s barrier; many of them had already vanished from the mine long ago.

“I don’t know how you did it, but the soldiers watching over us are like dolls right now, and you’ve brought Levia-sama to us,” said Gopher, Borkus’s daughter. “Everything you said was true. I couldn’t believe the words of a midget like you at first, but... then, does that mean that it’s true that you’re going to rescue us from this mine, Van...?”

“It’s Vandalieu, Gopher-san,” said Vandalieu. “I don’t mind if you call me ‘kid’ like Borkus does, though.”

He had blended in among the slaves and used the Mental Encroachment skill to reduce all of the soldiers into vegetative states, one by one.

“But please don’t call me ‘midget,’” he added. “I’m overly conscious about that.”

Races like Titans and Beast-people had a sense of values where they believed that size was equivalent to strength and being small meant being weak. Even if this weren’t the case, Vandalieu, who was small even compared to other children of the same age, probably looked unreliable to the Titans whose women could reach heights of 2.5m.

Death-Attribute Charm wasn’t working after all; communication with living people

was difficult.

I'm really glad I brought Princess Levia here, Vandalieu thought.

Gopher gave him a wry smile. "It's just like that Oyaji to be so energetic even when he's dead," she laughed. "I won't be calling you 'kid.' Levia-sama is calling you 'Your Majesty,' so isn't it strange for me to call you that?"

"You don't have to worry about that," said Vandalieu. "Anyway, at this point, I'm thinking about freeing everyone from this mine."

"But that's not as simple as it sounds, is it?" asked Gopher. "We have slave collars on our necks."

Slave collars, collars of servitude – they have various different names, but they are Magic Items that ensure that slaves do not disobey the wills of their masters.

If slaves try to cause harm to their masters or make an escape, the collars cause them suffering by suffocating them or releasing an electrical shock.

There are numerous ways of removing them, but the masters' approval isn't the only thing that is needed. In addition, normal curse-breaking spells cannot undo them; special spells are required, but they are kept secret.

"You won't be able to remove them even if you defeat the governor of this mine," said Gopher. "Even you couldn't simply –"

"I can remove them," said Vandalieu.

Before he could even hear the Titans surprised cries, he released black death-attribute mana that surrounded Gopher's collar, which unfastened with a click.

"N-no way..."

Gopher and the other Titans were dumbfounded as the heavy collar hit the floor loudly, but Vandalieu had previously used his Mana to brute-force his way through a seal left by a champion. Something like this was simple for him.

"H-how many times can you do that in one day?" Gopher asked. "There are over five hundred of us in total."

“It costs about a thousand Mana for each person, so I can handle three hundred thousand peoples’ worth and still have some left over,” said Vandalieu.

“You can really do it?!”

“Sorry, but time is also a problem, so it would help if you kept that number below ten thousand.”

“Alright, I understand, you can really free all of us within the day, right! With this, we can fight!” shouted another Titan.

“Everyone, His Majesty is a little shy,” said Levia. “And the soldiers standing guard are all allies, but if your voices are too loud...”

“I know, Levia-sama! So, what should we do?! When are we going to rise to action?!”

“For weapons, just pick up the pickaxes and shovels we normally use, hell, even grab a rock! I’m sure those tools and rocks will feel lighter than they’ve ever felt before!”

“Those bastards, I’ll teach them a lesson!”

The Titans were excited about being freed from their unjust imprisonment and finally having a chance to retaliate. Although Vandalieu looked expressionless, he was actually flustered, unable to find a good time to chime in.

But he managed to open his mouth now. “Umm... Tonight, in the middle of the night,” he said.

“I see, tonight... wait, hang on a second. That’s too early.”

Although it was too early to be called ‘the middle of the night,’ the sun had already set completely. There wasn’t enough time to free all the slaves and begin an uprising.

If they went on a rampage with no plan, the soldiers would cause severe casualties among the slaves, who were significantly inferior to them when it came to combat. And it wasn’t as if all of the slaves would join the uprising immediately.

“There are slaves who have already given up on everything, unlike us,” said Gopher. “We need time to convince them. Even if they don’t need to join us, we need to ask them to stay hidden... You’re not planning to use the same method on them as you did

on those soldiers to turn them into dolls, are you?”

The moment Gopher raised this question, suspicion appeared on the faces of the other Titans. It couldn't be helped; it would be stranger if they *didn't* feel fear for Vandalieu, who had shown himself capable of reducing people into vegetative states in less than an hour.

This was a very healthy reaction, so Vandalieu didn't pay any attention to it.

“No, I won't be doing anything like that,” he told them. “But we'll be carrying out this plan in the middle of the night. There won't be any problems.”

“Like I said, there's not enough time if we do that,” said Gopher.

“Not at all; there's plenty of time,” Vandalieu reassured her. “We will have occupied this mine by the early morning tomorrow. It won't matter if some people don't help us; everything will be done by the people I've called here.”

“W-what did you say?!”

The Titans were dumbfounded. They did believe that Vandalieu had come to rescue them. But they had been under the assumption that he would require their cooperation as well.

However, Vandalieu didn't need their cooperation at all. He had declared that no matter what the Titans thought of him, he had decided on a time and would occupy the mine with his own strength.

So then, why had the Titans gathered here beforehand?

This was what Gopher and the others were wondering now.

But Levia answered this question. “We want everyone to stay where they are tonight,” she said. “And after that, you must decide whether you wish to become citizens of the new Talosheim or not.”



The slave-run mine, which had been as sturdy as a fort, quietly surrendered and was occupied by the time the morning sun rose.

The soldiers' dinner had been poisoned. The soldiers had consumed their food without noticing the odorless, tasteless poison and entered comatose states in their beds.

There had been a very small number of soldiers with resistance skills who realized that something was wrong and tried to tell this to their colleagues who were still on their feet, but those colleagues... the ones that Vandalieu had turned into dolls, took them by surprise and restrained them.

Viscount Besser, who had been sleeping, as well as his knights and servants, were all captured alive.

And the soldiers who had been positioned on the outer walls as lookouts couldn't do anything even after realizing that something was strange about the rest of the soldiers.

"Th-there is an armed force approaching!"

"Those are Titans... Hyih! Undead Titans!"

With a terrifying roar, Borkus and the others charged in from the front of the mine at a speed surprising for their size.

The lookouts blew their horns and rang their bells to indicate a state of emergency, but none responded. No, some did respond, but this was not the response that they had desired.

"We're going to slaughter you all anyway, so entertain us as you die! Steel Cutter!"

"ARMOR BREAKKEEEER!"

"Iron Pierce!"

Borkus and the other Undead Titans unleashed martial skills, one after another, against the outer wall. The wall and gate were cut, broken and pierced through as if they were made of tofu.

They found amusement in seeing the soldiers being sent flying alongside the pieces of rubble.



And so, the next morning, Borkus and the others, who had reduced the outer wall and soldiers who had been watching them into ruins...

"...There's something lacking," Borkus murmured, scratching his exposed cheekbone as he looked down at Viscount Besser's soldiers and a hundred or so civilians, who were bound and unconscious.

"If you enjoyed yourself to your heart's content, this mine would have turned into a wasteland, wouldn't it?" Vandalieu pointed out.

"I wouldn't be *that* wild," Borkus protested. "I'd at least leave some rubble behind."

"I was planning to kill all of the soldiers right from the beginning, but it would have been problematic if you didn't at least leave the buildings behind," Vandalieu told him.

"Hahaha! You're right about that!"

Vandalieu gave a nod as Borkus laughed. Hearing their conversation, half of the former slaves looked fearful.

"Your face has changed, but you're still acting like a kid as always, Oyaji," said Gopher, showing no signs of fear. She gave a wry smile as she looked at Borkus, who had become half-bone.

Borkus looked at her and stopped laughing. "I'm sorry for lying," he said.

"Are you talking about your promise to repel the Mirg shield-nation and chase them back?" asked Gopher. "Nobody took that seriously."

"But you know, we left you guys for two hundred years even after we died."

"It's fine. I've heard from Levia-sama and His Majesty over here that you protected Zandia-sama and the others, and the goddess's legacy beneath the castle."

"That's what I was trying to do, but..."

The reality was that a wrist was all that remained of Zandia, and it hadn't been Borkus who protected the goddess's legacy, but the cursed ice that had sealed it away.

"It's nothing to beat yourself up over," said Gopher, giving her father a clap on his cold back. "Don't be showing me that disheartened face, it's not like you. I can't introduce you to your grandchildren like this, can I?"

"G-grandchildren?" Borkus repeated. "Did you say grandchildren?! I have grandchildren?!"

"Yeah, three of them," said Gopher. "I can only introduce you to two of them, and I can't tell you who the father is, but..."

The female slaves had been treated as playthings by the soldiers. Contraceptives were expensive in this world; they weren't things that slaves could use.

That was how things were.

"I see..." Borkus looked at Vandalieu. "Kid?"

Vandalieu shook his head. Almost none of the spirits of those who had died in the mine were still around. In the world of Lambda, Undead could appear. In a mine where slaves were worked to death one after another, a priest was present, and not only for treating the soldiers and regular workers. The priest would also purify the spirits of the dead.

There were none among the spirits who called themselves Gopher's child.

"I see... No, it's fine," said Borkus. "I'm sure they went to where the goddess is, rather than to that good-for-nothing* god. I did pray a lot, after all..."

TLN: "Good for nothing" is ロクデナシ/rokudenashi. Could be intentionally similar to Rodcorte's name.*

"You're right..." said Vandalieu.

All around him, he could hear the voices of the Undead Titans and the slaves crying out in joy over their reunion, as well as voices of grief as they mourned over those who were no longer here.

I can't kill Heinz, and I can't revive or make Undead out of those who have already returned to the circle of transmigration. I'm still powerless after all, thought Vandalieu.

Of course, Vandalieu wanted to change the former, but he wanted to do something about the latter as well. As these thoughts ran through his mind, he thought it was about time and gave Levia a signal.

"Everyone," she said, addressing the Titans. "We will return to Talosheim alongside His Majesty. Please decide whether you will come with us or go on a separate path."

Gopher and the other refugees from Talosheim were relatives of Borkus, Zran and everyone else, so of course, the Undead Titans wanted to take them back to Talosheim. However, that would mean coming to a nation where Vandalieu ruled as king. As such, their desires had to be confirmed as well.

"Talosheim is currently a nation of Undead and Ghouls ruled by His Majesty Vandalieu, as well as the monsters that he has tamed," Levia continued. "I believe that many things will be different from how they were in the past. I, too, am considerably different from how I was when I was alive. There are also many enemies. The Hartner Duchy would never let us be if they were to find out about us, and the Amid Empire, including the Mirg shield-nation, still desires our annihilation. There are also Pure-breed Vampires who worship an evil god, targeting His Majesty. And there will only be more enemies in the future."

"Of course, we will fight the enemies," Vandalieu added. "Last year, we repelled the Mirg shield-nation's expedition army of six thousand. If you have any requests, I will listen to them. But that does not mean that I am capable of doing anything. Everything has its limits. If you can accept this, then please come to my nation."

The current Talosheim had many enemies and its laws were borrowed. It was a nation full of problems. It wasn't a place that Vandalieu could proudly declare to be an ideal land or paradise.

Things would probably be fine for a while. But one day, Talosheim could be attacked by those reincarnating in Lambda with full knowledge of Vandalieu's death-attribute magic or Heinz's party who would be far stronger than they were now. One day, gods like Alda, the god of law and fate, or Yupeon, the god of ice, might descend upon this world and lead an army of tens of thousands of mighty, superhuman individuals and march on Talosheim.

That was the kind of nation that they were being told to come to, so asking them first was only natural.

That was what Vandalieu thought.

But Gopher's reply was, "What are you saying? Isn't it obvious that we're going to come with you? I'm grateful to you for saving us, and I was even able to meet Oyaji again. Also, since you had the strength to take over this mine, I'm sure things will be fine."

"It's not like I don't have any misgivings when you say that it's a nation of Undead and monsters, but Oyaji-dono and the others haven't changed at all from when they were alive, other than their outward appearances. I believe in you."

"And even if we went our separate paths, there's nowhere for us to live in this duchy... no, in this kingdom."

It seemed that all of the former refugees would come back to Talosheim.

"Thank you, everyone," said Levia, looking delighted.

Leaving the explanation of future plans to her, Vandalieu headed towards the next group.

Other than the Titans, there were two other kinds of slaves in the mine. There was a group of criminal slaves and a group made up of the slaves who had been brought here after nobody had purchased them elsewhere, as well as those from the First Cultivation Village.

It really was a plan to simply leave these people to fend for themselves... should I have made the castle sink more and tilt at more of an angle? Vandalieu wondered as he headed towards the group of criminal slaves.

Their slave collars hadn't been removed and they had been restrained, just like the soldiers, and Vandalieu had made the doll-like soldiers watch over them. They were formerly fiendish criminals, so Vandalieu couldn't let down his guard.

Some of them were those who had been brought to this mine only a couple of days ago; there were many who still had their willpower and stamina.

"You heard what I said, didn't you?" Vandalieu asked them. "Now then, I'm going to

make a selection.”

“...Don’t we have any right to decide?” asked a bearded slave with scars on his face.

Vandalieu looked at those around him as he answered. “You do have a right to decide,” he said. “But I have the right to decide whether or not to accept your decision. Even if your crimes were committed in another nation, I have no intention of welcoming evil criminals.”

These criminals had been exploited by the Hartner Duchy that had done horrific things to Talosheim, but that didn’t make them good people.

Vandalieu had no intention of bringing them to Talosheim unless they had some extraordinary circumstances.

“I see,” said the bearded slave. “Then I’ll bid you farewell here. Won’t you at least let me take some of the soldiers’ equipment and the food in the dining hall as a farewell gift?”

“Very well,” said Vandalieu. “Hannah-san, he wants to bid farewell to this world.”

“What?!” shouted the slave. “Wait a second, I didn’t choose anything like –”

“Okay. I understand~♪”

The scarred man screamed as the Flame Ghost Hannah enveloped him, surrounding him in flames. Before long, he collapsed and stopped moving.

“Alright, next person –” Vandalieu began.

“W-wait a second! What are you playing at?!”

“Why did you burn him to death?! He didn’t disobey you or demand that you give him money, right?!”

The criminal slaves were shocked and frightened.

Vandalieu blinked at them a few times before answering. “I did say that I have the right to decide whether to accept your decision, didn’t I? Based on that right, I decided that I wouldn’t accept that person’s decision,” he said.

“S-so then, why did you kill him?!”

“I mean, if I gave a former bandit weapons and food and set him free and then he returned to being a bandit and harmed more people, I’d feel bad for his future victims.”

The spirits of those who had died at the mine had been purified by the priest, but the spirits haunting the criminal slaves were still there. Thus, Vandalieu was able to tell which of them were evil people by listening to the spirits behind them.

Vandalieu had given up on the Hartner Duchy, but he wouldn’t consider releasing evil people into the wild. And if he did let evil people go free here, they might cause trouble for the nearest place where people lived, the cultivation villages.

“B-but what if we reform after being saved by you –”

“I haven’t saved you criminal slaves,” said Vandalieu. “You’re just extras that happened to come along with saving the relatives of Borkus and the others. I’m simply deciding whether to take you with me or discard you here.”

Vandalieu wasn’t trying to become a protector of the weak or a liberator of slaves. His objective was only the rescue of Talosheim’s refugees.

For him, these criminal slaves were nothing more than those who happened to be involved in that process. Leaving them alive would probably cause harm, so Vandalieu would kill them and make use of them, along with the soldiers of the mine.

“A-alright! I’m going to follow you and do whatever you tell me! I’ll definitely be useful!”

“Then please burn to death,” said Vandalieu. “Aria-san, please go ahead.

“Okay, look over here~”

“GYAAAAAAH! WHYYYYYYYYYYYYY?!”

“I mean, it would be troublesome if a serial robber, rapist and murderer were to come with me,” said Vandalieu.

The women of Talosheim would probably twist the necks of a sex offender with ease, but it would be bad for Pauvina and the other girls to see that.

“Now then, next –”

“W-wait! I’m fine with being a slave, I won’t ask you to set me free, but please spare me being burned to death!” the third man begged, skillfully managing to press his forehead against the ground despite being bound. There were no spirits behind him; it was possible that he wasn’t an evil criminal.

“Incidentally, under what charges were you turned into a slave?” Vandalieu asked him.

“S-stealing,” said the man. “I entered an inn to steal something and saw a valuable item... and it just happened to be something belonging to someone related to a nobleman...”

Vandalieu thought that sending someone to the mines for stealing was a bit of a heavy punishment for the crime, but it was certainly possible if the person being stolen from was related to a nobleman.

“Then please work hard in Talosheim for a while,” he said. “But if you try steal things in Talosheim as well, things will go horribly for you.”

Vandalieu would have him work in Talosheim for a year, and if there were no problems, he would be set free. The noblemen of the Hartner Duchy weren’t noblemen of Talosheim, so things would probably be fine like that.

“Yes... Heheh! I shall do my best to serve you in humility!”

Vandalieu gave a nod towards the man who had skillfully managed to fall prostrate while bound, delighted that he wouldn’t have to die. And then Vandalieu shifted his gaze to the next criminal slave.

“I don’t want to follow you, you creepy corpse-user. So if you’re going to kill me, do it with your own hands rather than dirtying the hands of your subordinates.”

“Eh?”

“What’s wrong, you can’t do it after all? Oi, you Titans! Even if you follow this guy, he’s just going to work you to death! So come with us and – what are you –” The man began choking.

Vandalieu used both hands to grab the head of the man who had tried to stir up the

Titans, used Surpass Limits and twisted it 180 degrees, destroying his cervical vertebrae.

I didn't want to kill with my own hands because I won't get Experience Points that way, Vandalieu thought with a sigh as he looked down at the man's face and back before throwing him aside.

"Now then, next –"

After that, the criminal slaves, having learned from these examples, seemed to have decided that being taken away and remaining as slaves was the best option for them.

Of course, even then, Vandalieu disposed of those who were evil people.

The former-slave Titans watched with stiff expressions as Vandalieu, having finished making a selection of the criminal slaves, headed towards the former inhabitants of the First Cultivation Village.

"J-just as he appears, he's not normal."

Seeing Vandalieu burn people alive and twist someone's neck with his own hands without a single change in his facial expression, they made changes to their impressions of him.

"I didn't really think of him as a liberator of slaves or anything like that, but..." Gopher murmured.

"Really? He was actually considerate enough to make it less frightening for us," said Borkus.

"He was?!"

"Yeah, the reason he twisted that guy's neck earlier was so that he wouldn't show you guys the blood."

"...Then I'd like him to do something about the smell, too..."

Of course, the smell of the burnt flesh of the criminal slaves was floating about. The Titans were quite far away, so it was bearable, however.

“You’re right, it’s starting to make me hungry,” said Borkus.

Gopher almost responded to her father’s remark with, “Exactly,” but managed to stop herself and stiffened. She did a double-take as she looked at Borkus’s face before looking towards Levia.

Levia looked up, as if wondering what was wrong. Gopher then realized that Borkus and Levia had changed more since they were alive than she had previously thought.

“I suppose I have no choice but to just think of Oyaji and Levia-sama having been reborn as slightly different races and get used to it,” she told herself. “But you really gave birth to a crazy son.”

“...Are you talking to me?” Eleanora blinked as she turned around after Gopher’s sudden remark, which had been directed at her.

“Yeah, you’re His Majesty’s mother, aren’t you?” said Gopher. “Vampires really do look young; I’m jealous.”

“No!” Having realized that she had been mistaken for Vandalieu’s mother because he was a Dhampir and she was a Vampire, Eleanora was indignant in her denial. “I am Vandalieu-sama’s servant; his mother is Darcia-sama!”

I want to eat some barbecued meat, Vandalieu thought as he finished talking to everyone from the First Cultivation Village, his hunger having been stimulated by the pleasant smell of burning flesh.

They were quite fearful of Vandalieu, but in the end, they had decided to come to Talosheim. Even if they stayed in the Hartner Duchy, there was nowhere for them to live.

If they were caught, they would be executed at worst or become slaves again at best. It would be a long journey if they wanted to escape to another duchy. Thus, following Vandalieu would give them the greatest chances of survival.

“I don’t mind remaining as a slave, but if you could treat us a little better than we have been treated up until now...”

“Oh no, we will welcome you as normal people... as free citizens,” Vandalieu promised. “Since you’re not criminals, I have no reason to turn you into slaves.”

The young man who called himself the village chief's son had become completely used to serving others after living as a slave, but Vandalieu stopped him from lowering his head.

Eleanora, having cleared up the misunderstanding about the matter of Vandalieu's mother, whispered in Vandalieu's ear. "Are you sure you wish to bring them with us just as they are?" she asked. "They may betray you in the future, Vandalieu-sama."

There was no way for Vandalieu to restrain the actions of those from the First Cultivation Village. Although Vandalieu had the ability to remove slave collars, he had no way to create new ones. Even if they were former inhabitants of the Sauron Duchy and followers of Vida's religion, there was no guarantee that they would remain loyal to Vandalieu.

Death-Attribute Charm didn't work on them, after all.

"Perhaps you should use Mental Encroachment to restrain them a little..." Eleanora suggested.

"No, I don't have to go that far," said Vandalieu. "Talosheim is a nation, not a secret society."

He had no intention of demanding such loyalty from them.

"But... if they betrayed you in the future..."

"They might betray me in the future. That's how people are," said Vandalieu. "I am the king, and they are merely citizens. With that being the case, that's how things are."

Vandalieu felt that it would be abnormal to use brainwashing to restrain the wills of ordinary people who weren't criminals. And if their families were taken hostage or they were promised great rewards, they could waver and betray him. That was how normal people were.

Leaving aside whether these people would really betray him, if they really did, Vandalieu would deal with it when the time came on a case-by-case basis.

But Eleanora didn't seem satisfied, so he continued. "And you know, you haven't betrayed me, have you, Eleanora? So it's fine," he said.

Eleanora's face lit up, almost audibly. And then she embraced Vandalieu in her arms.

"Vandalieu-sama, I will never let you go!" she declared.

"...The speed at which you hug me is steadily increasing." Being surrounded in softness that had a warmth unlike Rita and Saria's, Vandalieu was surprised at the fact that Eleanora's movements had no signs of hesitation or wasteful motions. He was already a user of the Unarmed Fighting Technique at such a level that he would be considered a master on Earth, but he hadn't been able to see Eleanora's movement at all.

Even now, her grip was superb, ensuring that Vandalieu couldn't slip out of it.

It was a sight to behold. As Vandalieu couldn't slip out, he asked her to carry him to the final group of slaves.

These were the slaves who had failed to sell or brought here immediately after the slave trader decided that they wouldn't sell anywhere else. Many of them were girls so young that even brothels wouldn't willingly buy them, and young boys who would take too long to grow enough to become useful for manual labor. They were slaves with large scars and damage to their bodies.

Their eyes were all dead-looking, and their faces were blank, as if their minds weren't thinking of anything at all.

Normally, it would be good to confirm what the slaves wanted. Even if their ability to think and decide for themselves had weakened, it would be best to stimulate that ability and prompt them to make a recovery and make a decision of their own will.

However, the slaves all stared at Vandalieu as he approached. They exhaled, groaned and looked up at him as if they were longing for him.

It seemed that Death-Attribute Charm was working on them.

"If there is anything you want to do, anywhere you want to return to, anyone you want to kill, please tell me and I'll think about how to proceed with those," said Vandalieu. "If there aren't, then please follow me. Accept what I give you, do what I tell you to do and do as you wish once you become stronger."

As long as Death-Attribute Charm was working, confirming what they desired wouldn't work properly. That was why Vandalieu had made it appear as if he were

asking them, but then given them an order. Once their bodies and minds recovered and they learned to read, write and do arithmetic, they would become able to think for themselves even if they remained under the skill's effects.

“Yes... I understand.”

“Goshujin-sama...”

The slaves, who were even more lifeless than the doll-like soldiers, nodded. Vandalieu would need to heal their wounds and make sure they ate properly before they moved from the mine.

Before that, the problem was dealing with one final person.

“...So, why are you here?” Vandalieu asked.

There was a man lying on the ground, his hands and feet bound. Vandalieu looked at this man through half-closed eyes – at Luciliano, the Degenerate.

CHAPTER 84

MOUNTAINS DON'T MOVE...

SO THEY'RE SIMPLER THAN PEOPLE

The knight Karcen, who had managed to successfully repel the sudden monster rampage before the city suffered any damage, was in a peculiar predicament.

“Why was there a monster rampage and the appearance of a new Dungeon at a time like this?” he wondered.

Some of the company that he led were heavily wounded, but fortunately, none of them had died. The lord of the region, Viscount Niarki, had also thanked him.

However, many of the achievements had gone to the Blue-flamed Sword Heinz, the one who was rumored to likely become the Orbaume Kingdom's second S-class adventurer. The monsters had chanted, “Kill Heinz,” as if it were an incantation and all aimed for him, after all.

With that being the case, Heinz might have been blamed for being the man who had summoned the monsters and brought a disaster to the city, but he had already gained a good reputation and was adored by many.

Rather than being blamed, his reputation has only improved for being the “champion who faced the large pack of monsters without running away.” The people were also praising the fact that Heinz had been targeted by the monsters, saying that this must be a sign that the evil gods who were surviving servants of the Demon King were after him – in other words, Heinz was a hero who was feared even by the gods.

As it was Heinz and the other members of the Five-colored Blades who had defeated most of the monsters, it was only natural that they received praise.

With that being the case, one might wonder why the adventurers and Karcen's men had participated in the defense, but... that would only be in hindsight. There had been no proof that the monsters would actually only aim for Heinz. Even if there was, there was no way that they would have been able to say, “Well then, it has nothing to do with us,” and look unconcerned.

And so, Karcan's company had exhausted themselves in a fierce battle. Heinz and his party were now clearing the ominous Dungeon that had been discovered in the forest near the city.

And Karcan had been told that the next expedition for his company wasn't necessary.

"In fact, it's true that it's not the time to be doing things like an expedition. The men of the company are being completely healed by Froto's healing magic, but they're not in a state where they are able to move around so easily."

The source of this monster rampage was almost certainly the newly-formed Dungeon, but it still wasn't completely certain. Until Heinz and his party returned, Karcan and his men, who had been assigned to be part of the city's defenses, couldn't move.

Even after Heinz and his party returned, it would take time to set up a system to control and watch over the Dungeon. Karcan didn't have any obligation to cooperate in this, but if he flatly ignored the expectations of Viscount Niarki who was relying on him, his social position would be jeopardized.

But with that said, that didn't mean that Karcan would necessarily be valued highly even if he did meet the viscount's expectations. After all, the cultivation project to the south that he was supposed to be in charge of had been left alone.

"The earliest we'll be able to move is winter..." Karcan sighed. He had lost count of how many times he had done so.

The city of Niarki still hadn't received news that the duke's castle built by Nineroad had sunk or the scandal that had shaken the Orbaume Kingdom, or that the Guild Master of the Mages' Guild as well as several noblemen had been revealed to have connections with Vampires.



Luciliano, the Degenerate. He was a human C-class adventurer, and when he first encountered Vandalieu, he had been working in the Mirg shield-nation.

He had created a Live-Dead out of the woman who had become Pauvina and used it as a familiar to infiltrate the village of the Noble Orc Bugogan in order to gather information.

And after the battle between the Ghouls and Orcs finished, he had encountered Vandalieu through the Live-Dead, but...

So that's what this person's face looked like. I guess I really do get a different impression now that I can see his physical body, Vandalieu thought.

Back then, when he was still three years old, he hadn't known what Luciliano's face looked like. Even if he did, Luciliano now had hollow cheeks and a freely-growing beard. If Gopher and the others hadn't told him that there was a former human adventurer among the slaves, he wouldn't have noticed Luciliano at all.

"So, why are you here?" Vandalieu asked one more time, as Luciliano hadn't answered him the first time... but there was still no response.

Rather than deliberately staying silent, it seemed that he had fainted.

Eleanora quietly raised her foot.

"Eleanora, he looks like he will break if you step on him, so let's not do that," said Vandalieu.

"Yes, Vandalieu-sama."

Still being held in Eleanora's arms, Vandalieu secreted some restorative medicine from his claws and used Telekinesis to apply it to Luciliano's face. The moment he did so, Luciliano sprang up like a spring-loaded toy... but he was still bound, so he lost his balance and fell to the ground once more.

"Kahah?! Hah! W-wait, please don't kill me! Even if you do kill me, please let me die in comfort! Also, let me have one final meal!"

"You're looking unexpectedly lively," said Vandalieu. "To start off with, judging from your behavior, it seems that you remember who I am."

"Th-there's no way I could forget someone of a rare race like a Dhampir. But wait, it wasn't my intention to encounter you here!" Luciliano begged.

"No, I'd be pretty surprised if it was," said Vandalieu.

It seemed that Luciliano remembered exactly who Vandalieu was. Including the fact

that Vandalieu had threatened him with, “The next time I see you, I will kill you.”

“Vandalieu-sama is asking what you are doing in a place like this. Answer him,” Eleanora said, prompting Luciliano to provide a response. “Also, I am not Vandalieu-sama’s mother, but his servant,” she added, as multiple people had now made the same misunderstanding.

“Alright, I’ll answer,” said Luciliano. “After that incident, I took my money, left Balcheburg and migrated to the Orbaume Kingdom. I continued my research into Undead while working as an adventurer. But one day, unfortunately –”

According to Luciliano’s story, he had gotten caught up in the dispute between Lord Belton and Lord Lucas.

The third son of a certain nobleman in Belton’s faction plotted to have his father change sides to Lucas’s faction and name the third son as his successor. By having his father assassinated and turning him into a Live-Dead puppet.

He set his eyes on Luciliano, an adventurer working solo without forming a party or finding companions, to create the Live-Dead.

Of course, Luciliano didn’t want to get involved in such a conspiracy, but he was kidnapped and threatened without being given a choice, so he pretended to do what was being demanded of him. But he secretly used a Live-Dead mouse as his familiar to find help, and the third son’s conspiracy was stopped before it began and those involved were arrested.

“But I was arrested as well,” Luciliano explained. “That noble family seemed to want to make it as if the incident had never happened. I was taken straight into imprisonment and then sent here as a criminal slave. Thanks to the slave collar, I can’t use magic. Well, even then, my Attribute Values are higher than the average person, so I managed to survive up until now, but... I suppose that ends here. Ah, I wanted to at least have some mellow wine, warm soup, fresh salad, soft bread, a fish dish with fresh fish, a meat dish with thick chunks of meat and a dessert before the end.”

“...Isn’t that a full-course meal?” Vandalieu pointed out.

Luciliano’s oval-shaped face had grown thin, making him look even seedier, but his request was quite extravagant. It was possible that he could get along with Vandalieu unexpectedly well.

“So, Vandalieu-sama, are you going to kill him?” Eleanora asked.

“What should I do?” Vandalieu wondered, looking troubled.

Luciliano was a man with quite a peculiar relationship to Vandalieu. He wasn’t an ally, so there wasn’t any reason for Vandalieu to assertively help him. If he had to decide, he was more of an enemy. But Vandalieu couldn’t answer whether he was someone worth killing in this situation.

For Pauvina, who wasn’t present, Luciliano was the man who had manipulated her previous life’s body without permission and turned it into a Noble Orc’s plaything, but he wasn’t directly responsible for her death and Pauvina hadn’t shown any signs of hating him after being reborn. In fact, hadn’t she forgotten about it?

But if Vandalieu let him go here, there was a high chance that information on what had happened in this mine would leak.

However, Vandalieu felt reluctant to kill him.

Unlike the criminal slaves who had been evil criminals, Luciliano wasn’t an evil person, nor did Vandalieu harbor any personal grudges towards him. Considering the details of how he became a slave, Vandalieu actually felt a considerable amount of sympathy for him.

“I suppose I’ll try asking Pauvina first,” Vandalieu decided.

He would reserve judgment for now until asking Pauvina whether it was alright for him to bring Luciliano back to Talosheim.



After that, Vandalieu woke up the noblemen and soldiers in the mine and gathered them in one place.

“It’s alright if their limbs fall off or their heads smash to pieces, but please try not to crush them all over. Ah, but it’s totally OK to turn them into paste,” he said.

His dangerous-sounding words were directed not at the conscious yet paralyzed individuals behind him, but the new inhabitants of Talosheim, who were breathing loudly through their noses with clubs, shovels and pickaxes in their hands.

“Y-you bastard! What are you planning to do?!” demanded one particularly large voice among the countless pleas for mercy.

“A public execution,” Vandalieu replied.

“Don’t fuck with me!” the voice shouted back. Vandalieu found this rather unpleasant.

However, these would be the final words of the people who were about to be executed in a gruesome way.

It would be immature to think of them badly for shouting at me, Vandalieu thought as he turned around.

“I am Viscount Besser, the one who has been entrusted with the management of this mine by His Excellency, the duke! I firmly protest to this unjust treatment!” shouted the viscount, his mouth open so wide that it looked as if his entire face consisted of only a mouth.

Vandalieu gave him a perplexed look. “Unjust treatment, you say... isn’t this normal?”

The viscount and his soldiers had done things that Vandalieu would hesitate to even say aloud. The positions had simply been reversed now, so this was normal, wasn’t it?

In fact, they would die within ten minutes without being subjected to the same treatment, so weren’t they actually lucky?

“Do not fool yourself! I am a nobleman!” the viscount exclaimed.

“...I mean, I know that. Is that relevant?” Vandalieu asked.

He had explained the situation to the viscount and his men. He had the feeling that doing this instead of killing them without them knowing anything would allow him to turn them into stronger Undead.

“You bastard! Even in war, it is common sense to take noblemen as prisoners whenever possible and give them treatment appropriate to their status! Are you not even aware of this?!” shouted the viscount.

“No, I wasn’t. Sorry.” Vandalieu, having learned something new, made a mental note of the viscount’s words. If he became an adventurer, he might have opportunities to

participate in wars, so it was good that he could learn this piece of common knowledge early on. "I'll do that next time," he said.

"No, do it now!" the viscount demanded. "Do you think that you can get away with killing me?!"

"I think I'll make sure that I will," said Vandalieu.

"There is no way that you could! I am a nobleman; if you do such a thing, all of you low-birth creatures will be sentenced to death! My Kingdom will put its prestige on the line to hunt down those who kill noblemen and end their lives without mercy!" Viscount Besser shouted.

The faces of some of the former-slave Titans turned pale in fear at his words; they began lowering the weapons in their hands.

That was how much of a difference there was between commoners and noblemen in the world of Lambda. Not everyone's lives were equal; the lives of nobles and royalty were clearly more precious. That was common knowledge.

"Do you understand now, you vulgar brat?!" Viscount Besser shouted at Vandalieu, the current king of Talosheim.

At this moment, a rising bloodthirst was coming from Borkus and Eleanora, but Vandalieu raised a hand to calm them.

The important thing here wasn't to deal with the fact that he had been insulted by the viscount, but to make the new citizens of Talosheim acknowledge his power. If he relied too much on Borkus and the others, some might change their minds and decide that they couldn't follow him after all. And if the criminal slaves didn't take him seriously, that would cause problems later on in the future.

"Everyone, please come over here," said Vandalieu.

"Okay~"

Thinking that he should show his power, Vandalieu summoned Levia and the other Ghosts, and transferred Mana to them. He looked up at the mine... the small mountain that was protruding from the surface of the earth, the small mountain that was about five hundred meters tall.

“...Corpse Flame Prison Destruction Barrage.”

Small flames appeared, like a countless number of fireflies. But in the next moment, they turned into a countless number of skulls made of black flames.

The skulls cackled as they flooded towards the mountain that Vandalieu was pointing at.

The resulting sight was fearsome to behold.

Over a hundred skull-shaped flames sank their teeth into the rocky mountain. The hard boulders became brittle and broke, burned and crumbled. This process continued endlessly, and before everyone’s very eyes, the mountain’s shape changed as it was gouged from the earth. There was a thunderous noise as rocks fell from the mountain, but even that was erased by Vandalieu’s magic.

“K-kid, the mountain’s going to disappear,” said Borkus.

“Ah, you’re right.”

By the time Borkus stopped him, the mountain had been reduced to two thirds of its size. It wasn’t that large a mountain to begin with, but this display of power made not only the previously-spirited viscount and his soldiers, but even the former slaves stare with open mouths.

Eleanora and the others were dumbfounded as well. Even Pete, whose head was protruding from Vandalieu’s hair, had frozen stiff.

Up until now, none of the spells of the death-attribute had possessed the ability to physically destroy their targets. However, by acquiring the Dead Spirit Magic skill and having Levia and the others available to use, Vandalieu could now accomplish the same things as fire-attribute magic.

Eleanora and everyone else was seeing Vandalieu’s Mana exhibit its true potential for the first time.

“Bocchan, would it not be quicker to simply invade the Hartner Duchy?” Sam suggested.

“Sam, it’s impossible because Heinz is here,” said Vandalieu. “Also, if I do that, that

would mean fighting the other duchies and even the Amid Empire, wouldn't it?"

"Well, I suppose so," said Borkus. "No matter how strong the kid is, he's just one person. If A-class adventurers and elite forces from every nation attacked multiple places at once, holding out would be impossible."

As he said, there were plenty of people in this world who were capable of doing what Vandalieu had just accomplished.

"And in the end, a mountain is just a mountain," said Vandalieu. "It doesn't move. A B-class or A-class adventurer would be able to avoid this attack."

Unlike mountains, people could be equipped with all kinds of Magic Items and possessed skills. Corpse Flame Prison Destruction Barrage wasn't accurate in its targeting, so it wouldn't be difficult for a superhuman to survive it... though ordinary people would simply turn into ash.

"It's true that things would probably work out with me, Vigaro, Eleanora-jouchan and the others, but..." Borkus looked up at the collapsed mountain.

Normally, they might have had to run away from the falling debris, but Vandalieu had even destroyed the debris.

He had even erased the noise, which made it feel less real, but if he hadn't done that, then many people probably would have lost consciousness.

"By the way, was it really alright to destroy the mine?" asked Borkus.

"It's not a problem," Vandalieu replied. "I intended to destroy the mine right from the beginning to eradicate the Hartner Duchy's supply of mineral resources." He turned around to face the former slaves. "What I want to say is, I have power, so the noblemen's retaliation isn't something to be feared. Don't you agree?" he asked them.

The former slaves remained dumbfounded for a moment before regaining their senses.

"I've never seen such a great spell... This is the one who's going to be our king?"

"If our king is this strong, then isn't it true that we don't need to fear the noblemen of this nation?"

“That’s right, even if the Hartner Duchy and other duchies, even if the king sends an army, they’ll be eaten up like that mountain and not even leave ashes behind.”

“If that person is our king, then we won’t even lose to the Amid Empire... we won’t be chased out of our homeland anymore.”

Strength returned to their eyes, and the weapons that had been lowered earlier were raised once more.

In fact, it was the viscount and his men who were now deathly-pale. After seeing Vandalieu’s Dead Spirit Magic, they were now perfectly aware as to whether the Hartner family they knew would be able to do something about the half-Vampire before them who called himself a king.

“W-wait. If you spare us – no, at least me, I’ll pay you any amount you want,” said the viscount.

His plea for mercy triggered the soldiers to beg for mercy as well.

“V-Viscount-sama?!”

“I have a wife and children; p-please spare my life!”

“I haven’t killed or raped anyone! It’s true; please believe me!”

“Umm, I can earn money in other ways, so I don’t really care about that,” said Vandalieu. “Raping others when you have a wife and child isn’t good now, is it? And you, the last one, you shouldn’t tell lies that are so easy to see through.”

All of the soldiers’ attempts were futile.

“I’ve already left out those of you who were simply working normally without unnecessarily harming, killing or raping the slaves,” Vandalieu told them. Those whom he had deemed to be not bad enough to deserve death had been gathered in a separate place.

There was an old soldier who had remained faithful to his wife and employees brought here by the viscount such as maids and chefs – around ten people in total. They weren’t particularly virtuous people, nor had they harbored deep compassion for the slaves, but they had hesitated to kill.

Vandalieu was planning to bring them back to Talosheim as slaves, watch them for a while and then, if they seemed alright, he would release them to become free citizens.

He loathed meaningless killing; he wouldn't think of killing them unless it was necessary. The incident where he had a single silver coin stolen from him in the marketplace hadn't even stayed in his memories.

But when there was a reason to kill someone, he believed that they should always be killed.

The viscount and his men were those who deserved to die.

"Now then, as part of my duty as the Eclipse King of Talosheim, I will carry out your sentence," Vandalieu declared.

The war cry of Gopher and the rest of the Titans, who were armed with the weapons that they had chosen, combined with the screams of the viscount and his men in a pleasant-sounding chorus.

The screams grew gradually quieter, but the pleasant sensation and sounds of flesh being crushed and bones being broken soothed Vandalieu's heart and the thick smell of blood stimulated his hunger.

"Now then, shall we leave this place to Princess Levia and the others while we get ready to eat? I'm sure everyone wants to fill their stomachs up," said Vandalieu.

"I'm sure that Saria and the others have finished preparations in the kitchen. By the way, what are they making?" Levia asked.

In the kitchen, there were food supplies that had been supplied by the traveling merchant. The slaves had been forced to eat food similar to what would normally be fed to livestock or turnip-like crops that would grow even in dry land, which they had grown in the slave village. But today, Vandalieu intended to prepare food for them made from the ingredients that the soldiers had been eating.

Vandalieu and the others found these ingredients rather strange, however.

"Sam and the others brought other ingredients here for us, so let's use those as well to make a stew," said Vandalieu.

“Oh, miso stew? That’s good stuff,” said Borkus.

There were no dairy products available, so the stew would contain miso to provide a deeper flavor. It was a fine example of a homemade Talosheim dish.

“If there was fresh, undried meat, I would have considered a barbecue as well,” said Vandalieu.

“Vandalieu-sama, I have to question that sentiment,” said Eleanora.

It seemed that she was the only one to have noticed that eating barbecued meat would be difficult after seeing the burnt corpses.

『The levels of the Dead Spirit Magic and Commanding skills have increased!』

“Please allow me to call you Master!”

“No.”

Having seen the Dead Spirit Magic, Luciliano begged Vandalieu to accept him as an apprentice. Vandalieu wondered what Luciliano had in mind. He doubted that he had any techniques that he could teach Luciliano.

“I don’t mind remaining a slave!” said Luciliano. “Please teach me your supreme techniques!”

“He is quite the promising man,” said Eleanora. She seemed to have taken a liking to Luciliano. She was probably happy with the way he gazed at Vandalieu as if worshipping him.

“Well, teaching others rather than being taught will be a good experience as well,” said Borkus. “I don’t think he’ll be able to do the same things as you, though, kid. He’ll have different magical affinities.”

“Pauvina-chan has forgotten about it and doesn’t mind, so isn’t it fine?” said Rita. “We’ll have another civil official, at least.”

“Well then... I will teach you, but what I’m using isn’t life-attribute magic, so you shouldn’t get your hopes up,” said Vandalieu.

“I would be more surprised if you were to tell me that it was the same attribute of magic as mine,” said Luciliano.

It seemed that Corpse Flame Prison Destruction Barrage couldn’t be mistaken for life-attribute magic.

In any case, Vandalieu now had a new apprentice.

After that, Vandalieu and the others stayed for two days in what was now formerly-slave-run-mine (in fact, the underground tunnel had now collapsed and turned into a graveyard).

During that time, they made various preparations, had Gopher and the other Titans gather some stamina and spirit, and Vandalieu performed physical examinations on them. As they had spent long years being exploited as slaves, there were some who didn’t have the strength to make the journey to Talosheim... they would certainly be over the limit for Vandalieu to fly them there.

As a result, Vandalieu needed to create carriages and horse-shaped Golems (similar to the clay horses in textbooks on Earth) with Golem Transmutation.

“Carriages in Lambda don’t have suspension, do they?” said Vandalieu. “Sam doesn’t have them either, though he doesn’t shake because of his skill.”

“Bocchan, why are you talking about pensions?” asked Rita.

Naturally, springs and coils hadn’t been invented in Lambda.

Boards and poles were put together in a structure to reduce shock, but metal springs didn’t exist.

So Vandalieu created them and added them to his carriages. He would be able to test the idea that he had thought of right away, so his Golem Transmutation and Carpentry skills were celebrating.

“You possess the technique of a carriage craftsman, your Majesty? But still, the world’s technology has progressed from where it was two hundred years ago when we were

alive,” Levia remarked.

“No, Levia-sama; this is something that the kid’s invented himself,” Borkus told her.

In truth, however, Vandalieu hadn’t actually invented springs. He had simply reused his knowledge from Earth and Origin to reproduce them.

“You can praise me more,” said Vandalieu.

He was happy to be praised, so he showed no modesty. Although he was using his prior knowledge, it was his own skills and magic that were reproducing the technology, so Vandalieu considered it to be his own achievement.

Patents on Earth and in Origin meant nothing in Lambda, anyway.

“It would be perfect with some Golem tires, but... were those made just by hardening some rubber?” Vandalieu wondered.

Tires would be convenient in various ways, so he would try making them when he got back.

And so, Vandalieu reversed the Titans’ aging while telling them that he was performing physical examinations. They had wasted two hundred years of their lives. This was a service he was doing them so that they could live enough to make up for that.

Vandalieu had gained their permission, albeit in an indirect way, so it was probably fine.

“This massage, do people ever tell you that they feel younger afterwards? I feel a hundred years younger, seriously.”

Things were going like this.

Vandalieu couldn’t complete the task for all of them in two days, so he was planning to do the rest along the way. This also acted as training to his Mana pool, so it was killing two birds with one stone.

And then he used the monster bones that Borkus and the others had brought to create decoy Undead.

“I have a complete understanding of Titan and human skeletons. Using Golem Transmutation to change the shapes of monster bones to disguise them as Titan skeletons is simply a little heavy labor for me,” Vandalieu explained.

“It’s heavy work?!”

“I have to make a lot of them, so it’s just troublesome.”

Incidentally, Vandalieu had used Decomposition on the gruesome corpses of the viscount and his men to make them rot away, put their broken bones back together and created Skeletons. With this, even if the people of the Hartner Duchy noticed that something strange had occurred at the mine, they would simply assume that someone had killed everyone here and that all of the soldiers and slaves had turned into Skeletons.

They wouldn’t think that the slaves had been rescued.

After finishing all preparations, everyone headed towards Talosheim.

『You have acquired the Title ‘Holy Son of Vida!’』

『The level of the Carpentry skill has increased!』



- **Name:** Eleanora
- **Rank:** 9
- **Race:** Noble-born Vampire Viscount
- **Level:** 47
- **Job:** Subordinate War Princess
- **Job level:** 27
- **Job history:** Slave, Servant, Apprentice Mage, Apprentice Warrior, Mage, Demon Eye User, Vassal Warrior
- **Age:** 10 years old (20 years old at time of Vampire transformation, 30 years old in total)
- **Passive skills:**
 - Self-Enhancement: Subordination: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 6
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 6
 - Intuition: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Corruption: Level 3
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Sunlight Resistance: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Allure: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Mining: Level 1
 - Time-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 2
 - Mana Control: Level 3
 - Bloodsucking: Level 4 (NEW!)
 - Swordsmanship: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
 - Steal: Level 1
 - Housework: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)

- **Unique skills:**
 - Charming Demon Eyes: Level 7

Job explanation:

【Subordinate War Princess】

A Job that can be acquired by a woman who has been born into nobility or previously held a certain social status, but is currently a subordinate to another person.

Depending on the nation, owning female warriors with this Job is a large symbol of status; it is not uncommon for nobles and royalty to trade them at high prices. Many harems contain multiple female slaves who possess (or forced to possess) this Job and act as guards.

This Job does provide bonuses to combat-related skills, but it also provides bonuses to the Allure, Seduction and Love-making skills.

In Eleanora's case, the prerequisite of being "born into nobility" is fulfilled by the fact that she is a Noble-born Vampire.

CHAPTER 85

A KING WHO VISITS THE PEOPLE

Korf, who managed the caravan of merchants who delivered materials to the slave-run mine, felt a strange uneasiness.

There had been all kinds of things happening in the Hartner Duchy recently.

First, a Dungeon had appeared at the city of Niarki and a monster rampage had occurred, causing a great deal of panic.

The monster rampage and the Dungeon, named 'Heinz's Skeleton Cavern,' had been dealt with by the A-class adventurer party, the Five-colored Blades. After the Dungeon was explored, it was declared to be a C-class dungeon with thirty floors and that monsters shouldn't emerge from within as long as the monster population inside was periodically kept in check.

Apparently, there were many Undead, venomous insectoid monsters and poisonous plant-type monsters; most of the floors were caves, swamps or forests.

During the monster rampage, all of the monsters had been more powerful than their Ranks, but the monsters had now returned to normal strength.

But it seemed that when the Blue-flamed Sword Heinz entered the Dungeon, the monsters would flood towards him.

This was a chance for the city of Niarki, especially the Adventurers' Guild, as only small-to-medium-sized Devil's Nests and D-class Dungeons had existed nearby until now. The monsters that appeared in the new Dungeon were unique, so the Dungeon wouldn't be very popular, however.

The merchants of the caravan anticipated that new, rare drugs could be created from the monsters' venom. They didn't care about the rumors that the remnants of the Demon King had created a Dungeon in order to kill the heroes of the Five-colored Blades, particularly targeting its leader Heinz. It was nothing more than a topic of idle conversation.

After that, the castle in Nineland, the Hartner Duchy's capital, had sunk. Not in the metaphorical, economic sense, but physically. The merchants hadn't seen it for themselves, so they found it difficult to believe, but it was certain that the castle had suffered large damage. An outlaw who had gone on a violent rampage in the north was apparently involved in the incident, but the smaller details hadn't been released yet.

Either way, the merchants had thought that this event had no direct effect on them, as they operated in remote regions. They only hoped that taxes wouldn't increase to fund the castle's repair.

But after leaving the city of Niarki, staying a night in a cultivation village and then heading further south to the slave-run mine, they realized that this wasn't the case.

"Boss... no matter how many times I count, there's a mountain missing."

"I see, so you thought so as well."

After they left the cultivation village, they drew closer to the slave-run mountain that was their destination over the first and second day, giving them a view of the rocky mountains lined up against each other, but... the scenery that they had seen countless times was now different.

There was one less mountain than there should have been.

"What is the meaning of this? Was there a great earthquake or something?"

"If there was an earthquake large enough to collapse a mountain, even the city of Niarki wouldn't be unharmed. The people at the cultivation villages would have known something, too. And if that really were the case, the other mountains would have crumbled as well."

"So, are you saying that the tunnels collapsed, causing the whole mountain to collapse?"

"There's no doubt that some fearsome monster has appeared; I'm sure it was the same demon that sank the castle!"

"We agreed that that was a false rumor, right? Calm down!"

"Stay calm! We always say that if you panic, you'll only cause yourself harm, don't we!"

shouted the caravan leader Korf, reprimanding his subordinate merchants. But he was aware that this was a state of emergency.

With that said, that didn't mean that they could simply turn around and return to the city.

"Everyone, keep your weapons in hand," Korf ordered. "Escorts, please be ready to fight at any time."

"We're going to keep going?!"

"Of course," said Korf. "How can we run away without knowing what happened? We're merchants!"

It was certainly an emergency situation, but there wasn't any threat or danger that they could see yet. They couldn't hear any volcanoes erupting or fearsome monsters howling.

If the caravan turned back now, they would be breaching their contract. Their carriages contained the food supplies and other necessities, as well as luxury items, for the slave-run mine.

If some kind of disaster had occurred at the slave-run mountain and the survivors were waiting for rescue, they might all die if the caravan fled without even investigating the scene. Never mind being charged a fine; in the worst-case scenario, Korf's head could be sent flying, physically. Even if that didn't happen, cowards who would say, "Something appeared to be happening, so we got scared and turned back," didn't have the right to form a caravan operating in remote regions.

That was why Korf's caravan needed to confirm what had happened at the slave-run mine.

In this world, merchants couldn't survive just by counting revenues and expenditures. They needed to risk their lives to gain the trust of others.

On the third day, they saw that the outer wall and gate of the slave-run mine had collapsed and been destroyed. However, there wasn't any sign of vicious monsters or armed forces occupying the mine.

With that being the case, it was unlikely that the caravan would suddenly be wiped

out. Believing this, they cautiously drew closer... and the men of Korf's caravan saw something terrifying.

"S-skeletons! The soldiers... no, the slaves have all turned into Skeletons!"

Monsters made only of white bones, their bones rattling with each movement and their jaws clattering in place of laughter.

There were Skeletons equipped with the armor and weapons of the soldiers, as well as Titan Skeletons over two meters tall wearing worn-out pieces of cloth instead of clothes with pickaxes and shovels in their hands... it looked like there were hundreds of them.

"Run, run back to the city, we have to tell the people in the city about this!"

There probably weren't any survivors; even if there were, this was too much for Korf's caravan to do anything about it. Having decided this, they fled back to the city of Niarki with the news that the mine had vanished and that the soldiers and slaves had turned into Skeletons.

And so, news of a third large incident spread, sending shockwaves throughout the Hartner Duchy.



One of the members of the Five-colored Blades, Edgar, noticed that the higher-ranking members of the Fangs of Dark Nights had been replaced by Undead, and through the party's efforts, a Vampire Zombie was exterminated. After that, they headed for Nineland by joint request of the Hartner family and the Church of Alda.

Around the same time, Vandalieu and those accompanying him arrived back in Talosheim and were now resting.

"Holy Son, congratulations on the fulfilment of the prophecy! Please grant us permission to build a new statue of you!" Nuaza exclaimed, worshipping Vandalieu as if he were a god walking on this world now that he had gained the Title of 'Holy Son of Vida.'

"Your Majesty, now that you are ruling over new citizens, there has never been a better opportunity to create our own currency!" said Chezare, insistent now that the nation

had gained hundreds of new citizens.

“Vandalieu, I told you through the communication devices as well, but there’s a new Dungeon. When are we going to clear it?” asked Vigaro, excited about the upcoming new adventure.

The three of them were all talking to Vandalieu at once in the castle, but he didn’t have the ability to answer them right now.

“It’s been quite a while since I felt this smooth, cool sensation of patting him,” Basdia remarked.

“You are absolutely right,” Tarea agreed. “By the way, won’t you people hold back a little? If you don’t, it will feel like I am embracing you.”

“If you feel that way, lose some of your meat,” said Zadiris. “Not only your upper arms, but you must get rid of some of your fat as well. Right, boy?”

“Wow, King’s tongue can grow so long! Look, Mama, it’s like an earthworm!” exclaimed Varbie.

“You’re right, it’s longer than you are, Varbie,” said Bilde. “King, what’s the inside of your mouth like?”

There were clicking noises.

“Huh? This isn’t his tongue, but a centipede-san?”

Rapiécage groaned.

“Your tongue won’t grow,” Bilde told her. “... It won’t grow, will it?”

All of the women had flooded towards Vandalieu.

For the men, the only parts of Vandalieu visible between all of the women who were engaging in physical contact with Vandalieu for the first time in a month were his limbs and his tongue.

“I did hear about it, but he really is popular with the women,” Levia remarked in a surprised tone.

“That’s right; it is Vandalieu-sama, after all,” said Eleanora.

Rita giggled. “Are you surprised?” She and Eleanora seemed to be boasting, for some reason.

“Hey, why are you boasting, Eleanora? Rita? Shouldn’t your reaction be a little different here?” asked Saria. But she couldn’t stop Basdia and the others from doing what they were doing; she had done the same thing as them.

Incidentally, Borkus was leading Gopher and the other Titans around the city, and for some reason, Sam was practicing flying through the sky. It seemed that he had been provoked by the fact that Vandalieu had become able to turn into an enormous bird and fly through the sky, but would a carriage really become able to fly through practice?

“Isn’t it about time you all calmed down?” asked Vandalieu, surrounded by warm, soft, pleasant-smelling skin. “And my tongue won’t grow any longer, so stop pulling it. Everyone wasn’t so assertive before. And there were times where you wouldn’t see me for days at a time, weren’t there?” he pointed out.

Nobody would see him for days while he was clearing Dungeons other than those in his party. But nobody had embraced him so passionately when he returned to Talosheim on those occasions.

“It is as you say, boy. But things have been difficult for the past little while,” said Zadiris. “Well, we didn’t really mind half of the Undead Titans all leaving Talosheim at once, however,” she added.

“Yeah, the walls you built are solid, Van, and normally, we would be clearing the Dungeons and hunting monsters in the nearby Devil’s Nests, so the monsters were being kept in check sufficiently,” said Basdia. “But –”

“Making preparations to accommodate the new citizens and welcome everyone coming back has been difficult,” said Tarea. “In particular, teaching the other Ghouls about the marriage system and making them understand it.”

“Yes, it’s been truly difficult,” said Kachia. “All of us former humans were lecturing them for a whole day. They didn’t object to what we were saying, it simply took a long time to make them understand.”

The biggest concern that they had about welcoming Gopher and the other new inhabitants was the way Ghouls conducted their sexual relationships. Ghouls had no culture regarding marriage, so it was possible that they would cause trouble by calling out to others who already had children and spouses.

The Magic Items that Vandalieu had distributed had improved the Ghouls' fertility, and their everyday lives had become more stable recently, so their nights were less wild than before; they weren't simply looking for whichever partners might be available. Ghouls had their preferences, too.

Also, Vandalieu as well as Nuaza and the other Titans had long since explained to the Ghouls how relationships between men and women worked in the societies of other races. Because of this, the Ghouls had acknowledged marriage as a situation where one worked intimately with their partner in order to bear and raise their children.

But there were still occasions where they would call out to each other and say, "I don't have a partner right now, so do you want to?" If a child was born, they would say things like, "Alright, I'll help you until they become adults," so the men weren't completely irresponsible, but... only if this happened between individuals who both had long lifespans.

If their partners had a proper view on marriage, there could be complications with jealousy and even bloodshed could occur.

That was why the Ghouls chief Zadiris and Basdia, her daughter who would one day become Vandalieu's partner, as well as the Ghouls who had once been humans, had educated the other Ghouls regarding this matter.

Incidentally, the marriage system wasn't as proper as that of Earth; people wouldn't submit documents to the government. They would simply tell their parents, relatives, neighbors and coworkers that they had gotten married.

The only documents involved were the family trees of nobles and royalty.

But in the reborn Talosheim, everyone would leave behind documented records.

"Thank you, everyone," said Vandalieu. "You've saved me a lot of trouble. Chezare, how is the family register coming along?"

"The documents have already been prepared," Chezare reported. "Now we simply

need to have them filled in and everything will be complete.”

According to Vandalieu’s will, a family register had been introduced to Talosheim. There was a system for distributing food, so it would be more convenient to have a family register.

Chezare and the others currently managed it... although he was a general, not a civil official. Had he forgotten this himself, perhaps?

“Well then, how is the Dungeon?” Vandalieu asked.

“We’ve kept an eye on it and the areas around it, but monsters aren’t coming out. We’re going to go and clear them now,” said Basdia.

“Thank you,” said Vandalieu. “That Dungeon was probably something I created, so it might be different from other Dungeons.”

Considering the timing of the appearance of the new Dungeon that had appeared in Talosheim’s forest of Immortal Ents, the Labyrinth Construction skill was clearly involved.

That would normally be something to be surprised about, but...

“So that’s it after all. We thought so,” said Basdia.

“Indeed,” Sam agreed.

“All of the citizens believed that this was the case,” said Nuaza.

Nobody was surprised.

“...Everyone’s reactions are so weak,” said Vandalieu.

“Everyone knows that you put a huge amount of your Mana into that forest, Van,” said Basdia. “Everyone was already saying that a Dungeon might appear there.”

“Dungeons are not things that could normally be created artificially, but your Mana is in the hundreds of millions,” Zadiris added. “Normal limits do not apply to you.”

“Yes, it is wonderful,” said Tarea. “If you simply create Dungeons in hostile nations and

cause monster rampages, we can defeat them without having to fight!"

"Hey, if there are monsters other than Undead and insects, we'll be wiped out as well!" Kachia pointed out.

"If you can choose what the terrain of the Dungeon is like, I kind of want to see an ocean. Can you do it?" asked Basdia.

It seemed that Vandalieu's ability to create Dungeons had been accepted. Tarea's thoughts were quite dangerous, but Kachia had reprimanded her for them.

Incidentally, Varbie, Jadal and Pauvina were playing with Vandalieu's tongue as if they were grabbing an eel.

Vandalieu's tongue was secreting a lotion-like substance that was gentle on the skin, so there weren't any problems with hygiene.

"First of all, let's sort out places for Gopher and the others to live and allocate food and other necessities so that they won't have problems for a while," said Vandalieu. "Then we'll decide how the criminal slaves will be treated, and after that, let's start clearing and inspecting the Dungeon. Regarding currency, I've given Datarā the coins we brought from the Hartner Duchy; we'll need to figure out their ratios of valuable metals first. But please think of possible names for the currency and hand your suggestions to Chezare. And about the statue of me... go ahead and build it whenever you want."

Examining the Dungeon and ensuring that it was safe was the top priority. Currency came after that, and the statue... there was an additional one being built every year, so Vandalieu didn't really mind it now.

