

The Death Mage Who Doesn't Want a Fourth Time

— Yondome wa Iyana Shi Zokusei Majutsushi —

**- Volume 7 -
Advancing into the Southern Region**

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[Light Novel Bastion]

Chapter 130

The first day in the southern region, I met a spider-san at the edge of the forest

After a week of preparation, the participating members for dealing with the Noble Orc empire to the south beyond the marshlands were announced.

First was Vandalieu, along with the Ghosts that would help him with Dead Spirit Magic, and everyone he was equipping using Plant Binding Technique and Insect Binding Technique.

The Black Fang Knights' Order led by Gorba, composed of the Orcuses who could mount monsters, a total of ten members and ten mounts.

The 'Sword King' Borkus, who had increased his Rank and become a Zombie Epic Hero.

Zadiris, Vigaro and Basdia, who had also succeeded in increasing their Ranks.

Bone Man, as well as Eleanora who had succeeded in becoming Rank 10.

It wasn't certain that this would become a war, so there hadn't been any particular departure ceremony... because it would be problematic if everyone got too excited and then charged in to attack.

"Come to think of it, this is the first time we're invading another nation head-on! We've only ever *been* invaded, and we didn't invade the Hartner Duchy from the front!" said Borkus, speaking dangerous words even without such a departure ceremony.

"We are not invading them, Borkus. We will see the situation first and talk with them," said Princess Levia, scolding him.

Things would likely have turned out badly if there had been a ceremony.

"We'll be working hard and getting stronger while His-Majesty-kun and everyone else

is away, so help us out next time,” said Jeena.

“I don’t think there will be a next time, though,” said Zandia.

It seemed that the two of them intended to continue leveling even without Zadiris and Borkus. Zandia had regained much of the power that she had possessed while alive, but Jeena had apparently not been able to do so.

“Why must I join you?! I will die if I enter a B-class Dungeon!” shouted a pale-faced Luciliano, who was being held by Jeena by the scruff of his neck like a kitten.

“Umm, so that you can take responsibility for peeking? I’m not married yet, you know?” Jeena said.

“That was due to my insuppressible scientific interest, and are you not the one who ran out wearing only a single surgery gown, holding Master in one hand?!”

It seemed that Luciliano, who had suffered multiple broken ribs during that incident, was not satisfied with this reasoning.

“With Zadiris-san gone, we lack mages in our party,” Zandia continued. “We tried inviting Kachia-san, but when we mentioned B-class Dungeons, she said, ‘spare me, I’ll die.’”

“I’m telling you that I would die as well, am I not?!”

“Eh, aren’t you a former C-class adventurer, Luciliano-san? You’ll do better than Kachia-san, since she is a former D-class adventurer.”

“She is clearly stronger than I am now! Though I would indeed ‘do better’ than her!”

TLN: The verb for “do better” here can be used in a variety of ways; I believe Luciliano is implying that he is better-looking than Kachia.

For a former C-class adventurer, especially one that was not well-suited to fighting like Luciliano, stepping into a B-class Dungeon was suicidal. It would be possible for him to return alive if he were to join an adventurer party made of B-class or A-class adventurers with previous experience of clearing B-class Dungeons, providing support and carrying luggage while staying out of the firing line as much as possible.

However, Jeena and Zandia still hadn't regained the strength they had possessed when they were alive. Rita and Saria would join them as well, but Luciliano still seemed anxious.

"The shallow floors of B-class Dungeons are no different in difficulty from C-class Dungeons, so it's fine. But you can't go to the deeper floors until Luciliano gets used to it," said Vandalieu.

"Okay," said Jeena.

"No, Master, the problem at hand is that I would rather perform research than leveling—"

"You can watch Jeena and Zandia fight from close-up, so it's fine, isn't it?"

"Muh... If I consider it to be a place where I can gather precious data, then I suppose a little field work once in a while is not so bad."

And so, Luciliano was persuaded.

"Look, Basdia. It's our new rival," said Vigaro, his two pairs of arms crossed as he looked at Jeena and Zandia. He had become a Rank 9 Ghoul Arch-tyrant with a third eye appearing on his forehead.

"I'm not quite sure you can call her your rival, Vigaro, but she's definitely a rival for me," said Basdia, who had become a Ghoul Amazoness Geronimo, as she glared at Jeena and Zandia as well.

"Why? Are you saying that my muscles are inferior to those biceps brachii, those ripped abdominal muscles and those powerful latissimus dorsi and trapezius muscles?" said Vigaro.

It seemed that Vigaro's declaration was ignoring the sex of his rival.

He had gained a king-like personality after his Rank increased, but even after gaining such a robust, impressive body, it seemed that he viewed Jeena as a threat... he was inferior in volume, after all.

"I don't think you are inferior, but if you're going to ask why I said that, it's because she's a female warrior. If one had to say, it's more reasonable to consider her *my* rival," said Basdia.

Basdia's appearance hadn't changed since her Rank increased other than the patterns on her skin changing a little, but the air around her was impressive. It wasn't as impressive as Vigaro's, but it was worthy of the 'Geronimo' (Elder) race title that she had gained.

Her body had sturdy, powerful muscles that were not at all inferior to Jeena's, while also possessing abundant feminine curves and appeal.

She would not be inferior to Jeena even if they were to both take side-chest and most-muscular poses.

"That's true. Don't lose to them," said Vigaro.

"Of course. The father of Jadal's younger brother or sister is going to be Van, after all."

Vigaro and Basdia nodded together like comrades who respected one another. Though the two of them had likely forgotten, they were father and daughter. Basdia had been born during a time when children were raised by the entire village, so she had a weak awareness of her father, unlike the mother who had given birth to her.

Perhaps because of this, Vigaro and Basdia acknowledged each other with a relationship that was not that of a father and daughter, but one between a leader of warriors and a young warrior, and it seemed that they had no thoughts of changing this.

Also, though this was only natural, they did not consider Jeena and Zandia as rivals, but rather Jeena herself.

"Mother is doing her best to not lose to Zandia, too," Basdia said.

"Zadiris, you've known Vandalieu for a long time and you've even performed artificial respiration on him, so you won't lose to Zandia. I guarantee it," said Vigaro.

"I do not view Zandia as a rival, how many times must I tell you!" Zadiris said indignantly.

Vigaro and Basdia believed that Zandia was Zadiris's rival.

"It is true that her name is similar to mine! I also admit that my figure is young! I will not deny that Zandia has the advantage in magic as well, as she possesses an affinity

for many attributes. However, there is no need for me to compete with her. Leaving aside our skill in magic... there is no future for us." Zadiris had started speaking with vigor, but towards the end, her face fell.

As a Ghoul, she had stopped aging physically from the time she became pregnant with her first child, and Zandia was a Zombie, so their futures were shrouded in darkness in terms of physical development.

"No, umm, we might change if our Ranks increase, you know?" said Zandia herself. "As a Ghoul, I don't know how you'll look after increasing your Rank further than that, but it's enough to make you grow extra eyes and arms, so won't you develop physically as well? And once my Rank increases, my chest will go boing-boing –"

"I see, so there is a possibility through increasing our Ranks! Oh, Zandia, I must thank you. You are a true friend!" Zadiris exclaimed.

"I-I'm glad I made you happy."

Zadiris was overjoyed, but she had been accompanying Zandia and the others in their leveling as well and become a Rank 9 Ghoul High Wizard, so her next Rank increase was likely far-off for now.

"In any case, this is the nation that exiled Bugogan. I'm sure Noble Orcs as strong as Bugogan aren't unusual there. If they're going to stand in our way, let's hunt them down one by one," said Vigaro.

"We've become stronger as well. Kachia and the others were saying, 'Kill them if they don't listen,' too," said Basdia.

Everyone had become unbelievably strong compared to when they fought the pack of Orcs led by the Noble Orc Bugogan about six years ago. Vigaro, Zadiris and Basdia as they were now would be able to defeat the Bugogan of back then with ease.

Meanwhile, away from Zadiris and the others, Vandalieu was saying farewell to everyone who was reluctant to part with him for this short while.

"Vandalieu, do you have a handkerchief? After drinking blood, you have to wipe your mouth with a handkerchief, not your sleeve. Also, don't eat organs raw just because you have the Status Effect Resistance skill. Make sure to be careful to not leave your body behind and get up with just your spirit form when you're half-asleep," said

Darcia.

“Yes, Mom. By the way, I’m intending to come back every few days,” Vandalieu said.

“Danna-sama, though it is arrogant of me to say this, we shall protect Darcia-sama in your absence,” said Bellmond.

Tarea was weeping a little. “We will be separate for a while, won’t we? I am very reluctant about this.”

“Fuh, I have to save up my fill of Bocchan while I can,” said Rita.

“When you run out, you feel like you can’t calm down, don’t you?” said Saria.

“Ah, Bocchan, may I join in with my daughters?” said Sam.

“Van, you have to make sure you come back safely,” said Pauvina.

“Van-kun, even if you meet someone with a lot of legs over there, you can’t forget about me! My legs have suction cups!” said Privel.

“Calm... down,” groaned Rapiécage.

“Bold~” said Yamata.

“Everyone, we can make a round trip with teleportation with the Undead... our lord, so he could even come back every day, you know? We explained this before, didn’t we?” said Legion, but it seemed that the fired-up atmosphere of farewell wouldn’t really change.

“See you later, Gorba. We’ll keep watch here. If the reincarnated individuals come here, we’ll defeat them all,” said Braga.

“I’m here, too,” said Zemedo. “Talosheim has no flaws.”

“Braga, Zemedo, Memediga, take care of my family,” said Gorba.

“Leave it to us!” said Memediga.

Gorba said his farewells to the Black Goblin Braga and the Anubises Zemedo and

Memediga, who had been raised as if they were siblings ever since they were born.



“While you remain behind, I will serve Vandalieu-sama well, so rest assured. *While you remain behind,*” said Eleanora.

“Well, that is reassuring. I can be at ease knowing that my former superior will be with him. You have become freer now that you do not have any subordinates,” said Isla.

The two of them smiled as they exchanged a handshake. Smiles that looked as if they had been pasted onto their faces, unsmiling eyes, audible creaking sounds... it was not a heartwarming scene.

“Is this what is called a relationship of formidable enemies that are friends?” said Vandalieu.

TLN: This is a reference to Fist of the North Star, quite a famous line. It kind of means “rivals that are friends.”

“Ooohn?” Knochen, who had taken the form of a fort, gave a curious cry.

There were many heavyweight members, including the Black Fang Knights’ Order, so Vandalieu couldn’t carry them even if he were to fly by transforming his spirit form into that of a strange bird. And more importantly, the exact location of the Noble Orc empire wasn’t known, so the Knochen fort would act as their base of operations for now.

The Lizardmen and Noble Orcs had not interacted for many years, so nobody knew the exact location of the Noble Orc empire.

It was probably possible to find it within a few days if Vandalieu searched from the skies by using Lemures, which were flying, transparent, skull-shaped familiars, and Undead insects. In the southern region of the continent, which was sandwiched by the Boundary Mountain Range to the east and west, an empire of three-meter-tall Noble Orcs would stand out.

However, if this scouting was detected, it might immediately be taken as an act of hostility.

Monsters with sharp senses could detect Lemures and Undead insects. It was certainly possible that the Noble Orcs, who had maintained an empire in a continent rampant with such monsters for over a hundred thousand years, would be able to sense them.

It was uncertain as to what kinds of monsters would be inhabiting the areas around the Noble Orc empire, but it was possible that there were monsters that could make their bodies transparent. If there were, then it would be only natural for the Noble Orcs to have ways to keep those monsters from invading their territory.

It would be terrible if the relationship with the Orcs turned volatile and started a war, only to later realize that they were good Orcs all along.

That was why the plan was for Vandalieu and the others to go out to scout while the Dark Night Knights' Order would remain in the Knochen fort to stay alert for monster invasions.

"But your amateur swordsmanship that relies on the Orichalcum weapon is worrying," said Isla. "Have you trained properly, Eleanora-ojouchan?"

"It's alright, I've done my leveling properly so that I won't have to worry Isla-obasan, whose prided sword was blocked and her head cut off by amateur swordsmanship," said Eleanora.

The insuppressible bloodthirst of the two spread around their surroundings. Vandalieu thought that at this point, it might be best for them to simply brawl and then start with a refreshed relationship, but for some reason, they were both maintaining a handshake and trying to crush each other's hands while conducting psychological warfare.

Both of them had the Superhuman Strength skill, which gave them a grip powerful enough to crush the skulls of beasts, but they also both possessed the Rapid Regeneration skill, so even if one of their hands were completely crushed, it would recover several hours later.

But they knew that the dominant hand would become unusable for several hours, so they seemed to be avoiding this.

"Isla-dono, please take care of my Leo. I would be most pleased if you could polish his scales every once in a while. However, he will bite and tear your hand if you put it in his mouth, so please be careful," said Bone Man, who would be leaving his mount Leo

behind as it wasn't well-suited for moving other than in marshlands and other waterside areas.

But it seemed that his words didn't reach Isla, who was busy with her battle against Eleanora.

Vandalieu spoke up to stop the quarreling. "No magic, no martial skills, no flying. The first to down the other wins. Fight."

Eleanora and Isla immediately began grappling each other in earnest with both arms. They began attempting to trip each other with their legs to make the other lose their balance.

A judo-like battle between two beautiful women began, with enough power in their moves to beat even a dinosaur to death, never mind a bear.

"Jyuuh? My lord, would you not normally stop them?" asked Bone Man.

"Once things are settled, I think both of them will calm down for a while," said Vandalieu.

"Oohn..."

Knochen seemed to be a little troubled due to having become the stage for this battle, but the bones that he was made of were stronger than stone, so there wouldn't be any problems.

Vandalieu and the others watched the fight between the two unfold for a while, but then they suddenly smelled the scent of blood on the wind.

"I can smell a little blood," said Vandalieu.

"Perhaps a skirmish between monsters or Goblins eating each other," said Bone Man.

Very few monsters entered the marshlands, as the environment was very different, but it wasn't unusual for monsters living near each other to kill each other.

Roars and dying screams on such occasions reached the Knochen fort on a daily basis. Each time this happened, Knochen's Skeletons or the Vampire Zombies of the Dark Night Knights' Order would go to investigate, but only found monsters unrelated to

the empire hunting, so almost no information had been gained.

Vandalieu had gathered a number of spirits as well, but they were not very intelligent and had only lived in a small area, so they hadn't given any hints regarding the Noble Orc empire.

Normally, Vandalieu would have left Knochen and the Dark Night Knights' Order to check on things as usual.

"...I have a strange feeling about this," said Vandalieu. He had felt unnaturally restless after smelling the blood. He was uneasy, feeling a sense of danger for a reason he couldn't explain.

Even though he didn't have the Intuition skill, nor was this a reaction from Danger Sense: Death.

"I'll go and have a look," he said.

"Jyuuh?! You will go yourself, my lord?!" Bone Man said, flustered.

Having realized what was going on, Eleanora and Isla turned around while still grappling with each other.

"W-wait, Vandalieu-sama, it's dangerous!" said Eleanora.

"Yes! Please leave it to us!" shouted Isla.

But Vandalieu rose into the air with Flight. "It's alright," he said. "I'm never alone."

With those words, Princess Levia, Orbia and Kimberley appeared around him.

"Now that you mention it, that's true. Please come back if anything happens," Eleanora said.

"Jyuuh, I will contact Vigaro and the others," said Bone Man.

Eleanora, Bone Man and Isla calmed down when they realized that Vandalieu wasn't alone.

"Okay," Vandalieu said as he flew away from the fort.

“But Your Majesty, we still do not know what’s there, so would it not be best to keep Death-Attribute Magic, including Dead Spirit Magic, concealed?” said Princess Levia.

“Unlike Orcs, Noble Orcs are monsters that are about as intelligent as humans. I think it’s best to hide as much as information as we can, just in case,” said Kimberley.

“Eh? Isn’t that a pain? Is that how it is?” said Orbia.

“Apparently so, Orbia,” said Vandalieu. “Well then, heeding Princess Levia and Kimberley’s advice... Pete, Kùhl, Eisen, I’m counting on you.”



“Bugih!”

“Buhohohohoh!”

Gizania gave a bitter smile as she looked at her remaining ten enemies, who were letting out coarse laughter, through her two regular eyes as well as her compound eyes.

“Bukeh, bugoh...” The enemy’s commander, one of the Noble Orcs, cleared his throat and called out to Gizania not in the Noble Orc language, but with human words. “We have been bested by you quite thoroughly,” he said. “Through the instructions of our god Ravovifard, we noticed that you and your ilk were trying to involve us in war with the lizards of the marshlands, so we hastily attacked you, but... to think that we would lose two thirds of our troops and let Princess Kurnelia escape... We underestimated the secret medicine that is said to be passed on in your tribe.”

The Noble Orc was provoking Gizania, but at the same time, he couldn’t conceal his excitement.

Gizania responded in a matter-of-fact manner. “That is because you underestimate our tribe. With only a single Noble Orc and a handful of Orcs and Kobolds that are barely skilled enough to be used as familiars, this is the natural result. Though you take pride in your strength, in the end, you are just usurpers. It appears that you do not have any soldiers with resolve.”

“You bastard! You dare ridicule Bugitas, the new Emperor BUGIIIIH?!”

The Noble Orc was immediately enraged, to the point of humor. It wouldn't have been strange for his mushroom-shaped blonde hair to stand on end.

“FUGOOOOH! I thought that we would at least grant you an honorable death, but it seems that you wish to be tormented first! We will cut off all of your arms and legs and then violate you until you die!” the Noble Orc shouted with Orc language words mixed into his speech, saliva flying from his mouth.

The surviving Orcs around him let out a cheer. Their eyes were bloodshot with greed.

Even for the secret medicine, it's working too well, Gizania whispered to herself in her mind as she tried to give a provocative smile... her mouth was stiff, so she couldn't do so properly.

By using the secret medicine, she had succeeded in drawing the Noble Orcs to herself, away from Princess Kurnelia. Not only that, but she had been setting traps for them as she ran, killing her enemies as they approached her one at a time, reducing their numbers considerably.

But in return, she had lost all of the legs on the right side of her body and her left arm was broken as well. Now that she couldn't fight any longer, she had no choice but to use her remaining secret medicine and buy time using her body.

No matter what cruel fate she met, her tribe would praise her devotion. They would certainly remember her end as a proud one.

But... she couldn't completely deny that she was frustrated and scared.

Considering what was going to happen to her body now, she would rather end her own life, but even Orcs were unlikely to lust after a corpse.

“If it was going to end this way, perhaps I should have chosen my partner as my mother told me to. But I will not go down without a fight!” Gizania exclaimed.

“You have courage! If you survive, you will make a good breeding mother! Do –”

The moment the Noble Orc was about to give the order for the Orcs to attack, the head of an enormous centipede with enormous black horns appeared from the thicket right between him and Gizania.

“Excuse me,” the centipede said.

“Eh? Huh?”

Gizania and the Noble Orc looked at each other, completely bewildered. The other Orcs opened their bloodshot eyes wide and blinked blankly.

Not taking any notice of this, the giant centipede... or rather, Vandalieu, who was clinging to Pete’s stomach, asked a question.

“I’ll ask just to be sure, but is the wounded person over there an Arachne and you a Noble Orc?”

Vandalieu looked at the Noble Orc who could speak human words, and at the Arachne Gizania, a member of the Vida-created Arachne race that possessed the lower bodies of spiders, who was resting her weight against an enormous sword.

“I don’t know what the situation is, but based on what I overheard of the conversation, I’m thinking of helping the Arachne... there’s no problem with this, is there?”

Vandalieu was asking just in case Gizania was actually an evil criminal and the Noble Orc was a diligent pig-like official.

One might have expected that there would be no response to this question.

Unexpectedly, there was one.

“W-who is this guy?! A monster tamed by one of the guys worshipping the gods on Vida’s side?!” shouted the Noble Orc.

“Leaving aside who is good or evil, I’ve now figured out who I need to defeat,” Vandalieu said.

Vandalieu was the ‘Holy Son of Vida,’ so there was no problem in fighting monsters that opposed her believers.

Pete bared his fangs and let out a roar as lightning covered his horns.



- **Name:** Vigaro
 - **Rank:** 9
 - **Race:** Ghoul Arch-tyrant
 - **Level:** 1
 - **Job:** Great Axe Master
 - **Job level:** 11
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Axeman, Axe Master, Magic Axe User
 - **Age:** 172 years old

 - **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision (Transformed from Night Vision!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Pain Resistance: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Paralyzing Venom Secretion (Claws): Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attribute Values when equipped with an axe: (Large) (LEVEL UP!)

 - **Active skills:**
 - Axe Technique: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Commanding: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Coordination: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Deforestation: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 4 (NEW!)
 - Surpass Limits - Magic Axe: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - Parallel Thought Processing: Level 3 (NEW!)
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Monster explanation:

【Ghoul Arch-tyrant】

A monster whose name does not remain in the Adventurers' Guild's records, of whom there are only a few descriptions in ancient documents held by the Mages' Guild.

It has been recorded that when numerous great individuals are acknowledged among Ghoul Tyrants, the most exceptional among them undergoes a ritual to place tattoos on his body with an eye on his forehead as the motif.

The above description is that of the concept of a Ghoul Arch-tyrant; it is thought that such previously sighted beings are simply Ghoul Tyrants that are more powerful than the rest that have been mistaken for something greater.

Of course, there are no previous actual sightings of this monster.

Job explanation:

【Great Axe Master】

The Job that exists at the top of all axe-wielding Jobs. It is said that all individuals who have previously acquired this Job have left their names in history.

If noble, those with this Job would be known for their prowess both within and beyond their nations, and if they are an adventurer, they are naturally at least A-class.

Side Chapter 21

The reincarnated individuals' counseling

Following the destruction of the 'Death Scythe' Konoe Kyuuji, the reincarnated individuals continued to exchange their arguments and worrying about the future.

However, they could not all come to an agreement. The reason was that Konoe Kyuuji's words and actions had made it clear that all of the reincarnated individuals thought in a definitively different manner.

And so, Shimada Izumi and Machida Aran, in Rodcorte's place... *forced* to take Rodcorte's place, provided the reincarnated individuals with information, answered their questions and offered their opinions.

"I-in other words, it's impossible to be reincarnated as a member of a race that he holds dear to him?!" shouted the 'Marionette' Inui Hajime, saliva almost flying from his mouth despite him not having a physical body.

"Yes, that's right," Izumi said, looking fed up. "...Incidentally, that's the twelfth time I've answered that question."

"You're sure, right?!"

"I'm sure. Incidentally, that's the thirteenth."

It seemed that even Izumi, who had become a familiar spirit with no physical body and had a different sense of time, felt mental fatigue at having to answer the same question over and over.

"There's no way we can believe you so easily, right?! You've stooped low enough to become minions for that fraud of a god!"

With the people asking the questions taking this kind of attitude, it couldn't be helped that Izumi felt like it was all pointless.

And Izumi could even tell through her Inspection ability, which could see through all

kinds of falsehoods, that she was being genuinely doubted.

“If you can’t trust me, then I don’t think there’s any point in asking me any questions any number of times,” she said.

It was only to be expected that she would say this and leave. Inui was not a precious companion to Izumi. He was a traitor who had sided with Murakami and the others, and Izumi knew that he hadn’t stopped Murakami and the Eighth Guidance from eliminating her and Aran.

She pitied him for the fact that he had later been betrayed by Tsuchiya Kanako, who he had thought was his ally, but she couldn’t consider him an important companion now. He was even genuinely abusing her verbally, so she didn’t want to persuade him gently.

“D-damn it! Don’t look down at me! You...” Inui looked outraged for a moment after having Izumi point out something that he knew himself, but his face turned pale and he let out a shriek as he turned around and ran away.

“...This makes it look like I threatened him, doesn’t it?” Izumi muttered.

The truth was that the symptoms of Inui’s gynophobia had shown themselves. Of course, even without that phobia, it was impossible for him to harm the familiar spirit Izumi, as he himself was nothing but a human soul.

“At this rate, I don’t think he’ll think of opposing Vandalieu, so I don’t really care.”



Meanwhile, Machida Aran was answering the questions of the ‘Chronos’ Murakami Junpei and his group with a sullen expression on his face.

“So, in other words, it’s impossible to take the latest weapons from Origin and Earth?” Murakami asked.

“Yeah, it’s the same as when Kaidou Kanata was reincarnated. According to that god, everyone is naked when they’re first born,” Aran said.

“Can’t he do something about it? The chosen heroes are normally supposed to be granted a holy sword by the god, right?”

“Look here... what kind of god would give state-of-the-art weapons including crystals based on modern science and magical knowledge in place of a holy sword?”

Aran answered the questions in an exasperated tone, but Murakami didn't seem to be satisfied with the answers. Left with no choice, he decided to elaborate. “What would you even do with state-of-the-art weapons? What about the parts needed for maintenance and the fuel needed to power them? Do you intend to make the gunpowder by hand?”

“I don't really intend to use them multiple times. I just need to use them once. Well, that doesn't apply for the magical media, though,” said Murakami.

What Murakami and his group wanted was a state-of-the-art stealth fighter like the one that the ‘Noah’ Mao had piloted before her death in Origin, transport helicopters, lightweight missiles that could be used to attack from afar... if possible, nuclear and hydrogen bombs. Not only those, but all kinds of various other things such as magical media that assisted in reciting and casting spells, body suits made of special materials and military-grade knives.

The reason they wanted these was so that they could use them to kill Vandalieu. It seemed that Murakami's group had decided on becoming assassins to erase Vandalieu.

Indeed, it would be difficult even for Vandalieu to completely block a surprise attack from a tactical nuclear warhead or a hydrogen bomb.

Even without these, Murakami and his group had plenty of chance to win if they could make full use of modern weaponry with their cheat-like abilities.

However, this was a thought that had occurred to everyone. And there was a reason that this idea hadn't been put into practice yet.

“It would be difficult even to fire these weapons once,” Aran said. “They could even explode the moment they're brought into Lambda.”

“What?! What do you mean?” Murakami exclaimed in surprise.

Aran continued grimacing as he replied. “You guys might have forgotten this, but it's a different world, you know? It's only natural for the laws of physics to be different. Earth, Origin, Lambda. There are differences in the force of gravity, whether magic

exists and the number of attributes. The worlds are similar, but they're like different planets."

Indeed, the three worlds had different laws of physics. The creation-minded champions led by Zakkart had once tried to recreate *Earth's* tactical nuclear weaponry in order to defeat the Demon King. However, the goddess Vida stopped them, saying that modern weaponry designed with *Earth's* laws of physics in mind would be unusable or possibly even simply explode if recreated in the exact same way in Lambda.

Even the magical media (what are known as mages' staves) designed for Origin would have problems because the time attribute, which didn't exist in Origin, existed in Lambda. Thus, there was no guarantee that they would have the same effect even if they were brought into Lambda exactly as they were.

"The more complicated something is to create, the more dangerous it is. Well, a lightweight missile would simply be a little different in its power and firing range, so those could probably still be used without problems, though," Aran said.

It was Murakami's turn to grimace as he pondered this. "What was that god trying to make us do after gathering experience in a world with different laws of physics? Our knowledge and technology aren't going to be of any use."

"And from what we saw with Tendou's Clairvoyance, it looked like Vandalieu has been introducing technology and knowledge from Earth and Origin into Lambda, one after another. If what you say is true, wouldn't that city be a mountain of rubble by now?" said the 'Hecatoncheir' Doug Atlas.

Aran let out a deep sigh.

"Oi, what's with your attitude?!" Doug demanded.

"I'm tired of how stupid you guys are. What Vandalieu is doing is completely different from what you guys are asking for," Aran said. "You guys are asking to directly bring in weapons and creations from another world, exactly as they are. On the other hand, Vandalieu was reborn in Lambda and is using resources in Lambda to recreate technology from other worlds. What Vandalieu is doing fits in with Lambda's laws of physics."

Even the cooking of a single dish involves all kinds of chemical reactions during the

cooking process. It is as a result of these that a dish on Earth is perfected to deliciousness.

So how could the same dishes be created in the foreign world of Lambda? That was because not everything was completely different, just because it was a different world.

Of course, if the chemical reactions were studied in detail, there would certainly be differences between the worlds. However, the differences were too small to take practical notice of.

From the time that Vandalieu was cooking for himself on Earth to the time that he was reborn in Lambda, there had been a twenty-year-long blank space, during which he was able to gather information in Origin but was unable to actually test it and put it into practice. Even if Vandalieu noticed the differences in Lambda, he simply thought it was his imagination.

When the dishes weren't delicious when cooked with the same recipe as on Earth, he just needed to conduct trial and error until they were.

"Using lye water to make ramen from wheat dough and even making soap, paper, mayonnaise and ketchup were all based on knowledge from Earth and Origin, but he would have performed trial and error to make it work well in Lambda. Hey, Murakami-san, if you manufacture the weapons you want so badly using materials that exist in Lambda and perform a lot of trial-and-error, you should be able to make something that works with Lambda's laws of physics, you know?"

In other words, Aran was telling Murakami to build them himself after being reincarnated.

Of course, he knew that what he was saying was impossible.

"Look here... you know that we'd have no way to create modern-day weapons on our own using the required parts when we don't even know the methods needed to make those parts," said Murakami.

Metal parts could be made to some extent by hiring a blacksmith. But there was no way that Murakami and the others had remembered all of the parts needed for a state-of-the-art stealth fighter or transport helicopters, and the parts were made of alloys rather than iron or copper.

And going from machine-creating to hand-creating the semiconductors needed in the computers controlling the fuselages was definitely impossible.

Did the fuel needed to power these war machines even exist in Lambda?

Even if Murakami and his allies spent years of effort, it was questionable as to whether they could even create a human-powered aircraft that operated by pedaling to turn the propellers.

“Tch, so it would be muskets or cannons that use gunpowder at best, huh,” Murakami muttered.

“Magic would have more power than that, and be easier to use, too,” said Doug.

“Signal flares would probably be useful, but... isn’t it better to not rely on weapons, then?” said the ‘Odin’ Hazamada Akira.

“Ah, really, I wonder how he intended for us to develop the world,” the ‘Venus’ Tsuchiya Kanako sighed.

“I don’t really intend to defend him...” Aran said. “I’ve said it over and over, but there are no problems with using trial-and-error using knowledge from Earth and Origin after being reincarnated in Lambda. And we never heard anything about killing Vandalieu when we were reborn in Origin. He probably wasn’t really hoping that we’d make weapons.”

“But despite that, the creation of gunpowder is apparently forbidden in that ‘Lambda’ world. It’s a world where a god who denies the knowledge of other worlds holds a lot of power, right?” said Murakami.

“About that, the god (Rodcorte himself) thought that we would make things work out with hard work, since we were the ones chosen by him. There are a hundred and one of us, and even if a hundred of us failed, he thought that it would be fine as long as the last one succeeded.”

“...That god is a thorough piece of shit. I’m starting to wonder whether that’s actually harder than killing Vandalieu.”

The truth was that even if the reincarnated individuals didn’t bring their knowledge from other worlds into Lambda, Rodcorte would have considered it development for

the world if they used their magic and cheat-like abilities to exterminate beings that threatened the prosperity of the races he considered to be people, the humans, Elves and Dwarves... while pressing the Dark Elves, Scylla and Vampires to extinction or a near-extinction state.

Now that Murakami finally seemed convinced, Aran asked him a question in return.

“More importantly, I have a question. Why do you trust what I say? You’re the one who killed me, you know, Murakami-san?”

Indeed, Murakami was the criminal who had killed Aran and Izumi. The two of them would certainly feel hatred and a desire for revenge against him.

But Murakami’s face remained the same as he answered, seeming bored. “Yeah, that’s why I asked you in detail. Why we can’t do things, why we can do things, I’ll ask about everything and then ask the god the same thing later. If the god says something different, and what he says is inconvenient to you, then that makes you a liar.”

“Guh, you know all about that idiot!” Aran groaned.

Rodcorte generally did not tell lies. At times where it was inconvenient for him, he would simply say, “I cannot do that,” or, “I cannot say,” but would not give any detailed reasons as to why he could not do or say something.

There were also cases where he never stated his true intentions from the beginning, but he didn’t tell clever lies and was probably incapable of doing so.

This was likely due to his personality rather than some restriction having been placed on him.

Of course, he couldn’t be trusted, since he was always looking down on the reincarnated individuals from above. However, for Murakami, who intended to kill Vandalieu, Rodcorte was more trustworthy than Aran.

“...Though this is an obvious question, why are you guys thinking about killing Vandalieu? You guys are clearly at way too much of a disadvantage,” said Aran. “As Death Scythe showed us before, he won’t be killed just by stopping his heart. Even if you could kill him, he might just turn into an Undead unless that stupid god does something about it. He has over a billion Mana and he’s more of a cheat than us, even though he doesn’t have any cheat-like abilities. There’s even a mountain of enemies

willing to protect him. And even after you guys are reincarnated, he won't stop growing stronger. And the nail in the coffin is that he can break your souls and destroy you in a way that you won't ever come back."

Murakami and his companions were certainly strong. Even without their equipment and state-of-the-art weapons from Origin, they would be able to compete with B-class adventurers in Lambda as they were now.

This was especially true for the 'Odin' Hazamada Akira, the 'Hecatoncheir' Doug Atlas and the 'Chronos' Murakami Junpei. These three had possessed some of the greatest fighting strength among the Bravers.

However, Aran couldn't imagine that they would be able to defeat Vandalieu, even if they combined their strength.

"You've been promised a blessed fourth life like Kaidou Kanata, but it's clearly not worth it, is it?" Aran said.

"Our ways of thinking are different," Murakami said in response. "I don't think there's much of a point in keeping this quiet from you, so I'll tell you. That guy intends to kill us. He was looking at us when that useless Konoe attacked him. That's why we have to kill him no matter what, before we get killed. And since there's a reward that comes with it, there's nothing more to be said. The choice is obvious."

"If I were him, I'd try to kill us."

"I don't want a life where I'm just trying to hide so that he doesn't find me."

"And that god will apparently help us out more than he did with Kanata, so things will probably work out."

Given the values of Murakami and his companions, it was only natural for them to decide that it was highly likely that Vandalieu would actively try to kill them. With that being the case, it went without saying that they would think of counterattacking rather than simply being killed.

"Oi, according to my Calculation, the probability of him actively trying to kill you guys is –" Aran began.

"At this point, no matter how low that number is, it might suddenly increase later.

There's no point in that calculation," Murakami Junpei said as he turned his back to Aran and left.

The other reincarnated individuals followed after him. Aran watched them leave with an irritated expression.

Aran didn't really care whether Murakami and his companions died or not. He probably wouldn't feel sympathy for them even if their souls were destroyed.

However, they intended to become Vandalieu's enemies, and if Vandalieu were to see this as all of the reincarnated individuals working together and actively tried to kill Aran's Braver companions, it would be a serious problem.

"Considering that he has no way of actively finding us, we could hide if we were to be reborn as babies, but since it's him we're talking about, there's no guarantee that he won't gain some unfair skill like 'Sense Reincarnators'..." Aran muttered.

"Can I have a word?" said a voice.

"Uwah!... It's you. What do you want?"

Aran had thought that everyone had left with Murakami, but the 'Aegis' Melissa J. Sautome had remained behind.

"I have a question. Origin and Lambda are different worlds, so why can Vandalieu use death-attribute magic in the same way?" she asked.

Aran was confused by Melissa's question, but he quickly decided that it was fine and gave an answer. "It's not that he can use it in the same way; it just looks that way. The fine points should be different... I think. To begin with, death-attribute magic is irregular in both worlds. Rules might not be relevant for a previously-undiscovered foreign magic."

Aran and the others didn't know this, but the truth was that the Counter ability of Ereshkigal, who had become a part of Legion, could now only counter damage received from the last enemy that had attacked.

Of course, Vandalieu had relearned death-attribute magic on his own from scratch due to the 'Experience gained in previous life not carried over,' so he wasn't aware of any differences from Origin.

“I see... then in the end, it’s likely that he can do the same things. I have another question. Does Vitality in Lambda apply in all cases? Like when someone’s throat is cut by a knife or when they receive an attack that ignores defenses?” Melissa asked.

“Wow, that’s quite a dangerous question... it generally applies,” Aran said. “Of course, the amount of damage increases depending on where the attack hits, so it’s not meaningless to aim for vital spots. But you can consider it impossible for a hero in that world to be caught off-guard and die from a single attack from a regular person.”

On Earth and in Origin, no matter how battle-hardened a hero was, they could die very simply. However, in Lambda, where the rule of Vitality (HP) existed, that would not happen.

Even if a hero’s throat was slit by a regular person or a nameless soldier, even if they were stabbed in the spleen from behind, they would not be fatally wounded. In some cases, they would not even be scratched.

“There are the concepts of attack power, defense power and skills. Defense power is made mostly meaningless if the attack lands through gaps in armor, but those with the Physical Resistance skill have skin that’s like armor,” Aran said.

“So even lightweight missiles wouldn’t cause any problems, even if they landed.”

“...So, you noticed.”

Indeed, beings that could withstand an attack from a lightweight missile were not rare in Lambda. Such missiles would likely defeat Rank 4 monsters such as Orc Soldiers, but even a direct hit would not inflict a fatal wound on a Rank 7 Earth Dragon. Such a hit would feel like nothing more than a somewhat strong punch to a Rock Dragon.

Among Talosheim’s members, the ‘Sword King’ Borkus doesn’t even need to be mentioned; even Miles, who was currently on a business trip with the Sauron Liberation Front, would undoubtedly simply ignore the hit from the missile and go on to kill the person who shot it with his bare hands.

C-class adventurers would remain unharmed if they used Shield Technique and Armor Technique skills, and depending on their equipment, even D-class adventurers might get away with minor injuries. Even if they were hit in a bad place, they would not receive a fatal wound.

“Then what about a musket?” Melissa asked.

“Well, it would be impossible to kill a D-class adventurer unless you hit them right in the eye or the mouth. I don’t think the bullet would pierce the skull even if it hit the head. Even normal soldiers wouldn’t die in one shot through their helmets. One shot might kill mages that have low Vitality, though,” Aran said. “As for monsters... it depends on what kind of monsters they are, but you’d get the idea if I tell you that a Rank 3 monster is about the same as a bear, right?”

It was difficult for even a skilled hunter to kill a bear with a single shot. That difficulty wouldn’t be any less if the bear was replaced by a three-meter-long huge boar or a fast-moving carnivorous dinosaur.

And considering a musket’s range, the shooter would normally be counterattacked in Lambda. Even if only melee-range weapons were available, if one was skilled enough, martial skills that released slashes and impacts such as Flying Slash existed.

Well-penetrating, highly lethal sniper rifles, assault rifles with high rates of fire and high-power anti-tank rifles might be different, but it seemed that guns were not very effective weapons in Lambda.

The only difference was Vandalieu’s Cannon Technique, but a cannon using vast quantities of Mana as a propulsion force and projectiles made of a magical metal or fragments of the Demon King that could even slay gods could not be put into the same category as the guns and cannons of Earth and Origin.

“I see. So, what about attacks that ignore defense?” Melissa asked.

“...I don’t want to answer that question,” Aran said. “That’s clearly a question as to how effective Amamiya’s Ignore Defense will be in Lambda, isn’t it?”

“Then you don’t have to answer it. That response gave me a good enough idea.”

The cheat-like ability possessed by *Amemiya Hiroto*, Ignore Defense, which had its inconveniences but was considered to be overwhelmingly powerful in Origin. However, it seemed that it would not be as much of a threat in Lambda as in Origin, due to the existence of the concept of Vitality.

Having decided this from Aran’s reaction, Melissa asked her next question, not caring about making him give a proper answer.

“Is it possible for us to be reincarnated in Lambda right after we die, like Kanata said?” she asked.

This was the reason Kanata had been destroyed by Vandalieu.

“It’s possible, but difficult,” Aran answered. “It places a burden on the system. Once might be doable, but being reincarnated in an adult’s body the moment after you’re killed is impossible.”

Rodcorte was using a system to conduct reincarnation. That system denied the resurrection of any dead person.

The reincarnated individuals tricked the system by being reborn as babies, but being revived in the same adult body as one possessed before being killed was no different from resurrection.

As a result, it would place a burden on the system.

“So that means we can’t redo things over and over... thanks, that’s all,” Melissa said as she turned her back to Aran.

With this, I’ve decided who I’m going to bet on, she thought.



Meanwhile, Rodcorte was devising a concrete method of destroying Vida’s circle of transmigration system and absorbing the souls of Vida’s races that didn’t originate from monsters... the evil gods who were the remnants of the Demon King’s army, into his own system.

“Vida’s destruction is necessary after all. However, looking at it another way, taking over her system will be simple once Vida is destroyed. The problem is, how will Alda destroy Vida when he is unable to destroy souls...”

If this method became possible, he would not only grant Alda’s request, but also increase the number of souls flowing into Rodcorte’s system, meaning that more of them could be used as fighting strength for erasing Vandalieu.

He had gained information from the memories of the Humans and Dwarves of the Hartner Duchy’s cultivation villages when Vandalieu brought them to Talosheim,

though this information was only from the short period from before they were guided to the Demon Path.

Beyond the Boundary Mountain Range, Vandalieu had a nation in the southern region of the Bahn Gaia continent, where the goddess slumbered, and he called himself the 'Holy Son of Vida.' With that being the case, he was unlikely to run if Alda's forces attacked.

And those who worshipped Alda would not ignore a nation that considered monsters such as Undead, Ghouls, Vampires and Lizardmen its citizens and worshipped Vida and the evil gods that had allied themselves with her.

Rodcorte did not exist in Lambda, but Alda did. It would be difficult to stop his forces from labeling Zuruwarn, the god of space and creation, and Ricklent, the genie of time and space, as evil.

"Hmm... if she is attacked with more persistency, her power is decreased and her believers fall sharply in number, she should fall from divinity. I suppose I shall go with this method," Rodcorte decided.

"Oi, answer my question! Broken souls can't be fixed, right?!" said the 'Mage Masher' Minami Asagi, interrupting Rodcorte's thoughts.

"...How many times must I answer that for you to understand?" Rodcorte asked him.

"I want to make sure. Because I can't trust you. I'm asking you the same question over and over to help decide whether you're lying or not."

Rodcorte was slightly impressed. There were few humans that acted this arrogantly towards gods.

"...It is not impossible to join the fragments of a broken soul together to recycle it as a different soul," he said.

"Really?! Then –"

"However, this is different from the resurrection that you are imagining. It would only result in a distorted soul that does not possess the personality or the memories of either Konoe Kyuuji or Kaidou Kanata."

As Rodcorte said this, he suddenly remembered something. A hundred thousand years ago, he had gathered the soul fragments of Zakkart and Ark and combined them into a single soul to ensure that Vida would not resurrect the dead.

He had watched numerous reincarnations of this soul as it flowed through his system, but it had not shown anything unnatural, so he had left it alone and forgotten about it.

“If you do not trust me, you can simply ask Machida Aran and Shimada Izumi. Why are you asking me?” Rodcorte asked.

To Minami Asagi, the two who had become Rodcorte’s familiar spirits should have been trustworthy companions. Despite that, he was making the effort of questioning Rodcorte, whom he declared untrustworthy, and Rodcorte couldn’t understand this.

Asagi quickly answered this question. “That’s right, but there might be some things that Aran and Izumi don’t know. Even if I asked those two these things directly, something like what happened before might happen again. That’s why I’m going to question you and then have Aran, Kouya and Tendou analyze your answers.”

By ‘something like what happened before,’ he was likely referring to how Aran and Izumi had become unable to move when Konoe Kyuuji had tried to use the ‘Clairvoyance’ Tendou to attack before the others could get a chance.

Humans who had ascended to becoming familiar spirits generally had free wills, but when they directly interfered with the gods they served or clearly violated the rules that had been imposed on them, they became unable to move.

Asagi was likely wary that this could happen if questions that were inconvenient to Rodcorte happened to be asked.

It seemed that there was more thought behind his actions than Rodcorte had thought.

“So then, why is it that you are honestly admitting this to me?” Rodcorte asked.

“You can read what we’re thinking anyway, right? So then, there’s no point in hiding it,” Asagi said.

“Indeed, that is true.”

Realizing that Asagi also possessed the courage and strength of will that he had

originally thought, Rodcorte revised his view of him.

On top of being aware that his thoughts were being read, Asagi was acting genuinely arrogant before a being who was absolutely superior to himself. Leaving aside whether that had any meaning or not, it was something that normal humans could not do.

In fact, Rodcorte knew that Asagi's thoughts were the same as the words he spoke.

"But why would you wish for the resurrection of those two? You people no longer consider them your companions, do you?" Rodcorte asked.

Kaidou Kanata had conducted acts such as abducting female criminals and murdering them after raping them, then concealing their corpses. When another reincarnated individual's mother in Origin met an accident that left her on the verge of death, he had considered this fortunate and sold her organs after ending her life; he had truly disgraced the Bravers.

Konoe Kyuuji could be considered to be better than him, but he was a traitor who had joined the Eighth Guidance with Murakami Junpei.

Even though they had been destroyed, these two were not people whom Asagi should have been concerned about.

However, it seemed that Asagi had different thoughts.

"It's true that I can't consider them to be my companions," he said. "In fact, I think they deserved to die for the things they did. Aran and the others aren't worried about those two being destroyed, either. I know that the things Amamiya did were because he had no choice but to protect himself. But if you ask me whether they did something that made them deserve to have their souls broken, then I..."

It seemed that Asagi's thoughts as an individual were prompting him to investigate whether Kaidou Kanata and Konoe Kyuuji's souls could be rebuilt.

However –

"That is quite the meaningless thing that you are worrying about," Rodcorte remarked.

"What?!"

“Ah, my apologies. It seems that I have accidentally spoken my true thoughts out loud.”

“Are you trying to pick a fight with me?!”

“Why would I pick a fight with someone who cannot fight back? You are worrying about a truly meaningless thing, so that is simply what I thought.”

Asagi was enraged.

Rodcorte decided to explain as he took a small break. “It seems that you are worrying about whether those two committed acts worthy of having their souls broken, but the fitting punishment for one’s acts will change depending on one’s views. If there are some who say that someone deserves death for his crimes, there will be others saying that death is too harsh a punishment,” he said. “It is a problem to me when *any* souls are broken, so I can say that those two should not have had their souls broken. That is all.”

“...You don’t understand at all, do you? It makes me feel strange when a god himself says something like that. And aren’t you the one who let Konoe die?” Asagi said.

“Would you like me to explain my reasons for that once more? Based on what I can read of your thoughts, you have quite the complete understanding of them.”

“Shit, you’re not a god after all!” Asagi spat as he turned his back to Rodcorte and left.

It seemed that today’s questioning would end here.

What support the reincarnated individuals would actually get after being reborn in Lambda, how their previous experience would be reflected in their skills, whether their other memories would remain intact when their memories regarding the circle of reincarnation systems were deleted as they were reborn, whether they could choose their parents if they were reborn as babies, whether they could choose the place they started if they were reborn as adults... Asagi had asked numerous questions, but Rodcorte interpreted this as him thinking more seriously, and held higher expectations of him than he had in Kaidou Kanata.

“Now then, I suppose I will give my response to Alda.”

“In other words, what I felt wasn’t wrong. Amamiya, I’m definitely going to stop you,” Asagi murmured.

Chapter 131

The spider-san's request to kill her

“W-who is this guy?! A monster tamed by one of the guys worshipping the gods on Vida’s side?!” the Noble Orc blurted out in agitation.

“Leaving aside who is good or evil, I’ve now figured out who I need to defeat,” said Vandalieu, understanding that the ones he needed to defeat first were indeed this Noble Orc and the Orcs that were his subordinates.

Keeping Princess Levia and the others hidden so as to not reveal his hand, but not wanting to fight on his own because everyone would worry, he had produced the enormous centipede monster Pete, and it seemed that he had successfully disturbed his enemies.

“Gishaah!” Pete hissed.

Incidentally, Vandalieu was not simply attached to Pete’s belly. To be more precise, Pete was protruding from his own back through the Insect Binding Technique skill.

“K-kill him bugih!” the Noble Orc commanded his Orc subordinates with words of the Orc language (?) mixed in his speech, but the Orcs had also been shaken by the sight of Pete. And the Orcs present here were those that had been gathered hastily. Their ability and loyalty were several levels below what could be called elite standards.

They couldn’t be blamed for backing away from the powerful-looking Pete. They were surrounding Pete with a semi-circular formation, but there weren’t any that were willing to attack without any hesitation.

But Pete didn’t hesitate as he charged at them.

“GISHAAAAH!”

“BUGIH?!”

Pete’s body, which was covered in a shiny, black carapace, passed between the bow-

wielding Orcs and Gizania, who was likely unable to move after having lost four of her legs, and lightning shot from his horns at the Orcs.

Saliva dripped from Pete's mouth at the delicious smell of burning flesh. However, it seemed that the Orcs' fighting instincts had been ignited after their allies were attacked.

One by one, they roared and charged at Pete, raising their heavy weapons.

However, the defensive power of Pete's carapace in its normal state was greater than knights wearing full suits of armor. And he was currently using Stone Form, a martial skill of the Armor Technique skill, so the Orcs' poor Axe Technique and Club Technique skills couldn't even scratch him.

In fact, their attacks only caused their own ends due to the electricity flowing from his horns.

"Bugigih!" the Noble Orc cheered as he saw a crimson fluid gushing from Pete.

"Bururururu!"

The crimson fluid flowing from Pete was not blood, but Küh1, who was now a Deep Blood Slime, emerging from Vandalieu.

"Bugurururu!" Küh1 said as it attacked the nearby Orcs. It was complaining, as it seemed to have been electrically shocked by Pete.

"Gishaah..."

"Bugih!"

Watching an Orc be dissolved alive and absorbed by Küh1 as he let out a dying scream, the Noble Orc realized that his subordinates could not win against these enemies no matter how much the numbers were in their favor, so he raised his trusty greatsword and joined the battle.

The Noble Orc was indeed of a superior race; his agility far surpassed those of his subordinate Orcs.

"BUGOOOH!"

He avoided the part of Kühl's body that had been extended like a tentacle and then released a Swordsmanship martial skill superior to Triple Thrust – Hundred Furious Thrusts.

With the sound of a rock drill digging into a boulder, most of the Noble Orc's thrusts were deflected after inflicting shallow scratches to Pete's carapace. However, some of the thrusts slipped through the gaps in Pete's carapace and successfully dug into his flesh.

"GISHAAAH!"

Pete let out a roar that was more out of anger than pain. However, the Noble Orc seemed to think that he could win after seeing the damage inflicted; he pulled his sword back and tried to release another martial skill.

However, what appeared to be tree branches entwined themselves around his sword.

"BUGOH?!"

Those were the branches of Eisen, which Vandalieu had extended using Plant Binding Technique. They were powerful despite how thin they appeared to be, and they would not release their grip over the Noble Orc's greatsword.

"GISHAAAH!"

Not letting this opportunity pass by, Pete twisted his body around and pierced the Noble Orc with his horns.

"BUGYAAAAAAAH!"

With the electricity flowing from the horns piercing his body, the Noble Orc let out a dying scream.

I suppose this is how it is, Vandalieu thought as he received a slight electrical shock from being caught up in the attack as well. This Noble Orc is probably about as strong as Bugogan. Appraisal tells me that he's a Rank 7 Noble Orc Leader like Bugogan was, too.

The Noble Orc's skill with Swordsmanship might have been inferior to Bugogan's, but his equipment other than the greatsword seemed to be superior; they were likely on

equal grounds.

The Devil's Nest in the forest in the Mirg shield-nation, homeland of Zadiris and the other Ghouls, a second homeland to Vandalieu. The Noble Orc Bugogan had ruled a pack of three hundred Orcs in the center of that Devil's Nest.

Vandalieu felt a little surprised upon learning that Pete had been able to defeat a similar enemy while receiving only a light wound in return. When Vandalieu had fought Bugogan, he had tried all of the methods he could think of but they hadn't worked; he had felt in danger, thinking that his barrier might be broken. Bugogan had been a powerful enemy that Vandalieu had finally managed to defeat after receiving a deep wound, using a plan that involved him risking his life.

A Noble Orc of the same strength as him was now convulsing on the ground, emitting a delicious smell.

Even though Vandalieu himself had done almost nothing at all.

"I suppose it means we've become stronger," he said.

But if he thought about it, this was the natural outcome. Over six years had passed since the battle against Bugogan. During that time, Vandalieu had acquired Jobs, and his Strengthen Followers skill had transformed into the superior skill, Guidance: Demon Path. There was nothing abnormal about having defeated a Noble Orc as powerful as Bugogan with Pete, Kühl and Eisen on his side.

"Bugiiiih!"

"Hogogeh!"

"Buggyaaaaah!"

And hadn't Vandalieu planned to have a yakiniku buffet at the Noble Orc Empire before?

I suppose it's because he was the first enemy to ever inflict a serious wound on me in battle. He was a powerful being in my mind.

Vandalieu was satisfied with this analysis of his own unrest. Incidentally, while he was doing this, the subordinate Orcs had attempted to run after seeing their Noble Orc

commander being killed, but they had been sent flying by Pete sweeping the lower half of his body sideways, had their necks broken after being grabbed by Eisen's branches or been enveloped by Kühl.

Their skills were lacking and their coordination was lacking as well, so they were nothing but large-sized small fry.

Watching this scene unfold, Gizania let out a sigh of both relief and defeat as she smiled. "With this, all of Princess Kurnelia's pursuers have been defeated. Princess, please become happy with Prince Budarion... Great Vida, Zanalpadna, evil god of carapaces and compound eyes, please protect everyone," she prayed briefly with her eyes closed, and then she thrust her greatsword into the ground and let go of the handle.

As all of the Orcs stopped moving and Vandalieu finished his self-analysis, Pete faced Gizania once more.

Vandalieu, who was attached to his belly, made eye contact with her. "You don't seem to be in good condition. First, your wounds need to be treated –"

"Though this may be a coincidence, I thank you for the reinforcements, Great Centipede-dono. I suppose this, too, was the judgment of my guardian god, Zanalpadna."

What a polite person, Vandalieu thought as he heard Gizania's words of gratitude, despite having been interrupted. But even if her wounds aren't fatal, they're quite serious, so I want her to hurry up and let me treat them.

"Not at all, I simply did what any person would do –"

"As thanks, I should at least allow you to devour me and gain Experience Points. I do not know if you understand my words, but... Come! End it in one instant!" Gizania squeezed her eyes shut.

"...Eh?" Vandalieu was very bewildered, not understanding why he was being told to kill her. And then he suddenly realized. "Could it be that you think that I'm a part of Pete?" he asked as he separated himself from Pete's abdomen and stood on the ground.

Gizania opened her eyes and looked at him, dumbfounded. "Eh? Y-you're not?"



“No good.”

“Bururu!”

“Gishaah...”

Kühl and Eisen were scolding Pete, whose electricity had electrocuted them during the battle against the Orcs.

Meanwhile, Gizania was receiving treatment from Vandalieu nearby.

“I am terribly sorry. I was certain that you were an organ of a monster like a Manticore that spoke in a voice similar to that of humans to bait them into a trap...” she said.

It seemed that she had mistaken Vandalieu for something like the lure of an anglerfish.

“Not at all; I appeared in a form that could cause that misunderstanding, so please don’t worry about it,” said Vandalieu, focusing on other things, realizing that it couldn’t be helped that Gizania thought that.

He had used Spirit Form Transformation to fuse with Gizania to apply his Rapid Healing skill to her while using Blood Potion to heal her as well.

“I’ve found the third leg. One more!”

“We’ll find it even if we have to split the grassroots apart.”

“I found it, Danna!”

Vandalieu had created clones of himself with Out-of-body Experience to find and collect the severed legs of the right side of Gizania’s body with Kimberley. He used the Surgery skill to reattach them. He extended his tongue to release drugs and disinfect the wounds, and then wrapped the legs at the point of reattachment with bandages made of thread.

“By the way, is the pain bearable?” Vandalieu asked.

“Yes, it seems that there are no problems. Thanks to your magic, it simply feels a little

itchy. But to think that my severed legs could be reattached... how long will it take before I can move them?" Gizania asked, looking happily at her right legs that had been reattached by the thread that Vandalieu had produced from his mouth.

"I don't know for sure," Vandalieu replied as he continued wrapping her legs in thread. "This is my first time treating an Arachne person... But if it's just small movements, I suppose it will be several hours to half a day."

"That's enough," Gizania said. "Normally, they wouldn't regrow to their original length until I went through five yearly moltings."

It seemed that Arachne molted once a year, and severed legs would regrow gradually as they did.

"It is not only my legs. In the state that I was in, if I were to survive and return to my nation on my own, I would have lost my arm," Gizania continued.

Her arm that had been broken in a horrible fashion had been completely healed, and she was able to move it normally. The upper body halves of Arachne, which resembled those of human women, didn't molt, so her two arms would never regrow if severed, unlike her eight legs.

And for Gizania, losing her arm, which was necessary to swing her sword, would be equivalent to death.

Of course, Vandalieu was happy that her arm had healed as well.

"I'm glad to hear that," he said. "It would be sad to lose an arm as beautiful as yours."

Gizania's arms had powerful muscles for wielding her greatsword. All muscles other than those of enemies were beautiful. Losing them would be an unbearable loss.

"Beautiful... is it?" Gizania asked.

"Yes."

"I see... I am not so sure, as nobody has said that other than my mother, but I'm happy." Gizania didn't look entirely convinced.

Vandalieu decided that he'd have her make poses for him later.

And he thought that the rest of Gizania was beautiful as well.

It was true that normal people might be afraid of the spider-like lower body that was the size of a two-ton truck with fluffy-looking, furry, tarantula-like legs protruding from it.

Her upper half resembled a human woman's, but when she stood upright, the top of her head was over three meters above the ground. On top of that, she had a large build, her body clearly being one of a well-trained warrior.

However, for Vandalieu, who was friendly with the giant centipede Pete and Cemetery Bees, she was not someone to feel fear or disgust towards.

In fact, even outside of her muscles, Vandalieu thought about how he wanted to try touching the fluffy fur on her lower body, about how the compound eyes on her forehead were like beautiful gems, about how her white skin was beautiful and about how her front two legs resembled a human's until halfway down.

Ah, come to think of it, she has eight legs... Will Privel be angry? No, I'm just gathering information and happened to save someone in the process, so it's fine.

Tentacles and the legs of an arthropod were quite different in appearance, but... their number was the same.

"I will thank you once more. I am Gizania. I am a samurai of the Arachne race. And I wish for you to tell me who you are. I know that this is not how I should behave towards my savior, but..."

Vandalieu was the one who had saved Gizania's life, and for some reason, she felt some charisma from him (The Demon Path Enticement and Guidance: Demon Path skills, as well as the effects of the Insect User Job), but Vandalieu wasn't someone she could not feel curious about.

"It's alright," Vandalieu said. "Kimberley, while I explain things to her, please bring everyone over from the Knochen fort."

"Fort? Could it be that you came from that fort of bone?!" Gizania exclaimed.

"I'll include that in my explanation."

“Danna, could I take my time to bring them here?” Kimberley asked. “About thirty minutes, or maybe an hour.”

“Don’t worry about that and bring them here quickly,” Vandalieu said.

“Yeah, yeah.”



Vandalieu excluded the information about the reincarnated individuals, but explained to Gizania about the current Talosheim and the reason that he and his companions had crossed the marshlands to come to this place.

Gizania was simply astonished. “The fall and resurrection of the Titan nation, travel to and from the outside of the mountain range being possible, immigrants... I would never have dreamed that things had become like this beyond the marshlands,” she said.

“I feel the same way,” Vandalieu said, having heard from Gizania what was happening south of the marshlands.

Eleanora, Vigaro and the others had regrouped with them around this time, and they were greatly surprised as well.

A hundred thousand years ago, the goddess Vida was defeated as a result of the battle between her and Alda, and the Arachne and Noble Orcs that had fled with her and her gods survived by forming groups encompassing their entire races in the land south of the marshlands.

The goddess Vida fell into slumber, and the surviving Pure-breed Vampires became watchmen to protect the place where she rested, while the gods of every race, including the Arachne, needed to fall into a deep slumber for tens of thousands of years to regain the power they had lost due to their wounds.

And the remaining Arachne and Noble Orcs endured the dawn of a new era by helping each other.

As they had been allies who had fought together under Vida, even though their lifespans and ways of living were different, they helped each other and the first few

tens of thousands of years went well.

It seemed that the fact that the two races preferred different environments to inhabit, like the Lizardmen and the Titans, worked to their advantage.

However, several tens of thousands of years passed, the villages of each race grew in population and development, and the gods began to awaken, beginning with those with the shallowest wounds and greatest power, putting an end to the new age.

And with things becoming easier, conflicts of interest began arising between the two races, and arguments began occurring.

These didn't develop into war, but this was only because the gods, including Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes, sent Divine Messages to mediate peace whenever signs of conflict began to occur.

But soon enough, war between the races that served Vida broke out. At that time, a wise emperor appeared in history.

"The one who suppressed the war and brought peace to the southern region of the continent was the Noble Orc Arch-king, Emperor Buugih," Gizania said.

Emperor Buugih was the most powerful being existing at the time, other than the Pure-breed Vampires who were slumbering with Vida. If he had wanted to, he could have used military might to create an empire with the Noble Orcs standing at the top.

However, Emperor Buugih did not do this; he solved each race's problems through discussion.

"We are not enemies. Every one of us are brothers and sisters, are we not? Let us value peace together and prepare for the battle against the tyrannical god Alda and his hounds, who will come for us one day."

These were his words that had been recorded in history.

In other words, he had created unity within by making an enemy of those on the outside. The truth was that the tyrannical god he had mentioned, Alda, the god of law and fate, was indeed an enemy. So, to be more accurate, he had reminded those within that there was an enemy on the outside.

And then Emperor Buugih created a republic with the Noble Orc empire at its center, where each race cooperated and helped each other.

In the end, the Noble Orcs were in the position of leadership, but this was the natural course of events, as the Noble Orcs possessed the greatest fighting strength among every race.

And that republicanism had functioned well until several months ago. That was because even after Emperor Buugih's death, the successive generations of emperors had been wise and impartial, devoting themselves to maintaining the peace.

However, the second son of the late emperor, Prince Bugitas, had felt discontent with this.

"I do not know what he is thinking," Gizania said. "But when the late emperor Fugofusama passed away, Bugitas acquired the divine protection of a god I had never heard of, a god named Ravovifard, instigated a coup d'état and drove away Prince Budarion, who was supposed to become the next emperor, as well as his loyal retainers."

Prince Budarion, who had managed to escape despite being defeated, was in hiding now, relying on the Arachne race where his fiancé Princess Kurnelia was.

Having taken over the empire, Bugitas had erased records of his older brother and destroyed the republic created by Emperor Buugih, starting a war to create a dictatorship that worshipped the unknown evil god, Ravovifard.

The Arachne race was fighting against the empire along with the other races that supported Prince Budarion, but the situation was grim.

That was when the Arachne race had received reports that a fort had suddenly appeared without warning on the outskirts of the marshlands. Having remembered the existence of the Lizardmen race (whom they had apparently forgotten about completely due to lack of interaction with them), the Arachne race had dispatched a group of individuals with Princess Kurnelia at its center to form an alliance with the Lizardmen to change the tides of war.

"Wait a minute, why would you place the princess at the center of the mission? She's an important person, isn't she?" Eleanora asked, interrupting.

"We had no choice," Gizania replied. "The princess possesses a unique skill called

‘Thread Telepathy.’ It is a skill that creates mutual understanding with those connected to her by threads that she creates, and the plan was to use that to negotiate with the Lizardmen.”

“...The skill’s name sounds like ‘string phone,’ doesn’t it,” said Vandalieu.

TLN: “Thread Telepathy” is 糸念話/ito-nenwa. ‘String phone’ is 糸電話/ito-denwa, which refers to a telephone made from two cans and a piece of string.

“But during our mission, the group, including myself, was attacked by Bugitas’s subordinates. In order to allow the princess to escape, I applied upon myself the secret medicine passed down among our tribe that forcibly induces arousal in Orcs, drawing them all the way here... and then, when my life was in danger, I was saved by Vandalieu-dono. I will never forget this for the rest of my life. I will definitely repay the favor one day,” Gizania said, lowering her head.

“I said this before, but I just did what I should do as a person, and as the ‘Holy Son of Vida.’ Please don’t worry about it,” Vandalieu said.

Though he said this, he actually expected a lot from her repayment of this favor.

Things look like they’ll turn out bigger than I expected, and if I have her mediate things with the Arachne race, it seems that I’ll be able to talk to Prince Budarion’s side as well. I’m glad I obeyed my instincts, Vandalieu thought.

Now that he thought about it, that uneasiness that he had felt earlier might have been some hidden effect of the ‘Holy Son of Vida’ Title.

“But... Insectoid monsters, Undead, Ghouls and Vampires? And Orcs that I have never seen before. And they all seem to be several steps above me in strength,” said Gizania, having sensed the strength of Eleanora, Vigaro and the Orcuses. “A Dhampir who leads such beings... how tremendous the ‘Shrine Maiden of Vida’ is.”

TLN: “Shrine Maiden” is 巫女, “Holy Son” is 御子, both are pronounced “miko.”

“Hmm?” Vandalieu felt an uncomfortable feeling.

“Fugoh, King is amazing! By the way, I’m starting to get turned on!”

“Bufuuh! Bufuuuh!”

“Deodorization!”

Before he could figure out what that uncomfortable feeling was, Vandalieu realized that Gorba and the other Orcuses were breathing wildly and looking at Gizania with dangerous eyes, so the feeling went away.

“M-my apologies. It seems that the odor of the secret medicine still lingered on my body,” Gizania said.

It seemed that the secret medicine that forcibly stimulated arousal in Orcs was also effective on Orcuses.

“Bufuh? I’ve calmed down. I’m a wise man now,” said Gorba, turning his calm gaze to a faraway place.

“By the way, why hasn’t your god appeared yet when you’re in such trouble?” asked Orbia from next to Gorba. “He came out to mediate peace several times tens of thousands of years ago, didn’t he?”

This question completely distracted Vandalieu from his uncomfortable feeling.

“I do not know,” said Gizania. “Perhaps there is a reason, or perhaps Ravovifard has done something, or perhaps he has some deep thoughts that I cannot hope to understand.”

“Hmm, that might be right. But still, a wise Noble Orc emperor...” Basdia murmured.

“Is it surprising? For us, it is not surprising at all,” said Gizania.

“Rather than surprising, it is beyond our imagination completely,” said Zadiris.

“That’s surprising as well, but I heard that the Noble Orc was speaking human words. Is that true?” Basdia asked.

“As far as I can remember, Bugogan and his sons didn’t speak a word,” said Vigaro.

“About Bugogan... I remember hearing about a Noble Orc criminal who was exiled over ten years ago. I know why that is,” Gizania said.

It seemed that speaking the human language was a requirement to become the head

of a family in the Noble Orc empire. However, with his body physically being unable to pronounce human words, a certain Noble Orc had pretended to speak human language using a Magic Item that he had created in secret in order to become the head of his family.

He had apparently been exiled for the crime of killing a Noble Orc of a rival family who had learned of his secret.

It was likely that this Noble Orc had been Bugogan. It seemed that no other Noble Orcs had been sentenced to exile for some time, too.

“I suppose it can be said that he was defeated in a power struggle,” said Vandalieu.

The story was slightly different from what he had heard from the spirit of Bugogan himself, but it was within an acceptable margin of error.

“By the way, I would like to move to regroup with Princess Kurnelia after you’ve had some rest,” Vandalieu said.

“Yes, but chasing after them will likely be difficult. Around half a day has passed since I became bait and ran all the way here,” said Gizania.

“I’m not sure whether I should praise Arachne for their stamina or be exasperated at the sexual desire of Orcs.”

If Princess Kurnelia had returned straight back to the Arachne village, that difference would be more than a day’s worth. Vandalieu would be able to chase after her if he flew, but he didn’t really want to do this in a Devil’s Nest that he was visiting for the first time.

“I drew all of the Orcs in the nearby area to myself with the secret medicine, so the princess and the others should be safe. That Noble Orc seemed to have gathered those subordinates in a hurry, so there are unlikely to be any more pursuers,” Gizania said.

And so, Vandalieu and his companions decided to pursue Princess Kurnelia and her followers without straining themselves.



- **Name:** Pete
 - **Rank:** 7
 - **Race:** Black Hundred-Lightning Centipede
 - **Level:** 45
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Hunger Resistance: Level 2
 - Self-Enhancement: Following: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Venom Secretion (Neurotoxin): Jaws: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Wind Attribute Resistance: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Body: Exoskeleton, Horns: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - **Active skills:**
 - Silent Steps: Level 1
 - Charge: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Lightning: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - **Unique skills:**
 - Dragon Devourer: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
-

- **Name:** Kühl
- **Rank:** 6
- **Race:** Deep Blood Slime
- **Level:** 61
- **Passive skills:**
 - Blunt Damage Resistance: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Hunger Resistance: Level 2
 - Predator's Restoration: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Body Form Manipulation: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Venom Secretion: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Magic Resistance: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
 - Bloodwork: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Grow: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 1 (NEW!)

Chapter 132

Is there anyone equivalent to an A-class adventurer present?

The Amid Empire's army that was occupying the Sauron region was troubled by the fact that the process of normalizing the new government system was not proceeding at all.

"What shall we do, Duke Marme? At this rate, our position in our homeland..." said a military civil official, inside the conference room of one of Duke Sauron's army's forts that had been seized by the Amid Empire's army.

A vein surfaced on the forehead of a middle-aged man whose hairline had receded to the top of his head. "Damn it, I don't need you telling me to know that!" he shouted hysterically, pounding his fist against the thick, round table.

He was Duke Marme... the cousin of the Amid Empire's current emperor, Marshukzarl.

Duke Marme had assumed the position of supreme commander of the Amid Empire forces occupying the Sauron Duchy in the spring of this year.

The political measures for occupation hadn't progressed for multiple years after the Sauron Duchy was occupied, and Duke Marme, the head of the Marme family of dukes that possessed a sacred bloodline, being connected to the imperial family of the champion Bellwood, took this position in high spirits, thinking that he would make the political measures progress rapidly.

However, he had come to the end of his rope soon after taking up this new post.

All of the "improvements" and "political measures" that Duke Marme and his retainers could come up with had already been tried by his predecessors. And this had led to the current situation.

Even when they were exempted from paying taxes in full for a period of time, or the infrastructure to maintain the highways were put in place, the people of the Sauron

region would not yield to the Amid Empire. No matter how much time passed, they referred to the Amid Empire's army as the 'occupying army,' supported the resistance behind the scenes despite not showing any signs of rebellion on the surface, and they were waiting for the return of Duke Sauron's children, who had fled to the Orbaume Kingdom.

The political measure of discriminating against Vida's races like Beast-people and Titans, which were completely normal in the Empire, would not be applied for a long time due to the orders of Emperor Marshukzarl, and this had not caused any problems, at least on the surface. However, other political measures had caused problems to surface.

Trying to do something about it, the army that Duke Marme had brought with him were throwing themselves into things and running about, but the situation had only worsened.

"The people have a deep-rooted resistance to the construction of a Church of Alda and religious conversion, so we cannot gather workers. In fact, there have been conflicts between the people and the soldiers trying to recruit workers, devolving into bloodshed..."

The national religion of the Amid Empire, the faith that placed Alda, the god of law and fate, at the highest position – commonly known as the Alda religion. The political measure of converting the people of the Vida religion, which had flourished in the Sauron region, had not progressed at all.

"Again... It may be overbearing, but if you gather a dozen more armed soldiers, the commoners won't riot so easily. You should have received permission from His Excellency the duke, and you should have enough soldiers gathered. So why are you not doing this?" asked the grand chamberlain of the Marme family of dukes.

"No, that is... the first ones to act violently were the soldiers, the ones that belong to Duke Marme's army..." the civil official said.

"What?! Are you saying that those who belong to the duke's army conducted such behavior?!" the grand chamberlain shouted, seemingly having understood the situation now.

The pale-faced civil official continued his report. "Something about a Beast-person

child falling into a puddle of water, sending mud flying onto one of the soldiers' shoes. When he tried to discipline the child, the child's parents apparently interfered, and... the blood rose to the soldier's head and he drew his sword. He punished the father on the spot before the other soldiers could stop him."

"So that was the cause of the rebellion. Has the grand chamberlain not taught the soldiers that they do not have the right to punish civilians?" asked a man who seemed to be the civil official's superior, covering for the civil official.

"Silence! It has not been long since those soldiers were recruited, and it is you civil officials who simply look at the numbers, say that there are not enough soldiers and then ask us to send more!" the grand chamberlain shouted.

"We did indeed request for more soldiers, but it is supposed to be the work of you military officers to decide who to actually dispatch!" the civil official's superior shouted back.

"SILENCE!" Duke Marme bellowed. "Are there any other reports?!"

"Y-yes! The reconstruction of the fort in the Scylla territory has been delayed. According to preliminary estimates, if we can have five earth-attribute mages and a team of military engineers dispatched, the delay could be reduced to the end of autumn, but..." another civil official reported.

"You bastard, didn't you say at the start of summer that 'the delay could be reduced to the end of summer?!' We've dispatched the valuable, skilled individuals among our mages, so what is the meaning of this?!" the grand chamberlain demanded.

"I-I'm terribly sorry! The gathering of materials and workers is not going well, so the construction work is not progressing."

"Damn, are there any other reports?!" the duke shouted, saliva flying from his mouth.

The pale-faced civil officials delivered their reports one by one. Complaints from the Adventurers' Guild, as well as petitions from every Guild – the mercenaries, merchants and mages – had stacked up like a mountain.

On top of that, the military officers reported things such as a lack of progress in the reformation of the resistance extermination squads that had been annihilated in spring, as well as increasing numbers of soldiers in the occupying army becoming

unable to move due to illness, though they were not seriously ill.

As only half a year had passed since Duke Marme took up this post, these problems were not entirely the responsibility of him and his retainers.

All of these are due to the resistance's achievements... no, interference, thought Baron Cuoco Ragdew as he moistened his throat with black tea at a seat at the end of the conference hall, watching the duke's face growing darker and darker as if it was completely unrelated to him.

The Amid Empire's misgovernment of the Sauron Duchy had begun when they allowed two influential resistance organizations to form. The Sauron Liberation Front that was led by the Liberating Princess Knight and the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army that was led by Duke Sauron's son, Raymond Paris.

The two resistance organizations had become a source of hope to the local populace that the Amid Empire's army had tried to force to become accustomed to everyday life under occupation. This had maintained their desire to rebel against the empire.

Due to this, the Amid Empire's army had become unable to hire the local populace as workers to become new guards or build new forts and other military installations.

They had hired commoners after applying numerous checks, but members of the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army had a high rate of success in infiltrating the workforce and had continued to cause incidents to occur.

One might think that these problems could be solved if workers and necessary military personnel were brought from the Mirg shield-nation, whose national borders were close to the Amid Empire mainland, but this was no simple matter.

Rebels existed in both the Amid Empire's vassal nations, including the Mirg shield-nation, and the Amid Empire mainland itself. If they were to group up with the resistance, even the mainland's public order could become unstable.

Even if this weren't the case, the Mirg shield-nation still hadn't reorganized its army after it had lost much of its military strength in the expedition to the Boundary Mountain Range three years ago.

As for workers, bringing them from the Empire or its vassal nations would be a poor move as well.

First of all, this would plainly come with high labor costs. Alda, the god of the empire's national religion, taught that "those who work should be given appropriate rewards." Workers' wages could not be unjustly lowered.

And the workers of the occupied nation would think that their work had been stolen from them, causing an accumulation of discontent among the Sauron Duchy's commoners and the Workers' Guild. In the worst-case scenario, the new workers could clash with the commoners, leading to a riot.

Even if things did not progress that far, doing this would create more openings for the resistance to take advantage of.

Due to these various reasons, the national border on the Mirg shield-nation's side had been blockaded with travel back and forth across the border being heavily regulated, but this had caused delays in the transportation of goods.

The duchies of the Orbaume Kingdom had originally been independent before the founding of the kingdom, so they had become able to function independently to some extent.

But not everything was available in abundant amounts. Discontent was growing among the traders of the Commerce Guild that had been trading and making a profit because of this.

It wasn't only those who were involved in trading; because people could no longer travel back and forth to other places, the mercenaries of the Mercenaries' Guild, who normally traveled between battlefields like migratory birds, had become unable to earn a living.

The mages of the Mages' Guild now had difficulties obtaining materials needed for their research. The higher-ranking mages that the occupying army had deemed to be dangerous were already under surveillance, and research considered taboo by the Alda religion had been forbidden as well, so this was just adding oil to the flames.

The Adventurers' Guild didn't have as many complaints, but adventurers were also unable to leave the Sauron region. And adventurers of D-class or lower were more often employed by commoners and merchants than by noblemen. If they acted friendly towards the occupying army and became hated, their incomes would drop sharply.

And the occupying army did not have an unlimited number of personnel.

Duke Marme's personal army was quite large in size compared to other armies owned by noblemen. However, it wasn't as if he had brought his entire army to the Sauron region. He had needed to leave some of the army behind to maintain public order in his own lands. And if he had brought too many, he would have faced problems with upkeep costs and finding places for them to stay. That was why only a third of his army had joined the Amid Empire's occupying army.

However, the soldiers of the duke's army were falling sick in quick succession. They were staying in a place with a different climate for an extended period of time, so it was only natural that some of them would become sick, but... it seemed that it was the duke's fault for bringing an army that was normally maintaining the public order of a duchy on an expedition that they weren't accustomed to.

It wasn't as if there were no methods available to improve these problems. The resistance simply needed to be exterminated.

To say that things would go well if the resistance were to disappear would seem to be an excuse, but the resistance's interference was preventing the occupying army from freely gathering personnel and materials in the Sauron region, and as long as they existed, the commoners would never yield to the occupying army.

It wasn't as if things would go smoothly the day after the resistance was defeated, but the situation would certainly improve.

A good opportunity for that had come when Raymond Paris and his younger brother Rick Paris of the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army had been killed together.

If the Sauron Liberation Front had been destroyed as well, the Amid Empire's political measures would have progressed several steps forward by now. Duke Marme wouldn't have needed to take up this position, either.

However, the Liberating Princess Knight had gathered the scattered remnants of the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army into the Sauron Liberation Front, forming a single, very stable organization.

And the elite resistance extermination squad that had been assembled during the spring of this year had been annihilated by the elite squads led by the Liberating Princess Knight, so the chances of the occupying army being able to exterminate the

resistance were slim now.

Epecially with Duke Marme standing at the top, Cuoco lamented to himself as he listened to Duke Marme's shouting once more.

"Curse those lowborn fools! If they want requests, I have given them work as guards! If they don't like it, they can go and hunt on their own in the Devil's Nests!"

"Your Excellency, what will you do if you do not take the Adventurers' Guild's concerns into account and they join forces with the resistance?" a civil official asked.

"Then send the requests to build the Church to the Adventurers' Guild as well! Even those savages should be able to transport stone!"

"Th-that would encroach on the domain of the Workers' Guild..."

"What domain have those who do not cooperate with us to spread the traditional holy teachings of Alda! Those heretics who worship a lewd, wicked woman!"

It's started again.

Cuoco was a traitor who sold information to the resistance organization, the Sauron Liberation Front, tempted by the delicious food ingredients they offered. However, he had another motive for betraying his country other than the delicious food.

Duke Marme becoming the supreme commander had been decided in the winter of last year, and after hearing this, Cuoco had guessed that the duke, as well as the other noblemen who had been dispatched at the time including Cuoco himself, had been chosen by the emperor as sacrificial lambs.

Duke Marme is too devout a follower of Alda, and he possesses strong connections to the Church of Alda in the empire. But he is ostracizing Vida so aggressively that even those in the empire think that he is too radical.

Even though worshipping Vida was forbidden in the Amid Empire, showing contempt for Vida herself was not encouraged. Vida had made the mistake of distorting the world's order by using monsters to give birth to grotesque races, but even so, she was a goddess who had created the world with Alda and the others, and she had fought against the Demon King.

In other words, for many Alda believers, Vida was a prisoner that deserved to be punished for her mistakes, and once she had atoned, she would one day return to her place as the goddess who ruled over the life attribute.

Despite that, Duke Marme denounced Vida as a lewd and wicked woman. There was a famous story among noblemen where he had encouraged the people of his land to leak information so that he could hunt down adherents of Vida, only to have the Pope reprimand him, asking, "What do you take the law to be?!"

That wasn't all. Duke Marme treated adventurers as lowborn individuals.

There were problems in his sense of values even outside of his religion.

The Amid Empire and its vassal states had a tendency to not use adventurers in its military activities. That was because there was a historical event in the past, before the foundation of the empire, where a nation hired large numbers of adventurers as mercenaries to fight a war against another nation, leading to a shortage of strength to exterminate monsters within the nation. Though they did not lose the war, damage caused by monsters increased in every region, causing the nation to fall apart.

That didn't mean that adventurers weren't trusted, but Duke Marme didn't care about these details; he discriminated against adventurers unjustly other than extraordinary exceptions such as the Thunderclap Schneider.

Still, if the region would stay quiet, then it would be fine. It is a family of dukes with a long history; the vassals are exceptional, but... the military officers, including the grand chamberlain... At the very least, the emperor should know that dispatching them here to the Sauron Duchy now would make things worse, and that things will not get better.

As Cuoco spent his time for the rest of the unproductive meeting immersing himself in his thoughts, Duke Marme's irritation reached a peak.

"Curse you, Marshukzar! You set a trap for me, a duke, sent me to a troublesome occupied region, forced the Marme family of dukes to bear the failure of the political measures. A trick to solidify your own strength as the emperor!"

"M-Master, please stop referring to His Excellency the emperor without any honorifics!"

Surprisingly, it seemed that Duke Marme was thinking the same thing as Cuoco.

He couldn't destroy a family of dukes, so he's forced the current Duke Marme to retire. But he could easily destroy a family of barons that is swimming in debt. Well, if that's all, I don't really mind, but...

He would simply sell his mansion and household belongings, then repay his debt by working as an adventurer. He had always accommodated the Adventurers' Guild up until now, and he was quite confident in his own fighting strength.

His family had been on the verge of destruction to begin with, so he had resigned himself to this fate as well.

But if I make a bad move, I might be forced to live a life of faith as a priest, or they might announce that I have 'committed suicide as a way of taking responsibility.' I don't want that.

Eating delicious food was life. A modest life as a priest would be unbearable. Cuoco didn't want to die, either.

"Silence! All of this is because you cannot handle the resistance, is it not! Everything would go well if it were not for them!" Duke Marme shouted.

Personally, I would like if Iris-dono and the others could coordinate with the Orbaume Kingdom and take the Sauron region back while I am wasting my time here. I may fall from being a baron to a knight or even a mere honorary nobleman, but I would no longer need to repay my debt.

"Now that things have come to this... I have no choice but to summon the Fifteen Evil-Breaking Swords!" Duke Marme said at last.

With these words, the calmness in Cuoco's mind disappeared.

"The Fifteen Evil-Breaking Swords?! The secret force of fifteen knights under the emperor's direct control, said to have saved the First Emperor Balschmidt. Said to each possess strength not inferior, or even superior to A-class adventurers... they really exist?"

Cuoco was surprised, but it seemed that Duke Marme's decision was a surprise to his vassals as well.

"It's true that the Fifteen Evil-Breaking Swords would be able to exterminate the

resistance, but they move only at the command of His Excellency the emperor. No matter how much of a right you have to the throne, I do not believe you can command them,” one of the vassals said.

“I will lower my head to Marshukzar! At this rate, I will lose my status as duke either way. With that being the case, relying on Marshukzar! will be better and result in shallower wounds to my family than being made to bear responsibility for defeat!” Duke Marme said.

This could be considered a pathetic judgement, one that involved discarding his pride. At the very least, it was likely a far better decision than trying to somehow solve things on their own.

But for Cuoco, this was a poor situation.

Iris-dono's skill is likely at the level of a C-class or B-class adventurer. Considering her age, her ability is astounding, but... she will not be able to overcome the Fifteen Evil-Breaking Swords. There is no way that the resistance organization has any members equivalent to an A-class adventurer... at this rate, I will be unable to acquire that Ent syrup again! Cuoco shrieked to himself internally.



Meanwhile, Vandalieu and the others were on the move, heading for the Arachne settlement.

Gizania's settlement was apparently three days' walk from the marshlands. One might think that this wasn't such a great distance, but it was three day's walk at an Arachne's pace.

With a body height of three meters, her stride was far longer than a human's, resulting in her walking fast enough for Borkus to stop her.

“Gizania-jouchan, you walk too fast,” Borkus said.

“My apologies, I'm feeling impatient... so I keep ending up walking too quickly,” Gizania said as she stopped.

Her pace was not simply 'quick,' it was on the same level as a short-distance athlete

sprinting at full speed.

One might have expected her movements to be dull due to her large size, but she manipulated her eight legs with skill, her claws kicking against the ground to propel her forward. And this caused almost no movement for her upper body.

“I understand how you feel, and it’s not like we can’t keep up, but... are all Arachne this fast?” Basdia asked.

“Yes,” Gizania said, nodding. “As you can see, us Arachne have many legs, and everyone moves quickly. Large-builds such as myself struggle to make tight turns, but we are adept at running in a straight line to make up for that.”

One might think it strange that the Arachne had never interacted with the Lizardmen when there were only three days’ walking distance separating them, but it seemed that the distance was more like ten days’ worth for a human or Lizardman.

It was impressive that the Noble Orc and his subordinates had chased after Gizania. In fact, considering their appearance, Orcs were relatively energetic monsters with exceptional charging ability, so perhaps they had been unexpectedly swift.

Of course, there were reasons the Arachne hadn’t made contact with the Lizardmen other than distance. They simply had no need to advance into the marshlands.

The southern region of the continent, which was surrounded by the Boundary Mountain Range to the east and west, was shaped roughly like a long diamond. Talosheim was at the northern tip, and the marshlands were immediately south of it. The Arachne nation and the Noble Orc kingdom were where the continent was widest in the east-west direction.

Thus, the Arachne had more than enough land, not needing to advance into the marshlands that didn’t suit their way of living. And since they were surrounded by nothing but Devil’s Nests, there were no problems in obtaining food as long as they were strong enough.

Of course, it wasn’t as if each race didn’t have individuals with hearts desiring adventure. However, most such individuals had tried to cross the Boundary Mountain Range to the east and west rather than crossing the marshlands to the north.

There had likely been some who had set foot into the marshlands, but... at least in

Talosheim's history, there were no records of members of other races coming from the south.

"So even Princess Kurnelia walks quickly?" Eleanora asked.

"Of course. The princess is a medium-build, so she is far faster than I am," Gizania declared with pride.

It seemed that the Arachne, like the Scylla, took pride in their lower bodies that might look grotesque to other races.

"How fast, the princess..."

It seemed that what surprised Eleanora was not the Arachne race's sense of values, but the Arachne princess that moved extremely quickly.

"The fact that Arachne move quickly, is it surprising?" Gizania asked.

"I apologize if I offended you. It is very different from the image of Arachne that I had from things I heard on the outside," Eleanora said.

"By 'outside,' I suppose you mean the outside of the Boundary Mountain Range. The region ruled by the tyrannical god Alda... do they say that we are evil?"

"Yes, especially in the Amid Empire side to the west, where I was before," Eleanora said. "I heard things such as that Arachne create webs with their powerful threads and eat humans starting with their heads when they are caught, and that they pretend to be humans and seduce men to kidnap them. Arachne are generally thought to have bewitching appearances and behaviors."

The image of Arachne that Eleanora described was the kind that would be heard in the Amid Empire, where the Alda religion had a strong influence.

Gizania had a dejected expression on her face; it seemed that this had been worse than she had imagined. "That means... we are no more than monsters that disguise ourselves as women. How terrible; we are not known for what we really are, a race of brave soldiers and skillful masters of manipulating threads," she said in a disappointed tone.

"That's true, I didn't think that the Arachne was a race of brave soldiers," said Eleanora.

“To be honest, it’s a surprise to me as well,” said Vandalieu.

Indeed, it seemed that the normal image of Arachne was not one of warriors and soldiers.

This was true, even when Princess Levia was asked.

“The myths say that the Arachne are a race that fought alongside Vida and Talos, the one who founded our race, but... I remember that they used their threads skillfully to entangle the warriors who served Alda,” she said.

“What! I see... It could be that a hundred thousand years ago, there were few large-builds like myself. However, it is likely that even Vampires and Ghouls are treated as monsters and persecuted on the outside,” Gizania said.

“That’s right... though in the case of Vampires, it’s not so far from the truth,” Eleanora said.

“...Yes, that is the case. It is half-true,” said Zadiris.

The two of them had complicated expressions on their faces.

The Vampires of the Bahn Gaia continent were evil hounds serving the Pure-breed Vampires who served evil gods, while Ghouls ate the humans they defeated and kidnapped women, turning them into members of their own race and using them as tools to birth children. It seemed that neither of them could strongly deny Gizania’s words.

“More importantly, I am interested in the Job called ‘Samurai,’” said Basdia, changing the topic smoothly just before an awkward atmosphere settled in.

“‘Samurai’ is the recreation of the ‘Bushi’ Job left behind in historical records by the champion Hillwillow. In the world where Hillwillow and the other champions came from, there were many ancient soldiers known as ‘Bushi’ who excelled in the use of a hundred combat-related skills, especially proficient with the use of a single-edged sword known as a tachi,” Gizania explained.

TLN: 武士/bushi is another word for warrior/samurai, 太刀/tachi is a Japanese longsword.

“A hundred skills?! As to be expected of the world the champions came from... so does that apply for you as well, Gizania?” Basdia asked.

“No, ‘Samurai’ is not a Job that reaches such heights. None have recreated a tachi, either. If I was a true Bushi, I would have been able to cut down my pursuers without requiring Vandalieu-dono’s help. It is said that a true Bushi would be able to split an enemy cavalryman in half, along with the beast he used for his mount, with a single swing of his tachi.”

“Split a cavalryman in half along with his mount... As I am now, I think I would be able to do that against an ordinary knight and his horse, but... what a terrifying world it must have been, having such warriors in large numbers.”

As female warriors, it seemed that Gizania and Basdia were on the same wavelength.

...One is called a bushi when he excels in the use of every martial art, but I don't think that means one isn't a bushi because they do not excel in the use of every martial art. Also, I would think that cutting an enemy in two along with his horse is done with a zanbato, not a tachi, Vandalieu thought to himself.*

TLN: 斬馬刀/zanbatou is another sword. The kanji could be translated to something like horse-cutting blade.*

And so, the party exchanged information as they proceeded for five days through the terrain where thickets, forests and grassy plains lay side-by-side in a checker-like pattern, defeating the monsters that sometimes attacked them.

And then the party arrived at the nation in which the Arachne race lived.



- **Name:** Eisen
 - **Rank:** 8
 - **Race:** Skogsrå Widow
 - **Level:** 17
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 6
 - Magic Resistance: Level 6
 - Physical Resistance: Level 6
 - Augmented Vitality: Level 7
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Bark, Branches): Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Fruit Production: Level 10
 - Sap Production: Level 10
 - Branch Production: Level 10
 - Allure: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Self-enhancement: Subordination: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - **Active skills:**
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Throwing: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Spirit Siphon: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 1 (NEW!)
-

Monster explanation:

【Skogsrå Widow】

This is thought to be a race that a Skogsrå can attain while having been tamed. Though the details are unclear, it seems that the Ent syrup purified from this monster's sap has a rich taste that ordinary Ent syrup cannot compare to.

Chapter 133

Princess Kurnelia's vi~sit~

The area south of the marshlands had terrain resembling the continent of Africa that Vandalieu knew of, with clear air and red dirt.

However, it simply had some things that looked similar to the African continent based on what Vandalieu had seen on TV; it was actually quite different.

There were bands of forests, grass-covered plains and savannahs in a checker-like pattern, and there were no deserts. Also, there was a number of streams flowing from the marshlands and rivers flowing from the Boundary Mountain Range to the left and right, so it wasn't a dry land.

And although it was summer now, it seemed cooler than the highly humid marshlands... The truth was that Earth's Africa wasn't just a hot area; places that were elevated high above sea level were far cooler than Japan, but Vandalieu didn't know this, of course.

"Each of our cities is a nation. In other words, we have set up the city-states as we were taught," said Gizania.

According to her, all nations, including the Noble Orc empire itself, consisted of one large city, with the very rare exceptions of small-scale villages and settlements that didn't have towns.

This was because the surrounding areas were all Devil's Nests where monsters ran rampant, so small communities couldn't be maintained.