"Let's leave Bone Man and Knochen to watch over the Dungeon while we get our new citizens settled in," said Vandalieu. "If we neglect to do this, it'll become a disaster in the future."

Vandalieu didn't know how things were in Origin, but on Earth, there had always been conflict with existing inhabitants when new inhabitants moved in. The strain caused by immigration policies.

Just because he had brought new citizens and convinced them to live here didn't mean that the work was over.

“So, it’s about time you let me go,” Vandalieu told the women.

“Eh, let’s play some more!” Pauvina protested.

In the end, Vandalieu went to check up on the new citizens while dragging everyone along with him.



It seemed that the new citizens would settle into Talosheim more quickly than Vandalieu had imagined.

“I was surprised about a lot of things at first. It was like we’d gone back in time two hundred years, and when we went inside, the buildings and streets looked even more fancy than they did two hundred years ago,” said Gopher as she placed a Reversi piece on a board with a clack.

Vandalieu had used Golem Transmutation to repair Talosheim’s townscape that had turned into a ruin. Thus, it didn’t look much different from before the city’s destruction.

But carvings in the shapes of faces and eyes of people and birds created by Undead Titan stonemasons now decorated the city all over. They were actually all Golems designed to detect intruders, but they looked artistic and gave the city a mystical appearance.

As a result, Talosheim’s townscape was something that wouldn’t fall short even if compared to Nineland, the capital of the Hartner Duchy.

“Also, you’re very generous,” said Gopher, pointing at the honey-colored cloth of the simple piece of clothing that she was wearing. These were the new clothes that had been distributed to her and the other former Titan slaves after only ever having worn clothes made of tattered linen.

They had all been made from the honey silk produced by the Cemetery Bees. Each person had been given several of them. They had even been given shoes, hats, essential furniture and houses.

“...It’s quite a cheap product, you know?” said Vandalieu. “The cloth isn’t dyed, and I’m sure it won’t do much against the cold in the winter. Over half of the furniture is stuff

I put together really quickly, and the houses were already there and I just allocated them to you. Actually, the houses belonged to you in the first place, didn't they?"

"That's true, but you're the one who repaired those houses out of the rubble, aren't you?" Gopher pointed out. "Your Majesty, are you aware? There's a big fuss among the ones from the cultivation village."

In Lambda, no matter how great a cultivation project, the people of the cultivation villages wouldn't be provided with living necessities, houses and everything else that they needed. Even those sponsored by the king of a great nation wouldn't be provided with clothes of fine material that only noblemen would wear and fully-furnished, properly-built stone houses.

There had been quite a bit of chaos as those from the First Cultivation Village wondered if they were dreaming and bowed before the Ghouls who distributed the supplies.

Perhaps this was only natural, as they had gone from being people of the lowest class in a slave-run mine and suddenly gained a quality of life that exceeded their previous social positions.

"A little," said Vandalieu. "But there is a reason for this. You were all slaves and didn't have any living necessities other than the ones you stole at the mine, so you wouldn't be able to live unless I provided them to you. Also, the houses are actually vacant, so it would be more troublesome to not have you live in them."

The former slaves didn't have anything that could be called assets, so there was no choice but to provide them with assets. And since Vandalieu was supplying them, he couldn't deliberately give them poor products... in fact, there were no poor products to give them.

The honey silk was the cloth that he was producing most stably; it would have actually been more problematic to give them linen or cotton clothes. Vandalieu had created over half of the furniture, but he hadn't used any particularly special materials. He had simply used Golem Transmutation to change the shapes of some pieces of wood.

As for the houses, he hadn't done anything other than allocate them to people. He had shuffled people around so that they weren't all living in once place, however.

"Wouldn't it be horrible of me to not provide you with anything and tell you to live

however you can? I don't have a hobby of collecting empty houses," said Vandalieu as he clacked his own piece onto the board. "Ah, but I'm happy that you feel grateful towards me," he added.

"Yes, yes, we are very grateful," said Gopher.

"More importantly, what about the stuff other than the practical side of living here?" Vandalieu asked. "The religion or the Undead, for example."

"Ah, that? Everyone is calmer about it than you expected," Gopher replied. "Nobody is rejecting anything."

Vandalieu's greatest fear initially was that the former slaves would reject the Undead, Ghouls and the races that he had created such as the Black Goblins. But according to Gopher, there was no need to worry about that for now.

"Everyone prepared themselves to some extent after seeing Levia-sama and Oyaji," Gopher explained. "And the Ghouls turned out to be pretty nice after actually meeting them, didn't they? I was a little surprised at the black Goblins, Orcs and Kobolds, and we were pretty dumbfounded to see plants moving around in the fields and forest, but... Well, I suppose it's nothing to worry about."

It seemed that the former slaves were more tolerant than Vandalieu had expected. Perhaps it was because they were inhabitants of a world where there were different races with different appearances and ways of living.

Also, the fact that many of them were believers of Vida was perhaps one reason they were so tolerant towards Undead.

"As for religion, it doesn't even need to be said," said Gopher. "It's not like we bowed before Alda because we wanted to. We have the 'Holy Son of Vida' here, too."

"Huh. I suppose that's true," said Vandalieu.

His new 'Holy Son of Vida' Title was the biggest reason for that tolerance.

The fact that Vandalieu possessed this Title was essentially equivalent to the goddess Vida's personal authorization of his actions. The truth was that the goddess didn't necessarily see everything, but this was how it was being interpreted.

Because of this, Gopher and the other former slaves from Talosheim, who had believed in Vida from the very beginning as well as those from the cultivation village, who were originally from the Sauron Duchy where Vida's religion had prospered, treated Vandalieu as a saint or prophet.

From Vandalieu's point of view, things had just turned out this way as a result of him doing whatever he could and whatever he had wanted to do. But Vida was the one god in this world who was friendly towards him, so he was happy to have been acknowledged by her.

"Actually, you're similar to the champion Zakkart, aren't you? I'm sure he used some crazy magic," said Gopher.

She and the other former slaves already knew of Vandalieu's past, which had been announced when he was crowned king of Talosheim.

"It's a little different, though. I don't have cheat-like abilities or anything," said Vandalieu as he placed a black piece on the board, flipping a white piece over to turn it black.

From now on, when people came to Talosheim, they would find out about Vandalieu's past. Leaving aside whether it would actually be believed, the entire continent would know about it once Talosheim began trading with foreign countries.

Vandalieu didn't feel any risk in this, however.

Being found out by the others reincarnating here or being found out by the Empire or the believers of Alda were meaningless worries.

There were so many things in the city that Vandalieu had reproduced from another world, like miso, soy sauce, mayonnaise and ketchup. It would be stranger to think that he would be able to keep it hidden.

If those reincarnated here learned that there was a nation exporting miso and soy sauce, they would probably realize that someone from Earth like them was in that nation, and he would be noticed by the Empire and followers of Alda who prohibited the use of knowledge and technology from another world.

That was why it would be healthier on Vandalieu's mind to simply announce that he had lived in another world in his previous life than to deal with the stress of keeping

it a secret. That was what he thought.

“More importantly –” Gopher began.

“Ah, the criminal slaves?” said Vandalieu. “I’ve assigned them work based on what they’re suited to, and I’m planning to release them depending on how they work.”

Most of the criminal slaves he had brought back to Talosheim wouldn’t be considered evil people by a Japanese person’s values, but that didn’t mean that he could simply acquit them.

That was why he had heard their requests and had them work under stonemasons, blacksmiths, arms smiths and potters, as well as having them do manual labor and farming work. This also served as training for them to find work in the future, so they would likely be useful after they were released, too.

Incidentally, they were being treated worse than people in Japanese prisons. If they lived like Japanese prisoners, other than a lack of freedom, they would be living more luxurious lifestyles than even middle-class workers in Lambda.

Japanese prisoners had three meals a day with sufficient nutrition, worked eight hours a day with no overtime and got one day’s rest every week. In Lambda, which had no Labor Standards Act, this would be incredibly good treatment.

Thus, in Talosheim, the slaves were given two meals a day and one day’s rest every ten days.

Even then, it was difficult to call this treatment poor in comparison to Lambda’s servants and employees who were only given a few days’ rest a year, and it was heaven compared to the lifestyle they had in the slave-run mine.

“No, not them –”

“The children? I’ll have them learn reading, writing and arithmetic before listening to what they want and having them work in the supply distribution center and the Church. Some of them are wondering if I’ll make them attend me at night in the future, but I have no plans to do that,” said Vandalieu.

“I know,” said Gopher. “Anyone would know that you have no time for that with one look at *that* you. What I want to ask is, between that one and this one, which one is the

real you?”

There was one spirit-form Vandalieu in front of Gopher, materializing only his fingertips to move the pieces. There were other Vandalieus all over the place, talking to the people while performing physical examinations on them and cooking things on iron plates. And a little further away, there was another Vandalieu, surrounded by beautiful Ghoul Women, Princess Levia and a young girl who was even larger than Titan children, which was the Vandalieu that Gopher was talking about.

“Both are the real me,” Vandalieu replied.

“...You’re the one I find most difficult to understand after all, Your Majesty,” said Gopher.

“Muh, communication is difficult after all,” Vandalieu murmured.

Why is it so hard when I’m such a friendly, honest king who visits the people like this? he wondered.



Title explanation:

【Holy Son of Vida】

This is a Title that indicates that the bearer is especially loved or acknowledged by Vida, the Goddess of Life and Love. In the past, only the founders of her new races such as Vampires or Dark Elves, or those she gave Divine Messages or trials, received this Title.

Because of this, such individuals are respected as saints by Vida's followers and members of her races.

This Title increases the ability to understand Divine Messages from Vida, as well as providing a bonus to the Clergyman skill.

Normally, Life-Attribute Magic would receive a bonus as well, but Vandalieu does not have an affinity for the life attribute so he does not gain this bonus.

CHAPTER 86

THE ECLIPSE KING'S ORCHARD

Dealing with Immigration had gone better than expected, so Vandalieu decided to clear the Dungeon in the Immortal Ent Forest and inspect his skills earlier than he had planned.

"I'm going to follow you this time!" Darcia exclaimed. "I was so lonely, but Vandalieu... I think it's too early for you to become independent of me."

"I mean, you were still asleep when I got back, weren't you, Mom?"

Darcia, who was a weak spirit, spent most of her time sleeping in the small bone fragment that she inhabited. It just so happened that she had been sleeping when Vandalieu returned.

However, he did think that it might have been for the best for Darcia to not be present at the time.

"So, I was thinking, what if you turned me into a Fire Ghost like Levia-san?" asked Darcia. "I was burned to death as well; I'm sure I'm suited for it."

"Wait, I've acquired a way to create Homunculi, so wait just a little more," Vandalieu told her.

"But if I become a Ghost, I can help you and always be with you, Vandalieu," she said.

"I'm begging you, please wait a little longer," said Vandalieu. "Also, something might happen to you if evil gods are around."

I have to hurry with this, he thought.



"Aren't there any evil gods, any wicked gods?*"

"...Boy, why are you holding a hatchet in one hand?" asked Zadiris. "Also, I do not think

that there would be any evil gods in a Dungeon that has only just appeared.”

“No, I thought there was a sliver of hope that there would be,” said Vandalieu. He stopped his namahage* impression and looked up at the Dungeon that had appeared in the Immortal Ent forest.

TLN: In a Japanese folklore tradition, men dress up like demons called Namahage and yell phrases like “Aren’t there any naughty kids?” to scare children into behaving.*

The members who were exploring this Dungeon were Pauvina and the other youths, the women minus Eleanora, Bone Man, Vigaro, ten Cemetery Bees and Luciliano, the baggage-carrier.

“But I am someone who works with my mind, Master,” Luciliano protested.

“You don’t actually have to carry the baggage,” said Vandalieu. “Watch our spells from behind and if you have any advice, go ahead and give it to us.”

Although Luciliano was a unique C-class adventurer, his ability in battle was quite unimpressive. However, although he had apparently been partially excommunicated, he was a mage who had studied under a master at the Mages’ Guild. He might have knowledge or ways of thinking that Vandalieu and the others didn’t have, as they were mostly self-taught.

“And you’re supposed to be my apprentice, aren’t you? Please watch my magic and if you think that there’s somewhere else I could apply it, let me know,” said Vandalieu.

“I shall do that, Master,” said Luciliano.

Thinking that this was impossible, Vandalieu faintly hoped that Luciliano would give up.

“But if the inside is too narrow or the monsters are strong, we’ll come back and start again,” said Vandalieu.

“I know,” said Kachia. “But it’s alright, I’ve become much stronger than I was last time!”

“You won’t cry?” Vandalieu asked her.

“I won’t cry! I definitely won’t cry!”

They entered the Dungeon while teasing Kachia to find that there was a forest inside. It was different to the Devil's Nest forest, the forests full of broad-leaved trees near Talosheim and the forests filled with giant ferns in Borkus's Sub-Dragon Savannah; it was a coniferous forest with pine and cedar trees.

"While you were away, we ventured into the first floor to ensure that a monster rampage did not occur, and this was how it appeared, my lord," said Bone Man. "The monsters... were like that."

Bone Man was pointing at an enormous, brightly-colored mushroom that completely destroyed the feeling of this place being a coniferous forest... a Rank 3 Poison Mushroom.

They looked like giant mushrooms with limbs, but despite their charming appearance, they were vicious monsters that attacked living things and killed them, leaving spores on their corpses in order to reproduce.

There were three of them standing there.

"They're standing up," said Vandalieu.

"...At this distance, they're within range of bows and arrows, but why are those monsters just standing there?" Basdia asked.

"Perhaps it's because there are so many of us that they are on guard now?" Darcia suggested.

"No, they would run if that were the case," said Zadiris. "Well, I suppose we should try and attack them."

Basdia, Zadiris and Kachia cast their spells to try attacking them. All of them were spells intended to test the waters, so none of them had much power.

The Poison Mushrooms remained motionless and took the attacks from the front. They were cut by blades of wind and the fragrant smell of burning mushrooms drifted into the air.

"They're not moving," Vandalieu remarked.

"Hmm, how eerie," said Zadiris.

“This is how the monsters have been,” said Bone Man. “Incidentally, I also defeated four of them with my bow and arrows, jyuuh.”

“I threw my axe to defeat a few of them as well,” said Vigaro. “They were different monsters to these ones, though.”

“So you defeated them... There’s something that I’m curious about, so please try defeating those Poison Mushrooms,” said Vandalieu.

“Very well, leave it to me.” Zadiris, who was holding the staff that Vandalieu had taken from the mansion of the Mages’ Guild’s Guild Master, used the Blade of Light spell to defeat the Poison Mushrooms in the blink of an eye.

Vandalieu looked at the defeated person-shaped mushrooms for a while before tilting his head in confusion.

“Those Poison Mushrooms have no souls,” he said. “I wonder why.”

“Indeed, I can’t see them,” said Darcia.

“Isn’t that because they’re plants?” Bilde asked.

“Even plants have souls, Bilde,” Vandalieu told her.

He didn’t know about other worlds, but plants in Lambda had souls. To be more precise, a soul resided in every living thing.

It was true that he didn’t know if microscopic organisms and viruses had souls; he couldn’t see them without an electron microscope. But plants had souls, so it was difficult to imagine that Poison Mushrooms wouldn’t have them.

“Also, Poison Mushrooms we defeated in other places had souls,” Vandalieu pointed out.

“Then why in the world don’t they have any?” Darcia wondered.

“Aren’t the souls still somewhere inside?” Vigaro asked.

“No, they’re already dead,” said Vandalieu. “But let’s check whether there are Magic Stones.”

Magic Stones normally appeared in the parts of the monster where their hearts were when they died. Thus, if Magic Stones were present in a monster's body, it was certain that the monster was dead.

Cutting open the Poison Mushrooms' bodies revealed that Magic Stones had indeed appeared. These Poison Mushrooms were unmistakably dead.

"Hmm, I don't understand," said Vandalieu. "It's not like I broke their souls, but they were able to exist without them. Luciliano, do you have any ideas?" he asked.

"Master, I am a mage, not a Spiritualist, so I could not possibly know," Luciliano replied.

"Jyuuh~ I did not pay it much attention earlier, but thinking about it again, it is strange after all," said Bone Man. "Could it be because this is a Dungeon that you created, my lord?"

"Indeed, it is difficult to say as I have never heard of an artificially-created Dungeon before, but... Well, apart from Undead, only Spiritualists and you can see whether they have souls or not, boy," said Zadiris.

They couldn't be certain of anything. It was unclear as to what principles and mechanisms were at work to generate monsters inside Dungeons, so they didn't know anything at all.

"Well, as for why they have no souls, the next time I have the opportunity to meet a god, I'll ask," said Vandalieu, but there was no telling whether any gods would even answer his question.

This question was stepping into the realms beyond mortal knowledge.

Dungeons generated monsters one after another thanks to the Demon King Guduranis's circle of transmigration system. The countless souls flowing through the system were used to create the monsters of the Dungeons.

This applied for Dungeons created by the evil gods as well

But Vandalieu didn't have his own circle of transmigration system, nor did he know of a way to use the other systems.

Because of this, the monsters in the Dungeon created by Vandalieu were like soulless

robots with living bodies. The exceptions were monsters that had entered the Dungeon from outside or monsters whose empty bodies had been possessed by exterior souls.

The same applied for Heinz's Skeleton Caverns near the city of Niarki; the monsters had been programmed to move based on Vandalieu's hatred and obeyed this programming the moment they were born. Other than the monsters in this initial monster rampage, the monsters of that Dungeon didn't have souls.

But this information was only known to the gods, so Vandalieu and his companions couldn't even make such conjectures. They had no choice but to put this matter aside for now and continue on.

"Well, isn't it fine?" said Darcia. "You can still earn Experience Points, can't you?"

Vandalieu shook his head. "We can, but since they're just standing like scarecrows, we won't get practice for our skills," he said. "It would be better if they just attacked us normally."

There were Poison Apes nearby, apes with venomous saliva, motionless like the Poisonous Mushrooms. The moment Vandalieu finished speaking, as if a switch had been flipped, they attacked his party.



After being surprised by the Poisonous Apes but defeating them without incident, Vandalieu and his party investigated why they had suddenly begun moving by examining other monsters.

"Stop, turn over, paw, stay, come, stop... Yes, the only ones that work seem to be 'stop' and 'come,'" said Vandalieu, watching the Rank 4 Poison Ents freeze like dolls and attack by swinging their branches based on his commands.

"How surprising... is it different from taming them?" asked Kachia.

"Yes, it is," Vandalieu replied. "They don't obey any other commands. For example, please take me around this place three times."

There was the sound of buzzing wings.

The Cemetery Bees grabbed Vandalieu's legs, flew up and took him around three times before letting him back down on the ground.

"And now... take me around this place three times." Vandalieu tried giving the same command to the Poison Ents, but they stayed frozen, not moving an inch.

"As you can see, they don't respond to my words," said Vandalieu.

"Wouldn't one normally tell them to spin around three times?" Luciliano muttered. His words were ignored as everyone gave these strange monsters bewildered looks.

"It does seem to be different from taming," said Basdia.

"Isn't it because they have no souls? I don't know much about soulless creatures, though," said Kachia.

"Perhaps they do listen to some of Vandalieu's commands because he's the one who created this Dungeon?" Darcia suggested.

"Indeed, now that I think about it, they seem quite similar to Golems," said Basdia.

"Similar to Golems?" Luciliano repeated. Feeling relieved that he hadn't been ignored this time, he began explaining. "Golems are puppets created by Alchemists; although there are various ways to create them, the one thing they have in common is that they produce Golems with no souls. Thus, in order to move, they require direct orders from the Alchemist that is their master or they must be provided with artificial personalities with orders given to them beforehand. It is said that Golems as useful and capable of making decisions as humans existed in the age of the gods, but now, even those that merely respond to the sound of their masters' voices and are able to obey a number of simple commands are considered high-class products, Master."

"The Golems that Van creates are quite different, though," said Basdia.

"...No Alchemist is capable of creating Golems as capable as Master's," said Luciliano, his mouth twitching. "If they could, the world would undergo a revolution."

After coming to Talosheim and seeing the Golem surveillance network and Golem factories that used Golems in place of machines, Luciliano had experienced several occasions of shock that nullified his previous knowledge.

Luciliano had become Vandalieu's apprentice after admiring the way that he used the many beautiful, fearsome Ghosts to cast a spell to cave in a five-hundred-meter-tall rocky mountain without any incantation, but not even a few days had passed since coming to Talosheim and had already seen numerous things that overturned concepts that mages took for granted. He didn't even want to count them anymore.

"Leaving that revolution aside, it does seem that the reason the monsters are behaving so strangely is the fact that they have no souls," said Luciliano.

Vandalieu, who didn't have a good idea of these concepts that mages took for granted, simply accepted this explanation and nodded.

He also decided to cut down these Poison Ents with his claws for now. "They won't make for good training like this, so I'll have them attack us normally," he said.

From then on, the monsters attacked the party normally like monsters in any other Dungeon. Vandalieu didn't know how it worked, but all of the monsters seemed to be this way even as they moved down the floors, so it was likely that all of the monsters in the entire Dungeon would be like this.

"Later on, we'll have to check whether the monsters still behave like this when Vandalieu isn't here," said Vigaro.

"You are right," Zadiris agreed. "If we need the boy to give them orders every time, they will not make for good training."

"...You can gather materials and Experience Points safely, so why would you go out of your way to make it more difficult?" Luciliano wondered.

Vigaro and Zadiris were of a warrior race, but Luciliano gave them a perplexed look, seemingly unable to understand. A Dungeon where monsters of Rank 4 and greater could be hunted – every nation would want this Dungeon if they knew about it.

"What are you saying?" asked Zadiris. "You are an adventurer, are you not?"

"I am an adventurer, but not all adventurers like adventures," Luciliano replied.

"Hmm, I suppose there would be a lot of people who would continue doing this because they can't gain Experience Points any other way. And even if our skills don't level up, we gain levels... I might have been pretty happy with this before I became a

Ghoul,” said Kachia. She seemed to agree with Luciliano.

It seemed that not all adventurers were warriors. This fact surprised everyone other than these two.

“What did you say?! Are adventurers not always full of fighting spirit?!” Zadiris exclaimed in shock.

“I thought everyone was as reckless as me,” said Vigaro.

“Are they not?” asked Levia. “Borkus in particular was always saying that combat was the daily bread of warriors in Talosheim.”

“Jyuuh, I was so surprised that my jaw... My lord, please pick it up for me,” said Bone Man.

“It’s hard to believe. What do you think, Van?” Basdia asked.

It was not only the Ghouls, who had only encountered adventurers who had come to hunt them, who thought that adventurers all loved fighting; Princess Levia had believed this as well.

“The adventurers I know are Mom, Kachia, Borkus and the others... I think that people like Kachia are in the minority,” said Vandalieu as he picked up Bone Man’s jaw.

It seemed that one couldn’t gain good knowledge with a small view of the world.



Vandalieu’s party descended from the third floor to the fourth floor, checking whether there were any monsters or traps.

There were some differences between the floors of this Dungeon, such as the leaves of the trees and patches of wetlands, but they were mostly forests.

Other than the top few floors, the monsters were mostly plant-type monsters of Rank 4 and above. The next most common monsters were insects, amphibians, reptiles, animals and fish in that order.

Many of the monsters had the ability to inflict poison and disease, so anyone trying to

clear this Dungeon without preparing properly beforehand could run into unexpected difficulties. If they weren't Undead, that is.

There were quite a few traps, too. Pitfalls, webs that fell from overhead, vines that dragged the victim's legs up into the air. There were even logs with spikes that came flying from the side when tripwires were carelessly triggered.

They weren't the kinds of traps that would be found in ruins; they were mostly the kind of traps that would be used in guerilla warfare.

"If the difficulty of the Dungeon was formally classified, I suppose it would be considered C-class," said Luciliano.

"C-class, huh. The only C-class Dungeon around before this was Borkus's Sub-Dragon Savannah, so everyone should be happy," said Vigaro.

"It's been packed every day," added Basdia. "Lately, it's not been unusual for there to be more people trying to clear the Dungeon than monsters inside it."

"Actually, nobody goes to clear the D-class Dungeons except for the stonemasons and fishermen nowadays, so they're pretty empty," said Kachia. "I'm not going to them these days, either."

There were four other Dungeons near Talosheim, but there was only one B-class Dungeon and one C-class Dungeon, so Basdia and Kachia had been finding it troublesome to find a place to train.

"The C-class Dungeon is packed full of people?! ... Are the people here monsters?" Luciliano wondered.

Normally, Dungeons of C-class and above wouldn't be packed. There were few adventurers who could progress to C-class and beyond.

D-class Dungeons, on the other hand, would be contested hunting grounds for the many D-class adventurers.

The only times when C-class Dungeons were full of people was when the first couple of floors contained desirable items for veteran D-class adventurers, or when certain products or monster materials were selling for a higher price than normal.

Nobody could blame Luciliano for being amazed.

“Things weren’t like this two hundred years ago, though...” said Levia.

“Until Vandalieu brought Levia-san and the others back, it was like the whole nation except for me and the children were adventurers,” said Darcia.

“And us Undead do not tire,” said Bone Man. “We can train in the Dungeons for days on end, jyuuh.”

“On top of that, I train in the Dungeons, and the ingredients for fish sauce, miso and soy sauce can only be gathered in the Dungeons. Everyone’s working hard,” said Vandalieu.

As a result, the tireless Undead and the normally-lazy Ghouls visited the Dungeons often. Everyone leveled up, and until the former slaves moved into Talosheim, most citizens were about as capable as C-class adventurers in battle.

“Without the Dungeons, we’d have to walk about half a day away from the city to find monsters of Rank 5 or higher,” said Basdia. “I don’t want to leave Jadal alone for too long.”

“Raising children is difficult, isn’t it? But this place is right inside the city, and you could make day trips if you’re just venturing into the first few floors, couldn’t you?” said Darcia.

“Also, the trading post is close by, so moving materials there won’t be too hard,” said Bilde.

The three housewives were having a dangerous conversation.

“Working women do need to consider the distance and methods of transport,” Vandalieu agreed. “The next time I make a Dungeon, I’ll make it closer to the city... I wonder if I can dismantle Garan’s Valley and Doran’s Aquatic Caverns and rebuild them somewhere else.”

“It would be convenient if you could, but I have never heard of Dungeons being moved in such a way,” said Zadiris.

Luciliano gave a hollow laugh. “Master appears to be very free, but I wonder who I am

supposed to discuss things with.”

“Jyujyujyuh, it appears that my lord’s apprentice has finally realized that superficial efforts will not make him worthy,” said Bone Man.



After that, Vandalieu and his party continued through the endless Dungeon, inspecting his new skills and investigating whether the Dungeon’s products and monster materials were usable.

Bloodwork was simply a superior version of the Bloodsucking skill.

The amount of Stamina and Mana recovered by drinking blood was dramatically greater than through Bloodsucking, wounds healed faster and it seemed to increase his Attribute Values as well, though only by a few percent.

Also, this skill was apparently quite famous; Luciliano was familiar with its details.

“It is a skill that indicates that one has consumed enough blood for the skill to become a superior skill, and many who possess the skill are apparently assaulted by a powerful thirst for blood,” he explained. “But... you are perfectly fine, aren’t you, Master?”

Due to the skill’s properties, many who possessed it were powerful Vampires, and the reason they manipulated humans in the shadows was to maintain a reliable source of blood to drink.

“I can drink as much blood as I want by hunting whatever monsters are available, can’t I?” said Vandalieu.

The thirst for blood wasn’t something he had been avoiding. Although he would have had a tough time on Earth or in Origin, Lambda was full of threats; there were always monsters to hunt.

And unlike Vampires, who valued the blood of virgins, Vandalieu didn’t care whether the blood came from a middle-aged man, a bandit or an Orc. He didn’t have any particular preferences when it came to the taste of blood.

He didn’t enjoy strong-smelling Goblin blood or the blood of animals with bad-tasting

meat, however.

“Speaking of which, what are the Vampire Zombies working under Eleanora doing for blood?” Zadiris asked. “I have not seen them drinking blood very often.”

“When they were training in the Dungeons with us, they were drinking monster blood,” Vigarō told her.

“They sometimes drink a little of my blood, too,” said Vandalieu. “The Vampire Zombies... don’t they absorb some whenever they eat raw meat?”

“I suppose I shouldn’t have asked this question in a country of Undead...”

Luciliano had been treated like an outsider in human society, but he was astounded to find that in Talosheim, he was a normal person. He was worried that he would lose his Title of ‘Degenerate.’



Next was the inspection of Vandalieu’s Insect Binding Technique, but this turned out to be simple as well.

“It’s really going inside,” said Vandalieu.

“Is that really alright?” Basdia asked.

“There doesn’t appear to be any particular problems,” Vandalieu replied.

There was a large, vividly-colored, venomous-looking earthworm in his hand. And then it slowly dug its way *inside* his hand.

“Umm, wasn’t that a Pain Worm? It’s only Rank 1, but it has tiny, poisonous needles growing all over its body,” asked Kachia.

“So it seems,” said Vandalieu.

“How can you be so calm about it?”

Basdia and Kachia’s voices sounded a little strained as they watched the Pain Worm disappear completely inside Vandalieu’s hand. But there wasn’t a single wound on his

white, unhealthy-looking, candle-wax-like skin.

“My Vitality hasn’t gone down, either, so it does seem that there isn’t any problem with this,” said Vandalieu.

“Jyuuh? Are you saying that you consumed that creature?” Bone Man asked.

“No, I don’t think that’s the case,” Vandalieu replied. “Look, it can come out whenever it wants to, too.”

The Pain Worm slowly emerged from Vandalieu’s other hand. It plopped onto the ground, but Pete leapt out after it, grabbed it in his mouth and returned to Vandalieu’s hand.

“It’s difficult to believe, but it seems that Insect Binding Technique is a skill that allows one to equip insects to the body,” said Basdia.

“Equip insects... will they actually be useful? It’s not like you can punch enemies with insects, right?” said Vigarō.

“Well, that explains the mystery of why Pete settled in my hair,” said Vandalieu. “As for whether they’ll be useful, they probably will be. Cemetery Bees, can you enter my body in the same way?”

Showing no signs of hesitation, the Cemetery Bees silently entered Vandalieu’s body. They forced themselves mercilessly into Vandalieu’s head despite their size, so it looked quite grotesque, but Vandalieu didn’t feel any discomfort or pain.

And then once the Cemetery Bees were completely inside him, Vandalieu was able to control them as if they were a part of his body. He could poke their heads out from his hands or their poisonous stingers from the tip of his tongue. In the same way, he was able to produce Pete from anywhere in his body on command.

“I see, so I can control any insect-type monster that I’ve tamed,” Vandalieu concluded. “By the way, what’s wrong?”

Everyone except for Vandalieu’s apprentice touched their own heads cautiously as they looked up at him.

“It’s just that they were completely inside your head, so I was wondering if it’s really

alright,” said Basdia.

“My lord, it may be fine for you, but to those watching, it appears as if you are being consumed by the insects, jyuuh,” said Bone Man.

“...I’ll make sure to avoid using this in front of people. By the way, what about Luciliano?”

“He’s fainted over there, but... I suppose we can’t blame him,” said Kachia.

Insect Binding Technique was a skill that allowed Vandalieu to equip insects inside his body, and if those insects were tamed, then he could produce them or a part of their bodies from his own at will.

But if the insects stayed equipped for more than a few hours, they would begin taking the nutrients they required from the host’s body. In other words, Vandalieu had to eat a lot in order to avoid losing Vitality to them.

That was the kind of skill it was.

It would probably be another excellent skill for Vandalieu alongside Dead Spirit Magic.

“What if I equipped the insectoid monsters that I’ve tamed, entered a city and registered at the Tamers’ Guild?” Vandalieu wondered.

“I am a Ghoul, so I do not know much about Guilds, but I believe that it would be best to give up on this idea,” said Zadiris.

“Vandalieu, I don’t think it’s a good idea, either,” said Darcia. “I’m sure you’ll shock everyone.”

“It’ll be more than a shock,” said Kachia. “Luciliano hasn’t even woken up yet.”

“There should be relatively harmless monsters like Pixies living somewhere, shouldn’t there?” asked Vandalieu.

At the very least, it seemed that there were no Pixies in this Dungeon.

“Are Pixies insects?” Darcia wondered.

“For now, I’m going to tame useful-looking insectoid monsters and equip them,” said Vandalieu. “It’s probably best to test how many I can fit at the same time, too.”

“Umm, try to make sure they’re cute ones, okay?” said Kachia.

“I’ll see how it goes.” Vandalieu nodded, but he couldn’t really imagine what Kachia had in mind.

What were these cute insects that Kachia mentioned? Bees and centipedes didn’t seem to fit the criteria, so woodlice, perhaps?



The focus of this expedition was the inspection of the Labyrinth Construction skill, but not all of its details could be seen immediately. As Vandalieu examined this skill, more new effects revealed themselves.

First, whenever Vandalieu descended to a new floor, he could see its overall layout. The moment he took his first step, a map would appear over his head.

He could also change the structure of floors that had already been cleared. He could build walls, set traps and even create staircases connecting floors, though only when both floors had already been cleared.

“Oh, there’s a wall of trees appearing right in front of us!”

“To think that you could make pitfalls and even stairs...”

“It uses up quite a lot of Mana though,” said Vandalieu. “Small traps and walls cost ten thousand, and ten million for stairs that lead both up and down.”

“But it’s not a lot for you, is it, Van?” asked Basdia.

“That’s true.”

“That’s amazing, Vandalieu,” said Darcia. “If you used it to create walls on all sides, we could rest safely, couldn’t we?”

Depending on their layout, the walls of any Dungeon could be made of trees, cliffs, stones, bricks, unidentified metals or even like the internal organs of an enormous

creature, but the thing that they all in common was that their structure couldn't be altered artificially.

The cliffs of Garan's Valley and the minerals of Doran's Aquatic Caverns could be temporarily broken and chipped, but they would return to normal after a few days at most. Even disarmed traps would be replaced, although it was a mystery as to who had set them.

If this weren't the case, high-class Dungeons would collapse during battles between high-Rank monsters and the mighty adventurers challenging them, so perhaps it was only natural that they had self-repairing functions.

Building additional walls or setting traps was impossible. It was certainly difficult to bring the materials to do so into a Dungeon, but even if one did take the effort to do these things, they would be destroyed by monsters or simply disappear eventually.

Even in Dungeons that were like labyrinths with stone walls, monsters wouldn't destroy the walls unless they happened to hit them during battle. But they would destroy any artificially-built walls without hesitation.

Even if monsters didn't destroy them, they would be identified as foreign objects and the Dungeon's self-repair function would cause them to disappear as if they were damage caused to the Dungeon.

Even though Vandalieu could use his Golem Transmutation skill to mine rock and minerals, he couldn't make large changes to the structures of Dungeons.

However, the walls made by Labyrinth Construction changed the Dungeon itself, so it was highly likely that they would stay there.

"Monsters destroyed the walls you made with Golem Transmutation, but they simply avoided and passed by the walls you made with Labyrinth Creation," said Darcia.

"Truly amazing, Your Majesty," said Levia. "If you can use this skill in other Dungeons, there is no telling how much easier everyone's lives would become..."

"No, it's not really that big a deal," said Vandalieu, feeling shy about being praised.

But the great discovery came after this.

It seemed that Vandalieu and those with him could teleport freely to any cleared floor in the Dungeon.

From the twenty-third floor to the first floor. From the first floor to the seventeenth floor. Whether it was the mid-boss's floor or the Dungeon's deepest floor where the boss was, they could go anywhere except for the Dungeon's treasure chamber.

And it wasn't only the entrances to the floors that they could teleport to. They could teleport to any point in a cleared floor.

Even the Magic Items installed in Dungeons through advanced Alchemy weren't capable of doing this.

"Teleporting is interesting, isn't it?" said Vandalieu.

"I suppose this makes you invincible in any Dungeon you have already cleared once, boy," said Zadiris.

"Yeah, I think any adventurer who works in Dungeons would want this ability," said Kachia.

With the materials, treasure and tamed monsters in hand, Vandalieu and his party left the Dungeon.

"To place the spirits around you into the soulless monsters... is this not an artificial reincarnation?" said Luciliano, trembling unnaturally in shock and fear.

"My lord, it seems that your apprentice is going to begin foaming at the mouth soon. Should you not have held back a little?" Bone Man suggested.

Vandalieu thought that Luciliano was overreacting.

In his mind, there was nothing different from this and creating Golems or Undead. Also, the monsters that were following him now were important to him.

"I want fruits and spices, after all," said Vandalieu. "I can't hold back."

The Dungeon had contained all kinds of plant-type monsters, and among them, there had been Ents and Monster Plants formed from trees that produced fruit.

There were wild strawberry, watermelon and capsicum Monster Plants as well as Ents that produced pears, cherries, raspberries, blueberries, coffee, citrus fruits, bananas, mangoes, avocados and sap that could be turned into syrup.

There were even monsters bearing fruits that Vandalieu didn't know. He didn't know whether these fruits existed on Earth.

"Jyuuu. In that case, it cannot be helped," said Bone Man as he quickly joined Vandalieu in enjoying the fruits that he had never seen before. Despite being made of bones, he was quite the big eater.

The next day, this Dungeon was named the 'Eclipse King's Orchard.'



- **Name:** Luciliano
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 29 years old
- **Title:** 【Degenerate】
- **Job:** Slave
- **Level:** 81
- **Job history:** Apprentice Mage, Mage, Life-Attribute Mage, Undead User, Alchemist
- **Passive skills:**
 - Mental Corruption: Level 2
 - Mental Fortitude: Level 3
 - Augmented Mana: Level 4
 - Mana Cost Reduction: Level 3
 - Detect Presence: Level 2
 - Fatigue/Hunger Resistance: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 7
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 3
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 3
 - Mana Control: Level 7
 - Alchemy: Level 5
 - Staff Technique: Level 2
 - Silent Steps: Level 1
 - Etiquette: Level 1
 - Mining: Level 1

A rare research-type adventurer. He is C-class, but his actual ability in combat is equivalent to a D-class adventurer. His high-level magic is specialized for creating Undead.

The Undead he makes are Live-Dead that he creates by granting life-force to fresh corpses, so they are different from the specimens that Vandalieu creates.

Incidentally, he lost his qualifications as an adventurer when he became a slave.

CHAPTER 87

ACTUALLY, LET'S GET ON WITH CREATING A CURRENCY

TLN: There is a play on words in the title; what I've loosely translated to "actually" is 一か/tsuuka, and "currency" is 通貨, also pronounced "tsuuka".

After clearing the Eclipse King's Orchard, the forest of Immortal Ents became much livelier. The trees that had fruits hanging from them all year round were like treasure boxes of fruit.

There was also a large reformation in Talosheim. Traveling to Dungeons had become easier; people no longer had to venture beyond the walls to reach them.

Garan's Valley, Doran's Aquatic Caverns, Borkus's Sub-Dragon Savannah and Barigen's End Life-Mountain had all been moved inside the city.

It seemed that Vandalieu's Labyrinth Construction skill was able to move Dungeons that he had previously cleared.

"Moving them at the speed of someone walking at a brisk pace, it costs about ten thousand Mana every minute, but... I regenerate about ten thousand Mana every second with the Automatic Mana Recovery skill, so with enough time, I can move Dungeons anywhere," said Vandalieu.

The Dungeons' entrances followed behind him with the sound of something being dragged along the ground, but there were no changes to the insides.

Everyone, not just Luciliano, was dumbfounded to see this.

Vandalieu was even able to teleport from the entrance of any Dungeon he had previously cleared to the entrance of any other previously-cleared Dungeon. Unlike teleportation between Dungeon floors, this teleportation only worked for himself, but... since the Ghosts following him and the insects he had equipped were treated as a part of him, he could bring them along.

He had even been able to teleport to the Dungeon that he had cleared years ago, before he had even met Zadiris and the Ghouls, so it seemed that he was able to go to any Dungeon anywhere as long as he had cleared it before.

“I suppose we should go and clear the Dungeon I made in Niarki next time,” said Vandalieu.

“More importantly, Master, should you not simply just create lots of small Dungeons all over the place?” Luciliano suggested. “You can create them, can’t you?”

“Well, it does use up a considerable amount of Mana, though,” said Vandalieu.

He had tried creating a small Dungeon just to test this ability out, but it turned out to be much more difficult work than moving an existing Dungeon. Creating a single Dungeon required an hour of concentration and consumed 100,000,000 Mana.

The resulting Dungeon was a Dungeon with a single floor, filled with only Rank 1 monsters such as Horned Rabbits and Big Frogs.

“It seems that when creating Dungeons, the amount of Mana, time and the effect it has on my mental state depends on the skill’s level,” said Vandalieu.

The Eclipse King’s Orchard had been formed as a result of the hundreds of millions of Mana that he had poured into the ground on numerous occasions. The thirty-floor C-class Dungeon, Heinz’s Skeleton Caverns, had been created as a result of him reaching such a mental state that his consciousness disappeared and his Mana pool ran empty; he had no recollection of what had happened afterwards.

It seemed that Vandalieu wasn’t yet able to freely create Dungeons of the difficulty he desired. It appeared that the Dungeons’ interior structures were also similar to the areas surrounding the places they were created in. That was why the Eclipse King’s Orchard was a forest environment.

However, Vandalieu was able to change the Dungeons’ difficulty and number of floors after they had been built. He spent time during the next day pouring Mana into the one-floor Dungeon to find that it had become a two-floor Dungeon. He could probably increase the difficulty of Dungeons in the same way.

And wouldn’t he become able to make the Dungeons more freely once his skill leveled up? There wasn’t any pressing reason for him to become able to create high-difficulty

Dungeons right away, so this was probably fine for now.

The Labyrinth Construction skill's features were as follows:

- Allows Vandalieu to create Dungeons. However, freely changing its floors, difficulty and interior structure was impossible at this point in time.
- Gives Vandalieu knowledge of the layout of a Dungeon's floor by stepping foot into it.
- The monsters appearing in the Dungeons have no souls. Because of this, Vandalieu is able to exercise limited control over them. In order to tame them, he must have appropriate spirits possess their bodies.
- Allows Vandalieu and his allies to teleport between previously-cleared floors in a Dungeon.
- Allows Vandalieu to alter the structure of previously-cleared floors in a Dungeon. He can place or remove walls, doors and traps, as well as create stairs that connect separate floors.
- Allows Vandalieu to move Dungeons. This has no effect on the interior structure of the Dungeons.
- Allows Vandalieu to teleport from the entrances of previously-cleared Dungeons to the entrances of other previously-cleared Dungeons. However, only the insects he has equipped and astral-type Undead can accompany him when he teleports in this way.

Vandalieu altered the structure of Doran's Aquatic Caverns, installing stone pipes to draw saltwater in order to create saltpans outside the Dungeon.

"It would be convenient if other people could freely teleport between Dungeons as well, but... I wonder if I could make a Magic Item for that?" Vandalieu wondered as he munched on a delicious fruit similar to an apple.

『The levels of the Labyrinth Creation, Strengthen Followers and Death-Attribute Charm skills have increased!』

Around the same time, Rodcorte was spending all of his time and energy on his circle of transmigration system, which was now producing frequent errors.

“What in the world is the meaning of this?! A large number of Lambda’s souls have left the system? Did Vida’s races do something?!”

Hundreds, thousands of souls were leaving Rodcorte’s control at a time.

This was something that had occurred countless times before when races like Vampires, Ghouls and Majin who were capable of turning members of other races into members of their own races caused souls under Rodcorte’s control to be taken in by Vida’s system.

However, this didn’t happen very frequently. At the very least, hundreds or thousands of souls would not leave Rodcorte’s control within a single day.

The cause of this was that Vandalieu had made large numbers of the spirits accompanying him possess the soulless monsters of the Eclipse King’s Orchard in order to tame them.

Vandalieu had done this thinking that it was no different from creating Undead and Golems, but as Luciliano had pointed out, it was equivalent to reincarnating these souls. In the same way that he had made a spirit possess the Live-Dead’s fetus in order to create Pauvina, he was making spirits possess living monsters rather than corpses or inanimate objects.

Vandalieu was merely a mortal, but he had started performing the work of a god.

He had to perform everything manually, but it was equivalent to running his own circle of transmigration system.

Vida’s races generally needed the consent of members of other races in order to convert them to members of their own race, but in Vandalieu’s case, the spirits were completely charmed by him. Under his command, they were happy to be reborn as plant or insectoid monsters.

And so, a new circle of transmigration system had been born in Lambda, one that trespassed on Rodcorte’s authority, one that was more unstable and more arbitrary in function than Vida’s circle of transmigration system that Alda was apprehensive about.

“What in the world is happening...!”

But Rodcorte was pressed to deal with the errors in his own system. It would be some time before he learned the truth.

Incidentally, this also caused frequent error in the Demon King’s circle of transmigration system, but it had already been producing errors every day; its normal working state was one that was producing errors. Thus, unlike the breaking of Sercrent’s soul, this was not considered a particularly great problem by the remnants of the Demon King’s army, including Hihiryushukaka, the God of Joyful Life.



Around the time of year where every region would be conducting their harvest festivals, the Five-colored Blades were trying to make a harvest of their own.

“GUAAAAAAH! Curse you, humans!”

They were harvesting not produce and fruit, but the head of a nobleman of dark nights who had grown fat from drinking the blood of the people, a Vampire.

“Guh, how did you know about this place, about our existence?!” shouted a man named Chipuras. He had served as the Sub-Master of the Commerce Guild for ten years, retired due to old age and was now a good-natured old man who provided advice for young, aspiring merchants.

But none would consider him a good-natured old man if they could see him now, crimson-eyed and baring his fangs like a beast.

“It’s all thanks to a good-willed informant,” said Heinz.

“Tch! Those traitors?! They sold us out after receiving Ternecia-sama’s blessings?!” Chipuras, who was no longer acting like a merchant, readied his claws with a movement unbecoming of his obese body.

Most of the Subordinate Vampires and Noble-born Vampires working under Chipuras had already been defeated by Heinz’s companions. He had very few allies remaining now. But although his eyes showed hatred, they didn’t show despair.

“I could have forgiven you if you were simply keeping that Dhampir as a pet, but now

that you have caused me so much disgrace, I shall kill all of you and present your heads as a present to Ternecia-sama!" he shrieked.

Chipuras's movements were far quicker than one would expect from his appearance, but Heinz saw through it immediately and his magic sword sliced deep into Chipuras's stomach.

"Blue Light Flame Blade!"

This was a martial skill of Radiant God Swordsmanship, Heinz's awakened superior skill that he had gained after moving to the Orbaume Kingdom and becoming a part of Alda's peaceful faction.

The martial skill that unleashed Heinz's light-attribute and life-attribute Mana in addition to the magic sword's normal attack power would cause a fatal blow to a Vampire even with a light graze.

This martial skill had sliced deep into Chipuras's round belly. Even a Vampire with an astounding amount of Vitality wouldn't be able to resist this.

"Gufuh, gufufufuh, that will not work on me~! Diamond Rend!"

"What?!"

Instead of being defeated, Chipuras sneered and used an advanced martial skill of the Unarmed Fighting Technique in an attempt to tear Heinz to pieces. He swung his claws with the strength of a Colossus; Heinz barely managed to use the Swordsmanship martial skill, Flowing Willow, to stop the attack and opened his eyes wide in shock to see that Chipuras was unharmed.

"Kuhaha! Because of the divine protection of Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life, I have been granted the Light/Life-Attribute Nullification skill!" Chipuras cackled. "Your sword technique has no effect!"

It was probably because of this skill that Chipuras, who was supposed to be a Vampire, remained unharmed despite the fact that the mansion's walls had been destroyed and the sunlight was hitting him directly.

"Hahahaha! I am a Vampire Marquis! I am one of Ternecia's three most powerful chief vassals; even if you are A-class, did you think that a human like you could defeat..."

Chipuras faltered mid-sentence, a suspicious look on his face. “You bastard, what are you playing at?”

Heinz had raised his sword, facing Chipuras directly.

“Are you listening to what I am saying? Your powerful Radiant God Swordsmanship and your light and life-attribute magic will not work against me!”

Ignoring Chipuras, Heinz focused and sharpened his mind.

“...Transcend Limits... Transcend Limits – Magic Sword...”

The image in his mind was one of a single blade.

“...Familiar Spirit Descent!”

Heinz was enveloped in a pillar of light that descended from the sky, and wings made of light sprouted from his back, a sign that a Familiar Spirit of Alda had descended upon him.

“Y-you bastard! Can you not tell that your efforts are futiiiiiile!” Chipuras shouted.

Against Chipuras, who possessed the Light/Life-Attribute Nullification skill, there was little meaning in Alda’s Familiar Spirit descending upon Heinz.

However, it was angry words rather than scornful laughter that were coming from Chipuras’s mouth. Unable to withstand the pressure that grew stronger as Heinz’s power became greater, Chipuras activated his own Transcend Limits skill, giving his body an explosive increase in physical strength.

“Diiie! Endless Twin Claw-Blades! Ice Beast Pack Assault!”

Chipuras used a martial skill in which the claws of both of his arms were swung in rapid succession, with beasts of ice conjured by water-attribute magic filling in the gaps between his attacks with their claws and fangs.

This was Chipuras’s consecutive attack that would result in certain victory. This was the trump card that he had used to climb the ranks of the Vampires’ twisted society, where one couldn’t survive on resourcefulness alone.

The moment this swarm of blades reached Heinz, he swung his magic sword.

“Evil-Crushing Blue Radiant Flash!”

Chipuras’s claws, which were harder than Adamantite, fell apart as if they were made of glass, along with the beasts of ice. The blade of the magic sword sank into his body as if being absorbed, and silently pierced through it!

This fearsome slash didn’t stop there. The ceiling and walls of the mansion were cut apart and erased.

“Im... possible...”

Heinz heard the two pieces of Chipuras, who had been cut in half in a line from his head to his crotch, falling to the ground behind him. He exhaled and returned his magic sword to its sheath.

“Even if you have a nullification skill that transcends resistance skills, I won’t lose so long as I have a will to carry out justice,” he murmured.

“That’s all well and good, but I wish you’d fight a little better,” whispered Delizah, the female Dwarf Shield-Bearer.

She had charged into the mansion with Edgar and the others; she was looking not at Chipuras, whose two separate halves were burning in blue flames, but at the place where the mansion’s walls had been.

The mountain beyond that spot had also been cut. It had been cleanly split in two.

“The mountain beyond the mansion belongs to Chipuras; there aren’t any people there so it should be fine,” said Heinz.

“That’s not the problem, is it, now?” said Delizah.

“I only split the mountain; I haven’t cut down too many trees, so Diana probably won’t be angry, will she?” said Heinz.

Delizah put her face in her hands. “Ah, you justice meathead.”

Heinz undid his Familiar Spirit Descent. “Justice meathead” was his nickname among

his companions.

In reality, he had defeated Chipuras, an enemy whose nullification skill that rendered everything ineffective except for the attack power of the magic sword itself, by repeatedly strengthening himself a ridiculous number of times before unleashing the most powerful attack possible in order to cut through with raw power.

The shockwave he had produced wasn't that great, but it had been enough to cut through a mountain.

"You did it, or maybe I should say, you've gone and done it," Delizah muttered.

"Edgar, where are Jennifer and Diana?" asked Heinz.

"They're gathering Magic Stones from the Vampires we defeated," Edgar replied. "As for the big one there..." He looked towards Chipuras's corpse disappointedly before returning to his usual, serious expression. "I don't think we're getting anything out of him."

"But how many Noble-born Vampires is that now? I'm sure that informant called Kinarp can go to heaven now," said Delizah.

Thanks to the informants, including Kinarp, the former Guild Master of the Mages' Guild, the Vampires who had been hiding in the shadows of the Hartner Duchy were being hunted down one after another. The impact of this was spreading to the other duchies as well.

At the personal request of Lord Belton, the Five-colored Blades were conducting an investigation of the incident in which the Demon King's seal had been removed in the underground cemetery that very few people knew about, while also hunting down the Vampires.

They were doing this because it seemed likely that there would be Vampires who worshipped evil gods behind the removal of the Demon King's seal, but they still had no leads.

In any case, they were hunting down big targets one after another, so they were being paid considerably well for their work as adventurers.

"Heaven, huh... I have to wonder about that." Heinz frowned.

He was frowning because of the state that Kinarp and his subordinates were in. They were currently little more than mannequins with beating hearts and moving lungs. They looked into empty space with saliva hanging from their mouths.

But when they were asked questions about information on the Vampires, they were able to speak fluently as if they had regained their sanity.

Kinarp and his subordinates had clearly been broken and manipulated by someone.

“Don’t feel sorry for them, they got what was coming to them,” said Edgar. “They’re guys who would kidnap us... I mean, kidnap Selen and present her to this fatty that you just cut in two. More importantly, how much do you think Lord Belton knows?” he asked. “Considering the incident with Baron Ikus as well, I think it’s certain that he’s hiding something.”

Baron Ikus, who had been severely injured when the castle sank, had recently breathed his last breath without regaining consciousness. Edgar believed that Lord Belton had conducted a premeditated murder on his own subordinate. Baron Ikus had been running a pseudo-secret-intelligence-organization so he likely knew a lot of secrets, and he was a traitor to humanity with ties to the Vampire who was the prime suspect for the crime of removing the Demon King’s seal.

It would be problematic for Lord Belton if Baron Ikus didn’t die silently.

In fact, there were several noble families in the Hartner Duchy whose heads and children had suddenly gone somewhere to rest because they had fallen sick. They would almost certainly be announced to have entered priesthood and be spending the rest of their days living religious lives or to be dead from their illness.

That was why Edgar was saying that there was still more than meets the eye, but Delizah shook her head.

“I don’t know about that,” she said. “That lord, he seemed like he was keeping appearances up, but now it’s more like he’s trying to extinguish the fire under his own ass. Even the fact that he gave us this personal request and pays us generously with every Vampire we hunt is all to try and recover his fallen image, isn’t it?”

“True... thanks to that rich kid, there’s a rumor spreading in town that we’re the duke’s best friends.”

Thanks to this, it seemed that the Adventurers' Guild would soon abolish its unfair rule change against Dhampirs, however.

"I don't mind being anyone's friend as long as the evil Vampires and the followers of the evil gods are defeated," said Heinz. "The problem is the Demon King's seal. I can't imagine that it was the doing of the man named Kanata. But I suppose as long as we're searching based on the information given by Kinarp, who was manipulated by someone, we won't arrive at the truth."

Edgar and Delizah nodded in agreement. Jennifer and Diana weren't here right now, but they would probably think the same.

Lord Belton having an ulterior motive wouldn't be the end of the world, but ignoring the Demon King's fragment that had escaped the seal could indeed result in the world's destruction.

This was true even if there were other pieces of the Demon King whose seals had been broken.

Naturally, the Demon King had been sealed away in the age before Vida gave birth to her new races. Even the Pure-breed Vampires, who were feared now, had been normal people back then, fighting alongside the gods and the champions against the Demon King. It wouldn't be strange to think that the Pure-breed Vampires knew of the places where the pieces of the Demon King had been sealed.

Members of Vida's races, such as the Pure-breed Vampires, had betrayed her and sided with the remnants of the Demon King's army. It was only a natural course of events for them to be removing the Demon King's seals and using his fragments simply for power.

This was the result of the battles between heroes and great evil that had been written in a hundred thousand years of history.

"It seems that this man named Kanata possessed a powerful unique skill, but it's difficult to imagine that there was someone controlling him," said Heinz. "His actions were simply too... how to describe it? Senseless."

"That's true, it's strange, isn't it?" said Delizah. "He repeatedly performed flashy, crudely-executed crimes before reaching Nineland, even made the effort of going to the Adventurers' Guild and declaring his name, and then suddenly he was a corpse

buried in the collapsed underground cemetery.”

Nobody knew Kanata’s past, where he had been born or what Jobs and skills he had. And yet, his actions before he reached Nineland had been those of an outlaw who simply possessed great power. But he had somehow entered the underground cemetery that had been concealed in a very specific location.

It was completely incomprehensible.

“This is just my intuition, but the man named Kanata might just have happened to be there and actually has no relation to the one who removed the Demon King’s seal,” said Heinz.

The thing that Heinz found suspicious was the information that he had gained from informants other than Kinarp and his subordinates... information that there was a Noble-born Vampire woman who had betrayed Birkyne, and that she and her new master were out there somewhere.

There was a beggar who had seen that Vampire woman... the one allegedly known as Eleanora, going in and out of Kinarp’s mansion.

From a distance, the beggar had seen a beautiful woman with red hair entering the mansion’s back entrance, holding a large number of shopping bags. Nobody, not even the beggar who had happened to be given leftover foods at a spot a little distance away from the mansion, had given her a second glance.

But Edgar, who had heard that there was a beautiful, red-haired woman in the city of Niarki from one of the underlings of the Fangs of Dark Nights, felt that something was wrong when he heard about this information from the beggar.

And upon conducting an investigation, they had found that she had vanished on the day the castle sank.

“It didn’t look like the underling knew the name of this Eleanora’s master,” said Jennifer. “It seemed as if he had been forbidden to speak the name by a Pure-breed Vampire.”

“That must be an extremely powerful individual,” said Diana. “It could be a newly-awakened Pure-breed Vampire. I think it is likely the one responsible for breaking and manipulating the minds of Kinarp and his subordinates.”

The two of them had returned after collecting all of the materials.

Now that the party had all gathered together, Heinz began speaking. "Even if it is a Pure-breed Vampire, we cannot simply leave someone who has undone a seal to release a fragment of the Demon King," he said. "I cannot allow the existence of someone who plays with life and desecrates souls. There is no more big prey left in Nineland; let's chase after the Vampire called Eleanora starting from tomorrow... though this means we'll have to leave Zakkart's Trials for later."

"It's fine; the world is in danger, isn't it?" said Jennifer. "There's no doubt that we're going to be victorious whichever one we go after, anyway."

"I'm sure Martie would forgive us as well," said Delizah.

The party seemed to agree with Heinz's decision, except for Edgar, the only one with doubt in his eyes.

The time that a woman resembling the Vampire Eleanora was spotted in Niarki was the exact same time that the Dhampir called Vandalieu appeared. Well, there is no information about Vandalieu in Nineland, but... in the end, Vandalieu's route... If he is the son of that Dark Elf from back then, I never managed to find out how he crossed the border between the Mirg shield-nation and the Orbaume Kingdom, passed through the Sauron Duchy into the Hartner Duchy and then came all the way to the city of Niarki. Are Heinz and I just overthinking things?

Edgar wondered whether Vandalieu had come to Niarki through the same route that the Five-colored Blades had taken; he would have never imagined that Vandalieu had crossed the Boundary Mountain Range that very few had ever crossed before.

That was why he never bothered thinking about finding Vandalieu's trail in the cultivation villages to the south of Niarki.



Vandalieu was munching on the fruits that were similar to apples, together with Pauvina and Rapiécage.

"Van-sama, it seems that you are often eating fruits these days?" said Tarea.

"Yes; they're very hard, fresh, very hard fruit with sweet juice," said Vandalieu,

mentioning the important feature of the fruit twice.

“...It looks like your jaw will get tired,” Tarea remarked.

“But they’re delicious, you know?” Pauvina told her.

“S... weet...” Rapiécage groaned.

These apple-like fruits were very delicious, but... their flesh was as hard as a cow’s thighbone. With the Superhuman Strength skill, Vandalieu and the others could bite into them normally, but normal people would be literally unable to make a dent* in them.

TLN: The Japanese phrase for “can’t make a dent/progress with [something]”, if literally interpreted, means something like, “teeth won’t last/survive.”*

They were so hard that the average Ghoul and Titan would soon get tired jaws while trying to eat them. Pete, the centipede monster that Vandalieu had equipped, didn’t even pay the fruits any attention.

“They’re very hard, but for some reason, one of the Ents I brought from the Eclipse King’s Orchard keeps giving them to me frequently,” said Vandalieu.

Every time Vandalieu passed by, this Ent would always give him this fruit. He accepted them, and thus, he had begun to eat multiple of these fruits every day.

Pauvina and Rapiécage were happy with this, though.

“I am sure that this Ent was a well-known fruit merchant who sold a lot of fruit when it was alive,” said Tarea.

Vandalieu didn’t really remember if there had been a spirit like that, but he wasn’t really concerned whether this theory was right or not. It was currently nothing more than an Ent that he had tamed.

“Now then, I have to come back to the real world and work hard in casting coins for the new currency,” said Vandalieu.

It seemed that Vandalieu’s rest and escape from reality had ended.

He exhaled as he looked at the numerous failed products in front of him... the stone containers that were filled with a blackish-purple, muddy liquid.

The problem with introducing a new currency to Talosheim was the metal used as the raw material.

Vandalieu had brought back coins of the Baum currency of the Orbaume Kingdom with the exception of the most valuable platinum coins (which weren't usually handled by anyone other than royalty, nobles and wealthy merchants). The Undead Titan blacksmith, Datara, had accurately determined the relative ratios of the metals in the coins.