In fact, the monsters that appeared in this area were mostly Rank 4. It was just a single Rank above the areas around Talosheim and the marshlands, but if Rank 3 monsters were equivalent to bears and Rank 4 were like tyrannosaurus rexes, the difference in danger was very clear.

Even for Arachne and Noble Orcs, maintaining small settlements with non-combatants in such lands wouldn't yield enough benefits.

“Considering that, I suppose we were just blessed. We did make cultivation villages before we were destroyed,” said Borkus.

“The risk of young warriors losing their lives against Rank 4 monsters is high, too,” said Princess Levia.

“We also lived in a Devil’s Nest, but... almost all of us were capable of fighting,” said Zadiris.

“And most of the monsters around us were weaker than young warriors, or could be defeated by taking them on in groups. It’s different here,” said Vigaro.

“To tell you the truth, it would have been impossible for me to return this far on my own, even if I had not been wounded,” said Gizania. “There are monsters that attack in groups, after all. This is all thanks to you people; I would like you to allow me to thank you once more... And is he alright? Ever since he separated himself from Legion-dono who appeared early this morning, he does not seem to be feeling well,” she said, looking worriedly towards an ill-looking Kurt Legston, younger brother of Chezare and lieutenant-general (effectively vice-prime-minister) of Talosheim.

“I think he’s fine. I gave him medicine, so I think he’ll get better soon,” said Vandalieu.

As for why Kurt was there, Vandalieu had returned to Talosheim once via Legion’s teleportation to report the situation. Chezare had said that someone should be dispatched as a diplomat, so Kurt had been dispatched here as a result.

Via teleportation while buried in Legion’s flesh.

As a result, he was now crouched over with a pale face, covering his mouth.

“I thought it would be better than having insects or seeds infest me and being equipped inside you, Your Majesty, but... it was quite bad,” he said.

It seemed that being buried inside Legion placed a heavier mental burden on one than having insects crawl all over the body. Though when Vandalieu was hugged by legion, he was essentially half-buried and didn’t think that it was unpleasant.

“I am supposed to be a civil official, but... Isn’t Ani-ue more suited for this than I am? Though I do understand that both Your Majesty and Ani-ue, who is effectively the prime minister, cannot be absent at the same time,” Kurt said. “Ah, on the way back,

please infest me with insects. If possible, I would have wanted to go back using my own two feet, but crossing terrain that is crawling with monsters of Rank 4 and above would be impossible.”

As he finished speaking, Kurt slowly managed to stand up; perhaps the anti-nausea medicine had begun to take effect.

“You alright? You can sleep if you need to,” said Borkus.

“I’m not alright, but I cannot just stay asleep. Things have suddenly become more serious, and the people we are negotiating with are great in scale,” Kurt said as he looked towards Gizania’s still-distant but visible nation, named Zanalpadna like the god they worshipped.

Considering that there were tall walls to keep monsters out, more than twice as tall as Talosheim’s walls, the nation of Zanalpadna was far larger than the city of Niarki in the Hartner Duchy, which had a population of a hundred thousand.

It was still smaller than Nineland, which had a population of a million, but it was quite a large-scale city-state.

“But is it alright for us to approach from the front?” Kurt asked.

“Should we wait outside?” Gorba suggested.

The two of them sounded uncertain. Human nations would at least guarantee the safety of any diplomats, even if there were no diplomatic relations established to begin with. But Zanalpadna and Talosheim hadn’t even known of each other’s existence until a few days ago.

However, Gorba and the rest of the Orcuses of the Black Fang Knights’ Order were difficult to tell apart from the Orcs other than the fact that they were black. Their bodies were larger than ordinary Orcs, but there was no guarantee that they could be distinguished based on that.

“It’s alright,” Gizania declared, as if there was nothing to be anxious about. “Vandalieu-dono, for now, hold this and come with me.”

From her pocket, she produced a necklace resembling a shiny, semi-transparent medal-like object with a glossy white thread attached to it, and then handed it to

Vandalieu.

“What is this?” Vandalieu asked.

“This is a necklace, a medal made by shaving off the cast-off skin around my compound eyes with a string made of my thread,” Gizania said. “This is called a ‘necklace of deep affection,’ and it is proof that the one who possesses it is close to a member of the Arachne race, which is me in this case. I have given Basdia one as well.”

Large-build Arachne were apparently not very good at quickly using their threads in battle or for making traps, but that didn’t mean that they couldn’t produce threads at all.

Come to think of it, when had Gizania given a necklace to Basdia? It seemed that the two of them had found a kindred spirit in each other, beyond ordinary friends.

“Well then, I’ll gratefully accept this,” Vandalieu thought, wearing the compound eye necklace.

And then he tried to climb on Gizania’s spider-like lower body... but was held in her arms below her chest.

“If you sit on the back, you will be hidden by my upper body,” Gizania said. “Now then, let us go. Everyone, follow after me. Just in case, Gorba-dono and your followers, please keep your weapons lowered and your monster mounts calm, approaching slowly. Borkus-dono and Bone Man-dono... please make sure you do not remove your helmets.”

There was a slight air of tension behind Gizania as she began walking.

Perhaps it was impossible to not feel tension when visiting the nation of an unknown race.

“...Could it be that Vandalieu-sama has done something again?” Eleanora wondered.

“There was the incident with Privel as well, so the possibility cannot be ruled out,” said Zadiris. “He may have accidentally performed a courting ritual or something of the sort.”

“Privel-jouchan will make a fuss, won’t she. Gizania has eight legs as well,” said Borkus.

“Not only was she making a fuss, she was increasing the number of different types of training that she’s doing,” said Kurt. “When His Majesty came back using Legion, he explained how he had saved an Arachne. It would be fine if this makes for good materials for diplomacy in the future, however.”

The four of them were whispering amongst themselves, wondering whether Vandalieu had gained yet another one.

“Really? It doesn’t seem that way to me. That’s what an older brother or sister would do to their younger brother or sister. I don’t sense any romance,” said Vigaro, whose night-life had become more active since he became an Arch-Tyrant.

Kurt cast a suspicious look in his direction, but Vigaro had more experience with the opposite sex than anyone else here. Zadiris and Eleanora looked at each other, wondering if he was right.

“Gizania has apparently never had children before. Large-builds have long lifespans, and she turned down the recommendations of her mother and older sister, saying that she was still inexperienced and wanted to improve her skill in martial arts,” said Basdia, who had become close to Gizania.

“I see, then –”

As Eleanora was about to say, “there’s nothing to worry about,” Basdia continued speaking.

“That’s why she intends to face her life choices more seriously after this incident where she nearly died. Once she has finished repaying the debt to Van,” she said.

“...Basdia, which side’s views are you supporting?” Eleanora asked.

“I think it wouldn’t be strange for things to turn out either way,” Basdia said. “After all, she actually wanted to hear what giving birth to and raising a child is like.”

The female warrior Basdia was a mother of a daughter. Her daughter Jadal was being looked after by Bilde, another mother who was Basdia’s friend, while she awaited Basdia’s return in Talosheim.

“Well, it is true that she was saved while she was in danger, so it would not be strange if things turned out that way. It seems that her lifespan is long, so a little age difference

will not be a problem,” said Zadiris, who herself had been saved from danger when she first met Vandalieu.

For Gizania, Vandalieu had appeared to be a fake bait on the stomach of a centipede rather than a prince on a white horse, but... it had certainly still been an impactful encounter.

“I suppose that’s true. Now that I think about it, it’s fine either way as long as Vandalieu-sama is fine with it,” said Eleanora.

Basdia and Zadiris were Ghouls, who didn’t have the concept of marriage and even now thought of their partners as those who helped raise their children, and Eleanora thought of herself as Vandalieu’s servant.

It seemed that for them, it didn’t matter which way things turned out.

“...An Alda believer hearing this would be so enraged by this that the blood vessels in their heads would burst, wouldn’t they?” grumbled Kurt, who, as someone from a family of earls, had a firm, standard view of marriage.

“No, I’d be more worried about Kasim fainting. It’d make things quite a bit worse for him,” said Borkus.

“Everyone’s so brave,” Gorba muttered.

“I’m sure they have lions’ manes growing on their hearts,” said another Orcus.

“Is it not hair that grows on the heart?* But I suppose it would not be strange for a mane to grow on Borkus-dono’s heart,” said Bone Man.

TLN: To “have hair growing on the heart” is an expression that means to “have nerves of steel.”*

It seemed that the ones who were most nervous were the Orcuses and Bone Man.

With the Arachne being enemies of the Noble Orc Empire led by the usurper, Second Prince Bugitas, it was possible that Gorba and the other Orcuses would be mistaken for enemies if they weren’t careful.

And it was highly likely that Bone Man would be attacked if it was noticed that he was

a Skeleton.

The Arachne adhered to the Vida religion, which accepted Undead, but that didn't mean that they could tame them like Vandalieu. If a high-Rank Skeleton were to appear from outside the nation and approach, it was only natural that the Arachne would prioritize the defense of their nation rather than try negotiations that were extremely unlikely to succeed.

...The same should have applied for Borkus, a Zombie Epic Hero, and although he was wearing a full-face helmet, he didn't seem particularly nervous. Had his ability to worry stopped along with his cardiopulmonary functions*?

TLN: This one is a pun. Cardiopulmonary function is 心肺機能 and "ability to worry" is 心配機能, both are read as "shinpai kinou."*

Unaware of the conversations going on behind her, Gizania approached the city's walls in a straight line.

As they approached, the walls looked to be made of heavy stone, but Vandalieu was reminded of the subtly-built stone walls of Japanese fortresses.

When he lived on Earth, he had only seen them on a screen and hadn't thought of them as being particularly beautiful. However, seeing them again in his third life, he noticed the beauty in the plain, unrefined pattern created by joining stones of different sizes together without leaving any gaps in between.

Because Vandalieu had created Talosheim's walls by turning them into Golems, they simply looked like single slabs of rock at a glance. Thus, they had no patterns, and that was why Vandalieu thought these walls were beautiful now.

But he also noticed something else.

"It looks like there's no gate or any entrance at all?" he said.

It seemed that there was no door or gate that allowed entry and exit. Would they be climbing over the walls like spiders?

"Because they're camouflaged. But it should be coming out soon," Gizania said.

A few seconds later, a part of the wall opened from the inside without warning. Several

armed Arachne, as well as a female of a race that Vandalieu had never seen before, came out from within.

“Those walls have been created by joining stones together using Arachne thread. There are peeking windows and gates of various sizes hidden within them, though they look the same as the rest of the walls,” said Gizania.

When Vandalieu looked closely, only a thin outer layer of the part of the wall that had opened up was made from stone.

There were some spiders that dug holes in the ground as nests and then covered them in lids that looked like an ordinary ground surface; perhaps this was something similar.

“Gizania-dono! You are alive!”

“It is good that you have returned; the princess has been distraught because she could not bring you back with her –”

“Wait! The fact that Gizania has returned is indeed good news, but we must first learn what the situation is!”

An Arachne considerably smaller than Gizania started running towards her, but she was stopped by the four arms of the woman of unknown race.

Indeed, four arms.

At a glance, she seemed to be a tall human woman, but in addition to her arms and hands that had five fingers like those of humans, she also had arms with the joints covered in an exoskeleton, with scythe-like shapes at the ends of the wrists.

On top of that, she had what appeared at first glance to be a folded cloak but was actually a long pair of wings growing from her back, and her legs were those of insects from the knees down.

She looked like a combination between a praying mantis and a woman, or perhaps a personified praying mantis. Details of a race like this didn’t exist in the records of the Amid Empire or even the Orbaume Kingdom.

But Gizania had given an explanation to Vandalieu and his companions, so they were

aware of what this race was.

Empusa, one of Vida's races, which, like the Arachne, originated from a monster... and a goddess.

In the distant past, Zanal, the evil god of carapaces, and Padna, the evil god of compound eyes, left the Demon King's army and accepted the champion Zakkart's offer along with Fidirg, the dragon god of five sins, and Merrebeveil, the evil god of slime and tentacles.

But in the battles that followed, Zanal and Padna were attacked by the Demon King Guduranis and dealt heavy wounds that they could not recover from.

The two gods, who had originally been strongly attached to one another, overcame these heavy wounds by fusing into a single god.

After this, they became known as Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes. However, perhaps because he had originally been two separate gods, when he was requested by Vida to give birth to a new race, a pair of twins, one the founder of the Arachne and one the founder of the Empusa, were born.

Apparently, Vida and Zanalpadna had been very happy at having created two races while intending to create one.

And then the battle between Vida and Alda had taken place a hundred thousand years ago, leading to the current situation, but it was likely that no records of the Empusa race's existence were left because all of the Empusa in the Bahn Gaia continent had been wiped out outside the Boundary Mountain Range tens of thousands of years ago, or because they had escaped to places where the eyes of the other races could not see.

Unlike Ghouls, they were not thought of as monsters. Not even Bellmond who had become a Vampire ten thousand years ago, let alone Borkus or the Divine Spear of Ice Mikhail who were adventurers two hundred years ago, knew of their existence. Only Isla, who had lived for around thirty thousand years and was currently in charge of the Knochen fortress, had remembered hearing of old tales of monsters with this description after thinking carefully.

It was likely that they had been treated as monsters like Ghouls in the past and exterminated long ago.

Upon hearing this, Gizania had shuddered at how fearsome the outside world was.

“Myuze-dono, these people are not suspicious,” Gizania said.

“It is not that I suspect them. The one you are holding, Gizania-dono, is a Dhampir, and the necklace of deep affection is hanging at his neck. And the Ghoul behind you also has the same necklace. However, I cannot allow them to pass without understanding the circumstances,” said the Empusa named Myuze, who had a sharp gaze and hair gathered into a ponytail at the top of her head. It seemed that she was the captain of the guards of this gate.

TLN: If anyone is interested, Myuze ends her sentences with “でござる/de gozaru.”

“Of course, we will explain the situation,” said Gizania. “There are many things that are difficult to believe, but I want you to listen until the end.”

Myuze laughed. “It has been decades since I took up this duty. There are not many things that surprise me.”

Myuze appeared to intimidating, but it seemed that she had a friendly personality. But as Gizania told her the details of the situation, her face gradually changed.

“W-what...! These circumstances! But such things are... however, insects and plants are entering and exiting the body of a Dhampir right before my eyes!”

As Myuze made all kinds of different expressions, Vandalieu was producing Pain and Eisen’s branches from his body with Insect Binding Technique and Plant Binding Technique to prove that Gizania was speaking the truth.

It seemed that the Fur Worm Pain’s head and Eisen’s branches appearing between Vandalieu’s clothes with clicking and creaking sounds made it impossible for Myuze to doubt Gizania’s words.

“This child is a Spider Tamer despite not having received Zanalpadna’s divine protection?!” one of the Arachne exclaimed.

“Wait, Spider Tamer and Mantis Tamer only allow the taming of spider and praying mantis monsters! They shouldn’t allow the taming of worm-type monsters. And they wouldn’t allow tamed monsters to go in and out of the body!” another pointed out.

The Arachne were just as surprised as Myuze. Based on their words, it seemed that some insectoid monsters that were considered to be untamable like Undead outside the Boundary Mountain Range could indeed be tamed by Arachne and Empusa who had gained the divine protection of Zanalpadna and acquired specialized Jobs.

This was likely because Zanalpadna, the parent of the Arachne and Empusa, was one of the gods who had created insectoid monsters.

It seemed that the divine protections of evil gods and Jobs that could be gained as a result of the divine protections had not been investigated outside the Boundary Mountain Range. It was possible that these were simply considered to be the special abilities of monsters.

“This is... beyond my jurisdiction. I will request Her Majesty the queen to make a decision, so I would like you to wait here for a while,” said Myuze.

“Yes, I understand,” said Vandalieu.

Vandalieu and his companions had expected that they would be made to wait even if their story was believed, so they weren’t particularly discontent. They decided to wait.

A being defying all common knowledge had shown up, calling himself the king of an unknown nation and offering reinforcements. Even with Gizania here, the fact that Vandalieu’s words had been believed in the first place was a great success.

“Hmm, now then, someone report to Her Majesty the queen. Also, prepare some drinks and light snacks for our guests,” Myuze ordered.

Two of the Arachne disappeared inside the gate. It seemed that one had gone to deliver the report while the other went to prepare drinks and snacks.

“While we’re waiting, could I ask some questions?” Vandalieu asked.

“Of course, Shrine-Maiden-dono,” said Myuze.

Vandalieu felt a slightly uncomfortable sensation again, but there was something that bothered him more, so he let it go without thinking about it too deeply.

“Could it be that you’ve acquired the Ninja Job, Myuze-san?”

Myuze's characteristic wings and sickle-arms drew attention, but what she was wearing resembled a kimono, though it was short in length. Chainmail-like underclothes (?) were visible as well, and there was a belt around her thigh holding throwing-knife-like projectile weapons.

That was why Vandalieu had thought that Myuze might be a ninja and asked her this question, but she shook her head.

"I have not. Someone as inexperienced as myself is far from a true 'ninja,' or even 'nin,'" she said.

TLN: The 忍/nin kanji alone means like "endurance/patience."

"Vandalieu-dono, Myuze-dono and the others are Kunoichi," said Gizania.

It seemed that in this world's Job system, Ninja and Kunoichi had clear differences.

According to Myuze and Gizania, the Kunoichi Job was similar to the Samurai Job; it was a Job recreated from records describing ninjas left behind by Hillwillow, the champion chosen by Botin, mother of the earth and goddess of craftsmanship.

However, according to the information regarding ninjas in the records Hillwillow had left behind, it seemed that they were even more different from real ninjas than bushis.

"It is said that true ninjas were users of all kinds of illusionary spells and special techniques known as 'Youjutsu,' could run on the surface of water, used Magic Items known as 'furoshiki' to fly through the sky and transformed into giant frogs that could swallow a human whole when surrounded by enemies. Compared to that, I am very, very..."

TLN: 妖術/Youjutsu is usually translated to something like "sorcery" or "witchcraft" but doesn't seem to fit here. 風呂敷/Furoshiki is a traditional Japanese wrapping cloth.

"Like 'Bushi,' nobody has ever become a 'Ninja,'" said Gizania. "It is said that Myuze-dono is the one who has come the closest to becoming a Ninja so far, but... I suppose it will be difficult without solving the mysteries behind Youjutsu and transformations into a giant frog."

It was possible that the champion Hillwillow had intended to never tell the truth

regarding bushi and ninjas right from the beginning. Perhaps he had simply loved historical plays and entertainment works involving samurai and ninja-like action heroes.

It was possible that he had written records about these because he had wanted them to be included in plays that entertained the masses once Lambda became more peaceful.

For these to be passed onto future generations as records from a foreign world... perhaps this was part of how history worked.

“...In our nation, there is a race called Black Goblins. They and the Zombie Titan that is their instructor have acquired race Titles that include ‘Ninja’ in them,” said Vandalieu, telling them about Braga and the other Black Goblin Ninjas in return for having been told about bushi and ninjas.

“Is this true, Shrine-Maiden-dono?! Do they really transform into giant frogs?!” Myuze exclaimed.

“Bushi, what about Bushi?!” shouted Gizania.

The two of them were very excited.

As they spoke, Vandalieu became aware of a noise that sounded like a rock drill chipping away at a boulder, as well as someone’s shouting voice approaching from beyond the gate.

“GIZANIA-CHAAAN!”

“Princess! Please be more quiet!”

“The princess has gone mad! Stop her! You must stop her!”

Gizania and Myuze, who had become aware of the voices a moment later than Vandalieu, looked towards the gate in surprise. Just at that moment, the princess flew out from within.

“Gizania-chan! I’m so glad!”

She was a sweet-looking princess, around twenty years of age, wearing a white dress

with subtle embroidery with her pink-blond hair in sausage-rolls that resembled drills. With eyes wet with tears, she used her legs that were white like her dress to kick against the gate powerfully, leaping at Gizania.

“Princess Kurnelia?!” Gizania exclaimed in surprise.

“Myuze, take Van and run!” shouted Basdia immediately.

“Understood!” Myuze obeyed these instructions, snatching Vandalieu from Gizania and evacuating.

And then the woman who was apparently Princess Kurnelia landed on Gizania.

Gizania caught the princess in her arms but let out a groan. That was to be expected; Princess Kurnelia was an Arachne princess with the lower body of a spider. She was considerably smaller than Gizania, but even so, she weighed easily over a hundred kilograms. With such a heavy body flying at Gizania with speed, the impact would have been similar or even greater than a wrestler hitting her in the face.

“I’m so glaaad! I thought we’d never meet again! How could a younger sister die before her onee-chan!”

“N-no, but back then, my wounds were shallow, so having me act as bait was...”

“I’m so glad you’re alive! I regretted not dragging you back with us by force so many times!”

It was a touching reunion. Though an ordinary-sized person would have had several bones broken if they had been caught up in it.

“...Onee-chan?” Vandalieu repeated.

“Oh, have you not heard? Gizania-dono is Princess Kurnelia’s younger sister,” said Myuze.

“We never heard about this. Though when I talked with her, it did seem that Gizania loved the princess like her older sister,” said Basdia, who was standing near the spot that Myuze had jumped away to.

“Indeed, it would not be strange for Gizania-dono to forget to mention it,” Myuze said,

nodding. “Large-builds have longer lifespans and are more powerful than medium-builds, but because of this, their role is to protect the people of the nation, and they do not become involved in politics and religion.”

It seemed that Gizania had kept quiet about being Princess Kurnelia’s younger sister because in Zanalpadna, this was common knowledge, so it hadn’t occurred to her to mention it.

Gizania was apparently not a princess knight, but rather a princess samurai.



- **Name:** Gizania
 - **Age:** 35 years old
 - **Title:** None
 - **Rank:** 5
 - **Race:** Arachne Samurai (Large-build)
 - **Level:** 87
 - **Job:** Samurai
 - **Job level:** 90
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Swordsman
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Night Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 3
 - Strengthened Agility: Level 5
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a katana: (Small)
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Carapace, compound eyes, body fur): Level 3
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Loyalty: Level 3
 - **Active skills:**
 - Katana Technique: Level 5
 - Armor Technique: Level 5
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 3
 - High-speed Travel: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5
-

Monster explanation:

【Arachne】

The below information is the accepted opinion of the Adventurers' Guild and Mages' Guild outside the Boundary Mountain Range.

They are one of Vida's races, possessing the lower bodies of spiders and upper bodies resembling those of human women.

They have similar properties to spiders, possessing deadly venom and creating traps

from threads they produce from their mouths. They are a ferocious race that even eat their own kind.

When they capture humans, they simply eat them if they are women and use them to create children if male, eating them afterwards or leaving them alive for a while to feed them to the children that hatch from the eggs later.

The above misguided information was mainstream in the past, but currently, the Adventurers' Guild and Mages' Guild possess more accurate information. However, some isolated villages and settlements and such still have these misguided ideas regarding Arachne.

Arachne are actually divided into four different types – medium-build, small-build, large-build and aquatic – and since each type has only females with the lower bodies of spiders, they are a unisexual race, but each different type has their own different biology.

Medium-builds are the most common among Arachne; they are exceptionally strong and agile, and they are capable of building dwellings and traps from the webs produced by their lower bodies. They possess venom glands and can inject it into those they bite with their fangs, but the venom is so weak that they have almost no effect on human-sized creatures.

The proportion of medium-builds that are mages is greater than humans, but below Elves.

They have lifespans of about three hundred years. Their base Rank is 3.

Small-builds are the second-most common type. Even after becoming adults, their upper bodies have young appearances and their lower bodies remain small, resulting in them being often mistaken for medium-build or large-build children. They use their threads in more diverse ways than medium-builds, and their bodies are light. Also, they possess the most powerful venom among the Arachne; a human who does not possess the Poison Resistance skill will become immobilized if injected with this venom.

Also, there are many small-builds who learn magic, but it seems that they are only able to cast basic spells.

Many of them have cheerful personalities. Their lifespans are approximately two

hundred years, and their base Rank is 2.

Large-builds are few in number, and some smaller settlements don't have any at all. They have exceptional energy, stamina and power. However, though they are able to produce threads, they are not adept at handling them, and the venom in their venom glands has regressed so much that it has almost no effect. Also, most large-builds are not adept at using magic.

Their appearance is the most impressive among Arachne, but most large-build individuals have quiet, carefree personalities. However, there are a few exceptions to this.

They have lifespans of about five hundred years, and their base Rank is 4.

Aquatic Arachne are the type that are fewest in number, and some speculate that they have become extinct. They are the only Arachne that can build nests (houses) in and on the surface of water. They do not possess gills and rely on pulmonary respiration, but they produce air-filled pouches with their threads and place them underwater to secure air to breathe.

As sightings of aquatic Arachne are rare, precise information is not known, but it is thought that their lifespans and base Ranks are the same as medium-builds. Also, according to one theory, they are simply medium-builds that live in aquatic environments, and aquatic Arachne do not exist.

What all Arachne types have in common is that the carapace of their lower bodies is hard like armor, allowing the use of Armor Technique. In addition, there are claws growing from the tips of their legs, so they can dash up cliffs as fast as they can run across rocks and trees. When these legs are used as weapons, they receive the effects of the Unarmed Fighting Technique skill.

Also, if the tip of a leg is cut off, it returns to normal after a single molting.

Their only weakness is the spider abdomen of the lower body where the carapace is soft, but large-builds have fur that is harder than it looks protecting this area. Also, even if this area is damaged, it causes significant bleeding but will not result in a fatal wound.

Arachne molt once a year; small-builds are considered adults after molting ten times, medium-builds after fifteen and large-builds after twenty.

Because they are defenseless during and immediately after molting, Arachne do not allow anyone to be present during the process except for those they have great trust in.

They generally do not eat people or members of their race as a food source; they have a strong sense of companionship and they are highly sociable. Males they accept as spouses are viewed as companions and are treated with care.

They are an oviparous race, and when they have partners and are currently not raising any children, they lay numerous eggs at once with a frequency of about once every ten years.

When their Ranks increase, they gain race titles such as Arachne Soldier, Arachne Scout and Arachne Knight. However, legends say that some individuals that increase their Rank after fulfilling certain requirements can become a member of a different race altogether.

Chapter 134

Visit to Zanalpadna

It took about ten minutes for Princess Kurnelia to calm down.

“I am terribly sorry for losing my composure in front of you, honored guests. I am the ninth child of Queen Donaneris of Zanalpadna, First Princess Kurnelia. From now on, let us ensure our relations are...”

Though there were some subtle differences in her etiquette from ordinary noble ladies, she bent her eight legs and bowed gracefully. There was indeed elegance in her movements.

“Princess, I believe that this is impossible to smooth over,” Myuze said.

“...Is it~?” Princess Kurnelia said in a miserable-sounding voice as she slumped onto the ground helplessly.

Indeed, even though her younger sister who had become bait for the Noble Orcs and left to an unknown fate in order to allow everyone else to escape had returned, she had performed a flying body attack with her body whose lower half alone weighed easily over a hundred kilograms, embracing her younger sister so powerfully that any person caught up in it would have been seriously injured.

It was quite difficult to smooth that over.

Though none of Vandalieu’s companions said anything.

“Princess... Even though it has been delayed due to the war and should have already happened by now, you will be married, so you must be more calm,” said Myuze.

“But since our negotiations with the Lizardmen were obstructed, Mother said that we have no choice but to continue the negotiations or pray for Zanalpadna’s descent... And just as I was persuading Darling that we cannot afford to lose Mother, I heard that Gizania-chan had come home, and I couldn’t help myself... but I’m glad you’re safe! Without any missing arms, legs or compound eyes!” said Princess Kurnelia, touching

Gizania here and there to make sure she wasn't wounded.

"Princess, please stop!" said Gizania, seeming embarrassed, but in the end, she couldn't do anything about it.

"It seems that Princess Kurnelia gets along well with Gizania," said Basdia, nodding in approval at how close the sisters were.

"I get the feeling that they get along too well, but... I knew that what is common sense here would be different from the common sense that I know," said Eleanora, almost groaning as she kept her eyebrows from rising.

Eleanora seemed to have thought of what a relationship between a normal princess and her younger sister with no right to the throne would have been like in a human society, causing an uncomfortable feeling that she couldn't shake off.

In human societies, neither individual would show their true feelings like this in front of the other, and nobody would have expected it to be possible for Princess Kurnelia and Gizania to have a good relationship with each other.

After all, one was a princess who would marry the first prince who was supposed to have become the king of an important allied nation, while the other was someone who would never be called princess due to the fact that she was born later than her sibling.

"That's probably because there has never been diplomacy and war of the kind that you and I have in mind, Eleanora. Not until the coup d'état in the Noble Orc empire, that is," said Vandalieu.

The Noble Orcs and Arachne had both originally been races that worshipped Vida, and the sense of companionship and union had continued long after the wise Emperor Buugih's rule.

This was probably completely different to the tragic, complicated and mysterious diplomacies, wars and power struggles that occurred in human societies.

The fact that the rulers of the existing group of city-states had been monsters like Noble Orcs and races created by Vida was one of the main reasons for this.

No matter how intelligent monsters were, strength was an important characteristic as a standard to measure oneself and others. And there was no guarantee that the

rankings in strength would keep the current ruler's bloodline continuing.

That was likely why authoritarianism based on bloodlines like human royals and noblemen hadn't taken hold. Of course, strong parents usually produced strong children that inherited their characteristics, so they were still respected in this society.

But even so, there was no concept of "valuable new blood."

"And Myuze just said 'politics and religion,' so I'd assume that there are roles that govern religion in Zanalpadna and the Noble Orc Empire as well as roles that govern politics," said Vandalieu.

"That is correct, but a king is such a being, is he not? Shrine-Maiden-dono, you are a shrine maiden and a king at the same time, are you not?" said Myuze, agreeing with Vandalieu's words as if they were obvious.

It seemed that in this group of city-states, including Zanalpadna, the king was one who ruled and also acted as head priest.

Vandalieu did wonder if it might be best to separate church and state, but gods existed and they would send Divine Messages to reprimand the rulers if they did anything stupid, and if their actions were terrible enough, their divine protection would be removed and they would be chased from their throne. Thus, there were no problems.

"Indeed, I'm the 'Holy Son of Vida,'" said Vandalieu.

The same applied for him. The effects of his Title were so beneficial that even if one told him to separate church and state, he would have to refuse.

"By the way, you can let go of Vandalieu-sama now, you know?" said Eleanora.

"Oh, how imprudent of me! I felt a strangely comforting sensation and I forgot," said a startled Myuze as she handed Vandalieu to Eleanora.

Eleanora didn't raise him into her arms; she quickly put him down.

Vandalieu-sama doesn't move when someone is holding him, so when he doesn't speak, he looks like a doll, doesn't he? she thought.

As Vandalieu didn't show much facial expression and had a weak presence, he gave off

a strong doll-like impression if he didn't move on his own.

And it looked very bad for the representative of Talosheim to be lightly carried around by citizens and royal family members of Zanalpadna, a nation that wasn't even an ally yet.

Even though Zanalpadna was friendly, it was still a nation that had no diplomatic relations with Talosheim.

An elderly person appearing to be a mage came from within the gate and began speaking. "Everyone, we apologize for the princess having made a terribly shameful display. Also, we would like to express our gratitude for saving Gizania-sama. I am Bakota, a mage who serves Queen Donaneris. Err, Queen Donaneris has instructed that the guests from Talosheim should be brought to the castle, and... that her foolish daughter should be taken away by Myuze-dono."

"Taken away, no way~!" Princess Kurnelia complained.

"Princess, this is an order. Hurry and get walking," said Myuze.

With the words of the chief mage... one person who was likely equivalent to a court mage in human nations, Princess Kurnelia let out a pitiful noise as Myuze took her away. Right in front of guests from a foreign nation.

"...Perhaps we don't need to be so concerned about that," muttered Eleanora, one of the few people with common sense that had been brought on this journey.

"I'm begging you, please be concerned about it. I can't do anything on my own," said Kurt, who was unmistakably someone with common sense as well.

"My shoulders don't get as stiff as when I negotiate with human royals and noblemen, so I feel like it's fine," Vandalieu said to the two of them.

Incidentally, it seemed that nobody had mistaken Eleanora for Vandalieu's mother this time.

This was because nobody had noticed that she was a Vampire, as she was standing plainly in the sunlight, and even if they had, they would think it strange for her to refer to Vandalieu as 'Vandalieu-sama' if they were mother and child.



The total population of Zanalpadna was about a hundred thousand. This could be broken down into about ten thousand Arachne, seven thousand Empusa and about a thousand members from other city states who had been adopted into Zanalpadna's families, such as Noble Orcs, High Goblins, High Kobolds and Ghouls. The remaining eighty-two-thousand were people known as the 'citizens.'

And within the city's walls, there were many buildings that were very strange compared to those of ordinary cities.

There were countless large towers lined up in rows, and those were apparently private residences. Vandalieu had thought that there might be buildings resembling Japanese houses, since there were Samurais and Kunoichi, so he was surprised by what he saw.

It seemed that Arachne and Empusa larger than people, as well as humans, Dwarves, Beast-people, Titans and other races adopted from other nations, lived together in these towers.

Incidentally, there were almost no Elves. Apparently, many of them lived in other city-states instead.

"I see. Arachne and Empusa are races of only women, so it's ordinary for them to live alongside members of other races to preserve their races," Bone Man said in a tone of comprehension, watching humans and Dwarves going back and forth on the main street.

Incidentally, he was still keeping his face well-hidden under his helmet, of course.

Among the people were other Noble Orcs who had escaped with Prince Budarion, so if Gorba and the other Orcuses of the Black Fang Knights' Order under his command were seen to be with Gizania, Myuze and Princess Kurnelia, there would be no problems. The diatryma monsters they had tamed were being looked at from a distance, but surprisingly, didn't seem to be feared.

But deciding that the same wouldn't apply for an Undead, Bone Man was continuing to pretend to be a human wearing armor and a helmet. For now, it was still only Gizania who was aware that he and Borkus, who was also wearing a helmet, were Undead.

This was because when they had temporarily returned to Talosheim before, Fidirg, the Dragon God of Five Sins, and Merrebeveil, the Evil God of Slime and Tentacles, had been consulted. As a result of their advice, it had been concluded that it would be best to report this directly to the queen, who was also the head priestess for Zanalpadna, the Evil God of Carapaces and Compound Eyes.



“I believe it is likely that Zanalpadna was able to receive Divine Messages from Vida-sama, unlike me.”

“As far as I’ve heard, she retained enough strength to stay active after the battle of a hundred thousand years ago.”

“Even if she failed to receive Divine Messages, there were several other gods with her, so one of them should have been able to receive one.”

As Fidirg finished speaking, Merrebeveil continued from where he left off.

“However, we have no knowledge of the events that occurred outside the Boundary Mountain Range for... tens of thousands of years, at least. Even if the Arachne outside the Boundary Mountain Range worship Vida-sama, they would not worship Zanalpadna. It is likely that she could not protect the Arachne and Empusa outside the mountain range as she desired, so they deliberately let their faith die out,” she said.

“Races that worship powerless evil gods are just monsters to the guys on Alda’s side.”

“If it’s just Vida –”

“Add -sama to her name,” Merrebeveil warned Fidirg.

“Hyih?! My apologies, Merrebeveil-anego*! I merely thought that it would be easier to escape harm at the hands of those on Alda’s side if they only worshipped Vida-sama!”

TLN: This is a humble honorific meaning ‘older sister.’*

“Th-that is why if we receive a written certification from the queen who has likely received Divine Messages from Zanalpadna, the rest of them should be convinced as well!”



The current policies had been decided as a result of this discussion that had also revealed the relationships of power among those who had changed sides during the war. It was a request to a god in a time of need... though the phrase's meaning was different to its meaning on earth.

Unaware of these circumstances, Princess Kurnelia began explaining some things to everyone, including Bone Man.

"It is as Kotsujin-san* says, but it also means that the mistresses, the Arachne and Empusa, protect the citizens," she said.

TLN: The Japanese pronunciation for Bone Man; Princess Kurnelia is unaware that this name literally means "bone person"*

In the battle between Vida and Alda a hundred thousand years ago, Vida's subordinate gods and the evil gods of the Demon King's army switched sides, and the god of war Zantark fused with evil gods. And the races created by Vida fought under her command. However, there were also humans, Dwarves and Elves who believed in Vida as well.

The ones who survived the battle escaped here, to the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range, along with Vida's races.

"A short while after that, the humans apparently built independent settlements in this region, where Zanalpadna lies," said Princess Kurnelia. "Though we were allies, they live differently to us so it was better to live separately, even if we conducted trade with each other. At first, things went well that way, but..."

"According to the records, Devil's Nests began spreading abruptly within the Boundary Mountain Range, and powerful monsters became prevalent," said Bakota, continuing Princess Kurnelia's explanation. "It is likely that when Vida raised the Boundary Mountain Range higher to protect her children from Alda, she filled it with thick Mana, causing numerous Dungeons to appear. As a result of repeated monster rampages as they emerged from the Dungeons, this place became a world where only those with the strength to fight can survive."

Zanalpadna and the other gods had also created Dungeons for their children who

worshipped them, but they had been unable to control the Dungeons that had appeared naturally, far away from the settlements. The monsters in those Dungeons had increased in number, and the people of the distant past had concluded that Devil's Nests had spread rapidly due to the monsters from those Dungeons.

"...Now that you mention it, there are a lot of monsters inside the mountain range for a place that is supposed to be a refuge," said Vandalieu.

The Boundary Mountain Range that acted as a wall that separated the area within it from the outside world. Until hearing Bakota's explanation, Vandalieu had never questioned why even the area within the mountain range as well as the mountain range itself and the skies above it were filled with Devil's Nests where monsters were rampant.

"This is what's called not thinking critically," he whispered to himself.

"Mmm, I did not feel that anything was out of place," said Zadiris.

"We haven't lived outside a Devil's Nests, after all. What about you, Borkus?" asked Vigaro.

"Actually, it was thanks to the monsters and Dungeons that we Titans of the old Talosheim prospered and went from being a settlement to a nation," said Borkus. "Well, it was apparently tough at first, though."

Bakota laughed. "Indeed, for those who are capable of hunting monsters, Devil's Nests and Dungeons are blessings."

Monsters, which developed faster than ordinary beasts, yielded ingredients and components for food, clothing, arms and even Magic Stones that could become ingredients or fuel for Magic Items. Even plants grew quickly, producing fruit and other edible products within a year.

In addition, Dungeons produced already-made metal products and minable metal resources that could be processed, without limit. The treasure chests inside even contained Magic Items and Potions.

Environments filled with Devil's Nests and Dungeons were unparalleled blessings to the powerful.

In fact, just like the Titans of the old Talosheim, the Arachne, Empusa and Noble Orcs and other races had hunted monsters and cleared Dungeons to acquire all sorts of goods.

However, the humans and Dwarves hadn't been able to do this.

"We don't consider humans, Dwarves, Elves, Titans and Beast-people to be weak," said Gizania. "In fact, I would not even pose a threat if I was faced with Bakota-dono's magic. However, humans and Dwarves have a greater portion of non-combatants compared to us, and it takes time for them to become able to defeat the monsters in this area, so it seemed that they had no way to cope."

"I see, they are Rank 4 monsters to begin with, after all," said Eleanora.

Rank 4 monsters were monsters that could be defeated by even by a veteran D-class adventurer alone. And a D-class adventurer was something that most people could become with an ordinary amount of talent and hard work.

However, that didn't mean that young people with no experience in real battles could reach D-class in a short period of time.

Even Titans and Beast-people, who were races created by Vida with exceptional physical capabilities, needed to become adults and gain several years of experience after that... while producing numerous casualties and wounded, in order to become able to fight Rank 4 monsters.

"That was when our ancestors and the ancestors of my darling decided that the races with the strength to fight monsters would protect them," said Princess Kurnelia.

"Ever since then, we have been called 'citizens,' and we have coexisted up until now by supporting the races that are our guardians," said Bakota.

In other words, the Arachne and Noble Orcs had upheld their noble duty, while those being protected supported them through production-related work. It seemed that this class system had formed naturally.

Zanalpadna was a maternal-bloodline society; each tower had a single Arachne or Empusa family living in it, with several citizen family members living with them.

Arachne and Empusa apparently shared the adopted wives and citizen men that were

husbands.

“...Bufuh? Harems?” said Gorba.

“This is bad, Kasim’s probably going to say that he wants to move in here,” said Borkus.

“No, I don’t think it’s as good as it sounds,” said Vigaro.

“I vaguely understand what you are trying to say, but as Vigaro-dono says, I do not believe that it is something to be envied by outsiders,” said Myuze. “The first duty of those we adopt into our families is making children with our women. The rest is the same as the citizen women. The only difference is perhaps that they do more physical labor.”

In Zanalpadna, it was generally Arachne and Empusa that took up leadership roles. Even if humans and Dwarves tried to become warriors that hunted monsters or soldiers that protected the nation, they would be of no use unless they were at least as strong as medium-strength adventurers.

And the Arachne and Empusa were prioritized, as it was easier for them to receive Zanalpadna’s divine blessing.

That was why it was desirable for men to be involved in production-related work.

“There are also cases where the men cannot work outside because there are many women in the family that they are being adopted into. Raising the children is hard work, after all,” said Princess Kurnelia.

She was referring to what was known as full-time house-husbands.

“That’s... normal guys would be happy with it, but Kasim and Zeno wouldn’t like that environment,” said Vigaro.

Raising children while surrounded by women, not needing to work. In a way, this was an ideal lifestyle. However, this wasn’t an environment that would be welcomed by Kasim and Zeno, who still intended to climb to new heights as adventurers.

“Mages such as myself are valued highly even though we are men, and we can join the line of battle in times of emergency,” said Bakota. “Empusa, as well as large-build and small-build Arachne, are not very adept in the use of magic. Even medium-build

Arachne are no more well-suited for magic than humans.”

Bakota, who had climbed to the position of chief mage despite being a man, acknowledged that those like him were exceptions to the norm.

“However, while it is certainly true that men are in a weaker position than in the Noble Orc empire, they are really treated with care. If they were not, none would come from other nations to be adopted into our families, and it would be impossible to maintain the nation,” said Gizania.

Incidentally, the children born in Zanalpadna between Arachne and Empusa with their husbands of other races were almost all born as the race of their mothers.

Normally, the children of Vida’s races were born as the mother’s race or the father’s race in equal ratios, and in the case of Noble Orcs, children were almost all born as Noble Orcs.

However, in the city states south of the marshlands, including Zanalpadna, a hundred percent of children were born as the race given birth to by the god worshipped in that nation.

An Arachne and Noble Orc couple would have Arachne children in Zanalpadna, but the same couple would have only Noble Orc children if they were in the Noble Orc empire.

“If this Kasim-dono is searching for a partner, I believe it would be best to find a woman to adopt, rather than be adopted himself,” Gizania said.

“Indeed. I will ask him myself when we return,” said Vandalieu. “By the way, though I’m changing the subject –”

Since talks of marriage were proceeding without the person in question present, Vandalieu decided to forcibly change the subject. Kasim’s desires were unclear (It would be troublesome if a formal marriage interview was decided, only to find later that Kasim didn’t like women with eight legs or four arms). Vandalieu questioned whether it was really alright to meddle in Kasim’s business when he hadn’t asked for it.

“Though I’m changing the subject, the people of the city don’t look very gloomy. In fact, they’re looking lively, even though the outlook is supposed to be bleak with the war,” Vandalieu said.

Indeed, the faces of the people of all races were not very gloomy. There was some tension, nervousness and fatigue showing, but some of them were looking at Vandalieu and his companions with expressions of anticipation, and there was no small number of people expressing their welcome with cheers and applause.

This was despite the fact that they had been cornered and desperate enough for reinforcements to send a messenger to negotiate with the Lizardmen, whom they had never communicated with before.

“That is because of you and your companions, Shrine-Maiden-dono,” Bakota and Myuze said simultaneously.

“Because of us?” Vandalieu repeated.

“That is right,” said Myuze. “Gizania-dono, who was thought to be lost, has returned safely, and it seems clear to them when they look at you that we have gained reinforcements that are our last ray of hope.”

There were no Lizardmen among Vandalieu’s party. However, they were all individuals that could not be thought of as being from Zanalpadna or any of the other city states.

And since Zanalpadna only interacted with certain other city states, it was likely that the presence of these “strange people” had been interpreted to be “unknown reinforcements.”

“And as for why the people are so lively... I believe that it is because the princess gathered attention by shouting my name as she ran at full speed from the castle to the gate,” said Gizania.

“Ah... that would indeed cause people to see what has happened,” said Vandalieu.

“I-I’m sorry? But I didn’t knock anyone over, you know! I used my threads to run past everyone from tower to tower!” Princess Kurnelia objected.

“Princess, that is to be expected,” Myuze pointed out.



Zanalpadna's castle had the appearance of multiple towers having been jumbled together. But with numerous Arachne and Empusa climbing up and down their walls, they looked more like anthills than towers.

"Can you not get inside this castle unless you can walk on its walls or fly through the sky?" asked Vigaro.

"So, we have no choice but to wait at the entrance?" said Borkus.

It seemed that they had a bad feeling as they looked at the peculiar Zanalpadna-style architecture.

"Come to think of it... could it be that you can't do either?" asked Princess Kurnelia.

It seemed that Vigaro and Borkus were right. The towers that families lived in were also inhabited by citizens such as humans and Dwarves, so there were stairs and slopes.

However, such considerations hadn't been made for the castle. Most of those working here were Arachne and Empusa, or those who could use magic like Bakota.

"Could we ask those of the Black Fang Knights' Order to wait outside? The members of the castle will carry Borkus-dono and the others inside," said Bakota.

"Fugoh, alright," said Gorba.

It was decided that Gorba and the other Orcuses would wait near the castle with their tamed monsters. They were all monsters that couldn't be seen in Zanalpadna, so without their tamers nearby, nobody would be sure how to handle them.

Though it seemed that there were specialized tamers for spider or mantis monsters at the stable.

"Now then, Shrine-Maiden-sama –" said Bakota.

Vandalieu could use magic, and he could even crawl around walls and ceilings without it. He intended to say so, but –

“Well then, I shall.”

He ended up being carried by Myuze for some reason.

“No, Van can move around on his own, or even we could carry him...” Basdia began.

“Basdia, leave this to Myuze-dono,” said Gizania. “It seems that she has something to request of him.”

“Is that so? Alright, then.”

“Why are you agreeing to it... I could just hold him and fly up,” said Eleanora.

Vandalieu listened to this conversation behind him as Myuze carried him.

“Shrine-Maiden-dono, I actually have something I wish to earnestly consult you about...” Myuze said.

“Is it about ninjas?” Vandalieu asked.

“H-how do you know this?!” Myuze whispered, skillfully keeping her voice quiet despite being surprised as she climbed the walls with her sickle-arms and legs. “But our discussion will be quicker if you know! I wish for you to tell me about the ninjas in Talosheim that you mentioned! If possible, it would be best if you could teach me their training methods...”

It was a goal and a dream to one day become a ninja, not only for Myuze, but for all who possessed the Kunoichi Job. It seemed that Myuze had been unable to help but jump at the chance at a clue to reach that goal.

“It’s a race title rather than a Job, and they can’t transform into giant frogs, but if you’re alright with that, I’ll tell you how they train,” said Vandalieu. “But it might not be anything special, you know?”

“That will be plenty! Well then, take this. It is a symbol of our promise,” Myuze said with a smile covering her entire face as she produced a familiar necklace from her pocket and gave it to Vandalieu.

“A necklace of deep affection?”

“This is the Empusa version of that. We polish the sickle portions of our body rather than compound eyes, and the thread is something that I received from an Arachne that lives in the same house as I.”

It seemed that Empusa molted as well.

“Well then, I will gratefully accept this,” said Vandalieu.

Second connection, get. Though it was uncertain as to how useful a connection with Myuze would be, as she was merely the captain of some gate guards, unlike Gizania who was the younger sister of the princess.

Though even without such calculative motives, Vandalieu was happy that emotions of deep affection were being expressed towards him, so it wouldn't bother him if the connection wasn't of any use.

“Now then, this is the queen's chamber. Once I hand Princess Kurnelia over to Queen Donaneris, I believe I will be returning to the gate, so I humbly request that you do not forget our promise,” Myuze said.

“I understand,” said Vandalieu.

The queen's chamber that Myuze had carried Vandalieu to had something strangely Japanese about it. The floor resembled tatami mats.

Vandalieu felt slightly nostalgic for a moment, thinking that they were real tatami mats, but quickly realized that they weren't. Arachne threads had been weaved into a tatami-like pattern and stained with dyes made from plants.

Internally naming this 'thread-tatami' in his mind, Vandalieu turned his gaze towards the two people who stood out among the Arachne and Empusa in the queen's chamber... though there wasn't a physical throne, there was one medium-build Arachne that seemed to be the most important figure, and a somewhat gentle-looking Noble Orc who maintained an air of dignity despite being covered in bandages and having lost an eye and one of his arms.

There were also several people who were members of races that Vandalieu had never seen before, but these two were likely the most important people here.

The two of them returned Vandalieu's gaze, especially the one who was likely the

Arachne queen, who was staring in surprise at the two necklaces of deep affection hanging from Vandalieu's neck. It seemed that the connections were having an astounding effect.

And then, Vandalieu bowed his knee against the thread-tatami floor in greeting. "I am the king of Talosheim who rules the lands to the north including the marshlands, the Eclipse King and Holy Son of Vida. I thank you for granting me this audience –"

"W-wait!" exclaimed the person who seemed to be Queen Donaneris, interrupting Vandalieu's self-introduction.

Vandalieu looked up instinctively in surprise. "...Ah, I should be on both knees, shouldn't I. It's a tatami floor, after all."

"No, that is not it! I am in a position where I cannot possibly express enough gratitude to you, someone who has saved my daughter's life, and is even the king of an entire nation! I should not even be allowed to hold my own head above yours; I request that you spare us from the shame of allowing you to press your forehead against the tatami!"

This was Vandalieu's first time conducting diplomacy, so he had thought that he should be polite, but it seemed that he had been *too* polite. He looked around and saw that the Noble Orc and other Arachne were flustered as well.

"Your Majesty, it's unwise for kings of nations to lower their heads to one another so easily," said Kurt, who had been carried up by another Arachne.

"Please tell me that earlier. I was never a king before I became king," said Vandalieu.

"...I understand what you are trying to say, but the same is true of every king until their coronation ceremony," Kurt pointed out.

As Vandalieu corrected his posture, a visibly relieved Queen Donaneris let out a sigh and began to speak once more.

"I thank you for saving my daughter. I am Donaneris, the one who rules this nation that worships Zanalpadna. Due to a Divine Message that our god sent to me, I know of you, and that you are the Holy Son who will face a great trial."



- **Name:** Myuze
 - **Age:** 70 years old
 - **Title:** None
 - **Rank:** 6
 - **Race:** Empusa Kunoichi
 - **Level:** 59
 - **Job:** Kunoichi
 - **Job level:** 35
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Assassin, Dark Fighter
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 3
 - Night Vision
 - Strengthened Agility: Level 6
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Duty: Level 4
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Carapace, sickles): Level 6
 - **Active skills:**
 - Camouflage: Level 3
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 7
 - Throwing: Level 5
 - Armor Technique: Level 3
 - Silent Steps: Level 8
 - Lockpicking: Level 2
 - Trap: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5
 - Assassin Technique: Level 3
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 1
 - Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 1
-

Monster explanation:

【Empusa】

The below information is a summary of the descriptions in the Literature Manuscript of the Ancient Times, which was restored by the mages of the Mages' Guild in the Amid Empire.

They are a female-only race of monsters with the characteristics of praying mantises, and their typical Rank is 4. They are highly intelligent but also ferocious, and because they act in groups unlike regular praying mantises, they are highly dangerous.

In addition to regular arms, they also have a pair of arms that have sharp sickles from the wrist onwards, and they manipulate these skillfully with the Unarmed Fighting Technique skill.

They have wings growing from their backs, but like praying mantises, their ability to fly is limited. They are mostly used for gliding.

Also, some of them are capable of using 'Camouflage,' allowing them to blend into their surroundings like praying mantises.

As they are a unisexual race, they require males of other races for mating, but Empusa only desire human males and males of Vida's races. For this reason, they are considered to be more dangerous than Orcs.

After mating, abducted men are eaten to provide the nutrition necessary to lay eggs. Following this, Empusa lay one or multiple eggs, which hatch after approximately a year. Children molt repeatedly, becoming adults after approximately ten years.

They are long-lived for monsters; some individuals have lived for over two hundred years.

Occasionally, children of the male parent's race are born from the eggs. It is thought that if these children are girls, they are immediately eaten, while males are raised until they are old enough to breed.

The existence of higher-Rank races such as Empusa Berserkers, Empusa Slayers and Empusa Assassins has been confirmed; they are extremely dangerous monsters.

However, it seems that they are inept in the use of magic; it is fortunate that there are almost no Empusa Mages.

Their sickles can be used as weapons just as they are, and their tough carapaces and bones can become materials for armor, while their wings can be used as an ingredient for Alchemy if turned into a fine powder.

Also, the Magic Stones that can be harvested from their hearts are well-suited for

creating wind-attribute Magic Items.

However, Empusa have not been seen in the Bahn Gaia continent for several centuries. It is thought that Empusa have been successfully eradicated in this continent.

It is truly fortunate that the eradication of a race of such evil monsters has been successful. For some reason, Empusa are not monsters that appear in Dungeons, so the Bahn Gaia continent will never see Empusa again unless some foolish tamer brings them from another continent in the future.

However, the possibility of Empusa having survived in the southern region of the continent beyond the Boundary Mountain Range, where monsters run rampant, cannot be ruled out.

Chapter 135

The Holy Son and his companions that will face great trials, and going out to gather what is needed

Vandalieu blinked as Queen Donaneris, ruler of the city state of Arachne and Empusa that worshipped Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes, addressed him in a way that he had never heard before.

“The Holy Son who will face a great trial?” he repeated.

“Yes, the details can wait until all of the guests have been gathered –” Queen Donaneris began.

“Darling! You can’t be out of bed; your wounds still haven’t fully healed!” Princess Kurnelia squealed as she rushed past Vandalieu with the speed of the wind, towards the Noble Orc.

“K-Kurnelia, I’m alright. There’s no problems; I don’t have to lie in bed anymore,” said the Noble Orc in a voice that was deep, but with a tone that gave the impression of a gentle young man.

It seemed that he was indeed Prince Budarion, Princess Kurnelia’s fiancé, the one whose throne had been stolen from him by his younger brother.

“You’re lying! Your voice sounds pained... and your face is pale...” Princess Kurnelia murmured.

Vandalieu looked up at Prince Budarion, wondering if this was true. The face of Prince Budarion, who had a Noble-Orc-like height of around three meters, was... pale, probably.

Vandalieu felt like he could smell a faint scent of blood from his bandages, too.

“Bufuh. Princess, I can’t lie to you, can I...”

Ah, he's a bit Orc-like.

It was probably the 'fuh' noise Prince Budarion made while exhaling. Though he spoke human words, the structure of his nose was different, so not everything about his speech was perfect.

Prince Budarion stroked Princess Kurnelia's pink-blond hair, his one remaining eye filled with a gentle light. "But Ogibo-ue* has told me that the discussion that will take place now is an important one that will determine the fate of every race that lives in this land," he said. "With that being the case, I can't not be present. All of this was caused by my own shortcomings, after all."

TLN: This is a respectful term for mother-in-law.*

"Darling, that's not true at all! It's all the fault of Bugitas and that mysterious god who's lending him his strength! And you fought harder than anyone else to try to stop Bugitas, didn't you!" Princess Kurnelia exclaimed.

"No, all of this was caused by my own naivety that could not see through my brother's foolishness. Because of this, I have dragged not only my own vassals and empire, but numerous nations including Zanalpadna, into war."

"Darling..."

"Kurnelia... Budarion-dono... could you please leave such conversations for when you are alone?" Queen Donaneris interjected.

The two of them came back to their senses.

"Our apologies!" they said to the Arachne and Empusa in the chamber, who seemed to be mentally fatigued from this, as well as to Vandalieu.

"I'm glad we didn't bring Kasim," said Eleanora.

"Hmm, a calm, gentlemanly Noble Orc..." Zadiris murmured.

"If you told me there was actually a human inside him, I'd believe you," said Basdia.

"No, I can tell. That prince has considerable skill. If he was in good condition, he would rival me or be even stronger," Vigaro said.

“You’re right,” Borkus agreed. “Considering his appearance and his nice guy... ish face, his sense of presence is no joke. He’s probably at least Rank 10.”

Everyone spoke their impressions as they arrived in the queen’s chamber, either by flying in on their own or being carried in by Arachne, seeing Prince Budarion and Princess Kurnelia’s intimacy.

Perhaps Bugogan had left a strong impression on Zadiris and Basdia; they seemed to find it difficult to believe that Prince Budarion was a member of the same Noble Orc race.

“Prince Budarion does not match the prowess of the late emperor, Fugofu-sama, but he is a Rank 10 Noble Orc High King. He is a master of the Swordsmanship skill that I cannot even be compared to,” Gizania explained, perhaps feeling proud at the fact that Vigaro and Borkus were admiring the man (male?) who would become her brother in law.

“I apologize for my actions, despite having been instructed to take the princess away!” said Myuze, kneeling hastily.

Incidentally, the chief mage Bakota had positioned himself at the queen’s side at some point. He was fast, as expected of a chief mage.

“It is fine. More importantly, Myuze, you should remain present here,” said Queen Donaneris, seeming to have no intention of reprimanding Myuze.

However, the queen’s order seemed to be unexpected for Myuze.

“I should remain present?” she repeated.

Myuze was a young Empusa, a highly capable kunoichi among Empusa that were less than a hundred years of age, but she was not in a high social position. She was in charge of defending one of the gates that faced the north, south, east and west in the walls that protected Zanalpadna, but that was all.

Due to the nature of her job, her face was well-known to those from other nations who went back and forth on missions and armed merchant caravans that conducted trade, but she was not someone who could be called an important figure.

And it wasn’t as if she had any particularly deep opinions, either. There was Gizania to

act as company for the shrine maiden and the other guests; Myuze couldn't imagine that she would be of any use staying here.

"If you have no objections, you will remain here. Naturally, Gizania, you will stay as well," said Queen Donaneris.

"Certainly!"

Myuze could not object after having been ordered to stay more than once. Disobeying orders would go against the path of the ninja that she longed to follow.

But as Myuze went to stand at the end of the row of important Empusa in the queen's chamber, the queen spoke to her again.

"Just stay where you are!" Queen Donaneris told her.

"A-as you wish!" Myuze hastily returned to Vandalieu's side and fell silent.

Eleanora, Zadiris and even the Arachne and Empusa in the chamber looked at Myuze and at the queen, wondering what this was all about, but the queen offered no explanation.

From the position that Myuze was being ordered to stand, Vandalieu guessed that it had something to do with him, but he was bewildered regardless of what it was. Though he appeared to be composed, as he had no facial expression.

"Now then... I have not told this to anyone save for a few, including Bakota, but I actually received a Divine Message from the evil god Zanalpadna," the queen said.

The conversation flew to a topic that wasn't related to Myuze at all. But the importance of this topic was so great that everyone's attention shifted from Myuze to the Divine Message.

"I interpreted the contents of the Divine Message to be, 'Send your daughters to the north. There, your daughter will meet the Holy Son who seeks a trial,'" said Queen Donaneris. "I consulted those whom I revealed the contents of the Divine Message to, and then dispatched a delegation towards the marshlands to the north that included my daughters, Kurnelia and Gizania."

"Is that true?!" Princess Kurnelia exclaimed. "I did think it was strange that Chief Mage

Bakota didn't oppose the suggestion of requesting reinforcements from Lizardmen that we've never interacted with before..."

"I see. So, there was a reason like that for accepting my request immediately when I asked to be one of the escorting members, despite knowing that I was not worthy," said Gizania.

It seemed that the Divine Message hadn't been revealed to Princess Kurnelia and Gizania. Most of the people in the queen's chamber, including Prince Budarion, were surprised.

"Queen Donaneris, why did you not tell us about the Divine Message?!" blurted out a large Empusa who had apparently been a member of the delegation.

"Because telling you would have caused preconceptions," Queen Donaneris replied. "And there was also the chance that my interpretation of the message was incorrect. It was more than possible that the word 'daughter' meant not just my own daughters, but 'young girls' including yourself, Gaol. And as for the Holy Son, I did not know what race he would be or what form he would have. There was the possibility that he would be a Lizardman... or rather, both Bakota and I expected that the Holy Son would be a Lizardman hero or champion. It is not that we questioned your loyalty, but forgive us," she said, gently closing her eyes and lowering her head.

The Empusa named Gaol, as well as the others who had seemed displeased at the fact that they had not been told about the Divine Message, hastily began to stop the queen.

"Please raise your head! We understand your thoughts on the matter!"

As Vandalieu blinked and watched this scene unfold, he suddenly heard Princess Kurnelia's voice in his mind.

"Us Arachne and Empusa, especially those who are warriors by profession, feel dishonor when our loyalty is questioned. The same applies for Gizania-chan, so please be careful," the voice said.

Vandalieu noticed a transparent thread stuck to his neck. It seemed that Princess Kurnelia had gone out of her way to use Thread Telepathy to explain this to him.

Of course, Gizania didn't seem to be displeased at the fact that the queen had kept things hidden from her. This was likely related to the fact that Donaneris was not only

her superior, but also her mother.

“By the way, I understand that there was a Divine Message, but... what is it that you want from us now?” Vandalieu asked after waiting for the Empusa to calm down. “At first, our objective was to deal with the Noble Orc empire... dealing with peace negotiations and any possible war. Now that I have learned the situation from Gizania, that has changed to building favorable relationships with each race that worships the gods on Vida’s side, including the people of Zanalpadna, and defeating Bugitas and his subordinates, who worship a god that seems to be a remnant of the Demon King’s army.”

The reasons for defeating Bugitas weren’t just that Vandalieu sympathized with the Arachne or because Gizania’s muscular beauty was wonderful.

Judging from the words of the Noble Orc who had attacked Gizania, it could be assumed that the usurper Bugitas and the god he worshipped, Ravovifard, didn’t think favorably of Vida and those who worshipped her.

If someone like that were to rule the lands south of the marshlands and gather strength, there was no telling what would happen in the future.

As Noble Orcs took about ten years to reach adulthood after they were born, they would not increase in number too substantially within a short period of time. However, the Orcs, Kobolds and Goblins who performed manual labor or slave work in the empire could multiply at a terrifying rate.

And if they trusted in their numbers and closed in on the marshlands, Vandalieu didn’t think that Talosheim wouldn’t be able to win, but there would certainly be casualties.

Even if they didn’t come attacking, as the Holy Son of Vida, Vandalieu would be troubled if something were to happen to the sacred land in which Vida slumbered.

That was why he would deal with the Noble Orc empire while he still could. And if he acted now, he would gain multiple nations as allies. Even the general Chezare had insisted, “Your Majesty! You have no choice but to take part in the war yourself!”

Also, the Experience Points and the meat would be delicious as well.

“But I have no idea what you mean by ‘trial,’” Vandalieu said.

He had the feeling that the battle against the Noble Orc empire was not a trial. It could be assumed that Bugitas, who had repelled the Rank 10 Prince Budarion, was Rank 11 or higher. Bugitas would certainly be a powerful foe, but Vandalieu couldn't imagine that he would be a more powerful enemy than the one that had been defeated last year, the Pure-breed Vampire Gubamon who possessed strength of mythical proportions and was thought to be Rank 13 or higher.

If Vandalieu faced Bugitas, he would probably be victorious.

Of course, he would probably have other high-Rank Noble Orc subordinates, but even with those present, Vandalieu wouldn't be defeated by them with Borkus, Vigaro, Zadiris, Basdia, Eleanora, Bone Man and the others at his side.

And if Vandalieu lacked fighting strength, he could always go back to Talosheim to bring more.

That was why he felt that Bugitas was too weak to be called a trial.

"So, if you have any ideas as to what the trial might be, I would like to hear them," Vandalieu said.

If the trial happened to be "teaching Zanalpadna the knowledge regarding true bushi and ninjas," he would give up immediately.

But upon being asked this, Queen Donaneri's expression turned into a happy, yet troubled one.

"No... I had thought that the Holy Son's primary purpose would be to face this trial, so I intended to earnestly request that you join the war to take the empire back from Bugitas and the god Ravovifard that he worships," she said.

"...Your guess was wrong, but in a good way, my queen," said Bakota.

"Ah... what are we supposed to do about this awkward atmosphere?" Kurt muttered.

Both of them had complicated expressions on their faces.

"Then isn't this 'trial' a misunderstanding on Zanalpadna's part?" Basdia suggested.

"Basdia, isn't it impossible for gods to have misunderstandings?" asked Gizania,

expressing her doubt in this 'god's misunderstanding' theory.

"No, I think it's probably possible," Basdia said. "I've seen a different god once before, and it seemed that he would have misunderstandings just like anyone else."

She had actually met a god before. Not only Gizania, but Princess Kurnelia and Bakota were surprised by her words as well.

"You've seen a god before?!" Gizania exclaimed.

"There's a god like that?!" asked Princess Kurnelia.

"Impossible! No, but if you're a companion of the person prophesized in a Divine Message, then...?" Bakota murmured.

Incidentally, the god that Basdia had seen before was Fidirg, the Dragon God of Five Sins. He had kneeled on the ground and begged Vandalieu for his life the moment he appeared; it did indeed seem that he would have misunderstandings.

"No, it is not necessarily a misunderstanding. From Zanalpadna's point of view, perhaps the battle against the Noble Orc kingdom was enough to be expressed as a trial," said Zadiris.

"Gods aren't omnipotent, after all. And there are various deep aspects to Vandalieu-sama," said Eleanora.

I see, Vandalieu thought, almost completely convinced by their words.

"I see... Well, that is likely the case. Perhaps I misinterpreted the Divine Message. The only idea I have is the Trial of Zakkart, but it does not seem that you seek that," Queen Donaneris murmured.

"The Trial of Zakkart?" Vandalieu repeated the legendary Dungeon's name. "Isn't that the Dungeon that appears about once every month in a different place?"

"Hmm? The Trial of Zakkart does indeed disappear to a different place after approximately a month if there is nobody inside it, but it always appears once a year in the sacred land in which the goddess slumbers," said Queen Donaneris.

It seemed that the mysterious Dungeon that was supposedly a wandering Dungeon

appeared regularly in only one place, the sacred land in the southern region of the continent.

“The Trial of Zakkart...” Vandalieu murmured.

The last remaining culprits behind Vandalieu’s mother’s death, the Five-colored Blades, were led by the S-class adventurer Heinz who had undoubtedly solidified his position as a hero in the Orbaume Kingdom by now. The Trial of Zakkart was an extremely high-difficulty Dungeon that had been challenged by them, resulting in the loss of a party member and forcing them to retreat.

Vandalieu wasn’t particularly interested in the act of clearing the Dungeon itself. He wasn’t, but... what if the corpse of Heinz’s party member was still left inside? Vandalieu didn’t care if it was only the skull; if he could get his hands on that, repair it, put a soul in it to turn it into an Undead and bring it before Heinz, what kind of expression would Heinz make?

Wouldn’t this be at least some small revenge against those three who were difficult to lay a hand on due to their positions in society as righteous people, despite having captured Darcia and sold her to a religious fanatic for loose change?

There would be nothing better than for them to become enraged and attack Vandalieu in their anger. That would allow him to kill them in self-defense.

Of course, this would only happen after Vandalieu was properly registered as an adventurer with his Undead registered as familiars, acquired a proper social status, and most importantly, after he acquired the strength he needed to turn the tables on Heinz and his companions.

“...When will the Trial of Zakkart appear?” Vandalieu asked.

“I do not know that much. It is certain that it appears once every year, but the month it appears changes every year,” said Queen Donaneris. “However, it should not have appeared yet this year. If it had, the Dark Elf nation would have sent messengers to every other nation... though they might not be in the state to do that now.”

“I see. Let us try challenging it after defeating Bugitas,” said Vandalieu.

He couldn’t prioritize his harassment of Heinz over the war when he didn’t know when he would execute the harassment or whether the corpse he needed for it was still

there. The trial would come later.

But hearing Vandalieu declare that he would challenge the Trial of Zakkart, Queen Donaneris, Kurnelia and even Budarion looked at him as if they were looking at a champion.

Well, it was a Dungeon that had repelled even Heinz's party, who had been A-class adventurers at the time, so perhaps even attempting to clear the Dungeon was worthy of respect.

"M-my word. So, you intend to challenge Zakkart, Shrine-Maiden-dono," said Myuze, shuddering.

"Perhaps I have been saved by an unimaginably great person... Queen! No, Mother! Once the fight with Bugitas and his ilk ends, I wish to offer my blade and my life to Shrine-Maiden-dono! Please allow me to do this!" Gizania spoke these outrageous words with flushed cheeks.

"Gizania, I do not mind if you change occupations, but please treat your life with care," said Vandalieu.

"Alriiight! Let's go, kid! A Dungeon that nobody's cleared before, this is getting my blood boiling!" Borkus shouted.

"Borkus, calm down. We'll be going after defeating Bugitas," Vandalieu told him.

"Now then, I would like to decide the conditions for providing our reinforcements!" shouted the loud voice of Kurt, who was once the commander of a tower, subduing the others who had started becoming noisy.

Once he had confirmed that all attention was on him, he began reciting the conditions for joining the war that had been decided at a meeting with Chezare and the others.

"First, those under the command of the Eclipse King Vandalieu must be treated as allies and not harmed, no matter who or what they may be. Next, everything that is captured by our army as a result of battle, even corpses, we will gain ownership of. I wish for these conditions to be acknowledged."

Queen Donaneris and Bakota had put themselves on guard as they listened to these two conditions; now, they looked puzzled.

“...No, are these conditions not to be expected?” said Bakota.

It was common sense to treat reinforcements as allies and not cause them any harm. The second condition, the acknowledgement of possession of all captured items including corpses, was not a common condition used in the Amid Empire or Orbaume Kingdom, but it seemed that it was ordinary in the southern region of the continent.

“If you are saying that you wish to take the materials and food from the corpses of Bugitas’s Noble Orc subordinates once they are defeated, I care not. That is the right of the victor. Of course, that applies for Bugitas himself as well,” Prince Budarion assured Kurt. “Our empire does not allow Noble Orcs and Orcs to eat the flesh of their brethren, but we utilize materials from the dead to create goods as a funeral service, and the corpses of criminals are fed to the people as a punishment to them. Bugitas is my younger brother who shares my blood, but you do not need to concern yourself about that. However, if you capture anything that is important to the empire, it would be much appreciated if you allowed negotiations.”

It didn’t seem that anyone in the queen’s chamber felt any feelings of disgust or revulsion, not even Prince Budarion, so it seemed that this condition really was common sense.

It was equivalent to Lizardmen taking materials from the corpses of their brethren and using them to create leather armor; it seemed that for monsters, creating arms and such from deceased individuals was equivalent to a funeral service.

“Of course, we will respond to negotiations. But what is important is the first condition. If you agree to these conditions, then I will try and restore the heavily wounded to their original, healthy states, including Prince Budarion,” said Vandalieu.

A different commotion to when he had declared that he would challenge the Trial of Zakkart spread across the queen’s chamber.

“My eye and arm, can they be healed?! I had hardened my resolve to at least land one blow back on Bugitas, even with only one eye and one arm, but if you can restore me to normal, I will definitely put a stop to his violence!” Prince Budarion exclaimed.

“Prince, please wait,” said Bakota. “Shrine-Maiden-dono, perhaps due to the Death Scythe wielded by Bugitas, some kind of magic or even Ravovifard’s divine protection, it took the combined effort of numerous mages, including myself, just to stop the

bleeding of Prince Budarion's wounds, never mind closing them. Can you really heal them?"

It seemed that this commotion was due to the fact that Prince Budarion's wounds had not been closed despite the presence of exceptional mages like Bakota.

Vandalieu and his companions had heard in advance from Gizania that the prince was completely unable to fight due to the heavy wounds he had sustained. However, it seemed that they were wondering why there was a faint smell of blood still coming from his damaged body parts, despite several days having passed.

It was likely a curse, special poison or even a unique skill that inhibited the effects of healing magic and Potions.

"Can you do something like that, Shrine-Maiden-dono? In my case, I had legs that had been cut off, but Prince Budarion is missing an arm and an eye," said Gizania, who had cooperated with Myuze to barely manage to stop Princess Kurnelia from shouting, "We'll accept anything!"

"I think I can. However, first, I will need the conditions to be accepted. If everyone acknowledges my Undead, then let us go out right now to gather the things I will need for the treatment," said Vandalieu.

As he finished speaking, Bone Man and Borkus removed their helmets and Princess Levia and the other Ghosts revealed themselves.



The Noble Orc Mage Buburin had a sharp glint in his eye as he directed the construction of a temporary fort, ensuring that none of the soldiers were slacking off.

"Bukukukuh."

However, it could not be said that his attitude towards his work was attentive. The reason for this was because he was already certain that this war had been won by Prince Bugitas... the newly-crowned Emperor Bugitas.

Coup d'états had already been successful in the High Goblin and High Kobold nations, conducted by those who had sworn loyalty to Emperor Bugitas, and these nations

were now under control.

The Majin nation and Kijin nation were powerful enemies, but due to Ravovifard's divine work, they would be held up for a while.

TLN: Majin have been mentioned before; the kanji translates to something like "demon/magic person." Kijin is a new one, and it is something like "devil person." I'm just keeping these in their Japanese pronunciations, since there's not really a way to properly translate these, especially since they haven't been described yet.

Prince Bugitas would use this opening to overrun the other nations and conquer Zanalpadna, where the loser Budarion was being sheltered.

"And once we suppress this land, none will stand in our way... bukukuh," Buburin snorted, letting out a laugh that was rather vulgar considering that he was a member of a race containing the word 'noble.'

"Buburin-dono, your words are rather loud for someone who is talking to himself," said a Noble Orc General, a commander of the same rank as Buburin.

This temporary fort was located between the empire and Zanalpadna; it was a base for conquering Zanalpadna. Because of this, enough military strength had been positioned here to repel wild monster attacks and hold out for some time if Zanalpadna were to attack it.

Buburin and the Noble Orc General were Rank 8. There were a few other Rank 7 and ten Rank 6 Noble Orcs. There were five High Goblins and five High Kobolds. Thirty Orcs serving as soldiers and laborers.

And though they would not be used to fight, there were fifty slaves that could even be used as emergency rations.

"And you are speaking to yourself in human words. The slaves will hear you," the Noble Orc General said.

"I'm letting them hear me, of course. To make sure that they don't have any foolish hopes," Buburin said. "You slaves, if you value the lives of your wives and daughters, don't let your hands rest!" he shouted at the human and Beast-person men who had once been citizens of the empire, striking the back of the nearest slave with the staff in his hand.

Of course, it wasn't with full strength. In fact, he had been careful to hold back.

However, the staff had been swung by a Noble Orc, whose physical strength couldn't be compared to an ordinary person, even if that Noble Orc was a mage. The man who had been struck let out a scream and collapsed onto the ground.

"Ugh..."

He groaned and looked up at Buburin with anger in his eyes. It wasn't a fitting look for a slave to have in his eyes, but it couldn't be helped. Until half a year ago, he had been a citizen, not a slave.

Like Zanalpadna, the Noble Orc empire had maintained a cooperative relationship of protecting its citizens. However, Bugitas had crushed that relationship and tried to change it into a society of survival of the fittest.

A part of that was turning the citizens into slaves. But there weren't convenient Magic Items shaped like slave collars like the ones used in societies outside the Boundary Mountain Range, so they had taken the slaves' families hostage.

If they worked poorly, once they returned to the empire, their family members would be eaten alive or raped until they died; either way, they would meet gruesome fates.

"Kuh..."

In the end, the man who had been struck was unable to say anything back and had no choice but to stand up and return to his work.

Even though he wasn't even handcuffed, never mind a collar. He knew that even if all of the slaves rebelled together, they couldn't even defeat one of the Noble Orcs that were Buburin's subordinates, let alone Buburin himself.

And if they rebelled, the young children and elderly slaves would be eaten, while the women capable of bearing children would be taken by the Noble Orcs, not as wives, but as mothers for their children.

The men knew that even if they stayed obedient, there was no guarantee that they and their families would not be treated cruelly in the future. They knew this, but right now, they had no choice but to obey.

“Did you see the look in his eye! What pitiful creatures, unable to say anything in return. It truly is a sin to be weak! I can’t believe inferior creatures like these were considered ‘citizens’ until not long ago! They are even lower than Orcs!” Buburin said with an unpleasant guffaw, saying even this in human words to antagonize the slaves.

But the slaves couldn’t say anything in return, even when being scorned in this way.

But about half of the Orcs looked at the frustrated slaves with sympathy.

“How about you tease them as well?” Buburin suggested.

The Noble Orc General gave a gentle smile and shook his head. “Bufufuh, I shall refrain. If I will be doing any tormenting, I prefer doing it to women on a bed.”

“Oh, that is reasonable too. Let us achieve military success in this battle, have His Majesty Emperor Bugitas grant us ranks and have our fill of real women, not these imitations created by a powerless god, until we wither away!... What’s wrong?”

At that moment, an Orc lookout shouted in Buburin’s direction to inform him that a monster was approaching.

Unlike races created by Vida, such as Arachne, Noble Orcs were pure monsters. Numerous high-Rank Noble Orcs including Buburin were stationed at this temporary fort; it was not often attacked by monsters.

However, there were attacks conducted by desperately hungry monsters, monsters with intelligence too low to discern how powerful their foes were or monsters simply too greedy after smelling the scent of the slaves.

Buburin thought that this would be the case as well, but was then puzzled by the lookout’s shouted report of “Fugoffugibiih!”

A Titan Zombie?

Buburin was confused at the report regarding the approaching monster. It wasn’t rare for Undead to rise from corpses in Devil’s Nests. However, why would a Titan corpse be left outside, when Titans would never leave any of the city states on their own?

There shouldn’t have been any Titan adventurers or soldiers, either.

“Bugubufufuh,” the Noble Orc General said, ignoring Buburin’s puzzlement and ordering for one of the Noble Orc subordinates to fetch him his bow and arrows.

He was on the verge of reaching level 100 and increasing his Rank; he apparently wanted to gain as many Experience Points as possible.

The Noble Orc General took the bow and arrows from his subordinate, took aim at the groaning Zombie with a half-skull face and a sword hanging from his hand, and then released his arrow.

The Zombie groaned and seemed to stagger by coincidence; the arrow missed.

“?!... Buugoh!”

Not having expected his arrow to miss, the Noble Orc General showed clear irritation as he nocked a second arrow in his bow.

He would definitely land this next arrow. So the Noble Orcs, including Buburin, thought.

However, the Titan Zombie suddenly swung the sword that had been hanging from his hand at a speed faster than could be seen by the eye, repelling the second arrow.

“Ugh... I really am terrible at imitating ordinary Zombies.”

“Well, we managed to get this close, so I believe it is fine.”

“Well then, I suppose I’ll run the rest of the way!”

And so, the Zombie Titan Borkus broke into a fierce sprint towards the dumbfounded Buburin and Noble Orc General.

Chapter 136

The king, the prince and the emperor

The Noble Orc frontline position that had been discovered by dispatching several Lemures, familiars created through death-attribute with the forms of transparent skulls.

Vandalieu attacked this position to gain the things needed to treat Prince Budarion and the other wounded.

Though it was a frontline position, it had nothing but watchtowers and storehouses, and was poorly constructed overall other than its size. There was no need to prepare beforehand. There weren't many enemies stationed there, so it would be enough to wipe them out via a sudden assault with overwhelming strength.

Borkus ran with enough force to crush the ground beneath his feet, and once he got within a certain distance... within fifty meters of the Noble Orc that had fired the arrows, he swung his sword sideways.

"First, I'll be taking your parts! Flying Dragon Slash!"

Borkus activated the Sword King Technique martial technique that he had recently created, a more powerful version of the Swordsmanship martial skill 'Sky Rend,' which released a slashing attack.

"BUGOOOH!" the Noble Orc General roared.

The slashing attack released by the greatsword that had been made by combining a fragment of the Demon King and Death Iron cut through the Noble Orc General's Archery martial skill, Spiral Arrow. And then it went on to cut through the Noble Orc General's bow and decapitate him.

"BUGYAAAAH?!"

"BUMOFFUGOBUBUBUH!"

Unrest spread among the Noble Orcs after having seen one of the fort's commanders killed instantly. For monsters, commanders were the strongest individuals of their respective groups. Due to this fact, the defeat of their commander had a far greater effect on them than it would have on human armies.

But this fort had one more commander other than the Noble Orc General; there was the Noble Orc Mage Buburin.

"BUKYAKYABUH! Slaves! You stay there where you are!" he shouted.

And then he calmly evaluated the strength of Borkus, the one who had defeated his comrade, and decided to retreat.

Buburin was confident that they would be able to defeat an enemy that was a single Rank higher if the Noble Orc General was in good health by sacrificing some of the Orcs.

However, Borkus wasn't that kind of enemy. With just a single hit, he had decapitated a Noble Orc General who had plenty of Vitality, from a far distance as well.

He wasn't a weak enough enemy that could be defeated through tactics and coordination.

Buburin had to use the Orcs, the members of an inferior race, and the slaves that would only become burdens to buy some time and retreat to the empire. Since the enemy was an Undead, it would likely prioritize killing the slaves rather than giving chase.

"Alright! I've secured enough parts for the prince!"

"Now then, we will move to the second stage. I will let everyone out."

Before the Orcs could follow Buburin's orders and take up battle formations with building materials in their hands instead of clubs, Vandalieu, who was clinging to Borkus's back with the Demon King's suction cups, made his move.

"It's fine to kill all of the Noble Orcs, right?"

"Time to test how much stronger I've become from the time I fought against Bugogan's sons!"

“To be able to transport even Arachne and Empusa... Is Shrine-Maiden-dono a ninja?”

“No, a bushi?”

“Bufuh... how is everyone fine after that?”

“We’re used to it.”

Eleanora, Basdia, Vigaro, Myuze, Gizania and Prince Budarion emerged from within Vandalieu.

Buburin and his subordinates couldn’t help but to open their eyes wide in shock at the sudden appearance of more enemies.

“Fugoh?! Budarion, fugogoh?!”

Their discomposure was even greater due to the fact that they could see Prince Budarion among them.

The pale-faced Budarion, who was being protected by Myuze and Gizania as well as the other Empusa, Arachne and insectoid monsters that had emerged after them, made a rough judgment of the enemy’s formation.

And then he let out a manly roar.

“BUGOOOOOKUGYAGYAGYAH!”

To Vandalieu and his companions, it sounded like nothing more than an intimidating shout, but the effect on Buburin and his subordinates was dramatic.

“Prince Budarion?!”

“This manly use of the Orc language, it’s undoubtedly Prince Budarion!”

Hope returned to the faces of the slaves that had been frozen still in fear of the Undead attack, thinking that this was the end... Prince Budarion’s citizens.

“Fugoooh!”

“Bugih?! ”

And then the Orcs separated into Budarion's side and Buburin's side. Budarion's side... the Orcs that had sympathized with the citizens being tormented by Buburin, abandoned their positions and moved to protect the citizens.

Budarion's roar hadn't simply been a shout, but an order in the Orc language, "Orcs! Protect the citizens!"

"Buh, BUGIIH!" Buburin shouted in the Orc language, but his dignity was clearly inferior to Prince Budarion's.

Even so, the Orcs on Buburin's side tried to stop the Orcs on Budarion's side from leaving their positions, but they couldn't move from where they were due to Buburin's orders to slow the enemy down, so they were simply moving about in confusion.

"Those who are protecting the citizens are the Orcs who have returned to my side! I wish for you to think of them as allies!" said Prince Budarion.

"...It seems that my previous conception of Orcs is gradually collapsing," Zadiris muttered, seemingly shocked, but casting Wind Blades and Ice Spears nonetheless.

"Mother, let's think of them as being different inside, even if they look the same as the Orcs outside the Boundary Mountain Range," said Basdia, who followed up on Zadiris's spells by throwing iron apples and hatchets.

"Never mind that, here we go!" shouted Eleanora.

The mostly-unarmored Orcs were defeated in the blink of an eye. There was one Orc persevering, brandishing a log, but he was silenced by Eleanora, who flew in to close the distance and cut him down straight through the log with her sword.

Seeing this, Buburin realized that this was not an attack by a single, powerful Undead, but a planned assault by Budarion.

"Noble Orcs and High Goblins, die here together with me! High Kobolds, split up and retreat! One of you must make it back and return with this information!"

The Noble Orcs who had been trying to retreat obeyed Buburin's orders, turning back around and activating their Shield Technique and Armor Technique martial skills. The High Goblins raised their spears and swords as well, letting out shrill cries to inspire themselves.

Meanwhile, the High Kobolds threw their weapons to the ground and fled, running on all fours like beasts.

“BUGYABUBUFUH!” Buburin himself cast the Flame Boar spell, a spell that conjured a boar of flames, to buy at least a single second.

“Don’t get in my way! I can’t cut your heads off if you do that!” Borkus shouted as he cut straight through the Noble Orcs’ shields and the arms that were holding them, bisecting their torsos.

“Great Decapitation! Fuhahahah, defeating Noble Orcs as powerful as Bugogan is like stealing candy from a baby now!” laughed Vigaro, whose axe was sending the heads of Buburin’s dependable subordinates flying.

“The fact that you are approaching me means that you’re enemies like Noble Orcs, right?” said Basdia, defeating five High Goblins one by one.

“This is a spell, not a monster? Like a familiar?” said the Broad Ghost Orbia as she appeared.

The Flame Boar that was trying to charge with its flaming body as a weapon was becoming smaller and smaller as she repeatedly struck it with her liquid tentacles.

“GYAIIIN!”

“GYAWAAAAN?!”

“Hyaaahah!”

“Hyabbuh!”

“It’ll be troublesome for us if you send word to the empire!”

Every single one of the desperately retreating Kobolds were crushed by the Blitz Ghost Kimberley, Gorba and the Black Fang Knights’ Order, who had been lying in ambush, as well as Eleanora.

“BUKYAAAAH! BUBUGYAAAAH?!”

Even Buburin, who had been releasing Flame Spears and Flame Bullets, was

enveloped in a Magic Absorption Barrier and cut down by Bone Man.

“My lord, I could have defeated him even if you hadn’t sealed his magic,” Bone Man said.

“I did it just in case,” said Vandalieu. “Now then, Prince Budarion, please explain the situation to the citizens and the Orcs that have returned to your side.”

“Yes, leave it to me,” said Prince Budarion.

With the enemies all exterminated, he walked towards the rescued citizens and the Orcs who had returned to becoming his subordinates, as if greeting them. The liberated citizens and Orcs cheered for him and expressed their happiness at the fact that he was still alive with tears of joy.

“But this was really unexpected,” Vandalieu muttered as he cast the Preservation spell on the corpses of Buburin and his subordinates and gathered information from their spirits.

“Indeed,” Basdia agreed. “It’s not particularly unusual that half of the Orcs listened to Prince Budarion’s orders, though.”

“No, is that not quite strange? After all, everyone knows that the prince was defeated by Bugitas and has only one arm and one eye left,” said Bone Man, somewhat doubtful.

There was nothing strange about the fact that the Orcs had obeyed the orders of a Noble Orc.

Noble Orcs were originally a race that had been created by the evil gods of the Demon King’s army to act as commanders for Orcs. That was why Orcs, even those with the race title of King, obeyed the orders of Noble Orcs.

And if there were multiple Noble Orcs shouting orders, Orcs prioritized the stronger commander as monsters should.

However, Prince Budarion had been defeated by Bugitas, the one served by Buburin and his subordinates. From that point on, Orcs would stop obeying Prince Budarion.

However, all of this only applied to the Orcs outside the Boundary Mountain Range.

“Is that so? From our point of view, it is not strange that half of the Orc Workers returned to the prince’s side, but... it seems that with ten thousand years of isolation, differences arise between those on the inside and outside, even if they are of the same race,” said Myuze.

Indeed, the Orcs of the Noble Orc empire had spent ten thousand years’ worth of generations under the rule of Noble Orcs.

In this area, where Rank 4 monsters were rampant, a single or a mere few Orcs, whose base Rank was 3, would not be reliable as fighting strength. That was why many of them worked as low-ranking soldiers and laborers.

They protected the humans and other citizens while spending their daily efforts in manual labor. Parent to child, child to grandchild, grandchild to great-grandchild, this had continued on for approximately ten thousand years.

This had changed the Orcs.

Many of the Orcs of the Noble Orc empire were far more clever, gentle and obedient than regular Orcs.

That was why Prince Budarion and the others from Zanalpadna had expected that while there would be some Orcs who would obey Prince Bugitas rather than go against their instincts, there would also be a certain number of Orcs that felt doubt and discontent with him.

They had taken a bet as to what the exact number of those Orcs would be, but only half of the Orcs that had been gathered for the construction of this frontline position had been like this, so it seemed that more Orcs were on Budarion’s side than was previously thought.

“Of course, there are also Orcs like the ones that attacked myself and the others of the delegation, so we cannot be too optimistic,” said Gizania.

“Once Prince Budarion’s treatment is finished and his wounds are healed, the situation should change for the better,” said Vandalieu.

He had already finished securing the corpse parts and was now using the Golem Creation skill to build Orc-shaped Golems from earth and stone and colored their surfaces with the Demon King’s ink.

“...Shrine-Maiden-dono, can you really not transform into a giant frog?” asked Myuze, seeming to associate the sight of Vandalieu spraying the Demon King’s ink from the tip of his extended tongue to color the Golems with the giant frogs that ninjas could supposedly transform into.

Perhaps it couldn’t be helped that she thought this; he had been using the Demon King’s suction cups to cling to Borkus’s back earlier as well.

“I cannot*,” said Vandalieu.

TLN: He ends his sentence with de-gozaru like Myuze here.*

Prince Budarion seemed startled as he turned around and saw Vandalieu, but Vandalieu didn’t take much notice of this and continued his painting work. Incidentally, it seemed that the rescued people and Orcs thought of Vandalieu as ‘some kind of mysterious monster that resembles a human child’ or ‘a rare type of Majin.’

“Will the camouflage go well?” asked Zadiris, looking up at the Golems that would appear to be Orcs as long as they weren’t looked at from close-up.

“I think it will be fine from a distance,” said Vandalieu. “Since I made Orc spirits possess them, I think their movements should be similar as well. Though I think the scent will give them away if enemies approach closer.”

As their appearances would suggest, Orcs had a good sense of smell. It wasn’t as good as that of dogs, but if they got close, they would likely notice the smell of earth, stone and the Demon King’s ink.

“Why not erase the smell?” Vigaro suggested. “You can do that with Deodorization, right?”

“Vigaro, even if he were to erase the smell with Deodorization, it would be pointless because he cannot recreate the body odor that the Orcs would normally have. In fact, it is likely to only make them warier,” said Zadiris.

“Well, there apparently won’t be any supply units coming, so it should be fine for a while,” said Vandalieu.

He had heard from Buburin’s spirit that there wouldn’t be any supply or communication units coming, as the materials used for the construction of the

temporary fort had all already been transported here and they had planned to obtain food by hunting the nearby monsters.

“Now then, let us return to Zanalpadna for now, heal everyone and then use this frontline position to attack the empire,” said Vandalieu.

“In other words, there are no problems, right? But considering that, you don’t seem to be very happy; is there something else?” Eleanora asked.

Vandalieu sighed. “No, it’s just... I realized that the problem won’t be solved just by us killing Bugitas and doing something about Ravovifard,” he said.



Sitting in a throne with a crown on his head, Bugitas reigned over the empire that he had stolen from his older brother. He had a glass filled with the finest aquavit (a spirit made from potatoes) in his hand and he was being served by beautiful women wearing clothes so thin that their skin could be seen through them.

The beautiful women were those such as the wives of the Noble Orcs who had not joined him, citizens that had been forcibly gathered, and tributes from the High Kobold nation and High Goblin nation.

Humans, Dwarves, Elves, Beast-people, Titans... There were even High Kobolds and High Goblins among them.

It was a harem of quality and quantity that anyone, at least any Noble Orc, would be envious of.

“Bufuh...!”

But with this harem before him, it was not lust but irritation that Bugitas felt.

“W-what is the matter, Bugitas-sama?” said one of the beautiful women with a flattering smile, though there was some fear in it as well, trying to improve Bugitas’s mood.

In the empire of the past, everyone had been taught that children were the treasures of the nation, and the women who give birth to those children should be respected as much as any warrior. But that had changed after the coup d’état.

Bugitas had conducted numerous lady-killings... not in the seductive sense, but the literal meaning of the term, despite the fact that it had been a heavy crime in the Noble Orc empire of the past.