As Talosheim would one day be trading with the duchies of the Orbaume Kingdom with the exception of the Hartner Duchy, it was important to match the value of the coins with the Baum.

However, there were no stable sources of gold and silver in Talosheim.

Gold and silver couldn't be mined in Doran's Aquatic Caverns. Gold and silver nuggets sometimes appeared in the Dungeon's treasure chamber, but a sufficient amount to create coins couldn't be harvested with this method in a stable manner. It was unknown as to what principles the Dungeon used to decide what treasures it generated in the treasure chamber, so they couldn't rely on it too much.

Even the Labyrinth Creation skill couldn't freely manipulate the contents of the treasure chamber.

Thus, Vandalieu had to create coins using the iron and copper that *could* be reliably mined, but if Vandalieu used iron and copper to create coins with the same value as the gold coins that were worth a thousand Baums and ten thousand Baums, they would end up too large and heavy; they would be nothing more than large lumps of metal with not even a shred of convenience.

Vandalieu had considered making paper money rather than coins, but he was still only able to produce sturdy Japanese paper in small amounts, and the printing technology available was still crude. Thus, it was better to use coins after all.

"The name of the currency was decided quickly though," Vandalieu remarked.

The currency was known as the Luna. It was a play on words; the coins of the capital

of the sun that was ruled by the Eclipse King were named after the moon.

The design of the coins had been mostly decided; there were already prototype coins for the one-Luna copper coin, the five-Luna copper coin and half-Luna iron coin. Datara had produced these coins with such quality that they were not at all inferior to the copper Amid and Baum coins.

And then Vandalieu had come up with the idea of *making* metal in order to create coins worth ten Lunas or more.

“When you mentioned the idea, I thought you were just being crazy as usual,” said Datara.

“Well, it should be considered an idea that isn’t confined to the limits of common sense!” Tarea exclaimed.

Pauvina blinked upon hearing their words. “... The two of you are saying the same thing,” she muttered.

She was a clever girl.

The creation of metal that Vandalieu had in mind wasn’t making an alloy like bronze, but using iron and bronze to create a new magical metal. Thus, both Datara and Tarea’s opinions were correct.

Magical metals were metals filled with Mana, with Orichalcum at the top of the list followed by others such as Mythril, Adamantite, Damascus Steel and Obsidian. Other than Orichalcum, it had been more or less established that all of these were created from lesser metals.

Mythril and Adamantite were produced when regular silver and gold were soaked in Mana for tens of thousands of years, becoming naturally refined.

Damascus Steel and Obsidian were refined from ordinary metals by skilled blacksmiths.

Datara could apparently create Obsidian if he had the materials. It was refined by using iron as a base and forging it for a whole day while adding a very tiny amount of Mythril or Adamantite. But he had said that staying up all night to make produce two or three swords’ worth of Obsidian was the best he could do; it would be impossible

for him to create a currency with it.

Of course, Vandalieu didn't have the Blacksmithing skill, so it was impossible for him to mass-produce this metal with Golem Transmutation.

Thus, Vandalieu had been trying to create a new magical metal by pouring Mana into metal equal to the amount contained within Mythril and Adamantite.

It would normally be impossible, but Vandalieu had thought that he could do it by pouring hundreds of millions of Mana into the metal and using Inanimate Aging, the spell that made time flow faster for its target.

And it turned out to be actually possible. The iron and copper had essentially been soaked in death-attribute Mana for tens of thousands of years, transforming into magical metals... liquid metals.

"Hmm, I did manage to make new magical metals, but I can't turn this into coins, can I?" said Vandalieu.

"They are liquids, after all," said Datara.

The metal was the same weight and size as what Vandalieu had started with, but he was troubled by the fact that they were black and purple, mercury-like liquid metals.

"Shall we call them Death Metal and Dark Copper for now?" Vandalieu suggested.

Although they were liquid, they were indeed magical metals; it was certain that they would possess special properties. Depending on their special properties, they would have their uses.

Whether or not they could be turned into coins.

It would be interesting if I could make armor out of liquid metal; I wonder if it's possible?

CHAPTER 88

THE KING PULLS THE STRINGS

At first, Vandalieu hadn't known how he should use Death Iron and Dark Copper, the liquid metals that he had created with his Mana. But once it was heated, it turned out to be unexpectedly easy to process.

"This is a metal that one could only dream of!" Datara cried.

The weights of Death Iron and Dark Copper were the same as the iron and copper that they had been created from, but since they were liquids, they could easily be shaped by pouring them into molds.

They became harder as they heated up. At iron and copper's respective melting temperatures, Death Iron and Dark Copper turned into solids resembling solid iron and copper at room temperature.

Of course, they returned to their liquid forms when they cooled, but if they were struck with hammers and forged in this solid state, they remained solid after cooling.

Datara poured Death Iron and Dark Copper into molds, heated them to a temperature where they became easily-manipulated solids and then used his hammer to forge them. After doing this, they didn't return to their liquid forms even after their temperatures dropped.

The swords and spears made from Death Iron were harder, tougher and sharper than those made from steel. But even when their blades were chipped, as long as the broken fragments were recovered, they turned back into liquid and fused back into the blade to restore its original shape.

On the other hand, Dark Copper was more suited to being used for armor; it absorbed impacts well, withstood slashes and resisted Mana as well. And like Death Iron, if it was damaged, the broken parts turned back into liquid and fused back into the armor.

Also, perhaps because they were metals that had been transformed by death-attribute Mana, both metals had properties that made them easy to enchant with death-attribute spells. It was simple to create swords enchanted with Healing Negation and

Deadly Poison or shields enchanted with Energy Absorption.

“For some reason, it seems that only the Holy Son, us Undead and the Ghouls can forge it, but that’s part of its charm!” said Datara.

Perhaps Death Iron and Dark Copper were affected by Death-Attribute Charm; only Vandalieu was able to use it to create items. Anyone could use the completed products, however.

But he now had Datara, the other Undead Titans helping Datara and the Ghosts who had been trapped in the underground cemetery in Nineland, so this wasn’t a problem.

Incidentally, if Vandalieu wanted to turn completed products back into liquid metal to turn them into something else, he would heat them up, then use Heat Leech to remove the heat energy, and the equipment would return to liquid form after cooling down.

By pouring Death Iron and Dark Copper that had been heated to the perfect temperatures into molds and hammering them a few times to harden them, Datara succeeded in creating coins.

And so, the thousand-Luna Dark Copper coins and hundred-Luna Death Iron coins were created.

“Is it alright for them to be this small?” Vandalieu wondered, holding up one of the Luna coins between his fingertips. It seemed that he was worried about the fact that they were about as big as Japanese one-Yen coins.

“I am sure they will do,” said Chezare, full of confidence.

“But they were originally copper and iron, you know?” Vandalieu told him.

“You are right... I am not so sure that we can trade these for hundred-Amid gold coins once we begin trading with other nations in the future,” said Tarea. “This metal was originally copper, after all.”

“Indeed, it is copper,” said Sam.

“But they are harder than gold or silver, and they are pretty,” said Zadiris. “I personally prefer these.”

“Unlike gold and silver, these coins can be combined to make armor in times of danger,” said Basdia. “I think this metal is better, too.”

“I prefer hard metals as well,” Vigaro added.

Because the metals were originally made from iron and copper, Vandalieu, Tarea and Sam were worried about whether the coins could be exchanged for gold and silver coins in the future.

On the other hand, the Ghouls were ignorant about monetary economies and valued metals not for their scarcity, but their properties when they were turned into weapons and armor.

And then there was a third group of individuals smiling wryly, knowing that the other two groups were both wrong.

“I don’t know if coins of this size would be considered of equal value to Amid and Baum gold coins, but –” Rita began.

“I think people will happily make the trade,” said Saria.

“Your Majesty, not only merchants, but even nobles and royalty would produce mountains of gold... no, mountains of platinum coins in order to obtain these coins of Death Iron and Dark Copper,” said Princess Levia.

For some reason, these three seemed to think that the Death Iron and Dark Copper coins would have a lot of value.

“Vandalieu-sama, I agree. After all, these are magical metals that nobody in the world can create except for you. Not only the Mages’ Guild, but every nation will want it,” said Eleanora.

Indeed, the value of Death Iron and Dark Copper was unclear, but it would certainly be high. Just as Eleanora said, they were metals that had been created by Vandalieu, probably for the first time in the world’s history!

Even if their base materials were copper and iron, which were worth far less than gold and silver, Vandalieu was the only one who could create them. That was why its preciousness was unfathomable. Nobody could decide how much they were worth in gold or silver.

“I see,” said Vandalieu. “Then I suppose these sizes are alright for now... but before we begin trading in the future, we need to think about how to exchange money.”

In the future, it was possible that trading with foreign nations would result in the Death Iron and Dark Copper coins being depleted extremely quickly. There was also the possibility that they wouldn’t even be given a second glance, though.

And so the circulation of the Luna currency began, and for now, things were going smoothly.

“This is ten Lunas, and this is fifty Lunas, huh... Oh, the Death Iron coins shine like a rainbow when you hold them up in the sun.”

“The purple color of the Dark Copper coins is pretty as well, isn’t it? I wonder if I should gather more.”

“Bufuh~ I’m going to make a necklace out of Death Iron coins.”

The Ghouls and Orcuses, who weren’t used to a monetary economy, seemed to be more interested in the coins’ visible beauty rather than their convenience.

“Receiving money is something that we are truly grateful for, and even providing us with work... Thank you, thank you.”

“I’m really glad I didn’t die at the mine.”

“Our hard work from now on will become our earnings... but I don’t want to be a miner anymore. I suppose I’ll go and be a farmer.”

“At the farms, they apparently teach you singing and dancing for some reason as well. I’m tone-deaf, you know.”

“I suppose I’ll go to the tofu factory.”

“I can sew, so I suppose I’ll be a seamstress.”

“I shall start a business. It brings back memories of the days when I was selling fish in the Sauron Duchy.”

The ones who had been made to work in the slave-run mine, like Gopher and the other

former refugees as well as those from the First Cultivation Village, had some experience with living in societies with monetary economies, so they accepted Lunas without any problems.

These non-fighting, creation-minded people were precious in Talosheim. Up until now, only a few of the Ghouls and Undead who were formerly craftsmen had been involved in Talosheim's farming, fishing and other industries.

As former slaves in a mine, Gopher and the others had the Mining skill; now that they were free, it was only natural that very few of them would want to continue doing the work that they had been forced to do for two hundred years... and miners in Talosheim needed to know how to fight. Because of this, it seemed that they would be employed in Talosheim's newly-created factories or in the farms.

The same went for those from the First Cultivation Village, but they were previously working as leatherworkers, seamstresses and merchants; it seemed that they wanted to find work similar to their previous jobs.

It was doubtful as to whether there was work for them in the Golem factories that had Golems instead of manufacturing robots or farms with Monster Plants, but there were plenty of other jobs available.

Vandalieu just needed to provide the Golems with a little of his vast Mana pool and they would work on and on. But in the end, they were just Golems.

They would accurately repeat the movements and protocols they had been provided, but their applications were limited. Most importantly, their ability to detect temperature differences that were too low to damage their mineral bodies and their ability to determine the current state of the product were too weak. Also, they were not suited to performing precise work.

These flaws would be made up for by people, finally allowing Vandalieu to get closer to producing the items that could be produced in Earth's factories.

It was the same concept behind the reason why tofu made by a craftsman tasted better than tofu produced entirely by machines.

"People are needed after all," said Vandalieu, feeling earnestly glad that he had visited the Hartner Duchy.

Incidentally, a tax system had also been implemented. Income taxes had been introduced.

“Your Majesty, you cannot be serious with these instructions!” Chezare protested.

In Lambda, unlike those such as adventurers and mercenaries, each normal citizen was taxed a certain amount as a poll tax. This would include a tax of 40-50% of their harvests in the fields and their profits from their businesses.

In the new Talosheim, this poll tax had been abolished and an income tax was collected from everyone’s earnings. With this system, even those who earned little could theoretically pay taxes.

Of course, this included a rule where those whose incomes were too low were exempt from paying taxes and a system where those with higher yearly incomes were taxed higher percentages of their incomes.

The minimum tax was 5% and the maximum tax for those who earned the most was 20%.

“Your Majesty, please reconsider!” Chezare urged Vandalieu. “This tax system is one normally used for the Adventurers’ Guild and merchants of the Commerce Guild. In order to apply this to each individual, we must determine each citizen’s income! And the taxes are far too low for what the nation requires!”

Nobody could blame Chezare for voicing these opinions. With such a low-percentage tax system, the nation would become poor in the not-so-distant future and become unable to maintain its structure.

But Vandalieu remained calm as he responded to Chezare’s concerns. “The head of most of the ongoing projects in Talosheim is me, you know?” he pointed out.

“...You are right,” said Chezare.

Vandalieu’s Mana was essential for operating the Magic Items enchanted with the Fermentation spell used for creating miso and soy sauce, as well as to provide power for the Golems in each of the factories.

Most of Talosheim’s other industries were practically impossible without Vandalieu as well. The Golems, Monster Plants, Immortal Ents and Cemetery Bees were all giving

their blessings to Talosheim because Vandalieu was here.

The supply distribution center in the remains of the Adventurers' Guild was also only functioning because Vandalieu was providing it with the products to distribute.

The members of the Church, the stonemasons, the carpenters and the blacksmiths – Vandalieu was the leader of all of these groups.

That was why determining the incomes of each citizen wasn't difficult. It was possible that it would become difficult in the future, but he simply needed to set up a system to do so before then.

And it was unlikely that the nation would fall into poverty because the taxes were too low. In the end, the citizens were buying various things from Vandalieu, the nation's king, as they lived here.

Actually, it was unlikely that things would be 100% problem-free, but Vandalieu had no choice but to simply use trial-and-error and make improvements whenever problems arose.

"I understand," said Chezare. "Well then, please leave the details to me."

"...Chezare, won't you quit being the general and become the nation's prime minister?" Vandalieu asked him.

"No, I am a person who belongs in the military, Your Majesty," Chezare replied.

But was it really alright for a military person to be doing so much work that a civil official should be doing?



Some time passed after this conversation, and the end of summer was in sight. Vandalieu was having a nighttime meal to take a break from work in the underground chamber beneath Talosheim's royal castle, the place where he had defeated the Dragon Golem and obtained the materials he had used to create Rapiécage.

"Umm, Your Majesty, what is this?" Levia asked.

"This is ramen, Princess Levia," Vandalieu explained as he showed her the contents of

his bowl – various ingredients and some noodles submerged in a white soup. “It’s a dish that’s similar to udon, but not quite. Incidentally, this is the tofu ramen I made at Braga’s request. The soup base is misodare with tofu, and the noodles are made by combining wheat flour and soybean flour in a certain ratio, and I’ve used fried tofu and freeze-dried tofu in place of pork fillet. For condiments, there’s onions.”

It was an incredibly tofu-filled... soybean-filled ramen. This was the time for isoflavones (whatever this meant)*.

TLN: Isoflavones are an organic compound found in tofu. As for what this line actually means... I’d love to provide a detailed, insightful TLN into this joke, but unfortunately, I don’t get it.*

If there was one thing that Vandalieu wanted to quickly get his hands on, it was spring onions. And wouldn’t the soup taste better with sesame seeds added to it?

“It looks very delicious, doesn’t it? Vandalieu is so good at cooking. Why don’t you have a bowl as well, Princess?” Darcia suggested. Her tastes now matched those of her son, thanks to the Mental Encroachment skill.

However, it seemed that Princess Levia hadn’t been asking about the ramen. “Thank you for the offer, but I was not referring to the ramen –”

“Then were you referring to this? This is a wedding dress,” said another Vandalieu separate from the one who was eating ramen... A Vandalieu who had been produced by using Out-of-body Experience and creating a clone. He was holding up the wedding dress that he was in the middle of making.

Using countless needles and threads, Vandalieu was trying to create a wedding dress straight out of thread.

“Making dress paper and things like that turned out to be troublesome, so I’d thought about how I could do it, and recently I realized that I could simply make thread directly into clothes without using dress paper,” he said.

“I’m in the middle of doing that,” said another Vandalieu. “Incidentally, these dresses are for Braga’s brides, Marie and Linda.”

“I’ve already taken their measurements,” said yet another Vandalieu. “Also, the material I’m using is the honey silk from the Cemetery Bees.”

Four Vandalieus' arms, which had divided into thin, thread-like lengths, were manipulating countless sewing needles.

Vandalieu wanted to make Golems and Cursed Tools to do this one day, but it was precise work, so he had no choice but to do it himself for now.

"With this, I can make clothes without any seams."

"Frills, frills... Laces, laces... Flells, flells*."

TLN: A nonsense word, a combination of "frill" and "lace".*

"But working alone, making two or three dresses in one day is my limit, so I need to make a sewing machine soon. This is cutting it close. I suppose I should make a pedal-operated one?"

Based on what Vandalieu had seen in Nineland and Niarki, the clothes of Lambda were inferior to those of Earth. There were more dyes available and they were more vividly colored, but the designs of the clothing were limited.

Vandalieu had put Undead Insects on Eleanora as she walked around Nineland, and through their eyes, he had seen secondhand clothes being sold in the marketplace. As someone who had lived in modern Japan, he had thought that they looked considerably unfashionable.

Vandalieu had only been a high school student back then; although his conduct hadn't been bad, it hadn't been particularly good, either. He had seen quite a few things in places such as the lost-and-found center.

That was why he planned to make various things. Things like bras, garter belts and stockings in particular. As for swimsuits, he planned to begin work on those once he found a fiber that wouldn't turn transparent when wet.

Also, as someone aiming to achieve physical beauty equivalent to that of a Hollywood action star, he needed to find the right time to make men's boxer underwear as well.

"It's really pretty, isn't it? I'm sure everyone will be happy, and when we begin trading with other nations in the future, I think everyone will buy them," said Darcia.

"Yes, I think they are very wonderful," said Princess Levia. "But it wasn't that... I was

wondering what that is..." Her gaze was directed at the mass of meat that was being carried out of the resurrection device.

It was an armful of meat with no hands, no legs and no head. There were throbbing blood vessels running along its red exterior surface, making it clear that, unbelievably, this thing was alive.

"Ah, don't pay that too much attention –" Darcia began.

"That's my seventh failed recreation of Mom," said Vandalieu.

"NOOOOO! DON'T SAY IIIT!" Darcia cried.

"I'm not saying that that's your true form, so calm down," Vandalieu told her.

Vandalieu had thought of the idea of using Golem Transmutation to manipulate liquid Death Iron and Dark Copper to replace the resurrection device's damaged parts. As a result, the resurrection device had started working again, but... when he tried to recreate Darcia's body with it, the device produced only lumps of meat.

He had gone through a lot of trial and error, but no matter what he did, the device only created lumps of meat that bore no resemblance to Darcia.

"As you can see, there is only meat and blood vessels... if there were organs, I would add an Orichalcum skeleton after it was finished. It seems making unnatural, temporary repairs to a resurrection device that was incomplete to begin with isn't going to be enough to recreate Mom," Vandalieu concluded.

He had used the machine seven times, but there was nothing he could do to stop the device from producing mysterious masses of meat. According to legend, the device was supposedly capable of creating bodies that were complete apart from their souls, but Vandalieu's results were nothing close to that.

"But you know, it's kind of... You say that, Vandalieu, but it's like I'm being told that this really is what I look like, so it's hard," said Darcia.

"I'm sorry, I..." Levia began.

"It's alright, it's just something that I've fooled myself into thinking. I'm sure that it's because the device is incomplete," said Darcia.

“Well, it does function, so I’m thinking of trying to make it more and more complete,” said Vandalieu. “Please wait a little longer, Mom.”

I suppose it doesn't work without the damaged parts being replaced by the originally-used materials. Unlike other materials, I still can't make detailed shapes out of Orichalcum, so... Should I make a Homunculus after all?

The level of Vandalieu’s Golem Transmutation skill had increased, but not enough for him to be able to create precisely-shaped components from Orichalcum. The work needed to repair the device wasn’t on the level of hand-making a semiconductor, but it was about as precise as trying to write letters on grains of rice. It wasn’t simple to do.

Perhaps it was better for Vandalieu to find an evil god, make a contract and create a Homunculus to use as Darcia’s body.

He had gained the knowledge he required to do that at the Mages’ Guild in Nineland. Things like sacrificing virgins would be a tall obstacle for Vandalieu, but perhaps he could discuss this requirement with the evil gods.

I wonder if you can negotiate with gods? I probably wouldn't be able to threaten them.

In reality, he had already eaten an evil god, but as Vandalieu was unaware of this, he was under the impression that every god was certainly a superior being to him.

“I’ll find the perfect evil god for the job,” said Vandalieu.

“Levia-san, it seems that my son is going to run off to a bad religion; what should I do in this situation?” Darcia asked.

“U-umm, I-I think it will probably be fine!” said Levia.

Vandalieu had only been trying to reassure Darcia, but it seemed to have only made her more anxious. He hadn’t said that he would necessarily join the evil gods, so why was she so worried?

『You have acquired the Blacksmithing, Thread-reeling and Enhanced Physical Ability: Hair skills!』

『The Clothing skill has been combined with the Thread-reeling skill and the Enhanced Physical Ability: Hair skill has been combined with the Enhanced Physical Ability: Claws, Fangs, Tongue skill!』

『The levels of the Cooking, Enhanced Physical Ability: Hair, Claws, Fangs, Tongue and Thread-reeling skills have increased!』



Time passed, and it was now October.

After finishing creating his currency and treating Gopher and the other former slaves with Youth Transformation, Vandalieu dropped by the cultivation village's harvest festival.

He treated the villagers who were in poor health, and in return, he was treated with not the thin porridge made from rice and millets that he had been given before, but a dish resembling fried rice with proper ingredients, which had been made by stir-frying vegetables and meat along with southern rice.

"You're eating a lot; how many bowls is that?"

"This is my third."

Vandalieu had given the villagers three Horned Rabbits and a sack of walnuts as presents, so he wasn't holding back.

"Man, things were really crazy after you came back," said Fester. "Something happened at the slave-run mine, you see. The outer walls were destroyed, the mine turned into an empty area of land and all of the soldiers and slaves turned into skeletons."

"What did you say, is that true, I can't believe it," Vandalieu said with his usual expressionless voice and flat tone; he was the perpetrator – the main perpetrator at that – of this incident.

Both his expressionlessness and flat tone were nothing out of the ordinary, so it seemed that the others hadn't noticed.

...The fact that Vandalieu's expression didn't change and reveal his true emotions

unless he put conscious effort into it came in handy at times like this, too.

“Yeah, the wall was apparently destroyed from outside, so it was probably monsters that appeared. They didn’t find any footprints or tracks, though.”

“So the soldiers and slaves killed by the monsters probably turned into Undead.”

It seemed that this was the conclusion reached by the Knights’ Order that had investigated the incident. Vandalieu’s effort of using Golem Transmutation to make monster bones resemble Titan skeletons had paid off.

“Fortunately, it seems that the monsters that destroyed the outer wall moved south from where the mine was afterwards, though.”

Those investigating seemed to have thought that monsters were the culprits since there were no traces of armed forces having moved in the area, and since there were no monster tracks, the monsters had simply flown off somewhere else.

I’m sure that there will be some who have made the connection between this event and the fact that the Demon King’s seal was removed, but... I’m sure they won’t know.

Nobody would dream that Vandalieu simply happened to have removed the champion’s seal and released a part of the Demon King (his blood) during his quest to rescue the slaves at the mine.

In fact, Heinz’s party and members of the Church of Alda were just as perplexed about the incident at the slave-run mine as Vandalieu had expected they would be. Considering the timing of the incidents, they probably weren’t unrelated, but they wondered, why had the second incident occurred there?

For the Hartner Duchy, it was quite an important location, as it was the duchy’s only source of mineral resources other than Dungeons. However, it was doubtful as to whether it would be a likely place targeted by the one who had undone the Demon King’s seal, or the Demon King’s fragment itself.

It wasn’t as if there had been other sealed fragments of the Demon King, nor were there other evil gods involved. As long as they didn’t realize that the one who had removed the Demon King’s seal was someone related to the former refugees of Talosheim, they would only be able to wonder about how strange it all was.

And it seemed that they hadn't realized this fact yet.

The fact that this cultivation village had gone unchecked was proof that those investigating the incident hadn't come anywhere near the truth.

Vandalieu's familiars, the Lemures in the sky over the village, confirmed that no lookouts of spies had been stationed here.

"Thanks to that, the adventurers and knights passed through the highway from Niarki, so Oyaji-san was all excited about it," said Kasim. "Now he's downhearted about the fact that we don't know if traveling merchants will come this way anymore, though."

Kasim and his friends, who didn't know about the various things happening behind the scenes, were being carefree and enjoying the festival. Seeing them was truly therapeutic for Vandalieu.

"Things are hard on Lina though, since she has more work to do now."

"Come to think of it, weren't you three included in the group sent to exterminate the Skeletons in the mines?" Vandalieu asked.

Actually, because of the Lemures, Vandalieu already knew that Kasim and his friends had been a part of the extermination force, but he decided to ask because he thought that it would be unnatural if he didn't.

"Of course we were. Just by participating, we were paid a reward that we can use for something other than food."

"Skeletons are Rank 2. They're enemies that even we can defeat, and there were lots of people in the extermination force."

"And the men of the village... and even some of the women, have started hunting Goblins to make the Gobu-Gobu that you taught us about. They go out in groups of five and hunt them with handmade spears and bows, so there haven't been any Goblins appearing near the village lately."

Vandalieu had been watching through the Lemures, so he already knew this, but the people of the village were sturdy. In fact, it was their sturdiness that had brought them this far.

“But there was something different about those Skeletons,” said Kasim. “They were attacking the other guys normally, but when it came to fighting us, they were like...”

“It was like they were training with us. No, both our weapons and theirs were real, so we did defeat them properly,” said Fester.

“It was supposed to be a real battle, and even though it was a real battle, it kind of felt like training as well. Also, I felt like there was something watching over us from somewhere as well,” Zeno added.

How to fight enemies wielding long weapons, enemies faster than them, enemies that outnumbered them, enemies that included both Archers and Shield-bearers? Kasim’s party felt that they had been tested on these subjects one after another.

Of course, this had been the result of Vandalieu having given the Skeletons instructions, using the Lemures and Undead insects that he had left behind. He had used a countless number of winged insects and made them form letters to give orders to the Skeletons.

“I’ve heard that Undead tend to repeat the actions that they performed when they were alive. Perhaps those Skeletons were previously instructors for new adventurers?” Vandalieu suggested.

“I see,” said Kasim. He and his friends seemed satisfied with this explanation. It seemed that they now assumed that the gaze that Zeno felt was also that of one of the Skeletons.

The truth was that none of those Skeletons had been good people while they were alive, however.

“Come to think of it, what happened to that priest-san?” Vandalieu asked. “I haven’t seen him around.”

The priest of Alda’s peaceful faction who had left the village, saying that he was heading for the city of Niarki... or rather, the simple life-attribute mage and spy who was disguised as a priest, Froto. This man was nowhere to be seen in the village that was crowded with people for the harvest festival.

“We have no idea, either. It’s not just this Seventh Cultivation Village; it seems that the people of the other cultivation villages haven’t seen him, either,” said Kasim.

“I asked the people in the extermination force, and they said they didn’t know of any priests like that. How about you, Vandalieu? Didn’t you see him when you went to the city?” Fester asked.

“Fester, it’s awkward for me to approach the Church of Alda,” Vandalieu told him. “Unfortunately, I didn’t see him there.”

“I see... I hope nothing has happened to him.”

The three young adventurers looked worried.

Vandalieu nodded in agreement. “Me too. But I think he’s probably doing fine, though,” he said.

He still didn’t know that Froto had been a spy. Even the Lemures would have been noticed if they got too close no matter how transparent they were, at most, they could only watch people’s movements from afar.

The Fangs of Dark Nights in the city of Niarki had been eliminated by Edgar, one of the members of the Five-colored Blades, faster than Vandalieu had expected, leaving him with no way to gather further information.

As a result, Vandalieu was under the impression that Froto was an unusually virtuous clergyman despite being a believer of Alda.

“By the way, what are you going to do now?”

“Starting from tomorrow, I’m going to go around all of the cultivation villages and indulge myself in the harvest festivals,” said Vandalieu. “After that, I was thinking of going to the city to get some essentials and visit some distant relatives of my mother.”

“Distant relatives of your mother, do you mean –?!”

“No, my father was the Vampire among my parents.”

“Ah, is that right? No, I was sure that...”

If Eleanora had been present, there might have been a misunderstanding. Vandalieu knew that this bothered her quite a lot, so he was glad that he had come alone.

“Oi, the main event is starting soon,” said the oyaji from the jack-of-all-trades store, calling Vandalieu over. “The stone statue is going to be put in the shrine, so come over here!”

And so, that day’s conversation ended there.

Incidentally, the quality of the statue of Vandalieu created by the former stonemason Ivan was... questionable. As the entire thing was made of stone, it had failed to portray the color of his hair, skin and odd-colored eyes, so it was possible that nobody would know that it was a statue of Vandalieu unless they were told.



Skill explanation:

【Automatic Mana Recovery】 , 【Increased Mana Recovery Rate】

Those with the Automatic Mana Recovery skill recover Mana automatically no matter what they are doing... When they are resting, exercising or even in the middle of reciting the incantation for a spell.

The Increased Mana Recovery Rate skill is a skill that increases the rate at which Mana recovers while resting.

Their names are similar, but they are separate skills.

Automatic Mana Recovery restores a fixed percentage of the skill owner's total Mana pool, while Increased Mana Recovery Rate reduces the amount of time required for Mana to recover regardless of the amount of Mana that needs to be recovered. Thus, those with large Mana pools often desire the Automatic Mana Recovery skill.

However, the Automatic Mana Recovery skill has the flaw of being difficult to acquire, and even after acquiring it, it requires training by expending all available Mana to increase the total Mana pool. In addition, the rate of natural Mana recovery is dependent on one's health and mental condition, but many mages are aware that sleeping is a way of drastically increasing it, so they tend to be fixated on the environment in which they sleep and the number of hours they sleep.

The fact that well-known mages carry pillows for traveling is even detailed in their biographies.

CHAPTER 89

ACQUIRING MILK

The Pure-breed Vampires worshipping Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life, had gathered in a room illuminated by the beautiful moonlight streaming in through the windows.

However, one of the three chairs was empty.

“Good grief, things have been far too noisy as of late. Don’t you think so, Gubamon?”

“The most disagreeable thing for me is being called out here by you, however, Birkyne.”

At a table that should have seated three people, Birkyne, who resembled a young nobleman, faced Gubamon, who resembled an evil, elderly mage.

“Please don’t be in such a foul mood,” said Birkyne. “The collection you love so much won’t mind you leaving for a little while. More importantly, it would be best to deal with the matter that we have been discussing. If we are not careful, we will lose our balance.”

The matter that Birkyne was referring to was the information leak by the Guild Master of Nineland’s Mages’ Guild, Kinarp, and his subordinates.

Thanks to their information, damage had of course been done to Ternecia’s faction who had been making deals with Kinarp, but the damage suffered by Birkyne and Gubamon’s subordinates and those cooperating with them couldn’t be ignored, either.

The Vampires had placed their roots deep in the Amid Empire, but their venomous fangs had been planted just as deep in the Orbaume Kingdom.

The Pure-breed Vampires had existed since a hundred thousand years ago. They knew from experience that if all of their influence was gathered in one country, they would be burned if that country was to fall to ruin. In an era where two great nations existed, they would extend their reach into both nations.

That was why it was painful that those who had infiltrated the Orbaume Kingdom

were being hunted down.

“Lose our balance?” Gubamon repeated, and then his wrinkled face twisted as he let out a cackle. “When did you grown so fainthearted, Birkyne? No matter how many of our subordinates and those working with them are hunted down, it is impossible for us to be at risk,” he said. “If we leave them to be hunted down, those humans will eventually be satisfied. There will be none who can reach us, and even if there are, we simply need to kill them.”

There was some truth to his words. No matter how many of their subordinates were exterminated, the darkness enshrouding the Vampires was deep. If blessed with incredible fortune, the humans *might* be able to play with the Vampire society’s tail. It was absolutely impossible for them to reach the Pure-breed Vampires at the head of the society.

And even if there were some heroes among heroes who managed to reach them, the Pure-breed Vampires would simply turn on them and kill them.

If the Pure-breed Vampires were on their own, it was possible that they could be defeated by an A-class adventurer party, an S-class adventurer or an S-class adventurer backed up by several A-class adventurers.

But they were not on their own.

The Pure-breed Vampires normally competed against each other pointlessly, but they had made a pledge that they would work together to stand against mutual enemies attacking from the outside.

Thanks to that, they had even managed to escape when they were attacked ninety thousand years ago by heroes with the divine blessings of Bellwood and Ninelord, who had become heroic gods. Five thousand years after that, they had emerged victorious in a battle against Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped a different evil god. They had been able to overcome many other dangers after that as well.

The fact that the faction that worshipped the Evil God of Joyful Life hadn’t fallen apart, and the fact that it was now managed in a parliamentary system by the three Pure-breed Vampires, were all because of those experiences.

...No mutual enemies had appeared during the past fifty thousand years, however.

That was why Gubamon's words were correct. If the three Pure-breed Vampires worked together, it was likely that they would even be able to defeat the Orbaume Kingdom's entire army. If the Five-colored Blades were included, things would be a little more difficult, but the result wouldn't change.

Their subordinates would likely perish, but they would simply need to make more afterwards. Even the Noble-born Vampires were nothing more than easily-replaced pawns.

They would simply need to survive and rebuild their influence in a new darkness. As long as the three Pure-breed Vampires survived, they could rebuild their society.

"That is indeed true," Birkyne said in agreement. "No matter how bad things become, there will never be any danger to us. But it is problematic for us to lose too many subordinates and those working with them, isn't it? We live long lives, so daily enrichment is essential for us. Isn't that right, Gubamon?"

"Hmm..."

Now that Birkyne was saying this to him, even Gubamon had to think about making a move. It was true that he was a powerful being, but in order to perfect his collection of Undead made from the corpses of heroes, his efforts alone were not enough.

He needed many eyes and ears to gain information and many hands and feet to work on his behalf.

"But what do you specifically have in mind?" Gubamon asked. "The information has already been leaked, and it is too late to erase those who know of it. Even if you wanted to have our subordinates disappear... That's right, that Chipiras fellow under Ternecia was defeated as well. Are you planning to make it appear as if all of this was his doing? And Birkyne, when will Ternecia be here?"

"Ah, Ternecia won't be coming," Birkyne told him.

"What?! That little girl, she has stood us up after I have made the effort of coming out here?!"

"No, Gubamon. I never invited Ternecia here. The only one I called here is you."

"What? What are you playing at, Birkyne? It couldn't be..."

Birkyne gave Gubamon a gentle expression as he spoke his next words. "This incident was caused by Ternecia's failure."

Was Birkyne going to proposing to Gubamon that they should feed Ternecia to the humans? Their sworn ally of a hundred thousand years?

Gubamon's eyes opened so wide in surprise that it looked as if they would fall from their sockets... but he quickly saw Birkyne's real intentions and twisted his mouth in a smile as he laughed. "I see. You intend to weaken Ternecia by throwing her to the humans, and then 'Judge' her?"

In terms of pure strength in battle, Ternecia's was the greatest. However, Birkyne had a trump card that he held in reserve. It was a trump card that forced others to obey him.

It was powerful but risky; despite having lived for a mind-boggling number of years, he had only used it a few times in the past. Even if not using it would place his life at risk, he had to be careful in using it.

That was the kind of trump card it was.

But if there was someone equally powerful to him but weakened to the point of being unable to resist... That would be a time to take a great risk but use this trump card to gain a tremendous return.

"Ternecia is responsible for this incident," said Birkyne. "Isn't it only natural for her to take responsibility?"

"I suppose that is one way of thinking about it," said Gubamon. "It was the human that Ternecia was using as a subordinate who leaked the information, after all."

"Yes, and she did something to the tunnel connecting Talosheim to the Hartner Duchy," Birkyne added.

"What? That is the first time I am hearing of this; what are you talking about?" asked Gubamon.

The Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped an evil god had sent numerous subordinates to the Hartner Duchy, which was adjacent to the new national border of the Amid Empire. Ternecia had put a considerable amount of her strength into this,

but Birkyne and Gubamon had dispatched several of their subordinates there as well.

“Actually, the adventurers called the Five-colored Blades, the ones who are mainly responsible for hunting down Ternecia’s subordinates, are doing something interesting,” said Birkyne. “It seems that they are looking for Eleanora.”

Through those subordinates, Birkyne had heard of the movements of Heinz and his party.

“Eleanora, you say? That cannot be; how are they, people who are in the Orbaume Kingdom, searching for a traitor who should be on the other side of the mountain range? Could it be... she was there? When the castle sank and the Demon King’s seal was removed! Then the fragment of the Demon King is in that little girl’s hands?!” Gubamon was visibly agitated.

“No, that is not the case,” said Birkyne, flatly denying that possibility. “I am her former owner, after all. I know the limits of her strength. No matter how much more powerful she has grown over the past year, she would be immediately consumed by the Demon King’s fragment. If she was the one who removed the Demon King’s seal, then she would have been seen rampaging like a beast in Nineland. The one who removed the seal was... Eleanora’s current master.”

“Her current master... That Dhampir. To think that he has already emerged... so was he behind the incident with Kinarp as well?” asked Gubamon.

“Most probably,” Birkyne replied. “Eleanora’s Charming Demon Eyes only work when eye contact is maintained, so he likely used some other method, however.”

There were also the incident of a Dungeon appearing in the city of Niarki and the incident where the slave-run mine had turned into a den of Skeletons and the mine itself had become an empty plot of land. Birkyne and Gubamon suspected that Vandalieu had been involved in these incidents as well.

They couldn’t imagine what his intentions had been in doing these, however.

People measure others by their own standards. In that regard, Birkyne and Gubamon were very much like people.

They would never have been able to imagine that Vandalieu had wanted to register as an adventurer, that he had investigated the relatives of the Undead that they treated

as pieces of their collection, or that he had caused this series of events as a result of that investigation.

The Pure-breed Vampires had concluded that Vandalieu had been after the Demon King's fragment, and that this series of events had been for that purpose.

He had undoubtedly released the Demon King's fragments in the southern region of the continent or sought out evil gods other than Hihiryushukaka in order to gain information. It could even be that there had been a sealed fragment of the Demon King near the slave-run mine that Birkyne and Gubamon didn't know about.

And hadn't Ternecia actually known about all of this? Birkyne suspected that she was already communicating with Vandalieu. Her subordinates had suffered the greatest losses, but it seemed likely that this was all part of the masquerade.

Birkyne felt this distrust because he had his own plans to make a deal with Vandalieu and turn him into an ally. Perhaps if the Pure-breed Vampires had spent a hundred thousand years building bonds like a blood-related family, then things would be different, but they were currently bound only by their common interests; the trust between them was brittle. If one crack formed in that trust, there would be no preventing it from falling into pieces.

"I see... The one who destroyed the tunnel was Ternecia, wasn't it? If they are plotting something, it makes sense to make Ternecia take the blame," said Gubamon.

"That's how it is... now then, let us get to the main topic of discussion, Gubamon," said Birkyne.



The Hartner Duchy was suffering from the economic recession caused by the Sauron Duchy being occupied by the Amid Empire, but with the recent 'accident' that had caused the castle to sink, the people had been worried that taxes would increase to pay for the castle's repair or the construction of a new castle.

Of course, the repair or rebuilding of the castle would be a public project, so there would be opportunities for business as well. However, those who planted crops and ran dairy farms as their main occupations would not receive the benefits of this.

A married couple who had barely been able to make a living working a small field were having a discussion late at night while their only son was asleep.

“If the taxes go any higher, we won’t have any choice but to sell Tom...”

“Please wait, dear. He’s only five years old; if we sell him, he’ll be sent to the mines.”

It was incredibly common for boys too young to be used for physical labor to be sent to places where they would be worked to death, such as the mines.

The wife was trying to stop her husband from sentencing their son to such a fate after she had gone through the pain of giving birth to him, but it wasn’t as if the husband was willing to sell his own child, either.

His face crumpled as he spoke again. “But at this rate, even if we feed ourselves on seeds and strangle every single one of our goats, we won’t make it through the winter... Rather than have our whole family starve to death, we have to gamble on the choice that gives us at least a little more hope... You know, Tom is quite smart for his age. I’m sure there will be a master who will buy him and use him as a servant.”

The man’s wife sobbed. “If only the rice plants hadn’t become sick...”

The poor farming couple who hadn’t been able to harvest a sufficient amount of rice seemed to have decided that they had no choice but to sell their son. But then a miracle happened.

“Wait... Azan... You must not sell that child.”

A voice that the couple had heard before reached their ears. However, the voice was one that they had thought they would never hear again.

“It can’t be, Ma?!” Azan, the husband, opened his eyes wide in shock. Standing before his eyes was his mother, whose corpse had been found in this year’s summer, the day after she left to pick some wild plants.

Her form was undefined and transparent; the wall behind her could be seen through her body.

“M-mother-in-law?!”

Azan screamed in terror. "Please, rest in peace!"

"You must not sell Tom... More importantly, you must tie the family's goats to the outside of the barn's door. And until the morning sun rises, you must keep all the windows closed and not step foot outside the house," the Ghost of Azan's dead mother said to the couple who were trembling in fear.

"The goats?" Azan repeated.

"Azan, listen to what your mother tells you," said the Ghost. "Listen to me. Leave your seeds outside the barn's door. Wait inside the house and do not leave until the morning sun rises. If you do that, then something good... The goddess Vida's blessings will be upon you."

"V-Vida, you say... Ma, didn't you convert to believe in Alda-sama?" Azan asked his mother.

Without answering her son's question, Azan's mother's spirit quietly vanished without a trace. The couple stared blankly at the place where the spirit had appeared for a while before looking at each other and nodding.

"Mother-in-law did love Tom, didn't she?" said Azan's wife.

"That's right... Those goats are soon going to be too old to squeeze any milk out of them anyway. Let's try believing in Ma," said Azan.

Azan and his wife tied the goats to the barn's door and waited for morning as they had been instructed.

When the sun rose, something astonishing had happened.

"This is...!"

There was a person-sized doll made of clay standing on the spot where the sack of seeds had been. If Azan and his wife had any knowledge of Japanese history, they would wonder what an earthen figure was doing here, but there was something that Azan was even more concerned about.

At the earthen figure's feet, there was a wooden club that he had never seen before. Thinking that he was meant to break the earthen figure open with it, he picked up the

club and struck the earthen figure.

The earthen figure easily split open, and boxes and bags filled with food and treasure fell out from inside, one after another.

“Salt, there’s so much salt...! There’s enough for a year! And this one is wheat! These bottles are... There’s even oil and vinegar!”

“Honey, aren’t these silver coins?! There are even some gold coins mixed in with them! And this shiny thing here, could it be a gemstone...?!”

The value of the food and treasures inside the earthen figure were dozens of times more than the pitiful amount that they would have gained by selling their only son. Not only would they not have to sell Tom, but they would easily survive the winter and have more than enough left over to buy new, young goats.

“Ah, thank you, Mother! Goddess Vida-sama, thank you very much!” Azan cried.



Vandalieu, who was surrounded by earthen-figure-shaped Golems in a plain covered thickly in tall grass a little distance away from the village, was pleased with himself as he looked at the results of his actions.

“Goats, rabbits, seeds for southern rice, multiple kinds of beans that we don’t have in Talosheim, seeds and seedlings of fruits that aren’t sold in the cities because they spoil easily... this is superb,” he said to himself.

Seeing how happy the farming families were, including Azan and his wife, Vandalieu did think that he could have taken a little more, but it wasn’t a big problem.

The Ghosts of Hannah and the others who had been killed by Kanata had told him the locations of several poor farming villages in the Hartner Duchy, flew to them and gathered the spirits in order to secure the people he needed to negotiate. And through these spirits, which he had used Visualization on to make them visible to normal people, he had offered his trades.

There were several families who ignored the offers, but many villagers of the deeply religious farming villages had believed the spirits and accepted Vandalieu’s trades.

As a result, Vandalieu had gained a lot.

There hadn't been any farming horses or cows that could help with work on the farms, but he had acquired several animals like goats and rabbits that could be raised just by feeding them grass, whose manure could be used as fertilizer. He had acquired the oldest animals in the trades, but there would be no problem if he used Youth Transformation on them.

The items he had given in return had been things that he had acquired in Dungeons or from bandits that he had encountered and exterminated along the way, so he didn't feel any loss from giving them away.

"I'm not in a social position where I can buy livestock and seeds normally."

Vandalieu wasn't the owner of a farm or a pasture, so he would stand out considerably if he tried to buy living livestock and seeds. That was why he was acquiring these through a method like this.

Click-click-click-click-click.

"Pete, you mustn't eat those yet," said Vandalieu, stopping Pete, who had extended half of his body from Vandalieu's head towards one of the rabbits.

"We have to breed them properly first... Tomato stew with rabbit meat... garnished with goat-milk cheese..."

It was the rabbits rather than Pete who had frozen in fear of Vandalieu's unconcealed hunger as the earthen figure Golems stored them inside their hollow bodies.

"Now then, let's move to the Dungeon I created yesterday. I want a few more goats."

Vandalieu left the plain behind, followed by the earthen figure Golems that were useful for transporting things.

And then he repeated the same thing in several villages. With this, all kinds of livestock were introduced to Talosheim.

In addition, the goddess Vida's religion became more active in the Hartner Duchy's farming villages. A custom spread where the believers offered the crops harvested that year to dolls made of clay during harvest festivals, and then everyone would break the

dolls the next day and take the broken pieces home with them as good luck charms.



The members of the Five-colored Blades sighed in frustration that their investigation was not going well.

“It’s not going well after all,” said Heinz.

“You’re right about that,” said Edgar. “Just where did she disappear to... The rumor that Vampires can turn into fog is just a superstition, right?”

“It’s mostly just a superstition,” said Diana. “However, it is said that there were once Vampires who possessed a unique skill to do so.”

Heinz and his companions had been chasing after Eleanora, defeating Vampires who would probably have information on her and questioning them, but no results were to be had.

After she was seen in Nineland, there wasn’t a single trace of Eleanora anywhere. The Vampires that Heinz’s party had defeated with Kinarp’s information had known that Eleanora was a traitor, but hadn’t known where she currently was or what she was doing.

In fact, they had been surprised, wondering why Heinz and his party were looking for Eleanora.

And since taking Chipiras alive would have been an impossible task even for Heinz’s party, they had only been able to question his underlings. They had tried finding someone with the Spiritualist Job to try and question Chipiras, but no Spiritualist had been able to communicate with the spirits of powerful Vampires.

From the limited information available, Heinz had concluded that the Vampires had been instructed to report any sightings of Eleanora rather than having been instructed to look for her, and that Eleanora’s master was considered to be an individual of far greater importance than Eleanora herself.

This was because Ternecia and the other Pure-breed Vampires had limited the information they provided to their underlings. As a result, rather than gaining information regarding Eleanora from the Vampires, Heinz and his party had

inadvertently informed Birkyne that Eleanora had appeared in the Hartner Duchy.

Unaware of this, they had continued searching, but they couldn't find any leads at all.

"Good grief, it really is strange. Even if Noble-born Vampires can fly, it's not like they can stay in the sky all day. So why can't we find any leads?" Jennifer wondered.

But both Eleanora and Vandalieu were now outside the party's search area of Niarki and the duchy's capital, so it was only natural that they couldn't find any leads.

If Heinz's party had visited the cultivation villages to the south, they might have been able to learn of Vandalieu and make the connection between him and Eleanora, but when the incident had occurred at the slave-run mine, they had been near Nineland so they hadn't had the opportunity to visit the cultivation villages.

"Well, we were unable to find the criminal who undid the champion's seal and released the Demon King's fragment, but our actions were not in vain," said Diana. "Not vain for us as adventurers, or vain in the fact that we are protecting Selen."

The Five-colored Blades had defeated well over a hundred Vampires, if including the Subordinate Vampires. They had even been acknowledged as saints by the Church of Alda.

Their pockets were quite warm with the rewards they had received for defeating the Vampires as well as the spoils of war taken from the Vampires themselves. Heinz's promotion to S-class was becoming a reality.

The more the Vampires' numbers were reduced by Heinz and his party, the safer the Dhampir girl Selen was.

That was why their efforts hadn't been entirely pointless, but...

"We should change the way we're conducting our search," said Heinz. "I think the fact that we have no leads whatsoever means that we've overlooked something."

The party was now sitting in the Adventurers' Guild, discussing how they should conduct their search. There had been a suggestion to see the ruins of the slave-run mine with their own eyes despite having already seen the search report, and another suggestion to investigate other known locations of champions' seals.

However, they were completely oblivious to the conversation that was going on behind them. But even if they did notice it and were interested in its contents, they would have thought that it had nothing to do with their search.

“Did you hear? They apparently appeared in Youda Village as well, the goddess’s clay-doll-samas.”

“By clay-doll-samas, do you mean those rumors? Where the spirits of dead parents or siblings appear and tell you to offer your aged livestock and seeds outside in the middle of the night? And then when morning comes, there’s a clay doll standing in their place with food and money inside?”

“Yeah, those rumors. Jeez, I wish I could get some of that luck. Can’t they visit our house?”

“...But your parents and brothers?”

“Yeah, they’re alive. Grandpa and Grandma are still going strong, too.”

“Then there’s no way that the clay dolls will come, is there? And you’re a shoemaker, aren’t you? What are you planning to offer?”

“Suppose you’re right.”

“Haah, I went out and got nothing again. I went to exterminate some bandits to find that they’d all been killed by monsters, and all of their treasure was gone as well.”

“Maybe they had a fight amongst themselves or someone took revenge on them; all of their throats were slit. That was the work of a real pro.”

“You as well? We didn’t have any luck, either. Well, our prey was Ghouls rather than bandits, though.”

“The venom on their fangs can be used for medicine, and the manes of the males are selling for more these days because they make for good materials, but... for some reason, I haven’t seen them around recently.”

“I wonder if the slave traders hired someone to do it? I’ve heard the females sell for quite a lot when trained.”

“Really? Those guys would have killed the males and taken their Magic Stones. But there weren’t any male corpses left in the remains of the village.”

“...Hey, don’t you smell something? I smell a conspiracy? I’m sure the many events that have been occurring recently are somehow connected in secret. I know this for sure.”

“Roger, have you already had something to drink? Keep your drunk conspiracies under control.”

In truth, as the adventurer named Roger had said, these things were all connected; they were all the doing of Vandalieu and his companions.

The goddess’s clay dolls were obviously Vandalieu’s work, but he had also conducted the extermination of the numerous bandit groups in passing, using them to gain Baum coins as bargaining tools, improving his Unarmed Fighting Technique skill and using them as prey to earn experience for Pete and the others.

Listening to the spirits, he had frequently encountered evil bandits who had committed murder many times, so he had ended up annihilating the bandit groups one after another despite the fact that the Adventurers’ Guild would normally send extermination requests for them.

And the fact that Ghouls had been disappearing from the Devil’s Nests of the Hartner Duchy was because Vandalieu had gone around inviting them to live in his nation after learning the locations of Devil’s Nests where Ghouls lived from the Guild receptionist who had been killed by Kanata and from Luciliano who had previously worked as an adventurer.

He had started doing this because it annoyed him that that the Ghouls were being hunted by the adventurers of the Hartner Duchy, but the Ghouls had fallen to their knees and bowed before him at the mere sight of him.

It seemed that when Ghouls saw Vandalieu, they felt as if a god had descended upon them.

His leveled-up Death-Attribute Charm skill as well as his Ghoul King and Holy Son of Vida Titles appeared to be doing their work.

After that, all there was left to do was creating tiny-scale Dungeons inside the Devil’s Nests and using underhanded tricks to take them back to Talosheim. The Ghouls’

leaders would have fistfights with Vigaro or compare their magic against Zadiris's. Once they decided who was superior, they would obey Vigaro and Zadiris as well, so there were no problems after the Ghouls' migration.

But many of the Ghouls had been unaware that their race had been created by Vida, and were very surprised to learn this truth.

It seemed that living in isolated, individual Devil's Nests was a problem for the Ghouls.

Incidentally, it seemed that there were no villages of Vida's other races in the Hartner Duchy. There were apparently some in the former Sauron Duchy, but the security around the national border was strict at the moment, so Vandalieu planned to sneak into the Sauron Duchy to obtain rice seeds later when the security was more relaxed.

And so, Vandalieu acquired some "essentials," livestock and farming crops, and visited his "mother's distant relatives," the Ghouls who were created by the goddess Vida, just as he had told Kasim and his friends he would.

Incidentally, while Heinz and his party were having their discussion, they learned that there were strange, small Dungeons that were difficult to even call E-class recently appearing one after another in the Hartner Duchy and decided to follow this trail.

All of them were Dungeons that Vandalieu had created with the Labyrinth Construction skill to use as a method of transport, abandoned after he was done using them. Heinz's party wasn't entirely off the mark, but they didn't gain anything from this, either.

Nobody but Vandalieu could teleport from Dungeon to Dungeon, after all.

And around the start of winter, Vandalieu headed for the cultivation villages to make sure that they would get through the winter just fine.



"The equipment is packed, right?"

"Everything is organized!"

"Alright, let's go!"

Karcán, who was mounted on horseback, left the city of Niarki with the unit under his command, Froto and two carriages of equipment.

They initially headed north before leaving the highway to take a side road south.

All in order to conceal their true destination and goal, which was to disguise themselves as bandits and attack the cultivation villages to the south.

CHAPTER 90

LET'S GO, YOU SORRY BASTARDS!

It wasn't snowing yet, but cold enough for the breath of the men in the unit led by the knight Karcan to turn white as they took the side road south.

There were about fifty of them, and although they belonged to the Knights' Order, only three men other than Karcan, including the vice-captain, had formally been decorated as knights.

The unit was made up of those with the social position of Equestrians, future knight candidates and the apprentices of knights. They were less skilled than knights, but equal to or slightly above the average soldier.

They were wearing old leather armor with numerous patches and stitches rather than suits of armor and helmets bearing the crest of the Hartner Duchy. At one glance, they appeared to be an orderly mercenary band.

"This is certainly not a pleasant mission, but this is for the sake of Lord Lucas, for the sake of the Hartner Duchy's future and for the sake of our people. Don't make those faces; you look like the remnants of a defeated army," said Karcan.

"But is this really necessary? Isn't Lord Lucas's succession to the family already almost certain at this point?" a man asked, voicing his opinion.

He was Froto, the spy who was participating in this mission as a staff officer, the man whom Vandalieu believed to be a virtuous priest of Alda.

Lord Lucas was the eldest son but his mother was a concubine, so people had thought it would be difficult for him to succeed the family. But as Froto said, Lord Lucas's succession to the family was now more or less decided.

The great scandal caused by Kinarp, the former Guild Master of the Mages' Guild, and his subordinates, who revealed that numerous noblemen had connections with Vampires who worshipped an evil god. Lord Belton, the second son born to the duke's legal wife, had been almost certain to succeed the family, but he had been caught up in the big waves caused by this scandal.

He had managed to protect himself, but the fact that his subordinates had been working with the Vampires had been revealed, so he had withdrawn from the dispute to succeed the family. Becoming a duke in the Orbaume Kingdom meant gaining the rights to be a candidate to become the king. Those of the other duchies and the current king himself had expressed their opinions one after another that they couldn't entrust this position to someone whose followers had been traitors to humanity.

Meanwhile, Lord Lucas had given a performance where he conducted a strict investigation to find out if any of his supporters had connections to Vampires and personally hunted and sentenced them.

Lord Belton was trying to appeal his innocence by doing things such as hiring the Five-colored Blades, but people already doubted him, people wondered whether he was simply a lizard sacrificing its own tail to survive.

Now that he had lost the people's confidence and his prominent supporters, every Church, including the Church of Alda, had distanced themselves from him and nobody sympathized with him. Lord Belton had lost his standing.

Of course, the worst-case scenario was that he would be taken somewhere to rest to recover from a "sudden illness" or be made to live a religious life in a remote church somewhere, so the result of losing his standing wasn't particularly unsatisfactory.

Once Lord Lucas succeeded the duke, Lord Belton would live on as the head of the branch family.

And it seemed that the current Duke Hartner wouldn't last until the spring. With the circumstances as they were now, Lord Lucas's succession to the family was all but confirmed.

Froto couldn't be blamed for doubting whether there was any meaning in crushing Lord Belton's cultivation project now.

But Karcan whispered in Froto's ear. "You may say that, Froto-dono, but if you do nothing now, you will return to your previous meaningless position."

Froto's face stiffened. He had been content with his meaningless position in the Mages' Guild, but the reason he had disguised himself as a priest and gone around the cultivation villages gathering information was all for the sake of becoming one of the duke's personal mages.

He had gone through a lot of trouble in order to become more renowned. That trouble would all go to waste at this rate.

“Either you perform one more job and acquire the reward you wanted, or receive thanks for your cooperation up until now and a little money before returning to your original position. It is one or the other,” said Karcán.

“...I understand,” said Froto. Being pressed like this, he was unable to refuse.

The truth was that the actions of Karcán and his unit would not be of any benefit to Lord Lucas. In fact, it would cause slight harm.

But Karcán’s seniors had been busy dealing with the recent series of events; they hadn’t given him any orders to cancel the plan to destroy the cultivation project.

“Standby for now.”

That was the order that Karcán had been given. Lord Lucas himself and the high-ranking members of the Knights’ Order supporting him had made it clear that now was not the time to make careless moves.

But Karcán had read too much into this, assuming that he had essentially been told, “We have no expectations of you lot anymore so don’t make a move.” He feared that he would be discarded for not having been of any use in Lord Lucas’s victory in the dispute to succeed the duke.

Now, he was trying to execute his originally-devised plan of having his unit pretend to go on an expedition, enter a side road far from the city, disguise themselves as bandits and destroy the cultivation villages.

If one just thought calmly for a moment, they would give up on such a plan, but as Karcán had been assigned to do all the dirty work, his sense of suspicion was greater than most people; his perspective had grown narrow.

If he didn’t make a move, would the consequences he had threatened Froto with not also happen to him? That was how paranoid his thoughts were.

But Karcán showed not the slightest sign of having been driven into such a mentality as he looked around the unit he was in charge of. He had managed to convince Froto; he was carrying on silently alongside the fake traveling merchant who had been a spy

right from the beginning. But the morale of the other men didn't look high.

Things won't go well at this rate, he thought.

The cultivation villages had no significant ability to defend themselves in battle. The largest village was the Seventh Cultivation Village with a population of two hundred and fifty; none of them were soldiers in occupation. There were three former refugees who were adventurers, but according to the information available, they were E-class adventurers whose D-class promotion had only just become a realistic dream for them. In terms of ability, they were probably no different from the Equestrians of Karcan's unit.

With fifty armed men, it wouldn't be difficult to slaughter the entire village. They would need to be careful of the adventurers, but there would be no problems if they did.

The only concern was the Dhampir boy. He had fled the city for some reason so his whereabouts were currently unknown, but even if by some tiny chance he was in the cultivation villages right now, he was only about as strong as a D-class adventurer other than his healing magic (or so they thought). If the True Knights with Froto's enchantments, including Karcan, surrounded the villages, they would be able to dispose of the people in the villages one-sidedly.

But the low morale wasn't good. If they were careless, unexpected failures could occur. Villagers might survive after seeing their faces, or even kill one of Karcan's men when they let their guard down.

Karcan wanted to avoid that.

Deciding that it couldn't be helped, he spoke to his men to get them into the mood to work. "Gentlemen, I know this mission is an unpleasant task," he said. "Even if we succeed, officially speaking, we will have done nothing more than conducted an expedition, so we will not be praised for our work. However, due to the nature of the mission, it is necessary for us to disguise ourselves as bandits. And what is it that bandits do when they attack helpless villages?"

At first, the Equestrians gave Karcan a puzzled look before suddenly being taken aback at what he meant.

What bandits did in villages was pillaging, violence, rape and kidnapping.

“Commanding officer?! Is that really alright?!”

Equestrians lived their everyday lives under strict discipline. As they were those who would soon succeed their True Knight parents, they had to motivate themselves to learn the art of combat and study academic subjects on a regular basis; they had to become an example for the soldiers.

In the future, they would command soldiers and defend their nation with their swords. Because of the position they were in, they couldn’t openly enjoy gourmet foods and drinks or make love to the women of the red-light districts.

Especially since the Sauron Duchy had fallen to the Amid Empire, there was a lingering atmosphere that they needed to be ready for combat at all times, so they couldn’t loosen their restraints by even the smallest amount.

These were the Equestrians that Karcan was speaking to.

“Of course,” he said. “But we will not be kidnapping anyone. Once you have enjoyed them like bandits, dispose of them like bandits. Don’t loosen your restraints too much just because there is no risk of making any children! Those who injure their backs and can’t ride their horses will be dragged back by force!”

The Equestrians were suddenly excited. Some of them were more in anticipation of the extra money they would earn rather than the women, but given the strange circumstances of being told that they could rape the women as much as they liked, most of them were unable to hide their excitement.

Froto turned pale as he imagined what the men would do in the cultivation villages.

His original role had been that of an informant; he had never imagined that he would have to directly witness the villagers suffering and being killed.

He would suffer a greater impact by seeing the corpses with his own eyes and watching the villagers suffering as they died.

But now that he had come this far, he couldn’t say that he would quit, nor could he escape.

If you are going to resent anyone, resent the Amid Empire who took your homeland from you. I have done nothing wrong; all I wanted was to gain a social position befitting of

someone like me, thought the fake priest, shifting the responsibility away from himself.



Having gone around the villages and seen that their preparations for winter had gone well, Vandalieu performed his usual healings and secretly stationed Golems at each village before returning to the Seventh Cultivation Village.

He caught Rank 2 Bloodsucking Rats on the way there. He had the owner of the jack-of-all-trades store cook their meat, which was richer than it appeared, and shared it with everyone.

And then he stayed the night in the same room as Kasim and his friends.

Things are going well for now, he thought.

Now that the slave-run mine was gone, traveling merchants no longer came to the cultivation villages, but it seemed that there would be no problems lasting until spring. Once it became warmer, Kasim and his party would have to escort the young men to buy things at the city, however. While they were there, they planned to consult the Commerce Guild to see if they could arrange other traveling merchants to visit the cultivation villages.

Despite not being citizens of Talosheim, these people were people who adored Vandalieu. Despite it having been for the sake of rescuing the Titan slaves, he felt a little guilty that he had caused such an inconvenience to the village.

If the Fangs of Dark Nights were still functioning, I would have been able to take measures against that, but... I wonder if these people would come to my nation?

If they did that, Vandalieu wouldn't have to hold back when it came to various things. He would be able to give them houses, furniture and food and offer them work, just like he had done with the people from the First Cultivation Village.

He would be able to have them eat delicious dinosaur meat, fully seasoned with all kinds of flavors, instead of preserved Gobu-Gobu.

There wouldn't be any need to station dozens of Lemure lookouts, Stone Golems and Death Iron Golems at every village. No matter what the Hartner family did, they would be able to live in safety inside Talosheim, which was currently having its sixth outer

wall built.

It did occur to Vandalieu that he should just tell the villagers everything.

But that would be equivalent to pressing the people of the cultivation villages to separate themselves from human society.

Vandalieu wasn't confident that this would lead to their happiness.

If the Hartner Duchy was a little more trustworthy, if the innermost members of its government and Guilds didn't have connections to the Pure-breed Vampires, then he would have had more options, however.

In the end, the Pure-breed Vampires and Heinz's party are in my way. I have to erase them somehow... or at least reduce their numbers.

If Vandalieu took direct measures, the Pure-breed Vampires would interfere. If he took indirect measures, Heinz's party would interfere.

The Pure-breed Vampires and Heinz's party were supposed to be enemies to each other, but they were hindering Vandalieu as if they had joined forces.

I could get rid of one member under the right circumstances. If things go well from there... Ah, but I suppose it's dangerous to presume that there is a chance of things 'going well.' I don't know how much they were cornered by the information I made Kinarp reveal; if the timing doesn't match up... The spirits of Chipiras and the other Vampires were horribly damaged, so I can't get any good information out of them. With Isla's information alone...

Heinz's party had done things in a flashy way. Thanks to that, the Lemures stationed in the sky over the city had been enough to let Vandalieu know that battles had been occurring, and he had been able to find the spirits of the dead to communicate with them, but... Couldn't anything be done about heavy damage to spirits?

Vandalieu had turned the 'Hound' Isla, one of Ternecia's 'Five Dogs' that were her trusted retainers, into an Undead straight away, so there was almost no damage to her memory. But the spirit of the 'Fine Dog' Chipiras, who had been split in two by Heinz, was damaged all over.

The only other spirits Vandalieu could obtain were those of the 'Mad Dog' and the

‘Fighting Dog.’ The fifth, the ‘Foolish Dog,’ was apparently not moving from a hiding place. Vandalieu just hoped that he could get good information from the Mad Dog and the Fighting Dog.

As these thoughts ran through his mind, he looked at the room’s ceiling, which he could see clear as day thanks to his Dark Vision skill.

He couldn’t fall asleep.

For some reason, Pete and the other insects that Vandalieu had equipped inside his body with the Insect Binding Technique skill were moving around inside him late at night, disturbing his quiet sleep with the sensation of them squirming beneath his skin.

It tickled, so he was inadvertently letting out stifled laughter.

The Status Effect Resistance skill kept sleep deprivation at bay, so Vandalieu was completely awake now. *There’s no helping it*, he thought, deciding to get up.

Sunrise was close. Vandalieu decided to pass the time by doing some morning training.

He silently crawled out of the bunkbed, spread a handkerchief-sized piece of tanned leather on the floor so as to not wake Kasim and his friends who were still sleeping and then began to do push-ups with his tongue.

It was harsh training that required not his arms, but his tongue extended with the Body Extension (Tongue) skill, to support his entire body weight. The tongue was a muscle, so it would surely be very effective training.

It would be quite the problem if he were to be seen by Kasim and his friends, but the three of them were humans and they couldn’t really see in the dark, so there wouldn’t be any problems if he just stopped right after they woke up.

But Vandalieu did only a few of these push-ups before stopping. The Lemures stationed around the village had detected several shadows of what appeared to be bandits.

...Who are these guys?

Through the Lemures, he could see a group of several dozen armed men wearing

leather armor and cloths over their faces. Seeing this, Vandalieu would assume they were just bandits, but for some reason, many of them were riding horses.

One or two bandits might have been normal, but there were around twenty mounted men. They were all sturdy horses; the one at the front carrying a man holding a kite shield was particularly sturdy-looking, so muscular that Vandalieu would feel the urge to touch it.

Normal bandits might have carriages to carry the items they pillaged, but they would not have a cavalry. Horses cost money to feed, as they didn't simply eat anything they were given, and they were normally cowardly creatures. And the bandits themselves were farmers and residents of slums who had gone broke, so they didn't have the technique for fighting on horseback. That was why having war horses would just be a waste of money to feed.

Selling those horses would actually yield more profit than attacking one small village.

In fact, Vandalieu had never encountered a single mounted bandit among all of the bandit groups he had attacked and robbed.

Then maybe these bandits are mercenaries who have gone broke.

There were people in Lambda who would normally do mercenary work, then act as bandits to make a living when there was no work available.

And because such people sold their strength on the battlefield to earn their money, they were far stronger than normal bandits.

At the very least, they were stronger than ordinary soldiers, possessed skills and used martial skills.

Though it was late, Vandalieu now felt a reaction from Danger Sense: Death. At this rate, it was possible that the village would be annihilated... no, its annihilation was certain.

"This is bad..." he muttered to himself.

As enemies, they weren't a threat to Vandalieu. If the bandit group were to aiming only for Vandalieu, he would be able to overwhelm them, just like he had done with the Goblin King and the pack of one thousand Goblins.

The difficult thing was to defeat them without losing any of the villagers as casualties. If he held back as he had been doing up until now, he would definitely lack the manpower to accomplish this.

...There was no helping it. Vandalieu decided to get a little serious.

He quickly cast Energy Absorption and Bloodshed Enhancement on the equipment of Kasim's party that was in the room.

And then he used his Scream skill to let out a loud voice, waking up Kasim's party.

"IT'S A BANDIT ATTACK!"

"A-an attack?"

"On this village?!"

Even though they were novices, they were adventurers. Despite being surprised, they got out of bed quickly. Vandalieu quickly explained the situation to them.

"Several dozen strong bandits are closing in on the village," he said.

"What?! Really?!"

"Yes, my insects have told me."

Vandalieu had noticed the bandits so quickly because he had been unable to sleep due to Pete and the other insects had been making so much noise, so this wasn't exactly a lie.

Hearing this, the three young adventurers hastily began equipping their weapons and armor.

"If it was Fester saying it, we would have doubted him," said Kasim.

"We trust you because it's you, Vandalieu!" said Zeno.

"Unlike me, you don't say things while half-asleep!" Fester added. It seemed that he had a history of speaking nonsense while half-asleep.

“But will we be enough to handle strong bandits?” asked Zeno.

“Don’t complain; there are dozens of them. Even if we’re not enough, we have no choice but to do this!” said Kasim.

There was audible tension in their voices.

“I think you’d manage if you were fighting them one-on-one,” Vandalieu told them. *I’ve applied enchantments, too.*

In fact, yesterday, Kasim’s party had told him that they would soon be allowed to take the D-class promotion examination, so they were already stronger than average soldiers. As long as they could kill people and have their minds stay normal after killing them, there was no way that they would lose in a one-on-one battle.

But surprisingly, it wasn’t Kasim or Zeno, but Fester who called out to Vandalieu with a serious look on his face. “Hey, Vandalieu. Do you have any tips? For kill... fighting people.”

They seem to have sensed that Vandalieu was experienced in fighting other people while they repeated their training and practice battles with him. Since the only human-shaped creatures they had killed so far were Goblins and Kobolds, they were asking him for advice.

“Tips?” Vandalieu repeated.

He was hard-pressed to answer this question. He had killed multiple people with his own hands, drank their blood and used their corpses as Undead, but he didn’t remember thinking anything in particular about doing so. For him, killing people was no different from preparing fish after catching them.

Meanwhile, the bandits had made their preparations for the attack. They were split into three groups; the archers and infantry would go around to surround the village, and once they were in position, half of the cavalry would attack the front gate facing the highway while the other half would attack the smaller rear gate.

The cavalry would cause chaos while the archers and infantry would bring down the fleeing villagers.

Golems, activate. Exterminate the enemies as they approach.

Princess Levia and the other Ghosts, stay transparent and standby in the sky.

Hmm, what advice should I give Fester?

Vandalieu's head was working hard, using the Parallel Thought Processing skill to give orders to the Lemures and Golems as well as telling Levia and the other Ghosts to stand by.

The response he gave in the end was a cliché one.

"Imagine what will happen if you don't fight or what will happen when you are defeated," he told Fester.

"Imagine?"

"Yes. What will the bandit group do to this village, what will they do with Lina-san, if we are defeated?"

Lina was the poster girl of the jack-of-all-trades store, the sole employee of the Adventurers' Guild branch in the village. What the bandit group would do upon finding a young woman like her didn't need explaining.

Fester, who had feelings for her, gripped his sword tightly.

"...Alright. I'm still not confident that I can kill someone, but I'll leave the feelings of fear and vomiting for afterwards," he said.

Vandalieu had used a line that he had seen a heroine in a manga on Earth say to encourage the protagonist who disliked fighting, but it seemed to have been more effective than he had expected.

I was contemplating between this and telling him to imagine that his enemies are pumpkins or something, but I suppose this was the right choice.

"Don't worry. I'm the Shield-bearer; I'll protect you properly," said Kasim.

"I'll watch your back, but I'm not going to pat it," said Zeno. "Ask Lina to do that for you afterwards."

"No, I didn't mean that I'd actually vomit... Shit, Vandalieu, where should we go?"

Fester asked. "Do we go to the front gate?"

"I'll leave the back gate to you," said Vandalieu. "Around ten mounted men will come that way; please hold out until I arrive. Tell the villagers not to leave their houses. I'll handle things at the front gate."

"Alright!"

Normally, they would stop a boy half their age saying that he would handle things on his own, but Kasim's party knew that Vandalieu was so strong that they couldn't defeat him even if all three of them attacked him at once. They watched him open the wooden door and fly out without stopping him before heading for the back gate.

"ATTACK! ATTACK! BANDIT ATTACK! CLOSE YOUR DOORS AND STAY IN YOUR HOUSES!"

Vandalieu was using the Scream skill to warn the villagers who would slowly be waking up around this time.



"It's so noisy. Could it be that they've noticed us?" asked one of Karcan's subordinates, seemingly afraid.

"Even if they have, the plan does not change!" Karcan shouted, drawing his sword.

He had a bad feeling about the high-pitched voice that he could hear coming from the village, but he ignored it and commenced the plan.

"Don't hold back, pillage and kill! This is for the sake of justice! Let's go, you sorry bastards!" he roared.

Seeing their commander charge forward, the Equestrians disguised as bandits let out violent war cries as they followed.

"Hyih! They really came?!"

"You stupid fool, stay calm!"

The men who had been keeping watch at the front gate during the night trembled with pale faces at the fearsome war cries and hoofbeats drawing closer.

It seemed that bandits were far more terrifying than Goblins or wild beasts.

“Doctor! We’ll leave the rest to you!”

“Let’s see here*,” said Vandalieu, whom many had started to call “Doctor” because he had been conducting medical treatments every time he visited the village.

TLN: I’m not entirely certain on this, but I believe this line is often said by doctors when examining their patients, as if to say, “let’s have a look.”*

He prepared his method for killing all of the bandits.

These men were probably mercenaries acting as bandits, but they were nothing but small fry for Vandalieu with his current power. He would simply need to fire Death Bullets as they approached and swing his claws a few times, and that would be the end.

But they were riding horses.

The horses should provide quite a bit of income for this village.

He wanted to leave the horses alive. If the wind had been blowing the other way, he could have just released volatile paralyzing venom into the air, but unfortunately, the village was downwind.

“Now then, I’m counting on you,” he said.

Eight spears of black flames appeared.

“Uwah, is this magic?!” one of the villagers cried.

“Yes, this is fire-attribute magic,” said Vandalieu, lying without hesitation as he released a Dead Spirit Magic spell.

“I’ll destroy the gate with my martial skill; follow me – GAH?!”

A spear of black fire pierced the chest of the man at the front who was raising his

sword. A second and third spear followed, incinerating the internal organs of the man – of Karcan.

Karcan opened his eyes wide in astonishment as he stared at small, white-haired boy floating above the wooden gate.

Impossible?! He wasn't just a user of healing magic and the Unarmed Fighting Technique?!

With the astonishment still etched on his face, he tumbled off his horse.

“C-Captain?!”

“Karcan-dono?!”

Seeing Karcan's subordinates and Froto stop their horses, their formation falling apart, Vandalieu saw a chance and released more spears of black flames and threw kunais at them.

“Higyah?!”

“S-Stone Wall! GUAHH?!”

“Gah... It's poison! There's poison on the... Kahah!”

One after another, Karcan's subordinates had their chests pierced and their organs burned from the inside, or fell to the poison on the kunais made by Datara and Tarea (which had also been turned into Cursed Weapons).

There were some who immediately raised their shields and used their martial skills, but martial skills like Stone Wall with level 1 Shield Technique were meaningless against Vandalieu's Dead Spirit Magic and Throwing skills.

The kunai that he had turned into Cursed Weapons, made of Dragon bones and Death Iron, thrown with his level 4 Superhuman Strength, were about as powerful as cannonballs. And since they were coated with poison, even a graze would spell the end for these men.

Froto, who had been at the back, let out a scream of terror as he tried to flee. Vandalieu raised a kunai to throw into his back... but upon hearing the words of the spirits of

Karcan and his men, who had approached him due to the Death-Attribute Charm affecting them because they had died, he stopped.

“Pete, everyone, please capture him alive.”

Several dozen insectoid monsters, including Pete, flew out of Vandalieu’s body and chased after Froto.

He had his remaining insects inject paralyzing venom into the horses and used Death-Attribute Magic to turn the bandits who were still breathing into ashes.

“You didn’t have to go that far...” one of the villagers murmured.

“They were still breathing, so I had to do it just in case,” said Vandalieu, lying to them again. He had now lied to them so many times that he had lost count. But he had no choice; these bandits... Karcan and his men, were knights of this nation.

Vandalieu hadn’t heard the fine details of why they had attacked this cultivation village yet, but...

Things have turned out badly. Now that it’s come to this, I have to kill the knights so they can’t be recognized, he thought as he turned around.

“By the way, what are those insect-looking things?!”

“They are my pleasant companions,” said Vandalieu. “You don’t have to worry about them. Now then, I’m going to take a look at the back gate.”

Hearing the villagers’ shouts of “Alright!” and “We’re leaving it to you!” behind him, Vandalieu headed for the back gate where Kasim and his friends were fighting.

“Doctor was a tamer, huh.”

“Yeah, he’s amazing. Ah, but should we say something to him about bringing them into the village without mentioning them?”

“Maybe we should... he did cure my athlete’s foot only yesterday, though.”

“Now that you mention it, he did something about my toothache as well... I suppose we’ll just give him a slight warning.”

“Yeah.”

The gate guards, who were now tying the horses up so that they wouldn't run away, didn't know that insectoid monsters had been deemed untamable by the Tamers' Guild.

This was the level of knowledge of people who had never actually seen a Tamer.

CHAPTER 91

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD IF NOTHING HAPPENED, BUT...

In terms of actually protecting the village, the battle to defend the Seventh Cultivation Village from Karcan's unit of knights disguised as bandits was going well.

By the time Vandalieu killed Karcan, half of the thirty archers and infantry surrounding the village had already been killed.

"OOOOOOOOHN!"

"UOH! A Golem?!"

"WAAAAH! What the hell is this Slime?!"

The Equestrians who were on standby after surrounding the village should have only needed to be shooting the villagers who had barely escaped with their lives, the only things that approached them were Stone Golems and Golems made of liquid Death Iron, which looked like Slimes at first glance.

The Golems that Vandalieu had diligently made and placed in the ground were ten Rank 3 Stone Golems and three Rank 7 liquid Death Iron Golems. All of them were affected by his Strengthen Followers and Strengthen Subordinates skills; they were as powerful as monsters one or two Ranks above them.

If the Equestrians were all gathered together, even if they couldn't defeat the Golems, at least half of them would have been able to escape because the Golems were slow to move. But because they had been surrounding the village, they were all separated.

"W-why are there so many Golems and black Slimes in a place where there are only supposed to be Goblins?!" shouted the final knight, before being covered and engulfed completely by a Death Iron Golem.

The Death Iron was a liquid, but it was just as heavy as the iron it had originally been made from. And since the Golem had its own superhuman strength as well, escape

after being swallowed by it would be impossible without a tremendous amount of physical strength.

And then the Golems groaned as they carried the Equestrians' corpses to the small-scale Dungeon that Vandalieu had created in order to hide them.



Kasim and his party were putting up a good fight against the ten mounted bandits.

“UOOOOH! Stone Shield! Shield Bash!”

Unable to withstand the blow of Kasim's strengthened shield that he had swung with all his might, one of the Equestrians fell off his horse.

Zeno aimed for that fallen Equestrian, but one of the other Equestrians stood in his way, blocking his line of fire.

“Guh! Are you trying to show off?!” shouted the Equestrian. Fortunately for him, the leather armor he was wearing was lighter than what he normally used, so he got to his feet quickly.

As usual, Kasim's skill level was still too low to use Shield Bash. “It's the embodiment of my fighting spirit!” he yelled back.

They were being forced to fight three against ten; they wouldn't last without some fighting spirit.

Fester was swinging his sword bravely next to Kasim as well. “UOOOOH! Lina, I'll protect you! Triple Thrust!” He used a Swordsmanship martial skill, releasing three swift, consecutive thrusts, aiming at one of the enemies on horseback.

The Equestrian twisted his body to avoid the first thrust, deflected the second with his own sword and was hit by the third, though the third thrust only took a little flesh off his side.

“There's your... weakness?”

Triple Thrust was a martial technique with three consecutive thrusts at a fearsome speed, but once the three thrusts were endured, there was an opening where the user

was vulnerable.

The Equestrian knew this and had planned to launch a counterattack after enduring the three thrusts despite having suffered a slight wound, but all of his Vitality was taken away by what was supposed to be a light wound in his side, sapping his strength.

This was the effect of the Bloodshed Enhancement enchantment on Fester's sword.

"ZEYAH!" Finding the Equestrian's opening instead, his regular thrust slipped through a gap in the Equestrians armor. The Equestrian's eyes rolled back as he fell off his horse.

"ANTON!"

"WHO'S NEXT!" Fester roared. "COME AT ME! I WON'T LET YOU LAY A SINGLE FINGER ON LINAAA!" He was making full use of Vandalieu's advice to endure the mental shock of having killed someone for the first time.

"Who is that?!"

The Equestrians were shaken after watching their ally fall.

"This is for Anton!" an Equestrian shouted as he and another Equestrian charged at Fester.

"You idiot, what are you provoking them for!" said Zeno.

"Provocation!"

Zeno's arrows kept the Equestrians at bay while Kasim used the Provocation, a martial skill that forcibly directed an enemy's hostility to himself.

"These guys are stronger than we heard they would be," the unit's vice-captain whispered to himself.

Kasim and his party were strong. The three of them were E-class adventurers, but they already had abilities worthy of D-class. In terms of ability, they were more than a match for the Equestrians. With Vandalieu's enchantments added to their equipment, they had become threats that couldn't be taken lightly, even ten against three.

To the point that the vice-captain now feared that they would all be individually defeated as a result of having split up to aim for the villagers.

What's taking Captain Karcan so long?!

The Equestrians were supposed to have charged through both the front and back gates, cause chaos and crush every adventurer and villager that tried to resist, but at this rate, even if they weren't defeated, they would suffer heavy losses.

Thinking that it would be bad if more casualties were suffered, the vice-captain of the unit turned to give orders to the agitated Equestrians.

"I'll deal with the swordsman! Two of you keep the Shield-Bearer busy and the rest of you take care of the Archer!" he shouted, riding his horse towards Fester.

As someone with the Job and social position of a True Knight like Karcan, he possessed greater abilities than Fester. He wouldn't be defeated easily if he utilized his advantage of being on horseback, even with the enchantments on Fester's equipment.

"Shit! Zeno, try to run around!" Fester shouted as he moved to engage the vice-captain.

And then he felt something flying over his head at incredible speed.

The head of the enemy he was trying to engage vanished with the sound of a bursting fruit.

"EH?!"

Fester and the Equestrians let out foolish-sounding noises of surprise. Not noticing that its master's head had exploded, the vice-captain's horse continued running right past Fester.

The long sword dropped from the vice-captain's shaking hand.

"I almost hit the horse. It's hard to aim this Telekinesis rifle, even though it could be useful because I don't have to worry about the bullets exploding since they're made of liquid Death Iron. I suppose it's no use without a gun barrel," said a voice from overhead.

Everyone looked up to see Vandalieu floating there, surrounded by several black, fist-

sized spheres floating around him.

“Well then, I’ll go for the remaining ones the normal way.”

Before the very eyes of the Equestrians, who still hadn’t recovered from their astonishment, numerous black spears of flames appeared around Vandalieu.

“W-wait –”

“Black Flame Spear.”

Starting with the one who looked like he was about to surrender, Vandalieu released his magic at all of the Equestrians, one by one.

“Hang on – Oi! Weren’t they trying to surrender?!” Kasim shouted.

“Sorry, I couldn’t stop myself in time,” said Vandalieu. He had lied so many times now that he was starting to feel bad, but there was no helping it.

“I see... Well, I suppose it was just my imagination. They were still holding their weapons, after all,” said Kasim, having lost interest in the Equestrians who were now corpses. From his perspective, the Equestrians were simply bandits, so he hadn’t had any intention of criticizing Vandalieu for killing them mercilessly to begin with. It seemed that he had simply shouted out in surprise. “You saved us. If you were any later, things could have gone badly. It’s the second time you’ve saved us now,” he said.

“Is this all of them?” asked Zeno. “Well then, we need to clean up the corpses and gather the horses inside to make sure they don’t run away.”

“Blurgh!”

“...Fester, you go and explain what’s happened to the village chief,” said Zeno.

“L-leabe it to be,” said Fester, struggling to speak.

“There is one bandit who escaped, so I am going to chase after him,” said Vandalieu.

“Are you alright on your own – Hmm, I think you are, but do you want help with anything?” asked Kasim.

“It’s fine. Rather than help me, I will ask you to take care of things here.”

“Alright.”

Kasim watched Vandalieu fly off and then grimaced as he realized that he had to pick up the broken fragments of the enemies’ heads that Vandalieu had smashed to pieces.

“I should have asked him to just burn them all,” he muttered to himself.



“Kah... Kakeh...”

Terrified at the fact that his body refused to move, as if it was now made of stone, Froto looked in despair at the countless compound eyes that were gazing at him.

Rank 3 Paralyzing Moths that scattered scales with paralyzing venom from their wings.

Rank 2 Carrion Flies that used their acidic saliva to dissolve weakened creatures as they consumed them.

Rank 3 Clear Dragon Butterflies, which could turn transparent for short periods of time.

Rank 4 Chameleon Mantises, the assassins of the forests.

And then there were the Rank 5 Cemetery Bees that had poisonous stingers and jaws that could destroy metal armor as if they were decorative pieces of candy, as well as a Rank 4 Lance Centipede with horns and a carapace tougher than iron.

To Froto, the sounds of their jaws and wings sounded like the countdown to his death.

He was an outstanding mage, but since he was fundamentally a researcher, he had little experience in real battles. Karcan had brought him not for his ability in battle, but because he knew all of the villagers’ faces.

Even so, he might have been able to manage to repel the small number of monsters present except for the Cemetery Bees and the Lance Centipede. If there was only one type of venom to deal with, he might have been able to counteract it.

But even though the monsters were all insectoids, Froto didn't have the strength to fight against over a dozen monsters of different races, nor did he have the ability to counteract multiple types of venom.

Th-this cannot be! Someone, please save me! I'm not the kind of person that can be allowed to die in a place like this! My death would be an immeasurable loss for this nation!

His eyeballs, the only moving part of his body, searched for help, but there were no signs that any help would come. Karcan, Froto's superior, had been killed right at the beginning, and his subordinates had quickly shared the same fate. Froto had the feeling that the spy had been among them.

Considering that, it was likely that all of the other Equestrians had been slaughtered by Vandalieu as well.

Even if there were survivors, they weren't close enough to Froto to come and save him, and even if they did come, it was difficult to imagine that they would be able to defeat these monsters.

Just as Froto gave up hope, a crimson and purple eye appeared from behind the insectoid monsters.

"It's been a while," said Vandalieu. He had killed Karcan and his men in a flash, and now he was looking down at Froto. There was no emotion in his voice or on his face.

Unable to speak, Froto screamed internally.

"I've heard the gist of the story from the spirit of the man named Karcan," Vandalieu continued, extending his hand towards Froto. "You were a hired mage who infiltrated the cultivation villages in order to destroy them, not a priest. Your objective was to gain a better position for yourself, it seems."

He knows everything?! He was a Spiritualist as well?!

Froto felt surprise and fear, and cursed Karcan in his mind for selling him out so quickly after dying and becoming a spirit.

Wait, I stopped! I knew this attack was pointless, but Karcan forced me into it!

Before this attack, several of the other cultivation villages were supposed to have been destroyed by plans that Froto had put in place himself, and he had conveniently forgotten this. But his tongue, paralyzed by the venom, was unable to produce any words.

“It seems that you have something to say, but there is nothing I want to hear from you,” said Vandalieu. “But you really have done something troublesome.”

He had repelled bandits to protect the village. There would be no problem with that. But the fact that the bandits were actually knights was a problem.

Normally, Karcan and his men would have been treated as a shame to all knights. But there was the fact that the cultivation project to alleviate the refugee problem was actually a plan to leave the people to fend for themselves, and the fact that Karcan had been acting according to Lucas’s will, even if he had been making decisions mostly independently towards the end. Thus, it didn’t seem that things would end so simply.

It seemed that they had come out on the pretense of going on an expedition, but... It was certain that the people of the Knights’ Order would realize that the missing Karcan and his men were the bandits who had been massacred in the cultivation villages.

When that happened, what would they do? It would be convenient for Vandalieu and the cultivation villages if they didn’t make a move.

If the Knights’ Order and the noblemen acted as if nothing had happened and treated the death of Karcan and his men as them having gone missing during their expedition, then nothing would happen.

However, considering what had happened up until now, Vandalieu had no faith in the Hartner family or the noble families close to the Hartner family.

They would definitely try something.

“If I knew they were knights before I killed them, I could have taken them alive and possibly tried various things to cover it up, but... your disguises were too elaborate,” said Vandalieu. “To actually die so quickly like real bandits, how unf... I suppose going as far as to say that would be unreasonable.”

Vandalieu’s hand drew steadily closer to Froto. Froto was waiting in suspense,

wondering when black flames would appear from that hand, when claws would extend from its fingers.

But that didn't happen. Vandalieu's hand lifted Froto's face up. Froto wondered whether he was being spared.

Thank you, truly, thank you! I'll tell you everything I know, and I'll do anything for your sake! So spare -?!

Insects silently emerged from Vandalieu's cold hand that was touching Froto's cheek.

Just as Froto saw the eyeless heads of numerous colorful, venomous-looking Worms coming out of Vandalieu's hand, their long bodies began twisting and crawling over his face.

"They're beautiful, aren't they?" said Vandalieu. "These are creatures that live as parasites in the bodies of other creatures. They can infest all kinds of places, like the brain or other internal organs. I'll tell you now that your consciousness will not be taken over. You will feel the pain and everything else vividly."

The slimy parasite creatures began entering Froto's body through his mouth, nose and ears.

He let out stifled screams.

Watching him tremble and convulse ominously, Vandalieu made a confession. "I'll say this now because perhaps you haven't noticed. I am very angry."

Vandalieu felt anger and disappointment at Froto's betrayal. He had admired Froto and thought he was a good person for a believer of Alda.

But he had betrayed Vandalieu like this. Vandalieu wanted to erase the past where he had worried for Froto's safety.

"Well, as you were a spy to begin with, I'm sure you thought that I was a fool for not noticing," Vandalieu continued. "Your eyes are telling me that I was a fool to be deceived, too."

I'M NOT THINKING ANYTHING LIKE THAAAAAT!

The voice of Froto, who was still alive, couldn't be heard by Vandalieu.

Vandalieu waited for the parasites to finish infesting Froto and then grabbed his body.

And then Froto's body silently began entering Vandalieu's hand.

W-WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MEEE?! SOMEONE SAVE MEEEE!

With his screams unheard by anyone, Froto disappeared inside Vandalieu.

"This is an underhanded trick, but I can equip creatures infested by parasitic insects with Insect Binding Technique," Vandalieu explained.

In order to use Dungeons to transport the Ghouls who had been living in the Devil's Nests of the Hartner Duchy and the livestock he had received in trade with the farming villages, Vandalieu had made parasites infest them, equipped them inside his body and then teleported to Talosheim.

Of course, he had only used a single harmless parasite for each person, only having them infested just before teleporting and then quickly releasing them straight after arriving in Talosheim.

If Vandalieu transported Froto to Talosheim alive and disposed of him there, his corpse wouldn't be found by the villagers, nor would there be even a sliver of a chance for him appearing near the village if he turned into a Ghost.

Death-Attribute Charm wasn't flawless, so Vandalieu was sure to take precautions where he could.

But perhaps because his capacity had decreased after equipping Froto; he was now one insect short of equipping all of them.

"I suppose unexpected, troublesome situations like this arise if I equip so many insects close to my limit," Vandalieu murmured.

Click-click-click? Pete seemed to be asking what they would do. Now that his Rank had increased and he had become a Lance Centipede, he was now larger than an anaconda.

"...Well, the gatekeepers already saw you, so I'm sure it will be fine."

Vandalieu might be scolded a little, but it would probably be fine for him to bring Pete with him.

“Once the bandits are all disposed of, I have to set some Lemures around Niarki and Nineland. Then I have to release some Undead Insects and...”

Vandalieu’s words trailed off as he let out a sigh.



The villagers of the Seventh Cultivation Village were shocked by the bandit attack and praised Vandalieu and Kasim’s party for defending them. It was still morning, so there wasn’t a feast thrown to celebrate. They stripped the bandits of their equipment, had Vandalieu burn the corpses and bury the ashes so that they wouldn’t rise as Undead, and gathered all of the horses. Then it was noon and the celebrations began.

“Don’t go screaming my name like that!” said Lina.

“B-but I was desperate to protect you!” Fester told her.

“So I’m telling you, don’t go shouting that to everyone! ... Say it when we’re alone together.”

Fester seemed to have recovered from the mental shock of having killed someone for the first time, and his relationship with Lina was moving forward as well.

Apparently, a couple consisting of an Adventurers’ Guild employee and an active adventurer couldn’t get married until one of them retired, so their goal was still far off, however.

“...I don’t really get it,” said Kasim. “But I did know that he’s liked Lina for a while.”

“More than not really getting it, it’s just lonely,” said Zeno. “Being single, that is.”

“Did you know? That Morris went and got engaged at that age, apparently.”

“Yeah, with his childhood friend... I wonder how you get a girlfriend?”

Kasim and Zeno were both staring into the distance.

That reminds me, Braga and his single companions were saying the same thing until this spring, thought Vandalieu.

“Vandalieu, you probably don’t understand at your age, but... make sure you get along with girls,” Kasim told him.

“...I’ll do that.” This was the only response Vandalieu could give, as he imagined how they would complain if they learned of his circumstances.

Also, he was staying silent about Froto, who was currently convulsing inside Vandalieu’s body.

After that, Lina, as an employee of the village’s branch of the Adventurers’ Guild, reported that twenty bandits had been repelled and paid Kasim’s party the reward... The villagers didn’t even know about the existence of the other thirty that had been defeated by the Golems.

The horses that Karcan and his men had been riding were now all Vandalieu’s. He was the one who had defeated most of the bandits, after all, so the rewards went to Kasim and Vandalieu got the horses.

But Vandalieu had no use for the horses, so he divided them among the cultivation villages. They would live new lives as farming horses.

“I’m currently still just a civilian, so if I receive money, it would count as doing business and I would have to pay taxes. So please just pay however much you want to the adventurers,” Vandalieu told the people of the other villages.

“Hmm, are you sure about that? We don’t really have anything we can offer you as a collateral...”

“It’s fine. I’m leaving all of the responsibilities of taking care of the horses to you, after all.”

And besides, if Vandalieu brought living horses back, Sam would be upset.

Vandalieu had accidentally been given a farming horse when he was collecting livestock from this region’s villages. This was the conversation that had taken place when he brought that horse back to Talosheim:

“Bocchan! You have me, and yet you would use a living horse as your legs?!”

“Sam, you don’t have to say it like you’re reprimanding your husband for having an affair...”

It seemed that Sam felt threatened by the fact that Vandalieu could spend long hours flying through the sky and had now even gained the ability to teleport between Dungeons.

Maybe I should register at the Commerce Guild as a horse leasing business.

This idea suddenly occurred to Vandalieu, but where he had obtained the horses would be problematic to explain, so it was probably best to see how things went for a while.

After that, having prepared themselves mentally during the fight against the bandits, Kasim’s party apparently managed to get through their D-class promotion exam that they took at the city of Niarki.

At that point in time, nothing had happened yet.

『The levels of the Insect Binding Technique, Coordination, Strengthen Subordinates, Strengthen Followers, Death-Attribute Charm and Throwing skills have increased!』

『You have acquired the Thread Refining skill!』



Shortly after the new year, Lord Lucas looked at his completely-petrified subordinate, feeling no desire to bring his mouth to the mulled wine that had been poured into his cup.

Lord Lucas’s office preserved the heat well, but his subordinate looked as if even his innards had frozen solid. His face and shoulders were completely stiff.

Perhaps it was not Lord Lucas that needed the hot wine, but this subordinate. However, it was not warmth, but a businesslike question that Lord Lucas gave.

“So, where is Karcan Lassen and his unit?”

The subordinate’s face stiffened even further.

The problem was that the knight named Karcan Lassen, who had planned to go on a two-week expedition, as well as his entire unit, had gone missing.

To Lord Lucas himself, Karcan’s name and face were things that he could barely recall from the corner of his mind. Karcan was the man in charge of one of the background operations conducted in Lord Lucas’s dispute with his younger brother Belton over the succession of the Hartner family.

Karcan was a man from the Lassen family, who had served as knights for the Hartner family for generations... In other words, he was a man from a family who had never risen above the mere status of knights despite having been around for generations; a very ordinary knight.

Of course, there was nothing wrong with being a mere knight. They had the splendid duty of protecting the land from monsters, criminals and enemy nations, as well as acting as role models for the soldiers and the people.

However, Karcan had desired a position above his own ability. The petrified subordinate before Lord Lucas... The captain of the Red Wolf Knights’ Order, Pablo Marton, had noticed him and entrusted him with one of Lord Lucas’s plans.

“That is... There has been no contact despite the expedition’s planned duration having already passed, and when we sent people to investigate, it was found that they were not at the expedition’s destination. Also, the Adventurers’ Guild apparently received a report that a cultivation village was attacked by about twenty bandits on horseback, but the bandits were repelled safely.”

Hearing Pablo’s response, Lord Lucas felt dizzy despite not having drunk any of the wine.

“I see,” he said. “That cultivation village was attacked by twenty wealthy bandits with horses, but they repelled them successfully. That small village? ... Pablo, is there any chance that there were fifty of those bandits, not twenty?”

“No; according to the Adventurers’ Guild’s records, there were twenty. However... I am thinking the same thing,” said Pablo.

In other words, it was likely that Karcen had led his unit out of the city, pretending to go on an expedition, then attacked the cultivation village disguised as bandits, where they were defeated.

A small cultivation village had annihilated a unit of three True Knights and fifty Equestrians. Even considering that they had lowered the quality of their equipment in order to disguise themselves as bandits, it was difficult to believe.

However, numerous unbelievable events had occurred in the Hartner Duchy last year.

Both the actions Karcen had taken and the fate that he had met were nothing more than more of these unbelievable events.

"I believe I ordered him not to lay a hand on the cultivation villages... No, I believe I ordered the cancellation of every secret plan after Belton's scandal, did I not?" said Lord Lucas.

Lord Lucas had ordered all of his secret plans to be cancelled, knowing that it was no longer the time for him and Lord Belton to be pulling at each other's feet.

Belton himself was apparently innocent, but the fact that several influential noblemen had connections to the Pure-breed Vampires caused an unbelievable scandal. If this wasn't dealt with correctly, it wasn't a matter of the Hartner family losing the trust of the other duke families. It was more than possible that many would demand that the Hartner family's status as a family of dukes be revoked.

No, before that, perhaps rebellions would begin occurring all over the duchy.

It was a critical moment that could have spelled the end of the Hartner family if Lord Lucas and Lord Belton had continued dragging each other down, which was why Lord Lucas had ordered all secret plans to be cancelled, but... Why had Karcen made a move?

"That is... It seems that he was desperate for success," said Pablo.

"I see. With people like this selected to work for us, I suppose it cannot be helped that things turned out this way." Lord Lucas sighed as he thought about how to deal with this problem.

It would not be good to treat all of them as having gone missing in an accident during

their expedition. It wouldn't be good, but it wouldn't be a big problem, either.

The Equestrians led by Karcan were apprentices of knights; there were the second and third sons of noble families among them as well. Of course, their families were those that supported Lord Lucas. Naturally, they knew of the conflict between the brothers.

That was why they would probably not be satisfied with the explanation that they had simply gone missing. Although it would cause some displeasure, it would be possible to silence them by brandishing the power of the nation.

However, the problem was that there was something ominous going on in this cultivation village.

"What do you think of the people in this cultivation village?" Lord Lucas asked.

"Most likely... they are threatening us, perhaps," said Pablo.

"My thoughts exactly," said Lord Lucas.

The Adventurers' Guild had received news that it was twenty, not fifty bandits. Lord Lucas interpreted this as the cultivation village declaring to him, "You know that we're keeping quiet about this for you, don't you?"

In fact, a scandal at a time like this would be bad. Normally, scandals would be dealt with one way or another, but the king and the other dukes were currently scrutinizing the Hartner Duchy. There was no telling what kind of faults they would find with the Hartner family.

That was why knowing the truth behind the incident was more than enough for the cultivation village to blackmail him.

Thus, Lord Lucas thought that the villagers and adventurers from the village somehow managed to kill Karcan and his men in retaliation.

If Lord Lucas and Pablo had received a detailed report on Vandalieu, they would have come to a different conclusion. However, until the moment of his death, Karcan had believed that Vandalieu was someone who could be dealt with by his unit alone, so he hadn't provided much detail in his reports out of fear that his ability would be doubted.

“Perhaps knights of the Sauron Duchy were among the refugees,” Pablo suggested. “It could even be that they are planning to establish their own independent power. There are no Devil’s Nests around there, and that incident occurred in that slave-run mine, so not many will approach those villages from now on.”

Lord Lucas sighed as he listened to Pablo’s words, realizing that he couldn’t just leave the cultivation village alone after all.

He had treated the refugees cruelly and tried to turn them into disposable, low-grade soldiers, and he had even intended to use secret plans to destroy several of the other cultivation villages. Thus, he was now unconsciously thinking of this village as an enemy that would harm him if given the opportunity.

And he couldn’t leave these people from the Sauron Duchy alone when they possessed an unknown amount of military might and political power in the Hartner Duchy that he would soon be in charge of.

“Pablo, this is your responsibility,” said Lord Lucas. “Use the Red Wolf Knights’ Order to deal with this.”

CHAPTER 92

THE TROOPS LED BY A HERBIVOROUS MAN VS THE RED WOLF KNIGHTS' ORDER

『Vandalieu has reached level 100 in Insect User!』

『You have Job-changed to Tree Caster!』

『You have acquired the Plant Binding Technique skill!』

『The Farming skill has been combined with the Plant Binding Technique skill!』

『The levels of the Rapid Healing, Superhuman Strength, Plant Binding Technique and Thread Refining skills have increased!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Holy Son of Vida】 , 【Taboo Name】
- **Job:** Tree Caster
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User, Insect User
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 644
 - Mana: 446,023,946
 - Strength: 239
 - Agility: 273
 - Stamina: 374
 - Intelligence: 903
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Healing: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 7

- Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
- Magic Resistance: Level 4
- Dark Vision
- Death-Attribute Charm: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Chant Revocation: Level 4
- Strengthen Followers: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
- Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 6
- Strengthen Subordinates: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 4
- Enhanced Agility: Level 2
- Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 4
- Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Small
- Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Thread Refining: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 2
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6
 - Golem Transmutation: Level 7
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Mana Control: Level 5
 - Spirit Form: Level 7
 - Carpentry: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Engineering: Level 4
 - Cooking: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Alchemy: Level 4
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
 - Soul Break: Level 6
 - Multi-Cast: Level 5
 - Long-distance Control: Level 7
 - Surgery: Level 3
 - Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
 - Materialization: Level 4
 - Coordination: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
 - Commanding: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Farming: Level 3 → Plant Binding Technique: Level 3 (COMBINED!)
 - Clothing: Level 2 → Thread-reeling: Level 3 (COMBINED!)
 - Throwing: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)

- Scream: Level 3
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Insect Binding Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Blacksmithing: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 4
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 4
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

There were no new Jobs this time.

A short while after finishing his Job-change, Vandalieu returned from the Immortal Ent forest.

“Mom, everyone, I’ve become a plant-binding-type* man,” Vandalieu announced.

TLN: This is 装植系男子/soushoku-kei danshi. It’s a play on the term 草食系男子 which is read in the same way. 草食系/soushoku normally means "herbivorous", but it's a slang term to refer to "young men who are not competitive as in the traditional male stereotype, including in the avid pursuit of money and sex, and who may also be kind, cooperative and family-oriented." Vandalieu’s version just means plant-binding-type man.*

“Really? That’s amazing, Vandalieu,” said Darcia, praising Vandalieu no matter what he did despite not understanding his joke.

“No, wait, Van. What does herbivorous mean?” asked Basdia, giving him a perplexed look.

“They’re a type of person that was growing in number in the world I used to live in,” Vandalieu replied.

Considering those called "herbivorous men" on Earth, Vandalieu was more of a

“carnivorous man*”, however.

TLN: The opposite of 草食系男子/soushoku-kei danshi – Jisho’s definition is: “man’s man; man aggressively pursuing sex and riches”*

“Actually, with the Plant Binding Technique skill I gained after my Job-change, I’ve been able to do things like this,” said Vandalieu.

And then a Monster Plant popped out of his head.

“I see, so it is a plant version of the Insect Binding skill,” said Zadiris, commenting on the skill while ignoring Vandalieu’s joke. “But will the insects and plants not consume each other?”

“That never happened in the Monster Plant fields or the Immortal Ent forest, so I wouldn’t think so,” said Vandalieu.

“Hmm, I see.”

Another plant’s roots appeared right before Zadiris’s eyes.

“Boy, this... appears to be a very ordinary plant,” she said.

“Yes, it is a very ordinary plant,” said Vandalieu. “My Farming skill combined with the Plant Binding Technique skill, so I’ve become able to cultivate plants inside my body as a result.”

“...Are they not acting as parasites to you?” Zadiris asked.

“Uwah, look, Onee-san, Bocchan’s head is full of flowers!” Rita exclaimed.

“Rita! If you say it that way, it makes it sound like Bocchan is a useless person, doesn’t it?” Saria exclaimed indignantly. “There are other ways to say it, aren’t there! Like saying that it’s wonderful and spring-like!”

“Umm, you two, I know that you don’t mean anything bad, but I think there’s another way to say it, isn’t there?” said Darcia.

It seemed that the phrases “head full of flowers” and “spring-like” didn’t have particularly good meanings in Lambda, either.

TLN: "Head full of flowers" is something like "airheaded." Not sure about the "spring-like" one.

"It's fine," said Vandalieu. "They just use up a little of my Vitality."

"Vandalieu-sama, unlike your Mana, your Vitality isn't very high, is it? You must be careful with it and not be wasteful with it," said Eleanora, as if teaching him how to use his pocket money.

"Okay," said Vandalieu. "But I'm raising plants that have medicinal compounds, so there's no need to worry. For example..."

A white mushroom sprouted from Vandalieu's head.

"If I'm not mistaken, that's a mushroom that can be used for Potions, isn't it?" said Kachia. "If I recall, it has healing properties even if you eat it as it is... But it's a bit... It looks more and more like they're parasitizing you."

It was a convenient mushroom, but it didn't seem to be very popular with Kachia and the others.

"This is training for my skill as well, so go ahead and take some," said Vandalieu, offering the the mushroom to everyone as a present. He produced more mushrooms from his head, plucked them, cut them into even pieces with his claws, used his Thread Refining skill to produce thread from his mouth and bundled the mushroom pieces together.

Incidentally, he had recently become able to produce thread from his mouth (or, more accurately, from the tip of his tongue) and his fingertips. Perhaps for this reason, his Thread-reeling skill included the Sewing skill. He could make fabrics more freely than before, so it was very convenient.

Vandalieu could also quite freely control the properties of the thread produced by Thread Refining, so he was planning to use it to make swimsuits.

He could produce threads with adhesive properties, threads that could cut flesh and bone on contact or transparent thread, but for now, he was using it to make clothing.

"Wow, thank you," said Rita. She, Kachia and Eleanora, the ones who used to be humans, were happy with the mushrooms.

“...Hmm? Does this have some medicinal effects?” asked Zadiris.

“Van... These aren’t very tasty,” said Basdia.

The pure Ghouls, perhaps because they had no custom of giving flowers as gifts, seemed perplexed.

Munch, munch, munch. Rapiécage was eating them. Pauvina and Jadal saw her and ate them as well.

“Ugh, they’re so bitter,” said Pauvina. It seemed that her memories of human society were somewhere very far away now.

Vandalieu produced sweet fruit for Pauvina and Jadal to eat. Darcia seemed to have entered parenting mode.

“Vandalieu, I’m happy, but when you’re giving presents to girls, you need to think about what they would like,” she said.

“Yes, Mom,” said Vandalieu.

“You can’t think of it as too troublesome,” Darcia continued. “Your father used to say that thinking about things like this was the enjoyable part of courting girls.”

“...Mom, what kind of things was Dad doing?” Vandalieu asked.

“If I recall... He was apparently seducing girls in bars in order to gather information. Getting along well with the prostitutes, things like that. Come to think of it, you’re the same, Vandalieu.”

Darcia smiled as her words gave glimpses the wrongdoings of Valen, Vandalieu’s father. As to be expected of the former dog of a Pure-breed Vampire.

“Well, I gave dresses and tuxedos to Braga and the other Black Goblins for their weddings, and I baked them cakes as well,” said Vandalieu.

Wedding parties were only held for the wealthy people of Lambda, but one had been thrown for the wedding ceremonies of the Black Goblins.

This was the debut of the wedding dresses and tuxedos made of honey silk as well as

a cake decorated with cream made from goat milk. Everyone had loved it.

The dresses were particularly popular with the people from the First Cultivation Village; many of them had sparkling eyes and said they wanted to wear them as well. Even for the Ghouls, whose fashion sense was quite different from that of humans, the frills and laces were fresh ideas. They gave their opinions to Vandalieu, telling him that they were beautiful, though they did wish that they revealed more skin.

“Kid, make one for this girl as well!” Borkus requested.

“You foolish Oyaji! I don’t have anyone to marry!” Gopher told him.

“Then a tuxedo for my grandson!”

“He doesn’t have someone to marry, either!”

This was the exchange between Borkus and Gopher, a father and his daughter, who were also communicating physically with dull sounds of them hitting each other.

Doing as he was told, Vandalieu had tried to measure Gopher’s size, only to be rejected. But he and everyone else interpreted that as embarrassment.

A grown woman would certainly feel reluctant to wear a dress with all kinds of frills and laces. When Vandalieu had made them for Marie and the other wives of the Black Goblins, things had gone better than he had expected so he got carried away and perhaps added too many.

The cake had cream and butter made from goat’s milk, which had a problematic smell, but it was well-received by everyone.

According to a documentary on goat farming that Vandalieu had seen on Earth, he remembered that goat’s milk simply absorbed smells from its surroundings easily, so it would not smell bad if machines were used to squeeze it from the goats quickly. With this in mind, he had thought of squeezing the milk from the goats in a sterilized room while continuously casting Deodorization, so the goat’s milk didn’t smell.

In fact, he had added large quantities of a sweet flavoring made from vanilla beans that he had found in the Eclipse King’s Orchard.

Dessert was covered by the Cemetery Bees’ honey and sugar created from a plant-type

monster from the Eclipse King's Orchard that offered a maple-syrup-like sap.

Perhaps it was a far more luxurious cake than one made from normal cow milk and sugar.

"Ah, but you mustn't lose your mind over women; your father used to say that you shouldn't fall for women, but make them fall for you," said Darcia. "Well, he did fall for me properly, though."

"...I wish Dad would have acted more normally and said more normal things," said Vandalieu.

It was probably a good story. Probably...

Although Vandalieu's internal image of his father had now tilted in a strange direction and sunk a little.

"Well, leaving that aside... I'm going to the Seventh Cultivation Village tomorrow so I'm going to make preparations now. I have to make use of the opportunity they created for me," said Vandalieu.

"You are going to welcome more new citizens to Talosheim, aren't you? This is truly auspicious, Your Majesty," said Princess Levia with a gentle smile.



As snow started falling, the ordinary lifestyles of the villagers, who were eating fried Gobu-Gobu for breakfast, were broken by the sudden visit of the Knights' Order.

"I am Pablo Marton, the man who leads the Red Wolf Knights' Order in the name of Duke Hartner!" a voice shouted. "Inhabitants of the Seventh Cultivation Village, come out at once!"

The Red Wolf Knights' Order was one of the three great Knights' Orders that protected the Hartner Duchy. The village chief, the Oyaji of the jack-of-all-trades store and Kasim's party all hastily ran outside to see what was happening.

In the plaza, there were the young men who had been acting as the village's gatekeepers, who were now cowering, as well as a large number of fully-armed Knights.

Dozens of knights with metal armor under their surcoats, armed with shields, longswords and spears... Nearly one hundred of them. The villagers were overwhelmed by their presence.

“W-we humbly welcome you in this snowy season. We apologize for not being able to come out and greet you. What business did you have on this day?” asked the village chief, surprised and wondering what on earth this was about.

“I have come to collect taxes in the name of Lord Lucas, the next duke of the Hartner Duchy! Each person must offer a hundred thousand Baums, right this instant!” Pablo demanded, a nervous look on his face.

The villagers were shocked by the amount he was requesting.

“A-a hundred thousand Baums?! There is no way we would have such an amount!”

“And what do you mean, right this instant?! We were promised that we would be exempt from taxes for five years!”

A hundred thousand Baums was an amount of money that even many noble families didn't have. Of course, it was certainly an amount that the people of the cultivation village couldn't make even if they worked frantically for an entire year.

Even Kasim and his party, who had become D-class adventurers, couldn't earn this much in a year.

Such a tax was being demanded not of each household, but each individual. It was absurd.

“What are you thinking? Even if we sell our houses and fields, it's impossible! You know that much, right?!” Fester shouted.

The nervous-looking Pablo opened his mouth to reply. “The five-year exemption from taxes that Lord Belton established has been invalidated,” he said.

Those who couldn't pay poll taxes were taken away as debt slaves.

Seeing the knights' attendants preparing ropes behind Pablo, the faces of the villagers grew pale. Even though debt slaves were treated reasonably well, there was no difference in the fact that they were bought and sold between owners. Families would

be torn apart and, depending on the owner, they could meet fates worse than death.

And if they were not sold, they would be treated like criminal slaves and sent to places where they would be worked to death. The slave-run mine was no more, but there were other final destinations for unsold slaves.

“That is nothing more than tyranny!” Lina cried.

“That’s right, that’s right! Even Alda teaches that you should watch your limits!” Kasim shouted.

Everyone grew angry, but Pablo and his men responded by drawing their swords and pointing them at the villagers.

“Your name was Lina, wasn’t it? You have been charged with embezzlement and fraud!” Pablo declared. “Until the investigation is completed, your qualification as an Adventurers’ Guild employee is void. There is also a suspicion that the three adventurers known as Kasim, Zeno and Fester are accomplices in the Guild employee’s fraud. Your qualifications as adventurers are void as well! We have permission to deliver your punishment on the spot if you make any attempt to escape!”

“No way!” Lina cried, almost screaming.

“F-fraud?! There’s a limit to how far you can go with false accusations!” Fester shouted in rage.

“Calm down! They’ll cut us down on the spot!” said Kasim trying to calm them down.

A middle-aged man protected by a knight on either side approached them.

“Hand over your employee badge and your Guild Cards.”

The administrative official accompanying the Knights’ Order confiscated the identification items of the distraught Lina and frustrated adventurers.

Pablo seemed nervous again as he looked at the villagers, who were now wearing expressions of resignation.

This is strange... Things are going too well.

Lucas had expected Pablo to force the village to reveal its hidden military force after being cornered for these absurd reasons.

The Red Wolf Knights' Order had gained total control over the people, and that was the end of it. Lucas had expected the behind-the-scenes negotiation with the Adventurers' Guild to be the one thing that would take time, but the Guild Master of the Adventurers' Guild headquarters, who had been taking bribes from Lord Belton, quickly changed to Lord Lucas's side.

However, there were no signs of any armed forces, despite Pablo and his men having thought that the ones who had killed Karcan and his men would be hiding in this village.

At this rate, things will end with the villagers all being tied up and dragged off. Is this not enough provocation? Maybe I should cut some people down... No, perhaps they're hiding in another cultivation village. I suppose getting that information out of them comes first, thought Pablo.

Some villagers were hanging their heads in defeat, thinking that they had no choice but to obediently become slaves, while others were desperately trying to think of a way out of the situation, but they couldn't come up with any answers. But before anything happened, a group of several people, who had calmly walked through the unmanned gate, appeared.

"Who are you... people?" Pablo had thought that the armed forces had finally arrived, but these people were what looked like five ordinary villagers. It was only after his question that he realized that the one standing at the front was a child who was less than ten years old.

"Vandalieu?! What are you doing here at a time like this!"

"Oi, that guy isn't a villager! He's just a passer-by!"

After noticing Vandalieu, Kasim and his friends hastily raised their voices so that he wouldn't get caught up in this mess. But it was one of the people behind Vandalieu who responded to their words.

"Everyone of the Seventh Cultivation Village, do you remember me?" asked this person. "Village chief-san, my father has always been in your care. Kasim, Zeno, Fester, I've talked to you before as well, haven't I?"

The villagers opened their eyes wide in shock at the sight of this young man, whose face had ordinary features that could be found anywhere.

“You’re the son of the First Cultivation Village’s chief, Sebas. You’re Sebas!”

“There’s no doubt about it; that’s Sebas! But why is he here? After the First Cultivation Village was deserted, they were supposed to have gone to another land for cultivation.”

“Why are you with Vandalieu?”

The young man’s name was Sebas. He was the son of the First Cultivation’s village chief. He had joined Vandalieu at the slave-run mine and become a citizen of Talosheim.

“Everyone, listen to me. The cultivation project is a complete lie. Everything is a conspiracy conducted by the Hartner family. We’ve been cheated. Nobody from the First Cultivation Village was sent to another land for cultivation. We were sent to the slave-run mine to the south! We’re not cultivators, we’ve been abandoned!” he said to the villagers of the Seventh Cultivation Village, pointing at Pablo with a hateful expression on his face.

The villagers were astounded and looked from Sebas to Pablo.

Sebas was a friend that they knew. Pablo and his men, on the other hand, while seemingly being important knights, were making unreasonable demands and trying to turn the villagers into slaves. It was clear as to which story should be listened to.

“You’re the son of the chief of the First Cultivation Village, and you were in the slave-run mine?!” Pablo repeated.

He and his men weren’t trusted by the villagers, but this wasn’t a problem at all.

The problem was that a young man, who was in the slave-run mine where all of the soldiers and slaves were supposed to have turned into Skeletons, was standing here.

“In other words, you are a runaway slave. I shall hear your explanation later. Give up quietly!”

With Pablo’s words, swords and spears were pointed at Sebas. It seemed that they had already realized that this was no group of ordinary people.

The knights formed a semi-circular surround as they closed in. Seeing this, the villagers were wearing expressions of resignation once more.

Even if there was a conspiracy or whatever else, there was no changing their fates. This was something planned by the man who was about to become the most powerful person in the Hartner Duchy, and even the Adventurers' Guild had a hand in it. Complaints from people like them, who were refugees from another land, were futile.

At this rate, even bringing up the fact that the Church of Alda was exempt from tax would be pointless.

"Everyone, please listen to me," said Vandalieu, who had remained silent up until now. "We will defeat these knights. Completely independent of the desires of the people of this village, I will fight them and defeat them."

Hearing the young boy's flat-toned declaration, the knights snickered. They knew that they couldn't judge an enemy's ability by their appearance and age, but there was no way that they could be defeated by this small, thin boy who could almost be called a toddler and a group of unarmed villagers.

That was what they thought.

The people of the Seventh Cultivation Village seemed to agree; they all shouted at Vandalieu to stop his reckless behavior, but he ignored them and kept speaking.

"After I do this, please decide whether you will follow us back or not. Now then –"

"No, I'll decide now. I'm going with you guys!" said a voice, interrupting Vandalieu. It was Fester's voice.

He got back onto his feet from his kneeling position, picked up the sword that he had cast onto the ground along with its sheath, and pointed its tip at Pablo and his men.

Rather than stopping him, Kasim picked up his shield and Zeno picked up his weapons as they got to their feet as well.

"There's no helping it. I suppose we'll join you," said Kasim.

"Well, I suppose it's better than becoming a slave," said Zeno.

Fester blinked in confusion at the fact that his companions weren't stopping him, and then gave them a manly smile. "Sorry for making you accompany me all the time," he said.

"No, wait a second," Vandalieu said hastily. "Why are you doing this? You don't have to decide now, you can decide *afterwards*."

He thought that they should make a decision afterwards, but their minds were set.

"Vandalieu. After this, let's go on adventures together in the next world!" said Fester.

"No, no, no, we can do that in this world," said Vandalieu.

Fester turned to Lina. "Lina, try to find an opportunity to run. Sorry about this. Even though I promised to make you happy..."

"Fester... No, I'll come with you," said Lina. "I at least know how to defend myself. And then... let's be together on the other side."

Fester looked touched. "You..."

"Umm, if you're going to be together, won't you be together here?" said Vandalieu. "I'll make you a dress, a tuxedo, a cake or even curry."

"Shit, I can't let my daughter and my son-in-law die before me! I'm going to do this too!" shouted the Oyaji of the jack-of-all-trades store.

"Me too! Even if we're spared here, I have no idea what will become of my children! You saved my life before, so I'll use it for your sake now!" said the former stonemason Ivan, whose life Vandalieu had saved before.

The villagers continued standing up one after another, and even the Red Wolf Knights' Order felt a little flustered. But the one panicking the most was Vandalieu.

"So then, Your Majesty, what will we do?" asked one of the other people with Vandalieu.

"...Ah, there's no other choice," Vandalieu replied. "I'll support the villagers, and you guys go with the plan."

“Certainly.”

“I suppose it was a mistake to think I could do the same thing as I did in the slave-run mine,” Vandalieu said with a sigh.

“SILENCE!” Pablo roared before gathering his men and giving them orders. “Cut them all down! Capture that one called Sebas and the other few people over there, alive!”

Things had gone a little differently than he had expected, but he had set his sights on the man who seemed to know something. All there was left to do was to dispose of the others in the way.

Upon receiving the orders, the knights who had surrounded Sebas and the others moved first. As knights, they were experienced with real battles, and unlike the Equestrians led by Karcan, they were as capable as strong D-class adventurers; they had a solid chance of defeating Rank 4 monsters in one-on-one combat.