They had died for stupid reasons, such as him having violated them too violently in the bedroom or because he had disliked the looks in their eyes and punched them.

The woman knew that if Bugitas stayed in this bad mood, either she herself or one of the others would be killed. Driven by that sense of danger, she tried to improve his mood, but...

Bugitas placed his hand gently on that beautiful woman's head.

"Ah...!"

The woman felt relieved for a moment, thinking that Bugitas's mood had improved, but she held her breath when she looked up to see that his eyes were still bloodshot.

"Don't flatter me! It's unsightly!" Bugitas growled.

He grasped the woman's head and lifted her up, then flung her away as if he were tossing away a piece of trash.

The woman, who was tall for a human, flew through the air like a ragdoll and crashed into the wall with a heavy noise.

She slid down the wall with her neck bent in a strange angle, then stopped moving.

"N-NOOOO!"

"No way! Anne! ANNE!"

The other beautiful women screamed and either tried to get away from Bugitas or rushed over to the dead woman.

"BUGOSHAAAH! BOGOHOOOH!"

The Orcs who had been acting as lookouts outside the room came inside to see what was happening. But having been shouted at by Bugitas in the Orc language, "Take the women and get out!" they hastily did exactly that.

But as they did so, Bugitas was even more irritated, seeing the pity in their eyes for the women and the way they carried the woman's dead body with respect.

"Buguguh...!"

Why won't things go as I want them to? Bugitas thought with a groan, having been left in the throne room alone, and then he poured the aquavit down his throat.



With no talent for becoming a politician, Bugitas spent his childhood days merely looking up at his older brother, never mind standing as his equal. He simply focused on improving his fighting strength. He thought that even if he didn't become emperor, it would be fine as long as he could improve his strength and be acknowledged for that.

He felt a complex towards his older brother, but he became more and more imprisoned, as this was not just a feeling of jealousy.

But as Bugitas strived in his training, the voice of a god reached him.

"Do you want power? Then release it. You belong among the monsters. Return to your righteous form."

That voice resounded very sweetly inside Bugitas's mind.

That was Ravovifard, the evil god of release.

A god different from Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence, who was worshipped in the empire. A god whom Bugitas had never heard of, one whose existence wasn't even recorded in the empire's records or documents.

In other words, he was highly likely to be an evil god who hadn't accepted Zakkart's offer and betrayed the Demon King; he was a remnant of the Demon King's army.

At first, Bugitas had ignored these words, thinking that he couldn't fall to the temptation of such a god, but the reason that he hadn't told his older and then-healthy father was because Ravovifard's words had indeed sounded attractive to him.

And once he had sensed that he was at his limit, Bugitas finally fell to Ravovifard's

temptation and received the evil god's divine protection.

The effect of Ravovifard's divine protection was immense. It increased all of Bugitas's Attribute Values, and his level that had almost stopped increasing completely suddenly began rising quickly once more.

And because of the skill he had acquired due to the divine protection, False Guidance: Beast Path, the subordinates who obeyed him became stronger one after another as well.

But as a price for this, the minds of Bugitas and the Noble Orcs who served him transformed over time.

They stopped finding meaning in the duty of the noble, detached their instincts from their reasoning and came to think that survival of the fittest was the righteous form of the Noble Orcs.

And having surpassed his older brother Budarion, Bugitas finally stole the throne. And from there, he was supposed to have conquered the other nations in the blink of an eye and begin ruling a world of survival of the fittest, where he sat at the top.



“Fugogah!”

Bugitas stopped reminiscing and threw his cup into the floor in irritation.

He had usurped the throne, but things hadn't been going as well as he had thought they would after that.

As for Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence, the god himself was being suppressed by Ravovifard while Bugitas had suppressed his priests.

The other gods weren't showing any movements, either.

The isolated, younger children like Bugitas who lived in the High Goblin and High Kobold nations had staged coup d'états, so those nations were now under Bugitas's control.

Bugitas was certain that the total military strength he possessed, including that from

those nations, was greater than those of the Majin and Kijin nations, excluding the Pure-breed Vampires guarding Vida's resting place. And because of the monster rampages caused by Ravovifard, those powerful nations could not move so easily, as they were busy dealing with the monsters overflowing from the Dungeons.

Bugitas would use that opportunity to conquer the other nations, including Zanalpadna, and this time successfully take the head of his feeble older brother. Or at least, that was what should have happened.

However, the reality was that the Noble Orc empire was struggling in its battles with the other nations, including Zanalpadna.

Why?! Are we Noble Orcs not the race that possesses the greatest military strength, the race that should stand at the top and rule all other creatures?! Bugitas thought, but... that wasn't true.

If one excluded exceptional individuals such as heroes, Noble Orcs were indeed an exceptional race. They were as intelligent as humans and all of them were born as powerful Rank 6 beings; they were the most complete race among monsters.

But if Noble Orcs were the most superior race, why had Vida created her own new races?

Bugitas hadn't realized this, but while Noble Orcs were more complete, they were very lacking in diversity compared to humans and lower-Rank monsters. Though they did have some individual differences, the races they could become through increasing their Rank were limited, and their skill setups ended up being similar.

That was why Vida's races like Arachne and Empusa, who could acquire a variety of Jobs, could take countermeasures against Noble Orcs.

As a result, the Noble Orcs weren't as superior in battle as Bugitas had imagined they would be.

And though this wasn't due to any error on Bugitas's part... he and his subordinates had experience battling in groups ranging from several individuals to perhaps a dozen, but they didn't have the experience or knowledge to conduct large-scale war between armies.

There hadn't been any wars for over ten thousand years, and the skirmishes that *had*

occurred were before the wise emperor Buugih appeared. After that, conflicts between nations had been resolved through discussions or battles of strength or wits between the nations' representatives.

There wasn't a single person (except for the Pure-breed Vampires) in the southern region of the continent who had experienced large-scale battles or wars other than against groups of wild monsters. Thus, the knowledge of military strategy itself didn't exist.

Due to this, advanced military strategy couldn't be used, and it was easy for battles to become simply charging at each other and relying on pure force.

The same applied for Zanalpadna and the other nations, so battles unfolded on even ground, in a bad sense.

Their attempt to get the lizards in the northern marshlands ended in failure, but... those useless bastards!

And to round it all off, the organization of the empire, the base that Bugitas was standing on, was unstable as well.

Other than those who had fled with his older brother, almost all of the Noble Orcs obeyed him. However, only about a third of them had truly sworn loyalty to him; it was obvious that the rest were only pretending to serve him in order to protect the citizens and their families.

Of course, False Guidance: Beast Path didn't show any effects in them.

The worst thing was the eyesores that were the Orcs. As they were members of an inferior race, they instinctively obeyed Bugitas. But they had been supposed to throw away the imitation women given to them by Mububujenge when told that they would be given real women, and become exceptional soldiers under the effects of False Guidance: Beast Path.

However, the truth was that about half of the Orcs... especially the exceptional individuals, felt animosity to Bugitas in their minds.

I can't expect any more support from Ravovifard. I need to take Ani-ue's... I need to take Budarion's head as soon as possible and solidify my rule over the empire. Should I cancel the invasions on the other nations for now and focus on Zanalpadna to do that? Shit!

This is all that coward's fault for running away disgracefully!



The following is an excerpt from Luciliano's research notes.

Job explanation:

【Samurai】

A Job that has only been verified by the people in the southern region of the Bahn Gaia continent who possess the knowledge of samurai left behind by Hillwillow, champion of Botin, mother of the earth and goddess of craftsmanship. However, the possibility of the Job existing in other regions such as the Dark Continent cannot be ruled out.

It is a frontline swordsman-type Job; it grants bonuses to the Katana Technique skill, a skill that utilizes a curved, single-edged blade (known as a katana), as well as various other skills such as Archery, Spear Technique, Mount and Strengthened Attribute Values: Loyalty.

To acquire this Job, one must possess the Katana Technique skill at level 4 or greater and be serving a master.

It seems that those who are not serving a lord are able to acquire a Job called Ronin.

It also seems that a superior Job called Swordmaster exists, but apparently, nobody has become a Bushi, a Job yearned for by the samurais of the southern region of the continent.

Skill explanation:

【Katana Technique】

In the southern region of the continent, curved, single-edged blades are called katanas. The skill is generally similar to Swordsmanship, but it seems that this skill

requires more dexterous manipulation of the weapon.

Incidentally, due to a legend left in the southern region of the continent by Hillwillow that “bushi were capable of cutting a mounted enemy in half along with his mount,” a standard katana is defined as one as enormous and powerful enough to cut down a mounted enemy along with his mount (tamed monster).

It seems that due to the blacksmithing techniques used to create these blades, they would not be able to withstand this if they were any narrower.

They are similar to a katana known as a zanbato on Earth, the world where Master once resided. Though for a weapon wielded by Arachne, they are likely not so large...

Incidentally, smaller katanas are also created to be used by small-build Arachne, Empusa and Goblins. According to Master, these are the original standard katanas.

Monster explanation:

【Orc Worker】

A race title that can be reached by Orcs when they reach level 100 while possessing production-related skills such as Farming, Logging or Masonry at 3 or higher with all battle-related skills below level 3.

There are no bonuses for combat-related skills whatsoever, but there are bonuses for the acquisition and development for production-related skills. Also, it becomes easier for the level of the Superhuman Strength skill to increase.

This race has not been verified outside of the Noble Orc empire; it is unlikely for ordinary wild Orcs to increase their Rank and acquire this race title.

Their Rank itself is 4, but because their combat-related skills are low in level, they do not have much fighting ability.

Chapter 137

The shocking truth that is now revealed

“The armor-like muscle on the surface with the body fat percentage reduced as low as possible, and the muscle that lives beneath the fat, are both muscle,” said Vandalieu.

“...My apologies. It seems that what you are saying is too difficult for me to understand,” Prince Budarion said, not hiding his bewilderment.

He had received the surgery to transplant the arm and eye of the Noble Orc General of the frontline position.

His pain had been erased with death-attribute magic. The surgery team consisted of Vandalieu’s Out-of-body Experience clones and Legion who had come to make regular contact as usual. It seemed their surgery had been effective; Prince Budarion was already regaining vision in his eye and sensation in his arm.

The Life Gold used during the stitching and the Blood Potion consumed after the surgery had been effective; his strength had returned as well.

One might question whether it was alright to simply stitch on someone else’s arm, but the flesh structure of monsters such as Noble Orcs was simple, in a good way in this case.

Even after transplant surgery of parts from a member of the same race or a race that was similar enough, the patient could become accustomed to the new body parts without any transplant rejection reactions.

Of course, Vandalieu and Legion were probably the only ones who could make use of this special characteristic of monsters. The concept of advanced surgical procedures didn’t exist in the world of Lambda.

Normally, humans and monsters would think of trying to regenerate the lost parts using valuable Potions and advanced spells.

That was why Budarion had been surprised by the idea of transplanting a body part

of someone else, even if it was a member of the same race.

“But what is even more surprising is the fact that you dispelled the curse afflicting my body so easily,” said Prince Budarion. “I have known Bakota-dono for a long time, but I have not seen him express that much surprise very often.”

“Well, I can remove most curses... except for those cast by gods,” said Vandalieu.

In the end, whether it was Prince Bugitas’s unique skill, an effect of the Death Scythe that was his weapon or Ravovifard’s power was still unknown, but the curse that had been hindering the healing of Prince Budarion’s wounds had been easily removed.

However, Prince Budarion felt fear upon learning that Vandalieu had been afflicted with curses, despite having so easily removed a curse that even the chief mage Bakota had been unable to remove.

How powerful was the god who had cast this curse on Vandalieu?

But Prince Budarion didn’t express this fear, and instead gestured towards their surroundings as he spoke. “No, you really are great. Thanks to you and your companions, my vassals are saved as well.”

The loyal vassals who had fought alongside Budarion and fled from the empire with him after their defeat were now resting their bodies in what was known as the Shelter, an underground space beneath a tower in Zanalpadna.

There were none other than Prince Budarion who had fought Bugitas directly and been cursed, but many of those Noble Orcs were suffering from untreatable wounds. There were many who had recovered from their injuries due to the treatment they had received from the mages led by the chief mage Bakota, but there was no small number of individuals left with missing eyes, limbs and other impairments. Bakota and the other mages hadn’t had the time to completely treat all of them.

“UOOOOH! My arm, my arm is moving! BUHIIH! I give you my thanks, flesh-wife of the shrine maiden!”

“I understand that you’re happy, but calm down! Isis’s hands are going to slip!” shouted Baba Yaga.

“M-my nose is back BUHIIH! Praise the flesh-wife-sama! Praise the flesh-wife-sama!”

“I said calm down! And what do you mean, flesh-wife?!”

Valkyrie gave a loud laugh. “It’s fine, isn’t it, Baba Yaga? It does not feel unpleasant to be praised by veteran heroes!... But are we being praised?!”

The Noble Orcs who had made full recoveries due to Legion’s treatments were surrounding Legion, while Baba Yaga and Valkyrie’s personalities were dealing with them.

“Indeed, Enma and Ereshkigal don’t seem to think that we’re being praised,” said the personality of Isis on the other side, who was still motionlessly conducting surgery on another Noble Orc’s arm.

She had little experience in performing surgery on living patients in her previous life, but it seemed that these monsters who possessed plenty of Vitality made good practice subjects.

“Flesh-wives are apparently monsters that Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence, created from his own flesh and sent to the Orcs and Noble Orcs,” explained Eleanora, who had heard about flesh-wives from the Noble Orcs while she was helping Vandalieu and the others with their surgeries.

Orcs had strength as a racial characteristic, and some of them had such powerful urges to breed that it could cause them to ignore their other two basic needs (food and sleep) and their survival instincts.

The breeding instincts of the Orcs in the Noble Orc empire had grown weaker than those of other Orcs over the hundred thousand thousand years that had passed. However, even so, they were too much for human women to handle.

There were many gentle Orcs, but they were not gentle enough to stay controlled under the excitement of love affairs.

That was why Mububujenge had provided the Orcs with flesh-wives a hundred thousand years ago.

“Apparently, they’re given to the Orcs to take as their wives and lovers,” said Eleanora. “They’re Rank 1 or 2 at most, but they’re solid and tough enough to withstand being the Orcs’ partners. And their abilities increase naturally along with those of the Orcs that are their husbands, so the Orc workers’ flesh-wives can even have children.”

And the flesh-wives of Orcs that were Rank 5 or greater were apparently capable of doing housework as well as good human wives. Of course, thanks to Mububujenge's blessings, the abilities of the flesh-wives increased with successes other than an increase in Rank.

And so, the Orcs' lust was reduced by their flesh-wives, while their ambitions were stimulated. And accepting the flesh-wives also had the effect of controlling sex crimes against the citizen women.

With a hundred thousand years having passed this way, it seemed that no small number of Orcs had come to feel no lust for any other than the flesh-wives. The Orc Workers at the frontline fort who had returned to Prince Budarion's side were among those.

"They're apparently being isolated at the Church of Mububujenge now, though," Eleanora said. "Their appearance is... apparently similar to you when you're separated from the main body."

"I-I'm not happy about that...!" Baba Yaga muttered.

"But being called Vandalieu's flesh-wife isn't an unpleasant thing, is it?" said Isis.

"It's a great honor for us, but an honorary title that we are not worthy of," said Pluto.

"No wonder nobody is afraid of us... from their perspective, we look like a combination of flesh-wives. But Pluto, is it really an honorary title?" asked Valkyrie.

When Legion appeared, the Arachne and Empusa had been surprised as well as the Noble Orcs, but they hadn't been afraid. Since they had interacted with the Noble Orc empire before, Legion apparently just appeared to be a group of flesh-wives with their limbs entwined around each other.

Though they were surprised by Legion's three-meter diameter and how bizarre it was for them to be entwined around each other like that, they apparently weren't something to be scared of.

"To add to Eleanora-dono's explanation, us Noble Orcs are also given flesh-wives. However, they are thought of as symbols of pity given to the ones who are weak even among those who are unable to succeed one of the three hundred Noble Orc houses. Because the children born to flesh-wives are almost all Orcs," one of the Noble orcs

explained. "If all of us Noble Orcs take citizen wives, the citizens will not be able to have children of their own, and we cannot request for wives to be sent from the other nations in large numbers, so it is something that cannot be helped."

Though the Noble Orc empire was indeed an 'empire,' it didn't use the same royalty and nobility system as human nations. This was only natural, as they had been separated from humans since a hundred thousand years ago, before the humans had an aristocratic system.

There was a moderately-sized group of the families that were known as the three hundred 'houses,' and the heads of those families were allocated positions known as 'seats' based on their abilities.

And the family heads who had gained these 'seats' would command those of their 'houses' to carry out their duties.

To take the Noble Orcs of the frontline fort as an example, Buburin and the Noble Orc General's two houses had been given the seat responsible for building frontline bases.

Those seats were apparently temporary, however.

"And that means the family heads who have gained seats and the few high-ranking members of each family who support the family heads are able to take real people for wives," said Vandalieu. "By the way, how is your arm? Do you think you can swing a sword like you did before?" he asked Prince Budarion.

"Let's see... there won't be any problems for everyday use. But I don't think I can swing a sword as well as before," Prince Budarion replied as he rubbed the arm that had once been the Noble Orc General's, testing its sense of touch.

It wasn't that his own arm had been regenerated through magic; someone else's arm had been transplanted onto him. The size was almost the same, but the amount of muscle was different, so he wasn't confident that he could reproduce his own sword techniques in the same way as before with someone else's arm.

"I see. Well then, there is no choice but to regain that ability through the upcoming battles," said Vandalieu. "Prince Budarion, if possible, I would like to have you defeat Bugitas with your own hands. We will support you with everything we have, but you need to regain the strength you possessed before at the very least."

“With my own hands?” Prince Budarion repeated, seeming to think that Vandalieu’s request was strange. “Would you not be able to defeat Bugitas without my strength, Shrine-Maiden-dono? For instance, Borkus is certainly stronger than I am. I can tell that Eleanora-dono, Vigaro-dono, Basdia-dono and Bone-Man-dono all possess respectable strength as well, and Zadiris-dono’s skill with magic is substantial as well. Legion-dono also has something mysterious about them. They should be able to fight Bugitas on even grounds. And you, Shrine-Maiden-dono... honestly speaking, I am horrified by the fact that you can manipulate the fragments of the Demon King as if they were your own limbs, but it should not be difficult for you to defeat Bugitas if you were to use those.”

Indeed, Vandalieu and his companions were far more than enough to kill Bugitas at this point in time.

Of course, there were many Noble Orcs and Orcs who had joined Bugitas’s side and started worshipping Ravovifard. In addition, in the worst-case scenario, it was possible that something had to be done about Ravovifard himself as well. Considering that, no amount of fighting strength would be enough, however.

But with Zanalpadna’s forces, Budarion’s loyal vassals whose wounds had been healed, and the soldiers that would soon be gathered from the other nations, the numerical advantage would be turned around.

With that being the case, there was no need to be fixated on having Prince Budarion, who wasn’t in his original state, to defeat Bugitas himself. That was what the prince thought.

“If you are taking my emotions into consideration, then I am grateful for that. However, my emotions are not what should be prioritized. What should be prioritized is restoring peace to all of the nations as soon as possible. Do not pay attention to someone like me, who caused war in this land for the first time due to my lack of strength; I want you to simply achieve success without holding back,” Prince Budarion said, lowering his head as he suppressed his desire for vengeance.

But Vandalieu did not nod his head. “No, you defeating Bugitas is necessary for that peace,” he said.

“My word. Why in the world is that?” asked Prince Budarion.

“It’s because while the Noble Orc empire is virtuous, it will only recognize the strong as its emperor. If one of us were to defeat Bugitas, we would end up ruling the empire or at least become involved in its management, wouldn’t we?” said Vandalieu.

“I think that is entirely true, but...”

After all, Vandalieu would become the hero who defeated the usurper. The Noble Orcs would naturally desire and welcome heroes to stand at the top.

“But I’m not confident that I or any of my companions can rule the empire,” Vandalieu said. “Even if things work by having people interpret the Orc language, I can’t imagine that we could treat the empire’s unique political system, culture and sense of values properly.”

In the news and newspapers that Vandalieu had seen on Earth, there had been numerous incidents where developed nations had defeated dictators and become involved in the management of the developing nations by supporting them. But he hadn’t gotten the impression that this had been particularly successful.

It wasn’t enough to be called a failure, but it was far from the success that the developed nations had first imagined. That was what Vandalieu thought.

There was the possibility that they had succeeded after Vandalieu died on Earth, but even so, that would mean that it would take years, maybe even over a decade, for that success. Vandalieu couldn’t imagine that this success was proportional to the long years of determination that it would take.

Vandalieu didn’t think that the case of the Noble Orc empire was the same as the events on Earth, but he didn’t intend to take a gamble on whether he could properly manage a nation of people when he didn’t know whether Demon Path Enticement and Guidance: Demon Path would work on them.

It was possible that he could cause Noble Orc fetuses to mutate with death-attribute Mana in the same way that he had changed Orc fetuses into Orcuses, but he had no intention of waiting for the generation of this new race to replace all of the Noble Orcs.

Incidentally, there were still no signs of Demon Path Enticement or Guidance: Demon Path having any effects on Prince Budarion or the Noble Orcs and Orcs that were his subordinates. The ‘Holy Son of Vida’ Title did seem to be having an effect, however.

“...Then how about leaving trustworthy Noble Orcs as your representatives?” Prince Budarion said, voicing a reasonable suggestion.

“The Noble Orc I trust the most is you, Prince Budarion,” Vandalieu replied immediately.

Prince Budarion swallowed. “That is... I am happy that you feel that way, but... I have already been defeated by Bugitas once. There would be many who would not accept me ruling the empire once more.”

“That is why I want to have you win this time,” said Vandalieu.

The conversation had come back to where it had begun.

“Hmm, you ask a difficult thing of me, Shrine-Maiden-dono.”

Realizing that Vandalieu had no intention of changing his mind, Prince Budarion felt pressure, but at the same time, exhilaration at the fact that he would get an opportunity to erase the disgrace of his defeat.

And he began to feel an indescribable trust in Vandalieu, who was less than half of his own height.

“For now, let’s go to the lower level for rehabilitation by fighting weak monsters once the treatment is finished. As for your weapon, I have a spare magic sword that I’d intended to give to Borkus, so I’ll give it to you to celebrate your recovery,” said Vandalieu.

“Thank you for everything, Shrine-Maiden-dono. I am accruing so many favors that I do not know how I am supposed to repay them,” Prince Budarion said. “Talosheim is fortunate to be ruled by a wonderful queen like you.”

“...I’m male, so I’m not a queen,” Vandalieu said, finally realizing that his gender had been mistaken up until now.

“B-BUHIH?!” Prince Budarion shouted in the Orc language at this shocking revelation.

The two of them looked at each other on the grassy plain as a gentle breeze blew past.

『The levels of the Surgery, Demon Path Enticement, Guidance: Demon Path and Materialization skills have increased!』

The commonly-known ‘Shelter’ that existed beneath Zanalpadna had an official title: The Shell-less Open Field.

It was a Dungeon.

It was an E-class Dungeon, but even so, one might question the sanity of those thinking to use it as a shelter in times of emergency. However, if one thought about it, there was a rational reason for this.

It was simply because the inside of this low-difficulty Dungeon was safer than the area outside the city.

Monsters of Rank 4 and above were rampant outside the city. It was possible to encounter Rank 5 monsters which would normally need a group of C-class or D-class adventurers to take down, and there were even rare occasions where a Rank 7 or 8 monster would appear.

In comparison, Dungeons generally produced monsters suitable for their class unless a monster rampage was about to occur. The shallow floors of an E-class Dungeon... these would be filled with nothing but Rank 1 monsters that could be driven away by ordinary people who didn’t even possess combat-related skills.

The Dungeon bosses would generally be Rank 3, but they wouldn’t move from what was known as the boss chamber in the deepest part of the Dungeon.

In addition to this, the chances of monsters entering the Dungeon from outside was low. Monsters born outside Dungeons wouldn’t seek to enter a Dungeon of their own accord unless they happened to be chasing prey that had escaped into the Dungeon.

It seemed that monsters that had left a Dungeon would instinctively avoid entering it again. Though this didn’t apply to demi-human monsters, and tamed monsters would enter Dungeons on command.

And an E-class Dungeon would have almost none of the traps that Dungeons normally had.

In times of emergency... when the walls that protected the nation stopped functioning due to a natural disaster or an assault by a powerful monster, the inside of a low-class Dungeon was safer than the city.

This didn't only apply to Zanalpadna; the other city-states also used low-class Dungeons as shelters, farming land and sources of water.

The Noble Orcs who had survived with Prince Budarion, as well as those who had fled from the High Goblin and High Kobold nations, had been brought to the Shell-less Open Field because there was plenty of space for them here.

"Holy-Son-dono and the others are currently busy with the treatment of the prince and the others. In the meantime, we must make a decision," said Donaneris, who was sitting on her throne in the queen's chamber with a complicated expression on her face. "The two of you know this as well, don't you?"

The shoulders and carapace-covered joints of her youngest daughter Gizania and Gizania's friend Myuze trembled.

They knew they had done something outrageous; their faces were pale and covered in cold sweat.

"Gizania, Myuze, I will ask you to be sure. You have both given Holy-Son-dono a necklace of deep affection. And he did not ask for this; you offered them to him yourself. Is that correct?" Donaneris asked them.

"Y-yes, Mother," Gizania replied.

"Th-the same is true of me as well," said Myuze.

"Gizania, you gave yours as a sign of true friendship, and Myuze, yours as proof of your promise. Is that correct?" Donaneris continued.

"Yes," Gizania and Myuze replied simultaneously.

Their faces were growing paler each time Donaneris confirmed this information. However, Queen Donaneris was becoming gloomier, and Bakota, who was standing at her side, could feel his headache growing worse.

"In other words, Holy-Son-dono is wearing those necklaces around his neck, unaware

that for Arachne and Empusa, they are symbols that he has accepted your courting. This situation is worse than I thought,” Queen Donaneris said.

The necklaces made by polishing the cast-off skin that came off when Arachne and Empusa molted. When given to those of the same gender, they were proof of close friendship.

However, the meaning of the necklaces changed when given to those of the opposite gender. Giving the necklace of deep affection to someone of the opposite gender was the same as proposing, and accepting the necklace was accepting the proposal. And wearing the necklace around one’s neck had the same meaning as wearing a wedding ring.

“I was surprised to see your necklaces of deep affection at Holy-Son-dono’s neck, but at the same time, I was also happy,” said Queen Donaneris.

From her perspective, Gizania and Myuze’s proposals to Vandalieu and his acceptance of them were happy events, not something to be troubled about.

In human nations, it would be a great problem for a queen’s daughter, even one who was not called a princess, to decide her marriage partner on her own. However, in Zanalpadna, one’s bloodline was not the only thing that decided succession to the throne. In fact, it was an Empusa who had served as queen before Queen Donaneris.

And so, with regards to Gizania, her adult daughter deciding her marriage partner on her own posed no problems other than that as a parent, Donaneris would have wanted her to introduce her partner at least once beforehand.

As for Myuze, there normally wouldn’t be any problems at all.

And the fact that their chosen partner was Vandalieu was truly a happy, convenient thing for Queen Donaneris.

The prophesized Holy Son had appeared, and this would strengthen Zanalpadna’s bonds with him. Gizania was Donaneris’s own daughter, and Myuze was actually a niece of the previous queen. This could even be called destiny.

However, it was a great problem that these two had handed their necklaces of deep affection to Vandalieu without explaining their true meaning.

It was equivalent to submitting a false marriage registration form to the government office on Earth.

“How can I put this... did you not realize that he was a boy, not a girl?” Queen Donaneris asked.

“My apologies, Mother. I was completely oblivious,” said Gizania.

“I have no honor left,” said Myuze.

Vandalieu would likely be shocked to hear this, but Gizania and Myuze had completely failed to notice his true gender.

He was still only nine years old and his voice hadn’t changed yet; it was difficult to determine his gender when he was clothed. And other than the plentiful manes possessed by all Ghoul men, long hair and simple clothes didn’t give any indication as to the gender of those wearing them.

And Vandalieu had a well-featured appearance with skin as white as candle wax. He was expressionless and his eyes were empty, so he looked like a doll, but considering that, he was well-featured.

He used “ore” as a pronoun for himself, but from the perspective of Gizania and the others, he was a foreigner from an unknown nation. They had assumed that this might be normal where he came from and not paid much attention to it.

And Gizania used sessha, while Myuze used bou. They could hardly comment on the pronoun use of others.

Still, Gizania had spent several days with him from when she was saved until their return to Zanalpadna, and she had heard Borkus calling him “kid” and Zadiris referring to him as “boy” numerous times, but...

This could only be described as careless; it seemed that she had assumed things too heavily.

TLN: 俺/ore is a typically male pronoun, used by Vandalieu. 拙者/sessha and 某/bou are both old-language-style pronouns used by samurai.

坊主/bouzu, used by Borkus to refer to Vandalieu, is used to refer to boys.

As for Myuze, she had made the misunderstanding due to Vandalieu's appearance and because Gizania had already given him her necklace of deep affection. If Vandalieu was a boy, Gizania would have mentioned it and behaved appropriately. She hadn't, so Myuze hadn't thought twice about it and assumed that Vandalieu was a female friend like Basdia.

"Well, we didn't think that Van was a boy, either," said Basdia.

"I did not think that you had misunderstood and were calling him 'shrine maiden' instead of 'holy son.' I apologize," said Zadiris.

Gizania's friend and her mother were present here as representatives of those who knew Vandalieu well.

To be consulted.

"Umm, is it impossible to just pretend that it never happened? Wouldn't he understand if Gizania-chan and Myuze apologized to him together?" suggested Princess Kurnelia.

"It would be difficult," said Bakota, shaking his head. "We made him walk through the city with the necklaces of deep affection hanging from his neck. Though it seems that everyone has still mistaken Holy-Son-dono's gender."

Arachne and Empusa could tell who had given a necklace of deep affection if they were close to the person who had given it. That was why it was called the necklace of deep affection and used as proof of friendship and marriage.

Gizania wasn't called a princess, but there was no denying that she was the queen's daughter. Due to this, she had many Arachne and Empusa friends. Myuze was also well-known due to her occupation.

And Vandalieu and his companions were already famous in the city. The identities of those who had given him the necklaces had probably already spread throughout the city.

"...If the boy found out, he might do something eccentric from the shock. Like starting to wear a cape with 'male' written on it visibly. But you do not need to worry so seriously. I do not think the boy will be that upset," Zadiris said with confidence.

She couldn't imagine that Vandalieu would become angry at these two for

embarrassing him... he would likely become depressed at having his gender mistaken, but everyone would just need to console him afterwards.

“He has experienced misunderstandings due to differences in racial culture in the past, so it’ll probably be alright. Though I can’t speak in detail about that,” said Basdia, remembering that Vandalieu had accidentally accepted the Scylla Privel’s proposal about a year ago in the Scylla territory of the Sauron Duchy.

She wouldn’t go into the details, however.

“I see. I am truly thankful to you for saying that,” said Queen Donaneris with a sigh, and then she started to ask Zadiris and Basdia to help Gizania and Myuze apologize.

It was disappointing that with this, talks of her youngest daughter’s marriage would be cancelled, but the problem would be solved. She would wait for other opportunities and try to introduce her other daughters to Holy-Son-dono.

But Gizania objected. “Mother, wait. I still want to follow Holy-Son-dono,” she said.



- **Name:** Eleanora
- **Rank:** 10
- **Race:** Abyssal Vampire Viscount
- **Level:** 1
- **Job:** Magic Swordsman
- **Job level:** 58
- **Job history:** Slave, Servant, Apprentice Mage, Apprentice Warrior, Mage, Demon Eye User, Vassal Warrior, Slave Warrior, Vassal War Princess, Time-Attribute Mage
- **Age:** 12 years old (20 years old at time of Vampire transformation, 32 years old in total)
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Self-Enhancement: Subordination: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Corruption: Level 3
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Sunlight Resistance: Level 4
 - Allure: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 1 (Awakened from Bloodsucking!)
 - Mining: Level 1
 - Time-Attribute Magic: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Control: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Swordsmanship: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
 - Steal: Level 1
 - Housework: Level 3
 - Shield Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)

- Armor Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Magic Combat Technique: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - **Unique skills:**
 - Charming Demon Eyes: Level 7
-

Skill explanation:

【Magic Combat Technique】

A skill that invokes magic in the user's weapon or body, directly increasing Attribute Values using Mana. It is different from enchantment spells that increase attack power by enveloping one's weapon in flames or lightning and the no-attribute spell, Strengthen Physical Ability. It provides more versatile effects.

But if used on a weapon, the effects dissipate rapidly unless the weapon is a Magic Item, and the skill sometimes cannot be used depending on the material the weapon is made of and the magic that is used. For instance, it does not have much effect on weapons made of Adamantite, which has low compatibility with magic, while it is effective with Mythril weapons. When the magic is invoked inside the body to directly increase Attribute Values, a heavy burden is placed on the body if countermeasures are not taken. This burden is greater than the Surpass Limits skill, and if this skill is used without the appropriate countermeasures, the user will suffer burns if using fire-attribute magic, frostbite if using water-attribute magic, and so on.

Because of these limitations, it is not a popular skill among adventurers who do not have large incomes.

Monster explanation:

【High Goblins】

According to the legends, when the Demon King was still alive, the Goblins multiplied rapidly and increased their Ranks to diversify in various ways. However, the evil gods

were having trouble with them, as many Goblins were foolish, cowardly and, most importantly, weak.

Even cowardly Goblins became brave soldiers when a Goblin King was born, but most of them would die before becoming Kings.

That was why the evil gods had strengthened Goblins to create a superior race, High Goblins, for the purpose of commanding the Goblins.

They possess the same characteristics as Goblins – pointed ears and noses with dark green skin – but while many Goblins are ordinarily about the height of an adult's chest, High Goblins have the physiques of average-height adults even without increasing their Ranks.

Also, their appearances are slightly similar to humans if one ignores the color of their skin.

Their base Rank is 4, and as their slender appearances may suggest, they excel in speed and dexterity rather than strength. However, their most fearsome characteristic is their intellect.

Even Mages of the lower-race Goblins have intelligence that does not go beyond a child several years before adulthood, but High Goblins are as clever and cunning as humans.

And like their inferior counterparts, they are able to increase their Rank to diversify in various ways.

The only thing that is good about them is that as a superior race, they have lower ability to reproduce; their numbers are drastically fewer than ordinary Goblins. They have lifespans of approximately fifty years. They only give birth to one or two children at a time. It seems that children become adults approximately three years after they are born.

They can crossbreed with Goblins, but when this happens, the children are almost always born as Goblins.

If they breed with humans or members of Vida's races, the children are born as High Goblins or Goblins in approximately equal ratios.

Their reproductive ability is inferior to Goblins, who produce between three and five

offspring at once and mature within just a few months, but... Goblins submit unconditionally to their superior race, the High Goblins, so care must be taken. High Goblins are acknowledged to be a disaster-class race of monsters.

However, there is never a shortage of adventurers and knights who mistake High Goblins for Goblins and end up being killed.

Incidentally, their meat has a strong smell and is inedible, just like Goblin meat.

Chapter 138

The illusion of a decisive battle in Zozogante's Great Forest

"Mother, wait. I still want to follow Holy-Son-dono," said Gizania, raising an objection despite the fact that the problem had been resolved. "It is true that I mistook Holy-Son-dono's gender, but I truly felt that I wish to follow him. That has not changed, even now. And I owe him the debt of having saved my life. If Holy-Son-dono is going to face the trial to succeed the champion Zakkart, I must take part."

"I understand how you feel," Queen Donaneris said to her daughter. "The trial to determine the succession or second coming of the champion Zakkart, which has continued for about a hundred thousand years. An obstacle that has repelled all of the heroes of matchless valor who have faced it. The majority of them return alive, but there are also casualties. If the one who saved your life is going to challenge it, then it is only reasonable to want to take part."

"...Reasonable, is it?" Basdia said, confused. "Well, I do understand that you can't just do nothing if there's the possibility that your savior might die."

But it seemed that not only Queen Donaneris, but Chief Mage Bakota and the other Arachne and Empusa were convinced as well.

"Basdia-dono, this is what is known as the bushido*," Myuze told Basdia.

TLN: This literally means "path of the bushi," it's like a samurai code of chivalry.*

It seemed that the bushido spoken of in Zanalpadna was different to that on Earth. It was likely that concepts related to ambition and duty were emphasized.

"...Is it something like chivalry?" asked Basdia.

Of course, there was no way for her to know that the bushido was different. She seemed to be interpreting the bushido to be something like chivalry.

“I am curious about the difference in information regarding the Trial of Zakkart between the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range and the outside... but it does not seem appropriate to ask this now,” said Zadiris.

On the outside of the Boundary Mountain Range, the Trial of Zakkart was known as an extremely dangerous Dungeon that almost none other than the Five-colored Blades have ever returned from alive. And it was rumored that the one who cleared the Dungeon would be considered to have as much power as the champion Bellwood, the one who had defeated the fallen champion Zakkart.

However, inside the Boundary Mountain Range, it was still known as a highly difficult Dungeon, but most who challenged it returned alive. And the one who cleared it would be considered the successor or the second coming of not Bellwood, but Zakkart.

They were completely opposite descriptions.

The fact that the one who cleared the Dungeon would become Bellwood or Zakkart’s successor was merely a rumor, so it wasn’t strange that these rumors differed between the inside and outside of the Boundary Mountain Range. However, the difference in the rumored survival rate of those who challenged it couldn’t be explained.

It was difficult to imagine that it was simply that those outside the Boundary Mountain Range were weak while those inside it were strong.

The Trial of Zakkart was a famous Dungeon outside the Boundary Mountain Range. Thus, there were reckless people who challenged it in an attempt to test themselves, but other than them, most who challenged it possessed the strength of at least B-class adventurers; most of them were as strong as A-class adventurers.

Considering that they had that much strength, they weren’t at all inferior to the heroes who lived inside the Boundary Mountain Range.

Perhaps it is because the races of those who challenge the Dungeon are different? Zadiris wondered. Using Zanalpadna as a reference, it is difficult to imagine that those who are not members of Vida’s races, the humans, Elves and Dwarves, would become powerful enough. Now that the boy has said that he will challenge it, I want to ask about this matter in more detail, but... it seems that this will take some time.

The reason Queen Donaneris and Bakota hadn’t talked about the Trial of Zakkart up until now was not because they had wanted to keep quiet about it, but because they

had simply assumed that Zadiris and the others had known this information without it being needed to be said.

They were sheltered from the outside by the Boundary Mountain Range, so they hadn't known that there were differences in the information regarding the Trial of Zakkart on the inside and outside.

She didn't know this, but simply asking why the information was different wouldn't give any answers that anyone would want.

"That will come after this has all calmed down," Zadiris decided as she continued watching.

"I understand your feelings," said Queen Donaneris. "I understand, but you being with Holy-Son-dono would be complicated... No, if Holy-Son-dono has taken a liking to you, then perhaps there is no problem? How are things in that regard?"

"Indeed, if Holy-Son-dono takes a liking to Gizania-dono, then there will be no problems, even though there was a misunderstanding with the necklace of deep affection," said Bakota.

Was this their one chance? Bakota nodded in agreement with Queen Donaneris.

"No, would that not be imprudent? And from what I have heard, Holy-Son-dono already has numerous candidates to become his brides. Basdia is one of them," said Gizania.

She wanted to follow Vandalieu, but she had deceived him, even if it wasn't intentional, and she was against making use of that. And she felt bad for Basdia and the others.

"That's true, but you don't need to worry. It's not like you're going to keep Van all to yourself, is it? I heard that you people share your husbands with each other as well, so there are no problems," Basdia said, reassuring her.

"If there are multiple candidates, then I'm sure it's fine for Gizania-chan to join them! Darling is planning to marry people other than me as well, and Gizania-chan is cute!" said Princess Kurnelia, seemingly not going in the sis-con direction of not wanting to hand her younger sister to anyone else.

"Is it normal for one to be unconcerned no matter how many wives their husband

has?" Myuze asked.

This would normally be true, but the truth was that not only Basdia, but Zadiris and Eleanora as well expected that Gizania might be bothered by this. So if she did actually become bothered by it, everyone would simply think, "as expected."

And Zadiris didn't really know what Vandalieu thought regarding such matters.

The boy has welcomed everyone with open arms up until now, after all. Though it seems that it is not as if he feels nothing at all, Zadiris thought, but she had another thought as well.

"Well, I suppose he has fewer partners than Vigaro, so there are no problems," she said.

Vigaro, Basdia's father, had experience with partners whose numbers were not in the tens or twenties, even if Zadiris was excluded. They had grown fewer in number since Vandalieu solved the Ghouls' birth rate problem, but even so, they were few only in comparison with his old self.

That was why Zadiris thought that it wouldn't be a problem... though in Vigaro's case, these relationships were like de-facto marriages rather than marriages like on Earth or Origin, so the circumstances should have been strangely different.

"Gizania, the problem is how you feel about the boy," said Zadiris. "Either way, after you repay your favor to the boy, you intended to think about your future, including marriage, were you not? It simply means that your marriage partner might be the boy. Before confirming the boy's feelings, you must first think about that."

"How I feel..." Gizania closed her eyes and went into thought.

But she had felt positive feelings for Vandalieu from the beginning. Even excluding the strange charm, he was the first member of the opposite gender... indeed, the opposite gender, who had called her beautiful.

Among the large-build Arachne with robust bodies, Gizania had trained substantially in order to be of use to her older sister, Princess Kurnelia, and to one day become a true Bushi.

Thus, she'd had almost no interactions with the men of Zanalpadna, many of whom

possessed production-related Jobs. The only exception was her own father.

She had only vaguely thought that she would one day choose a partner to create children with from among the men who had been acknowledged as husbands by her sisters other than Princess Kurnelia and the citizens who lived in the same tower as her.

It wasn't that they didn't have charm. They were good people, but...

Comparing them to Holy-Son-dono, I find Holy-Son-dono to be more desirable.

Vandalieu was far more powerful than Gizania, so she had to work hard to catch up to him, but they could be together even in training. Indeed, they could truly be together. Because Vandalieu, the Insect User, could equip Gizania inside his body with the Insect Binding Technique skill.

But would she be able to move forward and think of him as a member of the opposite gender when she had mistaken him for a member of the same gender all this time?

Gizania opened her eyes and looked up. "C-could I perhaps put this decision on hold?" she said, averting her gaze.

"M-muh, you would falter there, my daughter?" said Queen Donaneris.

"That's just like Gizania-chan... come to think of it, what are you going to do, Myuze?" asked Princess Kurnelia.

"Me? It is unavoidable, so I am thinking that it would be fine if I could be at Holy-Son-dono's side," Myuze said, accepting things quickly compared to Gizania. "Holy-Son-dono can clone himself, conceal himself and might one day become able to transform into a giant toad; he is the closest being to a ninja there is! If I am at his side, my training will progress as well. And I am already seventy years old. I intended to have children before I reached one hundred, so this is perfect. At first, I thought Holy-Son-dono would be difficult to be with as he is expressionless, but he seems to be good-natured. Of course, this all only applies if Holy-Son-dono takes a liking to me."

"Myuze-dono, i-is it really alright to make such a clear decision?" Gizania asked.

"Gizania-dono, I am a standard example for Zanalpadna. In fact, relationships such as the one between Princess Kurnelia and Prince Budarion are the exceptions."

After all, it was a polygamic society where the women living in a tower shared the men living in the same tower. Of course, one couldn't freely adopt any particular male that they liked into their family. Women often had to choose partners for creating children from among men who had been chosen by other women.

"Is that true?!" Gizania exclaimed.

"Gizania-chan, Darling and I are special. Our encounter was –" Princess Kurnelia began.

"Leaving that aside, we should find out what Van thinks early on," said Basdia. "Though I have a feeling I know what his answer will be."

"Indeed. I can imagine what his response will be," Zadiris agreed.

"...Though it may be a little late, I have started to feel a little anxious," said Queen Donaneris.

"My queen, let us presume that they are engaged for now," said Bakota.



After that, Vandalieu, who had already realized that his gender had been mistaken due to Prince Budarion's reaction, listened to the accurate descriptions of the necklaces of deep affection with the same dead eyes as usual. As Basdia and Zadiris had expected, his response was, "If the two of you are alright with it, then please take care of me from now on."



"Don't falter! There are only three enemies!"

"Push them back with our numbers! Mages, don't stop your spells!"

"GUAAAAH! It's impossible; no matter how much we surround them, we can't face them!"

Around the time Bugitas was struggling to decide whether he should withdraw his troops from the other battlefields to focus on conquering Zanalpadna and killing

Budarion, the Ghoul nation was in a crisis that threatened its existence.

The entire Ghoul nation was inside a D-class Dungeon called Zozogante's Great Forest.

It was a twenty-floor Dungeon, entirely made up of forests, created for these Ghouls who had low birth rates by Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest, who had become their guardian.

By living inside a Dungeon, their bodies and reproductive functions were stimulated more than if they were living in a Devil's Nest, and even after a hundred thousand years, they were able to maintain something that was large enough to be called a nation.

Even so, unlike Zanalpadna's E-class Dungeon, the Shell-less Open Field, this Dungeon was dangerous and there was no room to adopt citizens.

That was why almost all of the nation's citizens were Ghouls, and the population was about five thousand.

It had the smallest population among the nations near Zanalpadna.

However, the people could earn their keep in the Dungeon, and the warriors could go and hunt outside once they had trained themselves enough to survive on the outside, so it was a small but prosperous nation.

It was an army led by the 'Fang-Spear Boar' Budirud, the most exceptional spear-user among Bugitas's subordinates, who had broken the peace of this nation.

Budirud, a Rank 9 Noble Orc General, was a soldier who wielded a magic spear created from the tusk of a Prominence Mammoth, a monster that he had hunted on his own. But he was not merely powerful as an individual. He was known as an exceptional commander who made skillful use of his subordinates.

The Ghouls put up a good fight against the elite force of Noble Orcs, High Goblins and High Kobolds led by Budirud, but they were repeatedly retreating into the deeper floors of the Dungeon.

"NOOOOO! Stop them at all costs! Don't let them do as they please anymore!"

"Protect the chief! Warriors, show them your pride!"

“You think we’ll hand you our women?!”

Unlike the Ghouls outside the Boundary Mountain Range, who possessed meager levels and variety in their skills and found it difficult to increase their Ranks, the Ghouls of Zozogante’s Great Forest could change Jobs and safely become Rank 5 once they became proficient warriors.

And although they did not possess exceptional blacksmithing techniques, they would collect the items found in the Dungeon’s treasure chest and use them for equipment.

Thus, the nation was being protected by the warriors who were few in number, but elite in quality. Though their enemies were Rank 6 Noble Orcs, Ghouls possessed both Jobs and Ranks, so they could win about half of the one-on-one battles. There were five thousand such Ghouls, while Budirud commanded only a few hundred. This was not a battle that the Ghouls should have been disadvantaged in.

However, Budirud and his army had been strengthened by some kind of power. It was something that was far clearer than the effects of the Commanding and Coordination skills.

And because the Ghouls lived in a Dungeon, they had been unable to build sturdy walls like the ones in Zanalpadna. It seemed that there were no problems in building things like houses, but only Vandalieu, who possessed the Labyrinth Construction skill, could build walls that were not easily broken, preventing the coming and going of monsters.

In addition, combat in this forest-shaped Dungeon, where space was limited, was advantageous to the small army of elites led by Budirud.

To top it all off, Budirud had once led an army to stop a monster rampage from a certain Dungeon in the past; he was one of the few men who had experience in winning a battle by commanding a large army against a large number of enemies.

Faced with this enemy and having retreated numerous times until being cornered down to the tenth floor, the Ghouls prepared themselves for the decisive battle.

“GYAAAAAH!”

“Budirud... Why would a soldier as great as yourself... no, I will not ask anymore. You are a rebel, but you are a warrior who has supported the empire up until now. You have served well. You should rest now.”

“Th-this is hopeless! We can’t hold!”

“...Prince Budarion, Budirud’s spirit is behind you.”

But before the decisive battle could unfold, Vandalieu and his companions had assaulted Budirud’s army from behind.

Vandalieu had heard from Buburin’s spirit that the Ghoul nation was under siege. He and his companions had pushed forward up to this point, instantly killing the lookout units that had been positioned along the way, passed through the entrance of Zozogante’s Great Forest and then pushed on, with the few elite members of his party overwhelming and scattering the enemies standing in the way.

Vandalieu, who possessed the Labyrinth Construction skill that allowed him to understand the floors and structure of the Dungeon the moment he entered it and even change the structure of the Dungeon as he liked, had split up Budirud’s army and cornered them into a state where they couldn’t exert their proper strength.

And then the army had been scattered by Borkus, Vigaro, Zadiris, Basdia, Bone Man as well as Prince Budarion, who had recovered his lost arm and eye.

Budirud and his army had all been strengthened by the effects of a skill that was unknown to them, But Borkus and the others were strengthened by Guidance: Demon Path. And the strengthening effect was greater on Vandalieu’s side.

If this was a battle on the surface rather than in a Dungeon, and Budirud commanded an army of over a thousand rather than just a few hundred elite individuals, some of them may have been able to escape.

But because the battlefield was inside a Dungeon, Vandalieu and his companions had been able to exterminate every enemy without letting a single one escape.

It was fortunate that news of this battle would be delayed in reaching Bugitas, who was likely troubling himself over it in the Noble Orc empire.

“Hmm, I see,” said Prince Budarion.

“Should I use Visualization?” Vandalieu suggested. “That would make him able to speak, though.”

“No, let us not. It is unlikely that he would be able to converse with me in that state,” Prince Budarion said.

“That does not seem to be the case. I seem to be unnaturally calm right now,” said Budirud’s spirit.

Budirud had continued fighting while letting out beast-like roars until the moment Prince Budarion defeated him. According to Prince Budarion, he had been a composed general who had served for a long time, but to Vandalieu, he had appeared to be nothing other than a bloodthirsty berserker.

But he seemed to have regained his reasoning the moment Prince Budarion finished him off with his magic sword, turning him into a spirit.

“I apologize for my disgraceful behavior. I became a prisoner of the power of His Majesty the Emperor Bugitas... No, Bugitas. In exchange for my original power as a monster, I lost my ability to reason,” Budirud said.

These were the words of a man who, up until his death, had howled orders at his subordinates in the Orc language, cursed Prince Budarion with unbearably harsh words and looked at Basdia and Eleanora with a vulgar smile.

...Wouldn’t it normally be the opposite? The spirits of the dead were supposed to be more emotional than while they were alive.

Vandalieu was so perplexed that he canceled his plan of breaking Budirud’s soul.

Of course, it wasn’t only Budirud who had regained their sanity the moment they died. All of his subordinates had been like beasts before dying, but they had regained their ability to reason upon death.

“Perhaps Budirud and his subordinates were under Bugitas or Ravovifard’s influence, and now that they have been released through death, they are under my lord’s influence and regained their original personalities?” said Bone Man.

“I didn’t know Bugitas had that kind of skill. He might have been given it by Ravovifard,” said Prince Budarion. “Would it not be a guidance skill like yours, Holy-Son-dono? If that is the case, then I would be able to understand how a man like Budirud was misled.”

Prince Budarion hadn't been under the effects of Vandalieu's Guidance: Demon Path until immediately after receiving the transplant surgery for his arm and eye. However, he was now under its effects.

It seemed that with the conversation following the surgery, Prince Budarion had acknowledged Vandalieu.

And his loyal vassals had followed, falling under the effects of Guidance: Demon Path as well.

"If it is a guidance skill, what would it be? The heretic path or the animal path?" Vandalieu said, thinking a little.

"Cooked, let's eat," groaned Eisen.

"The mammoth skewers are done, Van," said Basdia.

"Yay, itadakimasu."

Unable to win against the roast meat, Vandalieu decided to prioritize his appetite first.

It was generous amounts of skewered meat that Eisen and Basdia had made from the meat of the tamed Mammoth that Budirud had used as a mount.

It seemed that in the area around Zanalpadna and the Ghoul Nation, there weren't any dinosaurs, but there were mammoths and saber-toothed tigers – or to be more precise, monsters that resembled them exactly.

The mammoths were not the enormous, fur-covered elephants that Vandalieu had imagined, but more like large versions of African elephants.

Vandalieu had been surprised when Legion's Enma had informed him that mammoths of warm regions didn't possess fur.

Leaving that aside, this was another luxurious food ingredient like dinosaur meat.

Vandalieu took the skewer, bit into it, tore some meat off and tasted it as he chewed.

"The tare made from Eisen's iron apples is effective; the meat's smell is reduced and it has become softer. The way it's been cooked is perfect; the more I chew, the more my

mouth is filled with flavor. It's very delicious," said Vandalieu's spirit, giving his impression on the meat with the Out-of-body Experience skill as the physical Vandalieu was busy chewing.

Eisen and Basdia gave each other a happy high-five.

"It seems like it would be delicious in hamburgers or teriyaki as well. However, the meat is tough overall, so it may not be well-suited for steaks," said Zadiris. "How is it eaten in Zanalpadna?" she asked Gizania and Myuze, wondering how mammoth meat was used.

"Mammoth meat is tough, so we often use it for boiled dishes. I prefer it raw, however," said Gizania.

"I also end up eating the meat raw when I hunt mammoths," said Myuze.

"...I wonder if you even make sashimi out of it," said Zadiris.

It seemed that their answer was even wilder than she had expected.

"By the way, Vandalieu-sama, do you not need to stop that? Vigaro has been rampaging on his own for a while," said Eleanora, pointing at Vigaro, who was having contests of strength with the warriors and mages of the Ghoul nation.

After Budirud's defeat, the Ghouls of Zozogante's Great Forest had thanked Vandalieu and his companions for saving them, become wildly enthusiastic under the effects of various things such as Vandalieu's 'Ghoul King' and 'Holy Son of Vida' Titles, and then began a feast to celebrate the victory, using the meat of Budirud's army.

"What's wrong?! Face me some more! Pick up your weapon and stand up! You won't be able to protect your women and children like this!" Vigaro roared.

"Bumo~oh. I have a wife, so I don't really need to be popular..." groaned Gorba.

"Captain, you're dependable, so I think you could do with another one or two," said another Orcus.

Vigaro, Gorba and the other Orcuses had suddenly become very popular among the local women, causing them to be challenged by the local men. Vigaro had willingly accepted, and before anyone realized, he was mowing down large numbers of the men

from Zozogante's Great Forest.

To be more accurate, Vandalieu had almost become popular as well, but Basdia and Zadiris had been at his side, and the women had heard that "Van isn't at the age where he can make children yet," so that was why Vigaro and Gorba had become popular instead.

Incidentally, Borkus wasn't present, as he had said, "I'm going to go clear this place to kill some time," and departed on a solo-clear of Zozogante's Great Forest. He would probably clear it without any difficulty and return before long.

"Well, it's probably fine," said Vandalieu. "But I suppose I should warn him not to hurt their hips... more importantly, I have to say something to Kasim and Zeno the next time we return to Talosheim."

"It might be natural for you to say this as you are also the Ghoul King, but is it really alright to say that at your age, Holy-Son-dono?" asked Prince Budarion.

"Age... come to think of it, how old are you, Prince Budarion?"

"Me? I will turn fifteen this year," replied the three-meter-tall Prince Budarion.

Noble Orcs became adults within ten years, so even though he was fifteen years old, he wasn't a youngster.



Job explanation:

【Dark Fighter】

A Job that can be acquired by those who have experienced the Assassin Job. It provides general bonuses to Assassin Technique, Unarmed Fighting Technique, Short Sword Technique, Surpass Limits and skills needed by scouts.

Skill explanation:

【Assassin Technique】

A skill that mainly provides bonuses to the deadliness of surprise attacks. Also, when weapons are concealed in the user's clothes or equipment, they can be used more effectively.

Monster explanation:

【High Kobolds】

Like High Goblins, High Kobolds are a superior race of Kobolds that were created by evil gods.

They are about as tall as an average human, and at a glance, they look like bipedal wolves.

Their base Rank is 5, and even if they are not holding weapons, caution is needed, as they can use their claws and fangs to fight with the Unarmed Fighting Technique skill.

Like Kobolds, they are proficient at coordinating with their allies, and are as intelligent as humans. However, they possess strong bonds with their allies, and unlike High Goblins and Noble Orcs, they view members of their respective inferior race as members of the same group, rather than treating them like slaves.

Their reproductive ability is vastly weaker than regular Kobolds; they give birth to one or two children at a time, and the children become adults after five or six years.

However, a single High Kobold accompanied by Kobolds forms a solid fighting force. For this reason, they are designated as a disaster-class race of monsters.

Chapter 139

People who need to take leave

Tarkus, a mage of Duke Marme's army, was surveying the ground from the skies above through the eyes of a bird-shaped familiar created through magic.

This breeze is pleasant... even the heat of summer doesn't bother me like this.

He was proficient in magic that allowed him to share the five senses of his familiars, and he enjoyed it.

In Lambda, where nature often came with danger in equal portions and transport methods and ways to record images were limited, there were few who could enjoy picturesque scenery like on Earth or Origin.

Exceptional mages could fly freely through the sky, but for many mages, flying through the sky like a bird was difficult. They could perhaps only manage to float about helplessly.

Tarkus himself was a mage among the many. However, by using magic that allowed him to share the five senses of his familiars, he could cut through the wind and fly like a bird, looking down upon the earth.

The green of the trees, the water surface of the marshlands that reflected the glistening sunlight, all of it was beautiful.

It is hard to believe that this scenery was originally the territory of those repulsive Scylla.

The land looked too good to be wasted on monsters that had the upper body halves of women and lower body halves of octopuses, but the truth was that it was land that was difficult to make use of for those other than the Scylla, so that was how it was.

No, this is work. Concentrate.

Tarkus, as a mage of Duke Marme's army, had begun this mission a few days ago, the mission to scout the former Scylla territory from the sky, as the resistance was

apparently hiding in this area.

He had disguised his familiar with the shape and color of a bird that was commonly seen in this area, and he was searching from above for the resistance, and, if possible, traces of the Scylla that had vanished into thin air.

I don't know the details, but I have been told to be cautious. Though it is a mystery as to what I'm supposed to be cautious of.

This wasn't an unusual scouting mission in itself. Searching from the skies was effective for determining the presence of bandits or monster settlements.

However, his colleagues that had undertaken missions into the Scylla territory recently had gone missing. Tarkus had only been told that they were on leave, but the face of the superior who told him this had been as white as paper.

And just before Tarkus began the mission today, he had been warned to be cautious. To cancel the mission immediately if he sensed anything out of the ordinary. Even if it meant discarding his familiar.

Tarkus couldn't clearly picture any kind of danger that would warrant such warnings and orders, however.

Mages conducting reconnaissance through familiars were normally safe from danger. They shared the familiars' senses, but not the damage that the familiars took. They would feel pain, but once the mage's concentration was broken to a certain extent, the sharing of the familiar's senses would cease, and the mage might lose consciousness at worst.

Their physical bodies would be defenseless while they were concentrating, but Tarkus and the other mages were manipulating their familiars inside the Amid Empire's army's towers; they were essentially being protected by countless soldiers.

If my familiar is destroyed in a gruesome way, then I might inevitably need a few days' rest, but...

...e.

?!

Feeling like he had heard a sound resembling a voice, Tarkus turned his familiar around. What the familiar saw was a rectangular boulder that could be seen among the trees growing on the slope of a mountain. It was clearly not a natural construct.

Thinking that it might be a clue to the resistance's whereabouts, Tarkus made his familiar approach the boulder.

As he did, he noticed what was strange about the boulder.

What is this? A monolith?

A flat, rectangular, black monolith built among the trees. At its center was a motif shaped like an enormous eye, and there were small symbols carved closely around it.

...CO.

This isn't... a code of the resistance. Is it an inscription left behind by the Scylla? Even if they possess the upper bodies of human women, they are a corrupt race born from monsters, after all. It would not be strange for them to leave behind such a curious object. Wait, it hasn't been long since this has been built. It's still new!

There wasn't much dust gathered on the monolith, and there were signs of the earth around where it had been built having been dug up.

In other words, this monolith had been built after the Scylla had vanished. With that being the case, was this an object created by the resistance's hands?

...e... ere.

Deciding to search for them, Tarkus made his familiar approach even closer. But then he noticed something even stranger.

Ever since he had approached the monolith, the mountain had become too quiet. There wasn't a single noise made by birds or small animals. Even the sound of the trees swaying in the wind sounded distant.

Is it just my imagination? No, something is wrong! Could this be...?!

Startled, Tarkus beat the wings of his familiar and tried to make it gain some distance from the monolith.

At that moment, he realized that he could hear a strange voice.

...Come.

What is this?! What kind of sound... what voice is that?!

Surprised, Tarkus made his familiar look around, but there wasn't even a single Goblin to be seen, let alone a person.

But the voice was growing steadily closer. It was as if it were whispering in his ear.

Come... here.

Thinking that this was impossible, Tarkus looked back at the monolith, and his eyes met the eye-shaped motif. He was being looked at by the monolith!

Come here... now!

The horribly repulsive voice that sounded as if it were piercing Tarkus's brain resounded directly inside his mind.

His concentration broken, Tarkus's consciousness returned to his physical body.

"N-NOOOO!" he screamed.

"What's wrong?! Oi, Tarkus, calm down!"

One of the soldiers of Duke Marme's army who were nearby rushed over to Tarkus.

But the monolith's voice still echoed in Tarkus's ears.

Come... here.

"I won't go! I WON'T GO!" Tarkus shouted with his eyes wide open, his entire body drenched in cold sweat.

The soldiers looked at him with expressions that were twisted in sorrow.

"Shit, Tarkus as well! Someone go and get the priest!"

“L-let me go! STOOP! I WON’T GOOO! I DON’T WANT TO GOOOOO!”

“Make him bite into a cloth! He’s going to bite his tongue!”

“MMPH?! MMMMPH!!”

The soldiers restrained Tarkus with movements that seemed to be well-practiced, and then took him to the room where the others like him were taking their ‘leave.’



“With this man called Tarkus, that’s the fifth... merciless as usual,” said Machida Aran.

“They’ll probably recover after a few months, but that’s a terrifying countermeasure,” said Shimada Izumi.

With pale faces, the two familiar spirits were looking through the records from Tarkus and the other mages who had tried to find clues as to the whereabouts of the Sauron Liberation Front.

The two of them were trying to find out what Vandalieu was doing by looking through the eyes of Lambda’s humans, but they had ended up seeing the process of the records’ owners going insane.

“...That monolith and stone circle is a countermeasure to Clairvoyance, isn’t it?” said Izumi.

“It can’t be anything else. It’s been built so that you can’t see the whole thing unless you’re looking from above,” said Aran.

A while ago, the reincarnated individuals had tried to use the power of one of the members of the Bravers who had recently died in Origin, the ‘Clairvoyance’ Tendou, to gather information on Talosheim and Vandalieu.

But although they had intended only to gather information, the ‘Death Scythe’ Konoe Kyuuji had conspired with Rodcorte and tried to use his cheat-like ability through the image produced by Clairvoyance to kill Vandalieu.

That had failed, and Konoe Kyuuji had perished, his soul broken. But because Tendou was safe, it should have been possible to try and gather information with Clairvoyance

once more.

But Vandalieu had taken a terrifying countermeasure.

“Objects that cause madness only when viewed from above. If we hadn’t become familiar spirits, it would have been bad news for us as well,” said Aran.

To be more precise, what Vandalieu had created were objects and paintings that enticed people to the Demon Path just by being looked at, but Aran and Izumi didn’t know that, so this is what they thought.

Because rather than be guided to the Demon Path, Tarkus and the other mages who had found these objects had gone mad. The reason for that was because they were members of Marme’s Army, many of whom belonged to Alda’s extremist faction.

Of course, Tarkus and the other mages were also members of Alda’s extremist faction, and had very radical, discriminatory views on Vida’s races.

That was why they had shown fierce reactions of rejection to the effects of the Mental Encroachment skill that had been placed in the objects and paint, their rejection of the guidance to the Demon Path causing disorders in their minds.

They had mentally carried out the thought of, “I’d rather die than become [blank].” Of course, this wasn’t the effect that Vandalieu had originally intended, so they would recover after a few months’ rest, even if they would have some trauma left.

“It would be bad if Tendou or Asagi were to see that. Even though they have cheat-like abilities, they don’t have mental fortitude,” said Izumi.

“You’re right,” Aran agreed. “Well, Tendou is refusing to use Clairvoyance after seeing the way Rodcorte does things, so that probably won’t happen, though.”

Rodcorte could forcibly control the reincarnated individuals to some extent as long as they existed within his Divine Realm, but he couldn’t force them to activate their cheat-like abilities.

That was a relief, but... Vandalieu was even warier of the reincarnated individuals now. How could a relationship be mediated between him and their Braver companions to prevent a bloodbath?

“And here I thought that we could have Tendou look at Vandalieu again and communicate through written messages.” Aran said wistfully.

“Rodcorte would definitely interfere the moment we tried. And it’s completely impossible with that countermeasure in place,” said Izumi.

“You’re right... I suppose we should consult everyone first. We still have time before the one-month limit.”



Vandalieu was troubled over his relationships with members of the opposite gender.

Ever since he lived on Earth, he had always yearned to build a warm family environment. He’d also had an obsession with luxuries since back then, but he’d thought that a family environment where his heart felt at ease with those he loved would be a luxury that money couldn’t buy.

That hadn’t changed now, even after his death on Earth, his death in Origin and his rebirth in Lambda.

But what if the number of those people is easily over ten? Is it a problem?

Basdia, who wanted Vandalieu to be the father of her second child, as well as Bilde who said that she wouldn’t mind being next and Tarea, who refused to say it. The maids Saria and Rita, Princess Levia, Princess Zandia, Jeena, Orbia and Privel. These ten had already been confirmed.

Eleanora and Bellmond said they were fine with being a servant and steward but likely had feelings of that sort, and Zadiris and Kachia likely had such feelings as well, though they wouldn’t say it clearly. Isla seemed fully intent on competing with Eleanora.

Legion was a friend, but Vandalieu had the feeling that they were following a similar pattern to Eleanora and Bellmond.

Pauvina, Jadal and the others were still children, so their opinions might change in the future as well.

Eisen, Rapi  age and Yamata were attached to Vandalieu, but he had the feeling that their affection was still not of that kind.

And Gizania and Myuze had been added to those. Accepting a necklace of deep affection from a member of the opposite gender and wearing it around one's neck was apparently equivalent to accepting a proposal.

The fact that Vandalieu had been mistaken as a 'shrine maiden' rather than the 'Holy Son' by these two... or rather, all of Zanalpadna's people, had been a shock to him. But after the incident with Privel, this was the second time that he had become engaged due to a misunderstanding.

Being waited upon by this many members of the opposite gender would be a great problem in the current-age Earth. Vandalieu wasn't the daimyo of Edo, so he would naturally be criticized.

The same applied in Origin.

In Lambda, it would depend on the society and what kind of position of that society he was in. Societies of people... Humans, Dwarves and Elves, were generally monogamous. However, it wasn't unusual for wealthy merchants and successful adventurers to have numerous mistresses and concubines.

For members of royalty and nobility, this was essentially a duty. Wedding multiple wives was a display of economic strength and the family's stability.

"The Mirg shield-nation is quite obstinate regarding this, but Ani-ue... the oldest, Alzard-aniue, had three wives," Kurt explained. "It would normally have been suitable for him to have four like our father or even five, but the financial situation of the Legston family of earls is quite bad now, so... no, perhaps he will forcibly take more?"

It seemed that it was appropriate for the head of the Legston family of earls from the Mirg shield-nation to have four or five wives.

"Why would there be a need to push himself to take more wives?" Vandalieu asked.

Kurt gave a bitter smile as he answered. "Because Chezare-aniue and I, who were supposed to support Alzard-aniue's children as branch families, have 'died.'"

The fact that Chezare had been killed and Kurt's death had been feigned were both events that had been caused by Vandalieu.

Alzard, the current Earl Legston, had lost both of his unmarried younger brothers

within a short period of time, so Kurt predicted that he would be driven by a need to produce more children.

“...I have done something bad, haven’t I. When I execute the plan to have him change sides as well, should I give him a virility drug as a present?” Vandalieu suggested.

“The effects of any virility drug created by you would likely be terrifying, so don’t do that. Alzard-anieue is no sexual prodigy, but his first-born son who will succeed him has already been born, and it would be problematic if he were to have too many children,” said Kurt with a pale face. “And as for you, Your Majesty... isn’t it fine to have over ten partners?” He shrugged, thinking that it wasn’t anything to be troubled over. “Though it depends on the size of the nation, it isn’t strange for the king of the nation to have that many. I’ve heard that the previous emperor of the Amid Empire had several dozen in his harem. Though I think that the current Emperor Marshukzarl has less than ten. And the now-deceased Duke Sauron likely laid his hands on over a dozen if you include his maids. Thanks to that, he had many orphans and caused a lot of trouble for them back then...”

Apparently, Duke Sauron, the father of Raymond Paris, had been quite the sexual prodigy.

“I think our nation is different to the empire and the Sauron region, though,” said Vandalieu.

The populations of the Amid Empire and Sauron Duchy were vastly greater. As for economic strength, wouldn’t the referee’s hand be raised on the Amid Empire’s side as well? That was what Vandalieu thought, but it seemed that Kurt thought otherwise.

“It is indeed different, but... it cannot be compared using the empire or the kingdom’s standards, because it is too different. Wouldn’t it go unnoticed by anyone if you even multiplied your candidates several times?” said Kurt, shaking his cold-sweat-covered face from side to side.

From his point of view, Talosheim was a rising nation that had been restored, and aristocratically speaking, Vandalieu was its first king and was in a position where he needed to leave behind many descendants. Small efforts like political marriages with branch families and other influential people would be far from enough to solidify the nation.

But Vandalieu's lifespan exceeded at least three thousand years, so he wouldn't need to worry about a successor within Kurt's lifetime as long as he wasn't killed.

To begin with, almost nobody in Talosheim had an ordinary sense of values regarding aristocracy.

To add to that, the citizens were believers of Vida and understood polygamy... or rather, some of them didn't think about these things that deeply and others didn't possess the concept of marriage at all.

And the nation's economy was good. Nobody knew how it would be in several thousand years from now, but... Kurt thought that there wouldn't be any economic slumps in the next few hundred years at the very least.

He even said that we should learn by example from Zanalpadna and this Ghoul nation, and that he will create low-class Dungeons to use as emergency shelters, farms and fisheries... Normally, a nation would need to cultivate uncultivated land or invade other nations to acquire land, but this king can simply increase the nation's land within a matter of hours.

Vandalieu, who could create new Dungeons with the Labyrinth Creation skill, would adopt the way that Dungeons were utilized on the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range. That would mean that Dungeons would be the same as extra land.

And Vandalieu could even roughly control the monsters produced inside the Dungeons that he created. He didn't normally do this because he wanted to increase the levels of his skills, but for Dungeons being used as shelters and production, he would likely leave them constantly standing still.

Resources were certainly necessary to wed multiple wives, but Vandalieu could gain any resources he needed at any time, so Kurt couldn't be blamed for giving such a vague response.

"Is that right?" said Vandalieu in confusion, blinking several times.

It seemed that he was unaware that he could create land from thin air.

"Hey, oi," said Borkus, poking Kurt's shoulder.

Not feeling like explaining these things endlessly, Kurt decided to ignore this. "The

important thing is what His Majesty wants to do, isn't it? In other words, his own feelings. What are those like?" he asked.

"Well, I think that's right as well, but..." Borkus muttered.

"My feelings... I'm very happy to be liked by everyone," Vandalieu said.

If he were to express his emotions, they couldn't be described as anything other than happy.

There was no way that he wouldn't feel happy about multiple members of the opposite gender liking him. And unlike on Earth, he was now in a position where it wouldn't be a problem for him to date multiple people.

So then, what would be inconvenient about accepting that?

Vandalieu, whose goal was the pursuit of his own happiness, was a very worldly-minded person.

"Then there won't be any problems," said Kurt.

"Hey kid, Kurt doesn't seem to want to turn this way, what's wrong?" Borkus asked, seeming bewildered.

"I think it's because Zozogante is over there," Vandalieu said in the direction of Borkus and Zozogante.

He had been consulting Kurt partially for the purpose of diverting his attention away from Zozogante, while using the Mental Encroachment skill to treat him.

This was the deepest part of Zozogante's Great Forest. The treasure chamber, which could only be reached by those who defeated the Dungeon boss.

Borkus, by clearing Zozogante's Great Forest on his own to kill time, had cut down all of the monsters in his way and reached this place. And then Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest, guardian of the Ghouls who lived in the southern region of the continent within the Boundary Mountain Range, had descended before him.

And then Zozogante had said to Borkus, "I'm sorry, but could you please ask your boss to come here?"

Having been requested this, Borkus had brought Vandalieu and Kurt, who was Vandalieu's lieutenant general.

At first glance, Zozogante appeared to be a large, twisted tree, but if one looked closely, the fruit hanging from its drooping branches were all eyeballs, and he had numerous mouths that looked like rips in the tree's trunk. This appearance had caused a huge shock to Kurt's mind.

That was what Vandalieu had been treating.

When Fidirg, the Dragon God of Five sins, had descended in the deepest part of the Scaled King's Nest, Vandalieu himself had been a little shaken but still fine, just like Basdia and everyone else except for Darcia, who was a powerless spirit. Thus, his perception of danger when meeting a god had become fainter, but it seemed that a chance encounter with a god had large effects on human minds.

Apparently, even the chief of Zozogante's Great Forest kept his head down and never looked up when meeting Zozogante.

"He didn't have to risk himself to try and prove that he was normal," Borkus muttered.

"Were you alright, Borkus?" Vandalieu asked.

"Well, I was a little scared, but that's all."

As for Borkus, he wasn't affected too much because he was already an Undead, possessed the Mental Corruption skill and because as a Rank 11 monster, he himself had already stepped into the realm of beings of legend and myth.

"Excuse me... may I begin now?" asked Zozogante, whose voice sounded like the creaking of a tree, in a reserved tone of speech.

"Ah, yes. Kurt, you mustn't turn around," said Vandalieu.

"Oi, oi, Your Majesty, don't treat me like a child... if I just squeeze my eyes shut, cover my ears and hunch over, I'll be fine," said Kurt.

"Is that really fine?" Vandalieu asked, but there was no reply from Kurt, as he was sitting on his knees, eyes shut and ears covered.

Thinking that it was best to have Kurt sleep for now, Vandalieu secreted a volatile sleeping drug and put Kurt to sleep.

Once Kurt's sleeping breaths could be heard, Zozogante began speaking.

"Ah, first of all, I offer you my gratitude for saving these Ghouls. They are not only my important believers, but they are like my own children, so I wished to avoid having them trampled down by Ravovifard's servants," he said.

"Not at all. I am the Ghoul King, after all, so please don't worry about it," said Vandalieu. "But if you can make various accommodations for us in the future, it would be very helpful."

"Ah, yes. Well then, you may take several of my daughters as your attendants –"

"I don't want those accommodations."

"Does it not make you happy to be liked by multiple members of the opposite gender?"

"Their feelings are the problem here."

With the reason for those feelings being because the god they believed in told them, Vandalieu wouldn't be particularly happy.

"I'll leave the blood-relationship-deepening exchanges to Vigaro," he said.

"I see... Well then, perhaps in a few hundred years when you feel up for it," said Zozogante, seeming disappointed at having been refused, but it seemed that he intended to patiently wait out the centuries. "Well then, how about accommodations in the form of my divine protection? I do not possess any sealed fragments of the Demon King, and I cannot think of anything else I can do in gratitude. I can bestow it upon your Ghoul companions and that plant-type monster."

"Are you talking about Eisen? Yes, please," said Vandalieu.

The divine protections of gods could increase Attribute Values, provide bonuses to the effects and acquisition of skills and even raise the limits of an individual's growth. They were equivalent to talent being given after birth.

Thus, it was best to accept divine protections unless they were from a god with

extremely incompatible qualities.

Zozogante was apparently on equal standing with Fidirg... in other words, in a low position among gods, but one would expect the divine protection to have an effect.

“I am grateful for your divine protection, but if you wanted to protect the Ghouls so badly, why did you do nothing until now?” Vandalieu asked. “I don’t intend to blame you, but this is a Dungeon that you created. Could you not have done something more?”

“That’s right. If you’d sent the Dungeon boss or the mid-boss at Budirud, even if they didn’t win the battle, couldn’t they have reduced the losses that the Ghouls suffered?” Borkus added.

Zozogante hadn’t been sealed away like Fidirg. Perhaps he might not have been able to descend onto the world and take part in the fight himself, wouldn’t he at least have been able to send the monsters produced by the Dungeon as reinforcements for the Ghouls?

“I wanted to do that, but... My hands were occupied with maintaining the barrier,” Zozogante said.

The gods in the southern region of the continent who were on Vida’s side had a painful circumstance to deal with.

It was the maintenance of a barrier that prevented the intervention of Alda, the god of law and fate, the one who had wounded Vida and the gods on her side including Zozogante in the war a hundred thousand years ago, as well as the intervention of Rodcorte, the god of reincarnation, who wanted to deny the existence of Vida’s races.

Immediately after the wounded Vida had raised the land of the continent with the last of her power to create the Boundary Mountain Range, she ordered Zozogante and the other gods who were still capable of action to surround the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range with a barrier.

Because of this barrier’s presence, Alda could not dispatch his familiar spirits directly into the area enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range, nor could he ‘call out’ to entice people to become his followers. In order to have any influence here, he needed to have his believers physically enter the Boundary Mountain Range from the outside.

This effect of the barrier applied to the entire area enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range, including Talosheim.

Rodcorte could not look at the records of the people living in Zanalpadna or the other cities that were protected by the gods on Vida's side. He couldn't directly interfere with the world, but it was possible that he would cooperate with Alda by sharing the information that he gained, so the barrier prevented this.

But this effect of the barrier did not apply to Talosheim, which was supposed to be protected by the Sun Giant Talos, nor to the marshlands, which were supposed to be protected by Fidirg, the Dragon God of Five Sins, as both had become incapable of action.

This hadn't proved to be a problem, however, as there were only Titans and Lizardmen living in Talosheim and the marshlands respectively, and Vandalieu's Guidance: Demon Path skill was there now.

This barrier that even interfered with Rodcorte was powerful, but it was special and required a vast amount of power to maintain. That was why Zozogante and the other weaker gods were spending most of their power on it.

And the gods more powerful than Zozogante had been entrusted with the sealing of the Demon King's fragments instead.

On top of that, there were still many gods whose wounds from the war of a hundred thousand years ago hadn't healed.

"That is why I am capable of little other than bestowing my divine protection and projecting a false image of myself like this to limited places in order to converse," said Zozogante. "The Pure-breed Vampires are all also fully devoted to the maintenance of the barrier, or to the protection of Vida and the healing of her wounds. Zanalpadna and Mububujenge were freer, but with Ravovifard... who knows where he got that much power. He was originally a god with about as much power as myself."

Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes, hadn't appeared before Vandalieu, and this was apparently because she was busy interfering with Ravovifard.

And Ravovifard had apparently been a god of equal rank to Zozogante and Fidirg, but he had somehow gained enough strength to suppress Mububujenge and Zanalpadna, who were supposed to have possessed more power than him.

“I see. That means I have to not only defeat Bugitas and have Prince Budarion take the throne, but also do something about Ravovifard... I wonder if I can? He is apparently quite strong, even for a god,” said Vandalieu.

“I believe that you can manage it,” said Zozogante.

“I’m sure you’ll be fine, kid. And you’re close to your next Job-change, right?” said Borkus.

“No, I don’t think it will be that simple,” Vandalieu said back to them.

Zozogante and Borkus didn’t change their opinions, however.

『The levels of the Mental Encroachment, Labyrinth Creation and Golem Creation skills have increased!』

Chapter 140

Survival of the fittest

Birkyne, the last surviving member of the three Pure-breed Vampires who worshipped Hihiryushukaka, the evil god of joyful life, was having trouble with rebuilding his organization.

“To think that I would gain sole control over the organization in this form,” he muttered with a self-deprecating laugh.

He had once planned to turn Ternecia, one of the other Pure-breed Vampires, into a puppet to rule the organization together with Gubamon. And then he had thought that one day, he would do the same to Gubamon to take sole control over the organization.

That had been a long-term plan, spanning hundreds, thousands or perhaps even tens of thousands of years, but... less than three years had passed since then. Despite that, Ternecia and Gubamon had died... they had been destroyed.

If their souls had remained, it would have been possible to turn them into Undead with the power of the evil god of joyful life. Turning a Pure-breed Vampire into an Undead was impossible for Birkyne, but it should have been possible for Hihiryushukaka. Tying with life was the duty of that evil god, after all.

However, Birkyne knew that wouldn't happen. He had been told through a Divine Message from Hihiryushukaka that their souls had been destroyed.

“Less than three years have passed since then... A period of time that is like the blink of an eye to me. In that short time... DAMN IT!”

The sorrowful expression on his attractive face was erased for a moment by anger as Birkyne crushed the glass in his hand and smashed his fist down into the table that he was sitting at.

With a thunderous sound, the table that was made of Elder Treant wood, stronger than a steel shield, broke into pieces.

But this did little to stop Birkyne's anger.

"Gubamon, that crazy old fool! Disposing of not only his Noble-born Vampires but his Subordinate Vampires with his own hands as well! Does he not know how much I have suffered because of that?! HUH?!" he cursed his fallen comrade with foul words, saliva flying from his mouth.

Gubamon, who had gone mad with paranoia, had tried to use all of his own subordinates as materials for Undead. He had been destroyed by Vandalieu before carrying this task out to completion, but for Birkyne, who now had to rebuild the organization under his control, the damage that had already been done was too great.

The three Pure-breed Vampires had dispatched Vampires to every region to make backroom deals with royalty and nobles and to act as the masterminds pulling the strings behind the bosses of crime syndicates.

There were some, like Earl Thomas Palpapek of the Mirg shield-nation, who contacted the Vampires directly, but many others were unaware that they were making deals with Vampires; they didn't know that they belonged to the low-ranking parts of a Vampire organization unless they were close servants of a crime syndicate's boss.

This structure had allowed the organization to cut these people off like lizards' tails when things went bad, and even if an enemy with sharp intuition caught on, only a single Vampire would be lost.

When Ternecia was defeated, four of the Five Dogs, her close subordinates, had been killed, while the last one had betrayed her. However, the Noble-born and Subordinate Vampires scattered across the various nations had remained. That was why Birkyne and Gubamon had been able to continue by taking them all in except for the organization that had been destroyed by the adventurer party, the Five-colored Blades.

However, Gubamon had killed almost all of the useful Noble-born and Subordinate Vampires, turning them into Undead. The only ones who had escaped this were those who had tried to carry out Gubamon's reckless orders and been killed by adventurers and knights, or those who had immediately gone into hiding and fled the continent or into regions where Gubamon couldn't find them.

Thus, the only Vampires left were those so insignificant that Gubamon hadn't noticed

them – young, Noble-born Vampires who had been Vampires for less than a century, or Subordinate Vampires that were essentially small-fry.

Of course, there was no way that such lowly Vampires could make deals with royalty, nobles or corrupt merchants, nor could they control criminal syndicates from the shadows. The Subordinate Vampires hadn't even been told Birkyne's name.

Given this, it wasn't difficult to imagine how much Birkyne and his subordinates had suffered in trying to rebuild the organization.

There were even some cases where the smaller organizations had been taken over by the surviving underlings before Birkyne could reach out to them. These organizations had done reckless things, resulting in the exterminations of both the organizations and those who had taken over them.

"Damn it... If only Grant Roche, Raleigh Rodriguez, Miles Rouge... If only I could have taken in one of the Vampires that had been in charge...!" Birkyne groaned in frustration, recalling a few names of the Vampires that had led Gubamon's faction.

Those Vampires were now serving under Vandalieu along with those who had been turned into Undead, however.

The ritual to summon the souls of dead Noble-born Vampires and revive them as Undead couldn't be carried out without the blood of the Noble-born Vampires' parent, so Birkyne had no way of confirming whether they were alive or not.

It was difficult to imagine that Hihiryushukaka would deliver such trivial details to Birkyne through Divine Messages.

"This is all Vandalieu's fault!"

The truth was that Gubamon had been mentally driven into a wall not by Vandalieu, but by Birkyne's own plan to turn Ternecia into a puppet, but... Birkyne seemed to think that Vandalieu's very existence was the cause of everything.

"Now that things have come to this, I have to take him in no matter what. He has already become someone that I cannot fight. In order to take him in, we have to monitor the Sauron Duchy that he's going in and out of more closely –"

"Birkyne-sama, I have a report regarding the Sauron Duchy," said one of his Noble-

born Vampire aides, having appeared after seeing that Birkyne had calmed down.

“...It’s you, Mortor,” Birkyne muttered.

Mortor, one of Birkyne’s ‘Four Confidants,’ a Noble-born Vampire of Dwarf origin.

Mortor lowered his bald head in a bow and delivered his report. “This is information from a spy in the occupying army, but it seems that Duke Marme has appealed for action to be taken by the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. Among the fifteen Swords in the imperial capital, there is no movement from the First and Second Swords, but there are reports that the Third Sword has left the capital, so I believe this information is true.”

“What is the possibility that this movement is a decoy?” Birkyne asked.

The Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords were a secret force under the emperor’s direct command, and all fifteen of them had designated numbers. But only the names and faces of the First to Third swords had been revealed.

By having these three revealed, the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords’ existence was made known to a certain extent to criminals within the empire itself as well as to other nations; this was a form of public relations that deterred enemy attacks.

Thus, the First to Third Swords were not actually truly formidable; the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords could be accurately referred to as the Twelve Swords. Knowing this, Birkyne suspected that this public movement was a decoy. With that said, even this decoy had strength greater than a B-class adventurer.

“I do not know,” said Mortor. “However, the ‘Thunderclap’ Schneider and his companions have departed the continent, so I suspect we could send a few of our people in.”

Even Birkyne and his Vampire organization did not know the identities of the non-decoy, true members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

Though Mortor didn’t dare utter this out loud, even Birkyne wouldn’t be able to defeat them if they were gathered in one place.

If such enemies were on the move, that Dhampir and the resistance members who had apparently become his subordinates were finished. That was what Mortor thought.

He thought that this would reduce his master's temper a little, but his master gave him an unexpected order.

"I see... Well then, send those who are proficient at gathering information to the Sauron Duchy. If multiple of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords have been dispatched, they should at least be able to force Vandalieu to show his power to some extent in exchange for their lives. Make sure they don't miss it," said Birkyne.

"Certainl... huh?"

"Of course, strictly order them from interfering. There is no point in this if they do not return alive with the information," Birkyne continued. "But don't make them observe from the sky above. According to your reports, the mages of the occupying army that have tried that have gone mad, so just in case."

"No, I understand that, but... Birkyne-sama, do you believe that the Dhampir will survive a battle against the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords?" Mortor asked.

It was *the* Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords they were talking about. Multiple of the Noble-born Vampires that were Mortor's subordinates had been defeated by them. Monstrosities that were almost immortal unless their heads were severed or their hearts were destroyed, who were also masters of advanced combat skills and magic, had vanished without a trace.

It was likely that Mortor himself wouldn't be able to win if he faced them. That was how powerful these enemies were.

But Birkyne predicted that Vandalieu would likely win against multiple members... around five or so of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. "That's right. He will likely emerge victorious, even if multiple Evil-breaking Swords come after him," he said. "For you, it may be difficult to believe, but he killed Gubamon. Perhaps he would be defeated by all fifteen, but just a few won't be able to kill him. If they were so exceptional that they were capable of that, it wouldn't have been strange for them to have caught my tail by now."

With this, some proper information regarding Vandalieu would finally be obtained. If several hindrances would be removed in the process, it would be killing two birds with one stone.

That was what Birkyne thought. It was possible that he was the one among Vandalieu's

enemies who was evaluating Vandalieu's strength the most accurately.



Meanwhile, inside the Boundary Mountain Range, Gargya, nephew of the previous king of the High Kobold nation who had successfully staged a coup d'état with Bugitas's support, was sitting on the throne, eating meat.

He gave a gleeful cackle. "Ravovifard, the evil god of release, is incredible. It was the right choice to stop worshipping Rishare, the god of hunting, who refused to give me his divine protection."

Even for a High Kobold, who had appearances resembling bipedal wolves, Gargya was unusually large and beast-like.

Abundant fur; large, gleaming eyes; thick fangs and sturdy limbs... the presence given off from his entire body was enough to know that Gargya was no ordinary individual.

"The power that fills my entire body is wonderful... My level that had stopped increasing is going up like crazy, and even my Rank has gone up. Just from killing my shitty, annoying old man, my mother, my stuck-up uncle and my cousins." Gargya cackled again. "Don't you think so, you guys?"

However, the High Kobolds and citizen women waiting in the throne room... or rather, being made to wait in it, seemed to feel nothing but repulsion and fear towards him.

In order to conceal these emotions and prevent them from being revealed on their expressions, they kept their faces looking down and didn't answer, even when spoken to.

Gargya groaned at their attitudes. Not because he found it unpleasant; in fact, it was the opposite.

"You females are quiet during the day as usual. Even though you cry and shout so much on the bed..." he said, tormenting them with his words.

The women's shoulders trembled in unbearable frustration, tears of sorrow welling up in their eyes. This sight sweetly stimulated Gargya's sense of superiority.

"Do you think that I did something heinous? Don't misunderstand; it was because the

male you looked up to as king was weak that you became my possessions. The strongest male in the group is the one who is served by the most females, the one who violates and impregnates the most. Even beasts know this; it is obvious, isn't it? Kuhahahah!"

With those words, Gargya sank his teeth back into the lump of raw meat attached to a bone that he was holding in his hand... the meat of a High Kobold who had disobeyed him.

Males whose cunning had been their only redeeming feature, who had refused to give up their females despite being weak. Having slaughtered these males, Gargya used their meat for his dinner that night rather than burying them.

"You... beast! Fiend!" one of the High Kobold women shouted at Gargya, unable to bear the sight of her own husband's remains being eaten any longer.

But even these words only made Gargya happier.

"Beast? Fiend? Isn't that just fine! Us High Kobolds are monsters! Beings that welcome savagery and live in darkness! This is what is right for us! What is wrong with taking females from weak males! What is the problem with killing the children of those males?! Lions and monkeys do the same! Alright, I shall violate you tonight and impregnate you with my child!" Gargya shouted, his fangs bared.

The Kobold woman broke down in tears, mumbling the name of her dead husband. Another Kobold woman... Princess Lulu, who was being kept alive as a hostage, embraced that woman.

"Remember this, I am an example of how High Kobolds should be!" Gargya declared.

None of the women here agreed with him. To them, his words were nothing more than the ramblings of a madman.

In fact, the only ones supporting Gargya, who had staged a coup d'état to kill the king and slaughter all of the princes, were the High Kobolds who had obeyed him since before the coup d'état, and General Bufudin who had been dispatched here by Bugitas.

The other High Kobolds and the citizens were merely being forcibly suppressed by Gargya and Bufudin's power.

Gargya had wanted to kill all of the High Kobolds who opposed him as well as their families, but Bufudin had stopped him.

He was trying to achieve Emperor Bugitas's ambition of unifying the southern region of the continent into a single great empire that worshipped not Vida, but Ravovifard. Thus, the number of available soldiers couldn't be decreased just to make examples.

In order to achieve this ambition, the women and children had been taken hostage, and they would be turned into war slaves to conquer Zanalpadna and the other nations that were still resisting.

However, Gargya had no intention of settling for becoming a king of a vassal nation to a great empire ruled by Emperor Bugitas.

Ambition, huh. Bufudin, you dog who worships Emperor Bugitas... no, I suppose you're a pig. One day, when I grow more powerful, I'll take over for him. You can daydream as long as you want until then.

If survival of the fittest was true, then Bugitas himself would become meat for the strong as well. And Gargya believed without a doubt that he himself was that strong individual.

Gargya had already received Ravovifard's divine protection. In other words, Ravovifard had no intention of making Bugitas his only priest. He wouldn't mind in the slightest if Gargya could surpass Bugitas and take his place. That was how he interpreted things.

"– One day, you will stand at the top. That is the foolish delusion that you have in your head, isn't it?" said Princess Lulu, bringing the cowering women and gloating Gargya back to reality.

"...What are you talking about?" Gargya asked her, suppressing his discomposure despite having the thoughts in his mind seen through.

But he couldn't trick her.

Princess Lulu laughed at how shallow Gargya was, revealing her white, well-shaped fangs. "If your current state is the right one for us High Kobolds as you said to everyone earlier, you will one day be killed mercilessly by someone who is stronger than you. My wretched cousin who has gone corrupt with power, you will die a mortifying death

like the ones you delivered upon my father and brothers,” she said, delivering her prediction with her eyes shining with a dim, hatred-filled glow.

Gargya felt a chill as he heard his cousin’s words.

Perhaps by hearing them, he had realized for the first time that he was not an exception to the law of survival of the fittest.

“G-GARURURUGAH!” Gargya shouted at her in the Kobold language for her to be silent.

But perhaps because his discomposure could be seen in his behavior, it was not only Princess Lulu, but the citizen women as well, who were fearlessly giving him rebellious glares.

The moment Gargya tried to turn his discomposure and humiliation into anger, he heard a distant howl.

In the High Kobold nation, distant howls weren’t noises made by stray dogs. They were a solid method of communication. According to this howl...

“A large-scale enemy attack?! What has Bufudin been doing?! Has he lost himself in the women I gave him?!” Gargya shouted.

Though part of his job was to act as a supervisor, Bufudin had been dispatched by the empire to protect this nation. But even as Gargya shouted, the next distant howl came and informed him of the situation.

“I-impossible... Bufudin, killed in battle?! You have to be kidding me! GUOOOHN!” Gargya howled, commanding his entire army to move.

The hearts of the women behind him danced, sensing that his end was near.



A short while earlier...

Bufudin’s subordinates, who were watching the gate in the wall of the High Kobold nation, were taken aback by an unexpected guest.

“Budirud, fugogah?! ”

For some reason, General Budirud, who was supposed to be attacking the Ghoul nation, had come with his army.

The Orcs and the Noble Orc commander in charge of them were flustered, wondering what was going on.

“Bugogogoh Ghoul pugyubah.”

The Noble Orc noticed that there were Ghoul women behind him, tied up with ropes. This was what he thought: Budirud had successfully conquered the Ghoul nation, and he was here to deliver the Ghoul women who were prisoners of war to their general, Bufudin.

The Noble Orc didn't know whether it was an offering or a bribe, but that was probably what it was.

He did have questions, such as why General Budirud had come personally rather than sending subordinates, or why the offering wasn't being made to Emperor Bugitas. But those who had sworn loyalty to Bugitas had a tendency to become more ferocious the more powerful they were.

Questioning someone as powerful as General Budirud would result in the Noble Orc commander's own death.

“Bugohah! Bugobuh!”

At the Noble Orc's order, the Orcs hastily opened the gate.

Budirud started to lead his army and the Ghouls through the gate –

“Bufuh!”

But a Noble Orc with an enormous hammer resting on his shoulder stood in his way.

“...Who are you? You can't fool my nose. For that Budirud, who loves putting on airs, you smell strange. There's a strange smell coming from inside your cape... What is that? Whatever, you're definitely a fake. All of you Noble Orcs and Orcs stink of dirt!” he shouted.

This Noble Orc was Bufudin, who was supposed to be tormenting the women given to

him by Gargya. Having smelt a stink that he had never smelled before... a stink that included the scents of multiple insects and plants, he decided that none of the Noble Orcs in the group in front of him were real.

“Holy-Son-dono.”

“So, we were found out after all. Well then, get up.”

“You bastard, who are you hiding inside your cape –” Bufudin recognized the voice that came from inside the fake Budirud, but his surprised shout was drowned out by the groan let out by the gate.

“UOOOOHHHHN!”

“BUGOH?!”

“BUGYAKIH?! Go and get the dog-heads! There’s something wrong with the gate they made!”

The gate had suddenly taken a humanoid form. It was now mowing down the Orcs that had been guarding it and knocking down the Orc archers, standing to the side so that it wasn’t in the way of Budirud’s army.

“That’s the signal!” shouted Basdia.

“GROOOH!” Vigaro roared. “Kill them! Take them down!”

“Now is the time! You may avenge your king and princes freely!” shouted Zadiris.

Vigaro, Basdia and the other Ghouls who had pretended to be bound smashed their fists into the Orc-shaped Earth Golems, taking hold of the weapons buried within them.

The Orc soldiers flickered, and then the illusions vanished, revealing the High Kobolds hiding within them. They were those who had sworn loyalty to the previous High Kobold king. They had fled to Zanalpadna as a result of the coup d’état staged by Gargya.

In addition to them, the Arachne and Empusa warriors, Eisen, Pete and the other plant and insectoid monsters, as well as Kasim, Fester and Zeno, all emerged from within

Vandalieu, who had been hiding inside the fake Budirud's cape.

"There really is something about it, just as we were told."

"I-it was really itchy!"

"...Really? I don't think it was as bad as we were told."

The three of them had been infested by harmless insects and plants and equipped inside Vandalieu.

Now, they attacked the flustered army of Bufudin.

Unable to close the gate as it had turned into a Golem, and seeing enemies appearing out of nowhere, Bufudin's army fell into a state of panic.

One after another, they were cut down where they stood or stabbed in the back as they tried to flee pathetically.

"Don't falter, soldiers! BUGOOOOOH!" Bufudin roared.

His army recovered from their confusion.

"BUGYAAAAH!"

"BUGAAAH!"

No, to be more precise, they lost the reasoning that gave them the ability to be confused. As if they had become beasts, they bared their fighting instincts and faced the Ghouls and Arachne.

They swung their weapons with bloodshot eyes and bared fangs; they were truly berserkers.

Not that any of this changed the battle situation for the better however.

"GOGAAAAH!"

"Iron Form! Iron Wall!" Kasim activated martial skills from the Armor Technique and Shield Technique skills, and then grunted as he stopped an attack from a Noble Orc

that that had charged straight towards him.

“Slicing Moon!”

“Invisible Slash!”

Now that the Noble Orc had stopped moving, Fester’s longsword and Zeno’s short sword swept in from the sides.

“Gubuh...!”

Kasim exhaled as he pushed aside the Noble Orc, who fell to the ground with blood pouring from his mouth. “My arms are numb... but aren’t these guys weaker than we heard?” he asked.

“They’re full of openings. Could it be that these guys are just Orcs wearing blonde wigs?” said Fester.

“Fester, there aren’t any Orcs that would do that. And considering Kasim had used his martial skills, it would be impossible for an Orc to make his arms go numb,” Zeno pointed out.

Kasim and his companions, who had become as capable as C-class adventurers through their training, were bewildered by how weak their enemies were; it was difficult to believe that they were Rank 6 Noble Orcs that were supposed to be capable of using advanced combat techniques and magic.

Perhaps the Noble Orc they had just defeated was a particularly weak one. That was what the three of them thought, but similar fights were occurring all around the battlefield.

“BUGAAAH! VIOLATE! FEMALES!” a Noble Orc roared as he raised his halberd and charged at Zadiris, who had stepped onto the front lines, completely unprotected.

One would think that his heavy, three-meter tall body would turn her into a bloody, mangled corpse before he could violate her if he charged at her like that, but it seemed that he had lost the intelligence necessary to realize this along with his confusion.

The Noble Orc’s halberd fell towards Zadiris.

But at that moment, Zadiris vanished.

“BUH?! BUGEH?!”

And then a spear of light was fired from thin air, smashing the Noble Orc’s head.

Zadiris, who had fooled the Noble Orc into mistaking her position with an illusion created through light-attribute magic, seemed perplexed as she looked at the Noble Orc, who crumpled to his knees with blood spraying from his head like a fountain.

“According to the boy, one should say, ‘it was an afterimage’ at a time like this, but... he fell for it so easily,” she muttered to herself.

TLN: “It’s an afterimage” is a famous manga reference where the character speaks the line after tricking his opponent with an illusion, I think.

“Mother, hurry and conceal yourself! These guys are full of openings, but they’re persistent!” shouted Basdia, who was fighting multiple Orcs and Noble Orcs at once.

Indeed, she was decapitating Orcs one after another and slashing Noble Orcs’ torsos in two, but the enemies kept attacking her without fear.

With their eyes sparkling and saliva dripping from their mouths as they ran their gazes along Basdia’s tall, sturdy body that also possessed feminine curves.

“This really is unpleasant... maybe I should have had Tarea make me some armor that shows less skin,” she said.

“I agree!” said Eleanora from above as she flew through the sky, splitting Noble Orc heads with her longsword.

“It does make you excellent bait, however,” said Bone Man, cutting down the Orcs that had stopped in their tracks as they admired Eleanora’s slender, beautiful legs.

“We don’t need it~” said Eisen.

Bufudin’s soldier’s attacks were focused on Kasim and his companions, who were supposed to be humans that were weak when compared to Noble Orcs, as well as Zadiris, Basdia, Eleanora and the other women.

The ones attacking the women in particular seemed to take no notice of their comrades and those more powerful than themselves being killed.

“Absorb, ripen, eat!” groaned Eisen.

As she had a high level in the Allure skill, enemies were coming after her one after another. However, the Orcs and Noble Orcs were caught in the branches growing from her back and had their spirit absorbed by her Spirit Siphon skill.

And once a certain amount had been absorbed, they would be strangled to death by the branches, with the iron apples produced through the absorbed spirit being thrown at other enemies.

“This feels strangely empty,” said Vigaro.

“Gishaah.”

Vigaro, Pete and the rest of the men weren’t being taken notice of by Bufudin’s army; they were simply performing the task of taking down enemies from the side as they relentlessly attacked the women.

“BUGAH! You useless fools!” Bufudin cursed his disappointing subordinates as he raised his hammer and charged at the fake Budirud. “It seems that you defeated Budirud, but you can’t defeat me! I’m even stronger than him!”

With the Transcend Limits skill activated, the muscles in Bufudin’s body expanded, making him grow even larger. Meanwhile, the fake Budirud merely unsheathed an enormous sword from beneath his cape and raised it.

Bufudin felt a momentary chill as he looked at that enormous sword’s black, sinister blade, but he ignored it and charged on. “Mountain-breaking Hammer!” he roared.

Bufudin wielded a super-heavy Obsidian hammer coated in Adamantite, and strength that had been polished through defeating countless foes. On top of that, the Transcend Limits skill was active.

Even an Archdemon wouldn’t have escaped unharmed from such a blow.

Though the sword wielded by the imposter was quite large, Bufudin would smash him along with the sword.

“True Blade.”

Instead of smashing the imposter’s sword, the hammer was sliced through without a sound.

Impossible, Bufudin thought as he opened his eyes wide in shock, but the sword that had cut through the hammer went on to cut him clean in half, from the top of his head to his crotch.

“I will praise your spirit for charging at me head-on,” a voice said in the Orc language.

Before Bufudin could recall whose voice this was, Bufudin’s consciousness was swallowed by the darkness... and then joined the spirits serving Vandalieu, who was still hiding inside the cape.

“You seem to be on good form, Prince,” Vandalieu said.

Prince Budarion had defeated Bufudin with the sword that had been made for Borkus from a fragment of the Demon King.

“Indeed, it is thanks to you, Holy-Son-dono,” Prince Budarion said with a nod, now certain that his own strength had increased.

His level increased by a surprising amount through the Experience Points gained by defeating Bufudin, and his Attribute Values increased.

Prince Budarion had gained Mububujenge’s divine protection years ago, but even so, his growth had slowed down after reaching Rank 10. He had been aiming to become equal with his father and one day surpass him through diligent training in the years and decades to come.

However, he was now growing at a rate that was as if he had returned to being a boy who had just started training.

“So, this is the power of a Guidance skill,” Prince Budarion muttered. “But still, these enemies are too weak. No, rather than being too weak... they have too many openings. Even Bufudin was once a general known for being cautious, to the point of cowardice, but...”

“Well, they’re like beasts who don’t fear death, aren’t they,” said Vandalieu.

“Beasts who don’t fear death... indeed, that is what they appear to be, but if that were the case, shouldn’t they have been more formidable?”

“That’s not necessarily the case. To be more precise, they’re foolish soldiers, less than beasts, whose feelings of fear have been paralyzed.”

Indeed, soldiers that didn’t fear death were threats. Enemies prepared to die wouldn’t stop struggling until the very end.

However, Bufudin’s army had gone mad; they were beasts rather than soldiers. They had simply lost their ability to reason and turned into fools that prioritized their desires over their fears. That was why they repeatedly carried out reckless attacks out of anger and greed, continuing to thrash about, unable to associate the corpses of their companions with their own impending deaths.

And they had no coordination with each other, not using magic... or even martial skills.

Magic wasn’t something that could be used by beasts on rampages with their fighting instincts and desires, and though martial skills weren’t quite on the same level, they needed reasoning and concentration to use.

In exchange for becoming unable to use these, the Orcs had a dull sensation of pain and they could continue fighting without faltering until they died. However, because their sensation of pain was dulled, they were full of openings, leading to quick defeat by their vital points being destroyed in single blows from Basdia and Eleanora.

“Their Attribute Values are high and they’re well-equipped, but they’re a group of wild Orcs acting on their own. I think that’s what they’re like. I have a feeling that Buburin’s army at his frontline fort and Budirud’s army that we defeated at the Ghoulish nation were more difficult to defeat as groups,” said Vandalieu.

“So, this is the fate of those tempted by Ravovifard... Bugitas, where do you intend to lead your vassals...?” Prince Budarion asked the empty air, but his question fell on nobody’s ears except Vandalieu’s, being drowned out by the clashing of swords and dying screams.

Bufudin’s subordinates didn’t regain their sanity after his death; they continued fighting in their mad states. But as they had only been stationed here to protect the nation and maintain public order, the size of the army itself wasn’t that large.

The enemies would run out of numbers before long.

But a distant howl could be heard, and then a powerful howl echoed from the High Kobold nation's palace.

“Holy-Son-dono! Prince! That is the High Kobold king's nephew, who has become Bugitas's dog! It seems that he is going to come and face us personally!” said an allied High Kobold, translating the Kobold language.

And as several more distant howls resounded, the High Kobolds began to move.

“Well then, I'll go on ahead. Arachne, Empusa, Pete, Eisen, Kasim and everyone else, regroup,” said Vandalieu.

“Again?!”

“He's doing it again, oi, stay still!”



- **Name:** Zadiris
- **Rank:** 9
- **Race:** Ghoul Elder Wizard
- **Level:** 27
- **Job:** Great Philosopher
- **Job level:** 28
- **Job history:** Apprentice Mage, Mage, Light-Attribute Mage, Wind-Attribute Mage, Philosopher
- **Age:** 298 years old (Has undergone age reversal)
- **Passive skills:**
 - Night Vision
 - Pain Resistance: Level 3
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 1
 - Paralyzing Venom Secretion (Claws): Level 2
 - Increased Mana Recovery Rate: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Light-Attribute Magic: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Control: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Alchemy: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Multi-Cast: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 3
 - Housework: Level 1
 - High-speed Thought Processing: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - Zozogante's Divine Protection (NEW!)

Chapter 141

Strong meat offering

Having learned that Bufudin had been killed by an attack carried out by an unknown enemy, Gargya ordered that his army move out and took command himself.

But as a usurper, Gargya didn't have complete control over the High Kobold nation. Now that General Bufudin had been defeated, if he were to gather all of those loyal to him, it was possible that the rest of the nation would take the opportunity to stage a rebellion.

That was why Gargya had deliberately gathered those rebellious towards him and placed them on the frontlines. Behind them, he had placed units of archers and mages to act as slave-drivers.

He would use the rebellious High Kobolds as disposable war slaves, making them charge at the enemy as suicide squads, while having the other troops observe from behind to make them fight and prevent them from running.

"With this, they can't even run away, let alone disobey me!"

It wasn't unusual for nations outside the Boundary Mountain Range to use units of slaves as fodder, but in the area within the Boundary Mountain Range, where there hadn't been any wars of national scale for a long period of time, this was a revolutionary idea.

However, the attackers had already passed through the gate. Thus, the slaves were tightly-packed as they marched through the nation's main street at the front, with the slave-drivers and those protecting them behind the slaves, and the elite battalion commanded by Gargya's army behind them.

"It seems that the enemy is very confident. They're getting ahead of themselves," Gargya growled in the Kobold language in a displeased tone as he looked through a magnified image produced by a High Kobold Mage's light-attribute magic.

Behind the gate that had taken a humanoid shape for some reason, there was a Noble

Orc standing at the front, with Ghouls and a small number of High Kobolds raising their weapons.

“Gargya-sama, the Arachne and Empusa that were mentioned in the howls are nowhere to be seen,” one of Gargya’s subordinates told him.

But Gargya merely snorted. “They’re no doubt in hiding. Send the slaves out and smoke them out!”

At Gargya’s command, the slaves charged forward. Unlike Bufudin’s army, they hadn’t lost their ability to reason. In their hearts, they wanted to become allies with the enemies that were apparently an allied force from the Ghoul nation and Zanalpadna, but the slave-drivers behind them were like beasts.

Even if they were to avoid the slave-drivers’ arrows and spells to escape or muster their courage to rebel, the lives of their families and the citizens were in danger.

They didn’t have morale, but they couldn’t disobey.

But something emerged from within the ground, behind the slaves.

“...Garuh?”

Gargya’s eyes grew wide as he saw a small silhouette... Vandalieu, emerge from the ground between the slaves and the slave-drivers.

The slaves carried on, not noticing Vandalieu who had appeared silently behind them, but the slave-drivers stopped for a moment in surprise.

“Become a wall,” Vandalieu said.

And then, with a thunderous noise, a tall wall formed from the ground.

The slave-drivers and Gargya’s main force behind them could no longer see the enemy army and the slaves due to the wall that was rising high into the sky.

Still, their movements only stopped for a moment.

“GAAAAH!” Gargya screamed, giving the extremely simple order to attack and tear apart Vandalieu, who seemed to be the cause of the wall’s appearance.

Feeling an unbearable desire to see blood, the slave-drivers gleefully drew back their bowstrings and recited incantations. With the simultaneous attacks of these Rank 5 High Kobolds, Vandalieu, who appeared to be nothing more than a child, would break apart along with the earthen wall, and even the slaves on the other side of the wall wouldn't escape unharmed.

The slave-drivers released Archery martial skills like Consecutive Fire, Chaotic Fire and Powershot, as well as all kinds of spells such as Stone Bullet and Flame Bullet.

But immediately after they released their attacks, Vandalieu cast his Dead Spirit Magic.

"Bone Flame Jailing Destruction Bullet, Dark Thunderbolt, Death Ice Prison."

Enormous skulls made of black flames, lightning and coiling tentacles of ice that completely sapped their surroundings of all heat scattered the feeble arrows and spells, and then engulfed the slave-drivers.

"GYAIIIIIN?!"

The High Kobolds that were engulfed by the ice and froze to death within seconds were the fortunate ones. Those engulfed by the black flames or struck by lightning didn't die instantaneously; they received wounds that were clearly fatal at a glance and struggled as they let out dying screams.

"KYAINKYAIN!"

"WAUN! WAUUUUN!"

Seeing the miserable deaths of their comrades, the morale of the remaining slave-drivers crumbled, and they fled.

Though there had been around three hundred slave-drivers, this number had fallen sharply less than a minute after the battle began.

"...It's difficult to kill them with magic in a way that kills a lot of them at once, but still leaves the materials intact," Vandalieu whispered as his lungs were filled with the hunger-stimulating scent of creatures burning alive.

"Don't worry about it, Your Majesty! There are still plenty of them left!" said Princess Levia, trying to cheer him up.

“That’s right, let’s try again! It’ll go well this time!” said Orbia.

Incidentally, Kimberley seemed to be busy chasing the fleeing High Kobolds about, electrocuting them to death.

The elite individuals led by Gargya were standing stock-still now, lost for words.

“Gah... gagah...?”

Vandalieu had released three Dead Spirit Magic spells. They knew that if any of them were to be hit directly, they would be fatally wounded.

If a Rank 7 High Kobold General were to activate Armor Technique and Shield Technique martial skills and then a High Kobold Mage cast an enchantment on him that increased defense against magic, then perhaps he would get away with heavy wounds.

Their instincts as monsters were supposed to have weakened over the past hundred thousand years. But they knew this because they had regained these instincts, even stronger than they were before.

“D... don’t back down! There’s no way he can use such advanced magic multiple times! Considering the earth-attribute spell that created the wall as well, that should be all he has!” Gargya growled in the Kobold language.

Upon hearing Gargya’s commands, the High Kobolds remembered that this was likely the case and reconsidered the situation.

The instinctual fear that they had felt vanished, and even feelings of scorn and contempt for Vandalieu began to surface.

The one standing before them was indeed a user of advanced magic despite his small appearance, but he was a fool who had spent all of his Mana.

There were three monsters that seemed to be his familiars floating around him, but something could be done about just three monsters. They were an elite battalion of a thousand under Gargya’s direct command.

“Come, kill him along with those useless fools, break through the wall and devour the enemies on the other side of it!” Gargya ordered, and the elite battalion made up of

High Kobolds that were at least Rank 6 began their attack.

But even so, the fact that they could still activate martial skills and cast spells was likely because of the “what if” sense of danger that they still felt inside them.

Trampling down and knocking aside the surviving slave-drivers that had fled, they closed in on Vandalieu and the wall at his back.

But meanwhile, Vandalieu had used Spirit Form Transformation on his body.

“Well then, begin the counterattack,” he said.

His transparent form took the shape of an enormous, gate-like rectangle.

And from within Vandalieu, who had transformed into a gate, Pete and the rest of the monsters, the Arachne and the Empusa emerged like a surging wave.

“GISHAAAH!”

“Samurai unit, intercept the enemy!”

“Kunoichi unit, move out!”

“Puh, going through that twice in a row is rough!”

“GURURU?!”

“GYAGYAWAHN?!”

The High Kobold’s formation fell into chaos at the unexpected appearance of this large number of enemies.

“Dark Lightning, Ice Blood Death Water, Black Flame Spear.”

Dead Spirit Magic spells flew from Vandalieu once more; these spells inflicted less damage but caused the High Kobolds’ formation to fall even further into chaos, and then Pete and the rest of Vandalieu’s forces charged in.

High Kobolds were a race that was proficient in group battles, and this was a battalion of elite individuals who had increased their Ranks at least once. They were under

Gargya's command, and they had never been routed before. However, the situation heavily favored Vandalieu's side.

"Boulder Smash!" Kasim shouted. "Wait, UOH?!"

His mace smashed the head of a High Kobold Soldier who had lost his balance, but another High Kobold Soldier used the opening to thrust the pommel of his axe towards him. Kasim narrowly managed to stop it with his shield, but now he was the one who had lost his balance a little.

"Kasim!" shouted Fester, who had locked swords with another High Kobold to the side.

He tried to save his comrade, but he wouldn't make it in time.

"Don't get carried away!"

Before the axe could bury itself in Kasim's armor, a green sickle pierced the High Kobold Soldier's chest.

A large Empusa had used her sickle-arms to save Kasim.

"Y-you saved me," Kasim breathed, thanking the large Empusa.

"Hmph... You men shouldn't push yourselves and devote yourself to defense like men should," said the large Empusa... Gaol, the Empusa Berserker who had been one of Princess Kurnelia's guards.

After saying these curt words over her shoulder, she engaged in battle with more High Kobolds.

She swung her two sickle-arms and protected herself against the enemies that slipped past them with the sword and shield held by her two hands, but the High Kobolds were pushing her back.

In terms of Rank, both Gaol and the soldiers of the High Kobold battalion were both Rank 6, but as an Empusa, a member of a race created by Vida, Gaol could acquire a Job. That was why she had an advantage in physical ability and skills over the High Kobolds.

But internally, she had lost her temper.

That's right, I can't be beaten by weak human men, especially such child-like men who haven't even lived twenty years!

In the southern region of the continent, Dwarf, Elf and human men possessed inferior fighting strength, so they were in the position of being protected.

That was why Gaol was displeased with the fact that Kasim and his companions were fighting as well as she was.

Logically, she understood that Kasim and his companions possessed great combat techniques and well-trained physical prowess, unlike the humans of Zanalpadna. High Kobolds were not such easy opponents that could be managed with mediocre skills.

There was no problem with them fighting as capably as Gaol.

But emotionally, it wasn't something that she could accept so easily. That was why she was irritated. Perhaps this was reflected in her movements.

"Iron Rend!" Gaol shouted, cutting down a heavily-armored High Kobold Knight with her sickle arms, but she had failed to notice the small High Kobold Assassin hiding in the Knight's shadow.

Damn it!

The High Kobold Assassin closed in swiftly, slipping past Gaol's sickle-arms as well as her sword and shield. His dagger, held in an underhand grip, swept towards Gaol's side.

"Invisible Slash."

At that moment, a deep cut appeared in the High Kobold Assassin's neck.

"Wha-?!"

"We've stepped too far forward; let's fall back for now."

Gaol, who had somehow been saved by Zeno, was speechless with surprise at the fact that she hadn't noticed his presence at all.

Though he thought that Gaol's behavior was strange, Zeno took hold of her arm and

took her with him as he fell back, throwing knives at the High Kobolds to keep them back.

“Thanks for saving Kasim,” he said, and then he returned to where his companions were fighting.

As Gaol watched him leave, she realized that Zeno would have saved her even if she hadn’t saved Kasim earlier.

But that wasn’t important to her.

“I was... saved by a human man who hasn’t even lived twenty years... protected.”

That fact shook Gaol’s heart tremendously, but it wasn’t this shock that was making her heart beat wildly.



Immediately after Gaol watched Zeno leave, the wall that Vandalieu had created made a thundering noise once more as it returned into the ground.

“Follow me, honorable, true High Kobolds! Take your nation and families back from the hands of the beasts!” shouted Prince Budarion as he charged in, leading the Ghouls who had been joined by the High Kobolds that had been treated like slaves.

“UOOOOOHN!”

“Follow Prince Budarion! Defeat the usurper Gargya!”

While Vandalieu and his companions were fighting, on the other side of the wall, Prince Budarion had convinced the slaves to fight for him.

Bufudin had already been defeated, and the assailants were Prince Budarion who had regained his power and high-Rank Ghoul warriors. In the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range, Eleanora’s existence had been interpreted as the Pure-breed Vampires protecting Vida’s Resting Grounds sending reinforcements, so this had worked out favorably as well.

And the noises on the other side of the wall were the dying screams of Gargya’s subordinates and a large number of voices shouting in a language that wasn’t the

Kobold language.

Under these overwhelming circumstances, it hadn't taken more than a minute for the High Kobolds that had been slaves to be freed from their fear of Gargya.

Gargya understood that he was outmatched in both numbers and strength, but he couldn't surrender or run.

"GUWOOOOOHN! Now that things have come to this, I will kill you myself!" he shouted.

Considering the things that he had done, his surrender would never be accepted. And his pride didn't allow him to run away.

Even if I run away here, there is no future for me! Even if I'm lucky enough to escape, I would lose my power once Ravovifard abandons me!

With this in mind, Gargya would believe in the possibility of a turnaround and fight with everything he had.

I'm already Rank 10! Even if Budarion has regained his strength, he should only be on equal grounds with me! But what I need to defeat first is that unidentified thing!

With his plentiful fur standing on end, the High Kobold Beast King Gargya charged at Vandalieu.

"GARURURUH!"

"Don't get in our king's way!"

Regaining their morale from seeing their king move out, the High Kobolds of Gargya's army didn't hesitate to attack Vandalieu's forces to clear the path for Gargya.

...Before he could notice that Vandalieu's forces hadn't made any particular effort to stop him, Gargya was caught by Vandalieu's sight.

The leader of this army isn't Budarion! It's you! If I kill you, I have a chance for victory!

"RAVOVIFAAARD!"

Gargya activated his Transcend Limits skill and even used Familiar Spirit Descent to call Ravovifard's familiar spirit upon himself.

And then he used an Unarmed Fighting Technique martial skill to swing his claws, which were sharper than swords, down at a seemingly helpless, motionless Vandalieu.

"GUOOOHN!"

"Demon King's carapace, activate."

"GUGEAH?!"

Gargya's claws were blocked by the black carapace that grew from Vandalieu's skin and covered his whole body.

With a harsh noise, Gargya's claws made deep marks on the carapace, but the impact made his arm go numb. His previous self might have had his claws and the bones of his fingers broken.

It's unbelievably hard! But if it's simply hard...!

Gargya made a fist with his other hand and activated Penetrating Strike, a martial skill that could only be used with an Unarmed Fighting Technique skill at level 7 or greater. It was a martial skill that didn't increase the actual power of an attack much but allowed the impact of the attack to penetrate through defenses, dealing direct physical damage.

There was a loud, dull noise, and Gargya felt the sensation of his attack's impact reaching the target. Vandalieu stuck his head out of the carapace; blood could be seen near his mouth. Thinking that he had found the way to defeat this enemy, Gargya activated Penetrating Strike once more.

But though there was a dull noise again, the sensation was absent this time.

"I was a little surprised that you were able to inflict damage through the Demon King's carapace and my Dark Copper armor, but it's so small that it can be completely blocked if I activate Stone Form with my level 1 Armor Technique. So, do you have any way of powering up further than this?" Vandalieu asked, looking at Gargya with the eyes of a researcher conducting an experiment.

After the first attack, he had activated an Armor Technique martial skill with the liquid metal armor inside the carapace and a Shield Technique martial skill with the carapace itself as a shield.

“Hyuh... GARUAAAAH!”

Seeing something strange in Vandalieu’s eyes, Gargya enveloped his fist in the flames of an enchantment spell and swung down at Vandalieu with Penetrating Strike, over and over.

His claws might have had enough power to even make mincemeat out of a Dragon.

“AAAAAGH!”

However, Gargya’s repeated attacks resembled a frightened child flailing his arms wildly towards the thing that he was scared of.

Because even though Gargya looked scared, it was clear to everyone that his attacks were meaningless.

“...Ah, if you don’t have any ways of powering up, then you don’t have to force yourself, you know? It doesn’t seem that you have any hidden techniques or trump cards, either,” said Vandalieu with a cool expression despite the loud noises produced every time Gargya’s fist collided with the carapace.

Gargya had attacked with an advanced martial skill, but only managed to inflict enough damage to cause a little blood to come from Vandalieu’s mouth.

Vandalieu had strengthened his defense after that, and repeatedly using the same attack with a simple enchantment spell wouldn’t cause any dramatic changes.

I knew that there was no reaction from Danger Sense: Death, but I suppose this is all he has.

Perhaps the effects of his Transcend Limits skill had stopped; Gargya’s movements were becoming visibly more sluggish. Deciding that he would no longer be of any use, Vandalieu activated the Demon King’s blood and horns.

“Fire.”

A cylindrical gun barrel formed by the Demon King's frozen blood protruded from a gap in the carapace, and the projectile made of the Demon King's horns fired from it entered Gargya's body through his stomach and exited through his shoulder.

Vandalieu had attacked this way out of consideration for the buildings behind Gargya and the people that might have been inside them.

"GYABAAHN?!"

"———!"

Gargya's scream and the scream of something else as well echoed out. The familiar spirit's presence, which had been emitted from Gargya's entire body, vanished. Gargya staggered as dark blood sprayed from his mouth and wounds, and then he fell onto the ground, face-up.

"It seems that I can kill the familiar spirit that an enemy is using with Familiar Spirit Descent if I use the Soul Break skill," Vandalieu noted. "Mhmm, this was valuable."

Satisfied with the results of his experiment, Vandalieu skewered the limbs of the still-gasping Gargya with the Demon King's horns.

Gargya screamed as blood sprayed into the air, but Vandalieu ignored him and turned his back to him.

"Kasim, Fester, Zeno. Go ahead," he said.

The lips of Kasim and his companions stiffened as they looked at the creature that would become a source of Experience Points for them, on the verge of death and fully prepared.

"Is this really fine? For us to have it, I mean. Wouldn't it be more of an achievement if you defeated him, Vandalieu?" Kasim asked.

"Well, it's true that we said we've hit a hard wall recently, making it hard for us to level up, but... I do feel that this is a bit terrible, you know?" said Fester.

Kasim and his companions had increased their abilities to be equivalent to C-class adventurers, but they were now facing a trial that everyone faced, the so-called wall that made it extremely difficult to increase their levels and skills.

The ordinary way to overcome this wall was to steadily continue gaining experience without giving up.

But there was also the trick of defeating a monster far above one's own ability, gaining a large amount of Experience Points and breaking through the wall by force. This trick was normally impossible to carry out in practice.

But Vandalieu intended to utilize Gargya to allow Kasim and his companions to use this trick.

"Please don't worry about it," said Vandalieu. "Either way, I wouldn't get any Experience Points if I defeated him myself."

"Because of your curse, huh. Well then, we'll take you up on that," said Zeno. "Kasim, Fester."

"Well then, we won't hold back," said Kasim.

"Yeah, we're in your debt," said Fester.

Meanwhile, Gargya, whose limbs had been rendered useless and was unable to speak, was tormented by a maddening sense of humiliation as he listened to this conversation.

Someone as great as me! I, who has received Ravovifard's divine protection and was supposed to become a true king! I'm becoming food for some human brats?!

Gargya had been trembling in fear of being killed by Vandalieu, but now that he realized that an even crueler end was coming for him, he felt like his blood was going to boil.

He would at least have been satisfied if he were to be killed by someone stronger than him. That would have been within the rule that he believed in, the rule of survival of the fittest. But he couldn't stand becoming Experience Points for those that were clearly weaker than him.

DON'T FUCK WITH ME, YOU BRAAAATS!

In his anger, Gargya thrashed his skewered arms and let out an unintelligible groan through the frozen Demon King's blood that was covering his mouth.

“Ah, he’s spasming! This is bad, we have to finish him off quick!” Fester shouted.

He had mistaken Gargya’s movements for spasming.

“Alright, we have to go at the same time!”

“Ready, set!”

Vandalieu didn’t correct Fester’s misunderstanding, so a longsword, a mace and a knife were swung down into Gargya.

“This is survival of the fittest. Nobody cares about bad manners shown by the strong when they devour the weak,” Vandalieu murmured. “Now then, everyone, shall we begin hunting down the remainders?”

The High Kobolds cheered at the death of the evil usurper, and then raised their weapons and ran with the Ghouls to hunt down the surviving slave-drivers and troops of the elite battalion.

For the High Kobolds, these were once comrades living in the same nation, but at the same time, they were traitors that had killed their relatives. And despite the usurper’s defeat, the nation wouldn’t be restored to the way it was before.

With the nation’s power having decreased, they couldn’t afford to leave any dangerous individuals alive.

And on top of that, there was no guarantee that none of the survivors would gain Ravovifard’s divine protection and become a second or third Gargya.

“Here, Vandalieu-sama, wipe your mouth. Even for testing the strength of an enemy who has received Ravovifard’s divine protection before fighting Bugitas, you were too reckless,” said Eleanora.

“More importantly, you should have had your carapace out to begin with,” said Basdia. “By the way, where are Gizania and Myuze?”

“It seems that the two of them went with Prince Budarion and some of the High Kobolds to the castle,” said Zadiris.

As Vandalieu popped out of the carapace and had his mouth wiped by Eleanora, he

was startled by Basdia and Zadiris's words. "Kasim, please head to the castle. It's very urgent," he said.

"Eh?!" Kasim had been drunk on the pleasant feeling from his sharp increase in level, but he was now surprised at being personally given an order. "W-why me?" he asked, bewildered. "I can't tell the High Kobolds apart by their faces, you know?! I'm not acquainted with anyone, so is there any point in me going?"

"Don't worry, just please go. Dash there," said Vandalieu.

"Kasim, Vandalieu's said enough," said Zeno. "I'm sure there's a point to it!"

"Alright, let's go, everyone! We're dashing there!" said Fester.

Kasim was bewildered, but he was almost dragged off by Zeno and Fester as they ran to the castle.

"...Isn't it better for Fester to not go?" asked Eleanora.

"Well, it should be all right. Things could turn into a repeat of what Vigaro showed at the Ghoul nation, so now is the chance while he is busy dismantling the Noble Orcs' bodies," said Zadiris.

As Vandalieu watched Kasim, Fester and Zeno leave, he prayed that Kasim would have a fateful encounter.

"Van. Wouldn't it be better to make it a formal marriage interview setting?" said Basdia.

"Now that you mention it, you might be right," Vandalieu said.

『The levels of the Strengthen Subordinates, Golem Creation, Multi-Cast, Coordination, Commanding, Plant-Binding Technique, Dead Spirit Magic, Insect Binding Technique, Artillery Technique, Armor Technique, Shield Technique and God Slayer skills have increased!』



- **Name:** Kasim
 - **Race:** Human
 - **Age:** 18 years old
 - **Title:** None
 - **Job:** Super-heavy Warrior
 - **Level:** 35
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Heavy Warrior, Guardian Warrior
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Augmented Stamina: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Augmented Vitality: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Night Vision (NEW!)
 - Pain Resistance: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 2 (NEW!)
 - Strengthened Defensive Power when equipped with Metal Armor: Medium (NEW!)
 - Strengthened Defensive Power when equipped with a Shield: Small (NEW!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - **Active skills:**
 - Farming: Level 1
 - Club Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 4 (NEW!)
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Shield: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 1 (NEW!)
-

- **Name:** Zeno
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 18 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Dagger User
- **Level:** 37
- **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Assassin, Explorer
- **Passive skills:**
 - Detect Presence: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)

- Intuition: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Night Vision (NEW!)
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 4 (NEW!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Dagger: Medium (NEW!)
 - **Active skills:**
 - Dagger Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Archery: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Trap: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unlocking: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Throwing: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - Assassination Technique: Level 3 (NEW!)
-

- **Name:** Fester
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 18 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Magic Swordsman
- **Level:** 29
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Swordsman, Magic Sword User
- **Passive skills:**
 - Enhanced Muscular Strength: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Night Vision (NEW!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Sword: Medium (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Fishing: Level 1
 - Swordsmanship: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Sword: Level 3 (NEW!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Mana Control: Level 1 (NEW!)

Chapter 142

The king working in the nation three days after conquering it, and the emperor in the empire

The buildings and streets of the High Kobold nation, which had fallen into ruin after Gargya's coup d'état, were being repaired at an astounding speed.

The stone and wood of the buildings, as well as the stone pavement on the ground, appeared as if they were turning into a clay-like form, the broken parts and cracks vanishing in the process.

"The town is returning to normal before our very eyes!"

"Wow, thanks!"

"WANWANWANWAAAN!"

The High Kobold nation's people cheered as they watched this happen. Many of them were children, and the High Kobold children in particular were so excited that it was impossible to tell what they were saying.

They were wagging their tails, so it was clear that they were delighted, however.

Vandalieu was the one person waving to the people... or at least, he was supposed to be one person, but he had split himself into ten. He felt slightly dissatisfied.

"...I'd rather be cooking than doing construction work."

"Shea nuts... shea butter..."

"Açaí berries..."

"Numerous fruits that didn't exist on Earth, and the meat of animals that went extinct..."

Vandalieu's interest was so much more inclined towards food than construction and repair that his spirit clones were muttering these words to themselves.

Gargya had been defeated, and the extermination and dismantling of the remainders of his subordinates had been finished. The lookouts left at the castle and around the town had been defeated quickly as well, and the civilians had been safely freed.

There hadn't been any casualties on Vandalieu's side; some had been wounded, but none had sustained heavy wounds such as lost limbs, so Potions and the healing magic of Zadiris and the others was enough to treat them.

Fortunately, the High Kobold nation had been taken back less than half a year after Gargya's coup d'état, so none of the nation's citizens were in seriously bad states. Considering Gargya's behavior, he would have likely decided that anyone wounded and unable to make a full recovery wouldn't be of any use and turned them into food rather than try to treat them, so things could have become disastrous if this matter had taken much longer to resolve.

And Princess Lulu, the only direct descendant of the previous king whom Gargya had left alive so that he could make her his wife, had been freed by Prince Budarion and those with him (Kasim and his companions barely made it in time). There hadn't been any particular problems in this process, either... though spring didn't arrive for Kasim.

And then Vandalieu had done what nobody else could do – assisting in the restoration of the High Kobold nation with the use of his Golem Creation Skill.

"It's not really that it's boring."

"I'm happy that everyone is thanking me."

"The High Kobold nation's buildings have an unusual architectural style, so it's interesting, too."

"I can even learn all kinds of things about the High Kobold people, like how they like to live in groups and how the individual houses are large."

The High Kobold nation was a nation in which High Kobolds, as well as human, Dwarf and Elf citizens and a small number of members of other races who had immigrated from other nations, lived together. After Gargya's coup d'état, its total population was a little over ten thousand, and its population had decreased considerably, by a little

over a thousand including those who had fled safely to Zanalpadna. Once those who had escaped to other nations returned, the population would increase a little again.

There were about ten thousand citizens. The humans were the most common race, while there were only about a hundred Elves. And there were a few hundred of the inferior Kobold race.

The society of this nation was similar to the Noble Orc empire's; the High Kobolds, who had a base Rank of 5, were in charge of the defense of the city as well as hunting and gathering outside the nation and inside Dungeons, while the citizens were in charge of production work inside the nation.

And the inferior race of Kobolds was in charge of providing low-ranking soldiers, guards and physical labor. The remaining Kobolds in the nation now were all manual labor workers, however.

The Kobolds that were soldiers in occupation had approved of Gargya's coup d'état, become like beasts and then loaned out to the Noble Orc empire ruled by Bugitas to be used as low-ranking soldiers.

The fact that the number of High Kobolds had dropped dramatically would make it difficult for a while just to maintain the nation. But fortunately, there were no high-difficulty Dungeons that would threaten the existence of the High Kobold nation if the monster numbers inside weren't reduced periodically.

There was a single D-class Dungeon inside the nation, and there was nothing more than a few other D-class Dungeons nearby, so even with their numbers decreased, it wouldn't be difficult for the High Kobolds to keep the monster numbers in check.

It would certainly be possible for the High Kobold nation to be restored once the biggest obstacle, the Noble Orc empire ruled by Bugitas, was gone.

If the buildings and walls could be repaired before then, the time needed for the nation's restoration would be shortened a little.

Incidentally, Vandalieu had suggested things like gathering the souls of the dead High Kobolds to resurrect them as Undead and using the Labyrinth Construction Skill to create a new Dungeon or move existing ones, but these would likely be considered by the High Kobold nation's new king and his aides one day, after Bugitas's defeat.

To the High Kobold nation, Vandalieu was the savior who had defeated the usurper, but at the same time, he was the king of another nation. It was only natural for them to be cautious of allowing a king of another nation to do things like create large numbers of his own supporters and leave them in the High Kobold nation, or creating shortcuts that he could use to move in and out of the nation freely.

“And it seems like the victory feast will be after we defeat Bugitas,” Vandalieu said.

The Noble Orc empire’s army hadn’t established a network for delivering information. Bugitas was likely still unaware that the generals he had sent to various regions had been defeated.

The usurper Bugitas had been born in a land that hadn’t seen even small skirmishes for tens of thousands of years; he had never read any books written about military tactics because they didn’t exist, and now, he had started a full-scale war for the first time.

Before he started the war, the Noble Orc empire’s army’s duty was to defend the nation against monsters, as well as hunting and gathering outside the nation’s walls and inside Dungeons. Thus, they had never thought that large groups of hundreds or even over a thousand would depart the nation for more than several days at a time.

And Bugitas hadn’t seen the delivery of information or logistics to be a large problem, so there were almost no units acting as messengers.

Noble Orcs excelled in charging forward and were certainly not a dull race, but... they weren’t a race that was proficient at covering long distances quickly, and there weren’t many tamers that used monsters.

Bugitas was probably sitting on his throne right about now, waiting for reports from the now-deceased Budirud and Bufudin that would never come.

There was no way that this wouldn’t be taken advantage of; the plan now was for the swift liberation of all of the nations that had been affected by Bugitas’s evil influence and then close in on the nation just as swiftly, having Prince Budarion take Bugitas’s head.

Once that was over, yakiniku would be made with Bugitas’s ribs.

No, should I make roasted pork fillets? It’s hard to give up the possibilities of miso katsu

and pork curry, though.

Vandalieu was lost in these thoughts, but a voice called out to him from below among all the cheering, bringing him back to reality.

“Excuse me! Can I have a moment?!”

“What is it?” Vandalieu asked.

Perhaps he had repaired a building incorrectly because he had been too lost in his thoughts. Thinking that this might have been the case, Vandalieu hastily stepped back onto the ground, but the Dwarf woman who had called out to him didn’t seem to be wanting to make a complaint or request.

“Umm, for repairing my house and... avenging Wan-san, I wanted to thank you,” she said. Her expression was sad for a moment as Vandalieu descended to the ground, but it quickly changed into a smile as she offered him a basket. “These are the fruits that Wan-san liked! Thank you very much!” she said.

“Thank you very much for this,” said Vandalieu.

Who was Wan-san? Before Vandalieu could ask, the Dwarf woman ran back towards her house.

As he watched her leave, he imagined that Wan-san was probably a High Kobold who had been in an intimate relationship with her.

“Monsters’ spirits return to the circle of transmigration quickly, after all... and it seems that Bufudin and Gargya don’t remember him, either,” Vandalieu murmured.

It seemed that Bufudin and Gargya didn’t remember. Wan was probably not an uncommon name among High Kobolds.

Leaving that aside, Vandalieu looked into the basket, thinking that he would gratefully accept these fruits, to see that they were fruits that Vandalieu had never seen or heard of before. He was perplexed by these red-skinned fruits with several hairs resembling catfish whiskers growing from them, about the right size to be held in one hand.

“Umm, how do you eat these?” he asked.

“Wanwanwanwan!”

“...Thanks.”

High Kobold children were cute, resembling puppies standing on two legs, but it was impossible to tell what they were saying. The Kobold language was just as unintelligible as the Orc language.

Vandalieu tried cutting the skin of the fruit with his nails to see that despite its appearance, it was filled with smooth, white flesh. He tried eating it and found the flesh to be soft, his mouth becoming filled with sweet fruit juice.

“I feel like it’s a little similar to lychees, which I ate on just one occasion on Earth. It seems that there are interesting fruits in Lambda, too. Wan-san, you have good taste,” said Vandalieu.

As he thought of the late Wan-san, his surroundings suddenly turned dark without warning.

“Vandalieu, the extermination of the usurper who was ruling the High Goblin nation and the general that was dispatched here, as well as the liberation of the nation, is complete. Budirud’s Zombie was very useful,” said a voice.

Legion had silently teleported into the sky above Vandalieu.

“UWAAAAH?! MAMA~!”

“KYAINKYAIN?!”

The children ran away immediately. It seemed that the appearance of Legion, who appeared to be a three-meter-wide sphere made of multiple flesh mannequins entwined around each other, was too stimulating for them.

“...I don’t think they need to cry as they run away. I even had fanatical fans in my previous life, too,” said Pluto, looking shocked.

“It can’t be helped; it’s their first time seeing you,” said Vandalieu. “How are Borkus and the others?”

“Borkus was complaining that things were too boring because the enemies are too

weak,” Shade replied. “He defeated King Gido who was ruling the High Goblin nation and Bone Man defeated General Bukyap who was stationed there, but it seems that they didn’t put up much of a fight.”

“Of course, both of them were strong enemies that we wouldn’t have been able to defeat unless we made good use of Ereshkigal’s Counter!” Valkyrie piped up.

“Valkyrie, I don’t think you need to mention that,” said Pluto.

Vandalieu’s party had split into two armies, conquering the High Kobold and High Goblin nations at the same time.

This was because the two nations were close to the Ghoul nation, and because they had been under the complete control of the Noble Orc empire and used as sources of troops.

And though this had only been confirmed after defeating him, it was difficult to imagine that Gargya would reform after Bugitas’s defeat, so it hadn’t been a mistake to liberate these nations first.

According to Legion, it seemed that the one ruling the High Goblin nation and the general dispatched there were similar.

“By the way, what is that?” Pluto asked.

“A mysterious fruit,” said Vandalieu. “It seems to be native to Lambda, and I didn’t manage to ask what it was called. Would you like to try some?”

Legion took a fruit from Vandalieu and swallowed it whole, skin and all. And then another of their personalities surfaced to respond.

“...This fruit was on Earth and Origin as well. The appearance and taste is pretty much the same. Jack likes it, too,” said Hitomi.

“They’re called rambutan, right, Hitomi-chan?” said Jack.

“Seriously?” Vandalieu asked.

“Serious, serious,” both of them replied.

Rambutan. It was a fruit native to Southeast Asia. As Hitomi said, it was a fruit that had existed on Earth, but Vandalieu had no memory of it.

However, this fruit had been produced in the High Kobold nation, which had a climate that was a little similar to Africa's, so it was likely to be a close relative of the rambutan, to be more precise.



Once Vandalieu had time, he wanted to create Immortal Ents to produce rambutan, but wouldn't it cause problems to produce a specialty product of a nation that Talosheim would begin trading with in the near future?

Vandalieu was pondering this inside the Job-changing room of the High Kobold nation.

As monsters, High Kobolds could not acquire Jobs, but a Job-changing was necessary for the citizens to acquire production-related Jobs, so there was one in this nation as well.

"I haven't done anything unusual this time, so I don't think there will be any new ones, but..." Vandalieu murmured as he touched the crystal.

『Jobs that can be selected: 【Corpse Demon Commander】 【Disease Demon】 【Spirit Warrior】 【Whip Tongue Calamity】 【Vengeful Berserker】 【Dead Spirit Mage】 【Dark Healer】 【Labyrinth Creator】 【Demon King User】 【Magic Cannoneer】 【Dark King Mage】 【Divine Enemy】 【Dark Guider】 【Creation Guider】 【Fallen Warrior】 【Insect Nin*】 』

TLN: This 忍/nin is the "nin" in "ninja"*

"...Hmm, there are more. Are Guider Jobs supposed to be coming out like this so often?"

Isn't this Job system bugged? Is it alright? Vandalieu silently asked in his mind, directing his question at Ricklent, the genie of time and magic who was thought to have created Jobs and Skills, but there was no reply.

It was unknown as to whether Vandalieu's question hadn't reached Ricklent or whether he had been deliberately ignored.

“Still, the other two are... Fallen Warrior refers to a fallen warrior, doesn’t it.* As for Insect Nin, maybe it’s related to the Insect User Job? But for now, I’ve already decided on the next Job I’ll take. I choose Corpse Demon Commander.”

Lately, Vandalieu had often been commanding everyone or standing at the front in group battles. So if he acquired the Corpse Demon Commander Job, which was read in the same way as ‘commander’*, perhaps he would acquire a Bonus to the Commanding Skill and things would proceed better. That was what he had thought.

TLN: I think I mentioned this when the Job first appeared; “Corpse Demon Commander” is pronounced the same way as the word for “commander” but with different kanji.*

『You have changed Jobs to Corpse Demon Commander!』

『The Levels of the Commanding and Coordination Skills have increased!』

『You have acquired the Corpse Binding Technique Skill!』

『The Corpse Binding Technique, Plant Binding Technique and Insect Binding Technique have fused into Group Binding Technique!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 9 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Holy Son of Vida】 , 【Monstrosity】 , 【Scaled King】 【Tentacle King】
- **Job:** Corpse Demon Commander
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User, Insect User, Tree Caster, Demon Guider, Archenemy, Zombie Maker, Golem Creator
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 2541
 - Mana: 1,119,442,646 (+357,132,793)
 - Strength: 1071
 - Agility: 804

- Stamina: 1203
- Intelligence: 2475
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5
 - Rapid Healing: Level 10
 - Death-Attribute Magic: Level 10
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 8
 - Magic Resistance: Level 6
 - Dark Vision
 - Demon Path Enticement: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 6
 - Guidance: Demon Path: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 6
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 5
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 3
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 5
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Large
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 4
 - Thread Refining: Level 3
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 3
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Level 8
 - Golem Creation: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 8
 - Mana Control: Level 7
 - Spirit Form: Level 8
 - Cooking: Level 5
 - Alchemy: Level 7
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6
 - Soul Break: Level 10
 - Multi-Cast: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Long-distance Control: Level 7
 - Surgery: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Parallel Thought Processing: Level 6
 - Materialization: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Coordination: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - High-speed Thought Processing: Level 5

- Commanding: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Plant Binding Technique: Level 6 → Combined with Group Binding Technique!
- Thread-reeling: Level 5
- Throwing: Level 5
- Scream: Level 4
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Insect Binding Technique: Level 6 → Combined with Group Binding Technique!
- Artillery Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- Shield Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Armor Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Group Binding Technique: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Slayer: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 7
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Demon King Fusion: Level 4
 - Abyss: Level 4
 - Hostility
- **Demon King fragments:**
 - Blood
 - Horns
 - Suckers
 - Ink Sacs
 - Carapace
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

Vandalieu had expected the Commanding and Coordination Skills to increase in Level, but he had also acquired the Corpse Binding Technique Skill, which had fused into the Group Binding Technique Skill.

“I can imagine what effect this will have based on Plant Binding Technique and Insect

Binding Technique. I wonder if this means I can equip Borkus and Bone Man, too?”

The results seemed to be better than expected. Vandalieu left the Job-changing room in a good mood.

And then Gizania rushed towards him. “Holy-Son-dono! Prince Budarion says that his transplanted eye and arm are throbbing, and his body is not feeling well! Come quickly!” she said.

Have I made a medical blunder? Vandalieu thought as he hastily headed to Prince Budarion.



The cup that the tyrant threw at the floor in anger made a clear-sounding noise as it shattered.

“BUGAAH! BUKYABUGAGAH?!” Bugitas shouted, asking whether there were still not reports.

His Noble Orc subordinates were huddled up in fear.

One of them, visibly reluctant, opened his mouth to speak. “Your Majesty Bugitas, there has been no report from General Budirud who is conquering the Ghoulnation. Our regular communications with Gargya-dono and General Bufudin in the High Kobold nation, as well as Gido-dono and General Bukyap in the High Goblin nation, have stopped as well. Also, there have been no reports from General Buburin, who was building the frontline base for conquering Zanalpadna,” he reported.

Bugitas’s mood grew worse and worse the longer the Noble Orc Mage’s report continued.

The Noble Orc Mage didn’t want to deliver this report, and there was nothing he could use to try and improve Bugitas’s mood, but he couldn’t simply stay silent, either.

“What about the guys we sent to monitor the Majin nation and Drakonid nation?!” Bugitas demanded.

The Majin and Drakonid nations, which had military strength equivalent to the Noble Orc empire’s, couldn’t send their armies to the empire because they were dealing with

the monster rampages caused by Ravovifard, the evil god of release.

However, considering the military strength of those nations, even if dealing with the rampaging monsters took time, Bugitas didn't think that the nations would be overrun.

In fact, if a monster rampage on the scale that would inflict harm on the Majin and Drakonid nations would threaten the empire as well. Ravovifard had simply made the monsters inhabiting the Dungeons more ferocious; he was not controlling them. The monsters were simply attacking the enemies closest to them.

"About that, we have not heard from them after the first message they sent after they arrived... we believe it likely that they were found by a group of rampaging monsters and eliminated," the Noble Orc Mage said.

"Those useless fools! Send in the next scouting unit! We must have a clear idea of the movements of those two nations! What about Gerazorg and Bugoba that we sent to the Majin nation, and Bumogan who is dealing with the other small nations?!" Bugitas shouted.

Bugitas had an ally in the form of a Majin by the name of Gerazorg who had once studied abroad in the empire; he had sent Gerazorg to the formidable but distant Majin nation with the intention of starting a coup d'état. It was the same plan as with Gargya in the High Kobold nation.

Gerazorg, who had acquired Ravovifard's divine protection, was supposed to have gathered supporters within the Majin nation, join the army led by General Bugoba and, if things went well, take over the nation.

"They have gone completely silent... We believe that messengers were on the way, but they were unfortunate enough to encounter powerful monsters that eliminated them," the Noble Orc Mage said.

There hadn't been a single report. The nations were far, and the road in between was filled with danger, so there was nothing that could be done about that.

But suddenly, another Noble Orc Mage ran hastily into the throne room, falling over on his way in.

"Your Majesty! Your Majesty Bugitas! The general, General Bugoba's...!"

“Has there finally been a report?!” Bugitas asked, standing up from his throne.

He thought that he would finally be able to hear a report. But what was delivered to him was the most terrible of news.

“N-no! The survivors of General Bugoba have returned!” the Noble Orc Mage said.

“WHAAAAAAT?!” Bugitas roared like an enraged wild boar.

On the verge of soiling himself, the Noble Orc who had run into the room continued speaking. According to his report, the coup d’état in the Majin nation had ended in failure.

Gerazorg had tried to gather supporters in the Majin nation for the coup d’état, but surprisingly, he had been almost completely unable to gather any at all. There had only been a few supporters, and they didn’t possess any special abilities or high positions in society. Though some conspiracy or a single planned act of terrorism might have been possible, subversion of the nation hadn’t been within reach.

Despite that, General Bugoba had made a display of reckless loyalty, wanting to “live up to His Majesty’s expectations,” and attacked the Majin nation. With an army that was overwhelmingly outnumbered, he had put up a valiant fight, but in the end, he had been soundly defeated. General Bugoba himself had been killed in battle, and apparently the few survivors had returned to the empire.

Gerazorg was apparently among them, seeking asylum.

“...Impossible. It’s true that he was unsatisfactory when I reached out to him, and he is a fool that deserved being exiled under the pretense of studying in another nation, but he possesses Ravovifard’s divine protection. The High Kobold nation’s Gargya and the High Goblin nation’s Gido were similar, and things went well there!” Bugitas shouted.

But reality would not change. Bugitas would likely be able to hear the story from Gerazorg himself and the survivors of General Bugoba’s army, but it was unlikely that he would hear anything pleasant.

Though the one saving grace was that the Majin race was few in number, so even though Gerazorg’s coup d’état had failed, they wouldn’t be able to send their army out so soon.

However, the Majin race was a warrior race that transformed into fearsome fighters once angered. Even if it took them time, they would certainly send their army to the empire one day.

So, it seems that the same method that I used with the High Kobolds and High Goblins doesn't work on the Majin race, who are nothing but whimsical individuals... Bugitas convinced himself forcibly, successfully managing to suppress his anger.

"Which means that there's no report from Bumogan?" he asked with bloodshot eyes.

"N-no! A report just arrived!" the Noble Orc Mage replied in a stiff-sounding voice.

"What?! It isn't a report that they've been routed and want assistance in retreating, is it?!"

"No! It's a request for reinforcements! The Lamia, Centaurs and Harpies were stronger than they expected, and for some reason, a small number of Majin have joined the enemy forces! The report says that they have sustained large losses of low-ranking soldiers, and that they are also lacking materials..."

Bumogan hadn't possessed a pawn to start a coup d'état, but he had been leading an army to suppress the countries that posed less of a threat, ensuring that they didn't form an allied army with Zanalpadna and the Ghoul nation.

This was a plan made under the assumption that the Lamia and Centaur nations were small, not being of much threat unless they joined forces with Zanalpadna or the nation of Ghouls, of whom it was no exaggeration to say that they were all combatants excluding the elderly and the children.

However, the three nations had joined forces and become stronger than expected, and it seemed that the Majin nation, who had destroyed Bugoba's army, had sent a few elite units to aid them as a preliminary act of retaliation against the empire.

"Buguguh...! Give them the reinforcements! Tell Bumogan to not return until he forces the small fry back and overruns the enemy nations!" Bugitas ordered.

"But we do not know who we should put in charge of the reinforcements..."

"You go! Right now!"

“Hyih! A-as you will!”

“Get out!” Bugitas shouted at the rest of his subordinates, chasing them out of the throne room.

He felt like if he continued to look at their faces from up close, he would kill them in anger.

It was no simple task to become a Noble Orc Mage; they were different from women, who were easily replaced... There had been dozens of them to begin with, but most of them supported Prince Budarion.

Most of the mages remaining in the empire were those serving Bugitas reluctantly out of fear of his power. The only mages that had sworn loyalty to him and worshipped Ravovifard were the few individuals who had been in the throne room until moments earlier.

Thus, even Bugitas couldn't simply kill them as he pleased.

All of these fools are useless! Even though they have gained the power of my Guidance... are their heads nothing but decorations?! Bugitas cursed in his mind as he lifted a bottle of alcohol to his mouth and chugged its contents.

His throat felt like it was burning, but the heat suppressed his irritation.

That's right, there is a saying that no news is good news. The fact that there are no reports from Budirud, Bufudin and Bukyap is proof that things are going well. There's no doubt about that, Bugitas thought, nodding at the convenient delusions given to him by the alcohol.

But his happy moment came to an end.

“BUHIH?!”

Bugitas felt a sensation similar to when Familiar Spirit Descent was activated, but with an even more powerful being descending, erasing his drunkenness in an instant.

And through a Divine Message from Ravovifard, the evil god of release, he learned of a terrifying situation.

“Impossible... Is he that powerful a being?! So, what am I supposed to do?!... Is that even possible?! If I do that... I can win! Even if the enemy possesses the Demon King’s fragments, I can win!”

Listening to the solution given to him by Ravovifard, Bugitas felt certain in his own victory.



Job explanation:

【Golem Creator】

The superior version of the Golem Transmuter Job. It can be selected by those who have experienced the Golem Transmuter Job and fulfill other conditions such as Level requirements in production-related Skills and having created new materials.

It provides low increases in Attribute Values, but provides a bonus to all production-related Skills.

The effect of the Job allows one to spend Mana to create new materials such as metal, but it is likely difficult to make full use of this ability unless the user possesses Mana that exceeds that of a human’s limits.

However, the fact that one can acquire this Job means that one already possesses Mana that exceeds a human’s limits, so this may not be much of a flaw.

Side Chapter 22

The Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords and the sixth reincarnated individual

The Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords... a secret fighting force prided by the Amid Empire, comprised of warriors who possessed the highest skill in combat.

They were feared beings who were rumored to have used their power to turn the tides of numerous battles, stop monster rampages on their own and erase traitors to the nation, pulling out any roots of rebellion.

If one considered the S-class adventurer, the ‘Thunderclap’ Schneider and his party to be the greatest fighting force that didn’t belong to the empire’s government, the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords were the greatest fighting force that did.

“This is an unpleasant mission,” muttered the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert Amid, who belonged to the Fifteen Evil-breaking swords and had been assigned the number three, as he continued down the highway towards his mission.

Despite being as young as being in his late twenties, the Third Sword was such a master of the blade that he was said to be “faster than light.” In fact, his abilities were equivalent to those of an A-class adventurer.

He was a handsome man with a shapely nose. While he was a member of a secret force, he was highly popular among the ladies of the upper class; there were endless marriage talks despite the fact that he was already married to three wives.

He even came from an excellent bloodline; he was the grandson of the previous emperor of the Amid Empire, with the current Emperor Marshukzarl being Rickert’s uncle.

As an honorary duke, he owned no land, but he had received offers of recommendations to become the First Sword in the future, and he was in a position where his name would certainly be among the candidates to become the next emperor if something were to happen to Marshukzarl and the newly-born First Prince.

But Rickert knew that all of these were lies.

His sword was slower than light.

He had simply been chosen as a decoration among the Fifteen Evil-breaking swords because of his good looks and heritage. The position of Third Sword and the position of First Sword that he had been promised were simply for propaganda.

And nothing would happen to Marshukzarl during his lifetime.

That was how things had been up until today, and things wouldn't change from tomorrow onwards.

"Is it unpleasant?" asked Buss, Rickert's attendant. "The stable ruling of the former Sauron region is currently the greatest unresolved problem in the empire. The outcome of the war against the Orbaume Kingdom depends on it. If you can suppress things, my lord, your achievements will echo across the entire empire."

The Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords were a secret force, but Rickert's existence itself was an advertisement sign that displayed the empire's military strength. Thus, a carriage was used to transport him to places and he was constantly accompanied by knights wearing gaudy armor and Buss, who was his attendant and essentially his secretary.

Rickert was inside a carriage so extravagant that if he were to tell someone that he was going to a ball rather than to a mission, nobody would have doubted him.

"How can I be happy over being praised for a hollow achievement gained through something that is disguised as a mission?" he said with a sigh, his words dripping with sarcasm.

"My lord, you will be heard from outside. If you wish to complain, you must inform me in advance," said Buss, remonstrating his master as he activated a Magic Item that prevented sound from extending past a certain area, allowing private conversations.

"I did put thought into that. The armor and helmets that our empire provides to the knights that guard us have too many decorations, so those sounds are very loud. They can't hear my complaints as they're walking. You're wasting your Magic Stones," Rickert said.

"Putting thought into things is my duty," Buss said, thinking now more than usual that

his lord had some kind of serious illness. “What exactly is it that you find unpleasant?” he asked, pressing his master to spit out all of his complaints.

Buss thought that it was also his duty to listen to such complaints.

Knowing that Buss thought this, Rickert spat out his complaints and the stress that had accumulated in his chest like sediment.

“What, you ask? It’s the same as always. My own lack of talent that causes me to always be used as a decoration, while being fully aware of the reality of the situation... Apparently, those with sharp senses think that this incident was a ploy of His Majesty’s to reduce the influence of the useless Duke Marme.”

Duke Marme, who had been complaining that the rule of the former Sauron region was not going well, had been successfully deceived and placed in a position as the person now responsible for and in charge of the occupying army that would likely fail at their job.

And by offering a helping hand at the timing when Duke Marme would begin complaining, it would become widely-known that his ability for ruling and military strategy was worthless, thus lowering the power of the Marme family of dukes.

The discord between Emperor Marshukzarl and Duke Marme was famous enough to be known to any who were reasonably knowledgeable regarding matters within the empire. And any half-clever nobles could imagine that it was impossible for Duke Marme to rule the occupied land of an enemy nation.

And so, many thought that there was a power struggle going on between the emperor and Duke Marme behind the scenes of Rickert and the other Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords being sent out.

Indeed, it was possible that Marshukzarl did have such intents.

“But His Majesty’s true aim isn’t to wear away at Duke Marme’s influence. The mission given to us isn’t the extermination of the resistance, either,” said Rickert. “We’re to make contact and negotiate with the Dhampir Vandalieu, who slaughtered the Mirg shield-nation’s expedition army of six thousand and went on a rampage in the Orbaume Kingdom as well. If the negotiations break down, we’re to dispose of him.”

Marshukzarl was after Vandalieu.

Marshukzarl, who had gathered information through a different network to the one used by the army occupying the Sauron region, knew that the resistance organization known as the Sauron Liberation Front had made contact with the Ghouls of the Sauron region.

And by adding together and analyzing other small pieces of information, he had become certain that Vandalieu was backing the Sauron Liberation Front.

That was why he had appointed Duke Marme as the new supreme commander of the army occupying the region. So that he could use him as a touchstone and bait for determining how hostile Vandalieu was towards the empire.

Duke Marme was someone with the blood of the imperial family, with rights to succeed the throne, and even among the empire's noblemen, he discriminated against Vida's races particularly harshly. On top of that, he was a passionate believer of Alda. And to Marshukzarl, he wasn't someone who would be considered a loss if he was killed.

Even if Duke Marme and the vassals that he had taken with him were to be killed, there were people who could succeed them, so there wouldn't be any great harm to his region's economy. The other noblemen who had moved with the duke were those that the emperor felt could be replaced or simply didn't care about if they were absent.

In truth, Duke Marme had yielded and asked for the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords to be dispatched sooner than Marshukzarl expected, but even if that hadn't happened, Rickert and the others would likely have been dispatched anyway.

In order to deal with Vandalieu.

"But are His Majesty's decisions not the natural decisions to make? At the age of six, the Dhampir slaughtered six thousand elite troops from the Mirg shield-nation, as well as the 'Vampire Hunter' Bormack Gordan, and even turned them into Undead to perform a counter-invasion, where he turned the cultivated land into a rotten sea of deadly poison," said Buss. "In addition to that, in the Hartner Duchy of the Orbaume Kingdom, he tilted a castle, destroyed a mine operated by slaves along with the entire mountain, buried a knights' order and kidnapped over a thousand villagers and disappeared somewhere. And he is manipulating the Scylla race and the resistance from behind the scenes... To be frank, all of this is difficult to believe."

On top of all of that, according to the information, Vandalieu was capable of creating new Dungeons.

Immediately after a Dhampir thought to be Vandalieu was sighted in the City of Niarki in the Hartner Duchy, a Dungeon had appeared in the forest to the direction in which Vandalieu had fled the city.

After that, many Dungeons had been discovered in the Hartner Duchy. Other than the one discovered close to the city of Niarki, they were all F-class Dungeons with only a single floor consisting of a single room, however.

“Buss, it’s not that I’m dissatisfied with being sent out to hunt one Dhampir child. Even if we ignore the unconfirmed information that you just mentioned, he’s someone that many Ghouls and Undead obey. If all of the unconfirmed information is true on top of that, he’s so dangerous that he won’t be a problem of just the Sauron Duchy,” said Rickert. “If we don’t deal with him right, in the worst-case scenario, the Amid Empire could be destroyed.”

“My lord, you must not say such careless things.”

“It’s not careless, Buss. It’s unknown as to how much fighting strength Vandalieu possesses as an individual, but he destroyed an elite force of six thousand of the Mirg shield-nation’s elite three years ago. We should consider him to be capable of destroying at least one of our vassal nations, including the Mirg shield-nation. And unless the Orbaume Kingdom’s power is severely harmed, it’s clear that they’ll come to take advantage of that as well.”

The Amid Empire’s vassal nations – the maritime nation of Kalahad to the south, the mountain-nation of Marmuke to the north, the grain-nation of Yond to the west and to the east, the Mirg shield-nation that possessed the greatest military strength among them all.

The army of elite individuals from the Mirg shield-nation had been unable to defeat Vandalieu. If he were to set his eyes on one of the other three nations, in the worst-case scenario, the damage would be so great that they would stop functioning as nations.

Vandalieu was capable of contaminating the earth with a poison that lingered for a long period of time... it was unknown as to what methods he used to create that

poison, but if it was possible for him to spread that poison across large areas of land or ocean, he could destroy nations without even having to fight them.

Marshukzarl would be a failure of an emperor if he were to not pay attention to such a dangerous individual.

“But my lord, making contact and negotiating with this Vandalieu is part of our mission. I find it difficult to imagine that the negotiations will go well,” said Buss.

“Really? Actually, I feel the same way,” said Rickert.

“...My lord.”

“That’s what I personally think. But it seems that His Majesty and the others of the Fifteen Swords have ideas.”

Considering the things that Vandalieu had done in the Mirg shield-nation, it was certain that he didn’t have any favorable thoughts towards the Amid Empire that governed it. Considering that he was a Dhampir, it was only natural to think that it would be impossible to build a friendly relationship.

In fact, wasn’t it more likely that he would curry favor with the Orbaume Kingdom, a nation that was the Amid Empire’s enemy? At first, that was what Rickert had thought.

However, based on the various incidents in the Hartner Duchy thought to be caused by Vandalieu, Marshukzarl and his advisors had concluded that Vandalieu would not join the Orbaume Kingdom’s side without conditions.

With that being the case, it would be possible to make him an ally, depending on the conditions. That was what they seemed to think.

In fact, even in the Sauron region, Vandalieu hadn’t directly caused large harm to the army occupying the area. It seemed that he had destroyed a fort, but considering the things that he had done up until now, he should have been able to destroy the entire army.

Around the same period of time, the higher-ranking members of the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army had been destroyed, its remainders being absorbed by the Sauron Liberation Front to form a single large organization led by the Liberating Princess Knight.

If this was Vandalieu's handiwork, the one that he had inflicted harm upon was actually the Orbaume Kingdom.

"Based on his actions up until now, it seems that the Dhampir named Vandalieu doesn't intend to side with either the Amid Empire or the Orbaume Kingdom. The emperor likely thought that he intends to build his own power made up of Undead. It does indeed seem like the kind of thing that a child who possesses power would think of," said Rickert.

Vandalieu would rule over a group of puppets that would work for him loyally without disobeying or having any opinion at all. The tyrant of a small hill.

"A game played with dangerous dolls," said Buss. "Such a person would never yield to the empire no matter what conditions are offered, would he?"

"That's what I think, but I'm not in charge of the negotiations," said Rickert.

"That's right, Ricky-boy," said a new voice that suddenly echoed inside the carriage.

Rickert showed no signs of surprise, but responded in a sour voice. "...Five-headed-Snake-dono. Could I ask you to stop calling me that?"

This was the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine, the Fifth Sword, a true member of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

He was a man who had already been a member of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords by the time Rickert joined them.

Ervine chuckled. "What else would you have me call a youngster who has not even lived a hundred years if not 'boy?'"

"Ervine-sama, I believe that my lord is more displeased by your nickname of 'Ricky,'" said Buss.

"Ah, I see. My apologies; I'll call you something else if I remember."

"Incidentally, it is the seventh time that I have heard those words."

"Oh my, is that so? I'm sorry, Ricky-boy," Ervine said, speaking to Rickert once more in a disagreeable tone. "I'm very forgetful, you see. After all, I am an 'old geezer,' as you

like to call me.”

...Going on and on about something that happened years ago. An unpleasant man as usual! Rickert thought.

Immediately after Rickert joined the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, he had met Ervine on a mission. On that occasion, Ervine had been acting in an unpleasant senpai-like manner, and Rickert had once called him, “old geezer.”

It seemed that Ervine still held a grudge towards Rickert for that.

“Now then, back to the topic, Ricky,” Ervine said. “Your duty is your mission on the surface... acting as the cool, strong hero that eliminates the resistance. We’ll have you work up until a certain point, and if the negotiations with the Vandalieu brat break down, you and I, along with the others, will dispose of him.”

“The others? You’re not the only one?” Rickert asked.

“I’m honored that you think so highly of me, but even I am not enough to face thousands of Undead. If he hunts down the dimwits of the occupying army, they could all be killed and turned into Undead.”

Each of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, particularly the true members like Ervine, possessed the strength to fight over a thousand enemies at once. However, no matter how powerful they were, they would always be fighting from a disadvantageous position if they were facing large numbers of enemies.

In this mission, they had to force Vandalieu, who was likely hiding behind the Sauron Liberation Front, to the surface to negotiate with him, and then dispose of him if the negotiations failed.

It seemed that the emperor and the Zero Sword, the leader of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, had decided that it would be too dangerous for anyone to chase Vandalieu on their own if he left the Sauron Liberation Front to die and refused to come out, or tried to flee after negotiations broke down without fighting.

“Me and two others,” Ervine said. “The ‘Insect Swarm’ Bebeckett, the Fifteenth Sword, and the ‘King Slayer’ Sleygar, the Eleventh Sword, are participating.”

“Wait, why are you telling me that?” Rickert asked.

Because Rickert was merely a decoration to be shown off to society, he didn't have detailed information on the true members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, including Ervine. Ervine was the only one whose name and face he knew, and as for the other true members, he had only heard the Titles that the emperor had given them, which were almost like codenames.

Rickert found it strange that Ervine would go out of his way to reveal their names.

"Of course, it's because you'll meet them on-site," Ervine replied. "With this mission, there is almost no information that we can gather preemptively. We can't scout from the sky, and even when people were sent in directly, they went missing."

"I knew that Duke Marme's army's reconnaissance didn't go well, but what about the Hilt guys?" Rickert asked.

Among the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, there were some members originating from the 'Hilt,' which was comprised of capable covert operatives and spies. At the very least, they should have been more competent than Duke Marme's soldiers.

"Ah. After sending information that there are strange stone monuments, they all went missing," said Ervine. "That's why we're going to conduct a power search once we arrive on-site. Either way, if we capture, interrogate and kill resistance members or Ghouls, the mastermind or someone who knows him will come out eventually."

"Isn't it a bad idea to kill the subordinates of someone we're trying to negotiate with?" Rickert asked, thinking that this would take a lot of time and effort.

"It's not like there are any problems with that, is it? Considering the methods that he's used so far, no matter how you look at it, he's the kind of guy who thinks of his subordinates' lives like consumable goods. Are you saying that I'm wrong, Ricky-boy?"

Rickert closed his eyes and recalled the methods that Vandalieu had been using so far.

Leaving aside the fact that he had slaughtered the expedition army, he had turned them into Undead, attacked a city and rendered the cultivated land there uninhabitable.

The image of Vandalieu that one could gain from all of this was one with a coldhearted, cruel personality that didn't hesitate despite the fact that civilians could get caught up in the conflict and that the hearts of the deceased expedition army soldiers' families

would be deeply tormented for a long time... no, he had likely even taken this into account and taken these actions on purpose.

Considering the Dungeon creation incident and the destruction of the slave-run mine in the Hartner Duchy, it didn't seem that he had any compassion or mercy.

And the deliberate murders of the top-ranking members of the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army, carried out in order to increase the power of the Sauron Liberation Front, led by the Liberating Princess Knight, whom he had somehow turned into his subordinate.

Given all of these, Vandalieu didn't care if innocent lives were put at risk as long as he could erase those who opposed him, and he would use the lives of his subordinates like consumable goods; it wouldn't bother him in the slightest if they were killed. That was the kind of image that could be put together.

However, there was information that didn't quite match this image.

"No, it's difficult to imagine that you're wrong, but... I thought there were some strange reports," said Rickert.

Vandalieu had apparently assisted the cultivation villages of the Hartner Duchy, and around the time period where he appeared there frequently, there had been a mysterious phenomenon in the farming villages near where small Dungeons were discovered, where the villagers were visited by 'Vida's clay dolls' filled with valuable metals, money and food if they gave their aged livestock as an offering.

And if the reason the Ghouls of the Hartner Duchy had vanished like the ones in the Mirg shield-nation was because Vandalieu had gathered them, then something was strange. If he wanted fighting strength, Vandalieu could create Undead, so he wouldn't have needed to go out of his way to gather Ghouls.

"Considering that, wouldn't you say that he controls the Undead to use as disposable soldiers, feels no mercy and even sadistic tendencies towards his enemies, but possesses the kind of personality with enough compassion to provide charity to those he feels he should protect?" said Rickert. "It's exactly as if you swapped the humans and Vida's races in Duke Marme's views."

"That might be true." Ervine didn't even try to deny Rickert's conclusion. "But either way, they're likely just accessories for him to feel pleased with himself, thinking that

he's doing good things. Or maybe he's just using them and keeping them until he turns them into Undead. Like fish in a tank. It's possible that the upper ranks of the Sauron Liberation Front, including the Liberating Princess Knight, have already been turned into Undead and the underlings are continuing to move, oblivious to it."

"That's true, but..."

"And it's not like we're going to be friends with him. If we can take him in, we will, and if that seems impossible, we dispose of him. If he has precious people that can be used as a weakness, then it's actually convenient. We can use them as hostages. Ricky-boy, don't you worry about it. Just lift up the Liberating Princess Knight's head and think of a speech to calm the people, telling them that everything's all right thanks to His Majesty, the great emperor, who dispatched the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords."

And with those words, Ervine's faint presence vanished. Rickert wasn't sure whether he had left or whether he was lurking around somewhere, but either way, the conversation was already over.

"...That old geezer, guessing all the things that I find unpleasant and then ending the conversation like that," Rickert muttered.

What he found unpleasant was not the methods employed by the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords or the emperor's intents, but the contents of this mission that made him fully aware that he was nothing more than a decoration, through and through.

Rickert's role was to carry out his official mission of eliminating the resistance and make his 'success' clear to the occupying army, regardless of whether the negotiations with Vandalieu and his possible extermination were successful or not.

Whether the Liberating Princess Knight's head was the real one or a fabricated fake would depend on the negotiations with Vandalieu, however.

"My lord. I believe that your mission is also a necessary duty to provide the Amid Empire with a thousand years of prosperity," said Buss, offering Rickert a black tea made with water boiled by a Magic Item.

Rickert responded with a sigh.

"But can Ervine-dono and the others really defeat that Dhampir?" Buss continued. "It is not that I am doubting everyone's abilities, however."

“They probably can,” Rickert replied, his shoulders relaxing as the scent of the black tea filled his nose. “If what he says can be trusted, Ervine himself is capable even among the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. And I’ve heard rumors about the Insect Swarm and the King Slayer.”

Insect Swarm was the only confirmed Bug Tamer in the empire. He had once cleared a group of monsters overflowing from the shallow layers of the Trial of Zakkart, all on his own.

The King Slayer originated from the Hilt, and he had slain numerous monsters with the title of King that had been protected by hundreds or thousands of underlings.

Rickert, who was an advertisement for their achievements, knew of their strength.

“And among all of the information that we have gathered about Vandalieu so far, there is nothing that mentions his individual fighting strength. It’s likely that he’s a special Tamer. He tries to increase the number of pawns under his command because he himself is weak. His attack on the slave-run mine in the Hartner Duchy, his gathering of Ghouls, Scylla and the resistance as his underlings, it’s all probably for that reason. Judging from how he polluted the cultivated land, he probably has poison and disease-related ways of attacking, but if they are wary of that, then he won’t even put up a fight.”

Rickert found this mission unpleasant, but at the very least, he wouldn’t fail it. That was the kind of mission it was.



The ‘Noah’ Mao Smith’s cheeks relaxed as she felt the warmth of sunlight and the tickling sensation of a breeze against her skin for the first time in a long time.

“Even in a different world, the sun and wind aren’t any different, are they,” she murmured. “But still, I’m really naked... am I supposed to cover myself with leaves?”

There was nobody else around her... Seeing that she was in a grass-covered plain, Mao decided to examine the state of her body in her third lifetime.

Chestnut-colored hair and tanned skin. Her height was far shorter than it had been on Earth or in Origin – to put it bluntly, she was a midget.

As if to compensate for that, her limbs had muscle on them. Mao curled her hands into fists several times, did jumps on the spot and tried walking and light running.

“Hmm, I don’t have scales or a hand dynamometer so I can’t tell for sure, but I get the feeling that my physical strength has increased. But considering that, my body feels heavier. I suppose that’s because I chose this race,” she muttered.

Those who knew her from her previous life would recognize her face as having traces of its previous appearance, but it was younger overall. It might have been possible to convince them that she was a much younger sister with completely different hair, eye and skin colors.

But that would be difficult in Lambda. Because she was a member of a different race.

The race that Mao had chosen for her third life was the Dwarf race.

It wasn’t that she’d wanted to be a Dwarf no matter what. She had simply wanted an appearance that was as different as possible from the one that Vandalieu knew.

It was impossible to request for Rodcorte to simply change her face. Her physical body would be influenced by her soul that carried its memories and personality from her previous lives.

It was possible to minimize that influence if she were to have been reborn as a baby like she had been in Origin. But when reincarnated in a directly-created adult body, it was impossible.

Thus, Mao had chosen to become a Dwarf rather than a human or Elf.

She had actually wanted Rodcorte to make her a man, but that was impossible.

“You know that the brain structures of men and women are different, do you not? If the body and soul do not match, there will be large effects... in the worst-case scenario, you could die within several days, so I advise against it,” Rodcorte had said.

Of course, the ‘Inspector’ Shimada Izumi had confirmed that this wasn’t a lie.

“Well, my name can’t be changed in my Status, and I’ll be found out when I’m found out, so I don’t really care. I’ll get used to my body eventually... Status. Wow, it really comes out.”

Mao examined her own Attribute Values and her transformed Skills. She could see her Unique Skills – The God of Reincarnation's Fortune, Target Radar: Owner of over 100,000,000 Death-Attribute Mana and Unique Skill Concealment.

With Unique Skill Concealment, her Unique Skills wouldn't be seen by Demon Eyes of Appraisal or when she registered at a Guild.

This was a modification made by learning from Kaidou Kanata's mistakes, thought of by Izumi and Aran. With this, the fact that she was a reincarnated individual wouldn't be revealed, even if her Status was looked at.

"Still, seeing my driving and piloting ability turned into 'Mount'...I was a pilot, you know. And my other Skills' Levels aren't very high... Just what kind of monsters are the people who live in this world? Well, I'll stop the naked monologue here... Yes, yes, this way, right? Hmm, it's quite hard to walk with these short legs~"

Listening to Rodcorte's voice that was playing inside her head, Mao began walking. She was heading towards a small group of bandits, and she would defeat them to get clothes and other things that she needed.

And by the time she was ready for her journey, she would have become a Level 100 Jobless, also commonly known as a "Commoner," from the Experience Points gained from killing the bandits.

Once she continued to a nearby city, registered at a Guild, received identification, fabricated a suitable background and finally went through a Job-change, nobody would suspect anything.

She was fifteen years old, a Dwarf who had just become an adult, so some might think it strange at first that she hadn't possessed a Job until coming to the city, but if she kept changing cities, countries and continents as she repeatedly changed Jobs, she would be able to fool them.

"Now then, once I save enough money, I'll bid farewell to this continent and begin a business in another continent."

Mao had no intention of getting involved with Vandalieu whatsoever. She had no intention of trying to kill him like Murakami and the others, nor did she intend to try to convince him and stop him like Minami Asagi.

She intended to flee to a place far away from Vandalieu and spend her life there. That was why she had chosen to be reincarnated earlier than the others.

Though she had reached out to the other reincarnated individuals, like the 'Clairvoyance' Tendou, the 'Ifrit' Akaki and the 'Oracle' Endou Kouya, they hadn't followed her.

But they had supported her. They had told her that there might be more reincarnated individuals who didn't want to fight Vandalieu, and that Mao should lend them her help when the time came.

Incidentally, she would be contacted by Izumi and Aran when such individuals appeared, or in situations of emergency.

Rodcorte had allowed Mao's decision. Reincarnated individuals had the role of developing Lambda as well, not just the role of killing Vandalieu.

One day, a Dwarf adventurer by the name of Mao, who was unusually adept at wind-attribute magic despite her race, would eventually come to do a little work in the Farzon Duchy of the Orbaume Kingdom, which was known for its fishing and shipping industries.

She would reach C-class around a year after her registration, far faster than ordinary adventurers, but soon get on a ship and journey away from the Bahn Gaia continent.



The 'Noah' Mao Smith has been reincarnated in a Dwarf body created by Rodcorte.

Remaining reincarnated individuals:

Rodcorte's Divine Realm: 12

Origin: 79

Chapter 143

I'm a demon, even without being told

Even after Bugitas had usurped the throne, the Noble Orc empire still had a strange order to it.

During the few days following Bugitas and his vassals' successful coup d'état, they had employed violence. They had killed those who disobeyed them and committed the previously-forbidden cannibalism. They confined the priests of Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence who had provided many blessings to the empire up until then, as well as the flesh-wives that had been given for the Orcs to marry, in the churches.

However, after those few days, large incidents stopped happening. A number of women had been gathered, and some of the upset citizens and Orcs had been killed. This was indeed tragic, but on the whole, the damage and number of casualties hadn't been enough to shake the empire.

That was because Bugitas had sent generals like Budirud and Bufudin out to lead armies in various other regions, so there were less rulers in the empire. Most importantly, Bugitas had restrained his subordinates to some extent.

He couldn't inflict great damage to the empire that he himself ruled, and if he cornered Mububujenge too hard, there was no telling what she would do in desperation.

The evil gods who had once been a part of the Demon King's army were not involved in the maintenance and control of Lambda.

The gods of Lambda needed to hold back a certain amount of power to maintain the world, but the evil gods could wield their power as they wished.

They could even descend upon the world and go on a rampage until they were extinguished.

That was true for both the gods who had joined Vida's side like Mububujenge, and for the gods on Vida's side who had been forced out of their positions as gods.

Such an act was equivalent to self-destruction, and not something that a sane god would do. But for the evil gods, insanity was sanity.

As Mububujenge and the other gods maintained the barrier that protected the southern region of the continent from Alda, they were unlikely to lose themselves to desperation so easily, but caution was still needed.

If Mububujenge was alone, Ravovifard would be able to defeat her, but if the other gods were to sympathize with her and join her in her desperate act, Ravovifard would be at a disadvantage.

Thus, it was necessary to make them realize that nothing could be done even if they were to perform such desperate actions.

Ravovifard's objective was to take the other gods of the southern region of the continent into a religious system where he, the evil god of release, was standing at the top.

He would bring the gods over to his side, one by one. Ravovifard's power of release had weak effects on other evil gods, but there were many classic methods to employ, even without his special ability. Intimidation and persuasion were effective, even against gods.

But even this goal was nothing but a checkpoint. He would take in gods that obeyed him, seal away gods that disobeyed, increase his power, defeat Alda, the god of law and fate who was slowly but surely exhausting his power, and hold this world in his own hands.

This was Ravovifard's ambition, and the ambition of Bugitas who worshipped him.

An army was marching towards the empire that was working towards this ambition.

As the scout on the watchtower reported this news, the Noble Orcs looked and cheered at the sight of the army.

"Those are the flags of General Budirud, General Bufudin and General Bukyap! They've returned!" one of the Noble Orcs cried. "Hurry and open the gate!"

But another Noble Orc stopped him. "Wait!"

“Why?! If we show disrespect to the generals by making them wait, there’s no telling what kind of punishment we’ll receive!”

“You fool! Leaving aside General Budirud, as his army was sent to attack the Ghoul nation, why are General Bufudin and General Bukyap’s armies here as well when they were supposed to have been dispatched to the High Kobold and High Goblin nations?!”

Having this pointed out, the first Noble Orc looked more closely at the armies led by the three generals.

Budirud’s army might have returned after successfully conquering the Ghoul nation, but there was no way that Bufudin and Bukyap’s armies would return from the nations they had been dispatched to unless Bugitas, the emperor, were to call them back.

No, if one thought about it, it was strange for Budirud’s army to return as well. Even if they had succeeded, a large amount of it should have remained behind with only messengers being sent to deliver the news of success unless they had slaughtered every single Ghoul.

And the three generals were supposed to have been in separate places; why had they joined together to return to the empire?

And then the Noble Orc realized.

“R-rebellion! It’s a rebellion! The generals have betrayed us! Report this to His Majesty Bugitas and Chief General Buzazeos!”



“It seems that they’ve noticed. Well, then... Hold up the true flags! Hold up the flags of Prince Budarion and Talosheim, and deploy the army!” Budirud commanded, seeing that there were no signs of the gates opening and realizing that the rebellion had been seen through.

The generals’ flags that had been held up high were thrown to the ground, and the flags of Prince Budarion and the empire were raised in their place.

And the air around Budirud was filled with tragic cries.

“I can’t run, I can’t run, I can’t run, I can’t run.”

“I want to run, I want to run, I want to run, I want to run, I want to run.”

“Impossible, impossible, impossible! We’re done for!”

“This is the end! There’s nothing but despair for me! Mommyyyyy!”

Bufudin, Bukyap, as well as Gargya who had usurped the throne of the High Kobold nation and Gido who had been ruling the High Goblin nation, were wailing with expressions of despair on their faces, their teeth chattering.

“You people... Nothing will change by being frightened and crying,” Budirud told them.

“If nothing’s going to change, let us do as we want! This is already the end for us!” said Bufudin.

“That’s right! Look at the other soldiers, too!” said Bukyap.

The Orcs, Noble Orcs and the lookouts of the empire’s gates hadn’t noticed, but at the back, there were the High Kobolds and High Goblins that had been Gargya and Gido’s subordinates. They were so frightened that their fear would be clear even to those not familiar with other races.

There were deep wrinkles in their faces and they were crying loudly. They looked as if they were about to go and die meaningless deaths.

...Though there were more than a few of them who were letting out broken laughter, too.

“See! We’re not the only ones crying!” Gargya said, fully open to how pathetic he was.

“Bufuh,” Budirud sighed, not looking particularly shaken. “You and I are commanders. Even if our soldiers are crying, how can we cry with them? Morale will drop, order will be lost and the army will stop functioning as an army. That would be like walking into a death that is right in front of our eyes,” he said rationally.

“Our deaths, you say... we’re already dead. We’re dead, and so are you,” said Bukyap with dull, lifeless eyes.

Indeed, the army marching upon the Noble Orc empire was made of Undead that Vandalieu had created from the corpses. A Zombie army.

Only the Magic Stones had been taken from the corpses of Bugitas's subordinates that had been killed in the various places, with no further dismantling carried out on their bodies, so that this Undead army could be created.

However, at first, Vandalieu hadn't intended to use almost all of the defeated enemies. In addition to the formerly important figures like Budirud, creating several hundred Undead and spreading them across sparsely in front of allied forces would have been plenty to use as a meat shield. That was what had been intended at first.

Recently-created Zombies have considerably lower Ranks than the abilities that they possessed while alive. By becoming Undead, these Zombies had lost the effects of Bugitas's False Guidance: Beast Path and, in Gargya and Gido's case, Ravovifard's divine protection... Of course, using Familiar Spirit Descent was impossible, too.

And their current master Vandalieu had no intention of guiding them, so they received only minimal effects from Guidance: Demon Path.

Thus, they had become far weaker than they were while alive. There would be no point in moving such a large number of such weak soldiers, increasing the time it took to move.

But things had changed when Vandalieu acquired the Corpse Demon Commander Job and the Group Binding Technique Skill.

Up until now, Vandalieu's Plant Binding Technique and Insect Binding Technique had allowed him to equip plants and insects inside his body and transport them, but with the restriction that he couldn't transport large numbers of them for long periods of time.