“Capture us alive? ... Go ahead and try!”

“Do you think you feeble knights can defeat us, when we have received the blessing of Eleanora-sama?!”

“I’ll avenge my siblings who died in the slave-run mine!”

Sebas and his companions glared at the knights with shining crimson eyes as they bared their fangs and met them in combat.

Their movements were faster than those of beasts; their bodies were strong in the face of the knights’ swords and spears, and their claws were sharp.

“Th-these guys aren’t human?! They’re Vampires!”

“That’s impossible; it’s still the middle of the afternoon!”

By the time the knights realized it, it was too late. They had already allowed Sebas and his companions to draw close.

When they were rescued from the slave-run mine, they had still been humans, but the next day, they had asked Eleanora to turn them into Subordinate Vampires.

After that, they acquired the Sunlight Resistance skill thanks to the effect of Vandalieu's Eclipse King Title, and now they obeyed Vandalieu.

But Subordinate Vampires had a base Rank of 3. These former villages had been Vampires for less than half a year; they wouldn't be a match for these numbers who outnumbered them nearly three to one. Even if they caught the knights by surprise, the knights would regain their formation before the Vampires would cut through.

However, the Vampires were citizens of Vandalieu's nation.

"Th-they're strong!"

Due to the influence of Strengthen Followers and Strengthen Subordinates, their Attribute Values had increased and they were as powerful as Rank 5 monsters. In addition, Vandalieu had already applied enchantments to them, and Dark Copper fibers had been weaved into their clothes, giving them extraordinary defense against bladed weapons. Even if the knights outnumbered the Vampires three to one, once their formation was broken, they wouldn't be able to defeat the Vampires.

"Damn it, take that child as a hostage and –" one of the knights began.

"That's impossible for you."

"Eh –"

The knight's head went flying.

Braga, who had been hiding and waiting for things to begin, moved like a shadow and decapitated the knight. With the effect of his unique skill, Human Slayer, he was able to use an attack effective for killing the human he targeted, and even gained a damage bonus.

If he took the average knight by surprise, decapitating him was as easy as harvesting an ear of rice.

And then he concealed himself like fog before the other knights spotted him.

"There was something here just now!"

"There are other enemies! Watch your backs!"

“Iron Rend, Embrace of the Flame Spirits.”

“GYAAAAAH!”

As the knights watched their backs, Vandalieu killed them from the front.

The knights could not avoid being severely wounded by the frontal attacks of Vandalieu, who had the Superhuman Strength, Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Small, Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs) as well as a level 5 Unarmed Fighting Technique skill. He had already shown Kasim and the others his Dead Spirit Magic, so he was using that without holding back as well.

Some knights were turned into burnt corpses as Princess Levia embraced them, while others had their stomachs slashed open and convulsed on the ground to be finished by Pain Worms that crawled towards them.

Click-click-click!

Buzz-buzz-buzz!

The Lance Centipede Pete used his horn to pierce a knight’s torso straight through his shield, while the Cemetery Bees’ venomous stingers and powerful jaws turned other knights into masses of meat.

The villagers were fighting hard as well.



The moment the villagers decided that they would “follow Vandalieu,” they had been acknowledged as Vandalieu’s citizens. As a result, they received the benefits of Strengthen Followers due to the Eclipse King Title, causing a steep increase in their Attribute Values. They weren’t quite as strong as the knights, but they were at least as strong as ordinary soldiers; if they decided to put everything into escaping, it would have been difficult for the knights, who were equipped with heavy weapons and armor, to give chase.

“Come on, important knight-sama, over here!”

“How can you be so pathetic for such a young person, you simpleton!”

The knights chased the villagers who were running around while provoking them. One of the knights stopped to fire an arrow, while another tried to attack with a martial skill.

“You lowly villagers, die by my arr – OOOOOH?!”

“Curse you, Fl – AAAAAAH!”

The ground beneath their feet, which had been turned into a Golem by Vandalieu, roared as it rose, causing the knights to fall into the hole it left behind.

And then the Golem returned to its original position on top of the knights, who had fallen two or three meters deep. After they were buried alive, Vandalieu sent monsters resembling earthworms and mole crickets after them, as well as the roots of plant-type monsters, before they suffocated to death so that they could become Experience Points.

“How dare you fire my daughter!” shouted the Oyaji of the jack-of-all-trades store.

He, Ivan and some others were throwing objects at the administrative official who was accompanying the knights. It was an extremely primitive method of attack, but their physical strength they had trained through daily work on the farms was increased even further by their increased Attribute Values. The rocks and hoes thrown by them wouldn’t be a joke if they made a direct hit.

The administrative official gave a pathetic scream. He was nothing more than an ordinary craftsman. “Wait, I only did this because it was my job, because I was paid to!”

If a strong-willed government official had been dispatched, it was possible that he would have sided with the villagers, so this man had been selected after careful consideration. But now that was backfiring.

“Kuh, you coward!” shouted a knight. He and two others were now unable to move, as they were forced to stay where they were to protect this ordinary worker.

“Eat this! Triple Thrust! TRIPLE THRUST! TRIPLE THRUUUST!”

“Stone Wall! Stone Shield! Cranial Strike!”

“Rapid Fire! Consecutive Fire!”

In terms of their Attribute Values, Kasim and his friends, the D-class adventurers, had become as strong as C-class adventurers.

They weren’t powerful enough to overwhelm the knights, but they fought with spectacular coordination and had already defeated two of the knights.

“Please run and lead the knights away while you have their attention.”

“Aim for that administrative official; throw anything you can find at him.”

“Fall back for now and change places with Kasim.”

These were the orders of Vandalieu, who had used Spirit Form Transformation and stretched his arms to string-like shapes to connect himself to every villager.

Using the vision from Lemures positioned all over the place, Vandalieu was constantly monitoring the situation. He followed up on the individual dangers detected by Danger Sense: Death, and used Rapid Healing to treat small injuries.

He was even casting his enchantments, Energy Absorption and Bloodshed Enhancement, and providing Mana to Kasim’s party as well as Sebas and the other Vampires.

Just to be absolutely safe, he was giving the villagers the benefits of his Commanding and Coordination skills as well, so there were no ordinary villagers in this place anymore.

“W-what is this?!” shouted Pablo.

Barely a minute after he had given his men orders, they were in the inferior position. In fact, his subordinates were letting out their dying screams one after another as they were scattered.

In order to defeat the mysterious armed group that had defeated fifty of Karcan’s men, Pablo had brought nearly one hundred men with him and each of them was at least as strong as Karcan himself. And yet, they were being slaughtered in a one-sided fashion.

The battlefield was an irrational place, but wasn’t this a little *too* irrational?

“Those who aren’t injured, step to the front and use your martial skills! Those who can use healing magic, treat the wounded! Don’t engage the villagers; slay the monsters and the adventurers first!” Pablo shouted.

He was still the captain of the Knights’ Order. He had seen that the ones who were defeating the knights were Sebas’s group, Kasim’s party and Vandalieu, so he was commanding his knights to stop attacking the villagers.

As he regained his composure, he looked for the mysterious child who, unbelievably, seemed to be the enemy commander.

But as the knights stepped forward to try and use their martial skills, an Ent suddenly appeared out of nowhere (or at least, that’s what it looked like to Pablo) and attacked by swinging its branches that were full of apple-like fruits; several knights were hit directly by the fruits and sent flying away.

The ones who were trying to recite incantations for healing magic were surrounded in what looked like black fog that seemed to be interfering with their magic; they were unable to cast their spells.

And then Pablo heard groaning and viscous sloshing sounds.

He could see Stone Golems, Death Iron Golems and around thirty Skeletons who had entered the village from the forest.

They were the Golems that Vandalieu had stationed around the Seventh Cultivation Village; he had called them here now. The Skeletons were the Undead created from the skeletons of Karcan’s subordinates who had been slain by the Golems.

“M... Make your own decisions on how to deal with the enemy!” Pablo shouted. He was essentially telling his men that there were no options left, and that he was now relying on every one of his men’s individual efforts.

And then he joined the battle at the frontline as well, in this inferior position with no hope of turning things around.

Kasim and the others joining the battle was something that Vandalieu hadn’t expected, but the biggest unexpected thing for Lord Lucas and Pablo was that they were desperately lacking in military power to deal with the problem on their own.



Job Explanation:

【Insect User】

A Job that can be acquired after successfully taming a certain number of insectoid monsters. One must have the trust of the tamed insectoid monsters.

This Job provides bonuses to Vitality, Strength and Stamina. It also provides bonuses to skills that cannot normally be obtained such as Insect Binding Technique, Parallel Thought Processing, Long-distance Control and Thread Refining.

These are all skills that alter the skill owner's mental state and make it difficult to maintain a normal level of sanity, so the Job grants the Mental Corruption skill and causes a gradual loss of sanity.

For those who possess different mental structures from ordinary people and those who have already lost their sanity, this is not a problem.

CHAPTER 93

THE MONSTER WHO WON'T GIVE UP

For the people of the Second to Sixth Cultivation Villages, this winter day was an unforgettable day indeed.

"I have something important to tell everyone," said the savior of the villages. He was accompanied by the people of the Seventh Cultivation Village and those of the First Cultivation Village which was supposed to have been deserted, as well as several knights in armor who were tied up and being pulled along.

"Everyone, listen to me," Sebas pleaded. "We've all been deceived by the Hartner family! When we became unable to maintain the First Cultivation Village, us villagers were told we were being sent to a new land to cultivate. We followed them, only to be thrown into the slave-run mine! We had no crimes or debts, yet we were turned into slaves! Because of the harsh labor we were forced to do in the mine, my father, the village chief...!"

"My little sister and brother as well...! There's no difference between the Hartner family and those bastards from the Amid Empire!"

"My Nee-san was treated as a plaything by the men... they're nothing but demons!"

Those from the First Cultivation Village, including Sebas, the village chief's son, spoke of the sorrow they had endured at the slave-run mine. Even though they were from another village, they were friends who had been living in this cultivated land, just like the rest of the villages. Each village had many who recognized their faces. The other villagers got the feeling that the color of their eyes was a little different, but that was within acceptable limits of error.

Thus, no matter how difficult it was to believe their words, it was impossible to completely reject them.

"And Lord Lucas... No, Lucas, who is about to become in charge of the Hartner Duchy, tried to destroy this cultivation project! Come on, talk!" Sebas said to Pablo, who had been captured alive.

Pablo gave a groan before revealing everything, except for the details regarding Froto, the fake priest sent by Karcan.

My body, even my mouth, moves against my will. W-why in the world?!

Vandalieu had used Spirit Form Transformation, split his claw into string-thin parts that extended to the knights who had been captured alive and then used Materialization inside their bodies.

He was secreting various drugs from his claws in real-time, forcing them into a state where they couldn't remain silent.

But thanks to the numerous resistance skills that existed in Lambda, it was possible to resist the effects of drugs in ways that were scientifically impossible.

"It's best to give up. You people don't want to end up like Kinarp, do you?" Vandalieu whispered to them, ensuring that they didn't regain their willpower and strength. He was also using his Mental Encroachment skill to inflict mental damage on them while slowly injecting more venom into them, little by little, and this was slowly beginning to take effect.

"I-I am... Pablo Marton, the captain of the Red Wolf Knights' Order. In order to have Lucas-sama succeed the duke family, I created secret plans and ordered my subordinates to sabotage the cultivation villages..."

Hearing Pablo's confession and seeing the crest on the armor that he was wearing, the trust the villagers of the cultivation villages had in the Hartner Duchy plummeted to the ground.

The concept of human rights was underdeveloped in Lambda, and those of royal or noble status were considered to be like a superior race to commoners.

With that said, commoners still felt anger and dissatisfaction when trampled underfoot for absurd reasons.

However, even if they did feel anger and dissatisfaction, there was a difference in power that prevented them from doing anything about it. It was meaningless for poor people living in cultivation villages to even think about opposing the Hartner family, who essentially ruled an entire nation.

But there was no guarantee that they could keep living quietly like this. The next duke had dispatched a Knights' Order and demanded impossible amounts to be paid in taxes and then told the villagers to tie ropes on themselves and become slaves because they had been unable to pay.

It was difficult to imagine that the Hartner family would stay silent after the Knights' Order had been repelled, and the villagers couldn't just hope for the Hartner family to change its way of thinking. If they were going to be turned into slaves, didn't they have no choice but to run away and become bandits or something?

Vandalieu whispered to the sorrowful villagers.

"I'm sure you can no longer live in the Hartner Duchy. If you don't mind, won't you all come to me like Sebas and the others have?"

"Us survivors from the First Cultivation Village are all living under his rule," Sebas continued. "We're living rich lives in a place where even the Hartner family can't touch us. We're eating until our stomachs are full every day, and there's even work for us to do!"

The villagers stirred and their eyes shone with hope.

"Chief, me and my family are going to follow this child!" said Kyne, the hunter from the Fifth Cultivation Village.

Other villagers who had been directly saved by Vandalieu, just like Kyne, raised their voices. The village leaders thought about the offer and then came to a decision.

"Alright. Everyone, we must make preparations. This place could not become our second home. I am sure it will be difficult to start over again, but we have the Guardian of the Cultivation Villages with us! We can make a new beginning anywhere! Isn't that right?!"

Vandalieu repeated this process for all of the cultivation villages.

And so, it was decided that over a thousand villagers would migrate to Talosheim.



The villagers, who were now receiving the benefits of Vandalieu's Strengthen Followers skill, were working away to prepare for their migration.

The Red Wolf Knights' Order had been carrying messenger pigeons to contact Lord Lucas, but they had been seized as well.

"Now then, please write that 'everything is in order,'" Vandalieu requested. "Ah, I don't recommend that you include a secret code to tell them that there is an emergency situation," he added. "They probably won't make it in time anyway... But if by some chance they do, and I have no choice but to do what I have to in order to protect everyone, that would be bad for you, wouldn't it?"

Pablo showed no signs of resistance. Even he knew that the Hartner Duchy would suffer the least damage if Vandalieu and the others simply left.

Things might be different if the Five-colored Blades came, but they were adventurers, nothing more. They were unlikely to move to match Lord Lucas's needs.

And the mastermind of all of this was a Dhampir. The ones who had been acting unreasonably were Pablo and his men. Even if the Adventurers' Guild learned of the situation, they were unlikely to side with the knights, who were the ones who had carried out injustice.

The Adventurers' Guild probably wouldn't cause any direct trouble in the Hartner Duchy, though... unlike the monstrosity before Pablo's eyes.

"What are you thinking? Why are you doing such a thing?" Pablo asked Vandalieu, the fearsome monstrosity in the form of a child.

What Vandalieu had done in this incident was different to repelling Karcan's men, who had disguised themselves as bandits.

Unlike Karcan and his men, Pablo and his knights had been clearly recognizable as the Red Wolf Knights' Order, and announced that they had come under formal orders from Lord Lucas, who represented Duke Hartner. Despite that, Vandalieu had incited the villagers, used military power to resist and slaughtered all of the knights except for a few.

If this incident were to be discovered, the people might praise Vandalieu, but a bounty would be put on his head for treason and he would be hunted all over the nation. If he was caught, he wouldn't simply become a criminal slave; he would be unable to avoid execution.

That was how serious Vandalieu's crime was.

Why would he risk all of that to save the people of the cultivation villages? The rewards simply didn't make the risks. Considering the dirty methods that Vandalieu had used, Pablo couldn't imagine that he had been driven by a sense of justice.

So just why had he done this?

Pablo's questions weren't an attempt to negotiate or gather information. The monstrosity before his eyes was simply so incomprehensible that he couldn't help but ask.

"For the sake of my own happiness."

The response Pablo received was also beyond his understanding.

"For the sake of your happiness? How does saving them lead to your happiness?" he asked.

Pablo couldn't imagine that Vandalieu stood to gain much here. Just what would he be able to do after gathering a group of poor cultivation villagers who had nobody supporting them? Even if he turned all of them into Vampires, it was unlikely that this was worth the risk of opposing the Orbaume Kingdom.

"Why do you doubt that saving everyone will lead to my happiness?" Vandalieu asked. It seemed that he couldn't understand Pablo's doubt, either. "I was simply passing by and there were people who were in trouble, so I helped them 'a little.' Those people were happy, and I became happy as well. And then while I was helping them 'a little,' we became close to each other and I made friends. And then people came to try and kill those friends and use dirty methods to take everything from them, so I helped them 'a little' once more. Is it really that strange?"

This was the only reason Vandalieu had for being an ally of the cultivation villages. As a result, he had acquired the Title, 'Guardian of the Cultivation Villages,' but that was merely a result that followed everything else.

It is said that even chance meetings are due to fate, and good you do to others is good you do to yourself. Vandalieu did have a little self-interest in mind, but if he were the kind of person who would consider wanting the villagers to be happy to be a detestable ulterior motive, he never would have gotten involved with other people to begin with.

It just so happened that Vandalieu's idea of 'a little' was relatively large. He had the fighting ability to lightheartedly dispose of Goblin Barbarians, Orcs and bandits. He had the magic and Mana to lightheartedly treat the injured and sick, remove the poison contaminating the fields and dig a well.

Vandalieu hated the idea of "the responsibility of those with power," but he wouldn't detest helping people 'a little' out of kindness.

In other words, this was normal.

"H-how can you give such a stupid excuse! For such a trivial reason, you turned us, the Hartner Duchy, into your enemies?! It is even possible for the entire kingdom to turn on you!" Pablo shouted, seemingly unable to accept this answer.

"Well, for such a trivial reason, you have all been exterminated," said Vandalieu.

Pablo's eyes widened as he fell into silence.

Won't this person's eyeballs fly out of their sockets if he keeps this up? Vandalieu thought as he continued speaking.

"The misunderstanding I don't want you to make is the assumption that I didn't intend to make the Hartner family my enemy from the beginning," he said. "You people did a lot of things to others, so I simply did some things back."

"A-a lot of things, you say?" Pablo wondered if Vandalieu was referring to the Karcen's reckless behavior, but he was wrong.

"Your ancestors murdered Titans from Talosheim including Princess Levia, and sent the rest of the refugees to become slaves in a mine. Even after two hundred years passed, you did not stop treating them as slaves. That's why I released the spirits of Princess Levia and the others, and rescued the refugees from the mine. You people had connections to the Pure-breed Vampires, so I revealed that. You people tried to destroy the cultivation villages, so I stopped you from doing that. You people caused

everything. I simply acted in response.”

“What?! Then, all of the incidents that have been happening...!”

“Yes, I am the main culprit.”

This wasn’t something that was easy to believe, but the monstrosity before Pablo’s eyes had already accomplished a great number of unbelievable things.

Pablo had been unaware of the conspiracy that had occurred two hundred years ago, but he could imagine that the Duke Hartner back then had started something.

In fact, Pablo and his men had been trying to do something similar in the cultivation villages, so it would have been stranger to think that the duke’s family of the past hadn’t started anything.

“D-demon...” Pablo muttered.

“Demon?” Vandalieu repeated. He was bewildered; he didn’t understand why he was being called a demon.

“Yes, you’re a demon,” said Pablo. “It would be stranger if you were not a demon. What you have done to the people you said you are protecting is not what can be considered sane. You turned the slaves you rescued into Vampires, produced insects and plants from your body one after another, fanned the fires of anger and dissatisfaction the people felt for the Hartner Duchy, spoke pleasant words to them and incited them against us. And why have the people of the cultivation villages, who have seen the countless monsters and those who have transformed into Vampires serving you, accepted that so easily?!” he demanded.

“Perhaps because everyone is open-minded?” Vandalieu suggested.

“There is no way that is possible! You are manipulating them, aren’t you?!” Pablo shouted.

“No, I really have no idea,” said Vandalieu. “Though I do think that everyone is very open-minded.”

None of the people of the cultivation villages felt any apprehension about the fact that Sebas and the others had been turned into Subordinate Vampires by Eleanora, or the

fact that Vandalieu used insectoid and plant-type monsters. Especially those of the Seventh Cultivation Village.

Vandalieu had thought it strange, as Death-Attribute Charm wasn't affecting them, but hadn't read too much into it, assuming that it was because they were believers of Vida – the same assumption he had made with Gopher and the other Titan refugees.

The truth was that it was the effect of the Strengthen Followers skill.

The moment the people of the cultivation villages chose to follow Vandalieu, they had become his followers. They felt a sense of familiarity and unity with Sebas and the other Vampires, as well as Pete and the rest of the monsters, because they were all Vandalieu's followers as well.

The Strengthen Followers skill wasn't a skill that was supposed to work on members of other races, so nobody, not even Vandalieu himself, knew this.

However, even if Vandalieu *was* aware of this, he probably wouldn't think of it as a bad thing.

"Well, I do admit that I stirred them up and instigated them, but is that a bad thing?" Vandalieu asked. "After all, right after you people tried to slaughter everyone in the cultivation villages, you tried to force unreasonable demands on them and turn them into slaves, intending to kill them if they disobeyed, didn't you?"

"Th-that is, Karcen... You people..."

"You people are responsible for Karcen, so this was simply our response."

As Pablo looked at Vandalieu, his vision blurred. His sweat, his cold sweat, had dripped into his eyes.

He had decided that the Dhampir in front of him was a monstrosity after all.

Vandalieu was speaking logically and politely; in fact, Pablo even felt like Vandalieu had a point.

But looking at Vandalieu's eyes, Pablo knew it. He knew that a monstrosity was before him. This monstrosity showed no hesitation to defy the absolute authority of the Hartner Duchy. He wasn't a champion of justice or a hero for the refugees.

He was a demon who tempted people.

Demons in fairy tales tempted people extremely kindly, and then they would guide the people on a path of evil!

“By the way, are you almost finished?” Vandalieu asked.

Pablo was startled by the question. He wondered just what kind of conversation he had been having with this demon.

He hadn’t been negotiating or gathering information. So, was it just idle talk? Impossible; it wasn’t as calm as that. Every time he had opened his mouth, he had been staring at the monstrosity before his eyes with more and more interest, hadn’t he?!

The monstrosity stood up from the log he had been sitting on, and his claws drew close to Pablo.

“For some reason, I am told that I’m insane, so I wanted to try talking to a normal person who is in a completely opposite position to mine,” said Vandalieu. “There were many points that I could understand. I felt like I did most of the talking in the end, but the time I spent on this conversation was very valuable.”

“W-what are you planning to do? W-what will become of me?” asked Pablo.

“Please provide my apprentice with more valuable time... as a guinea pig,” said Vandalieu. “Don’t worry. It will be over much quicker than the time I spent as a guinea pig.”

The moment Pablo thought he felt a liquid dripping onto his face, his consciousness blacked out.

『The level of the Grotesque Mind skill has increased!』



Immediately after a messenger pigeon delivered a message that read, “Nothing abnormal, everything is in order,” contact with the Red Wolf Knights’ Order ceased.

Spies were sent to investigate. What they found were empty cultivation villages and traces of a large number of people moving south.

Lord Lucas sent more spies to learn more details, but they didn't gain any solid information at all. He tried hiring a capable Spiritualist who was said to be living in Niarki, but it seemed that she had already closed her shop and either moved to another duchy or back to the Elf village where she was born.

In the city that was abandoned... or rather, forced to be abandoned, two hundred years ago, in a place a short distance away from the cultivation villages, a small-scale Dungeon with a single floor had appeared. Also, the tunnel that led to the southern region of the continent where Talosheim was should have been impossible to pass through as it had collapsed. But there were traces that the boulder at its entrance had moved. These were the only things that the spies were able to learn.

"Could it be that all of these events were caused by someone who crawled into the duchy from Talosheim?!"

In spring, Lucas shuddered when he saw this report. He had formally succeeded the Hartner family. Of course, now that he had become the duke, he knew of the absurd betrayal his predecessor had committed two hundred years ago.

Royalty and nobles created all kinds of enemies and allies through all sorts of methods. But when a new individual took over the family's headship, it was common for them to set the previous generation's deeds aside and mend previous relationships. There were some cases where a predecessor had said that certain families should never be forgiven, but even then, reconciliation usually happened a few generations later.

But grudges of other races, especially those with long lifespans, were different. Even if the humans had changed generations, the other race's individuals were often still alive.

Titans had lifespans of three hundred years. And although this news arrived late, the spies that the Hartner family had sent into the Amid Empire delivered information to Lucas that an expedition army of six thousand men sent by the Mirg shield-nation into the continent's southern region had returned as a swarm of thousands of Undead.

There was something in Talosheim. And that something was deeply malicious towards the Hartner family. There was no doubting that.

Lucas had no way of knowing how that something was related to the cultivation villages, however. He didn't know that it was simply because the cultivation villages were close to Talosheim.

"The appearance of small-scale Dungeons, the religion of Vida spreading among the farming villages, all of it is the doing of that someone..." Lord Lucas murmured. "Curse you, ancestors. Thanks to you, the Hartner family has earned the hatred of a monstrosity!"

Lord Lucas announced that the Red Wolf Knights' Order had moved to exterminate disaster-designated monster races that had settled into the ruins of the slave-run mine, where all of the men under Pablo's command lost their lives in exchange for those of the monsters. He also announced that the cultivation villages had been unable to be saved.

And then he decided to build a fort in the city of Niarki to be prepared to fight the monster to the south of the continent.

Incidentally, around this time, the Five-colored Blades were investigating the small-scale Dungeons when they ran into and defeated some Vampires who had come to do some investigating as well. With the information they gained from these Vampires, they followed the trail of the Pure-breed Vampire Ternecia and left the Hartner Duchy.

『Vandalieu has gained the 'Monstrosity' Title!』



Pan-fried gyoza, boiled gyoza, steamed meat dumplings, steamed buns, takoyaki, okonomiyaki, taiyaki, yakitori, hot dogs, frankfurters, kebabs, Cuban sandwiches, fresh spring rolls, chapati with meat, fish and vegetables, waffles, crêpes, sherbet, fruit juice, hornworm skewers... All kinds of food that could be found at food stands on Earth and in Origin were lined up, ready to be eaten.

With this food in front of them, everyone's eyes sparkled as if they had laid eyes on some high-class dishes, then they cheered.

"Wonderful...! I've never seen any of these dishes before!"

“I can’t hold back anymore! Itadakimasu!”

And then they began eating with an intense vigor. Talosheim’s usual members, with the addition of Luciliano, Kasim, Fester, Zeno and Lina, were here to enjoy the food.

The dishes had been cooked by the craftsmen who had migrated from the cultivation village. Everyone was taking the food from the plates one after another and eating as if in a frenzy, even though they weren’t being pressed to eat quickly.

“This gyoza, there are meat and vegetables inside?! What juicy bread! I see, it’s so delicious because the ingredients are wrapped in this thin bread!”

“Even gyoza is considered bread in Lambda, I see,” Vandalieu noted.

“Hey, bearded old man, this stir-fried bread called soba with vegetables and seafood is delicious!” said Kasim. “Those people from the country called ‘Earth’ were pretty clever to think of stir-frying bread together with other ingredients!”

“Kasim-kun, I am still in my twenties!” Luciliano said indignantly. “And that is not bread; they are called noodles!”

“Cotton*?” Fester repeated. “They’re made of cotton?! Cotton is edible, huh.”

TLN: Noodles and cotton are both pronounced as “men” in Japanese.*

“Fester, it’s good, so eat it. If you don’t, your question can’t be answered, can it?” said Lina.

“This round one is... hah?! It’s hot, but it’s good... Umm, there’s something creamy instead it. This fish bread is... hot! It’s sweet?! Why is a bread with fish sweet?!” Zeno shouted.

“Zeno, where is your usual composure gone!”

It seemed that the food was well-received by Talosheim’s new citizens. Braga, Eleanora, Zadiris and the others who were already accustomed to eating this food were also enjoying it.

“The taste is different this time, but it is still delicious,” said Eleanora.

“Yes, it seems that the takoyaki is filled with jam, and the yakisoba’s sauce is tare made with fruit and spices rather than soy sauce and mayonnaise,” Zadiris observed.

There were many dishes that weren’t difficult to reproduce as long as the method of making them were known and the ingredients were gathered. As for the necessary cookware, Vandalieu could make as many as was needed, as he was able to freely change the shape of wood and metal with Golem Transmutation.

He did have to work hard to make the equipment required to make Cuban sandwiches, which were made by putting ingredients between two buns and cooking it from both above and below, and kebabs, which were made by wrapping slices of meat into a cylindrical shape.

“So, what do you think?” Vandalieu asked. “If I continued selling these for three months at a food stall, do you think the Commerce Guild would accept it?”

He hadn’t given up on becoming an adventurer.

But he thought that he would have to use a bit of a roundabout method to do so. That roundabout method was to register at the Commerce Guild.

When he registered at the Adventurers’ Guild, his Status would be inspected, but Kasim and his friends knew of a way to avoid this – by presenting the registration card of another Guild.

The Commerce Guild, Mages’ Guild, Workers’ Guild – any Guild would do. If he already had a registration card of another guild, that meant his social status had already been checked.

And then Vandalieu would be able to have his Guild Card made without having his Status looked at by the Guild employee.

Incidentally, Darcia, Kachia and Borkus hadn’t known of this registration method. The Adventurers’ Guild was the Guild that was easiest to register at, so there was never a need to use such a roundabout method.

Kasim and his friends had only learned of it through the only son of a traveling merchant, whom they had met at the adventurer training school. They had remembered that this person had said, “I showed them my Commerce Guild registration card, so they didn’t have to take my blood.”

Incidentally, that only son of a traveling merchant had registered at the Adventurers' Guild not because he had been trying to seriously become an adventurer, but because the adventurer training school was the cheapest way to learn to defend himself.

Vandalieu had chosen the Commerce Guild as the Guild he would register at before registering at the Adventurers' Guild.

This food-sampling feast was to get everyone's opinions on whether the food could be used to sell in order to fulfil the Commerce Guild's registration requirement of "conducting business."

"I'm sure it will sell. There's no way something this delicious wouldn't sell!" said Borkus.

"Oyaji, the bits of food are falling out of the other side of your mouth," Gopher told him.

"We agree!" said Sam.

"I'm sure they will sell, Bocchan!" said Rita.

"I know you're not using miso or soy sauce so that they don't stand out, but I think there won't be a problem," said Vigaro. "There might be some who prefer it like this."

The reason he hadn't used things like miso, soy sauce and mayonnaise was because it would be problematic if the Church of Alda learned that these flavorings were being used.

It probably wouldn't become such a severe issue in the Orbaume Kingdom, but people with extreme opinions existed everywhere.

It would be problematic for Vandalieu to get involved with such people before he even entered society.

"S... weet..." Rapiécage groaned.

"It's delicious. I'm sure everyone will buy them!"

Still, it was a relief that the food was quite popular, though.

"It is indeed delicious to the point of being emotionally moving," said Luciliano, who

had experienced receiving special requests for him by name from multiple noblemen and wealthy merchants. However, he was wearing a difficult expression. “But there is a problem with selling it at stalls, Master,” he said.

“Why?” Fester asked, before Vandalieu could even respond. “It’s so delicious. I’d definitely buy it!”

“How much would you buy it for?” Luciliano asked in turn.

“How much, you say, that’s –”

“Yes, the problem is the price,” said Luciliano. “For example, this gyoza, these ingredients that are seasoned with these spices are expensive. The same goes for the steamed meat dumplings and the meat buns. The yakisoba is also full of luxurious ingredients, the kebabs and hot dogs... there is even butter in the Cuban sandwiches. Takoyaki uses a lot of oil, okonomiyaki requires fresh seafood, taiyaki needs jam and honey... There is an abundance of expensive flavors.”

“No, it doesn’t really matter if he sells it cheap, does it? Vandalieu’s objective is to register at the Guild, not to make a profit,” Kasim pointed out. “It’s not like he’s struggling to make a living.”

It was true that Vandalieu wasn’t trying to make a living out of his food stand’s sales, nor did he actually need to make a profit. In fact, what he wanted was to be conducting a business, so he wouldn’t care at all if he made a loss.

But Luciliano thought differently. “That is a naïve way of thinking,” he said. “If one sold dishes like this at a price that is clearly below the market, at a price that the masses can afford... What would the owners of other stores think?”

“...No matter how I think about it, I get the feeling that it’ll cause trouble,” said Kasim.

“Exactly,” said Luciliano.

“...Relationships with people are troublesome, aren’t they? Then how about doing business in towns and villages that don’t have any food stalls?” Vandalieu suggested.

“Master, I do not believe there would be a Commerce Guild in such places,” said Luciliano.

“Umm, there isn’t a need to be a big success, so can’t you just make and sell the same thing as the other food stands?” Lina suggested.

“Hmm, but it will hurt my conscience to make bad food and take money for it,” said Vandalieu.

Lina’s suggestion was quite a safe option, but Vandalieu felt opposed to it. Lambda’s stall food typically didn’t taste very good. Of course, it was true that Vandalieu was picky with his food.

The amount and affordability normally took priority over the taste, and it was important to be able to make it quickly with a limited amount of working space, so it wasn’t very delicious.

“Wouldn’t it be better to set up a permanent store rather than a food stand?” Luciliano suggested. “The food that you make, Master, is all things that even members of royal and noble families would eat.”

“...The image I had of royalty and nobles has crumbled again,” said Vandalieu. He felt dizzy just imagining dressed up, wealthy men and women having a banquet, giving elegant laughs of “fufufu” and “ohoho” as they conversed over yakisoba and takoyaki.

“Once I decide on a place to set up business, I suppose I’ll examine the prices of things being sold there before coming to a decision. Either way, I won’t be able to do business until I get rid of some of the Pure-breed Vampires, so it will be some time in the future,” said Vandalieu.

“By the way, Van, why is your physical body lying down and not moving?” asked Basdia, who had noticed that the physical Vandalieu was lying face-down in the corner of the room, completely still.

“...That is the one in charge of handling the depressing thoughts,” replied the spirit-form Vandalieu.

Who’s the one who called me ‘Monstrosity?’ If I find them, I’ll stick my claws in their ears and make their teeth rattle.*

TLN: This is a variation on a threat that’s commonly used in the Osaka prefecture that’s something like, “I’ll stick my hand in through your ears and grab your teeth.”*



- **Name:** Kasim
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Warrior
- **Level:** 70
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior
- **Passive skills:**
 - Augmented Stamina: Level 2 (NEW!)
 - Augmented Vitality: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Farming: Level 1
 - Club Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)

- **Name:** Zeno
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Thief
- **Level:** 67
- **Job history:** Apprentice Thief
- **Passive skills:**
 - Detect Presence: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Short Sword Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Archery: Level 2
 - Trap: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Erase Presence: Level 2 (NEW!)
 - Dismantling: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Unlocking: Level 1 (NEW!)

- **Name:** Fester
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Warrior
- **Level:** 72
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior
- **Passive skills:**
 - Enhanced Muscular Strength: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Fishing: Level 1
 - Swordsmanship: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 1 (NEW!)

CHAPTER 94

THE HALF-VAMPIRE'S HOUSE VISIT TO CONQUER THE MONKEY

"According to Isla, Chipiras and the 'Mad Dog' Berkert~ climb the mountain~ fly through the sky~ go into the lake~"

Vandalieu was singing the route he had planned using information he had gained from the Vampires while doing warm-up exercises by the lake.

Although it was spring, it was still only March. It was too early in the year to go swimming. And Vandalieu wasn't particularly good at swimming.

"I only barely managed to swim fifty meters with the school group... I can hold my breath for over thirty minutes now, though."

How long could seals, sea lions and sea otters swim underwater? Would Vandalieu be able to overtake them soon?

It doesn't matter, I suppose, Vandalieu thought as he flew into the lake.

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

Pete stretched himself out from Vandalieu's head towards the shore and pulled Vandalieu back. Vandalieu let out a strange noise of surprise that sounded like, "Hogeh!" as he landed on his back.

"Your Majesty, are you alright?!" asked Princess Levia. "The noise you made was very strange!"

"P-probably?" said Vandalieu. "Pete, as long as you stay inside me, it's just like when I take a bath, so it's fine. Ah, wait, stop, don't take root in the shore."

A considerable amount of time passed as Vandalieu calmed down Pete and the plant-type monsters, who seemed opposed to going underwater. Symbiosis was quite a troublesome thing.



Vandalieu was walking smoothly inside the cold lake water.

He skillfully manipulated the Immortal Ent branches extending from his hands and used the earth and rocks at the bottom of the lake as footholds.

“They would probably have disliked it if it was sea water, though,” Vandalieu whispered through his spirit-form mouth as he continued along the bottom of the lake. “Maybe I should take this opportunity to think of a way around that?”

It was dark, but even here, there was no problem with visibility thanks to the Dark Vision skill.

But if the water was cloudy with dirt and microscopic organisms, he wouldn’t have been able to see even with Dark Vision, so it was fortunate that the water was clear.

“Hmm?”

Several dozen silhouettes holding spears appeared in front of him. But looking closely, although they were human in shape, their whole bodies were covered in scales, and their faces were like a mixture between those of people and those of fish.

These were aquatic demi-human-type monsters, Gillmen.

Sahuagin, who were also aquatic demi-human-type monsters that were like fish with human limbs, known as the Goblins of the sea, also existed in Lambda. But Gillmen were far more powerful monsters than Sahuagin.

Since their mental structure was different from that of people, communicating with them was difficult, but they were highly intelligent, creating equipment from the shells and carapaces of other creatures, and they formed groups of as many as several hundred individuals.

People were not very familiar with Gillmen as they didn’t share the same environment as them, but in fishing villages, Gillmen were feared more than Ogres. And perhaps because there was some connection between them and Tristan, the God of the Sea who had created them, they rampaged like berserkers whenever they laid eyes on Mer-people, leading to Gillmen becoming known as the ‘Mer-people’s enemy.’

“Gubububu.”

“Buggukyubugyu.”

The Gillmen surrounded Vandalieu at a distance with visible bewilderment in their fish-like eyes.

They were probably saying things like, “What is that?” and, “There are branches coming out of its hands and feet,” weren’t they?

How troublesome; the monsters in this world don’t understand Japanese. If there was a Gillman spirit nearby, I’d use Visualization and have it translate, but I don’t see any.

Vandalieu was in a troublesome situation, but it seemed that the Gillmen had decided, “We don’t know what it is, but let’s dispose of it for now.” With an intent to kill directed towards Vandalieu that he could detect with Danger Sense: Death, they drew closer with their spears raised.

Since that was the stance they were taking, Vandalieu didn’t need to think hard about what to do, either.

“I don’t really feel like fighting underwater, though. I can’t have Princess Levia and the others help me, either,” Vandalieu said as he threw his Cursed Weapon kunai and scattered poison in the water. “But, well, it is fortunate that I’ve found these things so that they can guide the way.”

Incidentally, Gillmen were Rank 3. But as they were often fought in water and on ships, the Adventurers’ Guild recommended that they be considered one Rank higher when fighting them.



Making the Zombie Gillmen lead the way, Vandalieu found an underwater cavern hidden at the bottom of the lake, spent an hour traveling through it before finally raising his face above the water’s surface.

“Ah, I thought I was going to die.”

If he hadn’t bitten into the Gillmen’s throats and sucked the air from their lungs every time he was close to running out of breath, things could have been dangerous for

Vandalieu.

Gillmen had gills on the sides of their bodies, but they also had lungs to move about above water.

Incidentally, the only reason Vandalieu hadn't done mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration was because he didn't want to. Even if he were to ignore the fact that they were Zombies, he didn't want his first kiss to be with a fish-faced monster.

The Zombie Gillmen's faces silently emerged from the water's surface as Vandalieu made them help him get onto the shore. Vandalieu looked around to see that he had emerged from an underground lake and there was a nearby mansion that looked elegant at first glance... but also sinister upon closer inspection.

"Oh my. It would have been better if you had actually died, dear guest that I have no memory of inviting." A person who gave the impression of a capable steward came out to greet Vandalieu. He was a handsome, middle-aged man with a medium build. The monocle he was wearing, an expensive item in Lambda, suited him very well.

"Hello," said Vandalieu. "I apologize for coming here without notice. My name is Vandalieu."

"Oh my. You really are the rumored Dhampir. For a long time after the rumors began, I have truly desired to meet you. Excuse my late introduction. I am the steward of this mansion, the 'Foolish Dog' Bellmond," said the man, introducing himself with a courteous bow. "What business did you have here today?"

"I was thinking of forcefully taking over this place that you are in charge of," Vandalieu replied. "I'm going to begin doing that now; is that alright with you? Well, even if you say no, I have no intention of returning on another day."

"I see. That is just perfect. I was also just thinking of killing... you!" Bellmond shouted as he moved his fingers, his gentle smile turning into a mad one with his fangs bared.

In the next moment, the Gillmen protecting Vandalieu's sides fell into pieces.

The five Gillmen were sliced silently into over ten parts each, revealing their vividly-colored cross-sections, and fell into the underground lake close to the shore.

As the Gillmen fragments fell into the water with a splash, Bellmond felt disappointed

that Vandalieu didn't make even the slightest move.

"Fufu, you don't know what just happened, do you?" said Bellmond. "Despite my appearance, I have lived for tens of thousands of years, and this is the result. If I could get you to enjoy it as well –"

"You're using magic and your fingertips to manipulate super-fine metal threads. The magic is... wind-attribute, I suppose. Electricity falls under the wind attribute, doesn't it?" said Vandalieu.

"W-what?!"

Bellmond was in dismay; he hadn't expected his secret technique to have been seen through in an instant. But in the next moment, each of his fingers began bending in strange ways, as if they were individual creatures.

"Fuh. It was unexpected that I was seen through so easily, but what difference does it make? You are already a prisoner of my threads!" Bellmond declared. "There is no gap for you to escape through."

Having surrounded Vandalieu with his threads, Bellmond became certain of his victory and regained his composure.

With such a complete surrounding, Bellmond could dispose of Vandalieu before he could even recite an incantation. The remaining Zombie Gillmen were trying to circle around, but Bellmond would easily be able to deal with such small fry when they drew closer.

"Now then, please depart to where your parents are!" he shouted.

He bent his finger slightly. With that small movement, Vandalieu's head would fall off. That was what was supposed to happen, but... he felt a dull resistance.

The threads weren't moving the way he wanted them to!

"What?! This is... I see, you are a Thread User like me!"

Bellmond's threads had been tangled in the string-like objects extending from Vandalieu's own fingers.

“No, I do not have that Job,” said Vandalieu. “But I can manipulate thread-shaped objects.”

Every single one of Bellmond’s super-fine metal threads had been entangled in Vandalieu’s extended hairs and the sticky threads he had produced from his tongue and claws.

Vandalieu’s Thread-reeling Technique was far lower in level than Bellmond’s, but he simply needed to extend his threads around himself, so tangling them with Bellmond’s was simple.

“...Are Dhampirs a race capable of such things?” asked Bellmond.

“I don’t know any other Dhampirs,” Vandalieu replied.

To be more accurate, Vandalieu had seen the Dhampir girl who was being protected by Heinz, though he didn’t know her name, but he had only seen her once. He didn’t know whether she could spit threads from her mouth. He thought it likely that she couldn’t, however.

Bellmond gave a defiant smile upon seeing that Vandalieu could manipulate threads like him, even if it was through different methods.

“I see; this is no longer a battle between a Vampire and a Dhampir, but between a thread-user and a thread-user... the thought that I would be blessed with the opportunity to fight another enemy who uses threads did not even cross my mind,” he said. “I must thank Hihiryushukaka-sama from the bottom of my heart.”

It seemed that a strange switch had been flipped inside Bellmond. There was an innocent light shining in his eyes, as if he were talking to his closest friend.

“Now then, let us both make our utmost effort to seize the glory of victory!” he declared, his eyes looking at Vandalieu as if looking at a worthy foe. The moment he finished speaking, his shoes were torn apart loudly from the inside. “Now then, dear guest! Can you hold out against the threads from my twenty digits?!”

Each of Bellmond’s toes grew longer, like those of a monkey.

He wriggled them skillfully to manipulate his threads. There was no trace of the dejection he had displayed earlier; there was only the fast pounding of his heart.

Perhaps it was the appearance of a worthy enemy, or perhaps it was because he had a premonition about this battle. Either way, he had no doubt that the being before his eyes would grant him something.

The threads released by Bellmond were entangled with Vandalieu's, one after another. However, Bellmond's threads passed through, cutting their way through and closing in on their target.

"What is wrong? You cannot win with defense alone!" shouted Bellmond.

"You're right," said Vandalieu.

"Now then, I suppose I should begin a counterattack," said another voice from some distance away. Astonished, Bellmond turned to look in that direction.

To his left, some distance away, the Zombie Gillmen had gathered in one spot. Wondering whether it was these Gillmen Zombies who had talked, Vandalieus popped out from their scaly bodies, one after another.

"Eh? What? D-dear guest, are these your brothers?" Bellmond asked the Vandalieu whom he had engaged in battle, bewildered at the other Vandalieus that were smoothly appearing from inside the Gillman Zombies.

"No, all of them are a part of me," Vandalieu replied. "The one fighting you is my physical body, which is moving the others through the Long-distance Control skill."

"These ones," said another Vandalieu, "are my spirit-form clones made after using Out-of-body experience, which had been fused with the Zombie Gillmen."

"Now then, I'm going to begin my counterattack," said yet another spirit-form Vandalieu.

The spirit-form Vandalieus pointed a long, pipe-shaped object that the Gillmen had been carrying on their backs towards Bellmond.

"A physical body and spirit form bodies?! N-no, no, please wait, dear guest, that is strange," Bellmond stammered. "Do you mean to say that you used your physical body... your main body, as a bait to fool me?!"

"Well, you say it's my main body, but is it?" said Vandalieu.

“Did you not think that you would be unable to entangle all of my threads, and that you would be torn apart? In fact, in one more minute, I can separate your entire body into pieces,” said Bellmond.

“Even if my body is separated into pieces, it will take me less than three minutes to put the pieces all back together, so I won’t die,” Vandalieu told him.

“...But even Noble-born Vampires would die from that.”

“Also, I have this method.”

A Worm’s head sprouted from the back of Vandalieu’s neck. Its mouth, the only feature on its head, opened and a thick fluid overflowed from it.

That fluid... the Dark Copper, became an armor that surrounded Vandalieu’s body. Datara had tempered this Dark Copper Golem into a suit of armor.

And then he even put his Magic Absorption Barrier and his Impact-Negating Barrier up, engulfing both his and Bellmond’s threads.

Bellmond was dumbfounded at the way Vandalieu was creating defenses one after another with such ease. And now that Bellmond’s threads were in the barriers, they were almost completely immobilized.

Every time he moved his fingers to try and manipulate his threads, his threads instead ate into his fingers and blood sprayed from them.

“I am aware that I am being impolite, but... Dear guest, are you some kind of aberration or monstrosity?” Bellmond asked. Now that things had come to this, he had no choice but to cut off all of his limbs and run away, but he asked this question instead of reciting the incantation to do so.

His heartbeat grew violent as he realized that defeat was unavoidable; his cheeks became flushed and his eyes trembled, blurring his vision.

“I consider myself to be a person, so it is very regrettable that you said this to me,” Vandalieu replied as the spirit-form Vandalieus loaded a silver projectile into the pipe... or at least began to, before changing to a different projectile.

An Iron bullet was loaded into the pipe... the gun that had spiral-shaped grooves built

into the barrel to make its projectiles rotate. Vandalieu made small adjustments to his aim and then used Telekinesis to send the bullet forth.

“Fire.”

In contrast to the flat-toned voice, the bullet was fired with a thunderous noise.

“Kuh... fushaaah!” Bellmond extended his forked tongue to manipulate a thread to try to avoid Lambda’s first bullet that had been fired by Vandalieu.

But the iron bullet flicked the thread aside and struck Bellmond’s torso.

『You have acquired the Artillery Technique skill!』

It seemed that in Lambda, the skill for using guns was not Gun Technique, but Artillery Technique.

The iron bullet crashed into the far wall opposite the underground lake, causing part of the wall to crumble. It did make sense that it was being treated as a cannon rather than a gun.

Also, the barrel of Vandalieu’s telekinesis rifle that he had built for accuracy and power was literally nothing more than a barrel; there was no trigger or magazine, so it was probably difficult to call a gun.

But even as Vandalieu acknowledged the power of his Telekinesis gun and its barrel, he decided never to use it underground unless absolutely necessary.

“By the way, can you talk? I used an iron bullet instead of an Orichalcum or silver one, and I also altered my aim a little, so you shouldn’t die,” said Vandalieu, looking down at Bellmond, who was rolling around on the ground in a pitiful state, but maintaining his polite tone of speech.

“Kah... Hyuh... I humbly apologize... for showing you such disgrace...”

A hole had been gouged out from Bellmond’s right flank through his chest; fragments

of entrails, bones and blood had scattered about. Also, because he had been sent flying after being shot and rolled across the ground multiple times, his body had been wounded by the sharp threads that he had been manipulating.

No digits were left on his hands or feet, and his tongue was in shreds.

However, the “disgrace” that Bellmond mentioned was not referring to that. He was referring to his own true appearance, which was now visible because his monocle, a Magic Item of disguise, had broken.

Terrible burn-marks and stretched scars were visible through his torn clothes. Half of his handsome face was covered in burns, and one of his pupils was cloudy.

And the shape of his ears had changed.

“It’s surprising that you were a woman,” Vandalieu remarked. “And it seems that you were originally a Beast-person. Can members of Vida’s races also become Vampires?”

“I am from a race known as the Forest Monkey Beast-people,” said Bellmond. “With that said, I am not a Beast-person; there is Lamia blood mixed in my ancestry. This tongue and, though it is difficult to tell now, my blind eye, are in the shape of those of a Lamia’s. It is not impossible for members of Vida’s races to become Vampires. However, there is a ninety percent chance of failure and the possibility of death as a side-effect of the transformation. But how did you know I was a woman? As you can see, all of my womanly parts have either been burned or cut off.”

“I can see your internal organs through your wounds,” said Vandalieu.

“I see... That slipped my mind.” Bellmond, who turned out to be a woman, gave a bitter laugh. “So, will you finish me off?” she asked. “I am not as powerful as you, but I am a Noble-born Vampire with the status of count. I will be able to recover from wounds such as these. I do not know if I will be able to move in the same way that I could before, but after half a day, I will be able to manage walking. Also, even while we are enjoying this conversation, it is not impossible for me to recite an incantation if I tried.”

“But you’re not trying to recite any, are you?” said Vandalieu. “In fact, you have no intention of making a counterattack. Also, the Death-Attribute Charm skill is having an effect, isn’t it?” He could no longer feel any reaction from Danger Sense: Death.

Bellmond gave a surprised look before exhaling, as if coming to an understanding. “I

see. So, it is a charm-type skill. However, rather than me having been charmed by you, dear guest, my heart is being stirred because I was wondering what would change if I killed you, and by the fact that even if I cannot kill you, you will do me the favor of killing me.”

“Ah, so it was having that kind of effect.”

Even though it was a charm, it didn’t mean that it would cause everyone under its effects to become friendly towards Vandalieu. Those who were ill or mad like Bellmond would show reactions like this.

In other words, a yandere.

Now that Vandalieu thought about it, Sercrent and Isla, whom he had defeated previously, were Vampires, but unlike Eleanora, they hadn’t become friendly towards him. It was possible that they hadn’t simply resisted the Death-Attribute Charm, but that it had simply exhibited its effects in a distorted way.

He had already broken Sercrent’s soul, so he would have to ask Isla once he returned to Talosheim.

Vandalieu made a note of being more careful from now on.

“So, surely you are not telling me to change sides, are you?” asked Bellmond.

“Change sides,” said Vandalieu.

“...So, you are.”

“I am,” said Vandalieu. “All you did was try to kill me; I don’t have any particular grudge against you, and I want you to teach me about using threads,” Vandalieu continued as Bellmond gave him an exasperated look. “Also, I’m currently recruiting a steward.”

“...Even though I am a very evil person?” asked Bellmond.

“Hmm, but there is nothing haunting you. Could it be that you have spent long years watching this place and not gone outside?” Vandalieu asked.

“...That is correct, dear guest,” Bellmond replied.

She had told Vandalieu that she had lived for tens of thousands of years, but in truth, she had only lived for around ten thousand years after becoming a Vampire.

Ten thousand years ago, the clan that she had been born to exiled her due to her ancestor's blood manifesting as strange physical features. After wandering aimlessly, she finally reached a place where people lived, only to be treated as a monster and raped.

On the verge of death, she was picked up by the Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka.

"My master just happened to be looking for an obedient subordinate to guard this mansion," said Bellmond. "Despite its appearance, this is a place that serves as both a shelter for dire situations and as a vault for items; it would never have been left in the hands of someone who would betray her. And my master found half-dead individuals such as myself, saved them and raised them as Vampires."

"Considering that, you don't seem to have much loyalty," Vandalieu commented.

Bellmond gave a small laugh. "All kinds of things can happen if you live for ten thousand years. Especially with a body like this. The scars I gained before I became a Vampire cannot be healed, you see."

For the first few years, she had worked frantically to repay the favor that her master did for her. She studied hard and improved herself among companions with similar circumstances.

Her ability was acknowledged and she became a Vampire. While she shed tears for her companions who steadily grew fewer in numbers over the next few decades, she continued to frantically polish her skills so that she could return their favors to her master as well.

She was left in charge of this mansion and several centuries passed. She gradually began wondering if she was simply being made use of.

On her thousandth year after becoming a Vampire, her master forced the Magic Item monocle on her, along with the words, "Don't expose your horrid appearance at this mansion."

On the ten-thousandth year. Everything began to feel like it was in vain. There were

almost no opportunities for Bellmond to amuse herself by using the techniques that she had learned, and even when there were, they ended quickly. Even when she thought it might be better to make an escape, when she asked herself what she would want to do after escaping, she couldn't come up with an answer.

She thought perhaps it would be better to simply die, but she couldn't bring herself to do that, either.

Before she knew it, several more years had passed. After spending so long in a worn-down state of mind, Vandalieu had appeared.

"Then isn't it fine to change sides and join me?" Vandalieu asked, satisfied that Bellmond hadn't been involved in Talosheim's fate.

Of course, he didn't simply think that she was another victim. She had killed several people in the past ten thousand years, and had likely committed many crimes.

But these were things that Vandalieu didn't care about in the slightest.

"Honestly, I don't really care that it's very questionable whether you're good or evil," Vandalieu continued. "The perception of that changes easily between nations, cultures and ages. And I'm apparently considered an evil person to a great number of people, too. I don't know about the ideas of good and evil in a society that I have no relation to."

Vandalieu couldn't imagine that absolutely good beings could exist. Good existed because the concept of evil also existed. Since this was his way of thinking, the idea of good and evil was in itself an ambiguous concept.

In fact, both on Earth and in Origin, good had failed to save him.

Of course, he knew that it would be narrow-minded to come to conclusions based on only his own experiences, but things were going well in Lambda with this way of thinking, so he thought that this was fine.

"...What about the fact that I tried to kill you, dear guest?" asked Bellmond.

"I won, so it doesn't count," said Vandalieu.

He simply thought that in fights to the death, the victor held the rights to the life of the

defeated.

With monsters, he stripped them of their materials and Magic Stones, and with bandits, he killed them and drank their blood.

Even in war, killing enemy soldiers was an achievement, and capturing them alive earned extra money.

With that being the case, Vandalieu had defeated Bellmond, so he was free to invite her to join him.

“Speaking in extreme terms, it’s just a matter of changing sides while you’re still alive, or changing sides after you die,” Vandalieu told her. “But when you die, your memories and personality might crumble or undergo significant changes, so it would be most helpful if you changed sides while still alive.”

There were some, like Chezare, who shone brighter after becoming Undead, but those were rare cases.

“So, what will you do?” Vandalieu asked.

Since Vandalieu hadn’t needed to use Dead Spirit Magic, Princess Levia and the other Flame Ghosts were free, so they appeared before Bellmond.

“It is better for you to join His Majesty,” said Princess Levia.

“We haunt His Majesty like this, and even though we are Ghosts, we are able to eat delicious things. Isn’t that right, Levia-sama?” said another Flame Ghost.

“Yes. It would be reassuring to have you lend your strength to His Majesty,” Princess Levia told Bellmond. “Can I make this request of you?”

Realizing that there was no escaping this particular guest, Bellmond gave in. “Very well, dear guest,” she said. “However, I have two conditions. The first is that you defeat my master... Ternecia-sama. The other is that you return my body to its original form.”

If Vandalieu were to be killed by Ternecia, there would be no meaning in changing to his side, and in her current state, Bellmond wouldn’t be able to teach him about using threads or act as his steward.

“I understand,” said Vandalieu, giving a nod to these conditions that even an S-class adventurer would hesitate before accepting. “I’ll start by gathering and reconnecting your organs and bones together. Princess Levia, everyone, please keep your flames down. Bellmond’s offal is almost burning.”

“Ah, I’m sorry! I will keep my distance now,” said Princess Levia.

“Dear guest... I have to question calling someone’s organs ‘offal,’” said Bellmond.

Perhaps she had been too hasty in her decision. But even so, Bellmond couldn’t help but hold great expectations of Vandalieu.



“GUAAAAAAH! L-LONG LIVE TERNECIA-SAMAAAAAAA!” Daroak, a Noble-born Vampire with the status of marquis, fell as his heart was pierced through by the fist of a female warrior, letting out a dying scream that sounded as if he would end in an explosion if he was in a special effects film on Earth.

He was the one praised to have the greatest fighting ability after Ternecia herself, a man known as the ‘Fighting Dog’ in the underground world, someone who had lived for tens of thousands of years.

“Hmph. No matter how much you turn your body into mist, you are powerless before my Shining Fist Technique.”

Jennifer, who had defeated Daroak with her Magic Item bracers that were shining white, joined her companions and glared at the final remaining boss.

The Pure-breed Vampire Ternecia, who had her usual prostitute-like appearance, clicked her tongue at the death of her trusted aide as she glared back at Jennifer.

“Oh my, you really went and did it,” said Ternecia. “Even my Five Dogs have all been wiped out except for one... To think that you disposed of three of them, even if Isla wasn’t among them. I underestimated you people a little.”

All around, there were ruins of buildings and trees lying on the ground. This had been one of Ternecia’s bases, a considerably stylish mansion, but... because of the destructive waves of battle, it and the forest around it had been turned almost into a wasteland.

“Still, you are quite flashy,” Ternecia continued, looking around at what was left of her base now that there was no longer a ceiling obscuring her view of the moon and stars. “The legendary champion Bellwood felt pain in his heart every time he even stepped on a flower. Are you people different from him?”

“To hesitate to destroy you in order to protect a remote forest with nothing but monsters living in it would be a sin,” Heinz replied. “I did think about it, however, as this forest is the source of a river.”

Bellwood had avoided using knowledge from other worlds, but he had proactively spread knowledge regarding the natural environment, which still remained today. The fact that water was stored in forests was one of the pieces of knowledge he had left behind.

“Tch, words befitting of ‘the one who tears through the darkness,’” said Ternecia. “But I am tired of hearing your voices! I’ll let you continue singing as my Undead!”

Ternecia released a killing intent powerful enough to produce physical pressure, but on the inside, she was irritated and a little discomposed.

What are Birkyne and Gubamon doing?! Why are they not hurrying here; at this rate, I will be forced to use that trump card!

As if seeing the disturbance in Ternecia’s mind, Diana, the priestess of the Goddess of Slumber Mill, made an attempt to cast an enchantment spell.

“I won’t let you! Kah!” Ternecia gave a strange cry as she tried to use the Petrifying Demon Eye that she had replaced her right eye with.

“That’s my line!” said Delizah. “Great Provocation!”

Ternecia’s hostility was forcibly redirected to Delizah by her Shield Technique martial skill.

Delizah’s fingers and toes began turning into stone with an unpleasant sound, but Ternecia’s gaze was quickly turned away from her.

Ternecia let out another noise of frustration.

Edgar had crept up to her and attacked from her blind spot. His Mythril short

sword, enchanted with light-attribute magic, was pointed at Ternecia's vitals.

She blocked it with her claws and tried to tear through Edgar with the same motion, but in the next moment, his body vanished like mist.

"A Clone?!"

"I'm surprised you could tell. Most would confuse it for magic." Edgar waved his short sword as he created more clones of himself using Afterimage, an advanced Armor Technique martial skill. Even if most of them were just illusions, considering that any of their attacks could be real, they couldn't be ignored.

"All together!" shouted Heinz. "Radiant Sword Flash!"

"Radiant Fist Barrage!"

Heinz's magic sword and Jennifer's magic fists assaulted Ternecia. Even she couldn't handle all of this; her body suffered numerous wounds.

Considering the amount of Vitality that she had, all of them were little more than scratches. However, the attacks of Heinz's party were all specialized against Vampires. Even these scratches inflicted her great pain, greatly reduced her extraordinary regeneration ability and, most importantly, caused her concentration to come apart.

"...Don't swarm me, you brats! Chaotic Wind Blade Dance!"

Unable to contain her irritation, Ternecia released countless blades of wind into her surroundings. This should have forced Heinz and his companions back temporarily, giving her an opening to regain her composure.

However, Diana recited an incantation. "Mana, be guided by the goddess and become peaceful. Magic Slumber Wave."

Her spell drastically reduced the power of Ternecia's own spell, enough for Ternecia's spell to be deflected by the anti-magic defense of the party's defensive equipment, which was made of plenty of Dragon and magical metals.

Now that Heinz and his parties were the ones with an opening, the force of their attacks increased.

These people... They are accustomed to fighting enemies who are stronger than them!

The Shield-bearer Delizah would draw the enemy's hostility, Edgar would follow up, Jennifer would attack with many small attacks while Heinz would close in with a single powerful one, and Diana would support all of them.

Their coordination of execution was very advanced, and Ternecia was unable to exhibit her powers against them. On her own, she couldn't deal with the coordination of Heinz's party. No matter what she tried, she couldn't make any successful significant move.

The monotonous attacks she released in her irritation and frustration were blocked or had their power dampened by Delizah and Diana.

"How can I, Ternecia-sama who has survived the war against the champions, lose to such inexperienced brats!"

Ternecia was enraged. It was true that she was strong. She was a creature at the top of the food chain; she was so powerful that she could crush the average Dragon as if it were a winged insect.

However, that was precisely why she was weaker than she had been a hundred thousand years ago.

She had robbed countless of their lives over the past one hundred thousand years. However, most of these lives had been taken in one-sided slaughters, while the enemies she had faced who were capable of fighting her evenly were within countable numbers. And for the past few tens of thousands of years, she had simply existed as a tyrant ruling over countless subordinates.

Ternecia's instincts had been dulled by the days she had spent without ever experiencing her life being at risk; her mental strength and techniques that had once been sharp were now worn-down and loosened.

In such a state, Ternecia had no way of defeating the coordination of Heinz's party on her own. The three Pure-breed Vampires had been ruling in a parliamentary system precisely for situations such as these, but –

Kuh, do Birkyne and Gubamon intend to abandon me here?!

Her last ray of hope, her reinforcements, did not appear.

Ternecia gave a hoarse scream as she received yet another shallow wound. Although Heinz and his companions were now certain that they could defeat her, they were continuing their attacks without letting their guards down.

And then Ternecia bared her fangs and gave them a maddened laugh. “Die as you regret having cornered me! Activate, Demon King’s Horns!”

In the next moment, Heinz and his party were torn apart by the horns sprouting from all over Ternecia’s body.



- **Name:** Bellmond
- **Age:** Approximately 10,000 years old (18 at time of Vampire transformation)
- **Title:** Ternecia's Foolish Dog
- **Rank:** 10
- **Race:** Noble-born Vampire Countess (Forest-Monkey-type Beast-person)
- **Level:** 7
- **Job:** String Master
- **Job level:** 7
- **Job history:** Apprentice Hunter, Apprentice Thief, Thief, Assassin, Servant, Thread-user
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 3
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 5
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 6
 - Self-Enhancement: Subordination: Level 10
 - Mana Recovery: Damage: Level 10
 - Sense Presence: Level 7
 - Intuition: level 3
 - Mental Corruption: Level 7
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodsucking: Level 7
 - Archery: Level 1
 - Throwing: Level 1
 - Short Sword Technique: Level 9
 - Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 2
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 1
 - High-speed Flight: Level 1
 - Silent Steps: Level 8
 - Trap: Level 5
 - Dismantling: Level 3
 - Transcend Limits: Level 1
 - Housework: Level 10
 - Thread-reeling: Level 7
- **Unique skills:**
 - Offering

The weakest among Ternecia's close aides, her 'Five Dogs,' who has been given what is, in a way, the most important role. She was often sneered at by the other members of the Five Dogs for being a "watchdog."

Other than the occasional times that Ternecia visited her, Bellmond has spent over ninety percent of her ten-thousand-year-long life guarding a mansion with nothing but weeping, gasping, screeching Undead. Thus, her mental state is one step away from being like that of a disabled person, and she is possessed by a desire for her own destruction.

However, because of this, she has distanced herself from other Vampires, and in that regard, she is normal.

She was originally a female of a race of forest-monkey-type Beast-people, but part of the Lamia blood in her ancestry manifests itself in her physical features.

But due to the violent rape that she suffered before becoming a Vampire, her body is covered in scars and burn-marks. One of her eyes lost its vision on one occasion of her being assaulted, and the long tail that she should have has been cut off.

Thanks to her blindness in one eye and the irresponsible way that Ternecia has raised her, not caring as long as she didn't grow defiant, she is actually the weakest among the Five Dogs. She was not equipped with any Magic Items other than her Magic Item monocle.

Also, Vampires do not gain any bonuses to their talent for magic, so because she was born as a Beast-person, she remained unskillful with magic even after becoming a Noble-born Vampire. This is why she does not use any magic other than the spells needed to assist her in manipulating her threads.

She is at her strongest when she uses Short Sword Technique to fight, but... she is a hobbyist who prioritizes her hobby.

She is a master when it comes to ordinary housework; particularly when it comes to cleaning, she works flawlessly despite being in a mental state where entire blocks of several years can go missing from her memory at once.

CHAPTER 95

FIRE

With her shoulders heaving up and down, Ternecia gave a gleeful cackle at the drug-like sense of liberation that was filling her mind. Her appearance was now quite unlike that of a Vampire.

There were horns not only coming from her temples, but twisted, branched horns had also sprouted from her back, abdomen, upper arms, the back of her hands, thighs, knees and calves.

“Kufuh... Did you see it? Did you taste it? This is the power of a sealed part of the Demon King Guduranis... the ‘Demon King’s horns.’”

The fragment of the Demon King that Ternecia had acquired several tens of thousands of years ago. That was what these horns were. The ‘Demon King’s horns’ that could pierce through all kinds of magical defenses and even tear through Adamantite with ease. This was Ternecia’s trump card.

By joining forces with Birkyne and Gubamon, who also harbored fragments of the Demon King in their bodies, she had escaped from heroes with the divine protection of heroic gods and emerged victorious in battles with Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped other evil gods.

But that would end today.

“I see, fufu, they betrayed me. Ah, I see, I don’t need them. I’m this powerful, aren’t I? That’s right, I’m strong. I don’t need them. I’ll kill them, take their fragments of the Demon King, find the other fragments in the Amid Empire and Orbaume Kingdom – guh!”

Ternecia was seething with rage at Birkyne and Gubamon who hadn’t come to save her, but suddenly she gave a groan and clutched her head.

This is bad, the encroachment has already begun. I have to hurry and suppress it...!

Fragments of the Demon King bestowed vast power to those who possessed them.

Enough power to even fight against gods.

However, the price of this power was great. The fragment of the Demon King's body was still alive. It was trying to take over the mind and body of Ternecia, its false host, and gather the other fragments of the Demon King in order to resurrect him.

Even if it weren't alive, the Demon King's fragments contained Guduranis's Mana that had properties that were not supposed to exist in Lambda, so they would still eat away at their hosts.

The extent to which this had occurred was displayed as the 'Demon King Encroachment Degree' skill on the Status. Ternecia's Demon King Encroachment Degree was already level 5. The higher the level of the skill, the more freely she could use the fragment of the Demon King, but it was also proof of how close she was to the Demon King, how much her mind had been encroached upon.

Ternecia tried to calm herself and suppress the Demon King's horns, but seeing Heinz and his party get back to their feet around her, she had no choice but to stop doing this.

"This is... the power of a fragment of the Demon King," Heinz murmured.

"To think you'd fill my Adamantite shield with holes. You really outdid yourself," said Delizah.

Heinz and his companions had been seriously injured, but none of their wounds were fatal. And even those serious injuries were steadily healing.

"...Good grief. It seems that you are far more like Vampires than I am," said Ternecia. "How is it that none of you died with my last attack?"

Delizah's Adamantite shield and Heinz's armor of Mythril and Dragon scales had been torn to pieces by the Demon King's horns. Even if they were A-class adventurers, at least one... in particular, the lightly-equipped Edgar and Jennifer, should have suffered fatal wounds.

However, all of them were still alive and ready to continue fighting.

Before them was a monster who had lived since the age of the gods, defeated several gods and even possessed a fragment of the Demon King, there was no sign of defeat in

their eyes.

Does one of these people have that Job? No, if that were the case, I should have been cornered further. Which means that at most, one of them has the qualities for it.

“Well, that just means that I have to kill you until you die! Raging Spiral Throw!” Shouting the name of an advanced Throwing Technique martial skill, she fired the Demon Kings’ horns that were sprouting from her body!

“Don’t try to block it!” Diana warned her companions. “Please avoid or attack them!”

Heinz’s party did as she said, dodging the Demon King’s horns or striking them to change their trajectories with martial skills.

“We’ll create an opening!” Edgar shouted. “Million Slashes!”

“Go, Heinz!” said Jennifer. “Thousand Radiant Destructive Fists!”

The two of them both used the Transcend Limits skill along with advanced martial skills, closing in on Ternecia while spinning and striking down the Demon King’s horns.

“Leave it to me!” said Heinz. “True Magic Radiant Destructive Attack!” The tip of his magic sword, which was glowing even more fiercely than when he had cut Chipiras in two, closed in on Ternecia.

“Evil Wall!” Ternecia shouted, and the Demon King’s horns grew from her body once more.

The Demon King’s horns were different to the horns of Dragons that were made of bone; in terms of properties, they were more like the horns of deer or rhinoceroses. Just as a deer grew new antlers every year, the Demon King’s horns changed their shapes in the places that Ternecia wanted them to.

The reason she wore clothes with many slits that exposed her skin was so that she could use the Demon King’s horns when she needed to.

The horns twisted, branched and entwined around each other, turning into a shield to meet Heinz’s magic sword.

“UOOOOH!”

“AAAAAAAH!”

Heinz tried to pierce the Demon’s Kings horns and drive the tip of his sword through, but Ternecia grew more Demon King’s horns, solidifying her defense further.

This guy! This guy is a Guider after all!

Guiders were those who led not only their chosen companions, but many others as well. Excluding the champions like Bellwood and Zakkart, who had possessed this Job in the age of the gods, the number of people who had acquired this Job in the past one hundred thousand years could be counted on two hands.

In a way, it was a Job considered to be a requirement to be a champion.

The fearsome thing about Guiders was not only their own strength, but the way they endlessly strengthened their companions and those under their guidance.

As she had once been under the guidance of a champion herself, Ternecia knew this all too well.

“GAAAH! Evil Wall! Evil Armor! Spiral Pulverizing Strike! Light-crushing Dark Spear!”

“Kuh?!”

Ternecia unleashed martial arts of Shield Technique, Armor Technique, Throwing and Spear Technique in quick succession, enduring Heinz’s attack with sheer strength and forcing him back. And then she glared at the one she suspected could become a Guider, as well as his companions who were likely being protected by him, grinding her teeth.

She needed to kill Heinz, his companions and the Dhampir they were keeping at all costs. If they were left alone and given a chance to develop further, it was possible that the Vampires would be helplessly hunted down in the future.

Currently, Ternecia was still stronger than them. If she faced them down now, she would have about a seventy percent chance of killing them all.

However –

“Damn it, if I could just use magic, I would have more options!” Ternecia’s head was in pain from using advanced martial skills in quick succession. The mysterious Mana in the Demon King’s fragment had poor compatibility with other attributes of magic. Because of this, when the Demon King’s horns were active, Ternecia couldn’t cast any magic other than no-attribute magic.

Normally, this weakness would be meaningless due to the sheer power of the Demon King’s fragment.

『The level of the Demon King Encroachment Degree skill has increased!』

Ternecia heard this voice echoing inside her head and she screamed as the sinister sensation of the Demon King’s horns grew stronger. She felt a pleasant, numbing feeling spreading through her body, countering her headache and blurring vision. Her sense of panic reached a peak.

At this rate, even if I kill these guys, I’ll be taken over by the fragment! I have no choice but to finish this later!

“I will definitely kill you. Remember this!” Ternecia screeched.

“She’s trying to escape!”

“We won’t let you!”

Heinz and his companions tried to chase after Ternecia as she fled, but she fired the Demon King’s horns once more, obstructing their way.

By the time Heinz dealt with the horns, Ternecia was nowhere to be seen.



Using the legendary-class Magic Item implanted in her molar, Ternecia managed to teleport to her secret hiding place and then collapsed, pressing her forehead against the smooth, polished stone floor.

“I-I managed to escape...”

She had to regain her strength. She had to tell Birkyne and Gubamon that Heinz could become a Guider and then kill his party with their help.

This wasn't the time to be waiting for the Dhampir who was beyond the mountain range.

There was something wrong with Hihiryushukaka, too. How could he call himself the Evil God of Joyful Life? Heinz and his party were far more dangerous than a Dhampir who could create Undead, weren't they? Why hadn't Hihiryushukaka sent a divine message to kill Heinz earlier!

"Bellmond... Where are you absentmindedly strolling about now?! Hurry and come to me! You are my 'Foolish Dog,' aren't you!" Ternecia called for her last remaining confidant... her most useless servant.

This servant was scum who could only serve as a watchman for this place and as emergency rations; her mind and body were both broken and her appearance was unsightly. However, she possessed the unique skill called Offering. With the effect of this skill, the one who consumed her would recover all of their Vitality and Mana, and most status effects would be removed.

If Ternecia drained Bellmond of her blood, she could instantly make a full recovery. That was why she had kept Bellmond here all this time.

Now Ternecia would have Bellmond give her life to repay the favor of being picked up by the Vampires.

"Why aren't you coming! Hurry and – ah?"

Ternecia made no attempt to hide her irritation as she stood up. She saw not Bellmond, but five children all with identical faces, pointing a pipe in her direction.

Her mind froze for a moment before she screamed for her life.

"Telekinesis gun, fire."

With a roaring sound, something was fired from the pipe. Ternecia had been trying to suppress the Demon King's horns, she was forced to use them to try and protect herself a moment before the projectile hit her.

But the bullet fired from the pipe pierced through the Demon King's horns, which could normally tear through even an Adamantite shield, as if they were made of hard candy. It found its mark in Ternecia's neck.

Ternecia's eyes were still open wide in astonishment when her entire face disappeared. Her headless body collapsed onto the floor once more.

And then there was another roaring noise as the bullet hit the wall far on the other side of her, causing the cave to tremor. A few seconds later, there was a splashing noise as something fell into the underground lake.

"It seems that Orichalcum really does have a different level of power... but maybe I put too much Mana into it."

Vandalieu sighed as he looked at where his four spirit form bodies had been before disappearing due to the violent recoil and the gun barrel that now resembled a split piece of bamboo.



After Vandalieu put together the various scattered pieces of Bellmond back together, she had told him that the place Ternecia appeared when she visited this place was a port inside the mansion that allowed her to travel directly from the mansion to the underground lake via a boat.

The legendary-class Magic Item that Ternecia had in her molar was small and exceptional in how portable it was, but it was only capable of teleporting her to a previously-recorded location and the place she teleported from.

Vandalieu had been watching Heinz's party corner Ternecia through Lemures stationed far away from the battle, his gun with an Orichalcum bullet loaded in it waiting for her the moment she made her escape.

While waiting, he had created a small Dungeon for teleportation purposes behind Ternecia's hideout, wandered around, tamed the Undead Ternecia had created and collected the Magic Items and other items that had been kept here.

Incidentally, a week had passed since Bellmond had joined his side.

"She came here faster and in a more spent state than I expected," Vandalieu remarked.

"Is there not something else you should be saying?" Bellmond asked him.

"Something else...? Is there something I've forgotten?"

“Yes.” Bellmond sounded a little exasperated at the fact that Vandalieu didn’t show any particularly strong emotions after easily disposing of a Pure-breed Vampire who had ruled the underworld since the age of the gods.

But from Vandalieu’s perspective, Ternecia was far less of an enemy than Gubamon, who was the boss of the one who had killed his father and the one who had stolen the corpses of Talosheim’s heroes, and Birkyne, who was Eleanora’s former master.

Of course, Ternecia was the person who had been pulling the strings to cause the war between Talosheim and the Mirg shield-nation two hundred years ago, so she had indeed been on his list of “people he definitely had to kill.”

“Ah, if you’re worried about the fact that this underground space might collapse, it’s fine, because I’ve already made it more tremor-resistant,” said Vandalieu. “Even in the worst-case scenario, we will have time to escape.”

“...I can see that from the numerous thick stone pillars you have built next to the mansion,” Bellmond told him.

“I do not think that is what she meant, Master,” said Luciliano.

Even though it meant being parasitized by a creature and being equipped inside Vandalieu’s body, Luciliano’s burning researcher spirit had driven him in a desire to see the Undead created by a Pure-breed Vampire.

Luciliano was the first living human Bellmond had seen in a long time; thinking that he understood, she felt a sense of empathy.

“Those precious materials on the ground must be quickly collected!” Luciliano exclaimed. “This is a specimen of a Pure-breed Vampire that has lived since the time of the gods, one that has received the divine protection of an evil god! Its value is unfathomable!”

“...No, that is not what I was trying to say,” said Bellmond.

Our senses of values don’t match. It must be because I’m insane, thought Bellmond, feeling a sense of loneliness as she looked at Luciliano’s eyes sparkling with greed.

“I suppose you’re right,” said Vandalieu, agreeing with Luciliano. “Death Delay. Please infest her,” he requested his insects after casting a spell on Ternecia’s body, which had

started convulsing on the ground. And then he equipped her corpse inside his body.

It would have been a pity to let the large amount that had spilled onto the floor go to waste, so he turned it into a Blood Golem, made it go into his mouth and gulped it down. The broken horn fragments were collected into his luggage.

『The level of the Bloodwork skill has increased!』

To think that Vandalieu's skill had leveled up after drinking her blood once. Even if she had been rotten, she was still a Pure-breed Vampire.

"Please let me examine her as well when we return, Master," said Luciliano. "However... recovering her head is impossible, I suppose. I would have liked the Petrifying Demon Eye that Miss Bellmond mentioned, or fragments of her brain, but..."

"I have grown more and more afraid of going outside," said Bellmond. "Have you humans not become even more sinful than you were ten thousand years ago?"

"More importantly, do you know anything about the things that looked like horns and thorns growing from her body when I fired my Telekinesis gun?" Vandalieu asked.

"That is... No, I do not know," Bellmond replied, her tone of speech as polite as ever. "However, I suspect that it may be a fragment of the Demon King."

Hearing this, Vandalieu used Appraisal on the horn fragment that he was holding in his hand.

『Ternecia's horn: Details are unknown, but it contains Mana with the same properties as the Demon King Guduranis's blood.』

"I see... Ah, you two, get away from me," said Vandalieu. "She's coming."

"Coming?" Bellmond and Luciliano repeated.

"Ternecia isn't dead yet."

The moment they understood Vandalieu's words, a black, twisted horn flew out from the distant lake surface.

Vandalieu put up his barriers to try and stop it, but in the next instant, he heeded the

warning of Danger Sense: Death in his head and threw himself on the floor.

The twisted horn easily pierced through the Impact-negating Barrier.

“I see, so barriers don’t work on those horns. Still... I’m surprised you’re alive,” Vandalieu murmured in slight surprise as he stood up.

Ternecia, wearing a bloodcurdling, angry expression with water dripping from her body, emerged from the lake’s surface.

“I’ll kill you! I’ll kill you all!” she shrieked.

She had grown a new torso with her regenerative ability that defied reality, but she was in a state where her spine and ribs were accompanied only by her internal organs and a small amount of muscle, with some black, hard substance here and there holding her together.

“It seems that the rule that Vampires die when their heads or hearts are destroyed doesn’t apply to Pure-breed Vampires,” said Vandalieu, immediately using Golem Transmutation to return the gun barrel to its original shape and fire his Telekinesis gun once more, but the bullet was easily avoided this time. “You’re quite fast, considering that you look like you are on the verge of death,” he remarked.

Despite being enraged, Ternecia had not forgotten the attack that had inflicted such severe damage on her.

“There’s no way it will hit if you don’t take me by surprriise!”

The floor shook with thunderous noises, but Ternecia took evasive maneuvers at speeds beyond Vandalieu’s expectations. That was how cautious she was of the Telekinesis gun, but in reality, there was a delay of several seconds after firing before the next bullet could be fired, and it was difficult to maintain accuracy at ridiculously-long distances or against moving targets. It was an experimental weapon full of flaws.

I suppose I can’t hit enemies that fly around at high speeds.

When fighting Bellmond, Vandalieu had used his main body as bait to stop her movements, while just earlier, he had taken Ternecia by surprise. It seemed that he would need more planning before he could use his gun freely like a protagonist of an action movie.

“DIE! DIIIIIE!”

Ternecia looked as if she didn't even have a shred of sanity left as more of the Demon King's horns were fired from her body. Even being grazed by these horns that were spinning, twisting and branching rapidly would likely cause a loss of a large chunk of flesh.

“Extend your branches and vines,” Vandalieu instructed the Immortal Ent equipped inside his body. As barriers were ineffective against these attacks, he had decided to use the Immortal Ent's vines, branches and his own threads to entwine around the horns and trap them.

This was an effective strategy, as the Demon King's horns had plenty of spots where they would get entangled due to their shape. Even though Vandalieu couldn't repel them, he successfully managed to drastically change their trajectories.

“So, Master, what do you plan to do now?!” Luciliano asked.

“There is something I'm curious about, so I'm going to think,” Vandalieu replied.

“Can we interpret that as you being composed in this situation?!”

“Princess Levia, I'm going to give you tons of Mana, so I'll be relying on you,” said Vandalieu. “Eleanora, please cast Acceleration on me.”

“Yes, Your Highness,” Princess Levia replied as she appeared.

She and the other Ghosts turned into spears and skulls of black flames and then rammed themselves against the horns, trying to dampen their force as much as possible.

“Leave it to me, Vandalieu-sama,” said Eleanora as she emerged from Vandalieu's body to cast the time-attribute spell, Acceleration, on him.

Like Luciliano, she had been standing by inside Vandalieu with a parasite in her own body.

Now that time had quickened for Vandalieu with Acceleration, he went deep into thought as his Dead Spirit Magic intercepted the Demon King's horns.

Seeing this, Luciliano and Bellmond moved to support him as well. Luciliano recited incantations for enchantment spells on the Immortal Ent, while Bellmond used the threads that she was so proficient with to help divert the Demon King's horns.

"BELLMOOOOOND!" Ternecia howled. "WHY DID YOU BETRAY ME?! YOU UNGRATEFUL MONGREL!"

With her subordinate's betrayal revealed, her madness was intensifying. It seemed that her anger was making her become more articulate, but she didn't even notice that she was firing the horns before they had finished growing or that she was turning the mansion into rubble.

Bellmond gave a scornful laugh at the one she had given ten thousand years of loyalty to.

"So you say, 'dear guest,' but my new 'Danna-sama*' here treats me far better," she said. "It is true that you saved my life, but I have served you like a dog for ten thousand years. That is enough, is it not?"

TLN: A word for master. As you might expect, this is often used by stewards/butlers.*

Some would say that one should repay the debt of having their life saved by giving that life to the person who saved it, but that depended on individual senses of values, bonds and relationships.

And Bellmond had in fact spent ten thousand years serving Ternecia while being known as the 'Foolish Dog.' Could she really be called a mere traitor?

"You shitty woman! I'll kill you along with all of the other sluts!" Ternecia screamed.

"Me, a slut...!" Eleanora breathed.

"I-I won't forgive this!" Princess Levia cried.

"Your language was always rather foul, but oh my..." said Bellmond.

"Ah, it is quite fine if you ignore me," said Luciliano. "In fact, please forget that I exist, if you can."

At first glance, this conversation seemed to be a relaxed one, but one attack from the

Demon King's horns finding its mark would leave not only Luciliano, but Bellmond, Eleanora and even Vandalieu helpless. Even Princess Levia and the other Ghosts would be extinguished if they were hit after using up the Mana that Vandalieu had given them.

Even though Ternecia was simply repeating her monotonous projectile attacks, they couldn't let their guards down.

And Ternecia herself was in a dire state. She had received a fatal wound without having recovered the Mana and mental strength that she had used up in the battle against Heinz and his party. She had somehow managed to survive with her regenerative abilities and the Demon King's horns, but because of that, she had been forced to continue fighting without undoing the effects of the Demon King's horns.

Thus, she was unable to use magic. She had no choice but to stay airborne and fight, firing horns and spending vast amounts of Mana. If she didn't constantly stay moving, there was no telling when she would be shot by that mysterious pipe again, so she couldn't use her Petrifying Demon Eye.

And since only about thirty percent of her bones and muscles had returned, if she tried to engage in close-quarters combat right now, it was likely that her body would suffer damage.

Damn it! If only I could at least recover my torso! What did these guys do with my body?!

Ternecia was frustrated. If she could at least recover her torso and put herself back together, she might have been able to do something.

Luciliano pressing Vandalieu to collect her body had secretly been an excellent play.

Meanwhile, Vandalieu was watching Ternecia use the Demon King's fragment, deep in thought.

I also drank the Demon King's blood. So then, shouldn't I be able to do the same thing? But over half a year has passed since then, but there were no signs of me being able to do that at all.

Isn't there some kind of forbidden power? First, I need to use Out-of-body Experience and examine my body... Oh?

As he thought at a pace which had been sped up by Eleanora's Acceleration, he examined his own body and found a strange foreign substance (?) inside his body.

Put me together, put me together, make me whole.

Vandalieu could hear a small voice that he had never heard before. It seemed clear that there was a will inside his body other than his own.

How... unpleasant.

Put me together, make me whole.

『You have acquired the Demon King Encroach –』

You're a part of me. I'm you, and you are me.

Put me together... You? I am you, you are... me? I will put myself together, I will make myself whole.

Yes, that's fine.

Leaving aside Pete and the other creatures in his body, it was not good to have a will other than Vandalieu's own existing in the flesh and bones that made up his body.

『You have acquired the unique skill, Demon King Fusion!』

The moment Vandalieu heard the announcement that he had gained this skill, he knew how to use the Demon King's blood.

“DIIIE!” Ternecia shrieked.

At the perfect timing, Ternecia's attack pierced through the Immortal Ent's branches, tore through Bellmond's threads and closed in on Vandalieu.

Facing this attack, Vandalieu used his claws to cut his own neck.

“Vandalieu-sama?!” Eleanora screamed Vandalieu's name, but blood gushed out of his neck as if his neck was a fountain, and then twisted around like a snake to intercept the Demon King's horns.

“W-WHAT IS THAT?!” Ternecia and Luciliano somehow shouted the exact same words.

The Demon King’s horns were swallowed up by the Demon King’s blood that had surged out from Vandalieu’s neck.

“Why do you have a fragment of the Demon King?! Could it be that you undid the seal in Nineland... Hyih?!” Ternecia hastily began trying to escape as she saw the Demon King’s blood not stopping after twisting around the horns, closing in on her. But without warning, her body became heavy and stopped obeying her commands.

“This is, it can’t be... You intend to abandon me?!” Ternecia grunted as the Demon King’s blood, which had coagulated to become solid, broke through the Demon King’s horns as if they were nothing more than small branches and sank into her entrails.

As her internal organs were sent flying and she felt death approaching, she could hear something having a conversation.

I, you, join this body. Gather, me, and make me whole.

Incompetent host, incompetent host, I will join the superior hos– the main body. I am you, you are me.

The Demon King’s blood absorbed Demon King’s horns with the unpleasant noise of skin being torn off before returning to Vandalieu’s open wound. Ternecia, who now had nothing remaining other than a few bones and organs hanging from her neck, fell helplessly into the underground lake once more.

『You have acquired the Demon King’s horns!』

『The level of the Demon King Fusion, Mental Encroachment and Grotesque Mind skills have increased!』

“Great, I’ve won.” Vandalieu performed a small fist pump.

Eleanora and Princess Levia stared at him in astonishment. Bellmond’s mouth was twitching and for some reason, Luciliano seemed to have been moved to tears.

“That just now... was great?” Eleanora asked.

Princess Levia seemed uncertain. “Umm, it seems that you have defeated that person,

but...”

“To think that you not only harbored a fragment of the Demon King yourself, but that you would use it to steal the Demon King’s horns. Though I say so myself, it seems that I have wagged my tail for a troublesome individual,” Bellmond remarked.

“To think that I can research one of the highest of all forbidden arts, a fragment of the Demon King, so closely! Ah, I am so glad you took me as an apprentice, Master!” Luciliano cried.

“It seems that my apprentice’s opinion of me has risen in a completely unexpected way, but leaving that aside, let’s collect the Experience Points and materials,” said Vandalieu. “Ah, and please keep it a secret from my mother that I cut my own neck,” he added.

“Umm, Your Majesty? Is your body alright?” Princess Levia asked. She and Eleanora seemed worried, but Vandalieu gave them a nod.

“There aren’t any problems with it,” he replied. The wound on his neck had healed; other than the fact that he had spent a great amount of Mana, there was nothing wrong with his current condition. “Even if it is a fragment of the Demon King, now that it has become a part of the flesh and bones that make up my body, it is a part of me.”

If his dominant hand were to gain a mind of its own and say things like, “Listen to my commands from now on,” it would be very troublesome.

Thus, if it was possible to absorb the Demon King’s fragments, it was best to do so.

“In that case, well, it is probably alright,” Eleanora decided.

“Yes, well, I suppose so,” Princess Levia agreed.

The two of them still seemed strangely bewildered, but Vandalieu thought that they would be more satisfied if he became able to use make full use of the Demon King’s fragments, so he decided to collect Ternecia’s body.

“Bellmond,” he said.

“Certainly, Danna-sama.”

Threads extended outwards, raising Ternecia's body that was floating on the lake's surface, and dropped her onto the floor.

There was a groan.

Surprisingly, Ternecia was still alive, though there was a thick shadow of death on her face.

But naturally, Vandalieu showed her no mercy.

"Now then, first of all, let's collect the Petrifying Demon Eye," he said.

"W-wait... Stop... Help GYAAAAAH!" Ternecia screamed.

"One of the forbidden books that I took from the Mages' Guild says that some varieties of Demon Eyes can't be transplanted if they are not retrieved before death, so I will not wait," Vandalieu told her.

Ternecia opened her mouth and screamed as Vandalieu mercilessly continued his dissection after having already taken one of her eyes... and then Bellmond put her fingers in Ternecia's mouth.

"I am aware that you have a Magic Item implanted in your molar," she said.

Ternecia looked directly into the eyes of her subordinate, who was giving a faint smile. And then she realized that Bellmond was becoming something completely different from her past self.

This woman...! Just like Heinz's companions, she is being raised up by another being! Who, who is this person...!

Ternecia looked around with her remaining eye to see that the same thing was visible in Luciliano and Eleanora's eyes.

And then she finally looked at Vandalieu's eyes, and she was certain that he was the one responsible.

"That eye isn't a Demon Eye, so I suppose I don't really care about it," Vandalieu murmured.

Now that she had lost the Demon King's horns and her Demon King Encroachment Degree skill, she knew just how dangerous this Dhampir was. Even Guiders were nothing compared to him.

I must not be killed by him!

Perhaps it was instinct or Hihiryushukaka's divine protection that told her this. She was shaking in fear, but she literally had no hands or feet to do anything.

She had been cursed with misfortune.

"Ah, this is unexpected," Vandalieu whispered as two silhouettes appeared a short distance away from the mansion that had been turned into rubble.

"Eleanora?!"

"Just what is happening here?!"

Birkyne and Gubamon had teleported to Ternecia's hideout in order to Judge her.

The two of them had wrongly suspected that she had been working together with the Dhampir. Now, they froze for a moment at this scene that they could not understand.

The same applied for Vandalieu and his companions; they hadn't expected that any other Pure-breed Vampires would appear, let alone two of them at once.

Using this opening, Ternecia spat Bellmond's finger out of her mouth and teleported away.

"Curses!" said Bellmond, extending her hand reflexively towards the spot where Ternecia had vanished.

"That doesn't matter," said Vandalieu. "We're running away."

"OBUH?!"

Vandalieu stuffed one of his Worms into Bellmond's mouth to infest her while equipping both Eleanora and Luciliano inside his body.

And then he used Telekinesis to fire his own body like a cannonball towards the small

Dungeon that he had created.

CHAPTER 96

A POORLY-ENDING CONSPIRACY AND FUTURE PLANS

“We managed to escape... or should we say, she let us get away?” said Edgar.

“I don’t know about that,” said Heinz. “That Pure-breed Vampire didn’t look like she was in a position to do that, either. But let’s just heal our wounds for now.”

“Yes. Diana, we’re counting on you,” said Delizah.

Heinz and his party were healing their injured bodies with Diana’s healing magic and Potions, inspecting their equipment and stripping the Magic Stone and other materials from the ‘Fighting Dog’ that they had defeated.

“With this, we’ve managed to cut through the Vampire organization that worships the Evil God of Joyful Life, but...” Jennifer murmured.

“Damn it, she was more evil than the Vampires in fairy tales,” said Heinz. “So that was a fragment of the Demon King.”

He and Jennifer seemed regretful.

“Don’t beat yourself up over it,” said Edgar. “It’s true that we let Ternecia escape, but we’ve destroyed several of the Vampires’ bases and defeated three of her close retainers. There’s no way that this is small damage for them, is there?”

“And apparently there is only one of the Five Dogs left,” Delizah added. “It seems that there is someone out there who defeated one of them.”

“We have no information on this whatsoever, so it is possible that this retainer was not exterminated by someone, but defeated during a secret feud with other Vampires,” said Diana.

As they conversed, the empty air in front of them began shining. Ternecia, who now had a strange appearance, appeared in that spot.

She screamed as her severed head, from which her spinal cord and organs were trailing like the body of a snake, attacked Heinz's party with fangs bared. Heinz had happened to be closest to her; although he was surprised, he reflexively slashed at her with his magic sword.

With a deep cut in her head, she fell onto the ground and stopped moving.

"...Why did she come back?" Heinz felt the sensation of gaining a large quantity of Experience Points that told him that he had defeated Ternecia, which only added to his bewilderment.

His companions could only blink in confusion with him.

It would be a little while later when they realized why Ternecia had worn such a satisfied expression as she died.

With that said, Ternecia's spirit ended up being seen by the Lemures monitoring Heinz and his party, so Vandalieu would use Spirit Communication on her later.



The offensive spell that had been released instantly struck the entrance of the cavern... the entrance of the Dungeon. But although there was a thunderous noise, not a single crack appeared in the cavern. Even if the entrances of Dungeons were made of wood or stone, it was impossible to physically destroy them. Not even gods, let alone Pure-breed Vampires, could cause any damage to them.

If destroying them was possible, Bellwood and the others would have gone around destroying every dangerous Dungeon that was mass-producing monsters after they had become heroic gods.

Looking at it the other way, the fact that the Vampires' attacks couldn't destroy it meant that this entrance-shaped structure was a Dungeon.

"Impossible," Gubamon muttered. "Is that a Dungeon? Why is there such a thing here... No, more importantly, what is the Dhampir planning to do after having flown in there?"

"Gubamon... W-what happened?!" Birkyne shouted. "None of this was part of my plan! Why in the world are things like this! What happened?!"

“Damn it, calm yourself! Birkyne, this is not a time where we can leisurely wait for your temper to subside!” said Gubamon. He was reprimanding Birkyne, but even he wasn’t exactly calm.

The two of them had observed Ternecia’s battle from afar with their familiars and then come to her hideout in order to bring her down.

The three Pure-breed Vampires had been sworn friends who would work together in emergency situations. Thus, the location of Ternecia’s secret hideout had been known only to Birkyne and Gubamon.

But they had teleported here to find Ternecia not only weakened but on the verge of death, her mansion in ruins and the Dhampir holding one of Ternecia’s eyes in his hand, with Eleanora sticking out of his back.

Ternecia had made use of that moment when everyone stopped moving out of surprise in order to escape, while the Dhampir had somehow absorbed the human, female Ghosts and a Vampire who was supposed to have been Ternecia’s subordinate into his body and flown into this Dungeon.

Even these two Pure-breed Vampires who had lived since the age of the gods had no clue what was going on.

“What does this mean?” Gubamon asked. “Ternecia was cornered to the point that she had to use the Demon King’s horns, but even so, she would not easily be defeated by the average enemy. And that was Eleanora, wasn’t it? Then that means that the Dhampir –”

“Yes, that is Vandalieu,” Birkyne said, interrupting Gubamon. “The one born between your Subordinate Vampire and a Dark Elf, the one who stole my Eleanora from me. Damn it, he wasn’t working with Ternecia, he’d been planning to make use of those brats playing hero in order to kill her!” he shouted.

Gubamon hastily used his familiars to make sure, but it seemed that Heinz had indeed already finished Ternecia off.

“How could such a thing... What happened to the Demon King’s horns? The fragments are supposed to possess another nearby lifeform when their hosts die. Then does that mean that the Dhampir, Vandalieu, has acquired Ternecia’s fragment?!” Shocked, Gubamon stared at the Dungeon that Vandalieu had disappeared into.

The Demon King's fragments didn't simply grow stronger the more of them were gathered; in fact, there was the risk that the growth rate of the Demon King Encroachment Degree skill would accelerate. But these two Vampires still didn't know what kind of fragment had been sealed beneath Nineland.

It was possible that Vandalieu possessed a fragment of the Demon King that was very compatible with the Demon King's horns.

"Gubamon, just as you said, we cannot afford to waste any time. We must kill that brat now! He has at least two fragments of the Demon King, but you and I can kill him together!" said Birkyne, his fangs bared and his handsome face twisted in anger.

"You are right," said Gubamon, feeling a sense of danger for the first time in tens of thousands of years. "The mysteries can be solved after we kill that monstrosity. I am sure he intends to ambush us inside the Dungeon, but we should teach him and that traitor that things will not go as they expect."

Birkyne and Gubamon, having recognized that Vandalieu was not a thing to be toyed with but an enemy who could kill them, entered the Dungeon, but... of course, as Vandalieu had teleported out with the Labyrinth Construction skill, he was nowhere to be found inside.



Alda, the God of Law and Fate, had managed to gain a good idea of what Vandalieu had done in the Hartner Duchy through the memories of Pablo of the Red Wolf Knights' Order.

"Alda, he must be exterminated right this moment!" said Curatos, the God of Records.

"If we sit and do nothing, the situation could become irreversible!" said Niltark, the God of Judgment.

But Alda shook his head.

"Do not be hasty," said Alda. "That Dhampir... the 'Monstrosity,' has already returned to hiding in the southern region of the Bahn Gaia continent. We cannot even dispatch Familiar Spirits or Heroic Spirits there, let alone Spirit Clones."

Because believers of Alda and his followers did not live in the southern region of the

continent, and because the influence of the slumbering Vida was great, it was difficult for the gods to descend upon the world or directly send their subordinates into that region.

“Then send a Divine Message and start a holy war!” Niltark urged Alda.

“Niltark, that would also be a hasty move. The Dhampir has already become a ‘Monstrosity’ in both name and form. No matter how many weak soldiers we send, they will only be slaughtered horribly and turned into Undead,” said Alda.

He suspected that Vandalieu’s abilities were already equivalent to those of an S-class adventurer if the Adventurers’ Guild’s class system was used as a reference.

He hadn’t seen the fine details of Vandalieu’s battle against Ternecia, but since Vandalieu was the one who had manipulated Kinarp and his subordinates, Alda knew that there was a high chance that Vandalieu had been involved in Ternecia’s fate.

No matter how much of her strength she had exhausted in her battle against Heinz and his party, Vandalieu had reduced her to being on the verge of death. His power was unfathomable.

But the most troublesome thing was that Vandalieu led an army that would act as his hands and feet. If Vandalieu was on his own or had only a few subordinates, it would be possible for a dozen or so heroes to fight against him.

But Vandalieu had subordinates who could rival such heroes, and some of them had actually once been heroes.

And his numbers were endless. If attacked by weak soldiers, he was capable of creating as many Golems from nearby rocks or trees as he desired.

As long as Vandalieu remained hidden on the other side of the Boundary Mountain Range, it would be difficult to overwhelm Vandalieu’s military power in either numbers or strength.

“Everyone, we should value slow, elaborate moves over hasty ones,” said Alda. “What we need is great heroes, each of them equivalent to a thousand superhuman heroes. We need champions who would have stood equal to Bellwood in the past.”

The gods stirred as Alda mentioned the name of Bellwood, the heroic god who had

defeated the Demon King and was now in a slumber after having exchanged blows with the Evil God of Sinful Chains.

In the past one hundred thousand years, numerous heroes had appeared and achieved great things. Some among the gods gathered here had once been such heroes.

But even so, the champions who had been chosen and invited from a foreign world by the gods were beings of a different level. These champions would easily defeat enemies that heroes would need to fight for their lives against. Despite three of them being lost, they had managed to defeat the Demon King in his complete form, after all.

Alda was declaring that the gods would be making an effort to make these champions return. The gods were shaken with all kinds of emotions – approval, excitement, hope.

“...I can’t imagine that this can be achieved so easily,” whispered Nineroad, who led the gods of the wind-attribute in place of the fallen Shizarion, her tone showing neither opposition or disapproval.

“Hohoh. Is the one who was once a champion-sama herself trying to say that she cannot expect anything from the appearance of kouhais who could rival her?” Fitun whispered back.

“Fitun, I do not believe that strength is a requirement to be a hero,” Nineroad replied. Fitun, the God of Thunderclouds, was one of her subordinates – in a way, her kouhai. “I simply think that it is nonsense to judge the merits of heroes based solely on their power,” she said.

“Hoh, I would never have expected such words from your former self,” said Fitun. “Well, they are much more civil than the caustic words you exchanged with the heroes Ark and Zakkart at the scene of your separation.”

“...That scene was exaggerated by those who came later,” Nineroad told him. “The reality is that I simply ignored their words. Now that I think about it, I was foolish as well. Of course, it is unlikely that I could be thought of as wise now. Just like Alda.”

“...What do you mean by this, Nineroad?” Fitun asked. “It would be a serious matter if Niltark were to hear these words.”

“I’ll happily tell you,” said Nineroad. “I don’t mean anything in particular. I simply think that us gods should not make any moves ourselves.”

The gods were spending all of their time and energy maintaining the world; they could not descend upon it. In this state, guiding the people as they had done during the age of the gods was impossible.

And the people themselves likely did not desire this guidance. At the very least, Nineroad would not have accepted it if she were one of them.

“Fitun, if you were one of the people, forced to live and die repeatedly while constantly being instructed what to do, you would become fed up with it, wouldn’t you?” said Nineroad.

That was essentially what Alda was doing. Ever since Bellwood had fallen into slumber, Alda had been sending Divine Messages to the people more frequently.

“We are gods; we are not rulers or dictators,” Nineroad continued. “We should only make a move when the people desire it and when it is necessary. Heroes are not those we create, but beings that the people wish for. At most, all we need to do is lend them a little assistance.”

When she was a student by the name of Kyuudou* Akina, who worked part-time in a pet store on Earth, she had believed that there were no gods.

TLN: The kanji of her surname literally means “nine roads.”*

But Shizarion had taught her that gods existed, even on Earth. When Nineroad learned of this, she had lamented how helpless the gods of Earth were. They had simply left Earth’s people to do many things that could only be described as foolish.

That was precisely why she had worked with Shizarion, who had made moves to save his world, and sympathized with Bellwood’s words.

But now that she had become a god and looked back on it, how had this world turned out?

Nineroad sighed.

“...That is true,” said Fitun. From his point of view as a god, not the people, he agreed with her.

Even if something as troublesome as giving attention to each and every believer and

guiding them like a stubborn father was possible, he didn't want to do it.

"But a fragment of the Demon King has passed into the hands of another evil individual. Is that not something that we should fear?" Fitun asked.

"That too is a problem that the people should deal with themselves... As unfortunate as it is, the family I have been managing recently has not desired the guidance of any god," said Nineroad.

It hadn't been her intention for the Hartner family to make use of the barrier she had left behind. But Talosheim's betrayal conducted by the Duke Hartner of that time was only one of the tragedies that had been repeated throughout history.

It was the kind of thing that happened both on Earth and in other worlds.

Sooner or later, they would realize their mistakes, whether it was those of the duke's family, the ones who served them or even the ones who would replace them someday. Just like the many other mistakes that had been made.

Just like the foolish actions and tragedies that had happened over and over again up until now.

Also, Nineroad and the other gods here treated the destruction of Vida's races, including the Titans of Talosheim, as an act of justice. It would be ridiculous for them to try and prevent it.

"I suppose that was my most foolish move of all," said Nineroad. "Fitun, you're not hiding anything, are you?"

"Dear me. What are you suggesting that I would be hiding?" Fitun asked.

"Don't respond to a question with another question. But as long as it does not benefit those who absorb the Demon King's fragments, you are free to do as you like," said Nineroad. "I shall press Alda for change. I shall tell him that the teachings admired by his new heroes should be considered to be the path of righteousness."

"Do you mean the teachings of the peaceful faction, that Vida's races should be acknowledged as people?"

Fitun had inadvertently asked another question, but Nineroad left to where Alda and

the other gods were without answering it.

“Tch, peace, after all this time? If there is to be conflict, it should be carried out until one side dies out,” Fitun muttered. “But it is best for Alda to consider a ceasefire in order to devote efforts to fighting the Demon King’s remnants. I suppose there is a chance that he agrees to Nineroad’s words. There is no guarantee that he will continue to shake his head as he has done until now, spouting foolish things about the sacrifices that have been made so far.”

My superior has said some troublesome words, Fitun thought as he frowned.

Now that Vandalieu had absorbed the Demon King’s blood, there was little chance that Nineroad and Alda would make peace with him, but it wouldn’t be interesting for a wet blanket to be thrown on a fight to the death that he would experience for the first time in a long time.

“What happens next likely depends on Rodcorte, but... I wish he would hurry and reincarnate someone promising onto this world.”



Rodcorte experienced the memories of Luciliano, who had become Vandalieu’s apprentice, seeing what Luciliano had seen. What he saw made him forget that he was a god and hold his head in his hands.

“To think that a mortal being would go beyond resurrecting the dead, try his hand at reincarnation and end up absorbing fragments of the Demon King... I suppose the situation has deteriorated to the point that things are out of my control even if I send more of those reincarnated in Origin.

Even if the other reincarnated individuals were more proficient in battle and exceptionally resourceful compared to Kanata, Vandalieu had already grown too powerful. Rodcorte acknowledged this.

He had not given Vandalieu any cheat-like abilities, but he had shown terrifying growth both in Origin and in Lambda.

The most astounding thing was Vandalieu’s drive to not only attempt, but achieve things that any other person would refuse to do, hesitate to do or avoid doing at all

costs.

Rodcorte even felt a nightmarish premonition that at this rate, it was possible that Vandalieu really would become a second Guduranis.

“Perhaps I should come up with a way to bring Vandalieu to my side, like Kanata suggested. I should make Vandalieu think that I intend to bring him to my side, and when he lets his guard down, I will have the others reincarnated from Origin aim to kill him.”

Was it wise or foolish to assume that the option of earnestly apologizing to Vandalieu didn't exist at this point in time?

“I should make them form teams rather than attack alone, or make them build their experiences from the ground up like Vandalieu has done.”

Given a little room to grow, the others reincarnating from Origin should be able to defeat Vandalieu. They had been granted cheat-like abilities, after all. Rodcorte believed this with absolute certainty.

Suddenly, Alda's Familiar Spirit visited to notify Rodcorte of Alda's intentions.

Has he noticed the fact that I have reincarnated people from another world? Rodcorte wondered, but the message contained a suggestion.

“He wants me to make the souls of Vida's races flow through my circle of transmigration system,” Rodcorte murmured. “But I already refused him once, one hundred thousand years ago.”

This was a plan that Alda had considered after listening to Nineroad pressing him to accept Vida's races in accordance with the teachings of Alda's peaceful faction.

However, Rodcorte had already received this suggestion from Alda once before, one hundred thousand years ago.

Back then, Rodcorte had told Alda that his suggestion was impossible.

Strictly speaking, it wasn't impossible. Theoretically, it was possible. However, executing this suggestion was realistically impossible.

First, in order to transfer the souls to Rodcorte's system, Vida herself would need to willingly destroy her own system.

Even if this was accomplished, the only souls that could be transferred were those of Vida's races that had no monster ancestors. In other words, races like Vampires and Lamias would go extinct without being able to leave any descendants behind, and their souls would either wander endlessly or be forced to fall into the Demon King's system, which would cause them to be reborn as complete monsters.

The Vida of the past would have never accepted such conditions.

And Vida was currently in a slumber; it was impossible for Alda or Rodcorte to directly destroy the system that she owned. Thus, the only way to destroy the system was the extinction of all of Vida's races, the goal that Alda had been working towards all this time.

No matter how unknowledgeable Rodcorte was to the values of people, he didn't imagine that anyone would agree if they were told, "Your existence will be acknowledged, so please go extinct."

"Either that, or I would need to assemble a new system... In order to do that, I would need to stop every single one of my circle of transmigration systems, including the one that governs reincarnation in Lambda, for a period of several years to several decades. Considering the effects that doing such a thing would have, Alda should understand that this is not something that can be done."

A period of several years to several decades where not only humans, but all plants, animals and every other creature, would not be born properly. Bodies born without souls would grow in number, and at first, wandering spirits would possess the empty bodies, but... Plants would be fine, but what would happen if spirits with broken memories and collapsed, insane personalities were to be reborn in bodies that were not exclusively made for them?

The worst-case scenario of all life becoming extinct was more than likely.

In Lambda's case, the monsters that would grow in number due to the Demon King's circle of reincarnation system could still be hunted for food, however.

Rodcorte had explained all of this to Alda a hundred thousand years ago, and he doubted that Alda had forgotten this explanation, but Alda's suggestion also contained

a request at the end – that Rodcorte “give it some thought.”

“...Is he intending to make me think of a new way?”

It seemed that Alda intended to leave Rodcorte’s specialty to the specialist.

“But for this suggestion to come a second time means that Bellwood is still sleeping. On top of that, Alda has been cornered... though the cause of that is likely Vandalieu.”

Rodcorte had been thinking that even if Alda noticed those reincarnated from Origin, it would be fine if he left it to their own resourcefulness, but now that Alda had been cornered to this point, Rodcorte reconsidered and thought that it might be best to make a real effort to keep them hidden.

At the same time, Rodcorte decided to accept Alda’s suggestion for now. It was difficult that he would find a good solution even if he told Alda that he would think about it. However, he did think that giving it some degree of thought before telling Alda his verdict would be better than bluntly refusing the request.

If this had all been caused by Vandalieu’s actions, then in a way, it could be said that he had made this world move, though Vandalieu himself wouldn’t be happy about this at all.

“However, I am not unoccupied, either.”

During his free time between dealing with the continuously-occurring errors caused by Vandalieu, Rodcorte sent a reply of, “I will consider it,” back to Alda.



It was spring, and Talosheim was growing warmer. The livestock were eating algae and aquatic plants in the waterway.

“Meeh~”

“Meeeh~”

“Meh.”

“Meeh~”

They were goats.

They were not ducks or geese, but unmistakably goats.

Goats with white fur, white whiskers and wide eyes. However, only the upper half of their bodies and front legs were those of goats; the bottom half of their bodies had been replaced by the scales and tails of fish.

Perhaps because Talosheim was essentially a Devil's Nest, the goats had transformed into Rank 2 monsters called Capricorns after being brought back. Because their bodies had grown larger after they became Capricorns, the amount of milk they produced had doubled, so this wasn't really considered a problem.

Incidentally, the goats weren't the only ones. The rabbits, chickens and the single pig that Vandalieu had obtained had also transformed into monsters. None of them had undergone such extreme transformations like the Capricorns, however.

The horses would likely transform before long, too.

"Huh, where's King? I heard he was here."

"Vandalieu is with the goats."

"Ah, he's really with them!"

One of the men from the cultivation villages pointed at Vandalieu, who was swimming in the waterways with the Capricorns.

"Meeh?" said Vandalieu, who had produced goat-like horns on his head with the Demon King's horns.

"Please, speak like a normal person," said Bilde.

"What is it, Bilde?" Vandalieu asked. He had been swimming with the Capricorns while inspecting the waterways, but now he climbed onto the bank.

"Your eyes will become wide like theirs soon," Bilde muttered. "It's almost time for the cooking class," she reminded him.

"Ah, that's right," said Vandalieu. "Today was going to be how to make ramen, wasn't

it?”

He had introduced new foods and flavors one after another, but of course, they didn't become widespread right away. Only after he had taught everyone and made them understand what kind of cuisine was available could it be said that they were widespread.

That was why Vandalieu had begun holding regular cooking classes.

“Once I can print recipes with printing technology, I can make cookbooks, but... the results are still questionable,” said Vandalieu.

“Are they? I think it's amazing for that thick white stuff to spread out flat and become paper,” said Bilde.

At the paper factory, paper was being produced by the fibers of the plants that were the raw material being softened, turned into Golems, and then having them spread uniformly in a thin shape to turn into paper.

It was probably of lower quality than a product made by a skilled craftsman, but Vandalieu could still create paper that was more than suitable for making books.

“No, it's not the paper, but the printing that's the problem,” said Vandalieu. “I'm still struggling to adjust the power of the printing press Golems. Karcan and Pablo are clumsy as well, aren't they?”

“Hmm. Making paper and turning it into books is a lot of work, isn't it? I think it's fine to use stone or clay tablets, though,” said Bilde as she waited for Vandalieu to wipe the water off his body. It seemed that she still didn't understand the value of paper. She had originally been a forest-dwelling Ghoul, after all.



Vandalieu didn't look any different from before, but he was a little depressed at the fact that he hadn't managed to bring Ternecia down. His chance to gain a large amount of Experience Points had been wasted, and he had seen the achievement of killing her being stolen by Heinz and his party through the eyes of his Lemures.

It was difficult to say that his plan to defeat Ternecia had been thoroughly planned. But it had gone well until the very last moment.

First, he had reduced Kinarp, who had apparently held connections to one of Ternecia's subordinates, into a vegetative state and made him confess.

He had done this so that the knights and adventurers would hunt the Vampires who worshipped the evil god in his place, as he had been busy rescuing Princess Levia and those with her, as well as the former Titan slaves.

He had imagined that Heinz and his party would be particularly eager to make a move. If they intended to protect the Dhampir girl that they kept with them, the Vampires who worshipped an evil god were targets that they needed to exterminate as many of as possible.

And just as Vandalieu had expected, Heinz and his party had defeated the Vampires one after another, and Vandalieu had successfully summoned their spirits with Spirit Communication.

He had gained information from Ternecia's close retainers like Chipiras and pinpointed her hideout... the last place she would escape to if cornered.

It was a secret among secrets for Ternecia; only the other Pure-breed Vampires, Birkyne and Gubamon, and Bellmond who served as a watchdog and emergency consumption material, had known of its existence, but... people are creatures who are prone to failure.

Even if the secret was thought to be kept, secrets are things that leak through careless words. None of these careless words revealed any significant information; it was difficult to even say that they were clues.

However, the Vampires who had served Ternecia for tens of thousands of years possessed many of these dust-like specks of information.

And once Vandalieu had gained the spirits of three of the Five Dogs, he had amassed a mountain of that dust. He had identified the hideout's location and taken control over it with strength and by bringing Bellmond to his side. And then he had waited for Heinz to corner Ternecia.

What had been outside of Vandalieu's calculations was Birkyne and Gubamon's appearance in that place. They hadn't appeared when Ternecia had been cornered by Heinz and his companions, so he had assumed that they would not come to assist her, and that caused him to let his guard down. Because of that, he had failed to kill

Ternecia.

“Well, it’s fine. I didn’t gain Experience Points and none of Heinz’s party members died, but I did reduce the number of enemies I have by one.”

Vandalieu’s plan had been to get rid of one of his obstacles, and he had achieved that.

And he had also acquired several precious Magic Items and materials at Ternecia’s hideout.

The Undead that Ternecia had created were rather poorly-made, however.

Because she had considered Undead to be nothing more than playthings or works of art, the practicality for fighting that Vandalieu desired from them was nonexistent.

“Well, I’ve gained all the information I need, so –”

“GIHHHHHHYAAAAH –”

The unpleasant-sounding scream and clear sound that resembled the breaking of glass stopped at the same time. Ternecia’s soul had been broken and destroyed.

『The level of the God Slayer and Soul Break skills have increased!』

Ternecia had become a subordinate god of Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life. Vandalieu had decided that it would be dangerous to keep her in his pocket. She hadn’t been as friendly towards him as Bellmond, so he had broken her soul without hesitation.

“Now then, let’s get to the issue at hand,” said Vandalieu. He was holding a meeting to decide his future plans in the chamber beneath the royal castle, which he had thoroughly transformed into something like a multipurpose workshop. “Everyone, please make your reports.”

Kasim was the first to raise his hand, slightly intimidated by the other members at the meeting. “Yeah. I’m Kasim, the representative of the new citizens. Umm, about the refrigerators you made us, no matter how many times we keep telling Fester, he keeps freezing his vegetables and meat.”

Vandalieu had created refrigerators enchanted with Demon Fire, a death-attribute

spell that absorbed heat as it burned. They were extraordinary items that preserved meat and raw fish that would otherwise go bad within a day during summer, but... Kasim and the others had never used refrigerators before, so it seemed that they were still not used to them.

He had designed them so that children could never climb inside and get trapped, but he hadn't imagined that the refrigeration and freezing compartments would get mixed up.

"I'm glad I learned this during the prototype stage," said Vandalieu. "I can do something about this problem before commercializing it."

"Yeah, that's true," said Borkus. "I accidentally froze some miso before, too."

"The doors have written letters on them, do they not? Why do people not notice?" Zadiris asked.

"We can't read difficult kanji," Kasim explained. "Lina has written the furigana* on the doors for us now, though."

TLN: Characters that indicate the pronunciation of kanji.*

The meeting continued in a slightly relaxed, quiet atmosphere.

Next was Tarea's report.

"The development of a way to process your horns is going well, too, Van-sama," she said.

The Demon King's horns that Vandalieu produced were as hard as Adamantite, but they possessed the same properties as deer antlers and rhinoceros horns, so it was possible to turn them into all kinds of equipment and products.

It seemed that she was currently soaking them in Vandalieu's blood, which also contained the Demon King's blood, and observing the results.

"Ufufu, with my hands, Van-sama's hard, strong horns..." Tarea's voice trailed off.

"Do not make such a sickening face at a meeting," said Zadiris, reprimanding her. "I am sure that it will not return anytime soon, but we must continue."

“How is transforming Ternecia into a Live-Dead going?” Vandalieu asked.

“Without problem,” Luciliano replied. “Normally, the Live-Dead transformation process would be impossible for members of Vida’s races, including Pure-breed Vampires. But it has been made possible by circulating your blood, which contains the Demon King’s blood, through her body. It was my first time replacing the brain matter with that of another person, but thanks to the fine adjustments you have made for me, things are going well.”

“Then you have as many materials as you need for Eleanora and Bellmond’s surgeries, don’t you?” said Vandalieu.

“Indeed; the regenerative ability of Pure-breed Vampires is fearsome,” said Luciliano. “No matter how much of her skin, fat, bone or internal organs I take, there won’t be any problem as long as I make sure she does not die.”

“The fate of my former master is terrible indeed, but... Danna-sama, what do you mean by my ‘surgery?’” asked Bellmond, her cheeks twitching upon hearing the conversation unfolding before her.

Incidentally, despite Vandalieu killing Ternecia having been one of Bellmond’s conditions for joining him, he had not killed Ternecia directly. But because it was Bellmond herself who had let her escape, and because Ternecia had indeed died in the end, she seemed to have decided to serve Vandalieu.

There was also the reason of her not having anywhere else to go, however.

“Eh? Wasn’t your other condition for becoming my steward to return your body ‘to its original form?’” said Vandalieu.

“I did indeed say that,” said Bellmond. “But my body is already back to its original...”

“Slow on the uptake, aren’t you?” said Eleanora. “Vandalieu-sama is saying that he will heal our scars. The wounds that Birkyne inflicted upon me, and your wounds as well.”

Bellmond was surprised that such a thing was possible, but seeing her master nod in agreement to Eleanora’s words, she began to believe it.

“...Then I shall take you up on that offer. I am not maintaining this appearance because I want to, after all,” said Bellmond, touching her scarred cheek.

But there was nobody here who considered her to be as hideous as she thought she was. Half of Borkus's face, for instance, was made of only bone, never mind his scars.

And Kasim was another who didn't think that Bellmond looked unsightly. He looked at Vandalieu with a gaze that was soft and yet held resignation and sadness.

So, you're on that side, too.

Vandalieu wasn't being blamed, but it felt like he was, which made him feel very uncomfortable.

"W-well then, next topic of discussion," he said.

The newly-established school, the new workplaces of the city's new citizens, special events such as tournaments for shogi, chess, Reversi and go, the demand for new clothes including dresses, a plan to construct a new public bathhouse rather than restoring an existing one – All kinds of things were discussed, but it seemed that the largest problem was the lack of dairy products.

"Van, there isn't enough fresh cream," said Basdia.

The fresh cream created by Vandalieu had captivated the inhabitants of Talosheim with its soft texture and sweet taste. The amount he could make had increased when the goats turned into Capricorns, but in the end, there were still only a few dozen of them. They were not sufficient to satisfy a nation of over four thousand citizens.

There was such a gap between the supply and demand that all of the milk produced was being used to make cream.