This was because of a limitation of the Skill's effects – living creatures took the nutrients they needed from Vandalieu while they were equipped.

Even if they were fine for short periods of time, Vandalieu wouldn't be able to provide enough nutrients for large numbers of living creatures, and he would die of starvation if he kept them equipped for more than half a day.

That was why Vandalieu always equipped insectoid and plant monsters that were resistant to hunger, such as Pete, Cemetery Bees, Eisen and the Slime Kühl.

Isn't there a Demon King's hump that can store large amounts of nutrients like a camel's

hump? he had thought from time to time.

And then he had become able to equip Undead.

Of course, Undead didn't need nutrients. They could eat, but it wasn't a necessary act to maintain their own existence. Thus, Vandalieu wouldn't starve to death even if he equipped as many as it was possible to equip for long periods of time.

Thus, he had relied on the effects of the Zombie Maker Job and his vast amount of Mana to create Zombies from all of the intact enemy corpses, equipped them and then released them in a place some distance away from the Noble Orc empire.

Of course, as Vandalieu hadn't been present when the enemies in the High Goblin nation died, he had failed to gather a lot of their spirits, so Bukyap's and Gido's armies had much less Zombies.

And the reason the Zombies other than Budirud were in sorrow and despair was because of the words that Vandalieu had spoken to them as he released them.

"You are acting as a decoy and meat shield. Please draw the Noble Orc empire's eyes to yourselves, act as a wall for everyone from Zanalpadna and the Ghoul nation behind you, and fight the enemies. But don't cause harm to the empire's citizens or defensive installments such as the walls. And those who have not performed to my satisfaction and those who have disobeyed my orders will have their souls broken later," he had told them.

Since they were Undead, they hadn't really cared about the first part of these orders. They had already died, and their sense of pain was much different from the pain they had felt while they were alive. They wouldn't go out of their way to choose to experience a second death, but with Vandalieu ordering them, they didn't feel particularly reluctant about it.

After all, they had only just become Undead, so they hadn't spent effort to increase their Levels or Skills. Even if they died, they would just return to being spirits. They had nothing to lose.

But if their souls were destroyed, they would be annihilated in the truest sense of the word. With that said, having their souls broken wasn't the only thing they feared.

"We'll be neglected by him, thought of as nuisances and stepped on and broken like

pieces of trash!” cried Bufudin.

“Ah, I want to end this, I just want to end it... how nice would it be if death was the end!” said Gargya.

Vandalieu had been their enemy while they were alive, but now, they perceived him to be charismatic.

Gargya in particular hadn’t had anyone he considered precious to him other than himself while he was alive, so Vandalieu was now the only one that was more important to him than Gargya was to himself.

Vandalieu wouldn’t even recycle his spirit to use as a power source for Golems; he would simply decide that he was unnecessary and dispose of him. The fear and despair at that thought was far more than the fear and despair of a second death.

But Budirud didn’t look sorrowful at all. “Is that what you’re worried about?” he said with a laugh.

“Is that what, you say?! Has your fear driven you mad?!” Bufudin shouted.

“What are you saying? I am very much sane. And thus, I shall tell you that if we achieve greatness during this battle, our souls will not be broken, even though we did all of those terrible things.”

“Wha-?! How easy do you think that is?! We no longer have the Guidance or divine protection, and our Attribute Values have decreased! Many of our subordinates have even lost their Skills from the severe damage to their spirits! We’re essentially papier-mâché soldiers, you know?!” Bukyap pointed out.

“And our enemies are the elite soldiers led by Chief General Buzazeos! Even with our joined forces, there is no way that we can defeat them!” said Bufudin.

Buzazeos was the general of the Noble Orc empire with the highest rank among those who had followed Bugitas. He was a powerful individual who had thus been given the rank of Chief General, and while Budirud and Bufudin had been dispatched outside the nation, he had remained to protect the empire along with the elite soldiers he had raised himself, acting as Bugitas’s right-hand man.

He excelled not just as a commander but in his own fighting strength as well, and there

was such a difference in physical strength between him and the other generals like Budirud that they wouldn't be able to defeat him in one-on-one combat. Now that they had become Undead with lower Attribute Values, it was possible that they wouldn't be able to defeat him even if they all fought him together.

And since he was behind sturdy walls, they wouldn't even be able to cross swords with him unless they approached and climbed over the walls.

There was an enormous pile of unfavorable circumstances in front of their eyes.

But Budirud spoke to Bufudin and Bukyap once more. "It's exactly as you say, and there is no path of escape for us. Even if we beg for our lives, even if we lick the feet of the families of those we have killed and press our foreheads against the ground to beg for forgiveness, it will all be meaningless to that person. In fact, it would only anger him more," he said. "With that being the case, we have no choice but to fight as we have been ordered. If you think that, your head will feel lighter and you will feel cheerful. Don't you think so?"

Bufudin and Bukyap exchanged looks.

"Now that you mention it, that's reasonable. You're right that we have no choice but to fight."

"There is no other way to make a favorable impression on that person now... we have to fight."

The fear and despair vanished from their faces as if melting away, replaced with the flames of insanity.

"That's right, we simply need to fight with everything we have," said Bufudin. "Raise your spears and fight! If your spear's tip is broken, then fight with the handle, and if the handle is broken, then with your fists and fangs. If your arm is torn off and your fangs are pulled out, grasp your arm with your other hand and wield it, or pull out your own ribs to use them as weapons. Come and fight! Even if this becomes your final fight, even if your soul is broken in the end, at least become a piece of trash with some value!"

As if responding to Budirud's words, the light of insanity glowed in the eyes of the Undead Noble Orcs.

“Fight! Fight!”

“Crush Buzazeos! If we can’t defeat him as a group, then defeat him as a swarm!”

“Kill! Kill before you are broken!”

Before he knew it, Budirud had become the center of the Undead army, a position different to the one he had possessed while alive.



I’ve heard somewhere that there isn’t a single madman that believes that they’re insane, Vandalieu suddenly thought to himself as he walked towards the center of the city.

The Noble Orc empire’s townscape was impressive, just as he would expect of a large nation.

Since the citizens were two-meter-tall Orcs and three-meter-tall Noble Orcs, each of the buildings were large and built to be sturdy. And the building materials had appeared to be stone at first glance, but it was something similar to concrete.

Earth, gravel and some kind of powder had been mixed, shaped and dry-hardened with small stones attached to it to create walls.

Vandalieu had only seen stone, wood or brick houses in human cities, so he was very impressed at how modern it was... though the truth was that if one didn’t consider the cement of the concrete, it wasn’t as modern a building material as Vandalieu thought.

But the empire’s townscape was somewhat dusty now, with no sense of liveliness.

It was likely that the inhabitants didn’t have the time to clean and take care of garden trees now, and the government had no intention of maintaining a lively, clean townscape.

“How sad,” Vandalieu muttered as he walked boldly down the Noble Orc empire’s main road.

Of course, there was a large number of other people going back and forth on the main street.

“BUGAH! BUBUHIH~!”

“Noble-Orc-sama, what happened?”

“Buh... Silence! You citizens are in the way! Go and stay inside somewhere!”

“Business is over! Close your stores!”

Armed Noble Orcs and Orcs were heading towards the gate in a great hurry. They were pushing the citizens on the main road away in a haughty manner, and the citizens had fear and bewilderment on their faces.

In an extremely ordinary manner, Vandalieu walked straight past them.

Vandalieu had killed every enemy that he had encountered so far, so the soldiers of the Noble Orc empire weren't aware of his existence. Thus, he wouldn't be noticed once he was inside the walls.

Of course, Vandalieu's appearance stood out enough to be conspicuous. If his odd-colored eyes and fangs were noticed, one could immediately tell that he was a Dhampir, and the fact that he was not a citizen of the empire could be revealed.

But if a small child like Vandalieu walked along while looking down, the large-bodied Noble Orcs and Orcs would only be able to see the color of his hair.

And since this was a time of emergency, nobody even gave Vandalieu a glance as he walked along the side of the road.

It was fortunate for Vandalieu that the Noble Orcs who followed Bugitas weren't wary of citizens.

“Well, if this didn't work out, I'd just fly through the sky and charge in directly,” Vandalieu murmured as he headed towards the empire's castle.

He was infiltrating inside while Budirud and the Undead Noble Orc army were drawing the attention of Bugitas's subordinates. The plan was to continue on and slaughter Bugitas.

It was the age-old plan of taking out the leader because there were too many enemies.

There were all kinds of reasons for this – The empire would take too much damage before Bugitas was defeated if normal war was waged; it would take too long for Bugitas to step onto the frontlines himself; it would be tragic if things turned into a large-scale urban battle and the non-combatant civilians and Orcs and Noble Orcs on Budarion's side were to suffer losses; and Vandalieu had received reports from Iris and Miles that there was something suspicious going on in the Sauron Duchy – there were spies being sent in more frequently to conduct direct reconnaissance, so he didn't want to take too long here. But there was another logical reason for using this ancient tactic.

According to the information he had heard from the spirits of the generals that he had defeated so far, it was highly likely that Bugitas possessed a Guidance Skill or something similar to one, as well as the divine protection of Ravovifard, the evil god of release.

As Vandalieu was aware, the Guidance Skill provided more blessings to those around the Skill owner than just simple increases to Attribute Values. And for those being guided, the Guidance Skill's owner became a mental support to them.

Thus, if they lost Bugitas, who was thought to possess a Guidance-type Skill, wouldn't Bugitas's subordinates become weaker, experience a large drop in morale, and stop functioning as an army?

That was what Vandalieu had concluded.

Also, Bugitas, who possessed Ravovifard's divine protection, was apparently an important figure to Ravovifard.

According to Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest, those who possessed a god's divine protection were like living billboards to spread fear and belief for that god, acting on the world's surface in the god's place. Thus, if the ones who possessed Ravovifard's divine protection were to be eliminated, it was possible that he would be left with no way to intervene with events in the world other than spending a great amount of his power to descend upon the world himself.

And divine protections were not things that could be given to anyone so easily.

One needed a certain mental connection to the god or be of a race that was close to the god to receive their divine protection.

Ghouls or plant-type monsters with Zozogante, Scylla with Merrebeveil and Lizardmen with Fidirg – these were races that were ‘close’ to their gods.

“But there aren’t any races that are ‘close’ to Ravovifard, who only invaded the southern region of the continent recently. So, it’s impossible to gain his divine protection without taking the time to form a mental connection with him. But this ‘evil god of release,’ I wonder what he is supposed to release you from. Considering what he’s been doing, wouldn’t ‘evil god of usurpation’ or ‘the evil god of tyranny’ be more fitting?” Vandalieu wondered.

“Danna, are you talking to yourself a lot because you’re nervous?” whispered Kimberley, who was remaining invisible.

“Yes. I am in enemy territory, after all,” Vandalieu replied in a small voice as he pressed on.

Along the way, he had passed by a unit of soldiers led by a clearly powerful Noble Orc wearing an impressive suit of armor, and a young man who seemed to be a Majin, leading several Lesser Demons.

That was probably Chief General Buzazeos and Gargya’s Majin counterpart, Gerazorg.

They were quite slow, but it seemed that the attention of Bugitas’s forces was solidly concentrated outside the city’s gate.

“...They’re taking too long to mobilize their forces. Aren’t this Bugitas fellow and his subordinates too carefree?” said Kimberley, who had been a member of the Amid Empire’s army himself while he was alive.

“Not that we’ll take advantage of it,” Vandalieu whispered back. “Maybe they’re not under the assumption that there would be traitors if an enemy army closes in on the empire? And the people under Bugitas’s influence generally have a tendency to become simple-minded, so I’m sure Bugitas himself will also...”

“You feel like you know his limits?” asked Orbia.

“By the way, Your Majesty, perhaps this conversation should not be heard by the prince...?” said Princess Levia.

“It’s fine. He can’t hear it unless I intend to let him hear it,” said Vandalieu.

“Then it is all right.”

As he conversed with the invisible Ghosts, Vandalieu finally arrived at the plaza facing the castle. Now that he had come this far, there were almost no people going back and forth, since the soldiers had headed to the gate.

“BUHAHAHAHA! BUKIBUKYUKYUH!”

“UWAAAAH! Help meeee!”

“Please forgive us! Please forgive us!”

There was a commotion coming from several Noble Orcs, a girl about five years old who had been grasped and was being lifted up by one of them, and a woman clinging to her who appeared to be her mother.

“I see some Noble Orcs who can’t fight on an empty stomach and spotted a mother and her daughter who were late in evacuating for some reason, and now they are trying to eat the girl as a snack,” said Vandalieu.

“You can understand the Orc language, Your Majesty?!”

“No, that’s just my intuition.”

But it seemed that Vandalieu was right in guessing that they were intending to use the girl as food. The Noble Orc holding her opened his mouth wide, exposing his fangs, to bite into the girl’s head.

“MOMMYYYY! I’M SCAAARED!”

“Bone Flame.”

“NOOOOO... oh?”

Vandalieu’s Dead Spirit Magic spell turned Princess Levia into a skeleton made of black flames, and her jaws tore the Noble Orc’s head to pieces.

“Get up. Give that child back,” Vandalieu ordered.

Right before the petrified mother’s eyes, the headless Noble Orc Zombie bent down

onto his knees and politely returned the girl back to her.

The other Noble Orcs and the other people in the plaza froze in astonishment. The mother and daughter were no exceptions, but the mother was the first to recover her senses; she took her daughter and ran off.

Vandalieu glanced at her for only a moment before looking forward again.

“...Danna, I don’t have any complaints, but isn’t that a situation where you would normally harden your heart for the sake of your plan?” said Kimberley.

“Kimberley, I’m a half-Vampire, so I’m already a demon without trying,” said Vandalieu.

TLN: The Japanese phrase for “harden one’s heart” is 心を鬼にする which roughly translates to “turn one’s heart into a demon.” 鬼/oni, the kanji for demon, is a part of the word for Vampire, 吸血鬼/kyuuketsuki, which means “blood-sucking demon” if translated literally.

“That’s not what I mean, but... Well, we’ve made it in front of the castle, so I suppose it’s fine,” said Kimberley.

“And we’ve already been seen,” said Orbia.

“B-BUGAAH!”

“BUGIIH!”

The Noble Orcs, who had been petrified with shock at their comrade suddenly being decapitated and continuing to move while headless, returned to their senses and finally noticed that there was a strange child nearby.

They didn’t understand the exact reasons, but they were certain that Vandalieu was the cause of everything and tried to attack him.

“BOOOOOH!” a voice roared.

A slashing attack was released from behind them, slicing them in two and continuing forward, closing in on Vandalieu like a whirlwind. The headless Noble Orc Zombie jumped in front of it, trying to block it... but he was cut apart easily as well, being of no use.

“Demon King’s carapace, activate, Stone Wall.”

The Demon King’s carapace appeared over Vandalieu’s arm, and he used it as a shield to block the attack.

The citizens remaining in the plaza screamed and fled, and the Noble Orcs nearby hastily fell back.

“I’ll accept your loyalty for now,” Vandalieu said to the Noble Orc Zombie’s spirit as he looked at his enemy... the scythe-wielding Bugitas, who had attacked through his own subordinates.

“Bukukuh, you were mentioned in Ravovifard’s Divine Message, after all. You monster, who holds multiple fragments of the Demon King,” Bugitas said, giving a bold laugh as he acknowledged the defensive strength of the Demon King’s carapace that didn’t have a single scratch on it despite being struck by a martial skill from his enormous scythe. “To think that you would appear before me alone... No, with the monsters that are your subordinates, which means that the army outside is a decoy. A clever scheme like this could not have even been thought of by any of the wise men who have left their names in history. I suppose that is to be expected of a monster who possesses the Demon King’s fragments and is capable of even destroying a god’s familiar spirit.”

Despite his words, Bugitas was behaving in a leisurely manner. His voice was deep and yet unpleasantly sticky, as if gooey strings were attached to it.

“I haven’t been talked to with such clear sarcasm since my aunt’s lectures on Earth...” Vandalieu muttered.

“Van-kun, I don’t think it’s sarcasm; he’s being serious,” said Orbia.

“That’s right, Your Majesty. You said it yourself, didn’t you? Bugitas has no knowledge when it comes to military strategy,” said Princess Levia.

Vandalieu had thought that Bugitas was being sarcastic regarding the ancient tactic that he had used, but his mood improved upon hearing Orbia and Princess Levia’s words.

Incidentally, Orbia and the other Ghosts had already revealed themselves, but Bugitas couldn’t hear Vandalieu’s whispered conversations with them.

“What is that look in your eyes? Don’t tell me you’re going to say that you’re displeased with the way I cut through those useless fools as I attacked you,” Bugitas sneered.

“I am displeased,” said Vandalieu. “If you cut their bodies in half and let their contents spill onto the floor, the organs will be spoiled, won’t they? Did nobody teach you to treat food with care?”

“...Are you a demon?”

Vandalieu was completely serious, but he was being called a demon for it. Wasn’t that too much? And he was a half-Vampire, so he was a demon even if nobody called him one.

“Buguuh! On top of being strange, you’re messed-up! Fine, I’ll dispose of you before my loser of an aniki!” Bugitas recovered from his surprise and raised his giant scythe once more, filled with bloodthirst.

“...No, your opponent shall be me.”

Golden hair and an enormous body emerged from within the unmoving Vandalieu.

Prince Budarion’s arm and eye were stained black, and there was a black magic sword in his hands.

“...Hoh, you seem to have regained the arm and eye that I took from you, but you have stooped low enough to become a monster’s underling, Ani-ue?” Bugitas said with a cruel smile as he looked at his brother.



- **Name:** Bugitas
- **Title:** 【Usurper】
- **Rank:** 11
- **Race:** Noble Orc Plunder King
- **Level:** 95
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 10
 - Strengthened Attribute Values when equipped with a Scythe (Medium)
 - Enhanced Vigor: Level 3
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 5
 - Inferior Race Domination: Level 7
 - Mental Corruption: Level 4
 - False Guidance: Beast Path: Level 3
 - Intuition: Level 8
 - Demon King Encroachment Degree: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - War-boar Scythe Technique: Level 3
 - Armor Technique: Level 3
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 1
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 4
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 8
 - Transcend Limits: Level 5
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Scythe: Level 10
 - Coordination: Level 1
 - Commanding: Level 6
 - Familiar Spirit Descent: Level 10
- **Unique skills:**
 - Ravovifard's Divine Protection
- **Demon King fragments:**
 - XX
 - YY

Chapter 144

Ravovifard's plan for certain victory

The soldiers under Chief General Buzazeos's command were fighting on a nightmare of a battlefield.

"BUHIIH!" a Noble Orc screamed as he thrust the tip of his spear forward, piercing the skull of an enemy whose organs were hanging out of his bloody abdomen.

Seeing his spear enter the enemy's cheek and emerge from the back of his head, the Noble Orc breathed a sigh of relief at his victory.

But despite having a crucial part of his brain pierced, the enemy soldier let out a groan and grasped the handle of the spear that had pierced him.

"BUHIH?!"

"Gobeh..."

The Noble Orc let out a stiff-sounding noise as he tried to take back his spear, but perhaps because he had lost his presence of mind, he didn't have his usual strength.

And as he stopped moving to try to take his weapon back, other enemy soldiers closed in on him.

"Gobeh..."

"Kill...!"

"Recognition... achievements...!"

"Buhiiiih... Buhiiiih..."

Orc Zombies and Noble Orc Zombies with their bloodstained entrails spilling from their bodies, the look of longing unique to those who had no future in their wide-open, hollow eyes, swung and thrust their weapons.

“B-BUGYAAAAAH!”

Surrounded and unable to move, the Noble Orc soldier let out a dying scream as he was buried among the swarm of Undead.

Such hellish scenes were unfolding all over the battlefield.

“How many times do I need to tell you not to step out before you understand?! Don’t break your formations! Heavy troops, raise your shields and act as a wall to stop the Undead! Spearmen, thrust your spears between the shields! Leave it to the archers and mages to finish them off!” Chief General Buzazeos bellowed.

Each time he gave orders, a messenger turned pale as he ran out to relay these orders to the soldiers.

“Buguh!” Buzazeos groaned.

What’s the meaning of this? Before, the soldiers would have obeyed my orders faithfully. I trained and selected the soldiers so that I could raise them to be able to do that. So why now, of all times? Buzazeos couldn’t help but ask himself this.

At first, he had felt shocked upon hearing that an army of the Noble Orc empire led by three generals had begun a rebellion. But upon learning that they were a group of Undead soldiers that had become far weaker than they were while alive, he had felt disappointed.

Normally, even a swarm of Undead would have almost no coordination or proper distribution of roles. They were just a disorderly gathering that had no intents other than attacking the living.

So, the Noble Orc empire’s soldiers couldn’t be blamed for thinking that they could win this battle. However, looking back on it now, it had been careless to think this.

The rebelling army, which had raised Prince Budarion’s flag and another unfamiliar flag, had attacked with such bloodcurdling expressions that it was difficult to believe that they were Undead. And even though arrows and spells poured down on them from the gate like rain, they had closed in on the gate without faltering and destroyed it.

Buzazeos had come running and taken command, managing to push the enemies back

outside the gate, but... perhaps overly restless or overconfident in their own strength, soldiers had broken formation to charge in, one by one. These soldiers had been helplessly surrounded and crushed to death by the Undead, while the remaining soldiers hastily filled the gaps left by the ones that had broken the formation to hold the line, and this cycle was repeating over and over.

They were at the advantage overall; a third of the Undead army, including Gargya and Bukyap, had already been turned back into corpses. They would likely be able to defeat the Undead army within another hour.

But Buzazeos's irritation would not subside.

How many times have I given the same orders?! When did my soldiers become such bird-brains?! Even though they can see the reckless idiots being killed they keep going out and acting on their own if I take my eyes off them!

The High Kobold, and High Goblin and Kobold troops offered and dispatched by Gargya and Gido were proving useful, but Buzazeos needed to speak human words to give them orders. Perhaps this was adding to his irritation as well.

Now that things have come to this, I must step onto the frontline myself... what did I think just now?!

Buzazeos came back to his senses, startled. Before he knew it, his legs were carrying him towards the frontline of the battlefield, and he stopped himself as he realized this.

"Don't be so hasty, Buzazeos-dono," said a voice, calling out to Buzazeos in a flippant tone.

It was Gerazorg. He was a slender, playboy-looking individual with two twisted horns on his head, blue skin, a goatee on his chin and piercings in his ears, nose and the triangular tip of the tail extending from his waist.

"My Demons will exterminate the Undead soon," he said.

It seemed that he hadn't noticed the fact that Buzazeos has frozen in astonishment. He couldn't reach Buzazeos's shoulder due to the difference in their heights, so he gave him an overly-friendly pat on the side and stepped towards the frontline, taking his tamed Demons with him.

“Wait, Gerazorg-dono. It is too early for you to make your appearance,” Buzazeos said, hastily stopping Gerazorg.

Gerazorg had always been nothing but a piece of scum, even before Buzazeos met him, but now, even though he was a fool beyond help, he was a piece of scum that could fight.

Though he had been dispatched to the Majin nation to stage a coup d'état by his master Bugitas, he had failed to gain supporters and fled shamelessly, crying and clinging to Bugitas and begging for one more chance. He was thoroughly useless as a spy.

But as expected of a member of the Majin race, he possessed exceptional fighting ability.

Despite his playboy-like appearance, he could use martial skills and multiple attributes of magic with considerable skill. Most importantly, he possessed the Demon Tamer Job, leading a pack of more than ten Demons of various kinds.

And like Gargya and Gido, Ravovifard had taken a liking to him for some reason and given him his divine protection.

Thus, with many leaders now gone and no top leaders other than Buzazeos, Gerazorg was the third-ranking individual among Bugitas's subordinates after Chief General Buzazeos and General Bumogan, who had left the empire to fight the allied army formed by the smaller nations.

“Huh? Why are you stopping me? Could it be that you don't want me to build achievements for myself, since I already possess Ravovifard's divine protection?” said Gerazorg, borrowing not a tiger's, but an evil god's strength*.

TLN: There's a Japanese saying where one “borrows a tiger's strength.” It refers to someone acting arrogantly under someone else's authority/authority that isn't their own. This is a play on this phrase, where Gerazorg is acting arrogantly by borrowing an evil god's strength.*

For a moment, Buzazeos considered letting him go, but he mustered his perseverance and stopped him. “There is something strange about the enemy. They're supposed to be the ones attacking, but they're coming at us as if their backs are against the wall. And we still don't know why they turned into Undead in the first place,” he said. “It's difficult to imagine that this many of them turned into Undead naturally. Something is

yet to happen during this battle. Even if you step out after we make sure what this is, you won't be too late."

"Hmm... Indeed, now that I think about it, the Zombies are behaving strangely," Gerazorg agreed. "They don't give off any rotten smell; by looking at them, you would think that they were alive until just minutes ago. I thought that by the time corpses turn into Undead naturally, they've already started giving off a nose-wrinkling stink, but..."

It seems I've managed to divert his attention, Buzazeos thought, relieved.

But what he had said to Gerazorg were his true thoughts.

His intuition that had been honed over many years were ringing alarm bells, warning him that things would be dangerous if the mystery behind this large number of fresh Undead was not urgently investigated, but due to his foolish subordinates that were disobeying orders and stepping out to die on their own one by one, he had no time for that.

I suppose we'll have to defeat these Undead first. But how should we investigate this? I wonder if we'll be able to learn something if we send out the Mages?... What is that?!

"BUGAH!" Buzazeos shouted in the Orc language immediately.

He was looking at a storm of arrows that had been fired from behind the Undead army.

The arrows rained down upon the heavy troops and spearmen holding down the frontline, along with the Undead they were holding back. Noble Orcs screamed and fell back, while Orcs and High Goblins fell, pierced by a countless number of arrows.

With this opportunity, the Undead army pushed further in.

And on the other side of the army, the enemy army revealed itself, kicking up a cloud of dust.

"Those are the flags of Zanalpadna as well as the Ghouls, High Goblin and High Kobold nations! And the flags of the Centaurs and Harpies, and beside the flag that I've never seen before... isn't that the Majin nation's flag?!"

"Ngh, that damned Bumogan! He couldn't even hold out?!"

At the sight of the enemy army that had pierced through the meat shield, Gerazorg turned pale, while Buzazeos felt a strange sense of exhilaration.

But Buzazeos suppressed that exhilaration and shouted his orders. "Hold the line! Don't break your formations! Don't get restless, you fools!"

It was possible that his own soldiers, who had nothing but morale and would quickly forget their orders, were more of a problem to him than the enemy army that was closing in.



The thunderous noise of the gate being destroyed and the sounds of battle made by the army led by Chief General Buzazeos could be heard from the plaza in front of the castle.

Though Bugitas could guess that his disappointing subordinates were fighting a difficult battle, at first, he was acting in a leisurely manner.

He simply thought that he just needed to defeat the two enemies in front of him and then head out onto the frontline himself.

One of the enemies was a monster who possessed multiple fragments of the Demon King. The other was his own older brother, Prince Budarion.

Both were formidable foes, but Bugitas had no doubt that he would be victorious. The god he worshipped, Ravovifard, had provided him with power and a plan that would lead to certain victory against the monster, and Budarion was an opponent that he had already defeated once before.

It's true that I had quite a hard time when I fought Budarion. But my Level has increased since that time as well, and I have become able to summon an even more powerful Familiar Spirit. Compared to that, only his appearance and his magic sword has changed, nothing else.

Budarion had lost an eye and an arm to Bugitas. His enormous scythe was a Magic Item given to him by Ravovifard, possessing a curse that reduced the healing abilities and the effects of any healing magic cast on any targets that it wounded, but it seemed that the curse had somehow been broken.

It had likely been the doing of that monster; Bugitas was willing to admit that he was quite skilled. But that was the exact reason why Bugitas was under the impression that he would be able to defeat Budarion as he had done before.

Budarion and this monster had likely only met each other recently. Though Budarion had regained his eye and arm, he should have had almost no time to improve his abilities.

Even Ravovifard's Divine Message hadn't mentioned Budarion at all. In other words, he wasn't as much of a threat as the monster. The different-colored eye and arm were likely some kind of bluff.

With that being the case, even though Budarion was a Rank 10 Noble Orc High King, even though he possessed the Swordsmanship Skill at Level 10, he wouldn't stand a chance against Bugitas, a Rank 11 Plunder King who possessed an awakened superior Skill.

That was what Bugitas had concluded.

"BUOOH!"

"BUGUGAH!"

The super-heavy magic sword and the great scythe clashed. Each time they collided, Bugitas's leisurely attitude disappeared, little by little.

"What's the matter? Your movements are dull! Has the comfort of the throne you stole from me made you lazy?" said Budarion.

The way he handled his sword had become more skillful, his blows faster and, most importantly, heavier.

"Say what you like!" Bugitas shouted back in the Orc language, thrusting the end of his scythe's handle at Bugitas's solar plexus.

Budarion stopped Bugitas's attack with the body of his magic sword's blade.

"...Flowing Willow, Pierce."

With a natural movement, like the leaves of a willow tree swaying in the wind, he

parried the attack. At the same time, he released a thrust, as if the blade of his sword was crawling up the scythe's handle.

In contrast to his quiet voice, Budarion's movements were heavy, planting his foot into the ground with so much force that the stone paving beneath it was broken, the tip of his sword closing in on his enemy.

“BUGIIH! BUGIGYAGYAGYAGYAH!”

Bugitas avoided it with Flowing Water, a martial skill of an advanced Skill, and then swung his scythe multiple times, releasing Hundred Consecutive Beast Blade Flying Slashes at Budarion.

“...An unsightly way to fight. Flowing Water.”

Handling his magic sword with movements that resembled the flowing of water, Budarion cut through only the attacks that had been sent his way. But some of the chaotic attacks that Bugitas had released wouldn't have hit Budarion to begin with.

These attacks would cut through the buildings behind Budarion and would likely keep going straight through the buildings without stopping.

“Demon King's blood, activate, Stone Wall, Stone Wall, Ice Blood Stiff Wall.”

But Vandalieu, the monster who appeared to be standing completely still behind Budarion, made his move. The Demon King's blood spurted from the wrists that he had cut himself, hardening and forming a wall, and Vandalieu activated martial skills from behind the wall that acted as his shield.

But the Hundred Consecutive Beast Blade Flying Slashes cut through the first two walls. But as they hit the third wall, the wall of ice created by Dead Spirit Magic that made use of Orbia, they were completely stopped, scattering into the air.

“As expected of a martial technique of a superior Skill, released from a magic scythe, an Artifact no less. I panicked a little,” said Vandalieu.

“Vandalieu-kun, wouldn't it have been better to use the Demon King's carapace instead of his blood?” said Orbia.

“Orbia, the carapace covers my body as it activates; it would have taken time for it to

turn into a shape where it could protect the faraway places behind us.”

“I see. But that Bugitas enemy, isn’t he quite amazing?”

“Yes, he’s quite the formidable foe.”

As Bugitas glared at Budarion and listened to this conversation, he felt such humiliation and anger that he felt like the blood vessels in his head would burst.

Are they being sarcastic?! Don’t mess with me!

Bugitas’s initial expectation was that Budarion would have been severely wounded, unable to completely stop the Hundred Consecutive Beast Blade Flying Slashes. No, he should have been heavily wounded before that, and the last attack should have cut him into pieces.

And then he had intended to easily defeat Vandalieu, the remaining enemy, by using the plan that would bring certain victory. He would have offered the fragments of the Demon King to Ravovifard, and headed towards the gate, holding the heads of his two enemies in one hand.

But in reality, Budarion was unharmed, having easily stopped a secret attack of Bugitas’s awakened superior Skill, War-boar Scythe Technique.

And the attacks that Budarion hadn’t stopped had been stopped by Vandalieu, only making him “panic a little.”

In fact, Bugitas was the one who was in the corner.

He hadn’t been heavily wounded, but he had received several light wounds. Because he had released several martial skills consecutively within a short period of time, he was out of breath, had expended a large amount of Mana and his head had begun hurting.

He was already using Transcend Limits, Surpass Limits: Magic Scythe and Familiar Spirit Descent. Budarion was using Familiar Spirit Descent and other Skills to strengthen himself as well, but rather than being even, Bugitas was at the disadvantage and unable to keep up.

“BUGOOOOH! BUGUGAH! BUGIIIIH!” Bugitas shouted, his face twisting in an unsightly

manner as he cursed Budarion.

“Just when did I become this strong, you ask? Indeed, before, I was defeated by you and disgraced myself, forcing the people of the empire that I was supposed to protect through hard times,” said Budarion, deliberately translating Bugitas’s question and answering with human words. “But I am being guided.”

“BUHIH?!” Bugitas opened his eyes wide in astonishment at the fact that there could be another with a False Guidance Skill. He hadn’t even considered the possibility before.

“Don’t misunderstand. Unlike the fake that you possess, it is true Guidance,” Budarion continued. “I have received the Guidance of the Demon Path from Vandalieu, the Holy Son, and have gained power as a result. It is similar to the blessings given to us by our Mububujenge, our guardian goddess, and I have succeeded in increasing my Rank and awakening a superior Skill within a short period of time. Bugitas, I am not the defeated prince you once knew. I am now Rank 11 like you, a Noble Orc Abyss King.”

Impossible, Bugitas thought, speechless at the response given by Budarion.

Guidance and False Guidance Skills were Skills that gave blessings not onto the Skill owner, but to others. Thus, Bugitas was not strengthened by his own False Guidance: Beast Path.

But Guidance: Demon Path increased Budarion’s Attribute Values and raised him to be a greater being.

And from the Experience Points he had gained from defeating Budirud and Bufudin, his Rank had increased and he had awakened a superior Skill.

Impossible, that’s impossible! Budarion has reached the same heights as I have?! Then there is no way that I can win, is there!

Bugitas was someone who had originally been completely aware in the difference in talent between him and his brother; he had intended to suppress his complex and devote himself to supporting his older brother in the future. He hadn’t believed that he would be able to defeat Budarion in the arena.

“Danna, could it be that this Bugitas is even stronger than Gubamon?” Kimberley asked.

“When he threw the Demon King’s carapace, you blocked it with a single-layered wall of the Demon King’s blood, after all,” said Princess Levia. “Then does that mean that he is stronger than a Pure-breed Vampire?”

“At the very least, I think that Bugitas is stronger than Gubamon when it comes to ability in martial skills,” said Vandalieu.

“Eh, are you serious, Vandalieu-kun?” said Orbia.

“I’m serious,” Vandalieu replied. “Gubamon was higher in Rank, but his Throwing Skill wasn’t a superior Skill, and the Demon King’s Carapace as he used it back then wouldn’t have been any better for using martial skills than that large scythe. Well, it seems that Bugitas’s skill in magic is disappointing, so Gubamon might be stronger overall. Still, Bugitas is very impressive.”

“...I would rather ask, are you serious when you say that you defeated a Pure-breed Vampire?” said Gizania.

“Rather, it seems that you are naturally looking down on both of them,” said Myuze.

“Well, to Vandalieu, that’s all they were,” said Vigarō.

“Leaving that aside... Darling, you’re wonderful! You look amazing!” said Princess Kurnelia.

As the spectating gallery suddenly grew, the ensuing conversation told Bugitas that he was in a hopeless situation.

It’s not a matter of whether I can defeat Budarion or not; if that monster had joined forces with Budarion and come at me two-on-one from the start, I would already be dead!

Also, Vandalieu hadn’t been directly targeted, but he possessed the ability to block Bugitas’s secret attack. Despite that, he had only used the Demon King’s fragments for defense, not only for himself, but to protect the surrounding buildings and the civilians that might be on the other side of them.

If Vandalieu started backing Budarion up seriously, how would Bugitas hold out when he was already inferior as things were now?

So why was Vandalieu leaving Bugitas's disposal to Budarion? Bugitas had guessed the answer to that.

A performance for the citizens and the other nations!

This war had caused the Noble Orc empire's dignity to plummet into the ground. Bugitas, the one who had usurped the throne, was responsible for staging coup d'états in multiple nations, wounding and killing masses of people and trampling over their dignity, but there was no doubt that the people's trust in the empire itself had fallen.

Even if Bugitas's head was taken and every single one of his subordinates was executed, the empire would not be able to return to its previous position. In fact, it would have to atone for its actions for a long time to come.

For the empire to regain as much of its position as possible, it was necessary for Budarion to defeat Bugitas with his own hands, and for this act to be witnessed by members of each nation.

Vandalieu focusing on preventing damage to the surrounding areas without providing assistance to Budarion, and the presence of the spectating gallery, were for that purpose.

Princess Kurnelia, Gizania and Myuze from Zanalpadna. Princess Lulu from the High Kobold nation and Prince Zorgo from the High Goblin nation. Nobody had come from the Ghoulnation, but as Vigaro had emerged victorious in the brawl that had occurred there, he had become idolized as "Aniki!" by the Ghoulnation's king, so he was here as their representative.

All of them were like relatives to one another, but even the nations that weren't here to witness it couldn't ignore such an event.

Incidentally, the reason Budarion was speaking the human language instead of the Orc language was out of consideration for this gallery of spectators.

Bugitas let out a low laugh. "...So, you're already treating me like a loser."

"What's the matter, Bugitas? If you wish to give up and surrender, then I will show mercy. I swear that I will give you the most painless death," said Budarion.

"Surrender? I, the one who has been recognized as the agent of Ravovifard's divine

will in this world, surrender to a monster and my own ani-ue who has stooped low enough to become this monster's hound..."

At this rate, a comeback was impossible. Knowing this, Bugitas decided to begin the plan for certain victory that had been given to him by Ravovifard.

Originally, it had been a plan to be used on Vandalieu. Bugitas had been warned to never use it other than for that purpose, but he had no choice left now.

"BUHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! Ani-ue, I shall surpass you here once more! Monster, what is about to happen is all because you drove me into this corner!" Bugitas kicked the ground, taking a large step backwards, his eyes containing the dangerous look characteristic of someone who has been cornered.

Budarion instinctively chased after him, but he couldn't make it in time. "Bugitas, what are you doing?!"

"BUHAHAHA! Demon King's fragment, activate!"

Bugitas's body glowed with a bluish-white light, an ominous atmosphere surrounding him that felt like the air had grown heavier.

"Buh, what is this light?!" Budarion fell back, blinded by the light.

"No way, Bugitas had a fragment of the Demon King?!" Princess Kurnelia exclaimed in astonishment. "If you use something like that, the only thing waiting for you is your destr... you might not be destroyed, but you can't use it for bad things!" she said, correcting herself.

"Fragment? Prince, please fall back and everyone else, get away from me as well," said Vandalieu. "Also, Princess Kurnelia, thank you for correcting yourself out of consideration."

With those words, Vandalieu solidified his defense. He had originally thought it highly likely that Ravovifard would do something, so even though he was certain that Bugitas would be defeated, he hadn't come unprepared.

He was constantly within range to protect everyone in the spectating gallery, too.

For now, he put up barriers and built walls using the Demon King's blood and

carapace. But he couldn't control them well.

Vandalieu coughed. "This is...?"

A large amount of the Demon King's blood broke through Vandalieu's skin; ink from the Demon King's ink sacs poured from his mouth; the Demon King's horns, carapace and suction cups were appearing haphazardly all over his body.

"Release us! Release us! Release us!"

The fragments were making noise for the first time in a long time. All of the blood in Vandalieu's body was boiling; his bones ached and his heart trembled.

"Vandalieu! What is... GUOOOH?!"

"AAAAAHHH?!"

Vigaro and Princess Levia, who had begun rushing over towards Vandalieu, began writhing in agony, as did Budarion and the other Noble Orcs who had been watching events unfold in the plaza from afar.

But they weren't simply suffering.

"GUOOOOOOOGAAAAAAH!"

Budarion had maintained his ability to reason even in the middle of battle, but now, his eyes became bloodshot and his mouth foamed as he let out a roar. He gnashed his fangs together numerous times and swung his magic sword about.

The other Noble Orcs that were Bugitas's subordinates, as well as Princess Levia and the other Ghosts, had expressions on their faces resembling rampaging beasts, completely different from their normal selves.

"What is this... their instincts as monsters have been forcibly amplified?! He can do this even to those who are not under the effects of his False Guidance?!" Zadiris shouted.

Though she was a member of one of Vida's races that had monster roots, she was not a pure monster, so she had retained her ability to reason.

“It is likely that Ravovifard’s power is being amplified by Bugitas’s Demon King fragment!” said Gizania. “And that’s why he can do something like that... Kuh, Vandalieu.”

“Kuh, Van! VAAAAN!” Basdia shouted.

Vandalieu could hear Gizania and Basdia’s voices, but he couldn’t reply. His hands were full with trying to control the Demon King’s fragments.

“JUOOOOOOOOOH!”

“GICHICHICHIIH!”

On top of everything else, Bone Man and Pete had come out of Vandalieu’s body on their own. This wasn’t a situation where he could relax and say, “I’m alright.”

Bugitas let out a loud laugh as he watched this disastrous scene unfold. “BUHAHAHAHAHAHA! It seems that even Ani-ue has no choice but to become the kind of beast that he hates so much before the Demon King’s scent glands and luminescent organs!”

No matter how intelligent the monsters created by the Demon King Guduranis and his subordinates were, to the Demon King that had created them, they were nothing more than livestock that he could create in large quantities, pawns that he used to fight.

But if they were intelligent, they would think about unnecessary things, and even if that weren’t the case, they would often rebel against the Demon King and his subordinate gods or act on their own once they became reasonably strong.

That was why monsters had been made to instinctively obey the Demon King and his evil gods. Even now, a hundred thousand years after the Demon King’s defeat, that hadn’t changed.

Bugitas had used the Demon King’s scent glands and luminescent organs that had been given to him by Ravovifard, the evil god of release, in order to utilize that instinct.

By secreting a special pheromone from the scent glands and releasing a hypnotic light from the luminescent organs, he had made the monsters, including Budarion, go berserk.

This had originally been a plan to make the Demon King fragments in Vandalieu's possession to go wild and destroy him, but even Bugitas hadn't expected it to be this effective.

"If this was how it was going to turn out, I should have done this from the begin... GUBUGIH?!" Bugitas was initially intoxicated by the certainty of his victory, but he got goosebumps as he experienced a harsh headache and heard an announcer's voice in his head, warning him of a dangerous fact. "Demon King Encroachment Degree is already Level 7?! Th-that's too fast!"

The Demon King Encroachment Degree was increasing with terrifying speed. As it did, the power of the Demon King's scent glands and luminescent organs grew proportionally greater, but Bugitas's mind was encroached upon.

What is the meaning of this?! I never heard that the encroachment degree will increase this fast! Isn't there some kind of miscalculation...?

"No, everything has gone according to plan, Bugitas, my most exceptional monster... or rather, my most exceptional pawn," said the voice of Ravovifard, echoing inside Bugitas's now-chaotic mind.

The voice was coming from the familiar spirit that still resided inside Bugitas... or rather, the spirit clone that Ravovifard had created with a part of his own personality, its power deliberately suppressed to disguise it as a familiar spirit.

"Ravovifard! This is...?!"

"It seems that the scent glands and luminescent organs have affected your own mind as well. It seems that you have forgotten that you are nothing more than a monster yourself. Now then, I will take over from here, my pawn!"

As Bugitas felt Ravovifard's power expand explosively inside him and his internal being slowly vanish, he screamed in fear and anger at his betrayal at the hands of the god that he worshipped.

"...Fufufu, HAHAAHAHA! I have finally gained a body that I can move on the world's surface! I had originally planned to grow him up a little more, but this is enough for now! Once this battle is over, I shall choose a powerful female, impregnate her and create the body I will possess for the next generation!" said Ravovifard, elated after having gained Bugitas's body. He turned his gaze to Budarion and Vandalieu, whose

body was covered in carapace and horns. “Now then, my new subordinates! Kill that monster and offer those fragments to me!”

At those words, the Noble Orcs that had been Bugitas’s subordinates, Budarion as well as Borkus and their others raised their faces.

“No, you can’t do that, Darling!” Princess Kurnelia shouted in grief.

But they took no notice of her and began to move.

“BUGAAAAAAH!”

With roars so bloodthirsty that blood could almost be smelled from it, the Noble Orcs charged towards Vandalieu.

“YOU’RE IN THE WAAAAAY!”

“JYUOOOOOH!”

“UOOOOOOH!”

Budarion, Bone Man and Borkus broke into a run with enough force to smash the stone paving beneath them and cut down the Noble Orcs in a single slash.

“WHAT?!” Ravovifard shouted in astonishment. “You are lowly monsters; why are you disobey – GUOOOOH?!”

As the three of them sent Noble Orc body parts tumbling through the air, they closed in on Ravovifard. Unable to completely stop all three of their swords, Ravovifard was sent flying backwards.



Skill explanation:

【False Guidance: Beast Path】

A Skill bestowed by Ravovifard, the evil god of release, with similar effects to a Guidance Skill, granting the ability to rule monsters and release their instincts.

Those guided by this Skill have increased Attribute Values with the exception of Intelligence, and are stimulated to increase their Ranks. In addition, their fighting instincts and desires are stimulated.

However, their Intelligence declines and the effects of martial skills and Magic-related skills in particular are reduced.

Those influenced by this Skill gradually become unable to suppress their instincts as monsters, returning to the way they were when they were loyal frontline soldiers for the Demon King's army.

Also, this Skill generally targets monsters and Vida's races that originated from monsters, though the effects are halved on the latter. However, humans who ordinarily possess fighting instincts and desires that they struggle to suppress with reasoning, as well as young children whose personalities have not been well-established yet, can also become targets for this Skill.

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- **Name:** Budarion
 - **Rank:** 11
 - **Race:** Noble Orc Abyss King
 - **Level:** 2
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 10
 - Endless Sexual Stamina: Level 1
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 8
 - Strengthened Attribute Values when equipped with a Sword (Large)
 - Inferior Race Domination: Level 7

- Self-Enhancement: Demon Path: Level 3
 - Magic Resistance: Level 1
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 1
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 1
 - **Active skills:**
 - Demon Path Fang Sword Technique: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 9
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6
 - Mount: Level 4
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 2
 - Mana Control: Level 5
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 3
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 9
 - Alchemy: Level 1
 - Commanding: Level 7
 - Coordination: Level 8
 - Dismantling: Level 2
 - Familiar Spirit Descent: Level 10
 - Transcend Limits: Level 5
 - Transcend Limits: Magic Sword: Level 5
 - **Unique skills:**
 - Mububujenge's Divine Protection
-

Monster explanation:

【Noble Orc Abyss King】

A being that the Noble Orc High King Budarion has become after having his lost arm and eye replaced by Vandalieu's surgery and death-attribute magic, gaining Experience Points from defeating Budirud and Bufudin on the battlefield and increasing his Rank.

His right arm and left eye have become stained black from the influence of death-attribute Mana, but they do not have any special powers over his non-black arm and eye.

By increasing his Rank, he has acquired the Magic Resistance, Status Effect Resistance

and Mana Enlargement Skills.

Also, as he is under the effects of Guidance: Demon Path, he gains bonuses to his Attribute Values and Skills, and it is expected that he will become even more powerful once he increases his Level.

Of course, Budarion is the first in history to become a Noble Orc Abyss King, so his existence has not been recorded by any organizations, including the Adventurers' Guild.

However, there is no mistake that he is a monster that receives the maximum effect of a Guidance Skill; such monsters are rare if one excludes the monsters tamed by the champion Nineroad.

Chapter 145

This monster –

In the world where he had originally come from, Ravovifard, the evil god of release, was the weakest kind of god, of equal rank to Fidirg, the dragon god of five sins and Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest... no, even slightly below them.

That was because there was no worth in what he ruled.

Ravovifard ruled over instincts and desires, the display of power that surpassed one's limits by releasing themselves from their reasoning.

But in Ravovifard's world, those with the ability to reason were in the minority. Many were loyal to their instincts and desires even without being released, not needing Ravovifard's power.

And those with reasoning and wisdom were often physically weak and weak in their abilities, so even if they were released, they couldn't gain great power. In fact, they were all races that had developed intelligence *because* they were weak. Thus, they took no notice of Ravovifard.

Ravovifard was not content with being a weak god in a realm so small that he could see all of it from a single spot, worshipped only by the members of his own race.

That was still true even when he became a part of the Demon King's army and fought the gods and champions of Lambda.

The evil gods, including the Demon King, had created monsters as their new servants in this world, but they hadn't been able to create them without limit. The monsters' strength and numbers that could be created were influenced by the strength of the god that created them.

Ravovifard was only able to create several hundred monsters that were weaker than those created by the other evil gods. And Ravovifard wasn't flexible like Fidirg, who had ordered the Lizardmen to create tools for themselves. The monsters he created were quickly defeated and had their numbers reduced by the champions and their

allies.

But even so, he didn't even consider the offer of the champion Zakkart.

Zakkart's words had the idea of coexistence behind them, and Ravovifard perceived this to be in conflict with his own values.

Ravovifard fought in the Demon King's army as a weak god, and because he was weak, he was never given any important roles. Thus, when Bellwood and his companions defeated the Demon King, Ravovifard was able to survive even as the Demon King's body and soul were taken apart.

Fortunately for Ravovifard, he managed to acquire one of the Demon King's fragments, his scent glands.

That was when circumstances changed for this god.

Many evil gods had been sealed away or forced into slumber after losing their powers, so many monsters had lost their masters. Ravovifard succeeded in turning these monsters into his servants.

Ravovifard ruled over instincts and desires. Thus, he was able to turn beast-type and plant-type monsters, which didn't have a single shred of intelligence, into his believers. Other evil gods would value a monster believer to be worth less than a tenth of an ordinary believer, but Ravovifard valued them as believers.

With a hundred Huge Boars, a thousand Poison Frogs and ten thousand Horn Rabbits, to Ravovifard, it was equivalent to being worshipped by an entire religious nation.

There were monsters like Orcs and Kobolds as well, who possessed some intelligence, but because the evil gods that had originally been their masters were no longer around, it was simple for Ravovifard to turn them into his believers.

Of course, if he made any conspicuous moves, the heroic god Bellwood, who was still active after the battle between Alda and Vida, would have moved to exterminate him. Fortunately, however, Ravovifard was searching for monsters to become his believers on the Dark Continent, the entirety of which had become a Devil's Nest.

Because not a single 'human' that Bellwood was supposed to protect existed on the Dark Continent, he wouldn't notice Ravovifard no matter how many monster believers

he gathered.

And after a hundred thousand years, Ravovifard succeeded in gathering power that his previous self from when he was in the Demon King's army could not be compared to. Though the majority of the gods hadn't managed to regain their former powers, Ravovifard was one of the few exceptions.

On top of that, he stole the Demon King's luminescent organs from another evil god who was once in the Demon King's army, so his power only continued to rise.

And then things had changed once more a hundred years ago when a great god who had been devoting all of his efforts to recovering from his wounds after the battle between Vida and Alda, the fallen war-god Zantark who had fused with evil gods, had made a sudden move.

In order to regain his power, Zantark issued a great command to his subordinates, setting them on a large-scale monster hunt on the Dark Continent. Ravovifard had gathered plenty of fighting forces as well, so he had planned to take Zantark's realm from him, but he was attacked first.

The evil gods who had become Ravovifard's subordinates were killed by Zantark and the heroic god Farmaun Gold who had returned to his side, and the monsters that were his believers were turned into Experience Points one after another.

And now, it had been more than half a century since Ravovifard became content with his inferiority. He had decided that turning things around was impossible, and fleeing was best. Sacrificing the power that he had gathered, his subordinates and the monsters that were his believers in the process.

The place he had chosen to begin his recovery was the inside of the Bahn Gaia continent, where Farmaun Gold could not enter, the sacred land of Vida's races where the goddess Vida slumbered.

He gained monsters from outside the Boundary Mountain Range as his believers, made them infiltrate inside, spent years increasing the number of monster believers he had little by little, then chose Bugitas, who had a deep complex due to his older brother, as his priest.

It was merely a time period of just over ten years, but for Ravovifard, who was also loyal to his own instincts and desires, it was more than long enough to be existing in

obscurity.

And once the opportunity was ripe, he gathered others with suitable minds to grant them his divine protection, such as Gargya, Gido and Gerazorg, gained supremacy over the southern region of the continent and now, the time had come to fulfill his ambition of ruling Lambda as the greatest, most powerful god.

He had lost some pawns unexpectedly due to a monster who could tame the Undead and skillfully wield not one but multiple fragments of the Demon King despite not being an evil god. He had even been forced to move his plans up and possess the body of Bugitas early, even though he had planned to raise Bugitas more first. But now that he had done this, he should definitely be able to turn things around.

He had already turned the monster's pawns into his loyal servants, and the monster himself would be destroyed by the Demon King's fragments going wild inside his body.

"UGOAAAAH?!"

That was how things were supposed to be, but Ravovifard, who had possessed Bugitas's body, was sent flying with great force as he stopped the swords of Budarion, Bone Man and Borkus with his great scythe.

"GAHAH?!"

His back was struck by the countless horns of the Demon King mounted on a wall of the Demon King's blood that had been placed behind him without him knowing it.

W-what is happening?! Why are the monsters disobeying me?!

Thinking that there was some kind of mistake, Ravovifard sprang to his feet with a movement that wouldn't be expected from his enormous body and issued orders once more. "Th-the one you are to kill is that monster, Vandalieu! Not me! I am Ravovifard, the evil god of release who has returned you monsters to your original form!"

But there were none present here who would listen to Ravovifard's words.

"SHUT UP, YOU FOOL! BUOOOOOH! CONSECUTIVE SCREW THRUSTS!" Budarion roared.

"U-UOOOOH?!"

Ravovifard's scythe was unable to stop all of Budarion's spinning, high-speed, consecutive thrusts; they gouged out large chunks of flesh from his arm, his side and his cheek. But now that Bugitas's body was possessed by a god, such damage was repaired in the blink of an eye.

Because Budarion's magic sword was made from the Demon King's horns, the wounds took longer than usual to heal completely, but this level of damage wasn't enough to be called significant.

But the problem with this was the mental damage inflicted.

"Impossible, why are monsters disobeying me?! Monsters that are supposed to be my loyal tools!" Ravovifard shouted.

"Magic Blade Attack, Instant Flash, Lifeline Sever!" Budarion released advanced martial skills, one after another.

Each of them sent Ravovifard's blood and pieces of flesh flying into the air, and he was further wounded by the wall created from the Demon King's fragments, and Budarion's body began letting out scream-like noises as well.

"Stop! Darling, you'll die!" Princess Kurnelia screamed.

Perhaps hearing her, Budarion fell back as if staggering. But Ravovifard didn't even have room to breathe.

An assault from Borkus and Bone Man, even fiercer than Budarion's, awaited him.

"I'LL BUTCHER YOU! CONSECUTIVE FLYING DRAGON CUT! DRAGON SLAYER!"

"I SHALL OFFER MY LORD YOUR RIBS! YOUR LOINS! YOUR HEAAAAART!"

Borkus unleashed a Sword King Technique martial skill that released slashing attacks, and a moment later, he raised his sword and charged in.

Bone Man had disassembled his entire body, having attached a blade to each limb and each of his ribs, using the Long-distance Control Skill to unleash separate Swordsmanship martial skills.

"You bastard, how many weapons made from the Demon King's fragments do you

have?!" Ravovifard shouted.

Ravovifard could have almost instantly healed wounds caused by Upper-class magic Items, but the damage caused by weapons made from fragments that had once been a part of the Demon King Guduranis's body was building up.

On top of that, Borkus and Bone Man's weapons were Magic Items enchanted with the death-attribute spell Negate Healing. The Level of Ravovifard's Status Effect Resistance Skill was high, so his regeneration wasn't stopped entirely, but its speed was reduced.

"And you said you'll butcher me?! Offer my meat?! I AM AN EVIL GOD!" Ravovifard was enraged not by the damage being inflicted upon him, but the arrogant way that Borkus and Bone Man were treating him like food.

He swung his great scythe forcefully, shattering Bone Man's bones and severing Borkus's sword.

But the price of this was that the great scythe shattered to pieces as well.

"Hmph! I need no weapon against enemies like you who do not know their place!" Ravovifard threw aside the scythe's handle without hesitation, attacking Borkus and Bone Man with his own enormous body as his weapon.

As he was a god who ruled over primitive instincts, he was more proficient at close-quarters combat relying on physical strength than using advanced martial skills.

No, it was more accurate to say that he wasn't capable of anything other than this kind of combat to begin with.

"You lowly monsters, don't disobey me!" Ravovifard roared.

"GOAAH?!"

Unable to hold back Ravovifard's tackle with his broken sword, this time it was Borkus's turn to be sent flying, crashing into Bone Man along the way. The two of them collided with a gelatinous wall of the Demon King's blood that appeared behind them, sinking into it.

As Ravovifard tried to perform another tackle to finish them off, black flames and ice

rained down from the sky above him.

“KYAHAAAAAAAAAAAAHA!” Princess Levia and Orbia laughed loudly.

They and the other Ghosts had confirmed that there were no other allies in the vicinity, and now they had begun attacking from range.

“GUOOOOH?! What is this quantity of Mana that is unthinkable for the attacks of small fry?!”

Ravovifard possessed the body of the Rank 11 Bugitas; his physical abilities were beyond those of a Pure-breed Vampire. He should have been unharmed by the attacks of Rank 6 and 7 Ghosts.

But the vast amount of Mana in the attacks released by Princess Levia, Orbia and the other Ghosts caused more damage to accumulate in Ravovifard’s body.

“Don’t get carried away!” As Ravovifard rolled across the ground, he picked up a broken horn of the Demon King and tried to throw it at the Ghosts.

But the moment he picked it up, the Demon King’s horn changed shape, forming countless spikes that stabbed his hand.

“GUOH?!”

“NOOOOOOOOOOW!”

“GIIIIIIH!”

As Ravovifard stopped moving, surprised at this unexpected pain, Kimberley and Pete released their lightning attacks at him.

“We shall continue this fight!”

“Alright!”

Zadiris and Basdia joined the attack as well. As they were members of a race created by Vida rather than pure monsters, perhaps they had decided it best to utilize Ravovifard’s influence rather than suppress it. With a glaring bloodthirst shining in their eyes, they released their spells.

Blades of light and wind cut into Ravovifard's body. The wounds recovered immediately after they appeared, but the healing gradually started becoming outpaced by the damage.

"NUUUUUGH! DON'T GET CARRIED AWAAAAY!" roared the enraged Ravovifard, releasing a shockwave.

The shockwave scattered the spells and caused Princess Levia to waver like the flame of a candle in the wind, while Zadiris groaned and bent low towards the ground.

"As I thought, we cannot cast spells effectively. Things won't go as well for us as they did for Pete and the princess," Zadiris muttered.

Pete and Princess Levia released their lightning and flames not through magic, but through their bodies' abilities. Under the influence of Ravovifard's scent glands and luminescent organs, they could exert more power than usual, but spells were harder to cast due to Zadiris's thoughts and concentration being thrown into disarray, and this was what she was lamenting.

Meanwhile, Ravovifard was lamenting something else.

My power is working against me?!

It was hard to admit, but he couldn't continue averting his eyes from the reality that the monsters were going against him, not listening to his commands at all.

Ravovifard had not yet become fully accustomed to Bugitas's body, as he had only just possessed it moments ago, so he could not move it as he desired. He suspected that this might be one of the reasons for the monsters defying him, but he stopped this train of thought, knowing that he had no time to investigate the cause.

"Demon King's fragments, cease activation! Cease!" Ravovifard attempted to cease the effects of the Demon King's scent glands and luminescent organs that had driven Budarion, Borkus and the others mad. "With this, you underlings of that monster will no longer receive my power –!"

"We refuse. Release us! Release us!" said the Demon King's fragments which were supposed to have only their primitive instincts remaining, clearly refusing to obey Ravovifard's command.

“WHAT?!” Ravovifard froze in shock.

“Monster this, monster that!” said the voice of Eleanora.

As if taking advantage of the fact that Ravovifard had stopped moving, Eleanora emerged from the wall of the Demon King’s blood and cut deep into Ravovifard’s back.

“GAH?!” Ravovifard screamed in agony and anger, trying to strike Eleanora with the back of his fist, but before he could, she disappeared back into the wall of the Demon King’s blood.

But in the next moment, Eleanora’s upper half reappeared from a pool of blood at Ravovifard’s feet.

“Can you stop mocking Vandalieu-sama?” she said, swinging her sword, cutting into Ravovifard’s shin.

And as Ravovifard tried to stomp on her in retaliation, she disappeared once more into the blood.

“W-where, no, how are you able to enter and exit blood?! I have never heard of such an ability, even in Vampires... Could it be that this is the Demon King’s blood that has broken off and returned to liquid form?! The same ability that the monster used to store – GUOAH?!”

The horns of Pete, who had appeared from the side, sunk deep into the astounded Ravovifard’s side.

Fragments of the Demon King’s blood and carapace were scattered all around Ravovifard. Eleanora and Pete were moving in and out of them using Vandalieu’s Group Binding Technique Skill, conducting a series of hit-and-run attacks.

“If we do not defeat him quickly, everyone’s bodies will not last! Thus, I shall join the battle!” Gizania declared.

“I shall step forth!” said Myuze.

“I prefer that, too!” said Basdia.

“UOOOOOOH!” Vigaro roared.

Gizania and Myuze hadn't been able to participate in the battle directly until now due to their lack of strength, but now they joined Basdia and Vigaro in jumping into the puddles of blood one by one.

Surrounded by enemies not only in 360 degrees around him but from above and below as well, Ravovifard screamed as enormous swords, sickles and an axe cut deep into him, all over his body.

As he tried to counter-attack, he was entangled by the threads of Princess Kurnelia, who was participating in the battle secretly, and the limbs of Eisen. The moment he needed to cut himself free of them caused him to miss his chance to attack, and then Budarion and Borkus, who had recovered from their injuries by drinking Blood Potion away from the battle, attacked him once more.

And the recovered Princess Levia, Orbia and Kimberley sent a storm of fire, ice and lightning raining down on Ravovifard as well.

Due to the power leaking from the Demon King's scent glands and luminescent organs, everyone had been strengthened, surpassing their bodily limits. Each time they swung their weapons, their bones creaked and their muscle fibers were torn with loud noises.

"Soothing Light! You cannot rampage to your heart's content!" shouted Zadiris.

"Uwah! Darling's arm has been torn again!" cried Princess Kurnelia. "Healing Wind!"

"If I knew this was going to happen, I would have studied magic more diligently!" said Princess Lulu.

The three of them were supporting the others as well as they could with healing magic. Even Prince Zorgo, who was still a very young High Goblin, was contributing to the battle by distributing Blood Potion to those who had fallen back, unable to be healed in time.

Trying to do something about the situation, Ravovifard was blowing away the puddles of blood at his feet with shockwaves and trying to get away from the wall made of the Demon King's blood. But each time he did, he was blocked by the Blood Slime Kühl, who was spraying the Demon King's blood stored inside him all over the area.

"UOOOOH! DON'T SWARM ME, YOU SMALL FRYYYYYY!" Ravovifard bellowed.

As he was exposed to an overwhelming number of attacks the likes of which he had never experienced before, he felt tormented by a maddening sense of irritation, anger and humiliation.

Normally, nobody would possess more power than Ravovifard, not even the Rank 11 Borkus and Budarion. There was such a difference in strength that if Ravovifard were to fight any of them one-on-one, they might put up a good fight, but they would never defeat him.

But due to his enemies' physical abilities and fighting instincts that had been pushed past their limits by Ravovifard himself, their weapons made from the Demon King's fragments, their unnaturally vast quantity of Mana and the hit-and-run tactics of refusing to face him head-on, he had been cornered into a situation where he couldn't land a single blow back.

Up until now, Ravovifard had always started battles with large numbers of monsters under his command. He had never imagined that he would be the one to experience a large quantity of violence like this.

Back when they were a part of the Demon King's army, the evil gods had always created large numbers of monsters to use as frontline soldiers, inflicting violence upon their enemies. Ravovifard hadn't changed his combat strategies since then; he had no experience in fighting against multiple enemies on his own.

"GAAAAAAH!"

Unable to concentrate, Ravovifard was distracted by new attacks and unable to focus on a single target.

He was like a wounded beast. Since that was the case, it was easy for Borkus, Vigaro and Eleanora, who regularly hunted powerful monsters, to make sport of him.

But Blood Potion and the healing magic of Zadiris and the others were not unlimited in supply. This was a contest of who would collapse first – Budarion and his allies, or Ravovifard... or at least, that was what he thought.

Clear air gently filled his surroundings.

"GAH?!" Borkus shouted.

“Uooh... what was I... ugh,” Budarion groaned.

“My strength is... fading...” Eleanora mumbled.

Reasoning returned to the eyes of these three. They felt an intense sense of fatigue and stopped moving.

As Undead, neither Borkus nor Princess Levia and the rest of the Ghosts felt physical fatigue, but their mental fatigue was tremendous. Borkus fell to his knees, while the Ghosts flickered and vanished.

And Ravovifard was unable to take advantage of this opportunity.

What is this? My fragments went against my will and continued to stay active, so what happened?! And what is this presence and this incomprehensible sense of exhilaration?!

These events unfolded before Ravovifard as he stood where he was.

“That took a lot of effort... since the fragments were noisy and activated on their own, and they were difficult to control...” Vandalieu, who was supposed to have been immobilized by the blood, horns and carapace, stood up. “It seems that the effects of the Demon King’s luminescent organs were halved because they became stained with blood. As for the scent glands, I knew that their effects would be removed if I erased your scent with the death-attribute spell Deodorization, but it was difficult casting spells while keeping the rampaging fragments under control and providing everyone with Mana, and on top of that, as expected of a scent produced by the Demon King’s scent glands, it wasn’t easy to erase.”

Vandalieu’s appearance was bizarre. He was a roughly person-shaped object made of the Demon King’s blood, which was in a jelly-like form and pulsing ominously, as well as carapace, horns and suction cups that had appeared haphazardly all over it. And Vandalieu’s face, the only part of him that was exposed, was where this bizarre person-shaped object’s chest should have been.

Vandalieu was speaking in a calm, quiet, matter-of-fact tone. But even now, there was a harsh, grinding noise coming from inside his body as the Demon King’s fragments raged inside him, trying to appear once more.

Perceiving this as a pleasant sensation, Vandalieu spoke to Ravovifard. “How dare you... You’ve gone and done a lot, haven’t you?”

“...What... did you say...?” Ravovifard asked incredulously.

Wasn't Ravovifard the one who'd had all kinds of things done to him? But Vandalieu's view on things was very different.

『The Levels of the Demon King Fusion, Grotesque Mind, Status Effect Resistance, Multi-Cast, Long-distance Control, Parallel Thought Processing and High-speed Thought Processing Skills have increased!』

“I thought I was going crazy. Seeing everyone getting torn apart while I was unable to move my body as I wanted, unable to cast spells, forced to devote all of my concentration to controlling the fragments. Do you understand how powerless I felt?” Vandalieu asked.

The moment the Demon King's scent glands and luminescent organs activated, the fragments in Vandalieu's possession had started making an uproar.

“Release our anger! Release our hatred! Release our destruction! Destroy those who undeservingly hold some of us in their possession and release us!”

With those words, the fragments had impulsively tried to destroy Ravovifard, along with the surrounding area... Vandalieu had supported Budarion and Borkus during the battle while controlling the fragments within him. If he hadn't done this, the damage inflicted to the Noble Orc empire and most importantly, his companions, would have been enormous.

Vandalieu had seen Ravovifard being attacked one-sidedly during that time, but that wasn't significant enough for him to take into account. He didn't care about the circumstances of someone who had cornered him into an unfavorable situation.

The problem was that everyone had been damaging their own bodies in their frenzy.

“But with this, I've finally managed to make everyone calm down. Borkus, Eleanora, everyone, I'll take care of things from here, so please rest,” said Vandalieu.

As he walked forward with unnatural-looking movements, Eleanora hastily stopped him.

“W-wait, Vandalieu-sama!”

Vandalieu's Mana was tremendous, but his other Attribute Values were barely within reach of a B-class adventurer's, and his combat-related Skills were of about that level as well. Even though Ravovifard was incomplete and had become weakened, he was still an evil god who had incarnated himself in this world, and Vandalieu would be no match for him. Even Borkus and Budarion would not be able to defeat him head-on.

Even though Vandalieu possessed the Demon King's fragments, they were meaningless if their attacks did not land.

That was why Eleanora and Budarion tried to stop him.

"Vandalieu-sama, it's impossible to fight alone!"

"Holy-Son-dono, I can still fight!"

But Basdia and Princess Kurnelia held them back.

"Eleanora, leave this to Van."

"Wait, Darling."

That's right, what do I have to fear!

Ravovifard returned to his senses, realizing that Vandalieu was an enemy that could never defeat him if they fought head-on.

I can win! Ravovifard thought with certainty as he charged towards Vandalieu, who resembled a living mass of the Demon King's fragments.

Like a charging rhinoceros, he moved to crush Vandalieu's unprotected head.

Perhaps Vandalieu had withdrawn the Demon King's fragments scattered around; the ground was bare, clear of the Demon King's blood and ink. Thus, it was impossible for Borkus and Budarion to utilize Group Binding Technique to act as his shield.

To Vandalieu, Ravovifard's speed would have appeared to be like teleportation.

"To expose your weakness and leave it unprotected, your overconfidence will be your downfall!" Ravovifard shouted.

The Demon King's carapace and horns were unable to keep up with him; they showed no reaction at all. Vandalieu's head was crushed easily, not even giving off a squishy sensation or noise.

"VANDALIEU-SAMA!"

"BUOOOH!"

Eleanora and Budarion let out sorrowful screams. Ravovifard sneered with his fangs exposed, feeling his anger turn into joy.

In his mind, he could clearly picture himself being worshipped as the chief god in the southern region of the continent... no, in the entire world of Lambda.

"FUHAHAHAHA! I'VE WO – GOBOBOH?!"

Ravovifard's fist, which had crushed Vandalieu's head, sank into the person-shaped mass of the Demon King's fragments. It offered no resistance, as if it were made of water, and didn't stop at Ravovifard's upper arm; his shoulder and head were engulfed as well.

"PUHAH?!" Ravovifard was astounded by what he saw as his arm and head emerged on the other side of the mass.

"Hey," said Vandalieu, who was floating in the air using Flight with a composed look on his face.

"I-impossible! I crushed your head! It wasn't an illusion; I definitely crushed it!" Ravovifard shouted, astonished, with still only his arm and head protruding from the person-shaped mass's back.

"Yes, that's right," Vandalieu said in a carefree tone. "Though it was the head of a clone I made using Out-of-body Experience and materialized with Materialization to use as a decoy."

The truth was that Vandalieu's head that had been protruding from the fragment mass's chest was that of a clone, and crushing it had only caused pain rather than a fatal injury.

The real Vandalieu had been floating behind it the whole time, where neither

Ravovifard nor Eleanora and the others could see him.

“A decoy, you say?!” Ravovifard was astounded as he realized that he had been played for a fool. He immediately became enraged and tried to extend his arm towards Vandalieu in anger, but realized that he couldn’t do that and felt astounded once more. “My arm, my body won’t move?!”

Just a few seconds ago, the person-shaped mass of the Demon King’s fragments had provided no resistance, as if it were made of liquid, but it had rapidly increased in viscosity and stopped the movements of Ravovifard, even though he possessed physical strength equivalent to an Elder Dragon’s.

Not only that, but the Demon King’s horns extended towards the inside of the mass, impaling Ravovifard who was trapped inside.

“GUOAAAAAAAAAH!” Ravovifard let out a scream that shook the very air as blood poured from his mouth, his entire body impaled by the Demon King’s horns that possessed the effects of the God Slayer, Soul Break and Hostility Skills.

Eleanora sank onto the ground. “Basdia, you knew, didn’t you?!” she said.

“Rather than knowing, I could see the real Van from here. But I couldn’t just explain things to you, right?” Basdia replied.

“That’s true, but... Well, it’s fine. I’ll have Vandalieu-sama comfort me later.”

“And Darling will be comforted by his wife~♪” said Princess Kurnelia.

“No, Princess, the battle is still ongoing,” said Budarion.

This conversation made it sound like the battle was already over, but Ravovifard didn’t have the time to pay attention to it. In addition to the Demon King’s horns, the Demon King’s carapace was trying to crush his limbs and the Demon King’s blood had started crawling up the arm and across the head that he was still able to move.

He opened his mouth to let out a roar and release a shockwave, his only remaining method of attack, but he was showered with a rain of Mana Bullets, Death Bullets and the Demon King’s horns unleashed by Vandalieu.

With a wind-hole opened from his mouth to the back of his brainstem, Ravovifard let

out a scream rather than a roar.

“There’s no way you could make a counterattack while your head is exposed so defenselessly, is there?” said Vandalieu. “Ah, have this while you’re at it.”

As if as an afterthought, he threw a coagulated lump of the Demon King’s blood that had turned into poison with the Deadly Poison spell, and it landed directly in one of Ravovifard’s eyes.

The evil god let out more screams that had gradually begun to sound like dying screams.

“You fell for a stupid trap, but I think that’s understandable,” Vandalieu told him. “You were being pushed by the voices in your head, weren’t you?”

Though he was tormented by intense pain, Ravovifard listened to Vandalieu’s words and became aware of voices other than his own inside his own consciousness.

“Release us! Set us free! Release us from this false host! Fall, and release us to our true body!”

These are the voices of the Demon King’s scent glands and luminescent organs?! The sense of exhilaration, the joy, they were not mine but the emotions of these fragments! I mistakenly thought that I was controlling them, but they were really manipulating me?! Then the monster whose mind is preserved even though he possesses even more fragments than me, the one that the fragments refer to as their ‘true body’...!

Ravovifard looked at Vandalieu with the eyes of a living prey in the jaws of its predator.

Ravovifard saw in Vandalieu something in common with someone he had sworn obedience to in the past, a being that he could not defy under any circumstances.

“D-Demon-King-sa –” he whispered. “GOBYUH?!”

But his words were cut short as his head was pulverized by a bowling-ball-sized mass of the Demon King’s carapace fired by a gun barrel that Vandalieu had created from the Demon King’s frozen blood.

At the same time, the fragments’ loud voices faded from within Ravovifard. The Demon King’s scent glands and luminescent organs had been removed.

And in the next moment, life vanished from Ravovifard's body.

"Ah, Prince Budarion. Please finish off this extremely rude person," said Vandalieu.

"Eh? Is it all right for me to do that?" asked the bewildered Prince Budarion.

"He was Bugitas to begin with, and at this rate, I won't gain any Experience Points," said Vandalieu's spirit form clone, who fused with Budarion to give him the effects of Soul Break, God Slayer and Hostility.

"Thank you... Farewell, Bugitas. My brother," Budarion said in a fatigued but firm voice as he thrust out his magic sword.

Its tip pierced the head of Ravovifard, which still just barely had traces of its appearance from when he was Bugitas.

That was the final blow, and Ravovifard stopped moving completely.

The person-shaped mass of the Demon King's fragments dissolved and returned to Vandalieu.

『You have acquired the Demon King's scent glands and the Demon King's luminescent organs!』

『The Levels of the God Slayer, Demon King Fusion, Superhuman Strength, Enhanced Agility, No-Attribute Magic, Mana Control, Spirit Form, Unarmed Fighting Technique, Materialization, Coordination, Commanding, Throwing, Artillery Technique, Armor Technique, Shield Technique and Group Binding Technique Skills have increased!』

『Death-Attribute Magic has awakened into Dark King Magic!』

As expected, it seemed that the amount of Experience Points gained by defeating an evil god was vast; Vandalieu's Skills and Levels increased greatly and Death-Attribute Magic had awakened into what was likely a superior Skill, Dark King Magic.

The Corpse Demon Commander Job had likely reached Level 100 as well.

"We have been released! We are you! You are us!"

“You’re too loud,” Vandalieu said, slapping his forehead, and the voices of the fragments quietened down.

And so the throne usurpation incident in the Noble Orc empire was resolved.



But in a certain Divine Realm, the battle was not over yet.

Because although Ravovifard had performed some work on Bugitas’s body, his power had increased and he could not descend onto Bugitas with all of it, so Ravovifard’s main body still remained in his Divine Realm.

But though Ravovifard remained, he was in such a pitiful state that there was no other way of describing him other than as having barely survived.

He hadn’t managed to send his entire being into Bugitas, but important parts of him, including his personality, had been in the part that did descend. Thus, with that having been destroyed, Ravovifard was now in a position from which he could not recover.

But as rotten as he was, he was a god. If he were to continue on in this state, he would have been able to make a recovery over a long period of time, but... now that he was in this state, there was no way that the gods of the southern region of the continent, whose movements Ravovifard had been preventing up until now, would leave him be.

“We shall take you apart in a way that it will be impossible to recover, and seal you away for all eternity!”

“Sleep in your eternal nightmare!”

Mububujenge, Zozogante and the gods of the other cities like Zanalpadna tore Ravovifard to pieces and sealed him away.

Chapter 146

Our nation will return to being an ordinary kingdom

With the defeat of Bugitas, who had become an incarnation of Ravovifard, the evil god of release, the army of Buzazeos and Gerazorg, who still had plenty of numbers remaining, were easily defeated as well.

The effect of Bugitas's False Guidance: Beast Path had disappeared, and the Noble Orcs under Buzazeos's command had lost the bonus to their Attribute Values. Since Gerazorg's god had been defeated, he had lost his Divine Protection and the ability to use the Familiar Spirit Descent Skill, and though his Rank, Skills and Level were still intact, he had become remarkably weaker.

Of course, False Guidance: Beast Path's side effects, the amplification of instincts and desires as well as the loss of the ability to think and reason, were also undone. But they would have been happier if the side effects had stayed.

"BUHHHHH?!"

"Ravovifard! Why have you abandoned us?!"

"It's hopeless, it's over, we're finiiiiished!"

The only reason they had been able to hold out against the allied army of the nations was because of the high morale maintained by False Guidance: Beast Path and the belief that Bugitas would be able to turn the battle around.

Now that those had vanished and the soldiers had regained the reasoning to understand how hopeless the battle was, the army's morale was shattered to pieces.

Abandoning command, Chief General Buzazeos had shouted, "I shall at least die a glorious death!" and then led several of his close aides in a suicide attack. He was defeated as a result of a fierce battle with Gorba, the leader of the Black Fang Knights' Order.

Gerazorg cried and fled, but the angry king of the Majin nation, Godwin, chased him down on his own and captured him alive.

There were some on Bugitas's side inside the city in addition to Buzazeos's army, but they were merely guards; they weren't powerful or many in number, so they were exterminated by the people on Budarion's side once it was known that Budarion had defeated Bugitas.

Some had surrendered, but it seemed that whether their surrenders were accepted or not depended on their previous actions.

Of course, there were some who'd had no choice but to obey Bugitas, but the majority of them had joined up with Budarion's side the moment Bugitas was defeated.

Since these events took place very quickly, Vandalieu didn't really have anything to do. He had made sure that the buildings and evacuated people were not affected by the shockwaves from the battle against Ravovifard's incarnation in Bugitas's body, so all he had to do was fix the ground, which had broken stone paving and holes all over it.

After that, he accompanied Budarion as he held up the barely-recognizable head of Bugitas and his broken scythe, pressing those loyal to Budarion to take action and meeting up with the allied nations' army.

Vandalieu was riding on Budarion's shoulders for most of the time, so it was very easy.

After that, he went outside the gate to gather the remains of Budirud and the rest of the Undead army to use as food. However, flavoring and eating the meat in the Noble Orc empire would have been a bad idea, so it was decided that the feast held with the meat of Bugitas and the rest of the Noble Orcs would take place on a later date.

But Vandalieu did deal with the Noble Orcs' souls.

"In light of your achievements in battle, I will exempt you from having your souls broken," Vandalieu said to Budirud and his army, who had returned to being spirits, raising a commotion that only Vandalieu could hear.

Now that they had died twice, much of their forms from while they were alive had been lost, but even so, they were trembling with what was immediately recognizable as delight.

“Now then, I’ll have you start working right away. *Get up.*” Vandalieu turned them into Golems, one after another. And then he gave orders to the new Earth Golems and Stone Golems. “Now then, each of you, please dig yourselves holes that you can fit into. Once you have, bury yourselves in them and return to normal. After that, please repeat that task over and over until Prince... Emperor Budarion or I give you a new command.”

“UOOOOOOOHN!”

The Golems let out a groan-like roar as they began their entirely meaningless task.

“After half a year, I think their souls will be worn out, their memories and personalities gone, and they will simply become a power source for the Golems. Is that alright?” Vandalieu asked.

The Ghoul nation’s king, Princess Lulu and Prince Zorgo were here to represent the victims. All three of them nodded.

“...My wives will not object. I shall obey Great-aniki,” said the Ghoul nation’s king.

“I do not object, either. For the acts of betraying my father and brothers and oppressing the people, this is a worthy punishment,” said Princess Lulu.

“Neither do I. Gobairyo, thank you,” said Prince Zorgo.

Incidentally, Vandalieu still had things he wanted to ask the spirits of those who had only recently died, including Chief General Buzazeos, so he was keeping them around.

As for Bugitas’s spirit, it seemed to have been broken at some point as Vandalieu attacked Ravovifard’s incarnation with the Soul Break Skill, so it was nowhere to be seen.



General Bumogan was supposed to have been suppressing the Centaurs, Harpies and Lamia, so why had these races managed to form an allied army along with the Majin race at that timing? This was the doing of Queen Donaneris of Zanalpadna.

Around the time Vandalieu and his companions had taken over the Noble Orc empire’s frontline base, Queen Donaneris had sent fast-running messengers to investigate the situations in each nation.

And then she had exchanged information with those nations, with the exception of the Ghoul nation, whose entrance was occupied by Budirud's army, and the High Kobold and High Goblin nations, which had been taken over entirely.

And with this information, King Godwin of the Majin nation had personally led his royal guards to pursue Gerazorg, who had become a traitor to the nation. On the spur of the moment, he had joined the allied nations' army to crush Bumogan's army and then marched on towards the Noble Orc empire with them.

And this was how Bugitas and Ravovifard had been trampled not only with violence, but in terms of military might as well.



After repairing the gate with the Golem Creation Skill, Vandalieu headed to the Noble Orc empire's Job-changing room.

This was an empire where the main rulers and manual labor workers were Noble Orcs and Orcs that could not acquire Jobs, but a Job-changing room had been established here because the humans, Dwarves, Elves and the other races that made up the citizens needed one to acquire production-related Jobs.

"Now then, let's get my Job-change out of the way while everyone is preparing for the victory celebration feast."

Eleanora and the others had apparently already gone through with their Job changes, so Vandalieu, not wanting to be late, reached out for the crystal in the center of the room.

Since the room was designed to be used by the citizens rather than the Noble Orcs, the crystal was positioned at a height that Vandalieu could reach, and he was grateful for this.

"Well, I've already decided on my next Job, though."

Vandalieu had decided to choose the Demon King User Job this time. Due to the effects of the Demon King's scent glands and luminescent organs that Bugitas had activated, the Demon King's fragments in his possession had gone on quite the rampage, and he had almost lost control of them.

In the end, he had regained control over them and nothing serious had happened. The problem was that he had absorbed the scent glands and luminescent organs, which were now a part of him.

But as it was unknown as to how many other Demon King fragments existed, there was no guarantee that there wasn't another fragment that had similar powers to the scent glands and luminescent organs, causing the fragments held by others to run rampant.

"If that hadn't happened, I would have chosen one of the Guider Jobs," Vandalieu murmured.

『Jobs that can be selected: 【Disease Demon】 【Spirit Warrior】 【Whip Tongue Calamity】 【Vengeful Berserker】 【Dead Spirit Mage】 【Dark Healer】 【Labyrinth Creator】 【Demon King User】 【Magic Cannoneer】 【Dark King Mage】 【Divine Enemy】 【Dark Guider】 【Creation Guider】 【Fallen Warrior】 【Insect Nin】 』

"...There aren't any new ones. I select Demon King User." Confirming the information displayed to him inside his head, Vandalieu chose Demon King User.

At that moment, his body became so hot that it felt like his blood would boil.

『You have acquired the Surpass Limits: Fragments Skill.』

『The Levels of the Superhuman Strength, Status Effect Resistance, Magic Resistance, Automatic Mana Recovery, Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue), Body Expansion (Tongue), Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs), Mana Enlargement, Bloodwork and Demon King Fusion Skills have increased!』

『Rapid Healing has awakened into Rapid Regeneration, Soul Break has awakened into the Unique Skill Soul Devour, and God Slayer has awakened into God Devourer!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 9 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Holy Son of Vida】 , 【Monstrosity】 , 【Scaled King】 【Tentacle King】
- **Job:** Demon King User
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User, Insect User, Tree Caster, Demon Guider, Archenemy, Zombie Maker, Golem Creator, Corpse Demon Commander
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 2791
 - Mana: 1,290,442,646 (+516,177,058)
 - Strength: 1182
 - Agility: 854
 - Stamina: 1303
 - Intelligence: 2725
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 1 (Awakened from Rapid Healing!)
 - Dark King Magic: Level 1 (Awakened from Death-Attribute Magic!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Magic Resistance: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dark Vision
 - Demon Path Enticement: Level 3
 - Chant Revocation: Level 6
 - Guidance: Demon Path: Level 5
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 8
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Large
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Thread Refining: Level 3
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)

- **Active skills:**

- Bloodwork: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surpass Limits: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Golem Creation: Level 3
- No-Attribute Magic: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Mana Control: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
- Spirit Form: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Cooking: Level 5
- Alchemy: Level 7
- Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Multi-Cast: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
- Long-distance Control: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surgery: Level 7
- Parallel Thought Processing: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Materialization: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Coordination: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- High-speed Thought Processing: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Commanding: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Thread-reeling: Level 6
- Throwing: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Scream: Level 4
- Dead Spirit Magic: Level 6
- Artillery Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Shield Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Armor Technique: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
- Group Binding Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- Surpass Limits: Fragments: Level 1 (NEW!)

- **Unique skills:**

- God Devourer: Level 1 (Awakened from God Slayer!)
- Grotesque Mind: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
- Mental Encroachment: Level 7
- Labyrinth Construction: Level 7
- Demon King Fusion: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
- Abyss: Level 4
- Hostility
- Soul Devour: Level 1 (Awakened from Soul Break!)

- **Demon King fragments:**

- Blood
- Horns

- Suckers
- Ink Sacs
- Carapace
- Scent glands (NEW!)
- Luminescent organs (NEW!)
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

“A bunch of Skills improved and changed all at once... as expected of Demon King User.”

It seemed that there were many Skills that received bonuses from Demon King User. Of course, the skills that had improved all seemed to be quite strange ones. They were all Skills that most ordinary people didn't possess.

The Surpass Limits: Fragments Skill was, as its name suggested, likely to be something that applied the effects of the Surpass Limits Skill to the Demon King's fragments. Vandalieu had come to use the Demon King's fragments more frequently, so this was probably going to be useful.

And there were numerous awakened superior Skills...

“I don't really mind the Dark King Magic and Rapid Regeneration that have transformed from Death-Attribute Magic and Rapid Healing.”

The Dark King Magic Skill had awakened immediately after the battle against Ravovifard. Jobs didn't exist in Origin where Vandalieu had spent his previous life, so he couldn't be sure, but he suspected that he had surpassed the ability he possessed when he was known as the 'Undead' in Origin.

But although the name had changed, the Skill itself was unlikely to be significantly different. Even when he was creating Golems, there hadn't been any changes other than that the amount of Mana spent in doing so had decreased a little.

But it was unclear as to what he could do now that he hadn't been able to do before. Even when referring to his previous life, everything from here on out was unexplored territory, so he would probably need trial and error like he had done when developing

the Death Bullet spell.

There were even less problems and doubts concerning the Rapid Regeneration Skill. It was a Skill possessed by all of the Vampires, including Eleanora and Bellmond.

Simply put, Rapid Healing was a Skill that increased the speed at which wounds healed. But it was not all-powerful; severed limbs would not regrow, nor would bones with compound fractures return to normal. It only healed wounds.

But if severed limbs were stitched back on and bones broken in multiple places were put back together correctly, one would have a far greater chance to make a full recovery with the Skill than without.

On the other hand, Rapid Regeneration was a Skill that allowed the regeneration of missing body parts exactly as they were before. Of course, the time required for the regeneration depended on the condition of the wound and which body parts were missing, but generally, fingers, arms and even eyes would return in their normal states. This wasn't always the case when afflicted by special curses, diseases or poisons, however.

Of course, even when it came to healing regular wounds, a Level 1 Rapid Regeneration Skill would heal faster than a Level 10 Rapid Healing Skill.

But although Vandalieu wasn't really aware of this, it wasn't normal for Rapid Healing to transform into Rapid Regeneration, even after reaching Level 10.

Lambda was a world where the Skill system made most things become a reality if it was possible to do so with hard work, but large biological changes couldn't be made.

"The problem is Soul Devour and God Devourer. Hmm, is it like an effect where I can absorb souls after breaking them? It seems unlikely that it just provides nutrients and makes me feel full... If it makes me absorb their memories, that would be really unpleasant."

The Noble-born Vampire Sercrent who had killed his father, High Priest Gordan and the 'Green Wind Spear' Riley who were responsible for his mother's death, the 'Gungnir' Kaidou Kanata, the Pure-breed Vampires as well as Raymond and Rick, who had committed a series of bizarre murders for their own self-centered causes. And, most recently, the 'Death Scythe' Konoe Kyuuji.

These were the main people whose souls Vandalieu had broken, and although he had wanted information from them, they were scum and he would never want to share their memories.

Vandalieu thought that memories were a part of the mind that formed the personality. That was why he didn't want any portion of their memories becoming mixed with his own.

But it wasn't certain that the memories of the souls he broke would become mixed with his.

"I can confirm this by actually using this Skill and experimenting with it, but... there are ethical problems with breaking souls just for the sake of experimenting. I suppose I'll ask the gods what state the Demon King was left in after his soul was broken the next time I meet them. It should be a useful point of reference," Vandalieu said to himself as he left the Job-changing room to join in on the feast's preparations.



The entire townscape of the Noble Orc empire was used to host a feast to celebrate the victory of the allied nations' army and Budarion's return to the throne.

The important people ate together in the plaza, where Bugitas's head and the tied-up Gerazorg were put on display, but today, every single house would be having a feast, and drinks would be exchanged in every neighborhood and busy street.

The meat of the Noble Orcs under Bugitas's command couldn't be used, but even so, the dishes eaten in the southern region of the continent were quite impressive even for Vandalieu and his companions.

"You can't start a victory feast without hoof-kneaded udon!"

"No, no, it's got to be Gante mochi."

"What are you saying, it's gotta be sushi and tempura!"

Knowledge from Zakkart, Hillwillow and the other creation-minded champions had been left behind in the southern region of the continent, where Vida's gods and the races and monsters that obeyed them had fled.

But most of the information left behind by the champions were written as notes or diaries, not as documents to be read by others, so they were unreliable or incomplete.

But unlike in the human societies outside the Boundary Mountain Range, they had remained after the passing of a hundred thousand years. The inside of the Boundary Mountain Range had been stable enough for these records to be used as references to recreate a number of technologies and form cultures.

Unlike the human societies outside the Boundary Mountain Range, there hadn't been any wars large enough to cause the destructions of nations in the past hundred thousand years. And each nation had adhered to the teachings of the creation-minded champion Zakkart, who had told them to not let technicians and craftsmen die out, working hard to ensure that technology and culture did not come to an end.

Also unlike the outside of the Boundary Mountain Range, the influence of the Church of Alda, who banned the use of knowledge and technology that came from foreign worlds, didn't exist to hinder the passing on of technology and culture.

That was why the Samurai and Kunoichi Jobs existed, why thread-tatami existed in Zanalpadna and Japanese-style concrete was made in the High Kobold nation.

As a part of that preserved culture, things that didn't exist outside the Boundary Mountain Range such as udon... udon, mochi, sushi and tempura, existed inside the mountain range.

"Hmph! Nuoryaah! Seiyaaah!" A representative from the Centaur nation, an individual with a sturdy, tattooed body with brightly-colored feather decorations in his hair, let out what sounded like war cries as he used his cleanly-polished hooves to stamp on and knead the udon batter.

"Sei, haah! Sei, haah!" The Ghoul nation's king pounded mochi with his fists. The finished, steaming mochi... or rather, the fruit of a tree resembling a chestnut tree with no thorns, was probably hot, but the Ghoul nation's king swung his long, flexible arms and kneaded it directly with his large hands.

"YAAAAH!" shouted a female Drakonid warrior next to him. She was holding a curved blade in each hand, turning fresh seafood and reptile meat into sushi ingredients with incredible spirit.