For Vandalieu, who wanted to create butter, cheese and yogurt as well, this was a serious situation.

"Hmm, if we raise the animals with the same methods used by the farming villages, there's no telling how many years it will take before we have enough of them..." Vandalieu murmured.

Chezare spoke up. "Your Majesty, how about increasing the number of Capricorns we have?" he suggested.

"It's true that Capricorns are more fertile than normal goats because they're

monsters,” said Eleanora. “But because the bottom half of their bodies are those of fish, there is currently a limit to how many we can keep in Talosheim at once. Even if we breed them to reach that limit, I am sure there still won’t be enough to satisfy Vandalieu-sama’s desires.”

As Eleanora pointed out, there was an ecological problem in the fact that Capricorns needed places with water to inhabit.

But Chezare was already fully aware of this. “That is why we will cultivate new land,” he said. “Yamata-dono, please hand out those documents.”

Yamata... the Undead that Ternecia had created, a nine-headed Hydra with its heads replaced by nine upper bodies and heads of good-looking Centaurs and Mer-people, distributed some documents.

The documents contained maps of the surrounding area that were still left in Talosheim’s records.

“If we follow the waterway passing through Talosheim, it becomes a river to the south, and this river flows through this forest into a wide marshland,” said Chezare. “Let us cultivate this land.”

“But if I recall, there are several packs of Lizardmen... Two hundred years ago, a relatively amicable group ruled the area a short distance north of Talosheim,” said Princess Levia. “We had a treaty of peace with them, but I don’t know how things will be now...”

She was talking about how things had been two hundred years ago, but Lizardmen lived shorter than humans, with lifespans of only thirty to forty years. There was no telling what kind of groups would be ruling the marshland now.

“With that being the case, if that relatively amicable group is still alive, we simply need to suggest to them that they cooperate with us,” said Chezare. “If not, we can simply take control by force.”

Everyone at the meeting nodded in understanding.

“Well then, let us move south to turn the marshland into a Capricorn farm,” said Vandalieu.

Vandalieu had originally planned to one day visit the southern region of the continent where the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Vida, as well as the slumbering Vida herself, were said to be. It wasn't a bad idea to go south while waiting for the commotion in the Orbaume Kingdom to settle down.

And so began the cultivation project that would later be recorded in history books as the Cream Expedition.

『The 'Taboo Name' Title has been removed!』



Orbaume, the capital city of the Orbaume Kingdom.

The people in the great city with a population of two million were full of excitement today. A great hero who had become a legend... no, a myth, had been born.

"Heinz! Heinz! Heinz!"

"Long live the Five-colored Blades! Long live the 'five who tear through the darkness!'"

"I'm going to convert to the peaceful faction too!"

"Kyah, Edgar-sama is facing this way~!"

The people were cheering for Heinz and his party who were standing at the front of a dazzling parade with the Dhampir girl who was under their protection, Selen.

Edgar's expression had loosened after hearing the shrill voices of beautiful women while waving at them from a luxuriously decorated carriage.

Suddenly, he noticed that Heinz was looking somewhat depressed and called out to him. "Hey, hey, you can at least give them a forced smile, can't you? Smile, you have to smile," he said.

"...I am not someone fit to stand on a stage," said Heinz.

"What, you don't like the new Titles we've acquired?" said Edgar.

It was well-known that the five members of the party had challenged the Vampires in combat during night where they were supposed to have the advantage. All of them had gained the title, 'one who tears through the darkness.' It was true that even Edgar thought that it was an exaggerated, embarrassing Title.

Of course, once this became well-known, the Vampires would no longer let their guards down, assuming that humans wouldn't attack them at night.

"I don't really care about that," said Heinz.

"You don't really care, huh... so does that mean you like it?" asked Edgar.

"It's not that, it's Ternecia. We finished her off, but the one who truly defeated her was not us. She had escaped from someone else."

A Pure-breed Vampire who had been born in the age of the gods and gone on to rule the underworld for a hundred thousand years, threatening humanity. By defeating such a being, Heinz's party had been praised as great heroes.

But Ternecia had clearly been on the verge of death before Heinz dealt the fatal blow, and she had lost both her Petrifying Demon Eye and the Demon King's horns.

According to legend, the Demon King's fragments were supposed to fly out of their hosts' bodies when they died and try to parasitize another nearby organism. It was necessary to prevent that from happening and seal them, but... no matter how much time passed, nothing resembling a Demon King's fragment had emerged from Ternecia's corpse.

Ternecia had been defeated by someone else at the place that she had teleported to from the battle against Heinz and his companions. And then she had barely managed to escape with her life after having her Demon King's fragment and her Petrifying Demon Eye stolen from her.

By the other Pure-breed Vampires, or someone else.

"Everyone knows that," said Edgar. "We know it, the higher-ups of the Guilds and Churches know it and even the important people of the of the Orbaume Kingdom who are about to give us medals and words of gratitude know it."

"The people we're waving to don't know it," said Heinz.

“That is true, but... Heinz, if this truth were to spread, it would provoke the Demon King’s remnants including Pure-breed Vampires who worship evil gods other than Hihiryushukaka,” said Diana. “If a great conflict were to begin, it will not be only the underworld that suffers losses.”

“You’re right... It’s just as you say, Diana. And...” Heinz looked at Selen, whose cheeks were flushed with tension and excitement. “It will be for her sake as well.”

On this day, the Five-colored Blades received medals from the king, and their leader, Heinz, was made an honorary earl while the other members were made honorary barons and baronesses.



- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 7 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Holy Son of Vida】 , 【Monstrosity】 , 【Taboo Name】 → (Removed)
- **Job:** Tree Caster
- **Level:** 88
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User, Insect User
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 820
 - Mana: 485,273,958
 - Strength: 283
 - Agility: 317
 - Stamina: 462
 - Intelligence: 972
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5
 - Rapid Healing: Level 7
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 7
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7
 - Magic Resistance: Level 4
 - Dark Vision
 - Death-Attribute Charm: Level 9
 - Chant Revocation: Level 4
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 10
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 6
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 5
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 4
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 2
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 4
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Small
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 3
 - Thread Refining: Level 2
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)

- Surpass Limits: Level 6
- Golem Transmutation: Level 7
- No-Attribute Magic: Level 5
- Mana Control: Level 5
- Spirit Form: Level 7
- Carpentry: Level 6
- Engineering: Level 4
- Cooking: Level 5
- Alchemy: Level 4
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5
- Soul Break: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Multi-Cast: Level 5
- Long-distance Control: Level 7
- Surgery: Level 3
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 5
- Materialization: Level 4
- Coordination: Level 4
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 3
- Commanding: Level 3
- Plant Binding Technique: Level 3
- Thread-reeling: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Throwing: Level 4
- Scream: Level 3
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 3
- Insect Binding Technique: Level 3
- Blacksmithing: Level 1
- Artillery Technique: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 5
 - Demon King Fusion: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Demon King fragments:**
 - Blood
 - Horns
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs

- Unable to gain experience independently

SIDE CHAPTER 7

THINKING ABOUT HIM FROM A FARAWAY PLACE

TLN: Reminder that many Japanese names can be pronounced in multiple different ways. I'm not sure on the pronunciation on any new Japanese names appearing in this chapter. I'm basically just picking the coolest-sounding among the possible readings! In fact, sometimes I have to guess the gender of the character solely based on their names, too.

The Metamorph, Shihouin Mari, gave a small laugh as she looked at the place she had been taken to, a special cell that had been made for detaining her. “How generous of you to give me a custom-made room,” she said.

Her voice had no sign of bitterness or sarcasm, but a special microchip and explosives had been embedded inside her body.

This was a step to prevent even the smallest chance of Mari escaping, as she was capable of taking on any appearance.

“...I’m sorry for being so incapable,” said *Amemiya Hiroto*, apologizing to her without responding to her words.

He was wearing a pained expression as if he was the criminal, not her. The other reincarnated individuals who had been working with him and Mari were wearing similar expressions.

But Mari gave *Hiroto* a small, bitter smile. “Don’t apologize,” she said. “I know you worked hard to solve things without having to kill me.”

Mari had killed another person who had been reincarnated from Earth, Kaidou Kanata. Although she hadn’t worked with the terrorists, she had exploited them, led the government and her companions on a wild goose chase with false information and set things up so that her target, Kanata, would be sent on a mission on his own.

Kaidou Kanata’s death had a great impact on the other reincarnated individuals. They had been working in disaster relief and counter-terrorism, so they had come into contact with people’s deaths... even other than the civilians and terrorists killed in disasters, they experienced the deaths of allied military personnel and helpers that

they should have saved.

But the death of Kanata, one of their own, had a different level of impact.

They had been given new lives by a god and reincarnated in this foreign world called Origin from Earth with magical talent and special “cheat-like abilities.” But they had been stared in the eyes by the reality that even they could die and be killed.

This event had caused cracks to form between the reincarnated individuals who had come together to form the organization known as the Bravers.

No, to be more precise, the cracks had already been there, but they had simply been invisible. It was Mari’s murder of Kanata that had made these cracks impossible to ignore any longer.

But there were some among them who thought that everything was Mari’s fault. Even the governments and armies of every nation considered Mari, who possessed the Metamorph power that allowed her to perfectly replicate her target’s fingerprints, retinas and even their vein patterns, to be a dangerous individual.

And there were also those who felt distrust for *Hiroto*, who had advocated for her to be confined rather than erased.

“You killed Kaidou Kanata, a single person,” said *Hiroto*. “You ensured that the president’s daughter remained protected. I can understand your motives. This is your first crime, and normally you would be given life imprisonment or maybe even a definite term depending on the country, not a death penalty. And the nation you killed Kanata in has already abolished capital punishment. It would be too selfish to erase you out of convenience and emotion.”

“A stiff way of thinking as usual,” said Mari.

“It’s better than being soft,” said *Hiroto*. “At least, it makes it easier for others to tell what I am thinking.”

If including those who did the office work, not all of the Bravers were those reincarnated from Earth, but they had many relatives and needed to be faithful to international laws in order to be trusted. That was what *Hiroto* thought.

The reincarnated individuals possessed powers that went beyond even the principles

of Origin, a world with science as advanced as Earth's and magic that didn't exist on Earth. If something went wrong, they would be treated as mutants. In fact, groups advocating that they should be treated as such already existed.

That was why they needed to show that they obeyed the rules of society.

"But with everything said and done, I was oblivious to Kanata's crimes," said *Hiroto*.
"That's what I'm apologizing for."

"There's no reason to apologize to me, considering that I killed him with my own hands before consulting you," Mari said as she entered the room.

Seeing her disappear behind the closing door, *Hiroto* and the others turned and left.

"...What information do we have on them?" asked *Hiroto*.

"The whereabouts of Murakami and the others became unknown after they joined the 'Eighth Guidance,'" replied Minami Asagi, one of the three people who had been escorting Mari. His tone was polite, but his eyes were filled with anger.

Murakami... the reincarnated individual who had been a high school teacher on Earth by the name of Murakami Junpei, had left the Bravers with a group of ten others and vanished after joining a terrorist group.

Rodcorte had said that the conflict had subsided, but for *Hiroto* and the other Bravers, this was just a calm before the storm.

"Just what are they thinking... Especially Murakami," Asagi continued. "Did you know that he was our homeroom teacher? Would a normal teacher incite his students and have them join a group of terrorists?"

"It has already been nearly thirty years since he was your homeroom teacher," another one of Mari's escorts pointed out. He was the 'Oracle,' Endou Kouya.

However, it seemed that Asagi wasn't satisfied with these words.

"But we are all companions, are we not? Despite that, they betrayed us... I cannot forgive them."

Asagi had been a hot-blooded member of a sports club on Earth who cared about his

friends, who had a somewhat totalitarian way of thinking. He also had a strong tendency of being influenced by the past life he had lived on Earth.

Up until now, that had been a good thing. The past lives that the reincarnated individuals had lived on Earth and the things they had experienced there were a necessary foundation for them to not abuse their new lives and the powerful abilities that they had suddenly been given.

However, the current problem had occurred because they had relied too much on this foundation and not seen what they needed to see.

“Asagi, it has already been more than twenty years since we died on Earth... nearly thirty,” said *Hiroto*. “People change over that amount of time. We should have considered that.”

“*Hiroto*-san, I know that even in the news on Earth, you would hear about arrested criminals’ classmates saying that they were good people in the past, but we are companions –”

“Kanata sold the organs of his ‘companion’ on the black market.”

“That’s true, but... isn’t that because he gave into temptation and strayed from the path! We must fight, for Tanaka and the other two who were lost! If we don’t, they won’t be able to rest in peace!”

“Asagi, I know how you feel, but... we’re nothing more than humans who have memories from our previous lives and strange powers,” said Kouya.

“Kouya-san, what... are you trying to say?” Asagi glared at Kouya, as if Kouya’s words had poured cold water on his fiery emotions.

“Other than Murakami, we’ve already spent more time in Origin than on Earth,” said *Hiroto*. “We should not believe in each other blindly just because we are companions. We can be tempted, or... our senses of values can even change. That’s what Kouya is trying to say. And I think the same.”

“That... I understand what you are trying to say, *Hiroto*-san, but I cannot accept it!” Asagi shouted over his shoulder as he walked off, leaving *Hiroto* and the others behind.

Hiroto gave a bitter smile as he looked at Asagi’s strong-looking back, and then he

spoke to the other reincarnated individuals, who had remained quiet up until now. "Sorry, but please go and listen to his grumbling," he said, gesturing for them to go on ahead, leaving him and Kouya alone.

"I think he is far more hard-headed than I am, but it is helpful that he is so unchanging," *Hiroto* remarked.

"It's not like I hate him," said Kouya. "It's just that when nobody else is around, he says, 'but on Earth,' at every opportunity, which is troublesome."

"Indeed."

Hiroto and Kouya laughed and relaxed their shoulders as they continued their conversation.

"Can't you find out where Murakami and the others have gone with Oracle?" *Hiroto* asked.

Kouya's cheat-like ability, 'Oracle,' might be considered by some to be like a god's ability to make prophecies. However, in reality, it was not a power that could be called omnipotent.

Kouya's Oracle was simply 'something' that told him a way to achieve the results he wanted.

At first, Kouya had thought that this 'something' was a god. But he soon experienced that it wasn't anything as all-knowing or omnipotent as a god.

It had answered several of his questions with, "That goal is impossible to achieve."

Thus, Kouya suspected that the answers he received from Oracle were derived by accessing the collective human unconsciousness or the Akashic records or something like that.

According to the Oracle, the answer to *Hiroto's* question was –

"In the near future... I don't know the exact time because it changes every time I ask, but as soon as three months or as far away as three years, it says we'll know through the news."

“That means that those guys will do something. Is there a way to prevent that from happening?” *Hiroto* asked.

“...Sorry, but I don’t know,” Kouya replied. “The answer to that changes every time as well. If I don’t know what specifically needs to be done, I can’t give an accurate question.”

“How to prevent Murakami and the others committing an act of terrorism,” “How to prevent Murakami and the others kidnapping someone,” “How to prevent Murakami and the others from trafficking drugs” ... All of these were different questions.

With something vague like, “How to prevent Murakami and the others from committing a crime,” he would get strange answers like, “Catch Murakami within one hour before he spits out his gum on the street.”

On that occasion, they did check satellites and surveillance footage in nations and regions where spitting gum onto the street was a crime, but... of course, there was no way that Murakami could be found.

“Murakami and the others know about my Oracle as well,” said Kouya. “That’s why they’re interfering with it by making multiple plans for crimes and committing small crimes like spitting gum on the street.”

“I see. I suppose we have to use methods other than your abilities to find them,” said *Hiroto*. “If possible, I want to avoid doing something like killing them, but...”

“For your wife’s sake as well, huh?” said Kouya.

“Yeah. She said to treat them as different people from when they were on Earth, but it’s also a fact that we can’t erase the past,” said *Hiroto*.

Their lives that ended abruptly and irrationally on Earth, the bonds with their families that they left behind. And the unhappiness that they were experiencing in Origin now.

The more disappointing their lives on Origin were, the harder they were, the more their memories from Earth seemed to shine.

Companions killing each other was hard for Amemiya Narumi, who had become *Hiroto*’s wife.

Knowing this, there was something that Kouya hadn't revealed to *Hiroto*. "... There's something that I haven't told you," he said.

"I had the vague feeling that you were hiding something," said *Hiroto*. "Ever since a short while after that secret research laboratory was destroyed by one of the subjects becoming an Undead."

During that incident, the world had become aware of a new attribute, the death attribute, while simultaneously losing it. Even though they had been compelled to do it out of necessity, this incident was the beginning of the Bravers beginning to fight terrorists and criminal organizations in addition to rescuing people after disasters and accidents.

However, to Kouya, it was an unforgettable incident in a different way.

"After that incident... It was when we all started our military training. I asked, 'How we can avoid losing a single one of us reincarnated individuals.' The answer was, 'Impossible. One has already been killed.'"

The incident had now become even more unforgettable for *Hiroto*.

"Is that true?" he murmured. "Long before Mari killed Kanata..."

"After that, I managed to ask the Oracle before my Mana ran out," Kouya continued. "I asked who the killed reincarnated individual was, who killed him, whether there was any way to find out. For, 'who was killed where,' it told me to 'look at the file of the incident at the research laboratory,' and for, 'who that reincarnated individual was on Earth,' it replied, 'you will know if you ask Naruse Narumi what happened before she died on Earth.'"

Kouya's confession revealed a truth that was terrible for *Hiroto* and the other reincarnated individuals.

"I see, at that time, we... finished one of our companions," said *Hiroto*.

"I simply intended to ask the Oracle, 'the best way to exterminate the Undead,' but... for him, it was probably a terrible betrayal," said Kouya.

Kouya and *Hiroto*, who had finished their reincarnation in Origin before Amamiya Hiroto had reincarnated, couldn't understand why only Amamiya had been unable to

join up with the others and ended up as an experimental subject in that research laboratory.

However, the only reason that the other reincarnated individuals had all been able to join up was something as vague as a 'miraculous destiny.'

"Amamiya Hiroto... so he reincarnated as well," said *Hiroto*.

The young man who had tried to save Narumi and died before her. *Hiroto's* wife had first talked to him after mistaking him for Amamiya Hiroto. This was the beginning of their relationship, so *Hiroto* also remembered that there had been a boy who had a similar name to him.

"But Kouya, back then, he was already –"

"I know. He was an Undead. He was already dead and had turned into a dangerous creature. There was no way to turn him back into a human. That was why the only thing we could do back then was to grant him peace."

At least in Origin, Undead were those kinds of creatures. They were monstrosities that twisted and corrupted the Mana around them. There were some cases where they maintained their personalities for a short while immediately after becoming Undead, but even then, there was no telling when they would become evil monsters.

A method of bringing people back to life didn't exist, so there was no way that there would be a way to turn an Undead back into a person.

That was why Kouya didn't regret the act itself of killing Amamiya Hiroto, nor did he consider it a crime.

"Still, we were supposed to be able to find him, but we couldn't," he said. "I should have just asked the Oracle what we needed to do to meet him. But... for some reason, despite the fact that I asked the Oracle so many questions about our companions, it never told me about his existence."

The companions that Kouya had asked about were defined as, "those who had reincarnated from Earth and received new abilities from the god."

Amamiya Hiroto had indeed been reincarnated from Earth, but he had not received cheat-like abilities or anything else. That was why he had not been considered as one

of Kouya's "companions."

"It's best not to brood over it," said *Hiroto*, putting his hand on the guilt-ridden Kouya's shoulder. "It's you who said that we are merely humans. Neither you nor the Oracle are omnipotent. Don't blame yourself."

"But..."

"He died. We can't meet him anymore, nor can we apologize to him or have him forgive us. The only thing that we can do is to ensure that there are no more victims like him... victims born of research into death-attribute magic."

The real problem was that the dead could not be brought back to life. They could not be talked to or anything, so they could not directly apologize to Vandalieu.

Even if they wanted to compensate his bereaved family, Amamiya Hiroto had no relatives or friends in Origin.

That was why if they felt guilty and were seeking a way to atone, they had to act to satisfy themselves, just as *Hiroto* was saying.

The idea of 'saving enough people to make up for the person who was killed.'

"...You're right," said Kouya. "Since we can't bring him back to life, we have no other choice but to do that. What will you do about your wife?"

"Don't tell her. I don't want to cause her pain," said *Hiroto*.

"Yeah, that's for the best," said Kouya. "Even if we tell her, she can't meet him again. It's better for her to not know. That was something that could be said for you as well, but... I'm sorry for getting you involved. I kept quiet about it for as long as I could."

"Don't worry about it," said *Hiroto*. "The fact that we gained even the smallest amount of information about the death attribute means that there is a meaning to the battle we are about to face."

If Kouya had asked the Oracle how to meet Amamiya Hiroto again, it would have given him a clear answer that they would meet the one who had once been Amamiya Hiroto after death, and he and *Hiroto* would have been able to deduce that there would be a "next" opportunity for them. But this thought didn't occur to them.

“...And now that I’ve learned this, I want to capture the members of the Eighth Guidance alive, no matter what,” said *Hiroto*. “Of course, for reasons other than those of the intelligence agencies. Because they are the last people Amamiya Hiroto saved.”

The Eighth Guidance... When Amamiya Hiroto had become an Undead and gone on a rampage in the secret research laboratory, he had saved the other experimental subjects. The Eighth Guidance was a criminal organization formed by those former experimental subjects.

“Back then, we didn’t know the details behind that incident, and we ended up leaving their protection to an international organization. But we won’t fail this time,” said *Hiroto*.

The members of the Eighth Guidance, which Murakami and some of the other reincarnated individuals had joined, were supposed to be protected by an international organization, but they had then been secretly exploited by that organization for further research into the lost death-attribute magic. They had escaped through their own efforts, and now they had been involved in several major incidents in addition to conducting acts of terrorism against agencies and organizations that were conducting research into death-attribute magic.

They were completely different from other criminal organizations; they were almost like a cult. And every other organization was targeting them, suspecting that they knew something about death-attribute magic.

“I’ve already asked if there is a way to save them,” said Kouya. “But it’s going to be hard.”

“What was the answer?” asked *Hiroto*.

“...We have to capture Murakami and the others as soon as possible, or kill them. That was the answer. Murakami and the others aren’t cooperating with the Eighth Guidance. They’re going to use the Eighth Guidance and then betray them.”

Hearing this answer that was far more difficult than he had imagined, *Hiroto* pressed a hand to his forehead.



A god stood still with his eyes closed.

His appearance was that of a trinity consisting of an old man, a young man and a boy. So it would have appeared, but then these three, who were all carrying heavy books, turned into beautiful women.

The god's name was Ricklent, the genie of time and magic. Like Alda and Vida, he was one of the eleven gods born from the giants of origin.

He and one other god were gods with no gender and no fixed appearance like those of Alda and Vida; they were gods without form.

Ricklent opened his eyes and stared at Lambda, the world that he and the other gods had created.

"The prophecy has been fulfilled. Ark has returned," he said.

"Is it not Zakkart?" asked another voice.

A four-headed lion had suddenly appeared in front of Ricklent.

"Zuruwarn, he is also Ark," Ricklent replied.

The one with the form of a grotesque lion was Zuruwarn, the god of space and creation. He was a being that existed everywhere and yet existed nowhere, ruling over space.

"Indeed. He is Zakkart, he is Ark, he is Vandalieu and he is a violator," said Zuruwarn. "Other than our reckless older sister and brave younger sister, have any others answered?"

"There are few other than Vida who have responded to my prophecy," said Ricklent.

"What about our brother who has become violent and foolish?"

"Unknown. Zantark is too far separate from me."

"Then what about our new brother who is honest and wholehearted?"

“He answered. But he is wandering somewhere and cannot be found.”

“I see. Then what will we do from now? I intend to curry favor with the violator.”

Hearing Zuruwarn speak these last words, Ricklent showed emotion on his face for the first time.

He frowned and gave a bitter smile. “You should not use that expression*. Neither she nor Ark would want that,” he said.

TLN: The phrase for “curry favor” can also be used for a woman flirting with a man.*

“Then you will not curry favor with him?” asked Zuruwarn.

“I will not,” said Ricklent. “I will cooperate with him in accordance with Ark’s goal and humor him*.”

TLN: This is really just another phrase for “curry favor.”*

“So you do intend to curry favor with him after all, do you not?”

“Of course. He is a violator, after all.”

Long ago, Zuruwarn had suggested inviting inhabitants of a foreign world in order to save Lambda, which was in crisis due to the war against the Demon King. At the time, he hadn’t actually said, “Let us summon champions.”

He had said, “Let us summon violators.”

Beings from another world who would violate and stir all kinds of domains, creating something new.

Destroyers who would break down the existing order, causing chaos as a new order was created.

Those who would shout good words while scattering evil, one who would destroy evil and carry out good.

These were what Zuruwarn referred to as violators.

Those with the knowledge, ideas and values from another world who could make possible even things that the gods themselves could not accomplish. Zuruwarn had wagered everything on such a being.

And regrettably, at this rate, he would lose that wager.

That was why he needed the violator who was Ark and Zakkart to do everything he could.

Although he was a god, he thought it was irrational that the violator would need to continue where things had been left off a hundred thousand years ago and carry the world on his shoulders again, however.

“The violator has not honored us because our subordinate gods are cooperating with Alda,” Zuruwarn said.

Ricklent and Zuruwarn’s subordinate gods continued to exist, working under Alda, the leader of the remaining gods.

“They are our Spirit Clones that do nothing more than the work that is needed to maintain the world, but... it would also be irrational to expect a one-sided understanding from him, too.”

The god of seconds, the god of minutes, the god of hours, the god of the front, the god of points, the god of depths and the god of the behind. These were the gods who had been given the role of supporting the concepts of time and space, maintaining the space attribute. But their true states resembled advanced artificial intelligences.

A hundred thousand years ago, the world needed to be maintained whether Alda or Vida emerged victorious, so Ricklent and Zuruwarn, who were currently more than half-asleep, had ordered those subordinate gods to not participate in the battle.

As a result, even though they had remained neutral, the myths had depicted them as being among the gods who had supported the victor of the conflict, Alda.

From the perspective of the violator, Vandalieu, Ricklent and Zuruwarn were not definite enemies, but it was unlikely that he would think of them as allies, either.

And if they continued acting as if they were pulling the strings behind the scenes, he might mistakenly think of them as enemies.

Thus, it was necessary for them to make him aware that they were allies, even if they needed to strain themselves a little.

“With that said, we cannot do anything significant,” said Zuruwarn. “We have lost our power. I in particular must do many things in my powerless state.”

“It does not have to be significant,” said Ricklent. “The violator himself will do significant things. He is the one we are anticipating great things from. As expected of Ark.”

“There is Zakkart as well. But I am in agreement. He has reproduced the ramen, miso and soy sauce Zakkart and Ark could not. At this rate, curry will be not far behind.”

Ricklent experienced the pain similar to having one’s bones gouged out while Zuruwarn felt as if his organs were bursting as both of them ‘cooperated’ with Vandalieu.

“Whether this will be made use of will depend on him,” said Zuruwarn.

“It will depend on him, but either way, he will create something new,” said Ricklent.

And then Zuruwarn vanished and Ricklent returned to gazing continuously at Lambda.

CHAPTER V4 CHARACTER SUMMARY PAGE

Vandalieu

The protagonist who is approximately two months away from turning eight years old at the end of volume 4. Now that he has acquired dairy products, he has hopes for the future that he will grow taller.

He has realized that he has lost the resistance to solitude that he had developed on Earth, but now he is capable of equipping insects and plants within his body and is constantly followed around by Princess Levia and the other Ghosts who can become invisible, so he does not feel lonely at all.

He fears gods as he believes that they are beings that are absolutely superior to him, but that is because of the experience of great failure carved into his mind when he could not strike a single blow back at Rodcorte after dying in Origin. As for the fact that he destroyed the Spirit Clone of the god of ice Yupeon that resided in Ice Age, he does not think anything more of it other than, "It was nothing more than a Spirit Clone."

In addition, he is unaware that the pseudo-reincarnations that he is conducting is causing damage to Rodcorte. As Alda and Fitun are also gods, he knows nothing of their movements other than the fact that they are hostile to him.

He does not think much of the fact that he destroyed Kaidou Kanata, the first reincarnated individual that he encountered in Lambda. However, he does think that things will be troublesome once other reincarnated individuals arrive. But as he has no way to prevent their arrival, he believes that he should just take care and prepare as much as he can, just as he has been doing up until now.

After Heinz and his party defeated Ternecia, the Lemures who were watching them ran out of Mana, so he did not monitor them after that. Thus, he is unaware of the fact that Heinz was promoted to S-class or the fact that he gained the status of honorary nobleman that Vandalieu has been aiming for.

Vandalieu has succeeded in refining new metals, eliminating Ternecia and attracted new citizens to Talosheim.

Talosheim's current population exceeds four thousand, so it is still considered a small city-state in Lambda, but its infrastructure is as complete as any great nation's capital.

But Vandalieu himself isn't aware of this and works like a workaholic; he does not seem to have the sense that he is living luxuriously.

During the fourth volume, he was stared in the eyes by the reality that the Orbaume Kingdom he had so many expectations for was not a dream-like country but simply another nation, so those expectations rapidly vanished.

His eyes have been opened to the Hartner Duchy in particular; even if the Amid Empire was to invade it, Vandalieu would do nothing about it; if there wasn't an S-class adventurer in the Hartner Duchy, he would consider trampling over the Empire's army from their flank when both sides were exhausted.

He is currently planning to start cultivating a marshland to the south in order to produce more Capricorns and increase production of milk products.

He rapidly became more unworldly in the past volume, but he doesn't really mind.

In terms of power, if he fights while being careful not to stand out to others, he is in the lower to middle area of C-class.

If he uses Insect Binding Technique, Plant Binding Technique, his tongue and threads, Dead Spirit Magic and reveals how much of a 'Monstrosity' he is, he is between the upper area of A-class to S-class.

And if he uses the Demon King's fragments and fights without holding anything back, he is truly as powerful as an S-class adventurer.

Eleanora

She studied combat diligently in order to be of use to Vandalieu, so her magic-related skills have not developed.

But while she is by his side as a servant, she looks more and more like his guardian. She feels apologetic to Darcia every time she is mistakenly assumed to be Vandalieu's mother, and she feels angry, thinking, "I don't want to become a mother! I haven't even

had any experience!" She also feels depressed, wondering, "Do I really look that old?"

Her master is rapidly becoming more otherworldly, but she acknowledged Vandalieu as the most fearsome master in the world right at the beginning; she does not feel a renewed fear of him.

While she feels a sense of closeness with Vandalieu's new servant, Bellmond, she also feels a burning sense of rivalry.

She turned five people from the First Cultivation Village including the chief's son, Sebas, into Subordinate Vampires, but she has never actually had any subordinates of her own before except for Isla and the other Vampire Zombies, so she is troubled as to how to treat them.

Thus, she has currently told them to first undergo a Job-change and become Rank 5 and is now leaving them be.

She has polished her skills in swordsmanship and undergone a Job-change, so she has become a little stronger than she was in the third volume.

Braga

From being single, he has now married Marie and the former prostitute Linda, joining the ranks of the successful in life. In addition, their wedding ceremony was held at a time of year known on Earth as Christmas.

He has been unexpectedly careful with his family planning; he has already discussed with his wives that once they have a child, they should wait for that child to reach Rank 4 before having another.

Black Goblins have a starting Rank of 2, so they lack the strength they need to make a living by hunting in Talosheim.

Braga is currently spending fulfilling nights with his family while polishing his skills so that he can teach his children his specialized killing techniques once they are born.

- **Name:** Braga
- **Rank:** 6
- **Race:** Black Goblin Ninja Adept
- **Level:** 85
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 4
 - Intuition: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 5
 - Strengthened Attribute Values when equipped with Ninja Equipment (Medium)
- **Active skills:**
 - Short Sword Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Throwing: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Trap: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unlocking: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - Human Slayer: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)

Kasim

An adventurer, a former refugee who fled the Sauron Duchy, and a former villager of the Seventh Cultivation Village. He was promoted to D-class, but that qualification has now been invalidated.

He formed a party with other boys from the same cultivation village of the same age as him, and he is the Shield-bearer and leader of the party.

Incidentally, if one asks why he aspires to become a Shield-bearer, the answer is that he was moved by an old hero's tale he once heard, and that hero was known as the person who first invented Shield Bash.

That hero's name has been left in history as the one who invented offensive martial skills at a time when all other Shield-bearer martial skills were for defense and

provoking.

Kasim has dreamed of being like that hero. Perhaps because of this dream, he sometimes attacks with his shield while shouting, "Shield Bash," despite not being able to use the martial skill.

He is currently in his growth phase, so Vandalieu feels an unstoppable envy for his wonderful body that becomes more robust by the day.

However, Kasim feels an unstoppable envy for Vandalieu, who possesses a harem.

Incidentally, his family was a farming family.

Zeno

An adventurer, a former refugee who fled the Sauron Duchy, and a former villager of the Seventh Cultivation Village. His qualification as an adventurer has now been invalidated.

He formed a party with other boys from the same cultivation village of the same age as him, and he is the Scout and second leader of the party.

Because he has always been small, agile and bad at physical labor, he decided that he would be a Scout when he became an adventurer.

It seems that he had an aptitude for it, partially because of his calm personality.

He is frequently dragged along by Fester's antics; it is a common pattern for him and Kasim to stop Fester together.

In truth, he was quite cautious of Vandalieu when he first met him. But he began treating Vandalieu normally once he saw his behavior and realized that he was a child despite being expressionless... though he was taken aback to realize that Vandalieu was the king of the place that he was about to migrate to.

Since tasting Talosheim's delicious food, he realized that he is quite the gluttonous character.

Fester

An adventurer, a former refugee who fled the Sauron Duchy, and a former villager of the Seventh Cultivation Village. His qualification as an adventurer has now been invalidated.

He formed a party with other boys from the same cultivation village of the same age as him, and he acts as the frontline for the party and keeps the party's mood up.

He is the type of person who gets easily carried away, and is in love with Lina, who is the poster girl of the jack-of-all-trades store and the sole employee of the Adventurers' Guild branch.

One might think that he treated Vandalieu like a very normal child, but he has an unexpectedly sharp, flexible mindset that led him to asking Vandalieu for training and advice on how to prepare to kill someone.

His ability is growing rapidly and his relationship with Lina is progressing as well. It is possible that he has the elements of a protagonist.

Daene

Also known as the apple lady.

She was a middle-aged woman who raised her son while making a living selling fruit in the city of Niarki while enduring the abuse from her mother-in-law. Just when her son married a woman and Daene thought it would be her turn, the couple eloped. One could feel sympathy for her situation, but she reaped what she sowed.

She stole money from Vandalieu, saying that the coin he gave her was fake, and when he fled the Adventurers' Guild and left the city, she tried to capture him and sell him off, only to die in madness through his Scream and Mind Encroachment.

After that, she turned into an Undead and fought Heinz and his party and showed wonderful effort by becoming the core of a Zombie Giant.

After that, she was pseudo-reincarnated as an Ent that Vandalieu found in the Eclipse King's Orchard, which produces iron-hard apple-like fruits. She is currently equipped

inside his body.

Like Chezare, she is the type of person who is shining more brightly after death.

However, Vandalieu does not remember what kind of person she was in her previous life.

Levia

Talosheim's First Princess. Unlike her younger sister, in her previous life, she had meager ability in battle. When the Mirg shield-nation attacked, she escaped to the then-friendly nation, the Hartner Duchy, with her warriors guarding her along with the children and elderly who couldn't fight.

After that, she was betrayed and burned at the stake and then her ashes were abandoned in the underground cemetery.

After that, her feelings of regret turned her into a Ghost and when she was intending to move on to the next life, Vandalieu instigated her. Her Rank increased and she became a Flame Ghost and then a Blaze Ghost after killing Kanata.

Her existence is necessary for Vandalieu's Dead Spirit Magic, and currently she is the most prominent of the spirits haunting him with the exception of Darcia.

She is a beautiful woman with an air of elegance, and has a kind, graceful personality. But because she is a Titan, she also has the trait of not minding smaller details.

Her skin currently has the same dark color that she had when she was alive, but her hair and clothes are made of flames and below a certain point above her knees, her legs are missing. Her hair and clothes are a part of her, so she can change their shape at will and use them to attack during battle.

She normally exposes her skin a lot by having her clothes in the form of a leotard in order to save Mana, but the Titans of Talosheim actually prefer highly-exposing clothes other than during cold winters, so there seems to be no deep meaning to this.

Incidentally, when she was alive, she wore a long, simple piece of cloth (though when examined closely, it had many revealing slits).

As for her bust size, she reigns supreme among the people of Talosheim in terms of absolute size. However, that is due to the fact that she is a Titan who is over 2.5m tall; in terms of relative size to her body, her bust is not much different to Tarea's or Basdia's.

Thus, as a result of discussion, she has been treated as an exception in the bust rankings of Talosheim, and for some reason, is treated as a special adviser.

- **Name:** Levia
- **Rank:** 5
- **Race:** Blaze Ghost
- **Level:** 65
- **Passive skills:**
 - Spirit Form: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Corruption: Level 5
 - Heat Manipulation: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Flame Nullification
 - Materialization: Level 5
 - Augmented Mana: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Housework: Level 5
 - Projectile Fire: Level 5
 - Possession: Level 3

Kaidou Kanata

The second person reincarnated from another world into Lambda. He cleared military training at a fairly exceptional level. He used fire-attribute magic that was considered almost genius-level in Origin, as well as his ordinary wind-attribute magic. He also had the cheat-like ability 'Gungnir' that allowed penetration through target objects.

In Origin, where things like sniper rifles and infra-red scopes exist, he possessed the greatest mission success rate among the Bravers.

He performed much work, such as rescuing injured people during disasters by passing through the rubble to save them.

However, his personality can only be described as that of a low-life.

When he was on Earth, he was nothing more than a common high school student who aspired to becoming special, but after being reincarnated in Origin with cheat-like abilities, magic and talent, he was drowned in the feeling of being special.

In addition, he thought of the people of Origin not as humans like him, but as characters in stories or games. Thinking to enjoy himself more than everyone else, he used his cheat-like ability to stain his hands with crime.

He performed deeds such as dealing the final blow to Shihouin Mari's mother when she was wounded and on the verge of death in order to sell her organs. But he simply thought of this as role-playing a villain in a game.

His sense of life being a game was not cured in his third life; it worsened horribly due to the existence of the Status and skill systems. And as a result of being reincarnated again, his view on life and death become ambiguous as well, so he seriously thought that if things went badly, he would simply need to hit a reset button.

Before being reincarnated in Lambda, Rodcorte requested him to erase Vandalieu, but Kanata asked to be reincarnated for a fourth life in a world with developed science as a reward.

But that irresponsible thought became his enemy; because he used his cheat-like ability that needed to be used to kill the enemy the first time they saw it, and committed reckless acts of violence, Vandalieu learned how he fought and disarmed him.

In the end, he didn't know that Vandalieu could break souls, so he ended up declaring that he would be back for a rematch, only to have his soul broken to avoid that danger.

Pete

An aggressive centipede monster who was basking in the sun on a tree branch and performed a spectacular dive after being immediately tamed by Vandalieu who passed by underneath.

He is the number 1 creature that has been equipped through Insect Binding Technique.

After that, he became an underling of the Cemetery Bees.

He was Rank 1 to begin with, but as of the end of volume 4, he is a Rank 4 Lance Centipede.

He has a playful side such as sleeping in Vandalieu's hair with his head sticking out, but he has become more like his older Cemetery Bee sisters, who are always building their nests and gathering honey and larvae. Pete looks after the other insects that Vandalieu equips... apparently.

He cannot communicate anything specific other than through the clicking he sounds he makes with his jaws and wings, so nobody other than Vandalieu can understand him.

Incidentally, he hates water.

- **Name:** Pete
- **Rank:** 4
- **Race:** Lance Centipede
- **Level:** 95
- **Passive skills:**
 - Hunger Resistance: Level 2
 - Self-Enhancement: Following: Level 2
 - Venom Secretion (Neurotoxin): Jaws: Level 4
- **Active skills:**
 - Silent Steps: Level 1
 - Charge: Level 4
 - Surpass Limits: Level 2

Gopher

One of the daughters of the Sword King Borkus. She is two hundred and thirteen years old, and evacuated to the Hartner Duchy from Talosheim, but she was separated from Princess Levia and her warriors, was told that she would be taken to the place that she would live while taking shelter in the Hartner Duchy and spent two hundred years being forced to work.

As a result of having received Vandalieu's age-reversing massage, physically, she is currently about a hundred years old.

Her personality is that of someone who takes care of others, and when the elderly among the Titan slaves died, she became one of the leaders.

She gave birth three times in the slave-run mine, but she currently only has two sons. After reuniting with Borkus, her parent-child relationship with him was rekindled, but her father has changed in all kinds of ways and she is now struggling to mediate the relationship between her sons and the grandfather that has suddenly appeared in their lives.

She admired Levia when she was a child, and had the childish thought of wanting to be like a princess herself, but as a result of the harsh mine work that she was forced to do, she has grown into a strong woman who looks as if she could strangle an ox to death; Vandalieu acknowledges her as having “nice muscles.” In fact, she has experienced strangling Earthworms that emerged from the ground. All of this is the Hartner family’s fault.

After returning to Talosheim, she didn’t feel like doing any mining for a while and her body was feeling unusually good, so she decided to aim for the broken childhood dream of becoming an adventurer.

- **Name:** Gopher
- **Race:** Titan
- **Age:** 213 years old (Physical age 100 years old)
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Skilled Miner
- **Level:** 88
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Slave, Apprentice Miner, Miner
- **Passive skills:**
 - Augmented Muscular Strength: Level 7
 - Augmented Endurance: Level 7
 - Robust Health: Level 6
 - Fatigue/Hunger Resistance: Level 6
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 4
 - Self-Enhancement: Subordination: Level 3
- **Active skills:**
 - Swordsmanship: Level 1
 - Mining: Level 7
 - Farming: Level 1
 - Surpass Limits: Level 2

- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 2
- Bedroom skill: Level 2

Luciliano

An adventurer around thirty years of age who originally worked in the Mirg shield-nation, but moved to the Orbaume Kingdom to in order to continue his research into the Undead. He was caught up in a noble family's conspiracy during the conflict over the succession of the Hartner family and turned into a slave.

He was a C-class adventurer, but that qualification was revoked when he became a slave.

He was born as the second son in a family of artists, and although he was not gifted with a talent for art, he was blessed with a talent for magic. He intended to make a living using this talent, but he became entranced by research into Undead during his time at the Mages' Guild.

After that, he devoted himself to Undead research without breaking the law, but the Mages' Guild had ethical problems with this so they threw him out and essentially excommunicated him. However, he is sturdier than he looks, capable of working as an adventurer to earn enough money for living expenses and funding his research.

Incidentally, other than the false charges placed on him when he became a slave, he has never broken the law. He has always skillfully walked around gray areas.

While he is an adventurer, rather than accepting extermination requests and clearing Dungeons, he often received special requests from people like noblemen to use his life-attribute magic that he is adept with, so he has learned the proper etiquette for dealing with noblemen. At the same time, he has become aware of what a refined lifestyle is like; his tastes have grown so specific that he requested a full-course dinner for his final meal.

When he encountered Vandalieu earlier, he felt fear and a danger for his life, but after finding out that Vandalieu could use undiscovered magic and tame Undead, he decided to become Vandalieu's apprentice. Ever since, he has been spending fulfilling days as an assistant in creating Undead while researching whether he can replicate the effects of death-attribute magic with his own life-attribute magic.

However, he acts self-important despite referring to Vandalieu as “Master.” Vandalieu doesn’t criticize him for this, so this behavior appears to be increasing over time.

Bellmond

A Noble-born Vampire who was ‘Ternecia’s Foolish Dog,’ one of the Five Dogs that were Ternecia’s loyal retainers.

She originally appeared to be a handsome butler with a monocle, but she turned out to be a female forest-monkey-type Beast-person with Lamia blood mixed in her heritage, her body covered in scars and burns.

She was saved by Ternecia’s subordinates on the verge of death, and in trying to repay the debt, despite failing several times, she endured the side-effects and became a Noble-born Vampire.

However, what awaited her was becoming a watchdog of Ternecia’s final hideout and living out tedious days for thousands of years while enduring Ternecia’s outbursts of anger whenever Ternecia visited the hideout and remembered her. During this time, Bellmond realized that she was only a watchdog in title; she was nothing more than something to be consumed in emergencies.

With her mind in pain, she taught herself the Thread-reeling skill that is almost never used in modern society to manipulate metal strings as weapons and acquired the Thread-user Job; she is full of talent. However, her magical qualities remained poor even after becoming a Noble-born Vampire, perhaps due to having been born as a Beast-person.

She constantly maintains polite speech and behavior, but she is actually quite the yandere. However, rather than being the type to attack others, she only puts pressure on herself.

That hasn’t changed after she turned to Vandalieu’s side, but she wants to hold expectations from now on.

She is an expert of the Thread-reeling skill, even using her tongue in addition to her fingers and toes to manipulate strings, but she was the weakest of the Five Dogs in battle.

Also, due to her scars and burns, her feminine body parts are missing, so she is lowest in the bust ranking as well.

However, Vandalieu is intending to perform surgery to transplant all kinds of materials from Ternecia's body, which has been turned into a Live-Dead, to Bellmond.

Vandalieu has also told her that he intends to find a monkey-type monster to transplant its tail to replace hers that was chopped off, but Bellmond wore a stiff expression.

Ternecia

A Pure-breed Vampire, the one known as the most powerful in battle among the three that worship Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life.

She contained the Demon King's horns, a fragment of the Demon King Guduranis, inside her body as a trump card.

However, she met a horrible end after being forced to dance in Vandalieu's rough plan. She was cornered by Heinz, ambushed at the place she escaped to and her body from her neck downwards was taken, as well as her Demon King's Horns and Petrifying Demon Eye. Despite wanting to not be killed by Vandalieu and being finished by Heinz, in the end, Vandalieu used Spirit Communication to get information out of her and then broke her soul.

She is the one who met the most unfortunate fate in the fourth volume.

All of the Undead that she created were to satisfy her twisted desires that had become something like an addiction; they didn't have the strength in battle or practicality of use that Vandalieu desired, but some of them were adjusted and added to the ranks of Talosheim.

Yamata is one of them.

The rest of them felt too much pain in merely existing and had too many structural problems with their bodies, or simply desired to be in other forms, so they are now waiting to undergo pseudo-reincarnation after Vandalieu took their spirits out of their bodies.

Froto

Lucas's hired spy who disguised himself as a priest of Alda who did missionary work in the cultivation villages. His role was to gather information in each village, and if Vandalieu hadn't appeared, things would have progressed well. But around the time his plans finished, the Goblin King's pack would have attacked, turning him into Goblin food along with all of the cultivation villages.

In a way, his life was extended a little thanks to Vandalieu.

He had the potential to be quite successful as a researcher, but unluckily for him, he was hated by his superior and given a useless position, which is why he stubbornly chased success in life.

But he met the fate of being infested by a parasite, experienced the sensation of insects crawling around him inside Vandalieu's body and then he became food for insects that he could not see.

The fact that Vandalieu never realized who Froto truly was wasn't because Froto was exceptional as a spy, but rather because Vandalieu was naïve.

Karcan Lassen

An ordinary knight from a family of knights who serve the Hartner family. But he had great ambitions and joined Lord Lucas's faction in order to make them a reality.

He was put in charge of a plan to destroy the cultivation project started by Lord Belton, but he experienced failure after failure due to Vandalieu's actions. Despite being ordered to halt the plan, he became impatient and made a reckless move, causing him and his subordinates to be completely defeated.

Incidentally, if Vandalieu hadn't come to the Hartner Duchy, the cultivation villages would have been destroyed by the Goblin King's pack without Karcan needing to do anything. However, if that happened, there is no telling what would have happened to the slave-run mine and the city of Niarki.

His soul wasn't broken after he died, but he was turned into a printing press Golem.

Belton Hartner

He was born as the second son of the Duke Hartner, but because he is the son of the duke's wife, he was first in line to succeed the family.

His features are not sharp, but they are gentle, the kind of features that the people like. However, he is a conspirator who would use any cruel methods needed to achieve his goals.

He is not as extreme as to believe that those who aren't noblemen are not humans, but he believes that it is correct for the commoners to devote themselves to serving the noblemen, and that it is the duty of royalty and nobles to use the commoners in the most efficient way possible.

Incidentally, he does not consider those such as refugees to be his people. However, he does not mind adding them to his citizens if they work hard to make a living.

Due to the information exposed by Kinarp in the scandal, the Guild Master of the Mages' Guild that was supporting him, it became clear that many of his close aides were traitors to humanity.

After that, he murdered various people responsible and utilized Heinz to try and restore his image, but he ended up withdrawing from the conflict to succeed the family.

But as he is still involved with the management of the duchy as the branch family, he believes that there is a chance by entrusting things to his child, even if things are now impossible for him.

Lucas Hartner

He was born as the eldest son of Duke Hartner, but as he is the son of the duke's concubine, he was second in line to succeed the family.

He is a military man with sharp facial features, but at the end of volume 4, his troubles were only growing as he had to repair the castle, cover up what happened to the Red Wolves Knights' Order and build a new fort, causing his hair to turn gray.

He took incredible risks at the end of volume 4, so he feels a great sense of danger. Although he is now building a fort because of that sense of danger, all of his hair would turn white if he learned that this is meaningless against Vandalieu (who can easily ignore the fort by using Dungeon teleportation).

If he meets Vandalieu, he might have claws stuck in his ears and his teeth made to rattle*.

TLN: This line was explained in chapter 93. This is a variation on a threat that's commonly used in the Osaka prefecture that's something like, "I'll stick my hand in through your ears and grab your teeth."*

Pablo Marton

The captain of the Red Wolves Knights' Order.

He rode out with a hundred knights, but this number was an order of magnitude less than the number he required.

He is ordinary for a nobleman of Lambda, and he exchanged a one-on-one conversation with Vandalieu.

After being captured alive and humiliated publicly, he became Luciliano's guinea pig and then turned into a printing press Golem along with his subordinate Karcan.

Heinz

One of Vandalieu's targets for revenge. While working in the Orbaume Kingdom, he has acknowledged that Alda's peaceful faction is right and that Vida's races should be accepted (as long as they are harmless to people).

After going separate ways from the Green Wind Spear Riley, he moved to the Orbaume Kingdom, but he lost the Elf spirit mage Martie when his party challenged Zakkart's Trials.

His current party consists of two new members in Scout Edgar and the Shield-bearer

female Dwarf Delizah, as well as the unarmed fighter Jennifer and Elf priestess Diana.

He feels guilt over handing Darcia to High Priest Gordan, even if it was an adventurer's request to do so. After much internal conflict, he converted to Alda's peaceful faction, and now he is something of a leader of the faction. In doing so, he began protecting the Dhampir girl Selen.

His objective as an adventurer is the complete clearing of Zakkart's Trials, but things became complicated and he recently ended up going around trying to exterminate the Pure-breed Vampires who worship an evil god.

He is not a reincarnated champion or the descendant of someone who came from another world; he is a natural-born genius, purely of Lambda origin. As an adventurer, he has an unstoppable sense of justice and idealistic ways of thinking, but he has the ability and charisma to make such ideals possible, or at least make others think that they are possible.

He didn't know that Darcia's child survived, but he suspects that the Dhampir boy he saw in the city of Niarki (Vandalieu) is that child.

He also suspects that Eleanora was involved in the incidents that occurred in the Hartner Duchy, so he is looking for her and her master, but he has not realized that her master is Vandalieu.

Judging from his normal speech and actions, one could guess that he hates those who can create Undead, but that isn't a hatred specifically directed at Vandalieu; it is a very normal thought as a believer of Alda.

Incidentally, even Alda's peaceful faction treats Undead as targets to be exterminated or purified; they do not believe that they can coexist with Undead. The act of creating Undead is treated as a sin that desecrates life and goes against the laws of life and death.

In terms of ability, he is S-class. He has strength in battle rivalling the Mirg shield-nation's hero of two hundred years ago, the Divine Spear of Ice Mikhail.

In addition to this, he wields a magic sword and his body is fully equipped with legendary-class items.

- **Name:** Heinz
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 24 years old
- **Title:** Blue-flamed Sword, New Vampire Hunter, Sword Saint, One who tears through the darkness
- **Job:** Sword Saint
- **Level:** 98
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Swordsman, Magic Swordsman, Magic Warrior, Holy Warrior, Avenger
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 37,295
 - Mana: 12,505
 - Strength: 2,829
 - Agility: 3,510
 - Stamina: 2,700
 - Intelligence: 1,097
- **Passive skills:**
 - Strengthened All Attribute Values: Large
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 5
 - All Attributes Resistance: Level 7
 - Strengthened Attack Power while equipped with a sword: (Large)
 - Mana Cost Reduction: Level 7
 - Detect Presence: Level 3
 - Revenge: Zakkart's Trials
 - Strengthened Attribute Values while equipped with Metal Armor: (Large)
 - Guidance: Holy Path: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - Radiant God Swordsmanship: Level 4
 - Holy Light Armor Technique: Level 1
 - Transcend Limits: Level 7
 - Transcend Limits – Magic Sword: Level 7
 - Coordination: Level 9
 - Light-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 4
 - Clergyman: Level 2
 - Familiar Spirit Descent: Level 9
 - Etiquette: Level 3

- **Unique skills:**
 - Undead Killer: Level 10
 - Alda's Divine Protection: Great Hero's Destiny

Amemiya Hiroto

The leader of the reincarnated individuals in Origin. He has many, more powerful cheat-like abilities compared to the other reincarnated individuals, such as affinity for every attribute (There is no time attribute in Origin and nobody has yet been discovered to possess death-attribute Mana other than Vandalieu, so he has an affinity for the seven other attributes) and casting without incantations.

He gathered the reincarnated individuals in Origin together, used his way of thinking to found the Bravers organization and acted to ensure that the reincarnated individuals, who possessed non-magical special abilities that worked on unknown principles, were not ostracized.

However, as a result, he dealt the fatal blow to Amamiya Hiroto in Origin without realizing who he was, and ended up sending more of his companions to the battlefield.

All of this was a result of the fact that he decided to use the power that he had been given to live this second life correctly after having been hikikomori and a NEET on Earth. In fact, he has saved many lives.

However, he overlooked the fact that people could fall to temptation; he failed to realize that Kanata was committing cowardly crimes in secret.

Now, he is chasing after Murakami and the nine other reincarnated individuals who left the Bravers and joined a terrorist group.

In his private life, he has married Naruse Narumi and has a child.

Incidentally, he didn't know of Amamiya Hiroto's existence until Naruse Narumi approached him after having mistaken him for Amamiya. Of course, he is unaware that he has acquired the cheat-like abilities that were supposed to be Amamiya's.

Ricklent

The genie of time and magic. He is a genderless existence without form, and those who worship him depict him symbolically as a trio of beautiful women, old men, young men or boys, so he often takes this form.

He was involved in important events in Lambda; during his idle talk with Zuruwarn, he developed and implemented a system of Jobs and skills that supposedly existed in games in another world, interfering with the system created by the Demon King Guduranis that governed Dungeon creation and operation.

However, as a god, rather than being one who guides the people, the aspect of him being an ancestor of great mages and researchers is more prominent. His doctrine also consists of many teachings to encourage people to think like researchers and historians.

Thus, the Churches of this god often become more like research institutes than religious organizations. Also, places such as Mages' Guilds are always decorated with symbols and statues dedicated to Ricklent.

When the Demon King invaded, he summoned Akutsu Haruka, who later became the creation-minded champion Ark. His relationship with her was one where they would give each other inspiration; rather than being a god and a follower, they were like friends who got along well.

During the battle between Alda and Vida that followed, he had his subordinate gods remain neutral as systems without personality, but Ricklent himself, who has a personality and was the leader of those gods, was Vida's ally.

Also, it was actually Ricklent who informed Vida of the return of the soul that was Ark (and Zakkart).

In a way, he may be a god who holds more animosity for Alda and Bellwood than Vida.

Incidentally, the reason he did not try to discuss things with Alda and the others again was because he knew of the poor way that they had treated Vida. If he were to be attacked by Alda in his current state, he would be forced into another long slumber, so he will not take that risk.

By the time he came to this decision, Ricklent already no longer considered Alda to be

among his companions.

He sent a Divine Message in order to accomplish the goals of Vandalieu, who was once Ark, but its contents and the identity of the one who received it is unknown.

Zuruwarn

The god of space and creation. He is often depicted in grotesque forms, such as a lion with four heads.

His personality as a god is trickster-like, and his teachings are often whimsical as well. Thus, he is worshipped by inventors, artists and craftsmen. His statues often decorate Workers' Guilds alongside those of Botin, but there are few Churches devoted exclusively to him.

As he is the being who governs space, he often gazed at other worlds since ancient times. He spoke to Ricklent of games played in other worlds, leading to the implementation of Jobs and skills in Lambda.

He was the one who came up with ideas among the original eleven gods, but his erratic thoughts caused many quarrels with Alda as well. However, he was never stubborn about his ideas, so situations never became too serious.

As he was the one who proposed and executed the idea of summoning the champions, he was close with all seven of them.

For this reason alone, he was wounded deeply during the war against the Demon King and fell into a slumber, and by the time he managed to recover enough to regain some semblance of consciousness, he found Lambda in an astounding state.

His suggestion had caused the champions' deaths and even their souls were broken. Now that they are in the form of Vandalieu, he sent a Divine Message for their sake, but its contents and the identity of the one who received it is unknown.

SIDE CHAPTER 8

MEANWHILE, IN THE WESTERN REGION OF THE CONTINENT

One of the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, Ternecia, had been defeated by an adventurer.

This was big news that was enough to shake the world.

However, the greatest effect of this news was not on the surface of society, but on a society of individuals who squirmed in the darkness, a society that was difficult to even call an underworld.

The Vampires who worshipped Barurushapeh, the Evil God of Foreign Writings, stirred.

After the Pure-breed Vampire who was their leader was defeated by the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, they left the Bahn Gaia continent and had survived up until now by remaining hidden.

However, they had spent a long time gathering strength. Now, they had decided that Ternecia's death, the disappearance of one of their bitter enemies, was a good opportunity to restore their status.

It would be particularly convenient to establish a position in the Hartner Duchy of the Orbaume Kingdom and a part of the Amid Empire, where an empty space had opened with Ternecia's death.

But the Five-colored Blades were working in the Orbaume Kingdom, led by the new S-class adventurer Heinz.

With that being the case, the Vampires made moves into Kalahad, a maritime vassal nation of the Amid Empire to its south.

But the Storm of Tyranny, the party led by Schneider, the only S-class adventurer in the western region of the continent, was working there. However, they hadn't

performed any major deeds recently. And the party was led by someone who, despite being an S-class adventurer, was a depraved man who had a weakness for money, alcohol and, most of all, women. The Vampires thought that if they crushed each member individually, they could be victorious.

After finding out that one of the Storm of Tyranny's members was Zod... the Pure-breed Vampire Zorcodrio, they felt certain that they could win.

Guon, the leader of the Vampires, had heard from his previous master that Zorcodrio had once been defeated in ancient times.

According to that story, Zorcodrio was the man with the least talent in magic and combat among the Pure-breed Vampires.

According to that story, even during the battle between Alda and Vida, Zorcodrio had been the first one to fall at the frontlines.

It was said that there were around a hundred Pure-breed Vampires. With a hundred of them, naturally, some of them would turn out to be failures. Zorcodrio was one of those failures, the weakest Pure-breed Vampire.

Guon decided that this was the case after remembering his former master's words.

He decided that the first step of ruling the darkness of the Bahn Gaia continent would be to make a casualty of this Pure-breed Vampire, even if he was a failure, in order to show his power and the power of his followers.

The Storm of Tyranny cooperated with Guon's plans almost too quickly, separating themselves from one another. Guon himself, along with his elite subordinates, surrounded Zorcodrio and attacked.

"How frail..."

Several Vampire corpses littered the plain, which lay in waste as if a storm or hurricane had swept through.

"I-impossible. The elite Vampires that I raised myself, i-in a single instant... They were all at least of count status, Rank 10 and above!" Guon shouted. He was standing stock-still in the middle of the plain, simply shuddering at the monster of muscle before him.

Barely a minute ago, there had been a slim, gentleman-like person between the prime of his life and middle-age standing there.

But now there was a monster covered in steel-like muscles.

“Hmm, you are still young, but have your eyes aged too much?” asked Zod, who now looked like a completely different organism, never mind a different person. “I broke the ones you raised in a matter of seconds. Now then, it is your turn next.”

It seemed that Guon still hadn’t accepted reality. “Do not fool yourself! There is no chance that I, Guon-sama, who serves the Evil God of Foreign Writings, would be defeated by one such as you!”

Guon, who had reached the status of Vampire Emperor, used the Chant Revocation skill to cast fire, wind and earth-attribute attacks in rapid succession.

Zod brushed all of these aside with his overwhelming physical strength. He swung his arm swiftly to extinguish the flames, and the blade of air and spear made of minerals simply bounced off his pectoral muscles and abdominal muscles.