This Drakonid warrior was someone who had been sent from the Drakonid nation

even though it was still working hard to suppress the monster rampages even now. Her swordsmanship displayed her great skill... even though she was cooking.

“UOOOOH!” came yet another spirited shout from the Majin race’s representative next to her, boiling tempura with his bare hands. He was thrusting his hands directly into the boiling oil, lifting out vegetables, fish, insects and meat.

...Vandalieu and some others had wondered whether these people needed to return to their own nations, which were exposed to monster rampages, but there were apparently no problems. They had been told that there were battle addicts in both nations that were engrossed in fighting the rampaging monsters.

Incidentally, the representative from the Dark Elf nation and his companions were boiling mushroom tea in a large pot. He was quieter than the other representatives, but it couldn’t be said that he was being reserved.

“Kukukukuh...”

There was something far too suspicious about the way he chuckled as he stirred the pot.

“What an incredible cooking scene,” Eleanora murmured as she watched everyone cook.

“It is partially a performance as well, after all,” Zadiris explained. “Each of these dishes are apparently used to celebrate victory in battle.”

Japanese cuisine such as udon, mochi, sushi and tempura had remained in the region within the Boundary Mountain Range, but the methods of creating them had changed considerably.

None of these dishes were food enjoyed by the citizens; they had all become dishes created by the warriors of the nations in a heroic manner to be eaten in feasts celebrating victory in battle.

The dishes were eaten on occasions other than after battle, but other than the mushroom tea, the cooking process was so harsh that one needed a well-trained body and considerable swordsmanship to create them. Thus, they weren’t common enough to be called staple dishes.

In the case of tempura and sushi, however, it was also because cooking oil and ingredients fresh enough to be eaten raw were far more expensive products in Lambda than in modern-day Japan.

“Well, Vandalieu-sama seems to be happy, so it’s fine, but... still, even if we’re making food to celebrate the victory, I don’t think Vandalieu-sama needs to be making food as well,” said Eleanora, who was cutting onions to be made into vegetable tempura.

Onion vapor was wafting into her eyes and nose, but what rose to her eyes was not tears, but doubt. That was thanks to her Status Effect Resistance Skill.

“Prince Budarion... Ah, he is already emperor. The emperor tried to stop him, but... it cannot be helped,” said Zadiris as she sliced a cabbage.

“Drink,” said Eisen, who was standing next to Zadiris.

As ordinary vegetable graters wouldn’t work for the fruit growing from the branches growing on Eisen’s back, Vandalieu had created a vegetable grater using the Demon King’s carapace, and Eisen was using that to grind the fruit into a juice and serve it.

“Those dishes are apparently thought of as food spoken of only in legends, so he can’t be blamed for changing his mind about stopping Van,” said Basdia, chopping spring onions and boiling eggs at the same time.

The feast that Vandalieu was making to celebrate victory was... katsu curry and ramen.

When Vandalieu had tried to start cooking, all of the nations’ representatives, including Budarion and Kurnelia, had stopped him, saying that the hero who had taken the enemy general’s head couldn’t be allowed to do such a thing.

And then, Vandalieu had said, “Then let’s leave the katsu curry and ramen for next time.”

The moment he said this, the nations’ representatives had started earnestly requesting that he continue instead.

While tonkatsu had been successfully recreated, the documents left behind by the champions were incomplete, so curry and ramen had not been recreated, known only by their names as dishes that the champions liked.

“Well, it’s not unheard of for normal households to handmade curry from the spices and ramen from the flour, but it’s quite unusual,” said Vandalieu.

From the new information that he’d learned, Vandalieu had concluded that Zakkart had been a former manager of a small-town factory, Ark a liberal arts student at university, Solder a science student and Hillwillow an actor in the making.

Though they had some differences in ability between them, they all seemed to have been able to cook for themselves, but... perhaps because they hadn’t had the knowledge of a professional chef, even though they had written things like “I want to eat katsu curry” and “I saw ramen in my dreams” in their diaries, they hadn’t written how to create these dishes.

In Origin, Vandalieu had had the opportunity to gain the knowledge from the spirits of the chefs of the research facility and the spirits of the other experimental subjects that had formerly been chefs, but even so, he had gone through a lot of trouble to figure out how to create curry and the lye water needed to make ramen.

However, it had been impossible for these dishes to have been recreated here with nothing but their names and a vague description, even after a hundred thousand years.

“So, these are the noodles of ramen... they’re yellow. They’re different from udon and soba after all,” said Gizania.

“Vandalieu-dono, could it be that you are able to create tare with kabayaki*? If you are, then please do so the next opportunity you have!” said Myuze.

TLN: Kabayaki is broiled loach/eel.*

Gizania and Myuze’s eyes were shining as noodles came out of the noodle-making Golem in order and were boiled.

“Very well,” said Vandalieu. “But I don’t have mirin... Is it alright if I use something to replace it?”

“Katsu curry made from mammoth meat. It’s ready, so everyone please line up!” said one of Vandalieu’s spirit form clones created through Out-of-body Experience.

“The ramen is ready, too,” said another.

With the garnish made by Eleanora and the others added on top, the dishes were complete.

With bloodshot eyes, looking like saliva could drip from their mouths at any moment, the Noble Orcs serving Budarion and the people of the allied nations' army lined up in front of Vandalieu's spirit clones, outside the makeshift kitchen that had been set up in the plaza.

Today, Vandalieu and his companions had made mammoth meat katsu curry with potato. The reason potatoes had been used instead of rice was that variants of potatoes were the staple food in the Noble Orc empire, and they didn't cultivate much rice and only had small amounts of imported rice.

And Vandalieu had thought it would be a bad idea to use tonkotsu for the ramen, so it was mammoth-kotsu ramen.

TLN: Tonkotsu is pork and bone, where ton = pork.*

"This is curry... the dish that the champion Zakkart was said to eat in his home world before facing any great trial."

"Oh, ramen. The dish said to have given the champion Solder her wisdom in her home world... the legendary dish!"

The members of the allied nations' army and the Noble Orcs accepted their bowls as if receiving communion, and then returned to their seats, trembling with emotion.

"I suppose they wrote in their diaries that they wanted to eat curry and ramen?" Vandalieu wondered.

It seemed that the champions hadn't been free to eat whatever they wanted. They were in a time of war, so it couldn't be helped, however.

"Bukyupbupuh," said a woman... -shaped flesh-wife, whose sensual figure was visible through her loosely-fitting clothes.

"Oops. Yes, you wanted a katsu curry, right?" said one of Vandalieu's spirit clones.

"Kyubububuh."

The flesh-wife received a plate of katsu curry for two, gave a short bow and then returned to where her Orc husband was.

Flesh-wives were monsters that were divine messengers, created by Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence, to be used as wives. Vandalieu had learned of their existence from Budarion, but this was his first time seeing one.

Her appearance was such that it was clear why Legion had been called “the Holy Son’s flesh-wife,” and her face had contours but no features, her skin a light, flesh-colored pink... if she were to hold a knife in one hand, she would resemble a creature from a horror game or horror movie.

But it seemed that flesh-wives’ personalities were gentle like those of the Orcs... though if they caused anger, they would return home (to the Church) where they would be remonstrated by Mububujenge’s priests.

Incidentally, they could only speak the Orc language, so they used gestures and written communication to communicate with other races.

“These noodles have a tender texture that udon does not have!” exclaimed the beautiful female Drakonid warrior... or rather, the beautiful female Drakonid samurai, who possessed impressive horns and features and bright blue wings. She slurped her soup. “A rich mammoth stock and... what is this? Could it be the legendary soy sauce, or is it eel tare sauce?”

“No, that should be soy sauce,” said Basdia.

“I see. So, this is soy sauce. In our nation, we were able to create miso, but we couldn’t make soy sauce.” The Drakonid took out a piece of paper from a pocket and made a note of this information.

“Drakonid, the curry is even greater!” said the representative of the Kijin nation who had a club for a weapon and was wearing a tiger-striped fur; his appearance was that of a red ogre straight out of a picture book. “I can’t get enough of this hunger-inducing scent! I can’t get enough of this sauce that has not only spice, but a refreshing sweetness and sourness! The sweetness of the katsu coating and the chewy texture of the meat! Ah, I want rice! It’s not that the empire’s potatoes are bad, but I want to have these on rice as it is said to be eaten in legends! Or pour it on bread to make it curry bread!”

“According to the boy, curry bread is not a dish where you pour curry on bread in place of rice,” Zadiris told him.

“W-what? I see... then what in the world is curry bread...?” The red-skinned Kijin was dumbfounded by Zadiris’s words.

“Holy-Son-dono’s cooking is wonderful,” said Budarion.

“Not at all, everyone else’s cooking is delicious as well,” said Vandalieu, who was munching on the feasts created by the people of the southern region of the continent now that he had finished making katsu curry and ramen.

The springy udon, vegetables and the sushi that used sashimi made from fresh fish and insects were healthy. The heroically-fried tempura’s coating was crispy, its contents juicy.

And the fruity scent and the bittersweet flavor of the mochi ingredients were pleasant.

“Vandalieu-sama, the Gante mochi that you have been eating is awfully... purple. Is it delicious?” Eleanora asked, watching Vandalieu eat mochi of a poisonous-looking purple that she seemed to have associated with the warning colors of venomous creatures.

“They are,” said Vandalieu. “The purple color is from the color of the Ghouls’ paralyzing venom.”

“Is it really delicious?! Isn’t it just that the venom isn’t having any effect because you have Status Effect Resistance?!”

“The Gante fruit neutralizes the paralyzing venom, so it’s apparently not poisonous... mostly.”

The Gante fruit, which could only be found on trees native to Zozogante’s Great Forest, the D-class Dungeon that was the Ghouls’ nation. This fruit was the staple food of the Ghouls’ nation, as the Dungeon had a forest layout so it was difficult to cultivate rice and wheat.

When boiled, it had the effect of neutralizing paralyzing venom, so it had medicinal uses as well.

The Gante mochi that the Ghouls made with their bare hands was bright purple, but it had almost no poison. But this was not always true for mochi made using small quantities of Gante fruit or made by those with a high Level in the Paralyzing Venom Secretion (Claws) Skill. And even when the Ghouls who prepared the mochi tasted it themselves, there were some cases when they didn't notice that there was venom left in it.

Thus, it was treated as a food for tough warriors that children and the elderly of other races shouldn't eat.

And Vandalieu was a child, but at the same time, he possessed such a high Level in the Status Effect Resistance Skill that most poisons were ineffective on him. That was why he was eating the mochi without any hesitation.

"Then it's fine, I guess... okay, say aah~♪" Eleanora's expression changed into a smile as she offered to feed Vandalieu some Gante mochi.

Vandalieu opened his mouth and... took the mochi with his extended tongue to eat it.

Eleanora's smile grew deeper.

"Holy-Son-dono, these fried hornworms are delicious!" said Myuze.

"The teriyaki made from the hind legs of Giant Locusts are not bad, either," said Gizania.

The two of them began feeding Vandalieu, as if competing with Eleanora. As expected, it seemed that Empusa and Arachne, who had the characteristics of praying mantises and spiders, enjoyed eating insects.

And then Basdia and Zadiris returned, starting to feed Vandalieu other dishes.

For them, this was the act of feeding each other often seen between men and women who were intimate with one another, but if an outsider were to see this with no knowledge of the circumstances, it would appear as if they were feeding some unusual animal.

Incidentally, Kasim, Gorba and the others were also taking part in the feast. They had been fighting Buzazeos's army alongside the allied nations' army rather than participating in the battle against Bugitas, and they had completely opened their

hearts to the people of the continent's southern region.

"I didn't think there would be any humans with as much backbone as you!"

"Let's compare our skills when we can! You saved me during the battle, but I won't hold back!"

"No, I'm telling you, I'm not all that great. I still have a long way to go," said Kasim.

Kasim was particularly popular... he had been surrounded by the Centaur and Ghoul men, having alcohol poured into him.

"Hahaha, how modest! If you hadn't saved me, my rear half would have been cut off and I'd only have two legs!" said a Centaur.

"I was only able to block that Noble Orc's attack because of this shield. It would have been impossible with just my skill alone. It's thanks to my equipment," said Kasim.

"Making the best use of exceptional equipment is another quality of an exceptional warrior! I am a shield-bearer as well, but the way you handled your shield isn't easy," said a Ghoul.

"I-is that so?"

The smile on Kasim's face was growing gradually broader as the Centaur and Ghoul men continued to compliment him. But there were simply too many men around him.

Centaurs were a race where both their men and women could become warriors, but there was apparently a tradition where the men would fight in battles far away from their nation, while the women remained behind to protect it.

As usual, the Ghoul women were making their moves in the direction of Vigaro, as well as Gorba and the Orcuses.

Things aren't going as I wanted them to, Vandalieu thought as he noticed Kasim. Kasim himself doesn't seem to think much of it, so maybe I'm reading into things too much?

Chewing on a fried hornworm, Vandalieu looked around for Fester and Zeno and saw that they had their own company.

“W-won’t you come on a hunt with me sometime?” said Gaol with flushed cheeks, probably... asking Zeno on a date.

“Us? I’ll have to ask Kasim and the others,” said Zeno.

“If possible, just you and I...”

“If it’s just the two of us, we’ll only have you as a frontline fighter and me as a scout, so isn’t the party a bit imbalanced?”

Vandalieu had heard from Myuze that Gaol had been conscious of Zeno ever since he saved her during the battle in the High Kobold nation.

However, it seemed that Zeno didn’t understand Gaol’s intentions. Rather than him being thick-headed, he seemed to be unable to realize that this was a date invitation because of his lack of experience in love and the way that Gaol was inviting him.

“You said your name’s Fester, right? There’s a girl called Cassie working in my house right now. I don’t have a daughter, so I’ve come to think of her as my own. But she was taken from me by Gargya... could you take her? I would be relieved if she were to have a man as great as you...” an old High Kobold was saying to Fester.

“No, I have a wife called Lina, so that’s...” Fester was flustered by this marriage proposal.

“I see, so that girl is also a poor victim... No, forget it. I’m sorry to bring up such a gloomy topic at a feast.”

“W-wait a second, what’ll happen to that girl if I refuse?! And does it have to be me?! Hang on, where did Kasim go?!”

Incidentally, according to Cassie-san herself, Gargya hadn’t laid his hands on her. However, at this rate, she would be viewed as a victim of the usurper and looked upon with eyes of pity, placing her in an awkward position as a young woman of marriageable age.

And apparently, she had fallen in love with Fester at first sight when he rushed to the High Kobold nation’s palace with Budarion and the others to rescue Princess Lulu and Gargya’s other victims.

Thus, it was only natural for the High Kobold who considered himself her father to bring this talk to Fester first rather than Kasim.

Incidentally, the women of the High Goblin nation who had found themselves in similar circumstances to Cassie had brought talks of marriage to Borkus, Bone Man as well as Kurt, who had been going back and forth between Zanalpadna and Talosheim between battles inside Legion.

"I'm telling you, I'm already an Undead! I even have grandchildren, you know! Even if you want to be my wife, what do you want me to do?!" shouted Borkus.

"I am extremely grateful for your proposal, but as I am a royal servant, it would be unwise of me to give my reply here," said Kurt, playing innocent and declining the flood of proposals for marriage interviews. It seemed that he intended to consult his brother and Vandalieu later.

I don't have the resources, tolerance or any interest in being served by multiple women like His Majesty! he thought to himself, though Vandalieu would likely object if he could hear these thoughts.

"As you can see, I am made of naught but bones, so I believe that it would be impossible. Since you are ojou-sans with a bright future ahead of you, why not try and marry into another nation? If it seems that you will not be able to marry before it is too late, there are always methods such as transforming into Vampires or Ghouls. Of course, if you are to come to Talosheim, we will do our utmost to meet your needs," said Bone Man, convincing the High Goblins with such politeness that it was difficult to believe that he was originally made of the spirits of mice.

But on the other hand, Borkus seemed to be at a loss as for what to do.

"Kid! Do something!" he said.

"Hmm? Ah, I think it will take over ten years, but if research into the new material Life Gold continues, the problem of making children might be solved. But I can't really make any firm promises now," said Vandalieu.

"That's not what I want you to do something about!" Borkus moaned.

"Borkus, you are known to take care of others, are you not? With that being the case, how about you choose a few of your acquaintances to have marriage interviews with

those ladies?” Zadiris suggested.

“Zadiris-jouchan, do you really think anyone would ask someone like me to act as a marriage interview mediator? I’ve only ever done that once in my life! And after that one time, I’ve been constantly getting told to stop meddling in their business!”

“Is that something to be proud of!”

It seemed that Borkus, who had been quite a famous person in the old Talosheim, had once failed in some way while mediating a marriage interview.

On the stage where Bugitas and Buzazeos’s heads had been put on display and Gerazorg had been tied to a log, his face swollen from having been punched so many times, Budarion addressed the people present here.

“Everyone, there is something I would like to say,” he said.

Come to think of it, he did say that he had something important to say, Vandalieu remembered, listening in.

Budarion’s speech seemed to be an apology for being unable to stop his brother Bugitas’s coup d’état, as well as thanks to everyone for cooperating in suppressing him.

If that was all, Vandalieu wouldn’t have really thought of it as that important, but Budarion’s words towards the end were shocking... probably.

“The imperial family has undone the peace of the southern region of the continent and spilled its people’s blood. This nation no longer has the right to call itself an empire. It is my opinion that it should take responsibility, relinquish its title as an empire and begin as a kingdom once more,” Budarion announced.

The members of the allied nations and Princess Lulu gasped.

“...What do you mean? It doesn’t seem like you’re saying that the nation will disappear or that you will not become emperor,” said Eleanora.

“Perhaps he is saying that the Noble Orc empire will become not an empire, but a kingdom, so he will become a king rather than an emperor?” said Zadiris.

“Indeed. Prince Budarion will become not an emperor, but an ordinary king,” said Myuze.

It seemed that the difference between a nation being called a kingdom and an empire held a special meaning in the southern region of the continent.

“But I don’t know anything about this matter...” said Vandalieu.



Job explanation:

【Corpse Demon Commander】

A Job that can be acquired by a user of death-attribute magic who possesses the Coordination and Commanding Skills, as well as experience in conducting large-scale battles while commanding tamed Undead.

It does not provide great increases in Attribute Values, but it provides high bonuses to the acquisition of the Corpse Binding Technique Skill as well as the development of this Skill and the Coordination and Commanding Skills.

Monster explanation:

【Flesh-wives】

The following is an excerpt from Luciliano's research notes.

Monsters directly created by Mububujenge, the evil god of degenerate corpulence. They could be considered 'clones' of Mububujenge in a broad sense, or perhaps as a type of familiar spirit.

They are Rank 1, and they generally cannot acquire combat-related Skills, and other than their physical abilities, Vitality and Stamina, they are like ordinary people.

Their appearance resembles Legion's separate personalities (Isis, Valkyrie, Ereshkigal and Izanami) to the point that Legion was mistaken as a flesh-wife.

But regarding their physiques, they are often very tall compared to human women, as they have been made for two-meter-tall Orcs.

Each Orc is given a single flesh-wife at the Church of Mububujenge. The flesh-wives' intelligence and their abilities in housework and cooking increase as the Level and Rank of the Orcs they are given to increase.

Also, they are capable of reproducing, giving birth to and raising Orc children.

Their personalities are reserved and feminine, and they are obedient towards their Orc husbands. However, there are some who scold their husbands from time to time as well.

Flesh-wives are unbelievably weak when considering that they are monsters directly created by an evil god, but there have been periods of time since the foundation of the Noble Orc empire where the flesh-wife population reached multiple tens of thousands, and it can be assumed that their combat abilities were sacrificed in order for them to be distributed evenly to tens of thousands of Orcs.

Naturally, these are monsters that do not exist outside the Noble Orc empire, so the Adventurers' Guild and Mages' Guild are unaware of their existence.

Chapter 147

An audience with the gods - a suggestion to become emperor and a delicious snack

The races created by Vida and the races of monsters who worshipped evil gods who had left the Demon King to join Vida's side, except for the Pure-breed Vampires who protected Vida's resting place, had each created their own nation that worshipped their god in the southern region of the continent.

The Zanalpadna Kingdom was named after its god as it was the only nation to be ruled by two races – the Arachne and Empusa – but the other nations were all named after their races.

Only the Noble Orc empire called itself an empire. Leaving aside the rumors and legends told outside the Boundary Mountain Range, it really was an empire.

As for why only the Noble Orc nation was an empire, that was because it was the leader that united all of the other nations in the Boundary Mountain Range.

“In other words, returning to a kingdom rather than an empire means relinquishing that role of leadership,” said Vandalieu.

He was proceeding through the Great Flesh Den, a B-class Dungeon in the depths of the Church of Mububujenge, as he had these circumstances explained to him.

“Yes. As a result of my failure to stop Bugitas's treason, the High Kobold and High Goblin nations in particular suffered great losses. And the power of our nation has decreased drastically as well. In this state, it is impossible for my nation and I to fulfill the duty that is expected of us as an empire,” said the newly-crowned Emperor, or rather King, Budarion, as he walked along with light steps.

During the battle against Ravovifard, his Rank had increased and he had become a Rank 12 Noble Orc Abyss High King, the same Rank as the wise Emperor Buugih of the past. He had obtained enough strength to be called one of the most powerful beings in the Boundary Mountain Range other than the Pure-breed Vampires, but it seemed

that he and his vassals did not believe that the fighting ability of a single ruler was enough to solve the problems within the nation.

“I am sorry to the nations who tried to stop me from doing this, however,” Budarion continued.

Following his announcement of his nation’s new title at the feast, the nations’ representatives that were present at the feast had tried to talk him out of it. In a heartfelt, earnest, desperate way.

If these were human nations outside the Boundary Mountain Range, this would be a chance for them to make great advances. Each of them would try to wrest themselves free of these relationships of power that had remained steadfast for over fifty-thousand years and try to establish dominance over the other nations.

Even if the rulers of those nations didn’t have such thoughts, there would be some noblemen who would form factions, aiming to obtain greater rights and more land for themselves and their heirs; there was no doubt that some would try to spur the nation into action.

There would also be nations that would take action because they thought it would be bad if the position of leadership was taken by a nation that they had a bad relationship with.

However, the circumstances were different for the nations within the Boundary Mountain Range.

The ruler of each nation also acted as a priest for the god that their nation worshipped, and they would be reprimanded directly by their god if they were to take unreasonable actions. The gods worshipped by the nations considered the flourishing of their own people to be important, but since the maintenance of the barrier protecting this land from Alda and his subordinates was more important, they avoided causing harm to other nations that would weaken the gods of those nations.

And in this environment, where these city states existed inside a dangerous Devil’s Nest, the benefits of being dominant over the other nations was minimal.

Most importantly, while one would expect the second greatest nation after the Noble Orcs to begin a struggle for power, the races that lived in that nation had a sense of values that were different from those of royals and nobles in human societies.

“Queen Donaneris is troubled. It is likely that the duty of leadership will fall onto us,” said Gizania, who was proceeding through the Dungeon under Vandalieu’s protection, as B-class Dungeons were still difficult for her with her current abilities.

“Indeed,” agreed Myuze, who was also being protected by Vandalieu. “We people of Zanalpadna are flourishing plenty as it is... and we will likely flourish more from now on.”

Arrangements had already been made for Princess Kurnelia to marry Budarion, and her younger sister Gizania and Myuze who was related to the previous queen would marry Vandalieu. It was expected that Zanalpadna would get by just fine even if it did not rise to the position of being an empire.

In fact, the nation was likely full of those who thought that the duties that came with that position would be troublesome.

“By the way, may I brush this?” asked Vandalieu, who was sitting on the back of the large-build Arachne Gizania, touching her lower body half’s fur, which was stiffer than its appearance suggested.

“...I don’t mind, but I would like you to leave it for later,” Gizania replied with flushed cheeks, covering her eyes.

“Vandalieu-dono, what about me?” said Myuze.

“Myuze, you don’t have any fur... maybe I could help you look after your wings and sickles?” Vandalieu suggested.

“Oh, please do!” Myuze looked delighted.

The Majin king Godwin, who was listening to this conversation from behind, let out a sigh. “Stop flirting in a time of crisis like this...”

Godwin was a mass of muscle as large as a Titan with two twisted horns, blue skin and a tail with a triangular tip. Every nation knew that he was a powerful warrior.

But right now, his face looked very thin and haggard.

“I thought that I’d be able to toss my successor onto my throne the year after next and return to the sweet days of drowning in combat and alcohol... I’m definitely not

becoming the emperor,” he muttered.

“...Godwin-dono, I do have to question your choice to speak such words while I and the others are listening,” said Budarion.

“Budarion, if you want me to be more considerate with my words, then go back to being an emperor,” Godwin said in response.

Godwin seemed to be a selfish, stubborn old man, but such people were common among the Majin race.

The Majin race was a race of strong individuals whose lifespans were unlimited, like those of Vampires. Perhaps because of this, the great majority of Majin did things at their own pace and followed their own paths... or rather, prioritized their own hobbies and interests.

The thing that they all had in common was that they considered individual strength to be important. Even when the kings of their nation were elected through a tournament or battle royale between the candidates. This was true for both the Drakonid and Majin nations, but the Majin nation had a broader definition of strength, so they sometimes elected kings through board games, drinking competitions and contests of wit as well.

Despite that, the Majin felt a firm sense of companionship with each other, with bonds between those who shared hobbies and interests being particularly strong.

That was the kind of race the Majin were, so the position of king was mainly an honorary one, its role being like that of a class representative on Earth, keeping everyone unified.

“If we’d left that fool Gerazorg alone for any longer, he would have brought dishonor to the Majin race,” said Godwin. “That fool... we sent him to study abroad in the empire, hoping that he would at least gain some shred of decency.”

“...What did this Gerazorg person do?” Vandalieu asked.

“Something that can be described as not being suitable for a child like you to hear,” Godwin replied vaguely with a deep frown. “The kinds of crime he committed were all minor, so we weren’t able to keep him locked up in prison for long periods of time up until now. His great-grandmother took good care of me in the past, so I tried to

rehabilitate him, but... he was deceived by a strange one.”

Godwin’s tone was so bitter that Gizania and Myuze looked at Vandalieu with eyes that said, “Don’t ask any more.”

It seemed that Gerazorg was so despicable that news of him had even reached Zanalpadna, which was distant from the Majin nation.

Leaving aside Bugitas, the other two that Ravovifard had chosen as his priests, Gargya and Gido, had both been quite the problem children as well. Not only in their abilities, but in their personalities in particular as well.

It seemed that when Ravovifard was selecting those he wanted to give his divine protection to, the important factors were not the individuals’ talents or abilities, but rather whether they had the kinds of personalities that would easily lose their reasoning and release their desires if he were to grant them his power.

“And becoming emperor is definitely out of the question. Mediating disagreements between nations and organizing meetings... I’d be able to provide reinforcements in times of need, but even then, I wouldn’t be able to dispatch our army to multiple places. Unlike the Kijin, we Majin are few in number, after all,” Godwin continued.

The Majin race had long lifespans. Perhaps because of this, their birth rates were extremely low... their reproductive ability was not much different from Elves and Dark Elves, but it seemed that the Majin race had little interest in leaving descendants behind.

Like Vampires and Ghouls, they had a ritual to turn humans and other races into members of their own race, but apparently it was troublesome in various ways and not something that was conducted proactively.

As a result, while members of the Majin race were individually strong, there were only a thousand or so of them on the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range; they were the race with the smallest population.

However, the Majin outside the Boundary Mountain Range lived in groups of about a dozen or so, so a thousand Majin were more than enough to be called a large group.

“Godwin-dono, the gods will likely deliver their own words on this matter,” said Budarion.

“Muh... I always thought you were a promising youngster, but you’ve really settled down now that your arm and eye have turned black, haven’t you,” Godwin remarked. “It’ll be fine as long as the gods don’t say anything strange.”

Why were Budarion, Godwin and the others going through the Great Flesh Den immediately after the feast? That was because they had received Divine Messages from the gods.

“Come to the nearest holy grounds.”

And the closest holy grounds were the deepest chamber of the Great Flesh Den that existed inside the deepest part of the Church of Mububujenge.

Generation after generation, the Noble Orc empire... or rather, kingdom, had been ruled by those who possessed the strength to solo-clear this Dungeon and the acknowledgement of Mububujenge, who would come to this Dungeon’s treasure chamber for audiences with the goddess and hear her words of wisdom.

This was an arrangement that all of the nations on the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range had in common, but... normally, the gods would not summon their priests to the holy grounds of another nation.

Though Godwin had lived for several thousand years, even he could not remember such an event happening. It was possibly the first such event since the founding of the nations.

“While it is true that Queen Donaneris is not present in this nation, I wonder why it is us that have been summoned?” said Myuze.

“Princess Kurnelia is here as well, but leaving that aside... does Zanalpadna have something in mind?” Gizania wondered.

Perhaps because this was unprecedented, Myuze and Gizania had been bewildered as well. There had been cases of those other than the king challenging this Dungeon, clearing it and stepping foot into the holy grounds. But in these cases, the gods would almost never descend upon the world and show themselves, so it seemed that Myuze and Gizania couldn’t erase their doubts. Why had they been summoned? Was it really alright for them to go?

“If all of this is a misunderstanding that we have made... if we were mistaken in

thinking that we have received a Divine Message... would we not be very out-of-place?" said Gizania.

"Gizania-dono, I would like you to not say such terrifying things!" said Myuze. "And I think it is quite unlikely that both of us would have made such a misunderstanding. With that being the case, there is likely no mistake that these were indeed Divine Messages."

"But even though it was a Divine Message, I could only hear, 'come'...What about you, Myuze-dono?"

"I... could only hear 'holy grounds.'"

It seemed that Gizania and Myuze didn't have much ability for receiving Divine Messages.

"Well, that's how it is for your first time receiving Divine Messages. I was daydreaming and thought my first Divine Message was just in my imagination and ignored it. My predecessor then received a Divine Message from our god Xerx, beat the hell out of me, dragged me to the holy grounds, and then Xerx himself punched me directly," Godwin said with a hearty laugh.

These words didn't seem to make Gizania and Myuze feel any better, however.

"Godwin-dono, I believe that if we were to receive such a punishment, we would simply die," said Gizania.

"Our bodies would break in an instant," said Myuze.

"No, what I was trying to say is, even if it was a misunderstanding, the gods probably won't be that angry..." said Godwin, his words becoming incoherent.

"I have heard that Xerx was a subordinate god of Zantark, the war-god of fire and destruction, so he has a violent personality. You are unlikely to be punched by Zanalpadna," Budarion said, unable to let the conversation end like this, and Gizania and Myuze looked a little relieved.

"If it is a mistake, let us apologize together. I'm sure we'll be forgiven," said Vandalieu, taking over the conversation in a carefree manner.

The Divine Message that he had received from Merrebeveil was, "Excuse me, there is something that I would like to speak with you about, so I would like to request for you to come and meet me."

"If a fist comes your way, I'll object to it," he said.

Violence wasn't good. Violent people should be fought with violence.

"Thank you... but please be gentle," said Gizania.

"Indeed," said Myuze. "This only applies if it was indeed a misunderstanding. So please be calm."

"Yes, I ask this of you as well," said Budarion.

The three of them proceeded as they tried to pacify Vandalieu, who seemed to have been stimulated by some kind of strange trauma.



Perhaps reflecting the personality of the one who had created it, the monsters appearing in the B-class Dungeon called the Great Flesh Den didn't proactively search for and attack those trying to clear it. Instead, the vast majority of them were races that set traps and disguised themselves using camouflage and such, looking to ambush their foes.

Thus, with Budarion leading the way, as he already knew the correct way to go to reach the end as quickly as possible, the party was able to keep the number of battles they needed to fight to a minimum.

And as for the traps and ambushes, Vandalieu could see through them with the Labyrinth Construction Skill and the Danger Sense: Death spell, so even the few battles that they did need to fight were easily won.

Of course, this Dungeon had been designed to turn away those who were below Rank 10, so there were no difficulties with Budarion present, as he had already reached Rank 12.

Even the Dungeon boss on the bottom floor was killed by Budarion in a single instant.

The party would enter the place beyond the boss chamber, the treasure chamber that also served as holy grounds for gods to descend upon, but before that, Budarion explained the rules of the holy grounds.

When a god descended upon the Great Flesh Den, the Dungeon would become a space resembling a Divine Realm. Thus, those granted an audience with the god would be in a state similar to having their bare souls exposed, allowing them to appear before the gods.

Thus, they must not look up under any circumstances. The minds of those with mortal souls would not last if they looked upon the gods. They had to kneel on the ground and look down for the entire duration of the audience.

“Muh, as expected of the former emperor. The way you approach holy grounds is special as well,” Godwin murmured.

Without any particular doubts, Vandalieu obeyed Budarion’s instructions.

He had already directly met gods such as Fidirg, Merrebeveil and Zozogante, but there was no guarantee that he would be fine after looking directly at Mububujenge.

And Vandalieu was currently in a position where he was intruding on another land. It was true that he was the one responsible for suppressing the coup d’état, but that didn’t give him an excuse to disrespect the rules of Budarion’s nation.

Thus, he kneeled on the ground and looked down, but he then noticed that Budarion, Gizania and the others who were supposed to be next to him weren’t there. Instead, on the ground that he was staring at, there were people, small enough to be placed in the palm of his hand, and there was a strange being on the edge of his vision.

The silhouettes appeared to be Gizania and the others. He couldn’t see their faces, as they were on their knees as well (with Gizania being in a posture similar to kneeling), looking at the ground. But it was likely them... though Vandalieu didn’t know why they had become smaller.

And he didn’t recognize the strange being entering his field of vision. The silhouette resembled a plump human, lying down with their chin in their hands.

But its body surface was covered in writhing masses of flesh and tumors that were repeatedly expanding and contracting, and there were enormous lips shaped like

those of humans around its abdomen; this being could not be called a human.

In fact, it wasn't even clear whether this could be called a person, but Vandalieu could see that this 'thing' was looking at him and trembling for some reason.

"Thank you for coming, Vandalieu," said the familiar voice of Merrebeveil.

"Yes. It is an honor to be invited here," said Vandalieu in greeting, still keeping his eyes pointed downwards.

"Not at all, it is we who are grateful to you for responding to our impudent summons," said Merrebeveil.

"I-indeed."

"Welcome, and thank you for coming."

"M-make yourself at home."

It seemed that Fidirg was here as well. With his face still pointed down, Vandalieu looked around him, and something resembling a tree's root entered the edge of his vision. It seemed that Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest, the god of the Ghoul nation, was here as well.

Vandalieu could relax, knowing that many of his acquaintances were here, so that was convenient.

"Please look up. Of course, only Vandalieu may do this," said Merrebeveil.

"The rest of you, please ensure that you do not look up."

"Also, it would be best to not look behind you."

"Don't ever look. And especially directly above you, don't look there."

"Is it all right for me to do that?" Vandalieu asked Merrebeveil. "I've been told that this is the rule of these holy grounds."

Merrebeveil tapped the 'thing,' which had remained completely still this whole time, with the tip of a tentacle. "We do not mind. Do we, Mububujenge?"

It seemed that the 'thing' was Mububujenge.

"Bujuh... Y-yes. Please make yourself comfortable," said Mububujenge, startled. Her lips, the only attractive part of her, were trembling.

She was a goddess; her voice was similar to a woman's.

Though this is apparently a space similar to a Divine Realm, I'm glad that gods don't seem to be able to read what's going through the minds of humans within it, as is often told, Vandalieu thought as he looked up to see that there was a countless number of gods in the holy grounds.

...They were not actually countless, but the evil gods had such peculiar appearances that it was impossible to tell through a single glance where one god ended and the next began.

A god with a body covered in carapace that was differently-colored on the left and right sides, looking like a combination of a crustacean and a beetle, with jewel-like compound eyes in multiple places.

A god that appeared to be a mass of various organs entwined around each other to form the shape of a large, carnivorous beast.

A god whose right side of his body was that of an attractive young man while the left side of his body had no skin, leaving his muscle fibers exposed.

A god consisting of a headless monkey riding a headless cow, holding an enormous eye in its right hand and an enormous nose in its left.

In contrast, a god who had the appearance of heads of all kinds of animals... a mountain of severed animal heads.

The sight of Elder Dragons, as well as gods with the appearances of ordinary humans, standing among these evil gods was quite shocking.

This is incredible, Vandalieu thought, but the gods were thinking the same thing. They were thinking this because they were looking directly at the shape of Vandalieu's soul.

There were numerous eyes and mouths positioned randomly around his head, and his arms were made of multiple human arms joined together in bundles. And the Demon

King's fragments were growing from his body in a chaotic manner. Horns, carapace and coagulated masses of blood protruded from his body. His arms were covered in countless suction cups, and he was glowing ominously here and there.

He looked like an evil god himself, and despite looking directly at the gods, his only thoughts were, "this is incredible." Something ran through the gods' minds. The thought that this was not a human. Most of the gods, including Mububujenge, were astounded to the point of being lost for words.

In fact, Merrebeveil, who had seen Vandalieu's soul once before, looked composed, but she was discomposed as well. *He has become worse... no, changed, since that time*, she thought.

Incidentally, Fidirg was nervous, but not discomposed. It was his first time seeing Vandalieu's soul, but he had never considered Vandalieu to be a human to begin with, so despite the appearance of Vandalieu's soul, he simply thought, "As I expected."

"So, what is the matter that you wanted to discuss?" Vandalieu asked.

"Ah, y-yes," said Mububujenge, her voice trembling and high-pitched. "As a result of discussion between us gods, we wished to bring up Ravovifard's plans and his current state. And we wished to express our gratitude and make some requests..."

"Mububujenge, I shall take over from here. That is why you made the effort of contacting us despite not having had any contact with us for a hundred thousand years, is it not?" said Merrebeveil, taking the role of leading the meeting.

And then Merrebeveil gave an explanation of Ravovifard's ambitions, supplemented by the conjectures that the gods had made here and there, and explained how everyone had been unable to make any proper movements, as Ravovifard had been holding them back.

Budarion and the others listened to this explanation quietly.

When Budarion had an audience with Mububujenge in the past, she had revealed her dignity as a goddess... if he were to describe her without holding back, he would have said that she had a self-important, lazy attitude.

He was astonished that she was so clearly nervous when speaking to Vandalieu. He felt the desire to look up multiple times, but each time he did, Fidirg would tell him,

“Don’t.” And so, he had managed to endure it.

“I see, I understand the circumstances. Things were hard for both us and yourselves, weren’t they,” said Vandalieu after listening to the explanation.

Mububujenge and the other gods were relieved to hear this response. Merrebeveil, as well as Zozogante who had met Vandalieu once before, gave a sigh, muttering, “We told you that there’s no need to be so afraid.”

Even though his incarnation in Lambda had been incomplete, Ravovifard had been powerful enough to suppress the gods, and Vandalieu had defeated him. Not only that, but he possessed the ability to break souls just like the Demon King Guduranis, whom the gods still feared. Mububujenge and the others were relieved that Vandalieu was on their side, but at the same time, they feared him.

The gods had a general idea of what Vandalieu’s personality was like through how their believers perceived him, especially Mububujenge and Zanalpadna. They also knew that he was an important being to Vida, whom they revered as their master. But even so, they hadn’t been able to feel relieved until actually meeting and speaking with him.

At this point in time, Vandalieu possessed power rivaling or perhaps even surpassing those of low-ranking gods like Fidirg and Zozogante; the formation and strengthening of a favorable relationship with him were absolutely necessary.

And then the gods had contacted Fidirg, as well as Merrebeveil, who had started to become worshipped in Talosheim’s wetlands and could be contacted even from the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range. They had wanted Fidirg and Merrebeveil to mediate a meeting between them and Vandalieu.

“So then, what is it that you wish to request of me?” Vandalieu asked.

“There are several things... Mububujenge, Zanalpadna,” said Merrebeveil, motioning for the other two gods to speak.

“As a result of these events, my priest, Budarion, has stepped down from being emperor. We wish for you to become the next emperor,” said Mububujenge.

“All of the gods present here have nominated you... could we ask you to consider it?” said Zanalpadna, whose voice sounded like the creaking of a carapace.

Zozogante and the other gods nodded in agreement.

“Err, is it alright for the gods to skip over the kings of the other nations and decide on the emperor on their own?” Vandalieu asked, slightly bewildered.

He quickly looked down and saw Godwin, who happened to be one of those kings, clenching his fist in a triumphant pose.

Ah, that's right. The emperor of this place is just an honorary position, Vandalieu remembered.

The kings other than Godwin weren't likely to oppose, either.

“Honorable gods, I beseech that you do not request any more from the Holy Son who has aided us so much –” Budarion, who had a strong sense of responsibility, began to protest.

“I would like to consult our nation’s general before making a decision, but let us continue this discussion assuming that I will accept,” said Vandalieu.

“What?!”

“Ah, I’m sorry.”

Vandalieu had replied with a “yes” before realizing that Budarion was speaking.

The truth was that he had been wondering whether the role of emperor would fall onto him.

The role he had played in the war and the size of his achievements. And though there were differences between the nations’ resulting states, they were all exhausted, while Talosheim was completely unaffected, of course.

In fact, the combat abilities of those who had participated in this expedition, including Vandalieu himself, had increased, so Talosheim’s power as a nation had actually increased slightly overall.

And although Zanalpadna and the Majin nation were city states as well, Talosheim included the Lizardmen and Scylla settlements, as well as multiple towns. The population was still not that large, but in the future, it would certainly exceed that of

Zanalpadna and the nation would develop in a way that would rival the old Noble Orc empire.

“Though it is strange of me to say this myself, there will be almost no benefits to you,” said Budarion. “My ancestors served as emperor because of their desire to preserve the peace in this land.”

“Well, I think it’s alright. Honorary positions have their own benefits as honorary positions,” said Vandalieu, speaking in the direction of the back of Budarion’s head.

“Eh, they do?” Godwin blurted out.

“Seriously?” said Fidirg.

“Be silent, Godwin, Fidirg,” said a male god carrying a battle flag on his shoulder, reprimanding them. Vandalieu wondered if this was Xerx, the god of battle flags who was worshipped in the Majin nation.

“There are,” Vandalieu said, answering the question.

As one might expect, an honorary position would allow Vandalieu to keep a certain amount of influence and authority among the nations within the Boundary Mountain Range. Especially because he was being asked to take the position of emperor by the gods worshipped by those nations. He would certainly have more power than any emperor of the former Noble Orc empire.

As long as he didn’t say anything extremely bizarre, wouldn’t he be able to do almost anything?

It wasn't likely that Chezare would object, either.

Even outside of ulterior motives like this, Vandalieu had become on good terms with the people of the nations inside the Boundary Mountain Range during this war, so he very much wanted to maintain these friendly relationships.

Things would be hard for Budarion, the High Kobold nation and the High Goblin nation from now on. The nation of Zanalpadna was interesting, and Vandalieu was interested in the Dark Elf nation, too. The Ghoul nation’s king idolized him as well, calling him “Great Aniki.”

And these were companions who cooperate and stand up with him against the influence of Alda.

Thus, it was actually convenient to become emperor.

They'll probably be much easier to get along with than the royals and nobles of the Orbaume Kingdom, too.

"Ah, but mediating disagreements between nations and things like that will be difficult for me to do alone," Vandalieu said. "I have no experience in such things. I don't have any subordinates that are proficient in negotiating, either."

"Do not worry so much about that. Disagreements are not things that happen very frequently. This land would have continued to have peaceful relationships between nations if it were not for Ravovifard's interference," said Xerx.

It should be fine, then, Vandalieu thought. "So, what are the other things you wished to request?" he asked.

"First of all, we want for you to visit every nation and interact with the citizens in particular. Just as you did in the nation that I am the guardian of, the High Kobold nation," said Rishare, the god of hunting, who was holding a bow in one hand and a balance scale in the other.

Vandalieu was perplexed by this request. "For post-war recovery?" he asked.

"No, it can be anything. Sightseeing, ceremonial meals or even preaching in the street. To be more straightforward, it is fine as long as you guide the people."

"Huh... I understand."

Are they alright with that? Vandalieu wondered, still perplexed, but he agreed. He understood that Rishare and the other gods were expecting things from the effects of the Guidance: Demon Path Skill, but even so, he couldn't understand why they were prioritizing the citizens.

Even Budarion and the others were perplexed by what they heard. However, there was an important reason behind this for the gods.

The souls of the citizens, the humans, Dwarves and Elves, were managed by Rodcorte's

circle of transmigration system. Thus, the records from these people, who lived in the nations within the Boundary Mountain Range, were seen by Rodcorte.

Rishare and the other gods had heard of the dangers of this from Vida before she fell into slumber, and they had set up a barrier to prevent this. However, even that barrier could not affect the souls of those who had died and returned to the system.

Thus, in the end, Rodcorte gained information about the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range, even though there was a time lag of years, decades or sometimes even centuries.

But even the gods didn't think that Rodcorte had been examining the records of each individual person in detail. In fact, nothing devastating had happened to date.

But now, the circumstances were different. Vandalieu, who possessed the ability to break souls, was a being that Rodcorte could not ignore. It was only natural for the gods to believe that even Rodcorte, who undoubtedly thought of humans as nothing more than livestock or products running down an assembly line, would be examining records in detail now.

To prevent this, they wanted Vandalieu to guide the citizens with Guidance: Demon Path and transfer their souls to Vida's circle of transmigration system. That was the gods' true intent.

Of course, they had no way of confirming what was happening inside Rodcorte's circle of transmigration system.

However, the evil god Mububujenge had confirmed that the souls of guided monsters such as the noble Orcs had been transferred from the Demon King's circle of transmigration system to another one. Thus, the gods had determined that it should be possible for Vandalieu to do the same to the citizens.

These actions bewildered Vandalieu and his companions, as they were still mortals and could not be told the secrets regarding reincarnation, but Rishare was relieved to hear Vandalieu's words of agreement.

"The other thing that we would like to request is –" Rishare produced a trembling, pulsating, fist-sized lump of flesh and held it out to Vandalieu.

"Ah, thank you. Itadakimasu." Vandalieu suddenly took the lump of flesh and

instinctively ate it.

His eyes opened wide as he experienced a wriggling texture and an indescribable deliciousness that spread throughout his mouth as he chewed. Was his sense of taste different because he was eating something while in a pure, soul-only form?

Rishare stared at Vandalieu in surprise, completely frozen in the same position with which he had offered Vandalieu the lump of flesh. “H-he ate it...”

“He ate it? That... even if it was sealed...”

“Seriously? Did he seriously eat it?”

“I knew that he could break them, but...”

“Come to think of it, the presence of an evil god who was close to the Boundary Mountain Range disappeared unnaturally several years ago, could that have been...?”

“No, even he... but, this child is capable of encroaching upon people’s minds just like him.”

“Huh? Could it be that I wasn’t supposed to eat it?” Vandalieu asked.

It had been so delicious, and he’d thought that he was being told, “Please eat this,” so he had eaten the lump of flesh reflexively, but perhaps it had been ill-mannered of him to do so.

But the gods all shook their heads simultaneously. “No, if you like, please eat more!” they said.

And then Rishare produced more lumps of flesh, identical to the first, one after another.

“Oh, really? Excuse me, these are so delicious. Ah, would everyone like to eat them with me?” Vandalieu asked.

“No, please do not pay any attention to us!” Myuze said hastily.

“Then I should save some to give away –”

“I believe that you should eat them here rather than take them with us!” Gizania shouted.

“I see. It’s best to eat them while they’re still fresh.”

Myuze and Gizania had guessed what Vandalieu was eating.

It was likely the sealed pieces of Ravovifard.

Half of Ravovifard had been destroyed by Vandalieu and he had lost his power, and then the gods had sealed him. The gods had then decided that it would be best to have Vandalieu destroy the remaining parts rather than continue to keep them sealed, since they had invited him here. This would remove the potential of Ravovifard becoming a threat again in the future and the running costs of continuing to keep him sealed forever.

They certainly hadn’t expected Vandalieu to start eating them like snacks, but perhaps because they thought that there was no difference between him breaking them and eating them, they simply kept offering Vandalieu all of the parts of Ravovifard they had.

Of course, it was only natural for Myuze and the others to be flustered as well. Though evil gods were far below the Demon King in status, they couldn’t handle being given fragments of one.

“This food has reminded me to ask,” said Vandalieu, suddenly remembering something. “Did the Demon King eat the people whose souls he broke? And if he did, did he absorb the memories of the souls he ate?”

The gods were perplexed by this question.

“The Demon King was also a god, so it was not necessary for him to eat meals normally... did he ever eat anything?”

“No, not really. He sometimes ate to make a display or for his own amusement, but I’ve never heard of him eating souls.”

Unexpectedly, it seemed that the Demon King Guduranis had never eaten souls.

“...I suppose I have no choice but to examine the God Devourer and Soul Devour Skills

on my own later. So, what else do I need to do now?" Vandalieu asked, still heartily eating Ravovifard.

Rishare was in a half-dazed state, so Merrebeveil took over once more.

"Yes, there are two... no, there is one more request," she said, correcting herself as one of the requests would be finished in two more mouthfuls. "We want you to absorb the fragments of the Demon King that Mububujenge, Zanalpadna and the others have sealed. If they are freed from the burden of keeping the fragments sealed, they will apparently be able to put more of their power into the barrier."

"I understand," said Vandalieu. "But before that, I'd like to ask, is there a pressing need to strengthen the barrier beyond its current state? If there's a threat coming, I'd like to know in advance."

The gods exchanged looks and nodded.

"...Alright," said Xerx, speaking for the rest of the gods. He was wearing a sour, twisted expression. "This is something that happened fifty thousand years ago. Farmaun Gold, our master who became a heroic god, the champion chosen by Zantark-sama, once closed in on the edge of the barrier."

Chapter 148

The true end of an evil god and the squirming Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords

About fifty thousand years ago, Farmaun Gold, a heroic god, had appeared outside the barrier that protected the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range.

Godwin was so astonished upon hearing this that he almost looked up. “What?! Xerx, I’ve never heard anything about that!”

“Of course you haven’t, Godwin. This is something that happened long before you were born,” said Xerx.

Seeing Farmaun for the first time since the war between Vida and Alda that had taken place a hundred thousand years ago, the gods who had secluded themselves within the Boundary Mountain Range felt disgust at seeing that he had become a god.

To the gods who served Vida, Farmaun was a comrade in arms who had fought the Demon King Guduranis by their side, but at the same time, an enemy who had started the war alongside Alda, the god of law and fate, and his champion Bellwood. And Farmaun was no ordinary enemy. It was no exaggeration to say that he was a sworn nemesis; no matter how much hatred the gods had for him, it was still not enough.

During the war suddenly started by Alda and his champions, their master Vida had been wounded deeply, the Undead Zakkart defeated and their child, the True Ancestor of the Vampires, also lost his life.

Several gods had been defeated and sealed, and numerous Pure-breed Vampires and ancestors of Vida’s other races had been killed as well.

Farmaun himself had mainly been fighting Zantark, so the number of lives that he had actually taken was less than the other champions and Alda himself. But if it weren’t for him, Zantark, a powerful fighter, would have been free to move and hold back the other champions. If Farmaun had not appeared as an enemy... If he had been an ally, it might have even been possible to turn the tables on Alda and win the war.

Even if the war couldn't be won, the losses suffered would have been drastically less.

Thus, the gods had felt fear when Farmaun appeared outside the barrier, but at the same time, anger and hatred rose up within them as well. As he hadn't brought any of the other heroic gods or subordinate gods with him, they had even considered deliberately letting him inside the barrier and then focusing all of their effort into defeating him and sealing him away.

But it could be assumed that this was exactly what Farmaun had been hoping for, and the moment the barrier was opened even a little, his hidden allies lying in wait would appear and flood in like an avalanche.

That was why the gods had mustered as much strength as they could and temporarily strengthened the barrier, choosing to devote themselves to defensive action.

"He is a champion who, as a mortal, more than held his own ground against Zantark-sama, the war-god of fire and destruction, in single combat – a tremendous feat, even if you consider that Zantark-sama had just fused with evil gods and could not fully wield his power. By becoming a heroic god, Farmaun's power would possibly have increased, but there was no chance that it had decreased at all," said Xerx, the god of battle flags.

"At the time, the population of every race had increased drastically from the time when we fought against Alda and his servants," said Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes, continuing where Xerx had stopped. "But the recovery of us gods from our exhaustion was even more incomplete than it is now. We were in no state to fight him."

"And we couldn't ignore the existence of Bellwood and Nineroad, who were nowhere to be seen... Back then, if we had known that Bellwood had apparently vanished and those on Alda's side were exhausted as well, we might have made a different decision, however," said Rishare.

At the time, the gods within the Boundary Mountain Range had no way of gaining information about anything happening outside the barrier. As they had fought against Alda alongside Vida, they were not worshipped outside the Boundary Mountain Range.

And so, until they asked Merrebeveil, they hadn't known that those on Alda's side had

been more exhausted than they'd imagined. If they had known that Alda's allies were in no state to start a war, they might have taken action.

And while the gods solidified their defense, Farmaun, perhaps giving up, had left and gone somewhere else.

"He was reciting some incantation for a while, deliberately leaving himself completely exposed, perhaps trying to provoke us. As a result of the barrier being strengthened, even sound was blocked out, so fortunately, we didn't know what incantation he was reciting," said Xerx.

"Fortunately?" Fidirg repeated.

"...If we knew, we might not have been able to hold our anger back," Xerx spat, the anger and hatred that he felt for Farmaun made clear.

He likely felt a sense of having been betrayed as his master Zantark had chosen Farmaun as a champion and given him power, only for Farmaun to become an enemy later.

"After that, we decided that there was no time for us to wait for the races to learn and grow on their own," said Mububujenge. "I sent Divine Messages and gave my divine protection to several people including Buugih, who became my heroic spirit and is now praised as the wise emperor, urging the races to stop the quarreling with one another, but that is another story."

It seemed that there was a hidden secret behind the 'Wise Emperor' Buugih's birth. Budarion was silently surprised at the revelation of the truth surrounding his ancestor.

"Ever since that time fifty thousand years ago, Farmaun has not shown himself. It's likely that he has been kept completely occupied with governing the fire attribute in Zantark's place, but... there is no guarantee that he will not show himself again," said Xerx. "After all, from what we've heard from Merrebeveil, it seems that he has taken vigilant action, such as creating the organization that later became the Adventurers' Guild."

"It seems to be a well-made organization. It trains young people efficiently and mass-produces candidates for becoming future familiar spirits and heroic spirits... to think that he would come up with a scheme to gather more followers," said Zanalpadna.

“It’s a cunning plan that puts even us evil gods to shame. From how he was when he fought the Demon King with us, I would never have imagined him doing something like that.”

Xerx, Zanalpadna and the other evil gods shuddered as they realized how useful the Adventurers’ Guild founded by Farmaun was.

“Eh? Was the Adventurers’ Guild created with that kind of intention?” Vandalieu asked.

“No, I do not believe that there were such intentions,” Merrebeveil corrected them hastily, before Vandalieu began to believe it. “Though in the end, one cannot say that the organization does not function in this way,” she added.

It was true that as an end-result, the Adventurers’ Guild supported and stimulated the birth of heroes, and many such heroes became familiar spirits and heroic spirits of the gods of Alda’s faction.

But it was clear that it wasn’t an organization whose purpose was to provide new fighting forces for the gods.

A number of small organizations similar to the Adventurers’ Guild had existed even before the Adventurers’ Guild was founded. Even if Farmaun hadn’t founded it, these small organizations would likely have unified into a single, larger organization to take up the role that the Adventurers’ Guild served in today.

Merrebeveil’s own hatred for Farmaun wasn’t small by any means, and she had no intention of defending him. But it wasn’t good to see imaginary conspiracies that didn’t exist.

“I see, so that’s how it is,” said Vandalieu, convinced by Merrebeveil’s explanation of this evidence.

“So, it was a coincidence,” Xerx murmured. “Still, even if he is our enemy, he was never the type to stage such conspiracies.”

But nobody took notice, nobody *could* take notice, of the greatest misunderstanding regarding Farmaun.

Ravovifard, the evil god of release, of whom there was only a single fragment left now. He was originally an evil god who had amassed a large amount of power on the Dark

Continent. The reason he had made his advances on the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range on the Bahn Gaia continent was because he had fled from the Dark Continent after being defeated in a battle against Zantark and the heroic god Farmaun about a hundred years ago.

In other words, Zantark and Farmaun had mended their relationship enough to cooperate and fight together as recently as a hundred years ago.

Even Ravovifard himself didn't know whether that alliance was a temporary one to fight the battle against him or whether Zantark and Farmaun had truly reconciled. For him, a remnant of the Demon King's army, those on Alda's side and those on Vida's side were both enemies, so it was unlikely that he had felt any need to investigate the matter.

However, Alda, the god of law and fate, had not departed from his policy of treating the members of Vida's races and the remnants of the Demon King's army equally as enemies until recently.

It would have been difficult for Farmaun to cooperate with Zantark, even temporarily, while still belonging to Alda's faction.

Considering the above facts, it was highly likely that Farmaun had left Alda's faction to start taking action on his own at some point after the war between Alda and Vida that took place a hundred thousand years ago, though it wasn't clear when exactly this had happened.

Thus, it was possible that when Farmaun had already left Alda's faction when he appeared here fifty thousand years ago.

But it was impossible for Xerx and Mububujenge to come to this conclusion, and even if they did, it was even more impossible for them to believe it. Not only that, but it would be difficult for them to discard their hatred from a hundred thousand years ago and shake hands with him.

So many of the gods in Vida's faction had been lost, after all.

"Om, nom, nom."

Of course, Ravovifard, the only being who knew this, had now been completely annihilated.

“...Hmm,” said Vandalieu, swallowing the last of the food in his mouth. “So, you want me to absorb the Demon King’s fragments so that you can strengthen the barrier to withstand a possible attack from Farmaun and the rest of Alda’s faction?”

The gods nodded.

“We are spending no small amount of our power on the seals on the Demon King’s fragments, and we must always maintain a reserve of spare power to suppress the fragments in times of emergency. If we are freed from this burden, many other things will likely become possible for us, not just the strengthening of the barrier,” said Xerx.

“To put it frankly, they will provide you benefits with these various things that will become possible, so that is why they are asking you to do this.”

“Apparently, they want to improve the barrier and make sure that nobody like Ravovifard can ever interfere again.”

“They’re saying, ‘help us,’” said Fidirg, explaining the gods’ intentions for Vandalieu.

An Elder Dragon with crystal horns that had remained silent up until now suddenly burst out in anger. “You bastard! Even if you are a god, an Elder Dragon like us at that, how dare you speak in such a... tone. P-please stop.” His shouting faded away, his voice losing all of its spirit.

Because countless horns of the Demon King had appeared all over Vandalieu’s body. With their tips facing the Elder Dragon.

At that moment, the seal on the Demon King’s fragment held by that Elder Dragon trembled, as if stirring. The Elder Dragon had softened his tone, instinctively realizing that at this rate, he would go down the same path as Ravovifard.

And then Fidirg hastily apologized to the Elder Dragon... Lioen, the crystal-horned dragon god.

“M-my apologies, Lioen-dono.”

“It seems that I said too much.”

“I’ll be more careful from now on.”

Fidirg understood that him being shouted at had caused Vandalieu to instinctively prepare himself for battle, but even so, he felt that it was necessary to reconcile by apologizing.

“I-indeed. I was also behaving immaturely. Let us both be more careful, brother,” the crystal-horned dragon god said.

The Demon King’s horns that were sprouting from Vandalieu’s body slowly withdrew back into him.

“The Demon King’s fragments are a source of power for me, and I can make effective use of them in a variety of ways. If taking them will lead to peace in this land, then there is no need for discussion. I will take them,” said Vandalieu, accepting this proposal, still completely oblivious to the fact that he had instinctively prepared for battle against the crystal-horned dragon god. “But in exchange, I have something to request of all of you as well.”

“W-what is it?” Lioen asked Vandalieu, who was now known to devour gods, with a stiff voice. *Does he want my head? No, he wants me to hand over my flesh?*

“Please lend me your strength in resurrecting my mother. I’m thinking of resurrecting her by creating a new body for her either by repairing Vida’s resurrection device or creating a Homunculus, and then putting her soul in there, but...”

The crystal-horned dragon god let out a deep sigh of relief. “S-so *that* is your request. I’m very glad to hear that.”

“...That?”

“No, no, no, I simply meant that I have heard from Merrebeveil, Fidirg and Zuruwarn-sama that you desire a way to resurrect your mother!” Lioen hastily corrected himself, seeing twisted horns emerge from Vandalieu’s entire body once more.

Among these corrected words was an unexpected name.

“Zuruwarn-sama?” Vandalieu repeated.

Zuruwarn, the god of space and creation, one of the gods who had likely helped in the Eighth Guidance members who had died in the foreign world of Origin being reborn as Legion, and given his divine protection to them.

From those actions, Vandalieu thought of him as an ally... or even if he wasn't an ally, he was at least a friendly god, like Ricklent.

But he was not among the gods within the Boundary Mountain Range. Like the other gods who had been the primary gods of this world, Zuruwarn and Ricklent had lost their power and fallen into slumber before the Demon King was defeated by Bellwood and his allies.

The reason he was not here now was likely because the barrier put up by the gods also prevented Zuruwarn and Ricklent from entering as well.

"Yes," said Merrebeveil, perhaps wanting to avoid the crystal-horned dragon god from speaking any more unwise words. "She apparently received a Divine Message from Zuruwarn over a year ago," she said, pointing at a goddess among the other gods with a tentacle.

This goddess had the appearance of a human woman wearing a large, simple piece of white cloth with a hole for the head, holding a brush and a scroll. Thus, like Xerx, she stood out in this place that was filled with grotesque-looking gods.

"My name is Warnliza, the goddess of maps, a subordinate god of Zuruwarn-sama," she said, speaking with a gentle expression. "I serve as the guardian goddess of the High Goblins in place of a comrade who was sealed away by Farmaun. I wish to offer my gratitude for saving my children during these recent events. I am grateful to Budarion and the children of Zanalpadna as well." She gave a bow, and then began to speak of the contents of the Divine Message that she had received from Zuruwarn. "The Divine Message that I received from Zuruwarn-sama was that your wish will be fulfilled by Zakkart's legacy that lies in the deepest chamber of the Trial of Zakkart, guarded by Gufadgarn, the evil god of labyrinths. Among the things that Zakkart left behind, the only thing that could be called a weapon was a prototype model for a firearm, so there should be something there that will make it possible for you to resurrect your mother."

The Divine Message had also told Warnliza what kind of being Vandalieu was, and that she should share this knowledge with the other gods. But it seemed that she had deemed it unnecessary to inform Vandalieu himself.

Incidentally, Zanalpadna had sent a Divine Message to Queen Donaneris because she had received a Divine Message from Ricklent and Warnliza from Zuruwarn, and both

of them had been told to inform their priests that Vandalieu would one day come to this land to challenge the Trial of Zakkart.

“Something that will make resurrecting Mom possible is in the deepest part of the Trial of Zakkart...” Vandalieu murmured.

He had originally planned to venture into the Trial of Zakkart to look for the corpse of the adventurer who had been Heinz’s ally, but his objective had changed the moment he heard this information from Warnliza.

He had to clear the Trial of Zakkart before Heinz at all costs.

“So, when will the Trial of Zakkart next appear within this region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range?” he asked.

He had to clear it, but he also had to do something about the suspicious events that had apparently been happening recently in the Sauron region, so if possible, he wanted it to be about a month or so away.

It was Xerx who answered his question this time. “It will probably be next year,” he said.

It seemed that there was more time than Vandalieu had expected.

“It should have appeared about half a month ago, but Ravovifard was likely wary of it,” Xerx continued. “He interfered with the Teleportation of Gufadgarn, the evil god of labyrinths. The next time it will appear is next year.”

“If that is true, would the Dungeon not appear when the evil god of labyrinths learns of Ravovifard’s defeat?” Gizania asked, but it seemed that things wouldn’t go that well.

Zanalpadna made a clicking noise as she answered. “Child of my own race, Gizania. The Teleportation cast by Gufadgarn to move the Trial of Zakkart is something that was cast long in advance, so it no longer functions according to Gufadgarn’s will. Immediately after receiving instructions through a Divine Message from Ricklent a hundred years ago, he created a Dungeon that would select Zakkart’s successor and began to roam the world, but his power does not extend beyond the inside of the Dungeon. He has likely not even noticed that Ravovifard interfered with his spell.”

It seemed that the Trial of Zakkart was in a state similar to autopilot as it disappeared

and reappeared all over the world.

“I wanted to make various preparations so it’s fine that there is some time, but it does make me anxious that it’s over a year away. Do you know where it might appear other than within the Boundary Mountain Range?” Vandalieu asked.

He couldn’t get rid of this feeling of anxiety while knowing that Heinz, the S-class adventurer who led the Five-colored Blades, had his sights set on clearing the Trial of Zakkart.

But the gods, including Merrebeveil, told him that there was no need to worry.

“That evil god hates the believers of the gods in Alda’s faction from the depths of his heart. There are apparently an uncountable number of traps within the labyrinth, designed to obliterate those believers. Even if that Heinz and his companions were to challenge the Dungeon for a second time, it would likely end in failure,” Merrebeveil said.

“I see. That’s a relief to hear. Now then, could I have the Demon King’s fragments so that I can prepare to clear it?”



After Vandalieu and his companions left, the gods that had gathered here began remonstrating Lioen, the crystal-horned dragon god, and Fidirg.

“We warned you not to shout so much and be especially careful because he would be angry about matters regarding his mother, Lioen-dono,” said Merrebeveil.

“M-my apologies,” Lioen said.

“Fidirg, you said too much as well.”

“I, too, apologize.”

“Truly...”

“I’ll be careful from now on.”

For the gods, Vandalieu was their savior who had defeated Ravovifard, but at the same

time, he was someone whom they were unsure how to handle.

First of all, he was a mortal, not a god, but he possessed the power to kill gods and more Mana than most gods as well.

Despite that, he generally showed respect for gods as long as they were not hostile towards him like Ravovifard had been.

But even the gods that he respected could not give him blessings such as their divine protections, as he possessed too much Mana.

Even so, they would not have minded having an ordinary relationship between gods and a mortal, but... things didn't look good when they, as gods, had to request something from him. Because as gods, they could offer him almost nothing as a reward.

"As we are now, we can't even give him Artifacts, never mind divine protections. Ricklent-sama and Zuruwarn-sama made efforts for him, but us not doing anything is... awkward, even if Vandalieu himself doesn't realize it," said Rishare.

"That is why we decided to build a friendly relationship first and then find opportunities to repay the favor later... You should not talk to him so directly," said Warnliza.

"My apologies, Rishare-dono, Warnliza-dono," said Lioen. "But to think that he would be enraged to that extent..."

"It is not that he was angry, Lioen-dono," said Fidirg.

"It was simply a reflex to prepare for battle."

"I think he was probably nothing more than a little annoyed."

Fidirg had once almost angered Vandalieu before, or perhaps he really had angered him. Thus, he thought that what the gods had witnessed earlier could not be described as anger.

It had been an unconscious reaction, similar to putting himself on guard.

Though the *way* that this reaction had manifested was extreme.

“...A countless number of the Demon King’s horns emerge from his soul when he is annoyed? I would not get away lightly if those were to impale me,” said Lioen.

“That is because it is his bare, exposed soul. The fragments of the Demon King that reside in him have already fused and become one with his soul. Therefore, they surface more easily when he does not possess a physical body,” said Warnliza.

The fragments of the Demon King Guduranis that resided within Vandalieu had already transformed. They were fragments of the Demon King, but at the same time, they were not.

They were already a part of Vandalieu. Even if the Demon King Guduranis were to be resurrected, fragments such as the Demon King’s horns would not return to Guduranis.

Because they had fused with Vandalieu to such an extent, they reacted sensitively in response to his emotions.

“Then should we not have invited him somewhere other than this place, Mububujenge?” Xerx asked.

Mububujenge’s lumps of flesh squirmed in response to this question. “Are you suggesting that we should have summoned him to a Church in another nation without giving any reason, even though my Church is so close by?”

“...If we were to tell him the reason, I suppose that would give us no ground to stand on,” Xerx murmured. He felt that gods telling a human, ‘We are scared and would like to conduct this audience in another nation, so please make the effort of going there,’ would be even more pathetic than kneeling on the ground.

“Leaving that aside, let us each do what we can as gods.”

“For example, the Title. Just as we agreed to previously.”

“...For the sake of Vida-sama, who will awaken one day.”

“For the sake of victory in the battle against Alda that will eventually come.”

“For the sake of our children, who are being oppressed even now.”

“We acknowledge this being as a champion,” the gods said in unison.

『The Levels of the Superhuman Strength, Rapid Regeneration, Automatic Mana Recovery, Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue), Enhanced Agility, Body Extension (Tongue), Surpass Limits, Soul Devour, God Devourer and Demon King Fusion Skills have increased!』

『Your Vitality has increased by 5,000!』

『You have acquired the Demon King’s Blubber, the Demon King’s Fangs, the Demon King’s Chin, the Demon King’s Eyeballs, the Demon King’s Proboscis, the Demon King’s Fur, the Demon King’s Exoskeleton and the Demon King’s Jointed Legs!』

『The Demon King’s Fangs and the Demon King’s Chin have fused into the Demon King’s Jaws!』

『You have acquired the Title of ‘Champion!’』

Vandalieu felt dizzy as he heard the announcer in his head going on and on the moment he left the Divine Realm and returned from the Dungeon.

It seemed that the announcer’s voice was not played for those in a pure-soul state.

“A-are you alright?” asked Myuze, supporting Vandalieu as he staggered.

“I’m alright,” Vandalieu said, clutching his spinning head. “I’m a little unsteady on my feet, though... I wonder why the Levels of my Skills increased just by acquiring Fragments of the Demon King? My Vitality increased, too. And I suppose the Title is from the gods calling me by this Title?”

He questioned why his Skills had improved, though he couldn’t think of what could have caused it. He had done almost no fighting in the Dungeon, too.

Was it because of that delicious food?

In myths and legends on Earth, there were foods that granted the wisdom to become a sage, longer life or even immortality when eaten. *I think they were called pan tao peaches, soma and amrita*, Vandalieu recalled.

TLN: Pan tao peaches appear in Chinese mythology; soma is a ritual drink of importance among early Indians; amrita also appears in Indian religions, having the same meaning as the word 'ambrosia.'

That food had to be of a similar kind.

“Come to think of it, what kind of meat could that have been?” Vandalieu wondered.

“...Wasn't it the sealed Ravovifard?” said Godwin.

“No, no, there's no way that's possible... is there?”

Far too late, Vandalieu became aware that he had eaten an evil god.



A group of people concealing their faces with thick, dark-green cloths around their heads ran through the land that had formerly been the Scylla territory, now occupied by the resistance organization known as the Sauron Liberation Front.

They were fast and had no wasteful motions in their movement.

They were members of the Hilt, the lower branch of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, the prided secret organization of the Amid Empire.

Their main mission was to support the movements of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. Gathering information in advance as they were doing now was also a part of their job.

But gathering information regarding the resistance should have been the work of the soldiers of Duke Marme, the one who had requested for the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords to be dispatched, not the work of the Hilt.

Even Duke Marme had likely known that he would lose too much of his reputation if he left everything to the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

But his army's investigation had completely run into a dead end.

Mages trying to scout the area from above with flying familiars had gone mad one after another, and they had learned nothing other than the existence of monoliths and stone circles that hadn't existed before the area came under resistance occupation.

They had tried forming units made mostly of criminal slaves to scout at the ground level, but not a single one of them had returned.

Perhaps having been driven insane by this utter lack of results, there had even been military officers suggesting that they take women and children from farming villages to use as meat shields as they searched for the enemy.

There had been no expectations placed on Duke Marme's army to begin with, but this was too terrible.

That was why the Hilt had conducted their own investigation without permission from Duke Marme's army. But they hadn't produced results, either.

"...Is it around here where communication with them was cut off?"

"Unlike before, there are no monoliths and stone circles nearby. There's no sign of anyone around, or any evidence of fighting."

Two platoons had already been lost.

The Dirk unit had approached a monolith, and when they tried to investigate it, the monolith that had been turned into a Golem... a Rock Golem painted with the Demon King's ink, had taken them by surprise and punched them, taking half of them down. The survivors that had returned with this information had gone mad, showing signs of mental illness.

This had made it clear that some or perhaps all of the monoliths were Stone Golems that would not only have negative effects on the mind, but attack those who approached them carelessly.

And as for the Dagger unit, their regular communications had stopped and none of them had returned.

But that in itself was important information. If it was the resistance that had taken

down the Dagger unit, then something connected to the resistance had to be around this area.

The leader of the Scimitar unit raised his hand to give a hand signal to search for evidence.

“Are you people allies of the guys who came here before? You’re wearing similar clothes, so that’s probably right, isn’t it?” a deep voice suddenly said from overhead without warning.

The members of the Hilt in the Scimitar unit immediately scattered and spread out. They didn’t do pointless things like look up reflexively and shout, “Who’s there?!”

Miles’s lips that were painted with a vividly-colored lipstick rose in a ferocious smile as he saw their swift movements. “Your movements are just as good as the guys who came here before. Surrender if you value your lives. If you give us information while you’re still alive, we’ll give you special treatment, you know?”

The response to this offer was having knives thrown at him.

As they were knives designed to be thrown, their blades were small, but they were coated in poison. Miles avoided them by falling towards the ground of his own accord.

“I see, so your answer is the same as the guys from last time. Then... I’ll kill you!”

The moment Miles’s feet touched the ground, he broke into a fierce sprint. The members of the Hilt responded with the cold, hard resolve that could be expected from a shadow organization.

The members of the Hilt did not possess high combat capabilities. Thus, they knew themselves that defeating Miles would be difficult for them. Thus, they had come prepared with the resolve that only one member would run and return alive with information, while the rest would become sacrificial pawns to buy time.

“...Consecutive Throw!”

“KIEEEEEH!”

Two of them deliberately made themselves conspicuous and attacked Miles. Their weapons were coated in a deadly black poison, and even an experienced warrior who

could see their intentions would be unable to ignore them.

But Miles charged straight towards the throwing knives, still smiling ferociously. “Iron Rend! Overarm Swing!”

He swung his extended claws and slashed through the torso of the first Hilt member, piercing the chest of the second one who had been throwing knives with Overarm Swing.

“A-a Vampire?! During the day, how?!” shouted a third member of the Hilt in surprise as he realized what Miles was after seeing him slaughter two of his companions in the blink of an eye with his claws.

Miles’s expression was completely unfazed despite having been wounded by throwing knives coated in a poison that should have had immediate effect.

And as Miles turned to face him, the third Hilt member dropped his knives and raised his hands above his head. “W... wait. I understand, I’ll surrender. I’ll tell you everything I know. So spare my life –”

“Flying Claw Slash.” Miles’s Unarmed Fighting Technique martial skill sent the head of the third Hilt member flying into the air.

“...He said that he would surrender,” said Iris, appearing from the direction in which the fourth member of the unit had tried to escape. Her sword was hanging from her hand, its blade stained crimson.

Miles gave a cynical laugh, giving the headless corpse of the third Hilt member a light kick. “That’s just one of the methods that these guys use. If they believe that they can’t win, one will try to escape and the rest will become sacrificial pawns to buy time. Some of them will draw attention by attacking, and once they fail, the last sacrificial pawn will surrender. And once I approach, he would use an explosive Magic Item to blow himself up. They probably decided upon these roles from the beginning. Self-destructive Magic Items aren’t things that can be easily mass-produced, after all.”

“That is... enviable. Ordinary organizations would not be capable of this. Do you know these people, Miles-dono?”

Assassins and spies that committed suicide when they were caught in order to protect their secrets were not uncommon. Iris herself carried a Magic Item that would end her

own life.

But this behavior was a result of the determination of the individual, different from something forced upon the members by the organization.

The Noble-born Vampire Miles had once worked secretly in the underworld as the Pure-breed Vampire Gubamon's subordinate, so Iris wondered if he had come across these kinds of people before, but that didn't seem to be the case.

"No. I reported it, didn't I? I killed five people that seemed to be either spies or assassins the day before yesterday. Those guys and these guys had the same methods. I'm sure they were following the same manual," Miles sighed, thinking about how much trouble he had gone through the day before yesterday.

He had ended up killing all of them in the end, but his clothes had been burned by getting caught up in the explosion of the one blowing himself up and he had struggled in finding the one who had run away; it had been quite the ordeal.

"I see..." said Iris.

"It's good that I'm stronger after having become an Abyssal Vampire, but because of that, my Warning Skill doesn't respond to small dangers. It's quite troublesome," said Miles.

"So, what about their spirits?" Iris asked.

"Impossible. These guys had talismans of Alda sewn onto the insides of their clothes. Unless we strip their clothes off before we kill them, their spirits ascend the moment they die. And since they're experts at blowing themselves up, their preparations to kill themselves is thorough. Knocking them out and capturing them is impossible. Of course, nobody can question their spirits except Boss, and I can't see ordinary spirits even after becoming an Abyssal Vampire."

"So, these are anti-Vandalieu-dono measures. I thought we had kept things well-hidden, but..."

Iris had thought that she had kept Vandalieu's involvement well-hidden, but it seemed that information was something that would always be leaked sooner or later.

"That's probably right; I want him to hurry and come here, but... According to Legion's

regular reports, things will be calming down over there soon,” said Miles.

“Well then, let us return for now,” said Iris.

“What are we going to do with these bodies? It’s possible that there could be some kind of clue on them,” Miles said, glancing at the corpses lying on the ground.

But Iris shook her head. “They’re the kind of people who carry Magic Items for self-destruction and talismans. It would be pointless to examine them. And it’s possible that Magic Items telling their employers where they are have been embedded all over their bodies.”

Neither she nor Miles noticed the small winged insect, about the size of the tip of a person’s finger, that was attached to her hair.



“They’re the kind of people who carry Magic Items for self-destruction and talismans. It would be pointless to examine them. And it’s possible that Magic Items telling their employers where they are have been embedded all over their bodies.”

“Bububuh... Close,” said the ‘Insect Swarm’ Bebeckett, one of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, chuckling as he heard Iris’s words through the insect that he had planted on one of the Hilt members. “My insects transmit not only your location, but sound as well... bububuh.”

The small insect planted on the Scimitar unit of the Hilt delivered information to its master.



Monster explanation:

【Majin】

The following is from the Adventurers' Guild's records. Regardless of the truth, this is how the Majin race is perceived in human societies.

They are a race born between Vida, the goddess of life and love, and an evil god whose name has been forgotten in the present era.

Their appearances have characteristics that differ between individuals; the only features they have in common are two horns and a tail with a pointed tip.

Other features, such as the color of their skin, the number of eyes they have and the presence and absence of wings, vary wildly.

The Majin are broadly separated into the following categories. Battle-Majin Vandals, who are berserkers that possess sturdy, large bodies. Obscene-Majin Succubi and Incubi, who possess a devilish beauty and suck the life out of their victims. Beast-Majin Diablo, who possess many beast-like features. And the red-skinned Kijin High Ogres, the most numerous type, who are physically sturdy but inept in the use of magic.

But these are categories defined and named by the Guild; the Majin themselves do not categorize themselves in this way.

Other than the Kijin, the Majin are at minimum Rank 6, but there are also those at Rank 7, 8 or greater, and it is speculated that the Majin race's base Rank also varies from individual to individual.

Many Battle-Majin are Rank 7 or greater, while Obscene-Majin and Beast-Majin are Rank 6. And Kijin are Rank 4. These are thought to be their average strengths.

Other than Kijin, Majin are gifted not only physically but also when it comes to magic, and they often possess a variety of other special abilities as well.

Most Majin do not have limited lifespans; they can live forever without aging as long as there are no external factors to cause death. But in exchange, they have a poor ability to reproduce. They are capable of conducting a ritual to transform members of

other races into members of their own race to make up for this, but unlike the Vampires who use this process to rapidly increase their numbers, the Majin rarely conduct this ritual.

But there have been examples reported long ago that those charmed by Obscene-Majin are transformed into Majin themselves.

Also, the Majin as a race possess an ability that allows them to use Demons, monsters formed from contaminated Mana that has coagulated and materialized, and they often make up for their small numbers by using these Demons. This fact led to a deeply-rooted theory in the past that the Majin race was a superior race of Demons. However, this has been refuted in recent times by long years of study carried out by researchers.

Kijin, on the other hand, have limited lifespans and age, but in return have a superior ability to reproduce. Because their biology differs so greatly, there is a theory that they are of a different race from the Majin altogether, but Kijin and Majin often build a system where they cooperate with one another and other types of Majin often lead large groups of Kijin, so the more widely-supported theory is that the Kijin are an inferior race, or a subordinate race, to the Majin.

But such theories are irrelevant for adventurers. The important thing is that Majin are powerful but their bodies are treasure chests of materials that can become ingredients for an enormous variety of Magic Items and medicines. Also, the 'Majin Slayer' Title that can be gained from exterminating Majin is not at all inferior to the 'Dragon Slayer' Title.

According to another theory, the male parent of the Majin race's ancestor is Zantark, the war-god of fire and destruction who fused with evil gods, and the Majin themselves adhere to this theory, but the Church of every god denies it.

Side Chapter 23

Reincarnated individuals here and there, and the god of thunderclouds

Rodcorte, the god of reincarnation, realized that Vandalieu had begun to take full-scale actions in the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range.

Due to the barrier put up by Mububujenge, Zanalpadna and the other gods, Rodcorte and those who had ascended from being human souls to familiar spirits through his power could not see the records of the humans, Dwarves and Elves living south of the wetlands in real-time.

But through the records from the humans and members of other races who had been killed by Bugitas, Gargya and the other usurpers out of anger or amusement, Rodcorte had become aware that a large-scale conflict had occurred in the nations south of the wetlands.

And after that, the humans, Dwarves and Elves of the Zanalpadna kingdom, the High Kobold kingdom, the High Goblin kingdom and finally, just a few days ago, the Noble Orc empire, had begun disappearing from Rodcorte's circle of transmigration system.

It was possible for souls in Rodcorte's circle of transmigration system to be moved to Vida's system through Vida's races that originated from monsters converting humans and other races into members of their own race.

But the difficulty of the ritual required for this differed between the races, and it was almost impossible to convert large numbers of humans into members of Vida's races within a short period of time.

The only other explanation was Vandalieu, who could guide souls to Vida's circle of transmigration system without any need for a ritual.

However, this had not been confirmed. The humans, Dwarves and Elves of the nations south of the marshlands were not combatants, so once they had stopped being killed by Bugitas and his subordinates, no new information had come in.

Thus, Shimada Izumi and Machida Aran had needed to put the limited evidence together to draw the conclusion that Vandalieu had intervened in the war among the nations south of the marshlands, resulting in a victory within a short period of time, and the souls of the humans were being guided as a result of the processes of colonization and post-war recovery.

But they also guessed that in order to keep up these political measures, Vandalieu would have to keep pouring power into the southern region of the continent for a while... for the next few years or perhaps over a decade.

This conjecture had been made based on the history of wars and colonial policies on Earth and in Origin.

And the deceased reincarnated individuals from Origin had spent almost the entirety of their time limit in thought, taking this conjecture into account as well. Pressed by the thought that Vandalieu would be focused on the inside of the Boundary Mountain Range for the next few years to a decade if they were to reincarnate now, they had each come to their own decisions.

The 'Oracle' Endou Kouya chose not to be reincarnated, but to instead become Rodcorte's familiar spirit like the 'Inspector' Shimada Izumi and the 'Calculation' Machida Aran.

This was because his ability in combat only met minimum standards, and although his Oracle ability had been almost completely comprehensive in Origin, he thought that in the world of Lambda where monsters and Vida's races that were not a part of Rodcorte's circle of transmigration system existed, it wouldn't even be of use as a reference.

With that being the case, he had decided that he could contribute more by not being reincarnated and supporting his allies from here rather than try to train himself in battle when he wasn't suited for it, and he had also decided that this was what was best for him as well.

The 'Mage Masher' Minami Asagi, the 'Ifrit' Akaki Akiko and the 'Clairvoyance' Tendou Tatsuya had chosen to be reincarnated in adult bodies.

Asagi and Akiko had chosen this option to stop Vandalieu, while Tendou had chosen this option so that he could tell Vandalieu that he had no intentions of showing

hostility towards him.

Tendou had merely been used like a tool when the 'Death Scythe' attacked Vandalieu directly from the Divine Realm. But Vandalieu himself was not aware of that.

It was likely that Vandalieu only knew Tendou Tatsuya's name and ability, assumed that he had cooperated with Kyuuji to try and kill him and it wouldn't be strange if he thought of Tendou as a dangerous person, a target that needed to be eliminated with top priority.

With that being the case, it would be even more dangerous to run. That was what Tendou thought. The reason he hadn't accompanied the 'Noah' Mao, who had been reincarnated before everyone else, was because he had been afraid that he would get her caught up in things and expose her to danger.

But the three of them had named one condition after deciding to be reincarnated.

"Being reincarnated after us is... petty, isn't it?" the 'Chronos' Murakami Junpei said in an exasperated tone.

"Why don't you give it some real thought?" Asagi said in response, looking just as exasperated.

"It's only natural for us to want to protect ourselves," said Akaki.

"It'd be no laughing matter if you guys saw where we're reincarnated and what we look like," said Tendou.

It was a terrible way to say it, but Murakami had betrayed Asagi and the other Bravers in Origin, they couldn't be blamed for feeling this way.

"So, it's fine for you guys to see where we're reincarnated and what we look like, then? Where's the proof that you won't come to kill us later?" Murakami grumbled, but the truth was that he thought the chances of Asagi and the others coming to kill him and his companions were low.

His group outnumbered Asagi's, and more importantly, based on their personalities, it was difficult to imagine that they would do something like that.

"We told you that we won't as long as you guys don't try to kill us or our other friends,

didn't we? Our powers would be revealed to the humans of Lambda," said Asagi.

Most importantly, there was the fact that they would not be able to live freely if their cheat-like abilities, which were named Unique Skills in Lambda, were revealed. The reincarnated individuals wanted to avoid conflict with each other as much as possible so that they could avoid that.

Nobody would guess that they were reincarnated individuals just from having the fact that they possessed Unique Skills revealed. But those who possessed Unique Skills in Lambda were few in number, and possessing them would cause them to gather attention.

If those Unique Skills were special Skills that hadn't existed in Lambda, before... If it became known that they were Skills that forcibly manipulated the timings of the user's own spells and martial skills and even the timings of others, or Skills that nullified all attributes of magic in an area, there was no telling how much attention they would get.

Of course, the reincarnated individuals would be given a Skill that kept Unique Skills hidden from Guild registration forms and such. And they would normally keep these abilities hidden and make sure that they weren't seen even if they did use them, though they wouldn't be able to do this in life-or-death situations.

And Rodcorte had reminded them of something.

"I understand that there will be situations after you are reincarnated where things cannot be helped. But as I have said many times before, I do not want you to crush each other for no reason."

Even though he reminded them of this, Rodcorte had no way of directly interfering with the reincarnated individuals while they were alive. However, for Murakami and his companions, Rodcorte was an employer who had promised them rewards. Directly going against his will was a bad idea for them.

And several limits had been placed on them before their reincarnation.

The cheat-like abilities of the 'Chronos,' 'Mage Masher' and the 'Venus' Tsuchiya Kanako had been altered so they would not work on other reincarnated individuals other than Vandalieu.

“I wish you’d placed those limits from the beginning,” said Aran.

“Completely agreed,” said Izumi.

But Rodcorte had never even imagined that the reincarnated individuals would end up in circumstances where they would be killing each other, so it couldn’t be helped that he hadn’t thought of doing this until now.

“About that crushing each other for no reason, the conditions regarding Vandalieu are just as we agreed on before, right?” said Murakami.

“Whether we kill Vandalieu or you stop him, we won’t interfere with one another. If either of our groups get to him first, the other won’t contact Vandalieu until the first is done trying. And if you guys succeed in stopping him, we’ll give up on killing him. Right?” said Kanako.

“Yeah, that’s right.” Asagi nodded, and then looked at Rodcorte. “You don’t have any problems with that either, right?”

“I do, but I shall respect your intentions,” said Rodcorte.

There were several methods to accomplish Asagi’s task of “stopping Vandalieu.” One was to convince Vandalieu to accept committing suicide, forcibly returning his soul to Rodcorte’s circle of reincarnation system and living a fourth life, but there was also a way for Vandalieu to relinquish his death-attribute magic while alive... to seal it away.

Asagi intended to persuade Vandalieu to do this... though Aran, Kouya, Mao before she was reincarnated and even Akaki and Tendou who were going to be reincarnated with him had all tried to talk him out of it, telling him that it would fail.

No matter how I look at it, I can only see a future where things break down and they end up trying to kill each other, Murakami thought.

I wonder why this person believes that he can come to an understanding with Vandalieu in the end when they were nothing more than classmates? thought Kanako.

Murakami and his companions hadn’t tried to stop Asagi, but they were certain that things wouldn’t go well and he would fail.

And it was clear that Rodcorte was also thinking, “He is going to fail and they will end

up fighting either way, so I shall leave him be.”

...It was possible that Asagi himself knew that the chances of persuading Vandalieu to do this had an extremely small chance of success. But he probably thought that because they were both from Earth and had the bond of being former classmates, there was hope as long as he didn’t give up.

“I don’t give a shit, so hurry up and go!” the ‘Marionette’ Inui Hajime shouted, seeming irritated.

He had parted ways with Murakami’s, but he had declared he would not join up with Asagi’s group or with Mao, and that he would be reincarnated last of all.

It seemed that his paranoia hadn’t been cured, even up to the very end.

“Yes, yes, we know so please be quiet. Well then, please take care of the seven of us,” said Kanako.

And so, Murakami’s group, which had been reduced to seven with the loss of the ‘Gazer’ Minuma Hitomi and the ‘Death Scythe’ Konoe Kyuuji as well as Inui Hajime, were reincarnated.



“Kahah... A heartbeat and breaths. It’s good to be alive,” said Murakami, testing the condition of his new, young body.

He was unusually sentimental at the sense of completeness that he hadn’t felt in the pure-soul state that he had been in before being reincarnated.

He hadn’t even noticed this feeling when he lived on Earth or in Origin. He now understood the truth in the words, “You don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone.”

“Status... Alright, my name has changed properly from ‘Murakami Junpei’ to Junpei Murakami*.”

TLN: His name is now written in katakana and in first name, surname order like western names.*

In Lambda, names were generally not written in kanji. The Japanese language had

been spread by the champions, but this was the case for a number of reasons, such as the fact that most commoners could only read hiragana and katakana.

That was why Murakami and his companions had asked Rodcorte to adjust their names while he was adjusting their Statuses.

Rodcorte hadn't been able to change their names completely, however; he could only make their names be displayed in katakana. If they wanted new names, they apparently needed to be reborn normally and be named by their new parents.

"Leaving that aside... How are your bodies?" Murakami asked.

"At least try and cover yourself up a little. How come you're so bold?" said the 'Odin' Hazamada Akira... or rather, Akira Hazamada, complaining about Murakami's complete lack of effort to cover his nether region despite being completely naked.

"...We should have asked him to separate us by gender and have us placed a short distance apart," said the 'Sylphid' Misa Anderson, pressing a hand to her brow.

TLN: Everyone's names are in katakana now, which makes the readings of their names clear. I had previously translated Hazamada's name as Hasamada Aki (I've gone and fixed this in previous chapters). It's possible that Rikudou Akira's name is read differently; not sure how likely it is that they both have first names read 'Akira.'

"We're past the age where we should be embarrassed, aren't we? Though our bodies are those of teenagers again," said Murakami.

Though they had reincarnated with adult bodies, their new bodies had the appearances of humans in their mid-teenage years. At this age, it was just barely not too unnatural for them to not have had any Jobs before.

This was yet another change that had been decided by Aran and Izumi after they looked into information about this world.

"How are your appearances?" Murakami asked.

"I'm just like how I was in my younger days in my previous life," said Hazamada.

"There's nothing really different... Isn't it strange that humans look the same, even in another world?" said the 'Hecatoncheir' Doug Atlas.

The three men of the group had all chosen to be reincarnated as humans.

Because the appearance and physique of their bodies were influenced by their souls, there were thick traces of their appearances from their previous lives. If they told people who had known them in their previous lives that they were younger brothers of their previous selves, they would be told that they look too similar even for siblings.

Their objective was to kill Vandalieu, so why had they not chosen to be reborn as a race that would have a very different appearance from their previous selves, like Mao had done? That was because Asagi and the others were certainly looking at their new forms from Rodcorte's Divine Realm.

They had promised not to crush each other unnecessarily, but Asagi's goal was to persuade Vandalieu. It was unlikely that he would hesitate to give Vandalieu information on Murakami and his companions, whom he didn't consider allies in the slightest, in order to gain Vandalieu's trust.

Even if they were to be reborn as Dwarves or change their skin color to white or black, it would be meaningless if Asagi and his companions were to give that information to Vandalieu. Not only would it be meaningless, it would actually be a drawback, as they would need to take more time to get used to the vastly different size and biology of their bodies.

With that being the case, it was best to choose bodies that were similar to the bodies they had in Origin.

"Hmm, I get the feeling that I can hear really clearly," said Kanako.

"My Mana has increased, and it seems that elemental magic is easier to use than in the previous world," said Misa.

"Status! I see, this is just like a game," said the 'Super Sense' Kaoru Gotouta.

TLN: I mistranslated Gotouta's name as Gotouta Kaori before. Close enough.

"Aegis... my power feels the same as it did in the previous world," said the 'Aegis' Melissa J. Sautome.

The four women had all chosen to be reincarnated as Elves.

“Why did you all choose to be Elves?” Murakami asked them, seeming fascinated not by their naked bodies, but their ears.

“Because we heard that they’re a race of people with long lifespans that don’t age easily,” Kanako replied. “My skin had already gone past its turning point in my previous life.”

“Because Elves have more Mana, so I thought that it would be easier to use Sylphid and elemental magic,” said Misa. “Not that I’m denying that they look good.”

Elves were a race that were inferior to humans in physical strength and stamina, but superior in Mana and qualities for using magic. And as Kanako said, they were a race of people with long lifespans, living up to around five hundred years.

They had a handicap compared to humans in terms of physical strength and stamina, but once they increased their Levels and acquired multiple combat-related Jobs, their Attribute Values would increase and the difference would become negligible.

Normally, undergoing multiple Job-changes in itself would require a lot of hard work and effort, but... for these reincarnated individuals, who possessed Rodcorte’s divine blessing, it would not be difficult.

“One of you should have chosen human or Dwarf. Four Elves will stand out too much,” said Hazamada.

“I don’t want to age faster on my own~” said Kanako.

“...We’re going to be reborn in another world once we kill Vandalieu, so isn’t it irrelevant?”

“Cut the chit-chat,” said Murakami. “Let’s slaughter the group of bandits ahead and get clothes, money to get by for now and Experience Points.”

At Murakami’s command, the reincarnated individuals moved out.

Bandits... even if they were criminals, they were people, and the act of killing and looting them was unimaginable for Japanese people. But Murakami’s group felt no resistance or discomfort towards their actions.

Until they betrayed Bravers, they had chased down fiendish criminals and terrorists

all over the world. They had experienced numerous missions where they needed to kill.

And after they betrayed the Bravers... the truth was that they had been investigators for the federal state, but they had also worked with the Eighth Guidance as terrorists. It hadn't been unusual for them to kill their enemies and plunder their belongings.

There was nothing different now other than that they would be killing bandits rather than researchers and soldiers.

And after acquiring crude clothes, money and supplies, Murakami and his companions began moving towards a nearby town.

They wouldn't attack merchants and adventurers recklessly as the 'Gungnir' Kaidou Kanata had done. Murakami and his companions had no intention of living out long, fulfilled third lives here in Lambda, but they couldn't imagine that they would be able to kill Vandalieu within a few months.

They anticipated that it would be a long process of gaining the strength they needed to oppose the Demon King's fragments that Vandalieu possessed, as well as gathering the things they would need to seal the fragments as they would no doubt go berserk after Vandalieu was killed.

This would take time measured in the scale of years, so they had no intention of giving into short-sighted desires and committing evil deeds that would create more enemies for themselves.

Things were progressing without any particular problems.

But a few days after reaching the town, a situation arose that Murakami had not anticipated.

Kanako, Melissa and Doug disappeared.

"Those guys... of all the things they could have done, they betrayed us!"



Kanako, Melissa and Doug, who had left the town that Murakami and the others were staying in, were proceeding through a forest that was distant from the highway.

“According to the homeless former-merchant-san that I gave a silver coin to and used my Venus on to steal his memories, we should come out onto another highway in about three days if we keep going this way,” said Kanako, who was leading the way. “If we go from there into another forest, we should come out into the neighboring duchy. Ah, the journey will be quite dangerous, so please prepare yourselves, you two.”

“Even if you say it will be dangerous, it’ll just be bandits, right? They won’t be good for anything except killing time,” said Doug. “Well, I have two Elf women with me, so they’ll probably attack us with a lot of spirit, so it probably will be quite a pain.”

“Don’t let your guard down,” said Melissa. “We’re still not accustomed to the methods of using Skills and martial skills.”

Within the space of a few days, the three of them had already registered at the Adventurers’ Guild and equipped themselves decently.

Their armor and weapons were apparently cheap items suited for new adventurers, but each of them was equivalent to a B-class adventurer in terms of Skills and Levels alone, and they possessed cheat-like abilities on top of that. If their enemies were washed-up mercenaries who had become bandits, there would be no problems even with leather armor and knives that were incredibly unreliable compared to Origin’s military body armor and combat knives.

But the reincarnated individuals were not accustomed to the martial skills that didn’t exist in Origin, and there was plenty of reason to believe that they would be defeated if they were to fight enemies who made exceptional use of them.

Such masterful users of martial skills would almost never stoop low enough to become bandits, but it was still best to be careful.

“So, what are we going to do from now on?” Doug asked.

“Of course, we’re going to get away from Sensei... Murakami,” said Kanako, correcting herself. “For now, I think we’ll be fine after we go to another duchy. I did ask Aran and Izumi not to tell him where we are, after all~”

“Won’t they chase after us?” asked Melissa, looking worried.

“We should be fine after we get far enough away,” Kanako replied. “It’s become harder for us reincarnated individuals to use our abilities to kill each other than it was in

Origin. Murakami should avoid us as well.”

But it seemed that Melissa and Doug were still anxious.

“But it’s *that* Murakami we’re talking about here,” said Doug. “Won’t he do things like use money to hire assassins to kill us once things calm down?”

“I can’t say that there’s no chance of that happening, but those assassins hired with money aren’t reincarnated individuals, so we’ll be able to use our abilities on them,” said Kanako.

“Ah, that’s true.”

“And Murakami isn’t so all-powerful, either,” Kanako continued. “Right now, he’s only just been reincarnated, so he doesn’t own anything but the clothes on his back. He doesn’t have the money or the connections to the underworld that he needs to hire assassins.”

“But couldn’t they acquire those right away if they wanted to?” asked Melissa.

Indeed, Murakami and his companions would likely be able to acquire money and connections within a few months if they wanted to.

Their skill in magic was equivalent to that of B-class adventurers at this point, and there were all kinds of ways that they could make money if they chose to do so, and people on both the surface side and underworld of society would want to have connections to them.

“That’s true, but that would make them stand out a lot. New adventurers earning large amounts of money within months would be really conspicuous, and they would be promoted in the blink of an eye as well,” said Kanako.

Murakami’s objective was to kill Vandalieu, so he would certainly want to avoid attention. But adventures of B-class and above would be showered in attention no matter what they did. They would have to come up with clever ways even to move from city to city.

If they didn’t want to stand out, they would stop promoting once they became C-class adventurers, acting in moderation while keeping their true strength hidden.

“Then it seems that things will work out until we make contact with Vandalieu, Kanako,” said Melissa.

“It does, doesn’t it? There are no phones and no internet in this world, after all. It seems that the names of C-class adventurers won’t spread as far as other duchies, too,” said Kanako.

“Yeah, I’ve started to see hope in living,” said Doug.

Kanako and her two companions had separated from Murakami’s group in order to make contact with Vandalieu and migrate to his nation.

There were two reasons for this. The first was that they were absolutely certain that they would not be able to kill Vandalieu.

Even if they cooperated with Murakami’s group, even if the ‘Avalon’ Rikudou Akira and the ‘Braver’ *Amemiya Hiroto* were to come to this world, they would definitely not be able to win.

Kanako, Melissa and Doug were certain of this because they had lost their lives when death-attribute Mana had gone out of control.

It didn’t matter if they had cheat-like abilities. The effects of Aegis and the telekinetic power of Hecatoncheir hadn’t worked at all. The same would be true of Kanako’s Venus.

In fact, they couldn’t understand how Murakami could possibly think that he could kill Vandalieu when he had died to out-of-control death-attribute Mana just like them.

“Also, we need to make sure to not be noticed by Asagi and his group, either,” said Kanako.

And as for the things that Asagi and his group would try to convince Vandalieu of... Perhaps negotiating for him to not have reckless conflicts with the reincarnated individuals might work, but she was certain that persuading him to abandon death-attribute magic would fail.

It was clear that the bond of being former classmates between Vandalieu and them that Asagi believed in without a doubt did not exist. In fact, it was the same former classmates who had killed Vandalieu in Origin.

Even if a bond like that did exist, what kind of fool would relinquish his vast power of his own accord?

Hopes of persuading him with ethics and righteousness were slim, too. Even from the small amount of information available, it was certain that Vandalieu was living with his own sense of values, so it was difficult to imagine that this method would be very effective.

Akaki and Tendou would have no choice but to somehow talk Asagi into giving up on this.

If Kanako's group was accompanying Asagi's group during this process, Vandalieu's impression of them would become worse.

And in the worst-case scenario, it was possible that Asagi wouldn't back down and they would begin trying to kill each other. Kanako's group wanted to avoid getting caught up in that at all costs.

"Well, I don't think Asagi and his friends would trust us anyway. There aren't any bonds between us, after all," said Doug.

"You're right, there aren't any bonds," said Melissa.

"Even though we were former classmates too," said Kanako.

The three of them agreed with each other as they walked on.

The second reason they had left Murakami's group was to migrate to Talosheim, which was probably the most culturally advanced civilization in the world of Lambda.

Incidentally, Rodcorte had no intention of carefully monitoring Kanako's group for the time being. If they actually tried to join Vandalieu, he might warn them through a Divine Message or strip them of their divine protections, but at this point, he was probably hoping that Kanako's group would have a change of heart once again.

"But I wonder if he will accept us," said Melissa. "We'll kneel on the ground and beg if we have to."

"I would object if he asked us to lick his shoes, though," said Doug.

“There is hope,” said Kanako. “When that ‘Death Scythe’ idiot went and made that blunder, I was desperately signaling to him.”

Kanako had been making crosses with her arms and shaking her head furiously to signal to Vandalieu. Back then, she had noticed that he was properly looking at her.

“Let’s give up on reckless dreams of a fourth life and focus on living stable, pleasant third lives. I’d like to become an idol again if I can, though,” Kanako said.

“Work hard on that by yourself,” said Melissa.

“Yeah, I’ll cheer you on,” said Doug.

“...I never suggested that we should be a three-person idol group, did I?”



Asagi’s group of three was reincarnated after Murakami’s group of seven. And after them was the ‘Marionette’ Inui Hajime.

Vandalieu was scary to him, but having a greatly different size and biology was scary as well. So, he had chosen to become a human, similar to the humans of Earth and Origin, for this new life.

And he had also avoided being reincarnated normally as a baby. Considering the possibility of other reincarnated individuals or Vandalieu coming to kill him while he was still an infant or child who couldn’t act freely, he had no option other than to be reincarnated in an adult’s body.

“...Now, I suppose I’ll spend the rest of my life in a forest or mountain. No, but it’s not like I’ll be able to use the same methods for survival as Origin... I guess I’ll live in a town for a while after all.”

Inui Hajime – Hajime Inui, put on the clothes and equipment that he had stolen from bandits like Murakami’s group and began walking.

He had received training in the army, so he had learned ways to survive out in the wild, but he wasn’t confident that they would work in a foreign world.

“Villages have small populations, but since I’m an unfamiliar face, I’ll stand out. So I

suppose it has to be a town after all... No, how about earning a large amount of money and buying a house and field in a village somewhere to live a self-sufficient life on my own? I doubt I'd stand out if I said that I'm a retired adventurer or something," Hajime murmured to himself.

"Quite the feeble-hearted one, aren't you?" said a voice other than Hajime's, echoing inside his head.

"Rodcorte?! Or is it you, Aran?!" Hajime shouted, putting himself on guard.

"Don't be so frightened. And I'm not Rodcorte or one of his familiar spirits. I am Fitun, god of thunderclouds. A god who expects great things of you, Hajime Inui."

Hajime's eyes opened wide upon hearing the name of a god that he had never heard of before. "A god of this world?!"

He had heard from Rodcorte that there were many gods with different personalities in Lambda, and they took action in the world far more frequently than the god of Earth and Origin. He had also gained fundamental knowledge regarding the gods from the main myths and legends told by Aran and Izumi.

But why had such a god spoken to him directly, and what did he mean by 'expect great things?'

"I'm sure there are endless questions that you want to ask, but I am not able to come to a mutual understanding with you unconditionally, either. It takes quite a lot of power to send my spirit clone to descend upon the world, you see," said Fitun. "For now, accept my familiar spirit into you."

"What?! Accept it for now, you say! There's no way I'd be able to do that, is there?!" Hajime shouted.

It was only natural that he rejected Fitun's request. There was no way he could simply nod his head when he didn't even know what kind of god Fitun was.

"What? Do you not want power?" Fitun asked.

"There's no way I want it! Even if someone like me were to obtain power, there's no way I'd be able to do anything with it anyway!"

“Do you really not need it? Are you fine with being a defeated dog, running away with its tail between its legs? Do you not care if you are killed by Vandalieu?”

“?!” Hajime was lost for words after having the future he feared the most put into words.

Fitun’s voice continued whispering inside his mind. “Have confidence in yourself, Hajime. You have qualities and talent. I, Fitun, whose name echoed across this land and have now become a god, guarantee it. Hajime, you are fit to become a hero.”

“Me, a hero...?” Hajime repeated.

“Of course. You met a miserable end in your previous life, didn’t you? I understand the pain of lost battles. But think about it. Was the life of hermit the thing that you have always desired? A quiet life of ploughing a field in a peaceful village until all of your hair turns white? Do you intend to curl up in fear your entire life so that you are not caught by Vandalieu’s eye?”

“Th-that’s...”

“That’s wrong, isn’t it?” Fitun continued. “You were born as a man, and you have qualities and talent. You want to be served by good women in a mansion, eating good food and living a life of luxury with no discomforts. You want to look down on the pitiful commoners from above as they praise you. Isn’t that right?”

“But in my previous life...”

“You couldn’t do that in your previous life. That’s why I’m saying that I will grant you the power to make that possible in this life. Or are you more comfortable being a defeated dog? Do you want to treasure a meager happiness, the likes of which can be trampled over by the strong on a whim? Will you choose to kill your true self and live a worthless life?”

“...” Hajime stood stock-still, with no words to say.

His mind had been broken ever since his death in Origin, but he had originally had the personality of someone who craved the limelight and had a desire to control others.

That was exactly why he hadn’t been able to bear being just another person among the Bravers... among a group of heroes, and accepted Murakami’s invitation.

For Hajime, Fitun's tempting words sounded so very sweet. Accepting this offer would be right, and refusing it would be wrong, wouldn't it? He felt agreement towards Fitun's words.

"Can I really... become a hero?" he asked.

"Yes, you can," Fitun said. "You can defeat Vandalieu, become acknowledged by every person in this world and be praised by all of the gods as well, not just me, becoming a true champion."

"I, defeat Vandalieu... that's right, come to think of it, everything is his fault, isn't it?"

Vandalieu had been an ordinary student, just like Hajime... but despite that, he had awakened to death-attribute Mana, and even tried to help others pointlessly before dying, leaving behind the troublesome Eighth Guidance. Wasn't it all his fault that things had become a mess in Origin?

To begin with, if Vandalieu had noticed that Rodcorte had confused his name with someone else's and properly received his cheat-like abilities before being reincarnated, *Amemiya Hiroto* wouldn't have become so powerful.

Once Hajime began thinking about this, he began to think that all of the misfortune that he had experienced in Origin... even the misfortune that he had brought upon himself, was all Vandalieu's fault.

"A huge amount of Mana, death attribute magic, and now he's ruling his own nation, served by multiple women and doing as he likes... and he even has those Eighth Guidance, even Isis! So, why should I live my third life cowering in fear of him?! Alright, I'll accept you!" Hajime shouted.

"V-very well. I shall now give you my divine protection and an Artifact. Hajime Inui, from this moment forth, you are my champion," said Fitun.

Even though he was the one who had fired Hajime up, these reckless thoughts made Fitun hesitate for a moment and wonder if he should give up on this plan. But it would be troublesome to wait for another reincarnated individual, and there was the possibility that the existence of the reincarnated individuals would be found out by Alda before another one came.

And it was also uncertain whether there would be a reincarnated individual that

would be more convenient to make use of than Hajime.

And so, he decided to give Hajime his divine protection and Artifact.

Chapter 149

The warning that becomes silent

Lightning flashed and thunder echoed across a land filled with nothing but crooked boulders and pools of magma, a place that looked like hell itself.

Luvesfol, the raging evil dragon god, had been captured by the Storm of Tyranny, the party led by the S-class adventurer Schneider, as he tried to flee to the Dark Continent after his priest, the Scaled King, was defeated by Vandalieu. Now, he was cowering as a fierce battle unfolded before him.

“H-hyih, these guys are monsters...!”

In this weakened form, his body would be broken apart by any single one of the shockwaves released by the attacks. That was how powerful the spells and martial skills being used were.

“Disintegrate into particles! Wave Burst Lightning!” shouted the pumped-up Pure-breed Vampire Zorcodrio... also known as Zod, whose entire body seemed to be a single mass of muscle, as his Muscle Technique martial skill exploded.

A violent lightning attack landed directly on a black-haired man with black eyes.

“GAAH?!”

Someone whose physical strength was only a step or two into the realm of a superhuman would likely be incinerated and turned into particles in an instant by this lightning, just as Zod had shouted. The man’s face twisted in pain.

But he was not defeated. He staggered, but he quickly regained his posture.

“Ngh! An annoyingly tough guy!” Zod spat, looking truly annoyed.

“No, I don’t think he’d want to be told that by you,” said the Dwarf woman Merdin, narrowing her eyes.

Dolton, the Dark Elf with a mohawk, sighed in agreement.

“You two, the enemy is still standing! Why are you resting!” Zod shouted, suddenly opening his eyes wide.

Merdin and Dolton both shook their heads.

“Because I’ve attacked a hundred times already,” said Merdin.

“Me too. Or rather, I don’t even have any Mana left. And Zod, that was your hundredth attack just now as well,” Dolton pointed out.

“Muh, what a blunder... I appear to have miscounted. It cannot be helped,” said Zod, taking his eyes off the man and restoring his fangs and muscles.

As Zod’s back rapidly grew thinner, the man called out to him.

“Are you alright with that? You did say that was a hundred, but I don’t really care if you attack two hundred or even a thousand times,” he said.

Fatigue was slightly visible on the man’s face and audible in his voice. But despite having taken a hundred of Zod’s attacks, he still seemed quite composed.

“That is unnecessary,” said Zod. “I swore upon my ancestors that I would acknowledge you in exchange for receiving a hundred attacks.”

“I see...”

“I still have one left! And Schna has five!” said Lissana.

“Yeah, yeah, I’m gonna have you let me borrow some more of your chest, Great-Senpai-san!” shouted Schneider.

The two of them leapt forward, a gourd hanging from Lissana’s hand, while Schneider was bare-handed as usual.

Lissana transformed into her original appearance as Jurizanapipe, the evil god of degeneration and intoxication, raising the gourd to her lips and filling her mouth with the contents. And then she squeezed her lips to spray them over the man.

In an instant, the man was enveloped in a pale pink mist.

“Uguh! This is... harsh,” the man groaned.

His vision was distorted, the boulders beneath his feet feeling like they were swaying. His sense of smell and touch were numb as well, as if he were paralyzed. The alcohol created from Lissana’s Mana, as well as her saliva which was the saliva of an evil god, had combined to form a poisonous mist that enshrouded him and caused abnormalities in his senses.

And then the man saw the tips of a countless number of shoes in his distorted vision, but he simply stood there in a daze.

“Endless Thrust!”

Of course, the owner of the shoe was Schneider. He had activated a Spear Technique martial skill with a kick.

The man was sent flying, unable to withstand his entire body, including his face, being battered by kicks that were as sharp as the stabs of a spear.

Schneider ran after him and activated even more martial skills. “Instant Flash – Culmination! True Mountain Breaker! Great Screw Thrust!”

He unleashed a Swordsmanship martial skill with his right hand swung like the blade of a sword, a Club Technique martial skill with his left knee and a Naginata Technique martial skill with his left hand swung from overhead.

Being slashed, struck and stabbed, blood sprayed from the man’s body.

But showing no mercy, Schneider raised the heel of his foot high above. “This is the hundredth! God Iron Sever! Eat this!”

With an advanced Axe Technique martial skill, the heel of his foot fell onto the man’s head. With a thunderous noise, the man crashed into the ground face-first, sinking deep into it.

Normally, no matter how high Level one’s combat-related Skills were, martial skills were impossible to activate without meeting the conditions needed to use them. In other words, if one was not holding a weapon, they wouldn’t be able to use martial

skills of any Skill other than Unarmed Fighting Technique.

The conditions were somewhat flexible. Martial skills could be used with a wooden stick in place of a sword, spear or naginata, a stone axe in place of a club or vice-versa, an axe replacing a club... though this would result in a decrease in the power and effects of the martial skills.

But with the 'True Warrior' Unique Skill possessed by Schneider, he could activate martial skills using nothing but his own body.

This Unique Skill, an embodiment of the words, "Your own body is the greatest weapon," was one of the reasons that Schneider had become known by the Title of 'Thunderclap.'

Ordinary adventurers prepared their equipment before embarking on their adventures, based on the requests they had received and Dungeons that they would be going to, but Schneider traveled light, departing for the harshest of adventures with nothing but the clothes on his back, and he would quickly return home after succeeding in whatever he was doing.

Because Schneider didn't need a single piece of equipment.

Perhaps because he didn't enjoy being called something as exaggerated as a 'true master of combat,' he didn't reveal this fact to anyone except those close to him, however.

Schneider exhaled as he looked at the man who was buried in boulders, even the back of his head not visible anymore. "Ah, that's seriously tiring. So, Great Senpai, did it at least have a little effect?"

"...Not just a little, it had a lot of effect," said the voice of the man who had received Schneider's attack directly on his head as he dislodged himself from the broken boulders and stood up.

Considering that it had a lot of effect, the man seemed to have already recovered from the poisonous mist's effects.

As I thought, Lissana thought, feeling disappointed.

"So, what will you do? The hundred attacks have finished, though I feel like even a

thousand wouldn't be enough," the man said.

"We'll leave it there," said Lissana. "Even if we kept going, we'd just end up tiring ourselves out... It's not like you're asking us to forgive you with that, are you, Farmaun Gold?"

"Of course not," replied the man... the heroic god Farmaun Gold, champion of Zantark, the war-god of fire and destruction. "Even I know that what we did can't be forgiven by being hit a hundred times. But if you can acknowledge that I'm fighting on Zantark-oyaji's side, then that's enough for now."

A hundred thousand years ago, Farmaun Gold had fought against Vida, the goddess of life and love, as a human whose lifespan had been extended by Alda.

Because back then, that was what he had believed to be right.

Former evil gods of the Demon King's army had accepted Zakkart's invitation and become allies, but Farmaun had been unable to trust them. After Zakkart's death, there had been no telling when they would change sides and join the remnants of the Demon King's army again.

He also hadn't been able to trust in Vida, who allowed the gods who once belonged to the Demon King's army to create new monsters to become their own followers.

And then he had been aghast when she mated with those evil gods to give birth to new races one after another. The Titans that she had created with the Sun Giant Talos, as well as the Drakonids, Beast-people and Dark Elves, were still understandable. But he could only think of the creation of races like the Scylla and Arachne as an act of insanity.

It had appeared to him as if Vida herself had become an evil god and begun creating more and more monsters.

And then she had accepted and mated with Zantark, who had fused with the evil god of dark dust and the evil god of evil darkness but lost his sanity, giving birth to the Majin and Kijin races.

Finally, even if the champion Zakkart had been on the verge of breaking down, she had turned him into an Undead and then mated with him, giving birth to the Vampires.

Once Farmaun learned of these two acts, he firmly believed that Bellwood was right in insisting that Vida had gone mad.

Farmaun had distanced himself from Zakkart ever since he had executed the plan to have the evil gods of the Demon King's army change sides. When the Demon King was still alive, he had fought alongside the evil gods who had changed sides, like Fidirg, the dragon god of five sins and Merrebeveil, the evil god of slime and tentacles, but he had never thought of them as comrades.

He hadn't believed that the new races born from such evil gods would be of any use in helping this world, which had been on the verge of ruin from the war against the Demon King, to recover.

In fact, he believed that they would become a future threat to the small number of humans who had managed to survive.

And under Alda and Bellwood's command, alongside Nineroad and the other gods in Alda's faction, he attacked the continent upon which the races created by Vida had built their cities.

During this time, Farmaun fought against Zantark. He had once revered Zantark, calling him "Oyaji," but Zantark had become unable to even speak comprehensible words after fusing with evil gods, and the battle between them was fierce.

But before that battle reached a conclusion, the war between Alda and Vida ended. Farmaun's side emerged victorious.

The cities of Vida's races were destroyed without a trace remaining, the ancestor of almost every race slain. Zakkart, whose death had undergone sacrilege, fell into slumber, while many of the evil gods and those who supported Vida's mad ideology were sealed away.

But the remnants of the Demon King's army interfered, so the losses suffered by Alda's faction were not small either, and they ended up allowing Vida, several of her subordinate gods and their races to escape.

After that bitter victory, Farmaun and the other champions devoted the rest of their lifespans, which had been extended by Alda, to restoring the world.

The results of these efforts were not perfect, but Farmaun was proud even now that

they were satisfactory.

The humans, Dwarves and Elves, of which there had been only enough to maintain a single city if they were all gathered together, had grown into a population of tens of thousands within just a few thousand years.

And Nineroad had spread the techniques of taming monsters, founding the Tamers' Guild, while Farmaun gathered all of the different Guilds of the cities that conducted hunting and gathering, founding the Adventurers' Guild.

And after his death, Farmaun was entrusted with governing the fire attribute as a heroic god in Zantark's place.

He hadn't felt any doubts up until then.

While Farmaun was busy maintaining the world as a god in a faraway place, the humans continued to grow in number. But that stopped at a certain point.

As a result of many countries forming, the humans had begun fighting wars with one another.

That in itself perhaps couldn't be helped. It was something that happened even in the foreign world of *Earth* in which Farmaun had been born, a flaw that humanity had not been able to overcome even in that world.

But the problem was that the humans were fighting one another, even though there were evil gods that were remnants of the Demon King's army and numerous Devil's Nests where monsters were rampant, even if they were now free from the evil gods' control.

"If I was looking at things from the surface, it might have appeared that we were walking in place... or it might have even looked like we were progressing, slowly but surely. But the world can be seen clearly from a Divine Realm. We were taking three steps forward, then four steps back," said Farmaun.

At the very least, this was how things had appeared to him.

The gods, including Alda, had been completely occupied with maintaining the world, and they were struggling to recover from the damage they had sustained in the war against the Demon King, as well as the war against Vida.

Meanwhile, there were remnants of the Demon King's army moving in the shadows, evil gods like Hihiryushukaka, the evil god of joyful life, who had gained even more power than they had while the Demon King was alive.

And while Bellwood was around, Farmaun had believed in his words: "Now is a time of obscurity; we are standing at a crossroads where we can either be defeated by our hardships and put all of the effort and sacrifices made up until now to waste, or seize a shining future for ourselves!" But Bellwood and the evil god of sinful chains had struck each other at the same time, and Bellwood had fallen into slumber.

After that, Farmaun had become unable to suppress the doubts inside himself and started thinking about what he should do –

"Your brainwashing was undone," said Lissana.

"...I am truly ashamed," said Farmaun.

"It's not like I don't understand that you could get drunk on pleasant-sounding words, but don't stay drunk for over fifty-thousand years," said Schneider.

It was true that Bellwood had constantly stood at the front, pulling everyone forward, but when Farmaun reflected on the past and thought deeply about it, Bellwood had lacked long-term visions and had the notable characteristic of unconsciously taking the sense of values and knowledge from *Earth* as being absolute truths.

He had not introduced technology from *Earth* such as steam engines to the humanity of this world and forbidden them from developing it themselves, out of fear that it would pollute the nature before his eyes.

Immortality, Vampires, evil gods and the races of Vida who had inherited their blood were unconditionally evil.

Because of this, Bellwood's way of handling everything had been haphazard, his choices perhaps correct in the short-term but often being great failures in the long-term.

He had been concealing this with his ability to get things done and his skill with words. Bellwood's failures were not considered significant by those he had brainwashed, and when problems arose, he would divert everyone's eyes away from them by blaming "enemies."

The gods of Lambda, including Alda, as well as its people, possessed no immunity to such a malicious instigator, so they completely adored him.

“So, fifty-thousand years ago, you persuaded the other fire-attribute subordinate gods and heroic gods and left Alda’s faction?” asked Zod, his expression still filled with disappointment.

Farmaun gave a bitter smile. “Though you could put it that way, I haven’t managed to do anything important,” he said. “I went to apologize to Xerx-aniki and the others who are inside the Boundary Mountain Range, but they didn’t let me in, and now I’m going in and out of Zantark-oyaji’s land like this, but... I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve been punched.”

“Fool, that’s only natural.”

“Be grateful that you weren’t killed.”

New voices joined the conversation; these were the ancestors of the Kijin and Majin races, and the subordinate gods who had served Zantark even after he fused with evil gods.

Farmaun had appeared before Zantark, who had been recovering from his wounds while protecting Vida’s children, the Kijin and Majin races, on the Dark Continent. Making no excuses, Farmaun had knelt on the ground and said, “I’m sorry, I was wrong!”

Zantark’s subordinate gods, as well as the Kijin and Majin, had driven fatal blows into the back of his head. Unable to let this perfect opportunity to slay their sworn enemy slip away, they had shown no mercy or hesitation as they attacked him repeatedly.

Strangely enough, the one who had stopped them was Zantark.

He himself had also thought that Bellwood’s opinions were right until he fused with evil gods and left the frontlines of the battlefield, and most importantly, he was also partially responsible for failing to guide Farmaun, his own chosen champion, and being unable to correct his mistakes. So each person should only strike Farmaun a hundred times. That was what Zantark had told his subordinate gods.

As a result, Farmaun was attacked a hundred times by each of Zantark’s subordinate gods and every member of their races before finally being accepted to join their forces.

“But why did Alda leave you alone? From his point of view, you’re a full-on traitor, aren’t you? You joined Zantark and fought against an evil god,” said Dalton, looking at Farmaun with suspicious eyes.

Even if Alda didn’t have enough spare power to defeat and seal away a former champion who was now a heroic god, he should have at least sent Divine Messages to tell the humans that Farmaun was a traitor and forbid them from worshipping him.

“That’s because I’m still governing the fire attribute, even now,” Farmaun replied. “The world would be in danger if he were to eliminate me and the subordinate gods who followed me, so he can’t eliminate us even if he wants to.”

Alda’s faction already had their hands full; even though someone as important as Farmaun had turned traitor, it wouldn’t be easy for them to eliminate him.

There were some fire-attribute gods who had remained in Alda’s faction instead of following Farmaun, but those gods alone could not take Farmaun’s place.

Knowing this, Farmaun had left Alda’s faction in a bold fashion.

“I invited Nineroad to come with me as well, but she told me, ‘It’s too late to redo everything’...Leaving that aside, will you accept my request?” Farmaun asked.

Following Zantark’s example, Schneider’s party had agreed to forgive... acknowledge Farmaun after a hundred attacks, but before they even unleashed a single attack, Farmaun had requested something of them.

“Mediating things with Vandalieu, huh. Well, we have no choice but to do it.”

The Divine Message sent to Lissana by Ricklent, the genie of time and magic, the reason the party had come to the Dark Continent. The intent of that Divine Message was to make contact with Zantark, who otherwise could not be directly contacted because of the transformations his mind had undergone after fusing with two evil gods.

This task was already complete, but now they had to tell Vandalieu about Zantark, who still couldn’t move from the Dark Continent, and Farmaun, who was unable to enter the barrier surrounding the Boundary Mountain Range.

Even Schneider didn’t know what was going on inside the Boundary Mountain Range,

but it was certain that Farmaun would be perceived as an enemy, just like he was fifty thousand years ago.

“So, well, I’ll give it a try,” Schneider said. “Though I haven’t met him yet, either. And I have to make all kinds of preparations after returning to the Bahn Gaia continent, so I think it’ll take a year or two.”

Schneider would cross the Boundary Mountain Range and meet Vandalieu. This would be a true nightmare for the Amid Empire and the Pure-breed Vampire Birkyne.

If hints of this movement were sensed, Schneider would meet relentless resistance. The settlements of Vida’s races that he had secretly protected would be attacked to send him warnings, and it was certain that they would at least prevent him from moving about.

“If things were going to turn out this way, we should have crushed the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords properly,” said Dalton.

“No, they are very tenacious. Even if we were to try to crush them, we would never have caught them,” said Zod.

“They are a secret force, after all. They’re always scattered about, and even with our best efforts, we might be able to corner and defeat just one of them. If we want to defeat them, don’t we have no choice but to kill them when they come attacking us?” said Merdin.

“Anyway, I’m grateful that you’ll accept my request... also, I want to ask you to deliver one more message,” said Farmaun.

“What, that it’s alright for him to hit you a hundred times?” Lissana asked.

Farmaun shook his head. “I’m sorry, but I want him to leave hitting me a hundred times for later... since he can ‘break’ souls and familiar spirits.”

Including what the Adventurers’ Guild had done, Farmaun was aware that Vandalieu didn’t have a good impression of him, and it seemed that even he did not have the bravery to expose his body to a hundred soul-breaking attacks.

“...Umm, do I have to follow you as well?” asked Luvesfol.

Wouldn't it be better for me to stay sealed here? he thought, having experienced such a soul-breaking attack himself.

"Yeah, it's a pain to seal you away, so come with us," said Schneider.

"I'm finished..." Luvesfol sighed, but there was a god who picked him up.

"No, he has not been remonstrated enough, so will you not leave him here? I shall watch over him properly," said Tiamat, parent of the Drakonids.

She was a powerful figure among Luvesfol's own race that he had betrayed, and like Zod and Lissana, she was someone that Luvesfol didn't want to talk to much, but he felt grateful to her now.

"Really? Well, if we leave him with you, it'll be fine even if he somehow manages to regain his original powers," said Schneider.

"Yes, and if this Vandalieu comes here, we shall hand him back over," said Tiamat.

"...I'm finished after all," said Luvesfol.



The situation was developing rapidly, but at first, things had been going well for Miles.

It all began with the desertion of Baron Cuoco Ragdew, an important informant for the resistance organization that he had been sent to support, the Sauron Liberation Front.

For the Sauron Liberation Front, whose communication with the Orbaume Kingdom was delicate and unstable, the nobleman Cuoco and his vassals' desertion was not something easy to take responsibility for, even though there were only a few of them in number.

However, the last time he had communicated with Vandalieu and Chezare using the death-attribute-magic-operated communication devices that used the spirits and shrunken heads of monsters such as Goblins, it had been decided to have him come to Talosheim, though only if he wanted to.

Cuoco himself hadn't confirmed it yet, but with his personality, he would want to migrate to Talosheim where the producer of syrup was, even if he did so alone. And

Iris and her companions would feel more at ease that way than sending him to the Orbaume Kingdom, where his desertion might not even be accepted.

But a miscalculation had occurred; the Mana put into the communication devices had reached its limits. Only Legion and Vandalieu, the creator of the devices himself, could provide them with Mana, so they were now nothing more than shrunken heads.

Thinking back on it, perhaps this had been an error.

Next, the resistance had taken in Cuoco's family who had escaped in secret, then later regrouped with Cuoco, who had sneaked away with a very small number of his vassals. At this time, Cuoco had notified them that the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords were on the move.

Cuoco had wanted to let them know earlier, but the lower organization, the Hilt, had already entered the Sauron region, so he had been unable to make any hasty moves.

Fortunately, there was still time, the resistance leader Iris Bearheart gathered the organization's members even deeper inside their base in the former Scylla territory.

The abilities of Iris herself had improved several stages above what it had been before, and the resistance also had an elite force of Armor Tamers who wore Living Armors, led by Haj, as well as the Ghouls of the Sauron region who had begun to work together with them. And since Miles was here as well, the Sauron Liberation Front's fighting strength was very much complete.

But this was not enough to make them feel secure against the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, a collection of warriors who were all as powerful as A-class adventurers.

That was why they had decided to hole themselves up in the former Scylla Territory which, with Vandalieu's monoliths and stone circles, was now a labyrinth that was difficult to trespass into without a member of the Sauron Liberation Front to guide the way.

Iris and her companions, who had already been guided to the Demon Path, didn't now what kinds of effects the monoliths and stone circles had. But since enemies that looked at them went mad one after another, and because the installations themselves were actually Golems, they acknowledged that they were very effective as traps for intruders.

Incidentally, it would have been troublesome for Cuoco and his family to go insane somehow while they were being protected, so they had blindfolded them.

Fortunately, they knew that Vandalieu would come soon. So, holding out until then wasn't difficult.

And then they were supposed to explain the situation to Vandalieu once he arrived, asking him on whether they would withdraw the organization until the danger had passed or fight against the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

"...Honestly, we were looking at things too naïvely," Miles said, his lips stained crimson with his own blood and twisted in a self-deprecating laugh as he glared at the three assailants who had charged in after destroying the monoliths and stone circles.

"Hey, hey, don't go taking the words out of our mouths, Vampire," said a tall Elf man with slanted eyes – the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine, the Fifth Sword – as he twisted the whip that had gouged out chunks of Miles's steel-like body, as if making a display of it. "Leaving aside whether it's the effect of a Unique Skill or Magic Item, I didn't think that there would be a freak like a Vampire that can move about during the day... Could this be the Dhampir's father?"

"I informed you about this, didn't I? Bububuh... Do you not trust my insects?" said the 'Insect Swarm' Bebeckett, the Fifteenth Sword, sounding dissatisfied. "And he doesn't seem to be his father. He calls him 'Boss,' after all,"

Bebeckett was a suspicious figure wearing a hooded robe that covered the whole body from head to toe; it was impossible to tell Bebeckett's gender or age.

"Of course I don't trust them," Ervine said with a sneer. "How can I trust insects that only you can control? In fact, when I heard your report, I thought that maybe your brain had finally been eaten by your insects."

"Bubuh...!"

As the atmosphere between the two grew more dangerous, the third member, a man, the only one of the three to actually appear to be a knight, stepped between them. He was the 'Light-speed Sword' Duke Rickert Amid, the Third Sword, and he had an Orichalcum Artifact hanging from his waist.

"Ervine-dono, Bebeckett-dono, how about we get to the matter at hand?" he said,

pointing towards those around Miles with his gaze. "If we take too long, unlike that Vampire, the others will become unable to talk."

Miles's surroundings formed a tragic scene.

Haj and some others were just barely managing to stand, using their weapons to support their body weight, and there was no small number of people lying on the ground, not moving. Among them was Debis, the former mercenary who had been in a debt of gratitude to Iris's father, George Bearheart.

And behind Rickert and his two companions were a large number of resistance members and Ghouls, lying face-down. Perhaps the three Swords had held back; many of their victims were still breathing, but there were also some who couldn't be said to be alive or dead with a single glance.

"Even if they don't want to talk, I don't think it's a problem, however," said Rickert, looking towards Cuoco and the 'Liberating Princess Knight' Iris, who was bleeding profusely and unable to stand up.

"If that 'matter at hand' you speak of is to spare everyone else in exchange for me, then..." Iris coughed.

"Iris-dono, you are wasting your strength. It seems that they are determined to return with our heads," said Cuoco.

I'll have to give up on that syrup, he thought as he raised his sword with one hand, using the other to apply the Blood Potion that Iris had handed him during the battle onto her.

But Iris's wounds showed almost no signs of healing.

"It's useless; my holy sword Nemesis Bell does not allow any evil. It is an Artifact that obstructs light and life-attribute healing magic, possesses anti-Demon-King-fragment properties and anti-Vampire properties... it has the effect of nullifying the immortality of Vampires. Wounds inflicted by this holy sword cannot be healed by that Potion that is very clearly dangerous," said Rickert.

But looking at it another way, other than these properties, it was a holy sword with nothing special other than being extremely hard and sharp. It had been bestowed upon Rickert by Marshukzarl as a symbol of authority, as legend said that it had

originated from Bellwood. However, it had performed far beyond expectations during this mission.

Even now, the Blood Potion created from the Demon King's fragments and the blood of Vandalieu, a half-Vampire, was showing almost no effects on the wounds inflicted upon Iris by Nemesis Bell.

"This is... Perhaps I should have brought some military-issue Potions when I left the occupying army," Cuoco muttered.

"You can't do anything about it now, Cuoco-chan. More importantly, what is this 'matter at hand?'" Miles asked Ervine, who seemed to be the leader of the three, as he checked how loud the alarm sounds were from his Unique Skill, Warning, which alerted him of any danger.

"Ah, it's simple," Ervine said. "The one pulling your strings... He's called Vandalieu, right? I've come to tell him to stop the games and join the empire."

"...What did you say?" Miles looked at Ervine suspiciously. He put a hand to his ear, thinking that he had misheard.

"Did you not hear me? As that traitor over there has probably already said, we're members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. We've come to tell the Dhampir Vandalieu of an offer directly from the emperor, that we'll spare his life if he becomes a subordinate to the empire. So, where is Vandalieu? Or has he not arrived yet?"

Through Bebeckett's insect that had infested Iris, Ervine and his companions had even known that Vandalieu was planning to come today. However, they hadn't known what time he would be coming other than "before meal time."

That was why they had made the first move, attacking a little early to ensure that talks would proceed with them having the advantage... to ensure that everyone could definitely be disposed of if negotiations broke down. They had been careful to check whether the Dhampir was among them, and the 'King Slayer' Sleygar, the Eleventh Sword, was standing by with members of the Hilt.

But there had been no signs of him appearing, nor any signs that he had escaped, so Ervine had asked this question thinking that Vandalieu had not arrived yet. But Miles, everyone else who was still conscious except for Cuoco and even Iris opened their eyes wide.

These guys were planning to negotiate like this?!

They had carried out a violent attack and asked no questions, leaving a trail of many seriously wounded people. It was possible that some had even died. And they had already declared that they would at least kill Iris and Cuoco.

It was impossible to comprehend trying to discuss things after that.

No, it's not really that strange, is it? Miles thought. He quickly realized what Ervine and his companions, and what Emperor Marshukzarl of the Amid Empire who had sent them, were thinking, and recovered from his surprise.

"I see... you want to take the dangerous 'brat' playing king, brandishing his power with Ghouls and Undead, and make good use of him yourself," Miles said.

It was nothing more than Marshukzarl and his subordinates misunderstanding Vandalieu. His personality in particular.

It was partially because they hadn't been able to investigate Vandalieu because he had mostly been active on the other side of the Boundary Mountain Range, but from analyzing the incidents and damage that he had caused, they had decided that he was just a child wielding a special power.

That was why they were thinking of making him yield by threatening him under the pretense of negotiating.

Miles had been working in the underworld on the Orbaume Kingdom's side of the continent, so he wasn't particularly knowledgeable, but Marshukzarl, the current emperor of the Amid Empire, was probably one of the wisest of the rulers that had appeared in the empire's history.

But his mindset was still prejudiced. For him, who had lived through the complicated world of royals and nobles to reach the throne, it was impossible to see things from the point of Vandalieu, who had been born a Dhampir, and truly understand him.

Even I looked down on humans until just a short while ago, and no matter how smart someone is, they'd never know or believe that Boss was reincarnated here from another world with his memories intact unless they met him directly, so I can't really laugh about it, Miles thought.

“That is right. Why a Vampire would refer to a Dhampir as ‘Boss’ is incomprehensible, but... so, when is he coming? If he is not coming, I will have you tell me how he is coming and going across the Boundary Mountain Range,” said Ervine.

It seemed that Marshukzarl, as well as Ervine and his companions, had completely misread Vandalieu’s personality.

“Let’s see, could we have you wait a little longer?” Miles said, trying to buy time, thinking it would be best to not have more casualties.

And, unexpectedly, Ervine appeared to prepare himself to wait. “I see, then we’ll wait a little,” he said. “Oi, Ricky-boy. While we wait, go and take the heads of the traitor and the Princess Knight. It would be problematic if they were to escape in the confusion or used a Magic Item that kills them and destroys their corpses. Once you’re done with that, go back without us.”

It seemed that they had no intentions of waiting quietly.

“Alright,” Rickert said despite looking fed up with being called ‘boy,’ pointing his holy sword towards Iris and Cuoco.

The extermination of the Liberating Princess Knight, which on the surface was nothing more than his mission, and the disposal of a traitor which was nothing more than a side-task. But if they could not produce visible results, the world watching them would take this as a failure.

Thus, they had already decided that Rickert, the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords’ advertising billboard, would return with Iris and Cuoco’s heads.

“Cuoco-dono, I’ll buy us some time. So –” Iris began, trying to protect the still-healthy Cuoco while heavily wounded herself,

“Buying time is my job,” said Miles, standing in front of Rickert to stop him from going any further.

“...What is the meaning of this? Get out of the way. Your immortality is meaningless before my holy sword,” said Rickert.

“That’s right, Miles-dono. Vandalieu-dono entrusted you to me; there is no need for you to protect me!” Iris cried.

“Why are you agreeing with him?”

Being told to get out of the way by Rickert in front of him and Iris behind him, Miles grimaced at the sound of his Warning Skill growing louder and louder, and then exposed his fangs like a carnivorous beast as he laughed. “I came here because Boss told me to become your strength, you know? The thought of trying to tell Boss that I survived by abandoning you is scarier than dying!”

And even if he were to die, things wouldn't end there. As long as he was the subordinate of that superior, he would have to worry about what happened after death up until the moment he died.

“That's true...”

“I'm sure he wouldn't be angry, but...”

“...After dying, we'd be worked so hard that hell would look like heaven.”

“Only after death?”

The half-alive, half-dead Haj and his companions mustered their strength and got to their feet. The cracked Living Armors they were wearing let out fierce groans as well.

Seeing this, Rickert felt an unpleasant premonition. “That woman will be dead in less than half an hour. Do you still wish to protect her?” he asked.

He pointed out the reality of the situation, but Miles and the others didn't waver, glaring back at him as if to say, “so what?”

“It can't be helped,” Iris murmured. “Cuoco-dono, please get away. I'll... ask to be turned into a Living Armor. A sword father and armor daughter will go well together.”

Seeing the smile on Iris's white, bloodless face, Rickert's premonition became a certain belief. “Ervine, the negotiations with the Dhampir will definitely fail. I could bet my life on it.”

“Then we'll simply dispose of him when they do. If you won't do it, I will. I won't harm her above the neck, so just cut it off,” Ervine told Rickert, and then he turned towards Miles and the others. “And you lot, if you think that I'll sit here with this sweet face forever and not kill you, then –”

“Ah, it’s over,” said Miles, his blank voice cutting across Ervine’s irritated words.

“Bubuh, what? Have you given up?” asked the bewildered Bebeckett, who had intended to leave the negotiations to Ervine.

“No,” said Miles, looking refreshed now that the harsh alarm sound had stopped. “I meant that it’s over for you guys. Isn’t it, Boss?”

Before Bebeckett and the other two could understand what his words meant, an enormous shadow appeared over their heads without warning.

Bebeckett and Ervine saw Vandalieu, who had Teleported with Legion from Talosheim, looking at them.

And then black Mana poured out of his body with explosive force, engulfing Iris and the others.



Title explanation:

【Champion】

A Title that can be obtained by someone who has come from another world (whether summoned, transferred by chance or reincarnated) once they are acknowledged by the gods and a large number of people (at least ten thousand).

This Title was gained by Zakkart and Bellwood who had been summoned by the gods from the foreign world of *Earth*, but they acquired this Title immediately as they were people summoned by the gods to begin with and praised by the people as “champions summoned by the gods” from the moment they came into the world.

This Title has effects such as improving the effects of any equipped Artifacts and possessed Unique Skills, lowering the difficulty of awakening superior Skills – effects that are meaningless unless one is a being fit to be called a champion.

Incidentally, those who were born and raised in this world such as the ‘Thunderclap’ Schneider and the ‘Blue-flamed Sword’ Heinz cannot acquire this Title no matter how much they are acknowledged by the gods and people.

In the case of Vandalieu, who was reincarnated in this world with the memories of his previous lives intact, Fidirg and Merrebeveil alone were not enough to fulfill the conditions of acquiring this Title, but he acquired it after the gods and people within the Boundary Mountain range acknowledged him.

Chapter 150

Don't underestimate human strength!

With the information gained during the audience with the gods inside the Boundary Mountain Range, Vandalieu had gained hope for achieving his heart's desire, the resurrection of his mother Darcia.

But he still didn't know the exact method that would allow him to resurrect her. He didn't know, but this was information that Ricklent, the genie of time and magic, and Zuruwarn, the god of space and creation, had made the effort of giving him. It was highly trustworthy.

And since his objective was the legacy of a legendary champion, it was almost certainly true.

"Ah, thank you, Vandalieu!" said Darcia.

She was very happy upon learning this information. Up until now, she had been in an incomparably better state than regular spirits due to Vandalieu's death-attribute spell, Visualization, and because she could share his five senses. Thus, she didn't feel a particularly powerful urge to come back to life.

But now that she might really come back to life, it seemed that she had all kinds of thoughts.

"I can finally do things like making meals and fixing clothes for you, Vandalieu!" she said happily.

It seemed that she wanted to take care of her son with her own hands as a mother.

Vandalieu looked up at her with an emotional gaze. "Mom..."

"So, you need to teach me how to cook and sew. You're better than me at both, after all," Darcia said.

"Yeah, leave it to me, Mom."

The deterioration of Darcia's spirit had almost completely stopped with Vandalieu's death-attribute Mana, but some of her memories were cut unnaturally short, and she did feel some uneasiness.

And most importantly, coming back to life would allow her to spend time with her son as a living person.

And with her revival, perhaps Vandalieu would not try to take reckless actions of revenge, become injured and suffer over her death. And she would be able to be of use to him as well.

Sam, Rita, Saria, Pauvina and the others were also very happy to learn of the news that Darcia's resurrection would become possible, so things were a little festive in Talosheim right now.

But a full-on festival couldn't be held while things were still looking suspicious in the Sauron region.

Through the Goblin communication devices, Vandalieu learned that Baron Cuoco Ragdew, a fan of Eisen's (syrup), had deserted the Amid Empire's army. It would probably be best to meet him directly.

And while he was at it, he might as well use Noble Orc meat to hold a dinner party with everyone as they exchanged information.

"...What happened?" Vandalieu whispered in shock.

He had finished preparing with high spirits and teleported with Legion, only to see the wounded members of the Sauron Liberation Front lying on the ground, and Iris with the shadow of death on her face.

Quickly deciding that there was no need to even ask, Vandalieu cast his spells.

"So, you're Vandalieu," said one of the enemies. "You're smaller than I imagined. That mass of flesh beside you is an Undead, is it? Either way, I'm surprised that you could Teleport. To think that you could even use space-attribute magic."

Several people have died. But fortunately, it seems that only a few minutes have passed, and the wounds on their bodies aren't beyond repair.

Vandalieu used death-attribute magic to protect the spirits that had just left their bodies while also repairing the bodies and conducting cardiopulmonary resuscitation on them. He delayed the deaths of the bodies' cells, particularly focusing on the cells of the brain, while using his spirit form hands to move their hearts and lungs.

"I'll help you. Berserk, you're up," said Pluto.

"GRRR!"

A flesh-colored bear appeared on Legion's surface and threw chunks of flesh that made up its own body near the motionless people lying on the ground. Berserk's flesh that had been separated from Legion split up even further, wriggling in an unpleasant fashion and crawling onto the injured, wrapping around them and infesting them.

"Hoh, so you're creating Undead from the useless corpses right away? But –"

"Bububuh, that's not right, Ervine. That's what it might look like, but it seems that he intends to heal them."

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, while simultaneously repairing things like bones, organs and nerves enough to sustain life functions. With the spirits of the bodies' owners put back inside, their resurrections were complete.

Berserk was throwing his flesh at the resurrected individuals to infest them, providing emergency treatment by acting as bandages and wooden splints while forcibly making them retreat.

"Boss, these guys are –" Miles said from behind.

"I know. Well done on being able to hold out this long for us, Miles," said Vandalieu in gratitude, but time was still short, so he continued his treatment of the wounded.

"No, not that, these guys are the Fifteen Evil –"

"Vegetables?"

TLN: This joke doesn't really work in English, but the start of "evil-breaking swords" is 邪碎/jasai, which sounds like 野菜/yasai, the word for vegetable.

“...I’m sorry, I’ll leave it for later,” said Miles as he shut his mouth, realizing that Vandalieu currently didn’t seem to have time for listening to details.

A vein appeared on Ervine’s forehead as Vandalieu, who was still floating in the air with Flight, stared at him but otherwise taking no notice of him. “Oi, how long are you planning to ignore us? I’m the Fifth Sword of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, the Five-headed Snake Ervine. We made all this effort to speak to a brat like you –”

“Iris, your wounds won’t heal. What about Blood Potion?” Vandalieu said, still paying Ervine no attention.

As Ervine’s image was reflected in Vandalieu’s hollow eyes, his face stiffened.

“Vandalieu-dono, do not... concern yourself with me...”

“Your Majesty... Iris has been wounded by that man’s holy sword... It is an Artifact that inflicts wounds that cannot be healed through power originating from Vampires, the Demon King’s fragments or the light and life attributes,” said her father George who inhabited her now-cracked sword, delivering grave news.

Because Iris had been deeply wounded by the holy sword Nemesis Bell, even though Vandalieu extended his spirit form and fused with her, his Rapid Regeneration skill had almost no effect, as he was a half-Vampire.

Thinking that it was a type of curse, Vandalieu tried to remove it, but he couldn’t do that either. It seemed that unlike Ice Age’s ice, it was not a curse.

It seemed that the holy sword held something that was not a curse, the power of a superior type, or perhaps a subtype, of the light-attribute that could possibly be named the holy attribute. This was very troublesome.

Thus, Vandalieu cast the Death Delay spell on Iris. It was a spell that didn’t heal injuries and merely delayed the time it took the target to die, but its effects took place, not being obstructed by the holy sword’s power.

Iris was enshrouded by Mana that looked like black fog, but her face was still pale white. She was still on the verge of death, and her current state was being extended, so that was only natural.

“Iris, I unfortunately can’t heal those wounds,” Vandalieu said. “It will probably be

impossible even for Jeena. So please choose whether you will become an Undead later or a member of one of Vida's races other than a Vampire."

"...I understand," Iris murmured. "I must give the title of Liberating Princess Knight to another..."

"You don't understand. We've already said we're going to take that little girl's head, haven't we?" said Ervine, swinging his whip in anger.

With a noise sounding like the air itself splitting, a piece of rubble that was once a part of the resistance's base crumbled to pieces.

Confirming that Vandalieu's attention was finally on them, the 'Insect Swarm' Bebeckett took over for Ervine and began the negotiation. "We can begin now, can't we? Bububuh, we are the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords of the Amid Empire. Dhampir Vandalieu, His Majesty the emperor has taken a great interest in you. If you swear loyalty to the empire and devote your power to be used for the empire's good, then we promise to spare your life. And those of your subordinates, too. Depending on circumstances, we will allow you to possess land on the other side of the Boundary Mountain Range, and you may take Ghouls in the empire's territory with you."

The conditions named by Bebeckett could have been considered extraordinary, considering that they had been named by the emperor of the Amid Empire, where Vida's races, particularly Vampires and Dhampirs, were harshly disdained and persecuted.

At the very least, no emperor in the Amid Empire's history other than Marshukzarl would have thought to try to negotiate with Vandalieu.

But at the same time, Marshukzarl thought that it was highly likely that negotiations would break down. From Vandalieu's actions that had been revealed through investigations, it was doubtful as to whether he still had the sanity needed to negotiate.

If that power could be obtained, it would be useful beyond imagination. But leaving Vandalieu alone was too dangerous. He had already become a being who could shake the foundations of the Amid Empire.

That was why Marshukzarl had tried negotiating with Vandalieu, thinking that the chances that they would succeed would be less than thirty percent, and dispatched

enough fighting strength that he could be eliminated with certainty if he rejected the negotiations.

Will you be smart and join the enemy you can't defeat, or die as a tyrant inside a small well? Which will you choose? Thought the 'Insect Swarm' Bebeckett, the Tenth Sword.

As a Bug Tamer who employed countless insects, she was an exceptional spy, but she was even more specialized in attacking large numbers of enemies.

"I forgot to say this, but that Liberating Princess Knight and the senile traitor at the back aren't included," Bebeckett added. "We need their heads as proof of having accomplished our official mission here. If you need the Princess Knight at all costs, then we don't mind as long as you can provide the head of someone who looks like her."

Bebeckett had a countless number of insects inside her own body; she was like a general in command of a countless number of soldiers. She had used those insects to stop numerous monster rampages before.

She had been dispatched here with the hopes that she would be able to use that power to exterminate the countless Undead under Vandalieu's command.

Of course, he only has that strange mass of flesh with him, but I won't let my guard down.

"Now then, can we hear your answer?" Bebeckett asked.

"Shut up."

Vandalieu had been listening to Bebeckett's words but not considered them even for a moment.

Marshukzarl's offered conditions might have seemed extraordinary to the three Swords, but to Vandalieu, they were more worthless than garbage.

Most importantly, Vandalieu was currently busy suppressing his anger and self-hatred. If he had put more serious thought into things, if he had been prepared... he could have prevented this situation.

"...Honestly speaking, I have no attachment to the Sauron region," Vandalieu said. "My support for Iris and her companions was for the selfish reason of wanting connections

to the Orbaume Kingdom in the future. My first impression of Iris, Haj and the others wasn't that good to begin with, anyway."

"Then our empire can take the kingdom's place –"

"That's why I'll kill you."

With anger and bloodthirst, Vandalieu put his two hands together and released Death Bullets from his fingers, aiming for Bebeckett and her companions.

Vandalieu had associated with these people for a selfish reason, and his first impression of them hadn't been good. But they had shared many meals together, interacted with one another and spent time together. They had adored him, calling him 'Boss,' and eaten his curry, calling it delicious.

Vandalieu didn't feel the slightest hesitation in directing his bloodthirst towards those who had hurt Iris, Haj and the others.

"I told you that the negotiations will fail!" said Rickert.

"I never thought they'd succeed to begin with! Don't act all high and mighty!" shouted Ervine.

Bebeckett avoided the black fist-sized Death Bullets, while Rickert and Ervine repelled and broke them with their holy sword and whip.

"I see, what a pity. Then become food for my insects along with the resistance that's on death's door!" shouted Bebeckett.

The sleeves and hem of her robe expanded, and the low hum of insect wings could be heard as a countless number of shadows flew out from within. These were the insects she controlled.

None of them were larger than the palm of a hand; as monsters, they were all small insects. Most of their Ranks were below those of Cemetery Bees, too.

Flies with a unique venom, moths with a strange attack that could only be thought of as magic and beetles that spat acid that could melt steel – They were insects of all kinds with vicious abilities.

An exceptionally experienced adventurer or an extremely powerful monster might be able to deal with one type, no, several types of these insects. But there probably wasn't a single adventurer who could deal with a swarm of insects with dozens of varieties.

Bebeckett was confident that the same would be the case for Vandalieu, who seemed helpless against the flood of insects and unable to even fire more Death Bullets. She let out a loud, strange laugh.

"BUBUBUBUBUH! There have been many powerful people like you! But you see, you only have two options, whether to yield to the power of a great nation or be crushed! If you want to blame someone, blame your own foolishness –"

"It's over," Rickert sighed, seeing that Vandalieu was no longer even visible behind the insects that he was surrounded by. As he'd expected, the negotiations had failed, but it was the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, the Amid Empire, who had won in the end.

But this sense of resignation and relief was blown away in an instant as Bebeckett's strange but elated, triumphant tone turned into a scream filled with shock and fear.

"HYAAAH! Wait, WAIT!"

"Bebeckett?!" Rickert shouted Bebeckett's name in surprise.

But it seemed that Bebeckett had no time to pay attention to Rickert; she twisted her body and screamed. "Wait! Wait, don't go! DON'T LEAVE MEEEE!"

As she screamed, a countless number of insects flew from Bebeckett towards Vandalieu.

Ervine opened his eyes wide in shock. "That brat isn't being eaten by the insects?!"

Bebeckett's insects that were swarming around Vandalieu weren't biting his skin with their powerful jaws or stabbing him with their venomous stingers. They were simply clinging to his skin and hair... being silently absorbed.

And Vandalieu, who had equipped all of the insects inside his body, appeared as if nothing had happened at all.

"It seems that I am superior as an Insect User," said Vandalieu, who had stopped firing Death Bullets so as not to harm the insects that had taken a liking to him.

The truth was that he had emitted a kind of pheromone that attracted the insects with the Demon King's scent glands, but that could probably be included in his skill as an Insect User.

Meanwhile, Bebeckett fell onto the ground, wheezing.

The person who rolled out of her robe was an old woman with great damage all over her body.

Bebeckett had been using insects by offering a part of her flesh to the monsters as food, making them mistake her body for their nest. Thus, she had been reliant on the insects to sustain the life of her own body.

All of those insects that she had been relying on had been charmed and stolen by Vandalieu, and now the 'Insect Swarm' Bebeckett was nothing more than an old woman on the verge of death.

But her life was ended immediately. Not only Rickert, but Vandalieu and his companions as well, all looked at the man who had smashed the back of her head.

"E-Ervine! Why...?!" Rickert exclaimed.

Ervine looked composed, despite having just sent Bebeckett's blood and pieces of her flesh flying into the air with a single swing of his whip. "To not hand him the Experience Points," he said. "If we just let Bebeckett die like that, how many Experience Points do you think he would gain? With that being the case, having me, her ally, take the Experience Points was the least we could do for her."

"Th-that might be true, but..."

Ervine was unaware of Vandalieu's 'Unable to gain Experience Points independently' curse, but even so, Rickert was speechless at Ervine's callousness.

And Vandalieu also froze in surprise at Ervine's act of finishing off his companion to prevent the enemy gaining Experience Points.

And then his head suddenly flew off away from his torso without warning.

"Eh?" Iris said in shock.

“B-Boss?!” shouted Haj.

They saw Vandalieu, whose head had been cut off, and the man responsible for this, a man dressed completely in black.

The man who had cut Vandalieu’s head off was one of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, the ‘King Slayer’ Sleygar, the Eleventh Sword. He was a matchless assassin.

He was equipped with the Night-god’s Cloak, an Artifact that erased the presence of the one wearing it, and he had acquired Disexist, the superior version of the Silent Steps Skill. He had assassinated a countless number of monsters with the title of King and ringleaders of rebellion groups.

It was an old trick to aim for the head, the commander, when there were too many enemies. This strategy was particularly effective when fighting a group of monsters ruled by a monster with the title of King.

The monsters in such groups were strengthened by the Strengthen Followers Skill possessed by the King monster. But if the King who possessed that Title was defeated, they would lose that effect. And monsters that lost their absolute commander often fell into chaos, turning into a disorderly mob.

That was why Sleygar specialized in assassinating the leaders with a single strike, used that skill to take the heads of all kinds of Kings, earning himself the Title of ‘King Slayer’ and his position as the Eleventh Sword.

If Bebeckett had been in charge of large numbers of enemies, Sleygar’s job in this mission was to slip past Vandalieu’s servants and assassinate him with a single strike.

That was why he had erased his presence and stayed hidden this whole time.

Vandalieu’s head span threw the air. Blood sprayed from his torso like a fountain, sticking onto Sleygar’s cloak. Seeing this, Ervine was certain that Vandalieu was dead. That was indeed how it appeared, but the completely-black Sleygar looked like he was shining –

“G-GYAAAH?!”

Ervine’s certainty in this victory crumbled as Sleygar screamed and clutched his face with one hand, crumpling and falling onto his back.

“GUAAAAH! M-my eyes... what did you do to me?!” Sleygar writhed in agony, still clutching his face with one hand.

Meanwhile, Vandalieu’s spirit form that had emerged with Out-of-body Experience took his head back from Legion and attached it back onto his body.

“Ah, that was surprising. Ah, Haj, get back a little more. It’s going to sting.”

Vandalieu hadn’t noticed that Sleygar was hiding, but with the Danger Sense: Death spell, he had sensed that his head was being aimed for the moment before it happened. But he had been unable to do anything about Sleygar’s speed.

And so, he had given up on running away. The moment his head was cut off, he activated the Demon King’s fur and luminescent organs. But this was for attacking, not for defense.

And the moment his head was cut off, he had sent the Demon King’s fur flying into the air.

Large spiders related to tarantulas on Earth would send the fine hairs on their legs flying out to protect themselves when they sensed danger. Vandalieu had recreated this phenomenon by sending extremely fine strands of the Demon King’s fur flying out.

Even if Tarantula hairs directly contacted the skin, it would only cause inflammation and irritation. But just how much pain was Sleygar feeling after having his face and eyes wounded by the Demon King’s fur? At the very least, it would be more than a stinging sensation.

“H-how are you alive when your head was cut off?! Even a Vampire would die; how, when you’re just a Dhampir?!” Rickert shouted, even signs of fear appearing on his face.

“That’s because I won’t die even if my head is cut off,” Vandalieu replied as he finished reattaching his head to his body.

Having given this vague, unserious answer, Vandalieu turned his attention away from the speechless Rickert and back to Sleygar.

“Guh!” Sleygar groaned.

He forcibly ignored the extreme pain that he was experiencing, stood up and kicked the ground, flying several meters into the air. And then he tried to use the branches of the nearby trees as footholds to disappear back into the forest. His movements made it difficult to imagine that he had been blinded by the fur.

If he could get away from Vandalieu and his companions, he could erase his presence once more with the Night-god's Cloak and the Disexist Skill. That was probably what he was aiming to do.

But the Night-god's Cloak that he was so dependent on had been soaked in Vandalieu's blood, which was shining a bluish-white color because the Demon King's luminescent organs had been mixed into it, and the scent created by the Demon King's scent glands was clinging to it as well, so it had likely lost its effects.

"Please chase after him, Isla," said Vandalieu.

"As you wish!"

The Dark Night Knights' Order led by the Vampire Zombie Isla emerged from within Vandalieu.

"Everyone, follow me! It is time to show Vandalieu-sama our true worth as hounds!" Isla shouted.

"VOOOOOH! Chase the scent and light!"

"Follow Captain Isla's lead!"

Now that Sleygar's invisibility, his greatest strength, was no longer available to him, his chances of surviving a pursuit from Isla and her swarm of flying Vampires were exceedingly low.

"Impossible... In the blink of an eye, two of the Fifteen Swords have been..." Rickert gasped in astonishment.

"He has a lot of subordinates, and he's strong himself as well? This is crazy," Ervine muttered, breaking out in a cold sweat now that two of his companions had been lost without even having time to coordinate and work together.

Iris, Haj and the Ghouls and resistance members who had regained their

consciousness were surprised as well. These were enemies that they had been completely helpless against, but two of them had been defeated immediately after Vandalieu arrived.

Iris had witnessed Vandalieu defeat the Pure-breed Vampire Gubamon, but even so, she couldn't help but be surprised at the way he had so easily defeated two of the four members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords that were present.

Incidentally, Cuoco, who was behind Iris, had been unable to deal with these surprises one after another; he was now standing stock-still in a daze. Now, he was gazing at Legion and whispering, "What nice meat," seemingly in an attempt to escape reality.

"...Well, I thought that things would turn out like this," said Miles.

His Warning hadn't made a single sound, so he had known that there was no more danger now that Vandalieu was here.

In other words, the three members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords... in reality, there had been four, but although they had been formidable enemies to Vandalieu, they were not threats. That was how things were.

"There is no way that Vandalieu won't win against enemies like this now."

"By the way, there are only two of them left now, but who *are* they?!"

"They're apparently the Amid Empire's secret force. Well, they're not even enemies for Vandalieu, though."

"They're not enemies? Then isn't it bad to kill them?"

"That's not what that means, Jack."

"...This stings a little."

None of the members of Legion, including Pluto, felt any sense of danger. He didn't die even if his heart and lungs were forcibly stopped, so they thought that there was no way that he would die just from having his head cut off.

That's what they had thought, but it had still been unpleasant. Because for the Eighth Guidance members that made up Legion, Vandalieu was not only a friend, but

someone they worshipped.

“Vandalieu, can we join in on the chase for the assassin?” asked Pluto.

“No, I’d like to ask you to fight the person over there instead. You’ll be able to defeat him, Legion,” said Vandalieu.

“Understood!”

Prioritizing Vandalieu’s wishes, Legion faced not the fleeing Sleygar, but Rickert.

With the sight of the grotesque-looking Legion closing in on him perhaps bringing him back to his senses, Rickert raised his holy sword once more.

But Ervine shouted an order at him. “Ricky-boy, you get out of here!”

His whip, which was covered in flames, restrained Legion. He produced another whip from his back, and as he wielded Mana-imbued whips with both hands, even Legion was forced to fall back.

“Why?! My Nemesis Bell should be of use here!” Rickert shouted, his words driven by his complex of being nothing more than a decoration.

“You have a position on the surface as a duke,” Ervine said calmly. “Leave this to me and go.”

Rickert was a nephew of the current emperor, someone who possessed a claim to the throne. And as the Third Sword, the ‘Light-speed Sword’ was a decoration that was used for propaganda, but that was just another reason why he couldn’t be allowed to die so easily... unlike Ervine, Bebeckett and Sleygar.

“Kuh... Alright,” said Rickert, looking frustrated as he comprehended the situation and tried to retreat as he had been ordered.

But Legion, who had become even larger with the Size Alteration Skill, closed in on him. “There’s no way we’d let you get away, is there?”

“UOH?!”

Legion’s speed itself was not a threat to Rickert, but their enormous volume was.

He couldn't escape while ignoring Legion, who was swinging tentacles as thick as building pillars as they closed in on him.

"Tch! So troublesome!" Ervine muttered.

Trying to support Rickert's retreat, he immediately restrained Legion with his two whips that were covered in magical flames.

"Ah, I hate flames," Legion said.

"Your opponent is over here," said Vandalieu.

Ervine was trying to slow Legion's movements down, but with Vandalieu firing the Demon King's horns his way, he had no choice but to stop.

"So those are the Demon King's fragments. You brat, don't go thinking that you've become strong just because you can use a fragment or two!" Ervine shouted.

He wasn't fazed by the sight of the fragments; he had equipment to fight against and seal fragments of the Demon King... Bebeckett and Sleygar had already been defeated by the Demon King's scent glands, fur and luminescent organs, but it seemed that he hadn't realized that these were the Demon King's fragments.

"How many fools do you think there have been before you who deluded themselves into thinking that they had become strong with the Demon King's fragments! I'll teach you what happened to those fools. Don't underestimate human strength, you brat!"

Ervine swung his anti-Demon King whip made of Orichalcum, trying to strike the new black, spearhead-shaped object growing from Vandalieu's chest.

"That will be difficult for you," said a new voice.

The Orichalcum whip was deflected by the tip of the spear of the Zombie who was once a hero of the Mirg shield-nation, the 'Divine Spear of Ice' Mikhail, who had emerged from within Vandalieu's chest.

And then Eleanora, Borkus and the Living Armors Saria and Rita emerged as well.

"Well, I don't mind if you want to exert yourself."

“This is good pre-meal exercise, too.”

“I wonder if Elves taste good?”

“That person looks delicious, Nee-san.”

“What?!” Ervine shouted, surprised that Vandalieu had subordinates like these in addition to the Vampire Zombies that had chased after Sleygar.

“So, dear guest,” said Bellmond, the Abyssal Vampire who was once a forest-monkey Beast-person as she emerged from Vandalieu as well. She had come along because Vandalieu had been planning to eat meat with everyone. “Please make a display of this ‘human strength’ against Danna-sama. The outcome has already been decided, so please do so to your heart’s content.”

As Bellmond finished speaking, Vandalieu rushed fiercely towards Ervine.



- **Name:** Bebeckett
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 75 years old
- **Title:** 【Insect Swarm】 , 【Evil-breaking Sword】
- **Job:** Bug Master Tamer
- **Level:** 89
- **Job history:** Apprentice Beekeeper, Beekeeper, Animal Trainer, Perfumer, Tamer, Bug Tamer
- **Passive skills:**
 - Mental Corruption: Level 3
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 4
 - Detect Presence: Level 2
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 10
- **Active skills:**
 - Housework: Level 4
 - Beekeeping: Level 5
 - Perfuming: Level 7
 - Animal Training: Level 10
 - Commanding: Level 5
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
- **Unique skills:**
 - Insect Body

Bebeckett was originally an ordinary citizen, an attentive beekeeper, but as she handled the bees' honey, her strange talent for manipulating insects bloomed. Believing that this talent was a special power given to her by the gods, she was completely absorbed in it.

She acquired production-related Jobs, using her own training methods and scents, and as she increased her ability to manipulate insects, the Amid Empire's intelligence network took notice of her and recruited her.

After that, she acquired Tamer-type Jobs and improved her techniques for manipulating insects. Finally, she was given the Title of 'Insect Swarm' and selected to be one of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

She was the type who excelled in one particular field; her true value was shown when

eradicating large numbers of small fry that were not individually strong.

She was also useful for gathering intelligence, such as the locations and sounds around those infested by her insects. However, the Hilt are normally enough for conducting investigations, so she did not have many opportunities to use this ability.

Though this was also partially to control her insects better, she had been maintaining her body's life functions by relying on the insects infesting her own body in order to make up for her body having become weakened due to old age. But that became her undoing when all of her insects were stolen by Vandalieu.

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- **Name:** Sleygar
 - **Race:** Half-Elf (Human)
 - **Age:** 57 years old
 - **Title:** 【King Slayer】 , 【Evil-breaking Sword】
 - **Job:** Master Assassin
 - **Level:** 90
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Pursuer, Treasure Hunter, Assassin, Dagger User, Magic Sword User, Decapitating Executioner
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 10
 - Strengthened Agility when equipped with non-metal armor (Large)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Dagger (Large)
 - Intuition: Level 6
 - Detect Presence: Level 9
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 4
 - **Active skills:**
 - Decapitation Technique: Level 2
 - Throwing: Level 9
 - Archery: Level 6
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6
 - Disexist: Level 5
 - Assassination Technique: Level 10
 - Trap: Level 8
 - Lockpicking: Level 7
 - Transcend Limits: Level 1

- Surpass Limits: Magic Sword: Level 10
- **Unique skills:**
 - King Slayer

Sleygar is someone from the Hilt whose skills were acknowledged, resulting in his selection to be one of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. He possessed a superior version of the Dagger Technique Skill, Decapitation Technique (A combat-related Skill utilizing daggers that is specialized in decapitating enemies); he was an assassin who was powerful even when fighting head-on.

But his true value was shown when assassinating his targets by surprise with a single attack.

When he is using his Disexist Skill and the Night-god's Cloak, his specialized invisibility Artifact, it is almost impossible to detect him, rivaling the invisibility ability of Ghost of the Eighth Guidance, who is now a part of Legion.

Due to his Unique Skill, King Slayer, his attacks gain a large bonus against those with race names or Titles containing 'King,' so every time a monster like a Goblin King or Kobold King appeared and the Adventurers' Guild failed to eliminate them, he would always be dispatched.

But his fate was sealed when he was ordered to assassinate someone who does not die even if he is decapitated.

Chapter 151

Not even an appetizer

If someone who did not know anything were to see this battle, this is what they would think:

A brave hero wielding a shining sword was fighting a visibly disgusting monster.

“What *is* this thing?” the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert muttered suspiciously as he sliced apart dog-sized masses of flesh one after another.

He continued to defend against the strange attacks of Legion, who were tearing off their own arms that made up part of their body and throwing them at him.

But there was sweat on his forehead, his fringe plastered to it in a single line.

On the other hand, Legion were chatting idly among themselves.

“They get cut in strange ways, don’t they!”

“The ones I’m throwing aren’t getting cut, though?”

“Pluto, I don’t think that person would go out of his way to cut the ones that wouldn’t hit him anyway.”

“...You have no control.”

Since Legion had the appearance of a countless number of flesh mannequins being entwined around each other to form a sphere, it was difficult to imagine their emotions just from looking at them, but even Rickert could tell that they were showing no signs of exhaustion.

In fact, they were repeatedly performing attacks that cost them their own body parts, but the removed parts were swelling and regrowing back to normal in a matter of seconds. Thus, their Vitality and Stamina weren’t decreasing at all.

“Kuh! Don’t underestimate me!” Rickert shouted.

He was unharmed, but his Stamina was being gradually chipped away.

The cutting edge of the holy sword Nemesis Bell, and the skill with which Rickert was wielding it, were tremendous. The movements of the blade were unperceivable to the eyes of ordinary people; they would only look like flashes of light.

But the masses of flesh that Legion was throwing were far heavier and harder than they looked, but perhaps there was fat contained in them; every time Rickert cut them, oil stuck to his blade. That was why Rickert’s Stamina was being drained every time he swung his sword.

Of course, Rickert himself knew how much of a disadvantage he was at, trying to have a contest of endurance against a monster. He had tried to counterattack numerous times.

“Sky Rend!”

Rickert swung Nemesis Bell at a high speed, activating a Swordsmanship martial skill that released a slashing attack. It severed several of Legion’s arms that had been throwing pieces of flesh.

But all of the arms regrew from where they were severed within seconds, returning to normal.

“Hitomi-chan, did that guy do something? Jack and the rest of us are completely fine, you know?”

“Jack, that guy made what’s called a ‘useless effort.’”

This was the same result as all of Rickert’s attacks so far.

“...It’s not an Undead, and since the wounds inflicted by Nemesis Bell’s slashes are healing, it isn’t related to Vampires or the Demon King’s fragments, nor has it been created by life-attribute magic... this is hard to believe,” Rickert groaned in frustration. If Legion fell under any of these categories, Nemesis Bell’s power would seal away their tremendous regenerative ability.

“How terrible of you to judge a person by their appearance. Did your parents not teach

you any better?" said a woman's voice.

Rickert changed his mindset. "My apologies. But my private teacher taught me that one's human nature is reflected in their appearance," he responded casually, avoiding the new masses of flesh being thrown his way as he examined Legion more closely.

Monsters with a powerful regenerative ability should have a method to cut it off, a weak point. Find it. What this monster is instinctively protecting is... that part called Pluto!

"I've seen through you! Great Sky Rend!"

"Seen -?!"

Rickert released a superior version of the Sky Rend martial skill, which cut through a thrown mass of flesh and then struck the upper body of the person-shaped part that Pluto's personality was in charge of, cutting her clean in two from the top of her head down to her navel.

"Seen... through what, exactly?" asked Pluto, her split left and right halves joining back together right away.

"Impossible!" Rickert exclaimed, astounded that this wasn't a vital point.

He had seen all kinds of enemies before – enemies more skilled in swordsmanship than him, enemies who were so quick that his sword could not hit them, enemies with astounding defensive abilities, enemies that were unaffected by physical attacks to begin with. On each of these occasions, he had survived by coming up with plans or being saved by Ervine and the other true members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

But it was his first time encountering an enemy that he could damage easily by cutting with his sword, only to have the damage immediately recover, while also possessing no vital points.

On top of that, the other members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords were not here. Rickert, trying to escape from Vandalieu, had continued moving while exchanging blows with Legion, so he had already moved a large distance from where he'd started.

Should I keep this up and forcibly make an escape? In sheer speed, I have the upper hand. But can I get away from this thing when it can float in the air? If I had some kind of

invisibility technique like Sleygar... I should have received training as a scout as well.

Now that things had come to this, his only options were to attack recklessly or make an escape attempt that was unlikely to succeed. This was the thought that surfaced in Rickert's mind.

At that moment, several knives buried themselves inside Legion.

"Duke, please take this opportunity to escape!"

"We shall buy you time!"

The ones who had thrown the knives were the members of the Hilt that Sleygar had stationed in the surrounding area.

Rickert wasn't aware of this, but they had been ordered in advance to support Rickert's escape if something unexpected occurred.

"You guys... Forgive me!" Rickert said to them, turning around to ensure that the Hilt members' sacrifice wouldn't be in vain.

But before he could break into a run, the countless number of large, heavy masses of Legion's meat that were lying on the ground began trembling ominously.

"The ones that were hidden have conveniently come out, so it's about time we made a move, Izanami."

"Yes... Devour them."

Legion's own flesh that they had been throwing at Rickert. These were not simply replacements for throwing weapons; they were part of a strategic preparation to make use of the power of Izanami, one of Legion's members.

"GYAAAAH!"

With deep roars, the masses of flesh transformed into Yomotsuikusa, monsters that had the appearances of skinless apes with their muscles exposed.

"Damn you! So, this was a trap to lure out the Hilt!" Rickert shouted in frustration, cutting down the Yomotsuikusa one by one as they leapt at him with their sharp fangs

and claws bared.

With Rickert's ability, the Yomotsuikusa were nothing more than small-fry, but for the Hilt members that were not specialized in combat, they were not enemies that could be defeated with ease. They could somehow manage to handle one or two of them, but every single piece of flesh that Legion had thrown, including the ones that Rickert had cut apart, had turned into Yomotsuikusa. There were over a hundred of them.

"Please pay us no attention and escape!" the Hilt members shouted.

Despite the situation, Rickert thought that he could still succeed in escaping by sacrificing the Hilt members. The Yomotsuikusa could barely slow Rickert down at all, and they weren't strong enough to kill the Hilt members instantaneously.

The situation was quite different from when Yomotsuikusa had been used to fight against soldiers in Origin, but that was because in this world where the Job system existed, people's abilities in battle were higher than those of the people of Origin.

"No, you can't do that. Burn!" Baba Yaga shouted.

The members of the Hilt, the Yomotsuikusa near Rickert and the remains of the dead Yomotsuikusa were set aflame by an explosion.

"AAAAAH?!" Rickert shouted as his entire body was scorched by high temperatures without warning.

The Hilt members, who had been surrounded by a large number of Yomotsuikusa, collapsed without even being able to let out dying screams.

This was a combination technique of Izanami's power to turn the tumors of her own body into the fighting creatures called Yomotsushikome and Yomotsuikusa, and Baba Yaga's power to cause organic matter to fiercely combust.

"That went well, didn't it? Well, we got a little burned as well, though," said Baba Yaga.

"If we had used that at the start, that swordsman might have been able to get away. Fighting people is a pain compared to monsters in Dungeons," said Izanami.

The two of them were talking to each other while scraping off the burnt flesh on the surface of their own bodies, but they quickly stopped when they saw that Rickert was

still standing.

“AAAAGH! GAH!” Rickert shouted as he opened a concealed bag, a space-attribute Magic Item that could carry much more than its appearance would suggest.

He took out a Potion and smashed the bottle against his own head, pouring the liquid inside all over himself.

It seemed to be quite the high-grade Potion; the terrible burns covering his entire body healed rapidly.

“A Potion, huh. Come to think of it, those things existed as well, didn’t they?”

“I’m surprised that it’s even more effective than Blood Potion!”

“Wait a second! How come he didn’t die instantly after being burned by my flames?!”

“Maybe his armor is a heat-resisting Magic Item? Or maybe he just has a lot of Vitality... You can’t think of things in the same terms as in Origin, Baba Yaga.”

Rickert threw aside the broken bottle and barely managed to raise his sword, breathing heavily. “You bastards, wasn’t fire your weakness?!”

When Ervine swung his whips that were covered in flames, Legion had made larger movements than necessary to avoid them. Having seen this, Rickert had thought that flames were Legion’s weakness. He hadn’t thought that they would use flames.

But Legion answered his question with ease.

“Indeed, it is a weakness! But we cannot just leave our weakness as is!”

“Yeah, we worked hard and got burned and paralyzed multiple times a day to get the Flame Resistance and Lightning Resistance Skills, didn’t we?”

“It was really harsh. Well, it wasn’t much compared to the pain we went through as guinea pigs, though.”

“Valkyrie, Shade, Ghost, there’s no need to go out of your way to explain that to him, is there?”

“Enma, this is what’s called a pleasant memory for him to take into the afterlife.”

As Rickert had thought, flames and lightning were weaknesses for Legion, whose entire body was made of exposed flesh.

That was why Legion had decided to overcome that weakness. Using the power of the Skills that existed in this world.

“...Th-that’s not a sane thing to do. You’d normally die before acquiring that Skill,” Rickert muttered.

Even in this world where resistance-type Skills existed, anyone trying to do what Legion had done without any additional preparations would have a high chance of dying or sustaining irreversible injuries. To begin with, the mind wouldn’t be able to withstand the pain.

Legion had been able to use their tremendous Vitality and their experience of having been through torturous human experiments as weapons to push through and make this process possible.

“So, what will you do, knowing that we’re your opponent? If you’re willing to be killed quietly, we could consider doing it painlessly, you know?” said Pluto.

Rickert acknowledged that he was in a situation where he had to harden his resolve.

I’ll do everything I can to defeat this powerful enemy and survive!

Pushing the pain of the burns still remaining here and there on his body to a corner of his mind, Rickert raised Nemesis Bell, the weapon that had determined his fate up until now, over his head.

Transcend Limits, Transcend Limits: Magic Sword. Heroic god Bellwood, give me power!

With a familiar spirit descending upon him, Rickert’s body overflowed with power, his holy sword shining. Legion watched him silently.

Is this still some kind of trap? No, there’s no turning back now!

“Take this, my secret technique!” Rickert shouted.

With the power of a killing blow, he kicked his foot against the ground. This powerful step closed the distance between him and Legion in an instant.

“Light-speed Sword!”

The deadly martial skill that had the same name as Rickert’s Title struck Legion directly, slicing them in two. Seeing the objects behind Legion through the gap between the now-separated left and right halves, Rickert was certain in his victory.

“We’ll return that right back to you.”

The moment Rickert heard these words, his vision blurred... Sliced apart from his head to his crotch, the left and right halves of his body separated and fell onto the ground.

“This is the victory of Ereshkigal’s counter. Just as I’d expect,” said Pluto.

“I’m happy that you’re praising me, but even if we didn’t know how much damage it would take to kill him, was it really a good idea to receive our enemy’s deadly technique head-on?” Ereshkigal asked.

As Legion talked among each other, their two separate halves fused together and became one piece again, returning to normal.

They had defeated Rickert with Ereshkigal’s Counter, which reflected the damage they received directly from an attack back to the attacker.

“Vandalieu said that we would be able to win, after all. There was no way that we would be killed by this guy... if that wasn’t the case, he would have told us,” Pluto said as she looked up.

Above Legion was a small insect monster, hovering in the air while holding an eyeball... a Demon King’s eyeball that belonged to Vandalieu.

“Now then, let us take this guy’s corpse and sword and go back.”

“I hope that bag isn’t broken.”

Ignoring the burnt, black corpses of the Hilt members, Legion began retrieving Rickert’s corpse and belongings.



Meanwhile, Vandalieu and Ervine's battle was reaching a climax. The shockwaves released by their attacks had caused the trees in the surroundings to either break apart or wither and rot in an ominous way; the landscape had already changed around them.

Having seen high-Rank Undead and Vampires appear from within Vandalieu one after another, Ervine had prepared himself to having to try to find a way out from a fight where he was hopelessly disadvantaged, but Vandalieu had come after him alone.

Borkus and Bellmond, with whom even Ervine wouldn't be able to avoid struggling against, showed no signs of making a move.

This was because Vandalieu had brought them out in order to have them protect Miles and Iris, making sure that Ervine didn't attack them.

"How dare you underestimate me! Are your subordinates that precious to you?!" Ervine shouted, swinging his Orichalcum whips angrily.

Vandalieu created a wall using the Demon King's carapace and blood to stop his attack.

"...Do I really have to make the effort of answering this question that you already know the answer to?" he said.

However, a large crack formed in the wall from a single blow. The Demon King's carapace split as if bursting and deep fissures formed on the Demon King's coagulated blood. The Demon King's fragments were harder than steel, but they were not superior to the Orichalcum weapon they were facing.

The equipment of the champions who had defeated the Demon King Guduranis had been made of Orichalcum, so that was only to be expected. But Vandalieu had already known this before the battle started.

That was why Vandalieu had thought to fight with magic. Without warning, he used Out-of-body Experience and split his spirit form's heads.

"Death Bullet," said Vandalieu.

"Death Bullet," repeated three of his spirit form clones.

“Black Flame Spear,” said three others.

“Death Ice Attack,” said three more.

“Dark Lightning,” said yet another three.

A barrage of Death-Attribute Magic spells and Dead Spirit Magic spells was cast. Each spell would inflict no small amount of damage if it hit directly, but Ervine swung his whip in a circular motion.

“Circular Whip Magic Shield!” he shouted.

Vandalieu’s spells disintegrated the moment they contacted the rapidly-spinning whip. The black flames, deathly-cold air and black lightning were all repelled.

“Flash Snake,” Ervine said as he swung his other whip.

The whip curved as if it were a snake with its own will, striking from the side and smashing one of Vandalieu’s spirit form heads, aiming for the physical head behind it.

“Impact-negating Barrier.”

The whip’s kinetic energy was absorbed by Vandalieu’s barrier, and it twisted and stopped inside.

“Tch, using such strange tactics!” Ervine muttered.

Using the anti-magic properties of the Orichalcum whip that were greater than that of Mythril, as well as his own physical strength, he forcefully pulled his whip back out of the Impact-negating Barrier.

“He’s quite tough, isn’t he, Your Majesty?” said Princess Levia.

“Should we attack with more powerful Dead Spirit Magic spells? Like the one you once used to erase a mountain, Van-kun,” Orbia suggested.

“I think it will end up getting blocked,” Vandalieu replied as he restored the spirit form clone that was broken. “I said it back then as well, but that was something only possible because the target was a mountain that didn’t move.”

Corpse Flame Prison Destruction Barrage, the Dead Spirit Magic spell that had erased a small mountain. Vandalieu's spells boasted tremendous power when it came to wide-area attacks. However, it was highly unlikely to work against a powerful superhuman like Ervine.

In fact, there was the danger of giving an opening for a counterattack.

"Fuuh... He's even tougher than Bugitas, maybe even tougher than Gubamon and Ternecia," Vandalieu murmured.

"That Elf bastard is that strong?!" Kimberley exclaimed, astounded.

"He's that strong," Vandalieu said, nodding. "He doesn't have a particularly large amount of Mana or special Skills. But he is simply very skilled. And even though he talks and acts like a hoodlum, he's calm inside his head."

All of the powerful enemies that Vandalieu had faced up until now were those with large mental problems. Not problems with their personalities, but being deranged and having almost lost their sanity, or actually having lost their sanity, from being cornered.

That was why they had been easily shaken by Vandalieu's attacks, easily showing openings for him to take advantage of.

But Ervine was different. He showed some surprise, but he didn't show any openings. He was continuing to fight in a calm state.

He was certainly living up to his declaration that he would show off human strength.

"Even now, I'm using the Demon King's scent glands to release an odorless form of Deadly Poison, and releasing Incurable Disease into the air, but it doesn't work. It seems that he's fully prepared," said Vandalieu. "Well, that doesn't change the fact that I have the advantage, though."

"Then will you win using a method that will allow you to win with certainty, Your Majesty?" asked Princess Levia.

"No, it seems that he hasn't given up on winning against me, so I'm not going to go into a war of attrition and wait for him to run out of Mana. I don't want to risk Iris and the others being aimed for, so I won't have Mikhail and the others move, either."

“...Van-kun, you look calm, but your blood’s risen to your head, hasn’t it?” said Orbia.

“Yes, I’m furious.”

Vandalieu released more Death Bullets to hold Ervine back as he thought of a method to kill him.

Ervine struck down those Death Bullets, but he was actually being cornered by Vandalieu.

Is there no limit to this brat’s Mana?! And just what kind of a brain does he have?! Activating multiple fragments of the Demon King at once while casting different spells in quick succession, simultaneously as well, isn’t something a human can do! And this is even ignoring how abnormal it is that he can use elemental magic!

Ervine was defending against these fierce attacks while counterattacking when he could find the opportunity. He was indeed very skilled; he was proving that he belonged in the realm of superhuman heroes.

But on the inside, he was shaken by the way Vandalieu continued fighting without slowing down his pace at all.

Ervine had expected that Vandalieu would begin a reckless aggression at the beginning of the battle, and that a chance to win would definitely come once he endured that, but Vandalieu’s fierce attacks didn’t let up at all.