“The one who is fooling himself is you, you rotten youngster!”

Zod closed the distance between himself and Guon in a single instant, the ground crushed and broken beneath his feet.

During the moment where the defensive spell that Guon had cast in reflex was broken, he realized the true meaning of his former Pure-breed Vampire master’s words.

Zod had the least talent in magic and combat among the Pure-breed Vampires, but he made up for that with overwhelming physical strength.

During the battle between Alda and Vida, he fought further at the front and more fiercely than anyone else with this physical strength, and after enduring more attacks than anyone else, he was the first to fall.

“Take this! Violent Burst Lightning!”

As Zod began vibrating at such high speeds that his body began to blur, bolts of lightning erupted furiously from him.

Guon's Mythril armor, which was supposed to withstand even the magic of master mages, was pierced by that lightning and his heart was incinerated. He crumbled and fell, along with his ambitions.

Zod, who was releasing an acrid, ionic-smelling stench, made sure that Guon had stopped moving and then exhaled.

"Fushururu*... Just like the electric eels that inhabit Earth that have lightning coursing through their bodies without using Mana, this was my Muscle Technique's move that produces lightning with nothing but the vibration of my muscles. This is the power of science that was passed down by Solder, the champion chosen by Peria, the goddess of water and knowledge."

TLN: This seems to be a catchphrase of other Japanese muscular characters.*

"No, that's not completely science," said Lissana, who was standing there before Zod knew it. "Solder would cry if she heard that; she didn't deal with macho men well, either."

"Fuoh?! Lissana-dono, how rude of me," said Zod, hastily restoring his appearance.

He wore clothes that were Magic Items that could be restored by channeling Mana through them, no matter how badly they were torn, allowing him to return to his true muscular appearance at any time without hesitation.

"What about Schneider-dono and the others?" he asked.

"They've already finished and are heading back," said Lissana. "Unlike your situation, we couldn't resolve it by just hitting them a few times, so it was a little troublesome, though."

The Vampires had tried to persuade Schneider with a female slave's tears. Dolton, the spiritual mage with a mohawk who was concealing the fact that he was a Dark Elf, had been challenged to a drinking contest while the Dwarf dancer Merdin had been challenged to a dancing contest. Lissana had been busy making preparations for their next job with the Guild Master of the Adventurers' Guild.

It seemed that Guon and his followers had used methods other than battle against everyone but Zod. They had been unexpectedly wise.

“I see. However, it seems that I have caused trouble for everyone,” said Zod.

“It’s not really your fault, is it, Zod?” said Lissana.

“But this incident was caused by my brethren, even if they have strayed from the path,” Zod continued as he gathered and buried the corpses of Guon and his subordinates.

In modern society, Guon and his subordinates were monsters who worshipped an evil god, but Zod remembered the times when the Pure-breed Vampire who was Guon’s parent was a believer of Vida. They had been comrades in arms in the battle against the Demon King, Zod’s brethren who had felt the goddess’s kindness and become Vampires alongside him.

As they showed no signs of reforming, Zod hadn’t been able to allow them to escape, but he wanted to at least bury them as a final act of compassion.

“If you’re going to talk like that, then they’re children of my old companion, too.” Lissana, who was the incarnation of Jurizanapipe, had fought for Vida against Alda alongside Zod before he was sealed, as well as Guon’s master.

Zod had been defeated a hundred thousand years ago and sealed until recently, while Lissana had used the Demon King’s circle of transmigration system to be reborn.

Ternecia and Guon’s master had been defeated but managed to survive. However, in the end, they had fallen as low as to become hounds for wicked gods.

“Well, I’m sure those people had struggles of their own,” said Lissana.

“There is no telling what would have become of us if we had taken one wrong step as well,” Zod agreed.

The two of them, who were now in a somewhat dreary mood, completed the graves with blank gravestones and turned around to go back to the city.

“Ouch!” Lissana suddenly raised a hand to her head.

“W-what is the matter, Lissana-dono!”

Was it an enemy attack?! Zod began pumping up the muscles in his body once more.

“No, it’s not an enemy,” Lissana said, frowning. “This is a Divine Message. That Ricklent, why did he push himself so hard? And feeling like I have a hangover when I haven’t had anything to drink is the worst, too.”



Gubamon, who had finished moving his prized collection to a base that Ternecia hadn’t known about, let out a heavy, weary sigh.

“Good grief, that half-Vampire youngster... he torments us to no end.”

After those events – after Vandalieu vanished into the Dungeon from Ternecia’s hideout, Gubamon and Birkyne had entered the Dungeon to kill him together.

However, the Dungeon had been nothing more than a single floor with few rooms, and Vandalieu was nowhere to be found in any of them.

There were rare cases where the stairway leading to the next floor was cleverly hidden, so he and Birkyne searched for a while in case this was one of those Dungeons, but such a trick wasn’t present in this Dungeon, either.

It was likely that Vandalieu had used time-attribute magic or a Magic Item to teleport away from the Dungeon. After coming to this conclusion, Gubamon and Birkyne had been left with no choice but to leave the Dungeon behind.

And then they moved their bases with great haste. Ternecia had died, but Gubamon and Birkyne knew that Vandalieu seemed to be a Spiritualist. There was no guarantee that Ternecia’s spirit wouldn’t sell them out to Vandalieu.

...They had accompanied Ternecia for over a hundred thousand years, but they had been the ones to try to betray that person who had been their companion since the age of the gods, so it was difficult to imagine that she would try and keep them safe now.

“Curses, what are we to do now! Even if I cooperate with Birkyne... Hah! Wait. Can... can I trust him?”

Birkyne was a sworn friend of a hundred thousand years, who worshipped the same evil god. However, was it not he who had suggested to Gubamon the plan of turning Ternecia, another such sworn friend, into his puppet?

And now that he had failed, who was to say that he would not try to do the same thing to Gubamon?

“Birkyne said that if he and I join forces, we can kill that youngster. Join forces... Could it be that that rascal intends to turn me into his puppet next?”

It was possibly Gubamon’s turn to be the target of what they had attempted to do to Ternecia.

And so, the cooperative system between the Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, the Evil God of Joyful Life, began to crumble.



Marshukzarl von Bellwood Amid, the Emperor of the Amid Empire who had just finished his various daily duties, was surprised to hear this report, although the expression on his beautiful half-Elf face didn’t change.

The surprise he felt might have been greater than that he had felt when he heard the news of the expedition army of six thousand returning as Undead.

“That is not a metaphorical expression, is it?” he asked.

“No,” said the head of the Amid Empire’s secret intelligence. “According to the spies, the Hartner Duchy’s castle has physically tilted over.”

“I see...”

Now that the Amid Empire had occupied the Sauron Duchy, new lands had become adjacent to the Empire, and the Hartner Duchy was one of them. The movements of the Hartner Duchy were important affairs for the Empire.

Thus, he had been increasing the number of hidden agents in the duchy for a while, but the report that the castle had physically tilted over was difficult to believe.

If it were a fort adjacent to a Devil’s Nest, it could have been explained, but it was unheard of for a castle in the safest place, the capital city of a nation, to tilt over.

At the very least, it was a historically unusual event.

The report continued. “Also, it seems that the Guild Master of Nineland’s Mages’ Guild, Kinarp, turned out to be working with Pure-breed Vampires.”

“That is interesting information, but how did you find this out?” asked Marshukzarl. “I do not believe this is something that can be discovered by secret agents alone.”

“That is... For some unknown reason, he and his subordinates took the proof to consulates from other duchies and confessed everything,” said the head of intelligence.

“...This is getting more and more difficult to believe,” said Marshukzarl, pressing a hand to his forehead. But he had heard this information confirmed by numerous sources, so it didn’t seem to be false information or an untrue rumor. “Get your hands on the information that the Guild Master confessed, immediately. Continuing on from last time, this is our chance to squeeze out the pus. As for the incident of the castle tilting over... Leave it be for now. We will make the successful beggars take measures before they make too much noise.”

The Amid Empire had defeated and occupied the Sauron Duchy, but it wasn’t as if they hadn’t expended anything to do so. Of course, the Empire couldn’t simply kill all of the Sauron Duchy’s inhabitants, so magistrates needed to be sent to cities and village chiefs needed to be replaced in order to rule the people while keeping them suppressed.

But the inhabitants of the duchy that had long fought on the front lines against the Empire wouldn’t wag their tails so easily. More time was needed to discipline them. There were already reports that the surviving knights and soldiers were forming a resistance; if the Empire let its guard down, the carpet would be swept from under its feet.

If the Empire were to try and invade the Hartner Duchy in such a state, the extended supply lines and understaffed military bases within the Sauron Duchy would be exposed to the resistance.

And even if it were possible to assault the Hartner Duchy and occupy it, the surface area adjacent to the rest of the Orbaume Kingdom’s duchies would only increase.

The men of the Mirg shield-nation excelled in defensive battles, but even if they were positioned there, it wasn’t as if forts and sturdy walls would simply grow out of nowhere, so they would not be able to defend everywhere at once.

In other words, the moment the Amid Empire took this opportunity to invade the Hartner Duchy, it would be defeated no matter how things played out.

A few with a keen strategic eye would be able to realize this, but there were some noblemen who had failed to achieve anything in the previous war, whose eyes were clouded by their envy for the ones who gained new lands and higher court ranks... though some of them had poor eyes to begin with.

“I will take your concerns into account,” said the head of intelligence.

“Don’t pay any attention to them,” said Marshukzarl. “People are always a mixture of the good and the bad. For every great person, there are ten more fools mixed in with them.”

And it was the duty of the ones in higher positions to use those people well. Marshukzarl had the head of intelligence leave and quickly summoned the marshal, general affairs minister and the finance minister one after another to hear their reports and give them orders.

After that, there were reports of the numerous incidents that had occurred in the Hartner Duchy, but although Marshukzarl was interested in them, he was not surprised.

Even when he heard that a Dungeon had appeared near a city and caused a large monster rampage, or when he heard that Vida’s religion was unexpectedly spreading in the farming villages.

The sudden appearance of a Dungeon was something like a natural disaster, and now that the Hartner Duchy had become the frontline in the battle against the Amid Empire, he didn’t consider it unusual that Vida’s religion was spreading in an act of resistance.

While it was valuable information, it was also amusement for the busy Marshukzarl. It was similar to reading a weekly magazine on Earth.

However, when the intelligence agency reported yet another piece of information that should have ended in mere amusement, Marshukzarl raised his eyebrows.

“Is that true?” he asked.

The report he had heard was that the Ghouls of the Devil's Nests in the Hartner Duchy could no longer be hunted. The high-ranking intelligence worker was surprised at being asked this question in return, but he quickly nodded.

I've been had, Marshukzarl thought as he scowled.

"To think that he would move so quickly, and on that side of the mountain range... Tell all of our hidden agents to investigate everything they can about the Dhampir by the name of Vandalieu, no matter how trivial," he ordered.

Around a month afterwards, Marshukzarl's hidden agents reported that the slave-run mine in the Hartner Duchy had collapsed, that a Dhampir named Vandalieu had been treated as a saint in the cultivation villages that had been visited during the investigation, and that Vandalieu had appeared in the Adventurers' Guild in the city of Niarki.

Marshukzarl couldn't completely read Vandalieu's intents and motives, but he was certain that Vandalieu had been involved in all of the incidents that had occurred in the Hartner Duchy.

He informed all of his hidden agents stationed at places adjacent to the Boundary Mountain Range of Vandalieu's name and appearance, and ordered them to keep an eye out for him... By the time that order reached them, the cultivation villages had already mysteriously disappeared and it was announced that Lord Lucas's Red Wolf Knights' Order had sacrificed themselves to defeat dangerous monsters.

Incidentally, later on, Marshukzarl let out a grand sigh upon hearing that Heinz had exterminated the Pure-breed Vampire Ternecia, been promoted to S-class and reached the status honorary nobleman.

"Without knowing where the rest of her body went, he crushed her head without hesitation. And there are still two heads left. And though honorary, he is an earl. Both he and Vandalieu are troublesome."



Schneider, who had been sleeping on his stomach with mountains of dried herbs stacked in mounds on his back and set on fire, raised an eyebrow as Lissana returned and spoke to him.

“A Divine Message from Ricklent? Were you a goddess of the time attribute?” Schneider asked her.

Normally, Divine Messages were things that gods sent to their believers or followers. Lissana herself had once explained to Schneider that this pattern didn’t originate from simple hierarchical relationships, but because Divine Messages needed to utilize a mental connection between the target and the god.

“No,” said Lissana. “Things are strangely different from when I was on the Demon King’s side, but I’m now a goddess of the life attribute. So Ricklent has no connection to me, but... despite being reincarnated, I *am* still a goddess, so it’s possible for him to communicate with me through a Divine Message.”

Ricklent had really pushed himself; he felt pain as great as if his bones were being gouged out; even Lissana had experienced a violent headache that would have caused a normal person to lose consciousness out of shock.

“Sho, what’s it ‘bout?” Dolton’s speech had become inarticulate as a result of his drinking contest.

“He’s asking, ‘so, what’s it about?’” said Merdin, translating for him.

“He said he wants me to pass a message onto Zantark,” said Lissana.

“Z-Zantark? Not Zanta-san or Uncle Zazatak, but Zantark-sama? Isn’t that a god?!” Merdin exclaimed.

“Merdin, why are you so surprised? The Lissana-chan in front of your eyes is a goddess, too, you know?” Dolton pointed out.

“I don’t want to be told that by a drunken Elf,” said Merdin. “In fact, Zantark-sama, whom us Dwarves worship as our god-ancestor, is on a different level, isn’t he?”

“Well, you’re right, but you know. But it was that god of war who fought head-on against Bellwood and the other champions,” said Lissana.

“It was a defensive battle for me,” Zod added.

Zantark, who had fused with evil gods, had participated in the battle between Vida and Alda, standing on the side of Vida against Farmaun Gold, the champion that he

had chosen himself.

But this knowledge hadn't remained in the legends and myths of human society. It was a piece of historical truth that Schneider and his party had learned from Lissana and Zod.

"But we don't know where he went after that, do we? How are we supposed to pass on this message?" Schneider asked.

"That is... 'In a place where my eyes cannot see,'" said Lissana.

"What'sh dat shupposed ter mean?" asked Dolton.

"He said, 'What's that supposed to mean?'" said Merdin, translating.

While everyone fell into deep thought, Schneider instinctively came to an understanding of what those words meant.

"In other words, it's somewhere there's no Mages' Guilds that worship Ricklent, a city... country... continent. Alright, shall we go to the Dark Continent?"

And so began the Storm of Tyranny's next adventure.



"By the way, what are you doing?"

"Oh, this is called moxibustion. It's a therapy that was written in old books –"

"No, I know that. I know that, but I'm asking why you're doing something like that."

"Well, I was getting the feeling that I get tired easily these days. I wanted to test it out."

"You... you have the All Attributes Resistance skill, so what effect are you expecting moxibustion to have on you, exactly?"

SIDE CHAPTER 9

EVERYDAY LIFE IN TALOSHEIM

The final Goblin Barbarian fell with an ear-piercing shriek.

“...We won,” whispered Kasim, after making sure that the enemy was no longer moving and that there were no more enemies.

“Yeah, we won. With just us,” said Fester.

“Against four of them at once, too,” Zeno added.

The three adventurers inhaled, full of emotion. And then they screamed.

“WEEEEEE DID IIIIIT!”

“WE DID IIIIT! WE DID IT WITH JUST THE THREE OF UUUUS!”

“Alright... but let’s be quiet. We’re still in a Dungeon, after all.”

“That’s right...”

“Zeno, you’re always calm, huh.”

“What would you do with a Scout that isn’t calm?”

The three of them calmed down and quickly checked whether the Goblin Barbarian corpses had any Magic Stones or not before proceeding.



After returning from Garan’s Valley to the surface, Kasim and his friends looked at their thin metal plates that resembled Guild Cards while carrying the Magic Stones and materials back.

“These Dungeon Cards are pretty handy, huh.”

Vandalieu had inspected the Magic Item in the cultivation village's branch of the Adventurers' Guild that inputted information into Guild Cards, and reconstructed the machine left in Talosheim's Adventurers' Guild to issue these.

These cards, which were made of Dark Copper, Vandalieu's blood and the blood of the owners, had the function of allowing their owners to teleport within Dungeons, with some conditions.

"Apparently Vandalieu wanted to make it so that we can teleport between Dungeons, but this is convenient enough."

"The cards only allow teleportation to the entrance of floors that the card's owner has reached before, but I suppose that's normal."

"That's not normal. Using either the devices that were created by first-rate Alchemists that are installed in certain Dungeons or climbing all of the stairs, is the normal way to move around."

Dungeons were nests for dangerous monsters, but at the same time, they were treasure-houses of resources. However, in order to use those resources, most Dungeons required adventurers to carry them out on their backs. Unless one had an Item Box or one of its inferior counterparts (which were still rare and valuable), had a companion capable of using space-attribute magic or the Dungeon's layout allowed carriages or wagons to be brought inside, only what could be carried out by hand could be taken out of the Dungeon.

And considering that monsters could attack on the way, one could not carry as much as physically possible.

But these Dungeon Cards made things quite a lot easier. If one reached the target floor once, they would be able to teleport, not needing to spend any stamina getting there next time.

In addition, by reaching the stairs, one could return to the surface in an instant. Of course, at no time or stamina cost.

Depending on what needed to be done, it was even possible to simply hunt monsters near the stairs, return to the stairs when enough materials were gathered, return to the surface, leave the materials there and go back into the Dungeon.

“Dungeons are on another level after all. Strong monsters come out endlessly, so we can earn tons of Experience Points.”

“Yeah. The most we had around the cultivation village was Rank 2 monsters.”

This was the reason that the existence of Dungeons was important to amateur adventurers like Kasim and his friends. They could encounter monsters more frequently than in ordinary Devil’s Nests; the Dungeons were treasure troves of Experience Points as long as they had the ability to defeat the monsters.

“We would have found it difficult to reach the bottom floor of Garan’s Valley if we were just as we’d been when we lived in the cultivation village, though,” said Zeno.

They had defeated a group of Goblin Barbarians without suffering any injuries. Though their abilities had indeed grown, the main reasons were because their Attribute Values had increased explosively under the effects of Vandalieu’s Strengthen Followers skill and because their equipment had improved significantly.

Because they were Vandalieu’s friends, Kasim and his party had... not received any special, high-power equipment. Their weapons and armor had started showing their age in the battle against the Red Wolves Knights’ Order, so they had simply borrowed the cheapest of the commonly-used beginner’s equipment in Talosheim.

...That cheap beginner’s equipment was still far more powerful than the poor-quality items they had equipped themselves with before, however.

“That’s true,” Kasim agreed, looking at the Adamantite shield and armor he was equipped with now. “I might have been injured if I was using my old shield and armor.”

His new equipment was far superior in defensive ability to the cast-bronze shield and armor that had been made by pouring molten metal into molds, and even slightly lighter

“Yeah, that jii-san would have been really mad if we told him we wanted cast-metal items,” said Fester. “He’d say, ‘I only make forged arms!’”

Fester’s sword was another item forged by Datara. It was a cheap item, so it was far less sharp and solid than the products that Datara put all of his effort into.

However, if Fester were to call it a “cheap item” in the Adventurers’ Guild in the city of

Niarki, the adventurers of the same age would disagree, simply assuming that Fester was a rich person.

“Ah, Tarea-san and the others... They’re good people, but everyone’s sense is a little off,” said Zeno.

His equipment had been plainly upgraded as well. He had been handed down “leftover” items that intermediate-level adventurers would use habitually.

Talosheim was isolated from the outside world, so external economics and information had no influence here. One step outside the city would expose one to Rank 3 monsters... Ferocious Raptors with sharp fangs and claws, and monsters more powerful than them. Being able to survive in such an environment was considered a minimum requirement.

Thus, there was no point in creating the kind of cheap items that were commonly used in normal cities.

“Well, it’s not all good things.”

“That’s true.”

The three adventurers entered the former ruins of the Adventurers’ Guild, which had been completely renovated into a trading post with a sign hanging down.

The inside was exactly the same as a real Adventurers’ Guild.

“A purchase, is it? That’s five thousand Lunas.”

“An exchange for a mayonnaise, ketchup and Ent syrup set?”

“Excuse me, we’re sold out of cream.”

The only difference was, perhaps, that rewards could be paid in products other than money.

“They’re sold out of cream?” said Kasim.

“The wasabi mayonnaise hasn’t come in yet?” asked Fester.

The two of them seemed sad.

“You guys... We decided that we’d be paid in money today, didn’t we?” said Zeno, lightly poking them in the back of their heads.

The currency known as the Luna circulated in Talosheim, but there were still not many different kinds of stores. Thus, there were still many who traded in goods rather than money.

“Oh yeah,” said Fester, cheering up again. He gave a bright smile as he got in line and called out to the girl at the counter. “Lina, we’re back!”

“Welcome to the trading post,” said Lina. “Are you here to be paid? Or for a trade?”

“Oi, Lina, it’s me,” said Fester.

“Are you here to be paid? Or for a trade?” Lina repeated.

“Oi, Lina?”

The receptionist at the counter, Lina, who had been an irregular employee at the Seventh Cultivation Village’s Adventurers’ Guild, gave a businesslike smile to her lover, Fester. But her smile was gradually growing stiffer and stiffer.

“Lina?”

“I’m trying to tell you, I’m working now!” she shouted. “I’m glad you’re not injured, I was worried, I love you! If you’re satisfied with that, hurry and hand over your materials and choose whether you want money or goods in payment!”

“O-okay!” Fester hastily put the materials he was carrying onto the counter. Kasim and Zeno gestured to Lina in apology behind him.

Incidentally, this was how things normally went for Fester and Lina. She already had a firm control over him, but that was probably perfectly fine for Fester.

“Only Magic Stones other than the proof of extermination, huh? Ah, you did it, didn’t you? You achieved your goal of defeating Goblin Barbarians with just the three of you,” said Lina. “Okay, this comes out to five hundred Lunas in total.”

“Five hundred Lunas, huh...” Fester murmured.

“Eh, it’s not like I appraised it for lower because I’m angry, but... Those are the market prices,” said Lina.

The extermination rewards and Magic Stones of the monsters that Kasim’s party had hunted would have been worth over two thousand Baums at an Adventurers’ Guild in the Hartner Duchy.

However, they were only worth five hundred Lunas in Talosheim.

This was because there were quality Undead Titan and Ghoul explorers (They were not registered at the Adventurers’ Guild but were doing essentially the same thing, so this term suddenly started to be used), and because the frequency of encountering monsters in Talosheim’s surroundings and Dungeons was high. And Vandalieu’s existence was the reason for those.

Rank 4 monsters appeared frequently, and over two thousand explorers hunted them habitually. Thus, it was only inevitable that the reward for exterminating monsters was lower than the outside world.

In addition, the entire city’s Magic Items were powered by Vandalieu’s strange Mana, so the demand for Magic Stones was lower than in the outside world as well.

Until the people of the cultivation villages came, most of Talosheim’s citizens had possessed fighting abilities on the level of C-class adventurers, but this meant that if one wanted to make a living as an explorer, they needed to be able to fight at least as well as a C-class adventurer.

“It’s quite harsh here, huh,” said Kasim.

“Well, we just need to endure until we grow stronger,” said Fester. “Let’s do our best.”

“You’re right. Our levels have actually increased, too,” said Zeno.

“Please do your best,” said Lina. “I don’t mind being a working couple, but I don’t intend to support Fester on my own.”



After receiving their payment, Kasim and his party arranged plans to eat together with Lina once her working hours were over and then left the trading post.

Having a light snack of food from the carts, they headed for a bathhouse in order to wash away the sweat they had worked up in the Dungeon.

“...A little while ago, I said it was harsh, but if you asked me to go back outside of this place, I’d refuse,” said Kasim.

“Me too,” Fester agreed immediately.

“I’d definitely refuse as well,” said Zeno.

Their half-eaten food from the cart was still in their hands.

Kasim had a hot dog, while Fester and Zeno had hamburgers.

With a single bite, their mouths would be filled with meat juice and sauce, they would feel the pleasant texture of lettuce and chopped onions against their teeth and the soft, fluffy bread absorbed all of it perfectly, not remaining inside their mouths for very long. Once all of that was swallowed, they would want a second mouthful.

These were being sold for five Lunas each. And they were not being sold by a well-known chef running a hidden food stall, but a normal stall that attracted explorers going in and out of the trading post. The one making them was a former villager of the cultivation villages, just like Kasim and his friends.

“How much would you have to pay to eat something this delicious in the city of Niarki, I wonder?” said Kasim.

“Hmm... White bread, meat, fresh vegetables and sauce... about ten Baums?”

“There was that time our instructor treated us to fried Orc meat, remember? That was about ten Baums, apparently.”

“And this bread is clearly softer than the bread they sell in the city, too.”

“So about twenty Baums?”

The three of them looked down at the snacks in their hands again.

Hot dogs, lengths of meat called sausages that had been created through unknown technology, sandwiched in fluffy bread. Hamburgers that were so full of meat juice that it was difficult to imagine they were simply made of minced meat shaped into patties, along with the onions, lettuce and ketchup to give it an incredible texture.

Such food was only five Lunas. The different currencies weren't worth exactly the same, but... the food that could be purchased in the city of Niarki for five Baums was –

“Umm, sandwiches with brown bread and dried meat. With an unidentified sauce.”

“Dried vegetables and bean sauce. With a few pieces of meat in there, if you're lucky.”

“A large helping of mixed rice.”

The last item that Zeno mentioned, mixed rice, was something made when the stall owner stir-fried whatever ingredients he had acquired cheaply on that day with southern rice. The ingredients could be meat or fish depending on the day, so even when buying it from the same stall, they could be a hit or a miss.

The selling point was its quantity and cheap price.

Rather than having the feasts in their hands turn into that kind of food, it was perhaps best to accept small changes with a laugh.

“By the way, why are these called hot dogs?”

“Isn't it because they're made of Hell Hound meat?”

“...Is Hell Hound meat edible?”

“No, isn't it just because that was the name used for it in the other world? Just like taiyaki and Cuban sandwiches.”

Following this conversation, the three finished their snacks and entered the bathhouse. Incidentally, the number of non-Titan citizens had increased, so there were human-sized baths as well. Undead Titans sometimes decided to use them for half-body baths, however.

“We’ve come to take a dip, Father-in-law-san,” said Fester.

“I’ve told you, it’s too early to be calling me that!” shouted the former Oyaji of the jack-of-all-trades store, Lina’s father.

In Talosheim, that had no interactions with other cities and where all citizens had been provided houses, there was no need for inns. Vandalieu had offered him a civil official position, but the Oyaji had turned him down, saying that official work didn’t suit him, so he was now working in this bathhouse.

It seemed that he intended to save money and have another business up and running by the time Talosheim began doing trade with other cities.

The three adventurers paid the entrance fee, took off their clothes and entered the baths. Incidentally, this bathhouse was gender-segregated. Mixed-gender bathhouses were places for meetings between men and women, so Fester wouldn’t go to those.

“Fuuh... Baths are great, huh?” said Kasim, and the other two quickly agreed.

The three of them had never had baths with hot water before coming to Talosheim. There hadn’t been any convenient hot springs in the Sauron Duchy or in the cultivation villages, and they hadn’t been able to afford to heat up large quantities of water.

In modern-day Japan on Earth, people would heat water freely, but in Lambda, one couldn’t heat water without gathering firewood, using expensive Magic Items or learning fire-attribute magic.

Even if they wanted to use firewood, wood didn’t burn easily unless it was dried first. This would take time and effort; it wasn’t something that could be done every day just to have a bath.

But hot baths could be easily had in Talosheim for a cheap price. More recently, the boilers had been powered by Flame Ghosts rather than fuel, so it was gentle on the environment as well. The Ghosts could receive a considerable salary just for remaining still, so it was apparently a popular part-time job.

“And soap is cheap, too. I once saw a bar of soap in the city of Niarki on sale for a hundred Baums, but they’re only three Lunas here.”

“They’re made from monster fat, if I recall?”

“The cheapest ones are. The ones made from fruit are more expensive, but they smell better. Girls are happy when they get them as presents.”

Suddenly, a Ghoul man called out to the three of them with a voice that sounded like a growl.

“Ah, Bodan-san. Hello,” said Fester.

It seemed that the Ghoul named Bodan was an explorer like Kasim and his friends, and they had seen each other before.

“...Fester, I’m Baden,” said the Ghoul.

“Eh? Ah, I’m sorry!”

While Fester had indeed seen him before, it seemed that he had mistaken him for another Ghoul. But this probably couldn’t be helped. Ghoul men had the faces of lions that were largely different in structure from human faces, so they were difficult to tell apart unless one was used to seeing them.

It was even more difficult in the bathhouses, where they were completely nude.

“By the way, Baden-san, please tell us more about this soap!” said Kasim.

“How much is it worth?!” asked Zeno.

Kasim and Zeno, who experienced the loneliness of being single every day, were now engrossed in the conversation, so Baden didn’t really seem to mind having been mistaken for someone else.

Around the time Kasim and Zeno came to the conclusion that the honey soap that had started being sold recently might be a good item to give as presents, despite not having anyone to give presents to, Baden got out of the bath and left.

Other than Baden, there were also Anubises, Black Goblins, Orcuses and Undead Titans washing their sweat away in this bathhouse (although one particular group among these didn’t sweat at all).

Everyone from the cultivation villages had been surprised when they first moved to Talosheim, but they soon became accustomed to it. There was a sense of unity

provided by the Strengthen Followers skill, but there was also the fact that conversation with these races went surprisingly well.

There had even been an event to encourage interaction between the old inhabitants and the new ones. The biggest trouble that had occurred was a fight breaking out; there weren't any fierce hostilities developing.

Perhaps it was a good thing that the cultivation villages had been a mish-mash of refugees of multiple races.

And there was a single line that satisfied everyone when it came to their strange neighbors: "Everyone is normal compared to Vandalieu."

Vandalieu himself would probably have been unhappy to hear this, however.

"But there are some parts about him that are just like a normal child, right?"

"Yeah, it's easy to tell what he's thinking."

If Pablo Marton had heard these words while he was still alive, he would have questioned their sanity, but Kasim and his friends were completely serious.

Vandalieu was expressionless and his voice was flat-toned, but if one looked at places other than his face, it was unexpectedly easy to tell what he was thinking. He expressed emotions such as disturbance and surprise through his arms and legs, as well as his hair that had recently become able to move freely.

He was probably using parts of his body other than his face to express his emotions because he was aware that his own expression and voice never changed.

When he was nervous, he would stop expressing any emotion at all, so that in itself was easy to understand.

Kasim and his friends had realized this since they were still living in the cultivation village, so it was likely natural for them to treat Vandalieu normally.

If Vandalieu were to hear this, he would quite be shocked upon objectively realizing that his mental age had regressed, however.

Vandalieu was almost eight years old. Including the time that he had spent on Earth

and in Origin, he was in his mid-forties, approaching late middle-age.

“And it seems that he gets depressed when people call him scary or ‘Monstrosity,’” said Kasim. “Let’s make sure we don’t act scared of him.”

“Kasim, weren’t you the one who screamed after unexpectedly meeting Vandalieu in a bathhouse the other day?” Zeno pointed out.

“No, that was... It can’t be helped, right?! You guys were scared as well!”

One time, while Kasim was submerged in the bath, Vandalieu, who had actually entered the bath earlier with his head submerged (having not learned from last time), had silently risen up right next to Kasim. He had apparently had his eyes closed while submerged and simply come up to breathe, but it was still surprising for Kasim nonetheless.

Kasim couldn’t be blamed for saying that his reaction couldn’t be helped.

“Well, I suppose you’re right. I didn’t notice him either, even though I have the Detect Presence skill...” Remembering this memory that hurt his pride as a Scout, Zeno began to feel depressed.

“Either way, let’s make sure we don’t say anything like, ‘scary,’ about him.”

“You’re right.”

And so the three of them decided on how they would treat their friend, who was also the king of Talosheim.



It was now dusk, and the sunlight reflected by the mercury mirrors had weakened.

The three of them, who were heading towards the place where they had agreed to meet Lina, had their interest drawn by a crowd that had gathered near where they were passing by.

Over a dozen children were playing on a playground that had been built on a space of open ground.

Kasim and his friends were accustomed to seeing this. On Earth, the sight of healthy children playing on the typical sandboxes, slides, jungle gyms and iron bars might bring a smile to one's face.

However, the same could not be said for the sight of a group of children all with the same face playing on a playground, moving silently without letting out a single laugh, looking as empty as dolls.

"Scary..." Kasim and his friends whispered.

At the same time, Vandalieu noticed them. "Oh, what a coincidence."

At that moment, the outlines of the countless Vandalieus faded and gathered together at the one physical Vandalieu.

Fortunately, it seemed that he hadn't heard what Kasim and his friends had whispered.

"Umm, what were you doing?" Kasim asked.

"I built a park for people to relax and children to play at, so I was just testing whether there were any problems with the play equipment I installed," Vandalieu replied.

Talosheim had never had a park to begin with, so it seemed that Vandalieu had said, "I'm just going to move these a little to the side," dismantled and rebuilt the buildings in their new locations and used the newly-made space to build a park.

And he had apparently been testing the playground equipment he had made by changing the shapes of materials using Golem Transmutation himself.

"A park, huh... Are there places like this in big cities?" Zeno asked.

"Who knows? There weren't any in Nineland. But it's convenient to have places like this," said Vandalieu.

"So that's how it is."

Kasim and the others couldn't really understand the reason for making the effort of building a park or see its value, but Vandalieu had simply thought, "It would be nice to have one," so he couldn't really give a detailed explanation, either.

Parks had all kinds of benefits, being places where children could play within their parents' sight, where the parents could interact with each other and where various recreational activities could be held.

"So, have you finished inspecting it?" Fester asked.

"Yes," said Vandalieu.

"Then how about having an early dinner with us? We're going to go and meet Lina now," said Fester.

"If you don't mind eating at the royal castle," Vandalieu replied. "I'm planning to use my new cookware to try and make new dishes today."

"Are you serious?! Lucky us!" Kasim exclaimed.

"So, what are you making?" Zeno asked.

"Curry and naan."

"Eh? Curry and what?"

"I'm making naan."

TLN: ナン/Nan = Naan as in naan bread, but 何/Nan means "what" in Japanese.*

It seemed that Vandalieu had built a tandoori oven and was intending to make Indian curry before Eastern curry.

"I said I would make it when Fester and Lina got married," Vandalieu explained. "By the way, we've almost finished completing the first stage of information gathering, so the Cream Expedition is going to start in earnest. What are you three planning to do?"

"Ah, that. Lizardmen, huh... We still want to train ourselves more."

Discussing the new dish that Vandalieu was planning to make and the upcoming expedition, the four of them smiled as they headed to the place where they were meeting Lina.

APPENDIX 4

EXPLANATION OF RACES THAT HAVE APPEARED

This is an explanation of the races of Lambda that have made an appearance. There are some that have already been explained as monsters, but they will be explained as races of people here.

The definition of people in Lambda

These are separated into three major different ways of thinking.

First, for the gods like Alda whose objective is the annihilation of Vida's races, Alda fundamentalists and anti-Vida advocates, Vida's races are not people. Only three races, the humans, Elves and Dwarves, classify as people. (That is why Alda said that Lambda's total population is less than 100,000,000, but in reality, including Vida's races, the population is over 100,000,000.)

Next, for Alda's peaceful faction, the neutral gods, their believers and most normal people, so to speak, in addition to the above races, Vida's races that don't have monster ancestors, such as Dark Elves, Titans and Beast-people, classify as people.

The largest number of people use this definition compared to the other two.

The last is the inclusion of races that have monster ancestors, such as Vampires.

This definition is least used. Because there are those such as Vampires who work for evil gods, very few consider all races to be people, even if they are believers of Vida.

Half-breeds

Other than half-Elves and Dhampirs, the Statuses of children born to parents of different races usually display the race of one of the parents' races.

However, in many cases, the special racial traits of the parents manifest on the body. A human man born between a human and a Dwarf would have good vision in the dark and grow a plentiful beard, possessing exceptional physical strength and an affinity for the earth and fire attributes. A Titan born between an Elf and a Titan would have a large body easily surpassing 2.5 meters in height, but their ears would be pointed and they would possess the qualities for spiritual magic from birth. There are other similar examples.

Although these aren't reflected in skills or Attribute Values, sometimes there are cases where scales grow on the body or feathers grow on the arms.

Lifespans can differ on a case-by-case basis, but they can be roughly estimated by averaging the expected lifespans of the parents.

Also, there are cases where children born to parents of the same race are born with special characteristics of other races, or even born as an individual of a different race altogether. In the past, the mother's faithfulness was questioned in such cases, or sometimes this was called the prank or even a blessing of a god, but this is now known to be a result of atavism.

The above examples do not include half-breeds with monsters such as Goblins and Orcs.

Humans

The equivalent of humans on Earth or in Origin.

They have the lowest base Attribute Values among any race, but at the same time, they are the race that is thriving the most. The reason for that is said to be that the extent of their freedom is great; there are no Jobs that are suited or ill-suited for humans as a race.

There are all kinds of humans; there are some with low aptitude with magic while others have great aptitude for magic; there are some with affinity for only one attribute while others have an affinity for all attributes (with the exception of the death attribute).

As if to demonstrate the humans' extent of freedom, if one separates heroes that

appear in legends and myths by race, there are more human heroes than heroes of the other races. But on the other hand, there are many ordinary people who would struggle to fight a single Goblin.

Their life expectancy is around fifty to sixty years, but because infants of breast-feeding age often die of disease and such, once humans safely pass that age, they can even live for over eighty years.

Also, those who have experienced multiple Jobs and increased their Attribute Values age slower; there were some human adventurers in the past who actively worked for over a hundred years.

In many nations, humans are treated as adults starting from the age of fifteen.

There are no sub-races, but there are ethnicities with white, yellow or black skin color.

Humans can generally create offspring with almost any other race.

Elves

The race born between Shizarion, the god of wind and art, and Peria, the goddess of water and knowledge. They are known to have long, pointed ears and exceptional physical appearances.

As their ancestral roots lie in Shizarion and Peria, they have great Agility and Intelligence, but they are often physically weaker than humans.

There are many Elves who possess an affinity for the wind and water elements from birth, and few possess an affinity for the attributes that are poorly compatible with these attributes, the earth and fire attributes.

They possess the Dark Vision skill from birth. Also, though this does not apply for all Elves, many acquire the Spiritual Magic skill, so they are sometimes called the friends of the spirits.

Their lifespans are as long as five hundred years; they age at the same pace as humans until their teenage years, and after that, they grow into adults at a rate of one physical year of age every several human years. When they are treated as adults varies based

on the nation and clan, but they are generally regarded as adults from around fifty to sixty years of age. In cases where they are raised in human cities, they are treated as adults from age fifteen despite looking very young.

Sometimes Elf children are seen in towns giving orders to adults in a self-important manner, but they are simply Elves in their thirties giving orders to newcomers who are over a decade younger than them.

Because they have long lifespans, their sense of time is looser than that of humans; they are often gentle in nature. There are also more than a few who use their long lifespans to earn Experience Points over a long period of time to reach B-class or A-class... if they survive that long.

As adventurers, they are suited to being mages or using their speed to be lightly-equipped warriors or scouts.

As civilians, many Elves are artists or scholars.

In the past, there were large-scale villages of tens of thousands of Elves, though they were very different from human nations.

Elf villages are mostly located in forests or on lakes, and there are even nomadic tribes that build fleets of ships and sail as they live their lives.

The fact that they are vegetarians and do not eat meat is a mere rumor; they treat both meat and vegetables as blessings of nature and eat both equally.

When living in human nations, they are almost never in positions where they need to succeed noble families and such. Even those with occupations often retire after working for a few decades. Because their lifespans are long, even if they are noblemen, the nations that they live in will either be destroyed before their own lives end, divide into multiple nations or be merged with other nations, so there is no stability. Also, the Elves have historically learned that if they maintain their social statuses for too long, dissatisfaction grows in those of races with shorter lifespans.

Some Elves are disgusted by Dark Elves, treating them as corrupted Elves, but there is a myth telling of how after Shizarion was destroyed and Peria entered a slumber, Vida protected the ancestors of the Elves. Thus, there are also Elves with a deep belief in Vida, and those Elves are friendly towards Vida's races, especially the Dark Elves, whom they welcome as brothers and sisters who have received the goddess's

blessings.

There is no consistent philosophy of love among the Elf race; there is a wide variety of Elves, ranging from those who are sociable and court members of the opposite sex even after only meeting them once, to others who thoroughly get to know potential partners before making a decision. It is said that this is because Elves either inherit the nature of Shizarion, who had many romantic interests, or that of Peria, who was more discreet.

Also, it seems that many Elves believe that finding each person's different beauty and charm regardless of their appearance is a part of love... though this is likely not insignificantly due to the fact that all Elves have beautiful appearances.

But Elves often become deeply attached to the partners that they have decided upon. A certain human mage left behind the words, "If an Elf truly falls in love with you, you will be dragged around for your whole life, so give up on them."

Also, Dwarves are the only race that Elves cannot directly create offspring with. Due to this, the racial relations between Elves and Dwarves once became complicated.

Perhaps because of that incident, there are quite a number of Elves who enjoy playing with fire by having relations with Dwarves.

Dwarves

A race with ancestral roots in Zantark, the god of fire and destruction, and Botin, mother of the earth and goddess of craftsmanship. Even after reaching adulthood, their height only reaches the chests of humans. Dwarf men are known for growing plentiful beards once they become adults, while women maintain the appearances of young girls despite being adults (with large individual differences in figures).

Perhaps because their ancestral roots lie in Zantark and Botin, while they have exceptional Strength, Stamina and Vitality, their Agility and Intelligence are a little lower than that of humans.

Many Dwarves have an affinity for the fire and earth attributes, but there are few who possess an affinity for the opposite attributes, the wind and water attributes.

Also, Dwarves possess the Dark Vision skill from birth.

Their lifespans are around two hundred years. They develop at the same pace as humans, and once they reach the adult age of fifteen, their aging becomes very slow. They remain healthy until the age of one hundred and eighty, but after that, they often age rapidly.

They have longer lifespans than humans, but they are often picky about time and stubborn in personality. But they are not short-tempered; they enjoy training or raising things to the point that they make these their life goals. Also, they are a race that enjoys alcohol more than relations between men and women, to the point that it is often said that if one wants to marry a Dwarf girl, they should send alcohol to her father or defeat him in a drinking contest.

As adventurers, they are suited to being shield-bearers and frontline fighters, and not suited to being mages or scouts. Also, many Dwarves are religious, so there are cases where they become priests.

As civilians, they are often blacksmiths, stonemasons, potters, leatherworkers, arms smiths or chefs, and there are many who set their sights on farming as well. It is often said that when choosing a craftsman, an Elf craftsman would be best for aesthetics, while a Dwarf craftsman would be best for performance.

Although society praises the skill of some of these craftsmen, there are almost none who become noblemen and such. Other than cases where a Dwarf accepts a court rank in order to protect the rights and homes of his brethren, most of them are honorary noblemen, nobles in name only.

Other than the Workers' Guild, most Guild branches have at least one Dwarf among the medium to high-ranking leaders.

There are no races that the Dwarves consider enemies, and although they frequently quarrel with Elves due to their differing views, they do not hate them.

They do not hold anything against Vida's races, either. However, they laugh off the fact that Dwarves were the only race that Vida did not mate with to create a new race, saying that the Dwarven men of the past must have drank her under the table. They warn young Dwarf boys, saying that they should learn from their ancestors' example and not become the kind of men who would assault drunken women.

...However, it seems that they do not mind vigorously deepening their bonds with moderately drunk members of the opposite sex who have not passed out.

The Dwarves' perception of love is such that the men are not domineering husbands that demand that their wives follow their requests, but husbands who want their wives to keep them under control. This is thought to be the influence of Zantark's words of, "Men should fight and work outside while their wives protect the homes."

This is why Dwarf men like strong-minded, firm women. Also, it seems that they find voluptuous women more charming than dainty ones.

Dwarf women think of men as one of the raw materials that they need to temper; it seems that they are attracted to men who they feel are worth the effort of strengthening. Thus, although Dwarf couples do quarrel, this is often a whip of love from the wife.

Also, an important feature that all Dwarf men should have to charm Dwarf women is their beards.

However, more recently, there are many among the youngest generation of Dwarves that do not fall under the above descriptions. There is an emotional play about a Dwarf woman reforming a hopeless human man who was loved by everyone. This play was actually the story of the beginning of the romance between the playwright's parents.

Dark Elves

A race born between Vida, the goddess of life and love, and a young Elf who was serving her.

Their appearance is exactly the same as that of Elves other than their dark skin; they are sometimes referred to as "suntanned Elves." Also, old books say that Dark Elves have more sensual figures than Elves due to being descendants of a goddess who also rules over abundance and prosperity. However, in later years, the 'Extraordinary and Odd' Dario Dan, who was renowned as both a mage and as an artist, gathered a thousand Elves and a thousand Dark Elves to cooperate in an investigation, through which he determined that this rumor is not true.

Like Elves, Dark Elves possess the qualities for using magic, but they also possess

exceptional physical qualities such as Vitality and Strength. In other words, they have high overall Attribute Values; there are no areas in which they are inferior to humans.

They can possess an affinity for any attribute, and like Elves, there are many who awaken to Spiritual Magic.

They possess the Dark Vision and Magic Resistance skills from birth.

They have long lifespans of a thousand years. Excluding the Vampires, who do not age at all, Dark Elves have the longest lifespan as a race. (There are some among the Drakonids and Majin) who live longer than a thousand years, but they do not have longer average lifespans as a race; there are just large individual differences.)

Dark Elves age at the same pace as humans up to their teenage years, and after that, they age at a rate of one physical year of age every several human years, and at a certain stage, their growth (aging) stops. There are individual differences in when this period occurs; it can occur as early as the mid-teenage years or as late as the early thirties.

But unlike Elves, once their growth stops, they maintain this appearance for the rest of their lives, so it is possible for elderly individuals who have lived for nine hundred years to have the appearance of boys or girls in their mid-teenage years.

The mental ages of Dark Elves are strongly influenced by how old they appear to be. Perhaps due to this, they do not have a custom of respecting their elders unconditionally. They will always be treated as immature until they develop appropriate knowledge, skills and personalities.

But many Dark Elves respect those who show themselves to be mature, so they are also a race that is easy to get along with.

Because they have longer lifespans than Elves, many Dark Elves have somewhat carefree personalities. Some live as adventurers or as civilians, but with their sense of time, they consider these things to be “training,” “studying abroad” or “a bit of a long journey.” There are almost none who intend to spend their entire lives in human society... because most nations are likely to be destroyed or divide before they reach the ends of their lifespans.

But there are no Jobs as adventurers that they are particularly suited for, and they can use their long lifespans to learn all kinds of occupations as civilians.

Historically, Dark Elves have kept their distance except from Elves who believe in Vida, but they are not hostile as a race. However, many Dark Elves hate the very sight of priests of Alda.

Dark Elves' perception of marriage is peculiar and quite uninhibited. Because they have long lifespans, so even if they swear to love each other for eternity, arguments and affairs can happen if they spend hundreds of years together, so most Dark Elves make an oath to give each other "one hundred years of love." If they wish to remain a couple after those one hundred years pass, they repeat their oath for another hundred years in front of a statue of the goddess. Repeating this practice is marriage for the Dark Elves.

If they have changed their minds, they can simply divorce on the spot, so it is said that Dark Elves are the race that spills the least blood over romantic complications.

Titans

The race born between Vida, the goddess of life and love, and the Sun Giant Talos, who served the Colossus god Zerno. They were the first race to be created by Vida.

They have light-brown, sun-kissed skin. They are a race of large individuals; once they reach adulthood, men are over 2.7 meters tall while women are over 2.5m tall.

Other than the color of their skin and their size, they are no different from humans. There is a well-known comedy where a nobleman has his heart captivated by a healthy, beautiful girl with light-brown skin depicted in a painting and goes to confess to her, only to find that she is a Titan girl who is larger than him.

For their Attribute Values, they have excellent Vitality and Stamina, as well as Strength. However, they have poor Agility, Intelligence and Mana.

They have poor qualities for magic, and most only possess an affinity for a single attribute. This attribute is often the life attribute.

They possess the Augmented Muscular Strength and Augmented Stamina skills from birth, and it is easy for them to acquire each race's resistance skills.

They have lifespans of around three hundred years; they age at the same pace as

humans until they are around fifteen, and after that, their aging slows down, maintaining a physical age of someone in their twenties or thirties until they are around two hundred and fifty years old. After that, they begin aging rapidly. Because they age similarly to Dwarves, people have long wondered whether the two races are somehow related.

Many Titans have honest personalities and do not care about small details, but when they are angry, they are unmanageable. Also, they tend to prefer clothes that expose much of their skin. This is because Titans as a race believe that their bodies are beautiful things that they should be proud of. In fact, their sturdy, beautiful, well-proportioned bodies captivate those who behold them... though there have always been many women who dislike Titan men, saying that their muscles are unpleasant.

As adventurers, they are suited for being shield-bearers or powerful fighters who wield heavy weapons. However, parties made of only Titans sometimes do not have a shield-bearer at all. This is because there is no reason to become a shield-bearer if the entire party is sturdy.

As civilians, many Titans have occupations that require physical strength, such as farmers, miners and stonemasons.

Perhaps due to this, few Titans have high social positions. This is likely related to the fact that no nations made primarily of Titans have existed ever since Talosheim, a nation in the southern region of the Bahn Gaia continent, was destroyed two hundred years ago.

Although the Titans are not hostile to any races as a whole, there are more than a few who believe that the Amid Empire and its vassal nations that attacked the nation of the Titans are a common enemy of all Titans.

However, they hold disgust for the Hill Giants and Forest Giants, who are the descendants of the Colossi who joined the Demon King and became monsters in the age of myths, for defiling the bloodline of their great ancestors. Those who slay them are praised as worthy warriors.

In contrast, they worship the true Colossi, including Talos who maintained his divinity.

Their views on love are uninhibited and both men and women place an importance on strength and sturdiness, but they also admire those who have things like knowledge and a sense of art that they don't possess themselves. They are also

sometimes easily won over when they are treated with soft kindness and gracefulness.

It is said that there is a sub-race of Titans with white fur living in icy mountains and other cold regions of the Dark Continent, the continent that has become one enormous Devil's Nest.

Beast-people

The races created when Vida mated with the beast-kings who served Ganpapllo, the beast-god who was destroyed by the Demon King.

Because there are multiple beast-king parents, beast-people can differ in appearance, but they generally all have the ears and tails of beasts. Each race has different features, such as fur growing on the backs of their hands and their shins or horns growing on their heads.

Their Attribute Values also differ depending on their parent beast-king. However, most races have poor qualities for magic while having excellent Vitality, Strength, Agility and Stamina.

There are only mammalian races of Beast-people, and Beast-person races of boars, horses and aquatic mammals do not exist. This is because in Lambda, reptilians are descendants of the subordinates of Marduke, the Dragon-emperor god.

There are no races of bird, horse or aquatic-mammalian Beast-people; this is explained by the fact that the beast-kings of those races were either destroyed by the Demon King, while some joined the evil gods, so the children born between them and the goddess became Harpies and Centaurs.

There are no boar Beast-people because the boar beast-king joined the Demon King and became the ancestor of the Orcs; this is also recorded in the myths. However, this incident is not often spoken of.

Incidentally, there are no Beast-people of domesticated animals such as dogs, cats, or pigs.

In the Status, Beast-people's races are displayed as, "XX-type Beast-person." Wolf Beast-people are displayed as "Wolf-type Beast-person," while wildcat Beast-people

are displayed as “Wildcat-type Beast-person.”

The skills that Beast-people possess from birth depend on what kind of Beast-people they are. However, most Beast-people possess the Dark Vision skill. Also, carnivorous Beast-people have fangs and claws, while herbivorous Beast-people have horns.

Within ten years, they grow to the equivalent of fifteen years in human age, and after that, they live until they are a hundred and fifty to two hundred years old. The speed of their aging is extraordinarily slow.

Also, children born between parents of different races of Beast-people are born as a Beast-person of one of the parents’ races. There are no cases of things like Beast-people with wildcat tails and a wolf’s tail.

However, such children can grow fangs and horns; there have been confirmed cases of things such as bear-type Beast-people with horns. Also, when using the Beast Transformation skill, which will be mentioned later, some of their parents’ physical features can appear.

These are not the limits of half-breeds that Beast-people can create; children can be born with pointed Elf ears and fox tails.

Their diets depend on what kind of Beast-people they are, but carnivorous Beast-people are not completely unable to eat food that isn’t meat, and likewise, even herbivorous Beast-people can eat meat.

As Adventurers, they are suited to being scouts or frontline fighters, and they tend to prefer being unarmed fighters using their claws and horns, or having roles that fight with light equipment. Also, they can gain skills such as Beast Transformation, a skill that turns them temporarily into half-beast half-human creatures, and acquire race-specific Jobs such as Beast Warrior.

Perhaps because they worship the beast-kings, there are some with a Job called ‘Shaman,’ which is a separate Job from the Priest Job.

Incidentally, unlike most Beast-people, fox-type, tanuki-type and goat-type Beast-people have qualities suited to magic, so many of them become mages.

They don’t have any inclinations to any specific occupations as civilians. They work in all kinds of areas.

In societal terms, they are the same as humans, but other than in the Birkett Duchy in the Orbaume Kingdom, few Beast-people hold high-ranking positions in nations.

There are no races that Beast-men are hostile towards as a race, but they truly detest those who speak ill of the pride of their kind. It is not uncommon for people to be challenged to duels to the death over wolf-type Beast-people being called Kobolds and buffalo-type Beast-people being called Minotaurs.

They have all kinds of views on love and marriage; when members of a single race are all gathered together and living in the same place, they can have monogamy, polygamy or no marriage system at all, depending on the race. The thing that they have in common is that the husbands act important while it is actually the wives that hold authority in the household. But in important situations, the husband's opinions take priority.

When they live in villages and cities, they use the systems of those villages and cities.

Also, for Beast-people, love equals marriage; creating children is the basis of it. The criteria for loving someone is whether one wants to make children with them or not.

Thus, adult relations are not desirable.

Incidentally, Beast-people have certain periods where they want to leave offspring behind, which vary depending on their race. They can still create children outside of these periods, but things are rather plain when doing so.

It is not an insult to make fun of this as being a mating season for the Beast-people, but one should be prepared to receive a comeback of, "Well, your people mate all year round."

Ghouls

The general public believes that Ghouls are a special race of Undead. Though even many Ghouls themselves do not know this, they are a race descended from the younger of the twins, whose genders are unknown, born to Vida and the Undead champion Zakkart.

There are no remaining records of Ghouls in the myths, so it seems that their ancestor

was completely uninvolved in the later battle between Alda and Vida, but it is unknown whether they distanced themselves from the battle on their own or were allowed to escape.

Ghouls, both men and women, have gray-brown skin, but the women look exactly like beautiful human women except for their yellow pupils and claws. In contrast, the men have the heads of lions and arms so long that the backs of their hands reach the ground when they are standing upright.

Ghoul men and women differ in their qualities as much as in their appearances; the men are physically superior but have poor qualities for magic, while women are physically inferior to men but possess good qualities for magic.

Their lifespans are around three hundred years; the men age at the same pace as humans until the age of fifteen and then begin aging slowly after reaching adulthood. Women grow and age at the same pace as humans until they become pregnant (even if they do not have a successful childbirth), and once they become pregnant, their physical age becomes fixed.

Ghouls possess the Dark Vision, Superhuman Strength, Pain Resistance and Venom Secretion skills from birth; their claws that secrete paralyzing venom, become fearsome weapons when swung with their powerful arms.

They are vulgar and unsociable in nature, but their sense of unity as a race is strong; in times of emergency, they put their differences aside to cooperate with other tribes and villages. Also, it is possible for members of another race of Vida to make exchanges that are civil to a certain extent with tribes that are aware that Ghouls are a race of Vida.

Also, for a later-mentioned reason, villages that are in trouble may willingly welcome members of other races.

As there are no nations that treat Ghouls as people, they cannot become adventurers, but they live their lives while setting their roles based on their gender, so even in battle, men are often at the front while women are at the back.

There are no Ghoul civilians. One could make a far-fetched argument that Ghouls captured and traded as slaves, or tamed specimens, could be considered civilians.

Because they live like aboriginals in Devil's Nests, they are thought of as a race of

monsters, but they live like this because their reproduction capability is low; they cannot produce offspring outside Devil's Nests.

This is why Ghouls have no concept of marriage, and it is ordinary for them to do everything they can to produce offspring. It seems that there are cases where strong individuals monopolize members of the other sex, but these are rare cases.

For their diets, they prefer meat and even use human meat as food. For this reason, they are called corpse-eating demons, but the Ghouls would argue that humans take materials from their corpses as well.

It could be said that they are hostile to every other race. Also, it seems that some have complexes when it comes to Vampires.

Ghouls can conduct a ritual to transform human, Elf or Dwarf women into Ghouls. As their lack of fertility is a serious problem, when their female numbers drop too low for whatever reason, they sometimes turn female adventurers and such that they capture into Ghouls.

When they capture male adventurers, if they are lucky, they might be able to survive by nodding their heads to the advances of Ghoul women.

Note!

Much of the above does not apply to the Ghouls of Talosheim.

Vampires

The race descended from the older of the twins, whose genders are unknown, born to Vida and the Undead champion Zakkart. Within the race, they are divided into Pure-breed Vampires, Noble-born Vampires and Subordinate Vampires.

Their appearances are mostly the same as the races they originally were, such as humans, Elves and Dwarves, but their pupils are crimson and they possess long fangs.

They are generally regarded not as people but monsters, beings that oppose the gods. In human society, they are targets to be exterminated. But they have spread their roots in the underworld, and there are many examples in the past of clergymen loudly

advocating for Vampire extermination while actually being spies for the Vampires.

Pure-breed Vampires, Noble-born Vampires and Subordinate Vampires all have no lifespans; they are ageless. The moment they become Vampires, their aging stops.

From the moment they become Vampires, they acquire the Superhuman Strength, Dark Vision, Bloodsucking, Rapid Regeneration and Status Effect Resistance skills, but they become critically weak to sunlight and silver.

It is said that the likely explanation for the Vampires being weak to sunlight is that their very existence angers Alda, who rules over light.

Their weakness to silver is explained by the fact that Undead have always been weak against silver, and this weakness has been inherited by Vampires, who descended from the Undead Zakkart.

Many Vampires have pompous personalities, treating races with short lifespans with arrogance. Many of them are cunning, cruel, ruthless and inhuman.

However, this is because many of the currently-existing Vampires worship the evil gods who are the remnants of the Demon King's army; this is not the case for the Vampires who still worship Vida... In fact, virtuous Vampires are seen from time to time.

Details of Pure-breed Vampires are unknown as they are beings that even legends are unworthy of speaking of them; they are mythical beings. However, Noble-born Vampires excel in all Attribute Values and they are able to fly. Normal people do not stand a chance against even the most inexperienced Noble-born Vampires.

Subordinate Vampires have dramatically increased Strength, Agility, Stamina and Vitality (Even if they were originally frail children, they are capable of having frontal fist-fights against bears). However, their qualities when it comes to magic does not change from before they become Vampires.

There are no Vampire civilians, but they do not lose the skills that they possessed before becoming Vampires, so they can carry out their lives in human society as long as they are not exposed to sunlight.

Also, because they are ageless, Vampires who have spent long years and months improving themselves diligently are more fearsome than Dragons.

Vampires enjoy sucking the blood of others, but they can also consume normal food. However, if they go long periods without ingesting blood, their health deteriorates and it is said that they eventually die. However, it seems that monster or animal blood is sufficient for them to maintain themselves, so there are almost no cases where a Vampire has actually died from this.

It is said that they like the fresh blood of virgins, but their preferences vary from individual to individual, and in the past, there have even been Vampires who prefer the blood of middle-aged men who smoke tobacco... According to them, the bitterness in the blood becomes addictive.

Vampires increase their population by giving their own blood to members of other races... humans, elves and dwarves, in order to transform them into Vampires. Pure-breed Vampires and Noble-born Vampires are capable of creating other Noble-born Vampires or Subordinate Vampires, while Subordinate Vampires generally cannot turn others into Vampires.

Perhaps for this reason, those who become Vampires experience a decline in their sexual desire, which is replaced by a desire to suck blood. However, it does not disappear completely, so Dhampirs, half-breeds created with other races, are seen from time to time.

However, it is difficult to imagine that this mode of life is what Vida wanted for the Vampire race that she created. In fact, it is possible for Vampires to leave offspring behind in the same way as any other living creature.

Given this fact, Vida's believers insist that Vida wanted to add something more to the Vampires, of which only the Vampire founder and the Pure-breed Vampires existed at the time, but before she could, she was defeated by Alda, the god of law and fate, and the champion Bellwood.

Incidentally, the Vampire transformation ritual is possible for members of Vida's other races, but the side effects are so drastic that it apparently only succeeds for one in ten individuals.



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