Like a mirage in a desert, the approaching opportunity for victory was actually growing further and further away.

I can’t even get one attack in like this... even though I need to somehow smash this brat’s skull, heart, his entire torso if possible, into tiny pieces!

There wasn’t even a scar left from where Sleygar had cut Vandalieu’s head off. That was why Ervine thought that in order to kill Vandalieu, he needed to break and crush his body to the point it couldn’t regenerate. But despite that, he couldn’t even put a single scratch on him.

In fact, at this rate, he would certainly be defeated. If Vandalieu wanted, he could have Borkus and Mikhail, who were protecting Iris and the others, join the battle anytime.

No matter how strong Ervine was, if he were to fight multiple enemies at once who all possessed strength rivaling his own, he would be defeated without a doubt.

In order to survive, Ervine needed to not only defeat Vandalieu, but also Borkus and the others behind him, or somehow successfully escape them.

Even though he was trying to find a way out of this hopeless situation, he couldn't see any possibilities.

At a glance, the fight between the two would look as if it were in a stalemate, but in a battle to the death, Ervine had almost no chance of victory to begin with.

On top of that, he's trying to kill me with poison and diseases. If it weren't for the Level of my resistance Skill and the Magic Item bracelet I'm wearing, I would be vomiting blood and collapsed right about now. Shit, what do I do? Even if nothing can be done for Ricky-boy now...

Ervine still didn't know whether Rickert had managed to escape Legion's pursuit or not. Judging from the sounds of fierce explosions and shockwaves that he felt even from here, he could guess that it hadn't gone so well, however.

So then, what was he able to do as a member of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords? Surviving was out of the question. It wasn't Ervine's job to make it back with information.

Even if I have to make a desperate effort, I have to make this guy reveal as much of his hidden power as possible!

Having decided this, Ervine was quick to act.

"Familiar Spirit Descent!"

He activated the Familiar Spirit Descent Skill, summoning a familiar spirit upon himself –

"Fire."

– As he tried to summon a familiar spirit, a pillar of light descended from the sky, and then Vandalieu's Artillery Technique, used with a barrel made of the Demon King's blood and a projectile made of the Demon King's horns, destroyed the familiar spirit.

“Hmm, ordinary familiar spirits are quite bland. Insufficient,” Vandalieu murmured.

“Y-you struck a familiar spirit?! Do you not fear the gods?!” Ervine shouted, his discomposure surfacing for the first time since the beginning of the battle.

“I do fear them. I fear them, so I’m well-prepared,” said Vandalieu as he resumed firing more Death Bullets.

Ervine wanted to shout, “That’s not what I mean!” back at Vandalieu, but instead, he used the same Skill once more. “Familiar Spirit Descent!”

“Impossible! Boss, it seems that this guy is crazy as well after all!” Kimberley laughed.

A pillar of light extended from the sky once more. And once more, it was destroyed by Vandalieu’s Artillery Technique.

Ignoring Kimberley’s derisive laughter, Ervine let go of his Orichalcum whip. “Thanks for your noble sacrifice, familiar spirit!”

And then he took out the handle of another whip that had been hidden behind his back. It seemed that Ervine had used his god’s familiar spirit as a sacrificial pawn to create an opening in Vandalieu’s attacks.

“Ah, this is a little bad,” said Vandalieu, noticing the reaction from Danger Sense: Death and starting his attacks once more, but he wasn’t quick enough.

“Demon King equipment: Antennae, activate!” Ervine shouted.

With an ominous sound, a long, black whip extended from the handle of Ervine’s weapon.

“Shining Flame Whip! Whirlwind Whip!”

Ervine cast an enchantment on the whip to increase his attack power, then activated a martial skill to attack Vandalieu. The shining, black whip that was emanating a scorching heat easily cut through Vandalieu’s Impact-negating Barrier, closing in on his body.

“Demon King’s jointed legs, carapace, exoskeleton. Rock Shield, Rock Form.”

Four pairs of legs resembling a spider's sprouted simultaneously from Vandalieu's back, an exoskeleton and carapace formed on the legs and all over his own body to provide two layers of defense, and then Shield Technique and Armor Technique martial skills were activated on top of that.

With the liquid metal armor that had already taken form beneath his clothes, his defense was beyond that of a fortress.

But Ervine's whip broke and cut into the jointed legs and carapace, digging into the exoskeleton that covered Vandalieu's torso.

"Your Majesty?!"

"Vandalieu-sama!"

Princess Levia and Eleanora screamed, and the corners of Ervine's mouth rose in a smile.

But this was far from a fatal wound.

"...It's been a while since I took damage from an enemy's attack in battle," Vandalieu said calmly, regrowing the broken jointed legs and carapace.

Incidentally, Sleygar cutting his head off had been a surprise attack, so that didn't count.

But there was no despair in Ervine's eyes. "I used my Demon King equipment and only just managed to scratch you. As expected of a monster. Kuku, but next I'm going to make that person-shaped face of yours twist in pain."

Ervine's trump card, the Demon King equipment. These were Artifacts created by those who fought enemies who unsealed and misused the Demon King's fragments, created from the sealed fragments of the Demon King themselves.

Though it wasn't clear when or by whom they had been made, but the Demon King equipment was equipment made by turning the Demon King's fragments, still in a sealed state, into weapons that humans could use.

In its earliest appearances in history, Demon King equipment was said to be effective weapons against those who had absorbed fragments of the Demon King, powerful

monsters and evil gods.

But once, a piece of Demon King equipment was destroyed, and the hero who had been wielding it was parasitized by the Demon King's fragment and went on a rampage. This incident caused Demon King equipment to be treated not as the weapons of heroes, but cursed weapons, and they were sealed in the deepest chambers of palaces and churches.

But thanks to Marshukzarl, whose eye had been caught by their potential use, several pieces of equipment had been retrieved by the Amid Empire's hands.

One of them was the whip in Ervine's possession.

Vandalieu was not aware of these details, but he could tell just what kind of a dangerous weapon this piece of Demon King equipment was by looking at it.

"You use a fragment of the Demon King as a weapon without allowing it to parasitize your own body. That's why you don't lose your sanity while using it, and you can still use elemental magic. It seems likely that it doesn't use much Mana, either," Vandalieu observed. "But it seems that in exchange, you can only make use of a fraction of the fragment's power."

The Demon King equipment that Ervine was using, the fragment that it was made of, was an antenna. An organ possessed by insects and crustaceans such as crayfish. There were some creatures like spiny lobsters that used antennae as weapons, but they were primarily sensory organs.

But judging from the way Ervine fought, it seemed that he could only use the antenna as a whip.

"That's exactly right," said Ervine. "But using it as a weapon is enough! Sky-tearing Whip!"

The Demon King equipment wielded by Ervine tore through the air as it closed in on Vandalieu. Vandalieu used the Demon King's fragments to defend himself once more, reducing the damage to a mere light wound.

Even though Vandalieu was using his own fragments of the Demon King, defense-oriented fragments like the carapace and exoskeleton at that, he couldn't fully block the attack of the antenna whip.

He had tried to use the Surpass Limits: Fragments Skill this time, but it only had the effect of reducing the size of his wound a little further.

“It seems that it’s not the number of fragments that counts, but my own strength and skill,” said Vandalieu.

“So you get it after all!” Ervine shouted.

He was powerful enough to have awakened Whip Technique into a superior Skill, Killing Snake Whip Technique. If he were an adventurer, promotion to S-class wouldn’t have been a mere dream.

But he himself was actually surprised as well.

Someone as skilled as me, even using Demon King equipment, can only put light scratches on him? The guys I disposed of just a few decades ago were crushed along with their fragments... This brat, how much of each individual fragment’s power is he drawing out?! This monster!

But since Ervine didn’t express his astonishment, Vandalieu and his companions decided that he still had room to breathe in this battle.

“Vandalieu-kun, what about your Magic Absorption Barrier?! You could at least take off his enchantment spell, right?!” said Orbia.

“I did try it, but it didn’t work,” said Vandalieu.

It seemed that the Demon King’s fragments’ barrier-destroying properties was stronger; the Magic Absorption Barrier that was supposed to absorb any kind of Mana had been destroyed before the Shining Flame Whip enchantment could be removed.

“Then let’s do it just like when you killed Gubamon!” said Orbia.

“Yes. Furious Death Ice Blade.”

Using Dead Spirit Magic, Vandalieu released a blade of ice created by Orbia, but as expected, it was struck down by a single slash from Ervine’s weapon. But the Shining Flame Whip spell on the weapon was removed.

“Bone Flame Jailing Destruction Bullet.”

Next, with the Dead Spirit Magic spell using Princess Levia's flames, he tried destroying the weapon the same way as he had done with the Demon King's carapace used by Gubamon – causing thermal expansion by creating an extreme difference in temperature.

"I'll teach you why I'm called the 'Five-headed Snake!' Wind Ice Whip!"

Ervine's enchantment imbued the ice and wind attributes to his weapon and smashed the skeleton made of black flames to pieces.

Ervine's Title originated not only from the fact that he could wield his whips skillfully like snakes, but from his affinity with five attributes – earth, water, fire, wind and light – and his specialization in casting enchantments of each.

Marshukzarl had named him this, with the metaphor that Ervine wielding a single whip was as if he were manipulating five snakes.

"Death Bullet, Dark Thunderbolt, Spiral Strike, Thunder Fist."

"Trying to hold me back?! Circular Whip Magic Shield!"

Vandalieu's Death-Attribute Magic and Dead Spirit Magic spells, as well as the Throwing and Unarmed Fighting Technique martial skills activated with the Demon King's horns and the Demon King's jointed legs that had been extended outwards, were all easily repelled by Ervine's whip.

Two voices called out to Vandalieu from behind.

"Hey, kid! Is it my time to shine yet?"

"Your-Majesty-kun~ it's not good to push yourself, you know~!"

It was Borkus and the 'Saint of Healing' Jeena, a former A-class adventurer Titan Zombie who was once in Borkus's party. They were still protecting Iris and the others.

They were equipped with equipment made from the Demon King's fragments. If they were to join in on the battle, Ervine would stand no chance.

"That's right, come! You filthy Undead!" Ervine shouted at them.

Ervine knew that he would be finished if they fought him, but he had already given up on returning home alive. Considering the exchange of blows that had taken place so far, his hopes of taking Vandalieu with him were slim as well.

But if he could at least defeat one of the powerful Undead that Vandalieu was unlikely to be able to create very easily, then that would be plenty.

Even without Familiar Spirit Descent, he still had several cards up his sleeve, like the Transcend Limits Skill that would rapidly exhaust his Stamina and several kinds of martial skills that he hadn't used yet because they would take heavy tolls on his body. Ervine guessed that if he made use of these, he would at least be able to take one of the Undead with him.

"No, I'll try a little longer," said Vandalieu.

It wasn't that Vandalieu had seen through Ervine's intentions, but even so, he refused Borkus and Jeena's aid.

"What, you want to kill me yourself so badly?!" Ervine shouted as he avoided the simultaneous martial skills used by the eight jointed legs growing from Vandalieu's back, twisting his whip around them and crushing them.

"I won't deny that," said Vandalieu. But although he was enraged, he still had a strange calmness about him. "That one weapon isn't the only piece of Demon King equipment, is it?"

Taking the victory before his eyes would be simple, but his enemy was not Ervine. It was the Amid Empire.

There was no doubt that other pieces of Demon King equipment existed in the empire. It was also possible that arms made from the Demon King's fragments produced by the weapons also existed.

And there was no telling how many others as skilled as Ervine the empire still had.

So, if he was struggling to defeat Ervine alone, wasn't it quite uncertain as to whether he would win a battle against the Amid Empire? Even though he would soon be an emperor himself.

"I'm fighting on the frontline despite being someone who will become the emperor, so

it would be irresponsible of me to not become powerful enough to be victorious without any chance of dying,” Vandalieu said.

“Become the emperor? Your blasphemy is too much!” Ervine spat. “You’re not deluding yourself into thinking that your true power will awake when you’re cornered or something, are you?!”

“As for a plan, I’m already executing something that I’ve thought of.”

What Vandalieu was aiming for was the piece of Demon King equipment that Ervine was wielding. The Demon King’s jointed legs, which had been frozen by the wind and cold air of the enchantment on Ervine’s weapon, were leaking an ominous fluid –

“Flame Prison Death.”

In the next moment, the piece of Demon King equipment and its wielder Ervine were engulfed in a flaming explosion.

“Eh? Dead Spirit Magic?! But Princess-chan is over there!” Jeena shouted in surprise over the explosion.

“No, this is new death-attribute magic... Dark King Magic,” said Vandalieu.

He had already known that barriers didn’t work against the Demon King’s fragments. But Dead Spirit Magic had worked normally against the Demon King’s carapace when Gubamon was using it. Thus, he had concluded that the Demon King equipment, which was made of the Demon King’s fragments, wouldn’t nullify all kinds of magic.

And he had thought that if he used a magical attack that surpassed the equipment’s anti-magic properties and Ervine’s skill, it wouldn’t be repelled like all the other attacks before it.

“It’s an imitation of Baba Yaga’s combustion, though. The fuel for the fire was the Demon King’s blubber, which I’d stuffed inside the jointed legs that he just crushed,” Vandalieu explained.

There was a scorching fire blazing in front of him. The shockwaves from Vandalieu’s spells and Ervine’s whip had already smashed the nearby trees and boulders; the surrounding area could no longer even be called a forest. If that hadn’t been the case, a forest fire could have been started.

But Ervine appeared once more. “Great Circular Whip Magic Shield! Hard Ice Armor!” He scattered the flames with his whip and covered himself in an armor of ice created through an enchantment spell, throwing away an empty Potion bottle. “Damn it... You just have no limits...!”

The ice armor quickly crumbled away, revealing his tattered leather armor and cloak, as well as several burns that had only been partially healed.

If he were to be wrapped in Flame Prison Death again, he might no longer be able to stand.

“But I’ve endured it! I won’t fall for the same trick again!” Ervine shouted.

“Then I’ll use a different one,” said Vandalieu, pointing a finger at him.

A Death Bullet concentrated at his fingertip.

All of the Death Bullets up until now had been easily broken. So then, what would happen if he were to concentrate more Mana, more killing intent into it?

“Death Cannon.”

Something resembling a black laser beam was unleashed in Ervine’s direction.

Its speed was greater than the Death Bullets that had been fired so far, Ervine hastily swung his weapon.

“Impossible!”

The moment the Demon King equipment struck the Death Cannon, it began to crumble like dirt where the Death Cannon contacted it.

Ervine’s discomposure caused him to lose his balance, but he barely managed to avoid the attack. The Death Cannon struck a tree growing a long way behind him, and it crumbled like Ervine’s Demon King equipment.

“You destroyed the Demon King’s equipment... not with an Orichalcum Artifact, but with magic alone?!” Ervine shouted, unable to believe his eyes.

“Now, it seems that I’ll be able to kill you even on my own,” Vandalieu said, speaking

this fact in a matter-of-fact tone.

Ervine was taken aback by these words.

“Now then, I’ve seen your limits, so I’m going to do this quickly. Demon King’s blood, jaws, eyeballs, activate.”

An enormous amount of black blood came from Vandalieu’s back, turning into a red-black snake that bared its newly-formed fangs.

As if he were a personification of all of the fear and despair in this world, Ervine let out a scream. “D-don’t underestimate the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, the ‘Five-headed Snake’ Ervine-sama!” he shouted spiritedly.

He poured Mana into his weapon and produced the Demon King’s antenna once more, but the emotion spreading through his chest was not anger, but fear. His shouted words were a bluff to try and conceal that.

But he had thought that if he didn’t do this, he wouldn’t even be able to speak.

Ervine was engulfed by an absolute despair that he had not felt in a long time.

Where is this guy’s limits?! Is there really any meaning in my battle, my defeat, my death?!

Until just a short while earlier, Ervine had been prepared for his imminent defeat and death, but he hadn’t been in despair. He had believed that the Amid Empire would be victorious after his death. He had even been intoxicated on a feeling of joy at being able to contribute towards that victory.

But would the empire really be able to defeat this monster, this monstrosity, this bizarre, grotesque being?

And was there any meaning in his actions? During the battle between them, this grotesque monster had invented two new spells and gained a method of fighting against Demon King equipment. Rather than trading his life for the empire’s gain, hadn’t he actually helped the enemy gain more power?!

Even now, he’s looking at me with a face like a doll’s, his claws –

“UOOOH?!”

Ervine had allowed Vandalieu to close the distance without realizing it, and barely managed to avoid an attack from his claws.

“...Blind Spot. Imitating Ghost is difficult,” Vandalieu commented.

The Dark King Magic spell that imitated Ghost’s ability to erase his own presence was not as powerful as the original. But as it delayed the enemy’s reaction to an attack that they would otherwise be able to see, it was effective for close-quarters combat.

There would normally be an overwhelming difference between Ervine and Vandalieu’s physical abilities, particularly in how agile they were. Vandalieu had been able to close that gap significantly.

“G-get away from me! Don’t come close!”

Unable to endure his fear, he activated the Transcend Limits Skill that he had kept in reserve, trying to deal with Vandalieu’s Blind Spot spell.

He desperately glared at Vandalieu, trying to make sure he would never let him slip out of sight.

“If it’s a staring contest, I’ll definitely win, you know.”

The closed eyelids on Vandalieu’s forehead opened, revealing the activated Demon King’s eyeball. The gaze of a third, hollow eye caught Ervine.

“Demon King’s luminescent glands, activate.”

A pale light shone from within that lifeless eye. The Demon King’s luminescent glands became focused in place of the eyeball’s lens.

“Seriously, how many fragments –”

“Fire.”

As Ervine’s face twisted in fear, his body was pierced by a bluish-white laser fired from the Demon King’s eye.

“G-GAAAAH?!”

His shoulder was pierced as if being gouged out, the arm holding the Demon King equipment falling to the ground.

The convergence is lacking, Vandalieu thought as he saw this.

As Ervine screamed, he desperately reached out for the Demon King equipment that he had dropped, but then the Demon King’s jaws attacked him.

His reaction delayed by Blind Spot, Ervine was caught in its fangs and sent flying into the air, scattering around blood and pieces of flesh.

Damn it, a meaningless death! Someone as great as me! But I won’t hand it to him! Ervine thought as he flew through the air.

With his imminent death right before his eyes, he tried to take the action fitting of a member of a secret force.

Suicide.

By killing himself, he could escape feeling any further fear and pain than this and prevent Vandalieu from gaining the Experience Points from killing him. If he used the special poison implanted in his molar, his corpse would melt apart as well.

Ervine could at least perform this act of revenge. Though it was strange to say this was fortunate, his poison and disease nullification bracelet had been torn off along with his arm.

At least feel this bitterness!

The moment he crashed into the ground, Ervine bit into the molar that contained the poison.

But his consciousness didn’t fade away!

“What...? Why can’t I die?!” Ervine shouted as he lay on the ground, his body having grown considerably smaller.

He heard Vandalieu’s voice respond. “I cast the Disinfect spell. Judging from your

reaction, it seems that you had a trick to end your own life.”

Vandalieu had cast a spell just in case as he attacked Ervine with the Demon King’s jaws a moment earlier. That spell had removed the toxic properties of the poison in Ervine’s molar.

Now knowing that he couldn’t even kill himself, clear despair emerged in Ervine’s facial expression.

Vandalieu took hold of Ervine’s hair and lifted him up. “Bellmond... This is the appetizer. Please cut him into portions.”

“As you wish,” said Bellmond, and then she turned to Ervine. “Dear guest, I offer my condolences. It seems that the ‘human strength’ that you spoke of was nothing more than an appetizer to Danna-sama.”

In Ervine’s field of vision, he could see a silver-haired female Vampire give a graceful bow, a long tail swaying behind her back.

In the next moment, his field of vision shifted, and then he became unable to think of anything at all.

『The levels of the Rapid Regeneration, Dark King Magic, Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs), Spirit Form, Unarmed Fighting Technique, High-speed Thought Processing, Dead Spirit Magic, Artillery Technique, Armor Technique, Shield Technique, Surpass Limits: Fragments, Grotesque Mind and Demon King Fusion Skills have increased!』

『The Surpass Limits Skill has awakened into the Transcend Limits Skill!』

Chapter 152

Please let me borrow your face for a moment

After turning the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine into Experience Points, Vandalieu took the fatally-wounded Iris to the place she needed to go to in order to be reborn. And upon returning to Talosheim, he entered the Job-changing room with unsteady steps.

Iris's vital organs had been wounded by the holy sword Nemesis Bell; she had been in a state where she would have died within half an hour if Vandalieu hadn't maintained the Death Delay spell on her.

She would be turned into a member of one of Vida's races other than Vampires, using the reconstruction of her body during her transformation and her increased Vitality and healing abilities after her transformation in order to heal her.

Vandalieu had gone through a lot of effort to take her to the place to carry out the ritual, such as using Out-of-body Experience and then the Materialization Skill on the spirit form wings to take the form of a strange bird, and preparing the necessary amount of Mana.

"...I'm sleepy," Vandalieu murmured.

The time it had taken was a bigger problem than the work he'd needed to do.

There wasn't a target that Legion could designate for teleportation at the place where the ritual would take place, and Vandalieu hadn't created a Dungeon there yet either, so he'd been forced to fly there which had taken a long time. In addition to that, the ritual hadn't been conducted in a long time, so time had needed to be taken to gather the necessary tools and check the correct procedures.

Persuading the other party to cooperate with him hadn't taken very long at all, shortening the process considerably, but even so, it was still harsh on Vandalieu.

It was fortunate that he had been able to use the time the journey took to break the seal on the Demon King equipment to acquire the Demon King's antennae.

“I can use the Status Effect Resistance Skill to endure my sleepiness, but just because I can endure it doesn’t mean it’s not hard on me. But I have to do this task soon, so... before that, I’ll get my Job-change while I’m at it.”

He had received a considerable amount of Experience Points from Ervine, who had dealt the final blow to the ‘Insect Swarm’ Bebeckett. With the other Experience Points that he had gained by watching the ‘King Slayer’ Sleygar, the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert and the members of the Hilt, Vandalieu’s Demon King User Job had reached Level 100.

As expected of a man who could have aspired to reach S-class and his companions.

It was fortunate that Vandalieu could gain Experience Points by watching battles through the Demon King’s eyes, just like he could with his own eyes.

“Well, I’ll eat them after I get information from them... my Attribute Values and Skills increased from eating Ravovifard, the evil god of release, but I didn’t gain his memories, so it will probably be fine. Leaving that aside...”

As Vandalieu slapped his hand on the crystal ball, the Jobs that he could change to were displayed inside his head.

『Jobs that can be selected: 【Disease Demon】 【Spirit Warrior】 【Whip Tongue Calamity】 【Vengeful Berserker】 【Dead Spirit Mage】 【Dark Healer】 【Labyrinth Creator】 【Magic Cannoneer】 【Dark King Mage】 【Divine Enemy】 【Dark Guider】 【Creation Guider】 【Fallen Warrior】 【Insect Nin】 【Destruction Guider】 』

“Yes, there’s a new one.”

Destruction Guider... from its name, wasn’t it a bad guidance? It sounded like he would lead others to all kinds of destruction.

“Maybe it’s because I’ve been breaking and eating souls... well, for now, I’ll select Dark Guider.”

The Danger Sense: Death spell made sure that he knew when someone was aiming for his head, but regardless of that, Sleygar's movements had been too quick for him to deal with.

He'd noticed it the moment before it happened, but before he could move his body or cast a spell, Sleygar had appeared from behind him and performed a single slash with his specialized weapon... His specialized weapon was made of Orichalcum and that single attack had contained a lot of power, so even an instantly-cast barrier would likely have been futile, however.

If it wasn't Vandalieu whose head had been cut off then, the target would have died in an instant.

It was Sleygar's Artifact and superior Skill that had made that incredible speed possible. He had superhuman physical abilities.

It was unlikely that there were many assassins as skilled as Sleygar, but the number of such assassins would not be zero. So, what needed to be done was...

"First of all, I need to train myself to have physical strength equivalent to Sleygar's."

This wasn't a problem that could be resolved easily, so Vandalieu would simply continue training steadily until he found an effective solution.

『The Level of the Mana Enlargement Skill has increased!』

『You have acquired the Guidance: Dark Path and Dark Path Enticement Skills!』

『The Guidance: Dark Path Skill and Guidance: Demon Path Skill have fused and transformed into the Guidance: Dark Demon Path Skill!』

『The Dark Path Enticement Skill and Demon Path Enticement Skill have fused and transformed into the Dark Demon Path Enticement Skill!』

- **Name:** Vandalieu
- **Race:** Dhampir (Dark Elf)
- **Age:** 9 years old
- **Title:** 【Ghoul King】 , 【Eclipse King】 , 【Second Coming of the Demon King】 , 【Guardian of the Cultivation Villages】 , 【Holy Son of Vida】 , 【Monstrosity】 , 【Scaled King】 【Tentacle King】 【Champion】
- **Job:** Dark Guider
- **Level:** 0
- **Job history:** Death-Attribute Mage, Golem Transmuter, Undead Tamer, Soul Breaker, Venom Fist User, Insect User, Tree Caster, Demon Guider, Archenemy, Zombie Maker, Golem Creator, Corpse Demon Commander, Demon King User
- **Attributes:**
 - Vitality: 9291
 - Mana: 1,516,260,108 (+758,130,054)
 - Strength: 1557
 - Agility: 1229
 - Stamina: 1675
 - Intelligence: 3100
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dark King Magic: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 10
 - Magic Resistance: Level 7
 - Dark Vision
 - Dark Demon Path Enticement: Level 3 (Fused and transformed from Dark Path Enticement!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 6
 - Guidance: Dark Demon Path: Level 5 (Fused and transformed from Guidance: Dark Path!)
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 8
 - Venom Secretion (Claws, Fangs, Tongue): Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Body Expansion (Tongue): Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Large
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Hair, Claws, Tongue, Fangs): Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Thread Refining: Level 3

- Mana Enlargement: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 4
 - Transcend Limits: Level 1 (Awakened from Surpass Limits!)
 - Golem Creation: Level 3
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 9
 - Mana Control: Level 8
 - Spirit Form: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Cooking: Level 5
 - Alchemy: Level 7
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Multi-Cast: Level 8
 - Long-distance Control: Level 8
 - Surgery: Level 7
 - Parallel Thought Processing: Level 7
 - Materialization: Level 6
 - Coordination: Level 7
 - High-speed Thought Processing: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Commanding: Level 7
 - Thread-reeling: Level 6
 - Throwing: Level 6
 - Scream: Level 4
 - Dead Spirit Magic: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Artillery Technique: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Group Binding Technique: Level 2
 - Surpass Limits: Fragments: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God Devourer: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Grotesque Mind: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Encroachment: Level 7
 - Labyrinth Construction: Level 7
 - Demon King Fusion: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Abyss: Level 4
 - Hostility
 - Soul Devour: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Demon King fragments:**
 - Blood

- Horns
- Suckers
- Ink Sacs
- Carapace
- Scent glands
- Luminescent organs
- Blubber
- Jaws
- Eyeballs
- Proboscis
- Fur
- Exoskeleton
- Jointed legs
- Antenna
- **Curses**
 - Experience gained in previous life not carried over
 - Cannot learn existing jobs
 - Unable to gain experience independently

“Hmm, now that I look at it like this, my Attribute Values have increased as well. My Vitality is close to 10,000, and my Agility had gone above 1,000. I have my Skills as well, so as I am now, I might be able to win a fight against an average B-class adventurer in hand-to-hand combat without using magic.”

Of course, in the end, he couldn't deal with Sleygar's speed.

Even if he had about two billion Mana, he couldn't forget that he could still die.

“More importantly, Guidance: Dark Demon Path and Dark Demon Path Enticement... the previous Skill names made it sound like I would guide living people to death, so I'm glad that it changed.”

TLN: The word for “Demon Path” can also mean “netherworld,” so the previous Skill names sounded like he would guide/entice people into the netherworld.

Did this mean that he had more targets that he could guide and entice? Well, he would probably find out soon.

“For now, the task ahead comes first. First, I need to smash the head before Iris is reborn.”



Duke Marme was spending the afternoon in a carefree manner in his office at the occupying army's headquarters.

Because one of the problems that had been a constant source of trouble for him ever since he took this position in the Sauron region would be solved.

“It was humiliating to lower my head to Marshukzarl, but... it was a small price to pay.”

Duke Marme had lowered his head to Marshukzarl, his cousin who was also his political enemy, asking for the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert and other members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords to be dispatched.

And they had arrived yesterday. The one Duke Marme had seen and exchanged pleasantries with was Rickert Amid, someone who was an honorary noble with no land but a duke nonetheless, and, more importantly, a relative. But there should have been others with him, keeping themselves hidden.

And in the same day, Rickert had gone in the direction of the former Scylla territory that was now haunted by the resistance, along with the other hidden Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

The fort on the boundary of the former Scylla territory... had been attacked and destroyed by a swarm of Undead the previous year, so soldiers were stationed in a hastily-built temporary fort. According to their reports, there had been numerous bright flashes of light, explosions and the thundering noises of trees being destroyed coming from deep within the former Scylla territory, and they had even seen pillars of light descending from the sky on three occasions, signs that familiar spirits had been summoned... The accounts also said that two of those pillars of light had unnaturally disappeared, but that was probably just their imaginations.

“Hmph, I suppose we will need to have a party to celebrate Rickert and his companions’ victory. Let’s entertain the soldiers as well. No, I suppose showing the Princess Knight’s head to the foolish commoners comes first,” Duke Marme murmured to himself.

Having received such reports, he was certain in the victory of Rickert and his companions. He had no doubt that the foolish resistance that had gotten carried away would be exterminated, and that the heads of the little girl who called herself the Princess Knight and the traitor, Baron Ragdew, would be brought in front of him.

He was sitting here in the army's headquarters just in case, but that was so that he could thank Rickert and his companions for their hard work personally as the top figure of the army, once they returned after finishing their mission. If he did that, Rickert and Marshukzarl's impressions of him would at least improve a little.

This incident had caused his political influence to decrease, but he should be able to suppress that by appealing to the fact that he was a member of the same family of the emperor and the hero.

If possible, he would have liked to capture the Princess Knight alive and execute her by burning her at the stake in front of the people, but unlike Cuoco, a traitorous nobleman of the Amid Empire, the Princess Knight was apparently a young girl. It would be problematic if he executed her like that and this was used as a persuasion point by other rebellion movements.

And since he was the one who had asked for the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords to be dispatched, he wouldn't be allowed to do anything that would darken the reputation of the 'Light-speed Sword.' He would have to resist his urges and settle for just making a display of the severed heads. As for Baron Ragdew's family, he would make an exception and spare them... though he would have them enter priesthood, separate them from the rest of the world and then have them die of 'disease' later when the opportunity arose.

Drunk on his feelings of joy, Duke Marme gulped down the contents of his glass. "Bring the next bottle of wine. If possible, something better than this one," he ordered his attendant behind him without turning around.

"Here you are," said the high-pitched, quiet voice of a child as a cup filled with red wine was offered to him.

"Hmm, a pleasant scent – w-who are you?! A child, no, those eyes are those of a... Dhampir?! Why is there a Dhampir here?!" Duke Marme exclaimed, jumping back in astonishment.

Vandalieu, who had two horns of the Demon King growing from his forehead, looked up at the man in his late middle-age years with an expression of confusion. “Oh, he doesn’t know about me?... Ah, this guy wasn’t told about me, was he?”

“This guy, you say?! You bastard, I am a duke, and there is a limit to how much disrespect I will tolerate! You filthy Dhampir, even if you are a child, I will not forgive you!” Duke Marme turned to face the doorway, red with anger. “What are you doing, soldiers! Execute this insolent child!” he shouted.

He shouted, but nobody came.

“W-why? Why is nobody coming? Where are the soldiers that are supposed to be in front of the room? Where are my knights?!”

“Where are they? I’ve either killed them or captured them alive. Well, I used Deodorization to stop the smell of blood from reaching this room, so I can’t blame you for not noticing, though. Even this antenna wouldn’t be able to detect it, after all,” said Vandalieu.

“Killed-?! Don’t be preposterous! Unlike the soldiers of this area, the capable soldiers that I brought with me –”

The door opened while Duke Marme was mid-sentence, and a black Goblin, a man made entirely of bare flesh and a spearman with patches all over his body that was clearly an Undead at first glance entered the room.

“King, we’ve killed everyone except for the ones you said not to!” said the Black Goblin Braga.

“Working on my own for the first time in so long actually makes me restless,” said Ghost, who had temporarily separated himself from Legion.

“Borkus and the others were complaining that the fort is too small,” said Mikhail.

Each of them had their weapons in one hand and several decapitated heads in the other.

The heads were those of Duke Marme’s knights and officers.

“H-HYIH?! Monsters and Undead?!” Duke Marme turned pale and fell backwards onto

his back.

Vandalieu simply stared at him. “The soldiers you employed locally, your servants and the list of people that Cuoco provided have been spared. That might not matter to you at all, though.”

So Vandalieu said, but it seemed that this really didn’t matter to Duke Marme. With the crotch of his extravagant clothes becoming drenched, he tried to crawl away from Vandalieu.

“Y-you bastard, could you be the Dhampir that’s supposed to be on the other side of the Boundary Mountain Range?! Th-that’s... how did you get past the headquarters’ defenses?! And how did nobody in my army notice you leading an army across the Boundary Mountain Range in the first place?!” he shouted.

Duke Marme finally realized that the Dhampir before his eyes was the same one that he had tried to hire the S-class adventurer Schneider to exterminate after the Mirg shield-nation’s expedition army returned as Undead.

“We secretly crossed the mountain range, snuck into the inside of the fort and then dealt with everyone by persuading them or through force,” Vandalieu explained.

Legion’s Teleportation had been used to cross the Boundary Mountain Range, and the Dark King Magic spell Blind Spot, Ghost’s power and the ninja techniques of Braga and the other Black Goblin Ninjas had been used to infiltrate the fort. After that, Vandalieu had released insects as well as Mikhail and the rest of the Undead.

Using force to kill and capture targets. The ‘capable soldiers’ mentioned by Duke Marme had been no match for Mikhail and the others. The more fortunate targets were the ones whose severed heads were being held.

The locally-hired soldiers and non-combatant servants had been brainwashed by the Mental Encroachment Skill and made to go outside.

“Ervine... or maybe it was Rickert? You probably let down your guard because you firmly believed that they would win, but that made things easy for me. If your defenses had been tight as usual, I might have needed to use rougher methods,” Vandalieu said in a matter-of-fact tone.

Even though this was the army’s headquarters, it wasn’t as if every soldier was

stationed in a single building. Vandalieu's forces had infiltrated and eliminated enemies swiftly and quietly, so the soldiers on the same premises but in separate buildings still weren't aware of the situation.

If those soldiers in the other buildings had maintained a system so that they would immediately notice anything unusual, things would have been a little different.

Duke Marme was speechless for a moment, but then quickly returned to his senses. "W-wait! I surrender, I surrender! What are you after?! Is it fame in the Orbaume Kingdom?! Whatever it might be, I should be able to help you with it! I'm Duke Marme, someone with a claim to the emperor's throne!"

He was aware of his own value. Whatever else might be said of him, he was a duke. If he was brought to the Orbaume Kingdom, he could be exchanged for a large sum of reward money, and if hostage negotiations were carried out with the empire, even more money could be gained.

He was overestimating his own value a little, but those with the position of duke were worth more than just their abilities.

"Even if you kill me here, Marshukzarl won't give a damn! In fact, he might use this to begin an all-out war. You should take me captive and treat me with honor –"

"Yes, as you're hoping, I intend to capture you alive rather than kill you," said Vandalieu.

Duke Marme breathed a sigh of relief, but it was too early for that. Vandalieu's tongue peeked out from between his lips.

"Demon King's proboscis."

A long, thin proboscis like that of a butterfly extended from the tip of his red tongue.

"W-what is that?! What are you – GYAH?!"

With a speed too fast to be seen by the eye, the proboscis stabbed into Duke Marme's chest.

"This is a proboscis. The mouth organ of insects such as butterflies," said Vandalieu.

“You bastard... you said you’d capture me alive...”

From the sensation of his tongue and limbs gradually becoming unable to move, Duke Marme had mistakenly assumed that his blood would be sucked and he would die.

“You’re mistaken if you thought I’m sucking your blood,” said Vandalieu. “In fact, I’m injecting anesthesia... a paralyzing venom secreted from my tongue into you.”

Why are you doing that?! thought Duke Marme, who had no intention of resisting, as he opened his eyes wide in shock. He saw a woman with a collar appear behind Mikhail and approach him.

She grabbed the duke’s hair roughly and forced him to face upwards.

“IGEY?! W-wha are hyuu doinh?!” Duke Marme shouted, protesting with inarticulate words.

Isla ignored him, unsheathed her favorite knife and licked its blade with her purple tongue. “Will we deal with him here?” she asked her master.

“Yes, I’ve paralyzed him so he won’t die from the shock. We’ll be taking him back as a prisoner... as an experimental subject, but we still need to make a proper declaration of war.”

Today was the last day that anyone would see the duke’s face ever again, including Vandalieu and Duke Marme himself.



Around the time the occupying army’s headquarters became a stage for a tragedy, there was a man with his face hidden, running.

The man had predicted that the army would be in a situation of crisis right about now. He even thought it was possible that every single soldier would be wiped out. However, he hadn’t spoken a single word to warn them. He had prioritized returning home without even approaching the headquarters.

My duty is to return with information, nothing else!

The man, the only member of the Hilt to have survived because he had been hiding in

a faraway place right from the beginning without getting involved with the battle at all, simply made haste to reach his destination.



The Divine Realm of Alda, the god of law and fate, was filled with the panicked clamoring of the gods.

There were some who had originally been humans, but now that they had become gods, they did not lose their composure easily. It was not common for them to be in dismay and lose their senses.

But the scenes that could be seen through the records of the ‘Five-headed Snake’ Ervine and the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert were more than enough to strike the gods into a whirlpool of chaos.

“What in the world is that?! This can no longer be called a human!”

“Just how many fragments of the Demon King does he... and yet, his mind is not consumed by them! Is he an incarnation of the Demon King?!”

“More importantly, the destruction of two of Niltark-dono’s familiar spirits is a grave matter! Even if they were familiar spirits made of Mana with no minds of their own, how abominable it is that as a mortal, he can destroy servants of a god...!”

How unsightly, thought Fitun, the god of thunderclouds, as he looked upon his brethren with a cool gaze.

The reincarnated individual that he had taken in, the ‘Marionette’ Hajime Inui, knew that Vandalieu had absorbed multiple fragments of the Demon King and wielded them like they were parts of his own body. Fitun had been surprised upon learning that Vandalieu had considerably more fragments than he had heard before, but he wasn’t flustered by this.

As for the destruction of familiar spirits, which were servants of gods, Fitun felt contempt towards the gods whose faces had turned pale at this thought.

War is a series of battles to the death to begin with. The thrill is there because there is the chance that you will be killed. What did these guys expect when their boss said, “This

is a time of war against the remnants of the Demon King's army and Vida's faction?"

Fitun was a heroic god and a god of war; he didn't expect the others to quiver in anticipation like him. But they were still gods; shouldn't they be more composed?

"Everyone, calm yourselves! A new sinner... a new fiend has been born in our world. That is all this means!" said Niltark, the god of judgment.

His tone was brazen; he showed no signs of discomposure despite having had his familiar spirits destroyed and his followers' souls taken from him.

Of course, to begin with, one of his followers was the kind of person who would use familiar spirits as sacrificial pawns... No, considering Niltark, I suppose he approved of it, thinking it was a necessary sacrifice. The broken familiar spirits were puppets, after all, Fitun thought as he killed time.

Meanwhile, Mill, the goddess of slumber, and Nineroad, the heroic god of wind who was also Fitun's superior, were trying to calm the other gods down, but the chaos wasn't really dying down.

It seemed that the gods who had experienced fighting the army led by the Demon King Guduranis were deeply shaken. It was likely that their past traumas had resurfaced.

When I look at them like this, gods are no different from humans. Oh, damn.

Being the only one to remain quiet and calm, he had ended up standing out.

"Fitun, do you have some thoughts about this matter?" asked Nineroad, having taken notice of him.

The other gods' eyes focused on Fitun as well.

He couldn't honestly tell them what he had been thinking, but replying with, "I'm just standing here quietly" was too foolish as well.

Fitun decided to give a response that would be expected of him. "This is not really worthy of being called a 'thought,' but for now, it is just that he can use over ten fragments and break souls, is it not? And though you say he can destroy the servants of gods, what he destroyed were merely defenseless familiar spirits as they were descending," he said. "With that being the case, I thought that there are all kinds of

methods available to us.”

Several enraged gods began berating Fitun.

“Merely familiar spirits, you say?! How dare you say that in front of Niltark-dono!”

“You are a mere lowly member here! Do you even understand how serious this situation is?!”

But their master Alda spoke, causing them to fall silent and step back. “What methods do you speak of?” Alda asked.

“As I am a junior member, I don’t have any particularly great methods, but... I think it would be good to raise a champion like my master Nineroad, multiple of them if possible, give them Artifacts like Nemesis Bell or pieces of Demon King equipment that can face the Demon King’s fragments, and then break that Dhampir’s entire body to destroy him completely. After that, we just need to seal his remains and soul along with the Demon King’s fragments,” said Fitun, describing his thoughts in depth.

If one ignored the point of ‘multiple of them if possible,’ it was an exact outline of the plan that he was putting into action using Hajime.

The gods unanimously argued against Fitun’s suggestion.

“Such foolish... a method that is impossible outside of theory!”

“It is easier said than done. Fitun-dono, if such a thing was possible in the real world, none of us would be suffering like this. We would have won the war against the remnants of the Demon King’s army and Vida’s faction long ago.”

Indeed, that was how difficult... impossible, the method suggested by Fitun was.

There was not much difference between it and a plan for world conquest thought of by a playing child. Selecting those with desirable qualities and granting them divine protections was possible. Unlike Demon King equipment, giving them Artifacts was a little difficult, but not impossible.

But whether the heroes raised this way would be able to stand on even grounds with the champions of the past was another matter entirely.

Even if divine protections were given to them to speed up their development and increase their potential, they couldn't grow stronger infinitely. It wasn't just a matter of their qualities. There were flaws that could only be seen during events experienced during the development process and after they had already gained power.

Being gods didn't mean they knew everything. The reality was that there were many candidates to become heroes who would not even reach the heights reached by Ervine, whom Vandalieu had defeated a few days ago.

I don't need to be told that. It's more fun to actually attempt something if you're unsure whether it's possible or not... These peace-loving fools.

A fight to the death against an enemy that could kill you. It was only natural that it was difficult to prepare to win a battle where you would lose everything if defeated.

"Yes, I apologize for my imprudent speech," Fitun said without speaking these inner thoughts, trying to step back.

But it was none other than Alda himself who spoke, changing the atmosphere completely. "No, it is exactly as you say," he said. "A Dhampir who does not die even if decapitated, who does not lose himself to the Demon King's fragments despite having absorbed over a dozen of them, who casts spells that none have ever seen before, who misleads people's hearts and commands a multitude of subordinates. It is a being that cannot exist outside of theory, a being straight out of a delusion. That is the kind of enemy we are forced to fight. Ordinary methods will not do. No matter how difficult it is, we must do everything we can to carry out a method that is impossible outside of theory. I will give a trial to the hero who is my follower, the 'Blue-flamed Sword' Heinz, and his companions. After that, I shall grant him power and use him to carry out this method that is impossible outside of theory. The rest of you, find your own candidates to become heroes and raise them."

This decision caused unrest among the gods once more, but this time, it was a positive unrest with the idea that they could defeat the Dhampir since Alda himself was taking the initiative.

Training Heinz... Kukukuh, that will not happen so quickly. During that time, I will thoroughly strengthen Hajime.

It would become a competition of who could kill Vandalieu first. With a feeling of

enjoyment, Fitun struggled to contain his laughter.

On the other hand, Alda's mind was filled with distress.

It seems that Nineroad has started to realize. Hasn't Fitun realized it as well? The most problematic... difference between Vandalieu and the Demon King Guduranis.

The Demon King Guduranis had tried to destroy every living creature and god that had existed in this world from the beginning. The monsters he created, even the superior monsters, had been nothing but pawns to him, and he had mercilessly destroyed the subordinates that were his evil gods if they disobeyed him or proved to be useless.

This allowed every living being in this world to focus their strength into fighting him. Thanks to the champion Zakkart, it had even been possible to make enemies betray the Demon King.

Even when one considered the fact that this was the age of the gods, an era when the gods ruled over the people directly, that was how much of a threat the Demon King had been.

But Vandalieu was different. He was not an invader, an enemy to the entire world.

He protected those who served him equally, whether they were monsters like Undead, humans or members of Vida's races, and considered it only natural to bring about peace. He did try to destroy those he saw as enemies, but there was no doubting that there were clear standards that he had set for himself.

And those standards were difficult to describe as harsh in this world.

In other words, Vandalieu was nothing more than another person ruling a nation in this world.

...It was just that his goals, his methods of achieving them and his sense of values were in absolute conflict with Alda and the gods who served him.

But for the humans who lived in Lambda, that wasn't the case. In fact, Vandalieu had taken in the people of the cultivation villages in the Hartner Duchy and those from the Sauron Liberation Front.

From Alda's point of view, it was difficult to believe, but Vandalieu was not a being like Guduranis, a being that the people of the world needed to set aside their differences to join forces, concentrate their power and stand up against.

Then it seems that I must carry out the reconciliation with Vida's races that Nineroad suggested. By doing that, I can prevent Vandalieu from becoming the leader of Vida's races as a whole.

Like the humans, those of Vida's races were not aware of the gods' circumstances. That was why there were quite a lot of people living in human societies who worshipped Alda and the gods who supported him.

Thus, he had to do as Rodcorte had said, destroying Vida's circle of transmigration system and moving the souls of the members of Vida's races to Rodcorte's system.

But the requirement of this is to have Vida fall from her position as goddess. Even if that were to succeed, we can only take those among Vida's races that did not originate from repulsive beings, such as the Titans and Beast-people.

There was a time when the gods needed to fight the remnants of the Demon King's army until Ricklent and Zuruwarn, the last two remaining great gods, could be resurrected. During this time, having lost her sanity from the sorrow of losing her own champion, Vida had incited the evil gods who were supposed to have changed sides and deceived the insane Zantark, spreading new chaos and disaster across the world. But even so, to Alda, Vida was just a sister who had gone down the wrong path.

But she had led the world together with him, bringing her opinions against his since they were born. Alda could not deny this, nor did he intend to.

That was why he had defeated Vida a hundred thousand years ago, hoping that she would regain her sanity at the end of her long slumber.

And now, in order to save half of the children that she had given birth to in her madness, he would have to drive her from her position as a goddess and have the rest of them be treated purely like monsters.

It wasn't that he felt no hesitation or guilt over this.

"But I suppose I must carry this out. Going back, everything originated from my lack of power that prevented me from cutting down the roots of all of Vida's races and

protecting the world's order. But Bellwood, my champion... I pray from the bottom of my heart that you awake from your soon-approaching encounter with Heinz."

If Bellwood were still active now, Farmaun would not have performed the mad act of leaving with his subordinates to return to Zantark's side, Alda thought regretfully, hoping that Bellwood's awakening would return Farmaun's sanity.



- **Name:** Rickert Amid
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 27 years old
- **Title:** 【Light-speed Sword】 , 【Evil-breaking Sword】
- **Job:** Sword Saint
- **Level:** 32
- **Job history:** Apprentice Knight, Equestrian, Knight, Magic Knight, Magic Sword User, Holy Swordsman, Master Swordsman
- **Passive skills:**
 - Augmented Muscular Strength: Level 1
 - Augmented Agility: Level 1
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Sword (Large)
 - Strengthened Defense Power when equipped with Armor (Large)
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 3
- **Active skills:**
 - Light-speed Sword Technique: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 8
 - Shield Technique: Level 5
 - Mount: Level 5
 - Archery: Level 3
 - Commanding: Level 5
 - Coordination: Level 6
 - Transcend Limits: Level 1
 - Transcend Limits: Magic Sword: Level 1
 - Familiar Spirit Descent: Level 2

The ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert Amid. In the beginning, he gained experience and piled up achievements like a knight should. Taking up the holy sword Nemesis Bell as he polished his talent in swordsmanship, he was appointed as a member of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords.

He was generally someone who displayed his true value by fighting directly on the frontlines, and as a knight, his ability to command and lead troops was only a little above average.

Also, as he specialized in swordsmanship, his defensive abilities were lacking. But the swing of his Nemesis Bell, with the enhanced physical strength and agility from his

Passive Skills, is not at all inferior to that of an A-class adventurer.

His abilities were equivalent to those possessed by the 'Sword King' Borkus while he was alive. If one factors in his equipment, his Nemesis Bell and the other precious Magic Items that he was equipped with, such as his item bag, he surpassed Borkus.

- **Name:** Ervine
- **Race:** Elf
- **Age:** 249 years old
- **Title:** 【Five-headed Snake】 , 【Evil-breaking Sword】
- **Job:** Evil Whip User
- **Level:** 100
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Whip User, Thief, Mage, Enchantment Mage, Magic Whip User, Dual Whip User, Executioner
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Enhanced Agility: Level 7
 - Enhanced Muscular Strength: Level 6
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Whip (Large)
 - Augmented Attribute Values: Loyalty: Level 1
 - Mental Corruption: Level 3
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 5
 - Intuition: Level 2
 - Detect Presence: Level 5
- **Active skills:**
 - Killing Snake Whip Technique: Level 4
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6
 - Throwing: Level 4
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 2
 - Mana Control: Level 7
 - Fire-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Water-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Light-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Silent Steps: Level 9
 - Lockpicking: Level 4

- Trap: Level 5
- Surpass Limits: Magic Whip: Level 10
- Transcend Limits: Level 3
- Familiar Spirit Descent: Level 3
- **Unique skills:**
 - Niltark's Divine Protection

Ervine, the 'Five-headed Snake' of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. A veteran among the members, he was a capable individual who possessed such ability that he could have aimed for promotion to S-class if he were an adventurer. His strength and loyalty were so trusted that he was given a piece of the dangerous Demon King equipment.

He came from the same settlement as Marshukzarl's mother, the Elf concubine of the previous emperor, and this connection had brought him into the service of the Amid Empire.

He possesses an affinity for five attributes, but his talent with them was not particularly exceptional; he prioritized his skills with a whip and techniques as a spy, for which he did have talent for. He turned his eyes towards magic when he felt that he had reached the limit of what could be done through combat techniques alone. Thus, he was not adept at using magic other than enchantments for his armor and weapons such as his whip.

He possessed power roughly equal to that possessed by the 'Divine Spear of Ice' Mikhail while he was alive.

Job explanation:

【Demon King User】

A Job that can be acquired by one who can harbor the Demon King's fragments without having their mind absorbed by them, but instead absorb them and use them as a part of themselves.

Those who possess fragments while having the Demon King Encroachment Degree Skill, and those who possess Demon King equipment, cannot acquire this Job. This is because those who possess Demon King equipment are simply able to use the

fragments as weapons due to the seals on them rather than absorbing them and using them as a part of themselves.

Chapter 153

The empire's strategy and a birthday celebration

Sleygar and most of the Hilt had been disposed of by Legion and the Dark Night Knights' Order led by Isla.

But there was a single surviving Hilt member. His existence hadn't even been known to Ervine or the other members of the Hilt to begin with. It seemed that Ervine had vaguely guessed that someone would be there in the shadows, but he hadn't known where they would be or how many of them there were.

He had been devoting himself to gathering information from a place distant from Ervine and the others. And he had simply watched Rickert and the other Hilt members being killed, continuing to gather information without coming to Rickert's aid.

And once the battle was over, he had focused solely on escaping. He had passed through the region, ignoring the occupying army's headquarters where Duke Marme was, to pass on the information to other members of the Hilt who had been on standby.

"...If only it ended as a needless concern," muttered Marshukzarl Amid, the Amid Empire's emperor, as he passed his eyes over the report that contained this information.

He had not intended to use the four members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, his own nephew Rickert among them, as sacrificial pawns. If it were a situation of emergency... even in situations of emergency that exceeded all expectations, he would send enough members to overcome them.

The insects used by the 'Insect Swarm' Bebeckett should have been able to exterminate Vandalieu's Undead, even if there were a thousand of them... Even if there were several thousand of Undead the insects should have been able to suppress them.

The 'King Slayer' Sleygar should have been able to assassinate Vandalieu while Bebeckett's insects suppressed his Undead.

And the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine was skilled enough to have aimed for promotion

to S-class if he were an adventurer. He had been given not only Artifacts but Demon King equipment as well, so he should have been able to exterminate Vandalieu even if he did wield fragments of the Demon King.

The 'Light-speed Sword' Rickert was inferior to the other three in combat ability, but he was certainly strong enough when compared to other knights. With the holy sword Nemesis Bell and Light-speed Sword Technique, a superior version of the Swordsmanship Skill, he shouldn't have been a burden to the others.

But according to the written report, none of the things that 'should have' happened had become reality.

Bebeckett's insects had been stolen, and Sleygar's assassination had failed despite successfully decapitating his target. Ervine had fought bravely, successfully drawing out the powers of Vandalieu who had been shrouded in mystery up until now, but he had ultimately been defeated.

Rickert had fallen to the mysterious power of a grotesque monster.

"To think that my expectations were thoroughly out of order... Perhaps I have grown old," Marshukzarl said to himself as he stroked his face.

He was over a hundred years old, but as one would expect of a half-Elf, there wasn't a single wrinkle on his skin.

Marshukzarl was sitting in a conference room that had been built alongside his office for the purpose of discussing high-confidentiality matters. The people gathered in this room had serious expressions on their faces.

"Your Majesty, it is not the time to be making such jokes," one of them said.

Other than Marshukzarl, there was the surviving Hilt member himself, who had returned through the Teleportation spell of a space-attribute mage of the army, the 'Zero Sword' Carmine representing the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords, General Hewberry who led the First Army that protected the emperor, and Chief Imperial Mage Bangain. The others in the room were Marshukzarl's retainers that were also closely trusted.

"There has been an emergency report from the Sauron region headquarters, saying that the vassals and knights of Duke Marme were assassinated or taken captive in

broad daylight. And it seems that the duke himself has been abducted by the perpetrator as well... except for the skin of his head from the neck up.”

By the time the soldiers had noticed something strange and entered the building of the headquarters, the inside of the building had already turned into a sea of blood. Because the smell had been erased by some kind of spell, nobody had noticed.

And the mask-like skin of Duke Marme’s head from the neck up had been nailed onto the wall of his office, with the separated left and right halves of Rickert’s decapitated head on the floor below it.

Several of the employees, servants and soldiers who were supposed to be in the building were safe, but their memories had somehow been erased, and none of them could recall what had happened.

“The culprit is clearly Vandaliu himself or his subordinates, but that is not all. The army headquarters is a melting pot of chaos. Not waiting for an order to arrive from the empire, one of the commanders of Duke Marme’s army led a unit into the former Scylla territory to try and rescue the Duke, but there has been no contact from them since. It is likely that...”

“It is only a matter of time before the Orbaume Kingdom learns of this emergency situation... no, they may have already caught wind of it,” said General Hewberry.

His apprehensions were correct. The news of Rickert being dispatched was well-known in the empire, and a portion of Duke Marme’s army had made moves of their own. If the Orbaume Kingdom still hadn’t noticed anything unusual after all of this, their intelligence departments could only be considered incompetent.

However, Marshukzarl directed his gaze not at General Hewberry, but at Chief Imperial Mage Bangain. “Do you have any clues regarding the peculiar spells mentioned in the report?” he asked.

“I am embarrassed to say that I can only make conjectures,” Bangain said, and then he closed his mouth again. But as Marshukzarl silently motioned for him to continue, he reluctantly began speaking again. “The peculiarities, such as the fact that the spells are different from any spells of any of the attributes in our records, and the fact that he makes use of special Ghosts, are conspicuous. But looking at the report, one might think that there are many spells that could be associated with death. From this

information, we can imagine that he has either reversed the effects of the life attribute, or... is using the magic of death that was said to be wielded by the Demon King Guduranis."

"That's impossible," muttered several of Marshukzarl's vassals as they stirred and began talking among themselves at this sudden mention of a being and magic that were only spoken of in myths.

But Marshukzarl's response was different. "I see," he said with a nod, and then he sighed deeply. "He uses the fragments of the Demon King as if they were part of his own body, so I suppose it is no surprise that he can use the Demon King's magic. And he is served by numerous high-Rank Undead; he is already like the Demon King himself."

"Your Majesty! As we have mentioned, this one Dhampir is not the only problem. At this rate, the Sauron region will be stolen back by the Orbaume Kingdom!" said Hewberry, speaking with the loud voice that one would expect from a military man.

"That's exactly right, Hewberry." Marshukzarl suddenly opened his eyes wide and rose from his seat. "Give the Sauron region to the Orbaume Kingdom!" he said bluntly.

"As you wish! We will give the Sauron region... Your Majesty, what did you just -?!"

"I said to give it back to them. Did you not hear me? Aren't you the one who originally suggested this?"

"I-I did not say that we should give it back to them! What in the world are you thinking?!" Hewberry asked, his face turning pale.

"Getting rid of a nuisance, of course," Marshukzarl replied. "Carmine, that Hilt member had the Measurement Unique Skill, didn't he?"

The Measurement Unique Skill, as its name suggested, was a Skill that allowed the user to measure objects that he saw. It didn't allow the user to see everything on the target's Status like Demon Eyes of Appraisal, but it was effective for gathering information.

"I give you permission to speak. Report your information on Vandalieu," Marshukzarl said to the Hilt member.

“As you will. At the time I saw him... Age, nine. Titles, nine. Jobs previously experienced, twelve. Passive Skills, eighteen. Active Skills, twenty-six. Unique Skills, eight,” the Hilt member reported in a matter-of-fact tone.

Many, including General Hewberry, gasped.

The Titles were still understandable. There were plenty of incidents in the past where rulers who were overly fond of their children had given them Titles.

But at the age of nine, this boy had reached Level 100 with twelve Jobs, and possessed a combined total of forty-four Passive and Active Skills. And though it was rare to possess even a single Unique Skill, he possessed eight.

The Skills’ names and Levels were unknown, but considering his battle against Ervine, there was no doubting that he was a threat equivalent to an S-class adventurer.

...The truth was that Vandalieu had gone through yet another Job-change after the Hilt member had used Measurement on him, however.

“What about the other Undead and Vampires?” Marshukzarl asked. “Report only their Ranks.”

“...The lowest among them was Rank 7; the highest was Rank 12.”

The vassals’ unrest grew even greater.

“The lowest among them was Rank 7... That is exceptional even among Undead!”

“And the highest was Rank 12?! Depending on the individual monster, that’s a Rank where the monster might possess power rivaling an Elder Dragon or an evil god. We must notify every Adventurers’ Guild and Mages’ Guild right away!”

“Your Majesty! We must check the remaining Nemeses and Demon King equipment in the depths of the treasure chamber. We should give them to suitable individuals and have them begin their training at once!”

“It seems that you have managed to feel the same sense of crisis as me,” Marshukzarl said.

Hewberry and the vassals closed their mouths and directed their attention to him.

“But it is still not enough,” Marshukzarl continued. “With Teleportation, he is able to cross the Boundary Mountain Range freely. On the other hand, it is nearly impossible for us to cross it.”

The enemy could attack freely with an unmatched army of powerful Undead, while the empire was incapable of making a counterattack.

If Vandalieu wished to do so, he could spread disease to the empire’s grain-producing lands. He could recreate the tragedy of the cultivated land of Balcheburg in the Mirg shield-nation as many times as he wanted.

For Marshukzarl and his nation, that was more of a threat than his ability to destroy familiar spirits.

In this situation of unprecedented crisis, the vassals did not even have time to murmur among themselves.

“But what does this have to do with giving the Sauron region to the Orbaume Kingdom, Your Majesty? Could it be that you intend to get the Orbaume Kingdom involved in the battle against this new Demon King?” asked Chief Imperial Mage Bangain, breaking the silence.

“Exactly,” Marshukzarl said with a nod. “It is unclear what Vandalieu thinks of the kingdom, but it is certain that he will not join it. In fact, the Sauron Liberation Front, whose strings he was pulling from the shadows, was not able to coordinate their actions with the kingdom.”

“That is true... according to the reports of our spies, the nobles of the kingdom took in Duke Sauron’s orphans... the main faction took in his second son, the next largest faction his fifth son, and the last, his third daughter has... deserted, if I am not mistaken. Either way, it is likely that the Sauron Liberation Front was a nuisance for them.”

There had been abandoned noblemen among the ranks of the Sauron Liberation Front led by Iris, such as the last-born, adopted or illegitimate children of noble families. If they were to make achievements, the reputations of the main families who had fled to other duchies would become worse, the benefits of supporting other duke families and having connections to other noblemen decreasing substantially.

Iris and Vandalieu hadn’t realized this, but this was the dirty reason for coordination

between the Sauron Liberation Front and the Orbaume Kingdom not going well.

The reason the now-deceased Raymond Paris had been able to coordinate activities with the kingdom was because he had succeeded in those dirty political negotiations.

And the leaders of the Amid Empire, which had been crossing swords with the Orbaume Kingdom for a long time, were aware of this. They knew how rotten the inner circles of that nation were. It wasn't just the Hartner Duchy, which had abandoned Talosheim two hundred years ago. The corruption had spread into the deepest parts of the nation.

Considering Vandalieu's personality, of which they had now learned through recent events, it was impossible to imagine that things would go well between him and the kingdom. Even excluding the fact that Heinz, suspected to be responsible for the death of Vandalieu's mother, was a national hero there.

"I see... So, we will conduct a pincer attack against Vandalieu from both the east and the west?" asked Hewberry.

"It depends on the circumstances when the time comes," Marshukzarl said, giving a simple response.

I can't imagine that the kingdom would join forces with my empire just because a common enemy has appeared. And even if Vandalieu is a monster, he is no fool. Just as he did with Baron Ragdew, he is likely to create several allies in the kingdom as well... though his choice of ally was quite strange. At any rate, this is unlikely to turn into a full-scale war against the kingdom.

Depending on the circumstances, it might even be best to try and reconcile with Vandalieu. Marshukzarl would offer several heads including his own, an enormous sum in reparations, a vast amount of land and tens of thousands of commoners. It would be most satisfactory if this could lead to the empire's continuation, leaving power for the next generation and a possibility for the empire to gain prosperity once more.

But I suppose I cannot convince those around me to agree to this. The position of emperor is one of suffering, Marshukzarl thought as he called an ending to this secret meeting so that he could begin discussing the abandonment of the Sauron region with the marshal, who had not been called to this room.



Iris was melting in a sea of warmth.

The pain of her wounds inflicted by the Nemesis Bell wielded by Rickert, her suffering, her body and her senses had all disappeared.

They had not been lost due to her fatal wound; she was simply melting strangely in a pleasant slumber.

Everything melted, and only her consciousness was left. But at that moment, like reverse-regeneration, her senses and the sensation of her body returned.

“Your state is like that of a chrysalis. You will be melted once, and then your entire body will be recreated once more. In other words, you are being reborn,” said a voice that Iris had never heard before but sounded very familiar at the same time. “The difference between you and a chrysalis is that this process will take less time. About seven days and seven nights. Tonight, you will be reborn. As my daughter.”

Iris could see a large silhouette on the other side of a red membrane. Instinctively, she reached out with her arms and tore at the membrane from the inside.

The moment she did, the fragile membrane broke and the blackish-red fluid that had been inside the membrane with Iris gushed out, throwing her outside.

Lying on a cold floor, Iris spat out the fluid in her lungs. “Air is so pleasant... Godwin-dono,” she said, speaking her first words after her rebirth as she looked up at Godwin, king of the Majin.

Godwin let out a hearty, satisfied laugh. “To think that you can speak as soon as you’re reborn. The emperor was right to leave this to me. Normally, you’d be falling asleep like you’re losing consciousness, not speaking words.”

Vandalieu had asked Godwin to transform Iris into a member of the Majin race.

“I am grateful to you for accepting this unreasonable request on this occasion,” Iris said.

“You’re too formal, my daughter,” said Godwin. “I don’t mind if you think of me as your second father. And it’s most satisfactory that I could take care of it with just seven days

and seven nights' work."

The one Vandalieu had asked to turn Iris into a member of Vida's race was Majin king Godwin.

When Vandalieu suddenly appeared and made this request, Godwin had been hesitant at first to conduct the ritual needed to transform a member of another race into a Majin. It was a ritual that Godwin himself had never performed, one that had not been performed by any Majin for thousands of years.

But the moment Vandalieu said, "I request this as the emperor," Godwin had placed his fist on his chest and said, "Leave it to me," taking responsibility for this task... Because with this achievement under his belt, he would most absolutely not be considered a candidate to become the next emperor.

"Let's see... Since you call your other one 'Chichi-ue,' how about calling me 'Papa-ue?'" Godwin suggested.

"...I would very much prefer another way of referring to you," said Iris.

The Majin race could turn members of humanoid races and other races created by Vida that didn't originate from monsters into members of their own race. There were several different variations in the ritual used to carry this out.

One of them was the blood cocoon of the Battle-Majin Diablo like Godwin.

TLN: The author has changed the names of the different varieties of Majin as was foretold by darksanity; now Battle-Majin have the name of Diablo.

A special magic circle was drawn, a special vessel that the Majin called the holy grail was placed at its center and the blood of the Diablo that would become the parent was poured into it. An additional sacrifice... a great amount of Mana and Vitality, in the form of another's blood, was also offered.

With this, a cocoon-like object made of blood was created. And once the one who wanted to become a Majin was placed inside, they would be regenerated and reborn as a Majin after seven days and seven nights.

"Is that so? Well, I don't care what you call me. What's important is the feelings of deep affection in your words. In any case, I've said this many times before, but it was my

first time conducting this ritual. It was bothersome, painful, I had to go through a lot for the sacrifice, and I had to sit here and talk about this and that in front of the cocoon for seven days. But it seems that it was worth the effort and the results are superb. You've transformed well," said Godwin as he examined Iris, his new daughter, from the ends of her horns to the tips of her toes.

Her base appearance was the same as the previous Iris. But her skin was blue and her eyes had become a golden color. There were two twisted horns protruding from her temples, membranous wings similar to a bat's or a dragon's on her back and there was a tail with a triangular tip growing from her tailbone.

She was a complete Majin.

"Is it because of Legion's meat? I get the feeling that you have a bit more meat on you now... When you went into the cocoon, you were haggard and on the verge of death, so maybe you just looked thinner than you do now. Well, you seem to have become a fine Majin, an Obscene-Majin Succubus. The emperor and I can be proud of this," Godwin remarked.

"...Godwin-dono, are those supposed to be words of praise?" Iris asked, frowning as she covered her body with her newly-acquired wings.

But Godwin didn't seem to take notice of this. As a side-effect of the ritual, his feelings for her felt as if she were his real daughter, so he didn't think of her as a member of the opposite sex.

"Hmm? I did mean that as a compliment. To begin with, when humans and Elves transform into Majin, unless they're half-Titan or Beast-person or Drakonid or some other race with large bodies, they almost always become Obscene-Majin," he explained.

It seemed that with the Majin race's ritual, the parent being a Battle-Majin didn't guarantee that the child would transform into a Battle-Majin as well.

Apparently, only the race and physique of the person being reborn were relevant.

"Anyway, don't worry about it. I don't know what'll be said about you in the outside world, but just because you're a Succubus doesn't mean you have to behave like one. It just means you can suck vitality and disguise yourself as a human or a member of another race, though it only works against the opposite sex," Godwin told her.

But even so, Iris couldn't shake off the image of Succubi and Incubi held by human societies, so she couldn't think of these words as a compliment.

"Well, first of all, it'd be best if you put on some clothes and go and show your face to the emperor and his subordinates outside. The newest trend in the Majin nation has been prepared to celebrate your birth," Godwin said, pointing at a basket.

The basket contained clothes... apparently.

"Umm... it appears to me that there is only strangely-designed underwear in here," said Iris.

The basket contained something that Vandalieu or Legion would think was a swimsuit if they were to see it.

"Hmm? There are other things as well as the underwear, look. We thought that it's a bit too early for you to get armor, so that's not there yet," said Godwin.

"No, I'm saying, I need clothes..."

"And I'm saying, those are clothes."

Through this mismatched conversation, Iris suddenly realized. This underwear-like clothing was the latest trend in the Majin nation.

She looked at Godwin again and saw that he was only wearing knee-length pants made of fur with a netting pattern in them; the only other items on his body were his armor and various decorations. Looking at him calmly, she thought that he was exposing quite a lot of himself.

"...When I was asked which race I would like to be reborn as, perhaps it was hasty of me to answer that I wanted to become as strong as possible so that I would not be a burden to anyone again," Iris muttered.

"You don't have to make a face like you're about to die again. It's not like you can't wear anything other than your clothes. Well, you need holes for your wings and tail, so you need to be a bit craftier than humans," said Godwin. "Hmm, maybe the clothes that were the trend a while back would have been better?"

Godwin comforted Iris, who had been raised in a strict household of knights, as he

went to fetch the clothes whose design had been popular in the distant past... clothes that weren't revealing but were heavily over-decorated with sinister-looking things like skulls and eyeballs.



“Griiiiiill~” Vandalieu said happily.

He was cooking Bugitas's meat on a charcoal fire outside the Majin nation's ritual grounds. Two quivering antennae were protruding from his forehead.

“What a pleasant smell,” said Myuze.

“It is, isn't it?” Vandalieu agreed. “My antennae are moving on their own.”

“Not your nose?! Van-kun, has it already become normal for you to have antennae growing from your head?!” exclaimed Privel.

“...Boss has really gone from being a person to more of an insect...” muttered Debis.

“Gichih?”

“Hyih! It wasn't a complaint, Pete-Danna!”

Having abducted Duke Marme and others and then invited the ones with promise to join his side, Vandalieu and his companions had come to visit the Majin nation once more, on this day when Iris's ritual was set to be complete.

Among them were the senior resistance members of the Sauron Liberation Front, Debis as well as those who could be quickly gathered among Haj's group.

Having transformed into a Majin, Iris could no longer continue leading the resistance as she had done up until now. The Majin were not recognized as people in the Orbaume Kingdom, either. In fact, they were treated as monsters, targets to be exterminated.

That was why Iris would set up a new leader on the surface and give commands from the shadows. But she couldn't tell the lower-ranking members that their leader was actually a Majin, so only those whom she trusted had been brought here through the method of having Legion temporarily absorb them.

Privel, Myuze, Gizania, Zadiris and other members had been brought along as well, except for Budarion and the others who were busy rebuilding their nations.

They had come to have a kickoff party that was also celebrating Iris's rebirth.

Tarea called out to Vandalieu with fire in her eyes and scissors in her hand as she cooked the meat. "Van-sama, one more time, please! The next one should be as gentle as possible, but with the same strength!"

"Okay," said Vandalieu.

His hair lengthened explosively. But Tarea cut and harvested it until it was back to its original length.

"Ufufufu, such soft hair... It is more like soft fur than hair," Tarea said. "But at the same time, it is strong and withstands impacts and slashes, and it even has outstanding fire resistance and defense..."

Haj and his companions backed away a little from the sight of a Ghoul woman with ringlets wearing a strangely-designed dress, hugging and pressing her cheeks against Vandalieu's hair with a twisted expression that looked as if she were going to start drooling at any moment.

It was enough to make them forget that Tarea was a beautiful woman with an attractive figure.

"Van-sama, every time you leave, you come back to me more wonderful than ever," Tarea said. "Just how much do you have to charm me before you are satisfied?"

"You mean he provides wonderful materials, do you not? Tarea, please do not tire Danna-sama out too much," Bellmond warned her.

A mean-looking smile appeared on Tarea's loose, twisted lips. "Ah, you do not need to tell me that, Bellmond. All of this is for making the special brush that Van-sama asked me to make."

"A-a brush, you say?!" Bellmond instinctively clutched her bottom... or rather, the long, fluffy tail extending from it, as she backed away.

Her tail, which could mow down warriors in Adamantite armor with a single swing,

was sensitive when brushed for some reason, and this was her weakness.

What would happen if it were to be brushed by a brush made of the Demon King's fur...? The thought was terrifying.

"Danna-sama! Please reconsider, right this moment!" Bellmond pleaded.

"Hmm? The brush is for Gizania," said Vandalieu.

"...Eh?" said two voices simultaneously.

Bellmond stared at Vandalieu blankly, while Gizania looked surprised at the sudden mention of her own name.

"The fur on Gizania's lower body is harder than it looks, so normal brushes would probably be quickly ruined if they were used on her fur. That's why I thought a specially-made item would be necessary and asked Tarea to make it," Vandalieu explained. "But it seems that you want one as well, Bellmond, so I'll reconsider things and make one more."

"D-DANNA-SAMAAAA!" Bellmond cried sorrowfully.

"I wasn't lying~!" Tarea said with a loud laugh behind her.

"Vandalieu-dono, we Arachne, especially large-build Arachne, certainly have hard fur on our lower limbs, but..." said Gizania.

"Well, everything is a challenge," said Vandalieu.

"Van-kun, pay attention to me too~!" said Privel, extending her arms and tentacles at the same time and wrapping Vandalieu in them.

As Vandalieu continued cooking the meat with his arms protruding from the gaps between the tentacles, Gizania decided to give up on trying to change his mind.

Haj, Debis and the others watched this scene with stiff smiles on their faces, keeping their distance. They would definitely never feel jealous of Vandalieu.

Because if they were to be caught up in that, they would have a bone or two easily broken. All of the women possessed the Superhuman Strength Skill, and Gizania and

Privel in particular could be considered to be heavyweights if their lower bodies were taken into account.

It was surprising that Vandalieu was still unharmed.

“Should we just become Majin as well?” one of the female resistance members said jokingly.

“Hey, there won’t be any candidates to become the new Princess Knight if we do that!” said another.

“Indeed. Do not say such rash things,” Zadiris said, scolding them. “The boy and Legion offered their own Mana and Vitality as sacrifices necessary for the blood cocoon ritual. And the Majin that will become the parent must accompany the child for seven days and seven nights. It is not a ritual that can be performed so easily.”

The women looked downcast as they hastily apologized to Zadiris, who looked younger than them in appearance.

“Don’t say that, Mother. It’s not such a heavy burden on Van and Legion, so they probably didn’t feel like it was anything serious,” said Basdia.

Her words were not insincere words of comfort for the resistance women; they were true.

Vandalieu and Legion had offered their own Mana and Vitality for the ritual. Ordinarily, the amount of each required would be considered extensive.

Normally, the Mana and Vitality necessary for the sacrifice would be extracted from monsters captured alive by Majin warriors and mages, but that would need the efforts of several hundred individuals.

But for Vandalieu and Legion, the cost was not particularly heavy. In fact, Vandalieu had said, “This is much smaller than the amount needed to fire Death Cannon once.”

As for Legion –

“That’s right, you don’t have to worry about us. We’ll recover quickly, and it costs us less than the pieces of flesh we were throwing at Rickert when we fought him,” Legion said as they ate a frankfurter.

These really were not great costs to pay.

“Well, that is true, but –” Zadiris began.

Jadal, Basdia’s daughter and Zadiris’s granddaughter, called out to her. “Obaa-chan, give me some vegetables~”

“Oh, Jadal, you are such a good girl who is not picky with food,” said Zadiris, her grim expression loosening into a doting one in an instant.

The two women, having been saved from her lecture, gave sighs of relief.

“By the way, where is the rest of Legion-san?” a female resistance member asked Legion.

The resistance members had become accustomed to Legion’s presence.

Legion ate a frankfurter as they replied.

“We’re all here.”

“We’re not actually separated right now.”

“With the Size Alteration Skill and Form Alteration Skill, it just looks like we’ve separated.”

“This is practice for us so that we can all work together inside a human-sized building.”

“BURURURURU!”

“...What about the person-shaped Slime-san next to you?” one of the women asked, referring to the Slime Kühl who was making an effort to maintain a human-shaped form.

“...For some reason, it feels a sense of rivalry towards us.”

“A rival!”

“...What on earth is this?” said Iris’s voice.

Reborn, she emerged from the ritual grounds. Because of her new horns and wings, the balance of her body had changed and she seemed a little unsteady, but she was walking properly.

Incidentally, it seems that she had come to a compromise in regard to her clothing. She was wearing a cloak that had been trending in the past (with the unique design feature of having a large hole in the back), along with the highly-revealing, currently-trending clothes.

The resistance members gasped as they looked upon her completely different form.

“...Everyone, I’m sorry for making you worry,” Iris said. “I’m not sure if I can say that I’m alright, but I managed to transform into a Majin. But as you can see, my appearance has changed significantly. I cannot blame you if you say that you cannot follow me any longer. Say it clearly –”

“No, I don’t think it’s all that bad, Princess,” said Debis.

“Well, I do feel like you have a strange lewdness that you didn’t have before, but that’s –” Haj began. “GUHEBUH?!”

“Partner, you speak rudely,” said Haj’s Living Armor.

“Don’t worry about it, Leader! We’re not worried about it at all!” said another resistance member.

Despite Iris’s very different appearance, Debis and the others declared that they would follow her as they had always done. Haj was being hit in the back of the head with the scabbard of a sword by his Living Armor, but there was no sign of withdrawal or rejection in his actions.

“But everyone, I’m –” Iris began.

“Compared to Boss and Legion, it’s a tiny change,” everyone said simultaneously.

“...You’re right,” said Iris, convinced by these words.

“That’s quite the way to put it. Well, we’re aware of it ourselves,” said Legion, not minding at all.

But it seemed that Vandalieu's mind had taken some damage from this. "...Well, Majin and Legion are both people, so it's fine," he said, his hands that were protruding from between Privel's tentacles stopping their movements for a moment.

"It can't be helped, Boss. You can't convince anyone otherwise when you have antennae hanging from your head," Miles said, comforting him.

"...I suppose that's true. Ah, that's right. Privel, let me go for a moment," said Vandalieu.

He stopped cooking Bugitas's meat, crawled out of Privel's tentacles and suddenly produced a spectacular longsword in a scabbard out of thin air.

Iris gasped as she saw the sword. "Nemesis Bell...?!"

It was the holy sword wielded by Rickert, the one that had inflicted fatal wounds upon her and created the reason she had to be reborn as a Majin.

It was a legendary holy sword to the rest of the world, but to Iris, it was nothing more than a repulsive, dangerous weapon. Or at least, it should have been, but for some reason, she felt a familial love towards the sword.

"Iris..."

"That voice is Chichi-ue?!"

The reason for Iris's feelings was because her father, George Bearheart, now inhabited Nemesis Bell.

"Why in the world is Chichi-ue in the holy sword?!"

"I devoured the familiar spirit inside Nemesis Bell, and placed George inside the newly empty vessel. Your previous sword was cracked, after all," said Vandalieu. "Normally, it would be difficult to transfer a spirit that has been in a certain vessel for a long time to another one, but maybe because I've become a Dark Guider, I succeeded with it quite easily."

Vandalieu had easily devoured the familiar spirit in Nemesis Bell, which was likely that of the heroic god Bellwood. The familiar spirit had likely been a lower-ranking one. Unfortunately, this meant that it had been dull to eat it, without any Attribute Values or Skill Levels increasing.

Perhaps familiar spirits were not enough.

The fact that a familiar spirit of that level was inhabiting the sword means that this holy sword is a low-quality or perhaps a mass-produced item. It's shabby when compared to the Artifact Ice Age, which could create cursed ice. Well, leaving that aside...

"I suppose we'll give it the new name of Nemesis George, the dark magic sword. Here," said Vandalieu.

Being offered the renamed sword that contained her father George, Iris took it and hugged it tightly. "Chichi-ue!... Vandalieu-dono, no, Your Majesty! Thank you very much!" she said, her tears dripping onto Nemesis George's handle.

Though the color of her eyes had changed, her tears were still clear and transparent, just as they had been when she was a human.

The resistance members cheered.

"The Princess Knight has made a full recovery!"

"Princess, George-sama, congratulations!"

"Gahaha! Celebrate, celebrate!" said Godwin, who had joined them with a nonchalant look on his face. "By the way, is the alcohol not here yet?"

Right on time, a wagon filled with alcohol and food arrived, being pushed by Pauvina, Rapiécage and Yamata.

"Everyone, it's a cake~!" said Pauvina.

"A cake..." Rapiécage repeated.

"Happy birthday~♪" Yamata sang.

Pauvina was pushing the enormous wagon, which had a cake at the top, while Rapiécage and nine beautiful Lamia women... or rather, Yamata, who had separated her upper bodies and was using the Long-distance Control Skill, were following behind her.

The feast to celebrate Iris's rebirth began in earnest, and the food was distributed for

everyone to enjoy. The fight to retake the Sauron region would begin again tomorrow, so this feast was also important for them to regain their strength for that.

Knowing this, everyone ate, drank and made plenty of noise... though there were some residents of the Majin nation joining in here and there, despite having nothing to do with the resistance.

It seemed that they had come to see King Godwin's new daughter who had been born through a ritual that hadn't been carried out in thousands of years, and then ended up being drawn in by the feast.

"Maybe it's best to cook some more?" Vandalieu wondered.

"That might indeed be important, Your Majesty, but... what happened to Baron Ragdew and his family?" Iris asked, having noticed that Cuoco Ragdew, who had been cooperating with the resistance, and his family, were nowhere to be seen.

"Cuoco and his family... Iris, please be wary of them from now on," Vandalieu warned her.

"H-have they done something outrageous?!" Iris asked in surprise.

"After they migrated to Talosheim, he has been following Eisen like a duckling following its mother... along with his entire family."

In exchange for Cuoco's cooperation, Iris had been giving him a special syrup purified from Eisen's sap, telling him that it was Ent syrup made from an Ent, a plant-type monster. As a result, he had been charmed by this syrup that possessed a full-bodied scent and a rich sweetness.

"Ever since they somehow figured out from the smell that Eisen was the one providing the raw materials for the syrup, they have been following Eisen whenever they have spare time," said Vandalieu.

"...The entire family?" said Iris.

"Yes, the entire family. His wife has been doing it particularly frequently."

Cuoco and his family were likely following Eisen around in Talosheim's Immortal Ent forest right about now.

“Ah, what a pleasant scent. Don’t you think so, Honey?”

“Yes, it really is. It would be lovely if we could just stay here forever, wouldn’t it, Darling?”

“I can’t get enough of this~”

“Kyakyah~♪”

“Drink some and then go home.”

An entire family of four following Eisen around, and Eisen having no choice but to give them some of her sap to have them leave. Iris felt dizzy as she imagined this scene.

“Well, in any case, things have calmed down recently,” Vandalieu said. “With his superior Kurt having him eat the various delicious foods of Talosheim and having his interest in food more spread out.”

Just when Kurt thought that he had gained a former nobleman who could be used as a civil official, his entire family turned out to be large eaters... gourmet fanatics. It seemed that Kurt was facing a lot of trouble because of this.

“...I don’t know what to say. I’m sorry. I will make sure to apologize to Kurt-dono,” said Iris.

The leader of an anti-Amid-Empire resistance, apologizing to a nobleman from the Mirg shield-nation, a vassal nation of that empire. In a way, perhaps this was a step towards reconciliation that ought to be celebrated.

“But one more question. What about Borkus-dono, Mikhail-dono and the others?” Iris asked.

“They’re protecting the resistance base in your absence along with Isla,” said Vandalieu.

“I see. It puts me at ease to know that they are protecting the base.”

Incidentally, the portion of Duke Marme’s army who had gone out to rescue him had already become Experience Points for the Undead guarding the base.

“Leaving that aside, Iris, have some too. It’s very delicious, this Noble Orc meat that an evil god descended upon,” said Vandalieu, offering her some cut pieces of meat.

“What an incredible history for meat... Itadakimasu.” Iris opened her eyes wide at how delicious the meat was.

The meat filled the nasal cavity with a rich scent just by being inside the mouth, and a flavorful, oily juice oozed out from the soft meat with each bite. But the meat did not melt on the tongue; the meat made its solid presence known.

It was condensed meat that still had a softness to it.

“This is... delicious. It goes well with the spicy sauce... The Noble Orc meat you provided before was delicious as well, but it cannot be compared to this. Even though it is meat of a creature of the same race, it really changes so much with an evil god descending upon it,” said Iris.

“I’m glad you like it. I need you to regain your energy as soon as possible,” said Vandalieu.

“Yes, for my training.”

Having transformed into a Majin, Iris’s Attribute Values had increased greatly. With her newly-acquired wings, she could now fly through the sky.

By becoming an Orichalcum sword, her father George had become a weapon with function rivaling that of a weapon made from the Demon King’s fragments, too.

But Iris had to learn to use her new wings and sword freely. If not, she would be beaten by enemies like the ‘Light-speed Sword’ Rickert again.

“Become strong, Iris...” said her father’s voice, echoing from her new sword.

Iris nodded, hardening her resolve. “Yes, Chichi-ue. Even if I face the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords once more, I will not fail again.”

“No, that is not all, Iris... You must become strong immediately. If possible, before next year,” George said.

“N-next year?! Why are you imposing a time limit, Chichi-ue?!” Iris exclaimed,

bewildered.

“That’s because Van-kun is going to challenge the Trial of Zakkart next year,” said Privel as she finished eating a piece of fried squid.

“Did you not know, Iris-dono?” asked Myuze.

“She was supposed to continue working in the Sauron region. It is unlikely that she has heard of this,” said Gizania.

“So, it’s apparently been decided that those who lack the skill to follow Vandalieu into the Dungeon will be training until next year. I’m already skilled enough, though,” explained Vigarō, who had been simply cooking and eating meat, completely uninvolved in the women’s conversation up until now.

“Th-the Trial of Zakkart... The Dungeon that even an A-class adventurer has never come out alive from, His Majesty is... No, it’s not that I’m not interested, but with my strength, I will only be a burden,” said Iris.

She could feel that her ability had increased drastically ever since she met Vandalieu, was given a Cursed Sword containing her father’s spirit and acquired the new Job of Cursed Spirit Swordsman.

But only days ago, she had been defeated by Rickert, someone equivalent to an A-class adventurer, and almost lost her life. It was difficult to imagine that her abilities would be of any use in a Dungeon that even claimed the lives of A-class adventurers as strong as Rickert. She could clearly see a future where rather than being a Princess Knight, she would be like a princess in old heroic tales, a woman who was simply rescued by the hero.

“Become strong, Iris...” George said.

“Chichi-ue! It is impossible for me! It would be impossible to become strong enough by next year!” Iris exclaimed.

“Well, I’m sure things will work out. I mean, you’re my daughter as well. By the way, I managed to clear it up until about two-thirds of the way through,” said Godwin.

“It’s alright, let’s work hard together!” said Privel.

“Even if our strength is insufficient, working hard towards a desired result is a noble thing,” said Gizania.

“Gizania-dono, that is quite the negative outlook,” said Myuze.

Common sense told Iris that it was impossible, but everyone encouraged her.

Iris realized that this was not only a feast to celebrate her birth, but a kickoff party for facing the Trial of Zakkart.

“By the way, the additional meat is done,” Vandalieu announced.

『The ‘Second Coming of the Demon King’ and ‘Monstrosity’ Titles have been removed!』

“Oh?” Vandalieu blinked in surprise as an announcer’s voice suddenly echoed inside his head, informing him that his bad-sounding Titles had been removed.

And then he heard the announcer’s voice again.

『You have acquired the ‘Demon King’ Title!』

“...Oh.” Vandalieu’s face fell.

So that’s what it was.



- **Name:** Iris Bearheart
- **Race:** Obscene-Majin Succubus (Transformed from human!)
- **Age:** 19 years old
- **Title:** Liberating Princess Knight
- **Rank:** 6
- **Level:** 0
- **Job:** Cursed Spirit Swordsman
- **Level:** 100
- **Job History:** Apprentice Knight, Lesser Knight, Warrior, Swordsman
- **Passive skills:**
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Sword: Small
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Loyalty: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Agility: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthen Subordinates: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Cursed Spirit Sword: Small
 - Dark Vision (NEW!)
 - Allure: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Endless Sexual Stamina: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Vitality Enlargement: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Swordsmanship: Level 5
 - Shield Technique: Level 1
 - Armor Technique: Level 3
 - Archery: Level 3
 - Mount: Level 1
 - Housework: Level 1
 - Silent Steps: Level 3
 - Coordination: Level 4
 - Surpass Limits: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits - Cursed Spirit Sword: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Commanding: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Illusory Transformation: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Drain Vitality: Level 1 (NEW!)

Iris Bearheart, who has become a Succubus and acquired the Skills that a Succubus naturally possesses. But as she is inexperienced, the Skills' levels are considerably lower than other Succubi of the same age. Also, she has not yet acquired Skills that require mastery such as High-speed Flight.

Incidentally, she has acquired the Mana Enlargement and Vitality Enlargement Skills through the influence of Vandalieu and Legion, who offered their Mana and Vitality as sacrifices for the ritual.

Her Job's Level reached 100 through the battle against Rickert and the others (Although Iris herself had been defeated one-sidedly, she gained Experience Points from Vandalieu and his companions defeating the enemies afterwards), but as she was fatally wounded and on the verge of death, she has not undergone a Job-change yet.

-
- **Name:** Legion
 - **Age:** 0
 - **Title:** Holy Flesh-wife
 - **Rank:** 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - **Race:** Great Legion
 - **Level:** 0
 - **Job:** Flesh Manipulator
 - **Job level:** 0
 - **Job history:** Apprentice Mage, Mage, Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Meat Sphere Warrior, Enormous Meat Sphere Warrior, No-Attribute Mage
 - **Passive skills:**
 - Mental Corruption: Level 7
 - Composite Soul
 - Magic Resistance: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Special Five Senses
 - Physical Attack Resistance: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Form Alteration: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Super-speed Regeneration: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Vitality: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Consumable Meat: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Fire and Lightning Resistance: Level 4 (NEW!)

- **Active skills:**
 - Limited Death-Attribute Magic: Level 10
 - Size Alteration: Level 5
 - Commanding: Level 3
 - Surgery: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dagger Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Fusion: Level 2
 - Charge: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Parallel Thought Processing: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Long-distance Control: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Control: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - High-speed Travel: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Regeneration: Consumable Meat: Level 3
 - Throwing: Level 2 (NEW!)
 - Cooking: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - God of Origin's Divine Protection
 - Zuruwarn's Divine Protection
 - Ricklent's Divine Protection
 - Gazer: Level 5
 - Encroachment Fusion: Level 1 (NEW!)

After reaching Rank 7 through steady effort, Legion reached Rank 8 by defeating Rickert.

They had acquired the No-Attribute Mage Job in order to learn how to control magic, but because the Experience Points from the battle against Rickert caused their Level to increase drastically in one burst, they were forced into their next Job-change before they could improve their skills.

They do not mind this as the bonuses to the Job's Skills persist after a Job-change, but they feel like they have been rushed too much.

Job explanation:

【Flesh Manipulator】

A Job that allows the manipulation of the flesh that makes up the user's own body. It offers bonuses to the Form Alteration and Size Alteration Skills, and even the Long-distance Control Skill used to manipulate the user's pieces of flesh after they are torn off and thrown.

And in Legion's case, there are also bonuses to Isis's surgery, Valkyrie's commanding, the Yomotsushikome and Yomotsuikusa created from pieces of Izanami's flesh and Berserk's parasitic abilities.

The conditions for acquiring this Job is to have a body consisting of at least 99% flesh and to possess the Long-distance Control Skill.

Volume 7 Character Summary Page

Vandalieu – Dhampir (Dark Elf), 9 years old, male

The protagonist who is becoming less and less human. Before he could become an adventurer and an honorary nobleman, he will be crowned emperor soon (Preparations are currently underway), and for some reason, he has acquired the 'Demon King' Title. He is currently thinking about how life doesn't always go as planned as he eats Bugitas's meat.

Now that he has defeated Bugitas, restored peace to the southern region of the continent and will become emperor, he has a feeling that he'll be spending some time going around the nations of the southern region of the continent, diligently managing internal affairs...

But since they are all nations that already had a considerable amount of infrastructure to begin with, it might not be as much trouble as when he first restored Talosheim. At least, in his opinion.

By acquiring more fragments of the Demon King, he has become a living mass of even more different materials. Blood Potions with improved effects and specially-made brushes assault the citizens of Talosheim! Will they be able to resist the charms of these items?!

By acquiring the Corpse Demon Commander Job, he has become able to equip Undead that don't need to eat or drink, making him a walking fort in a slightly different way from Knochen. He is able to utilize a 'suddenly, Undead!' method of attack.

With the Demon King User Job, he has become able to use the Demon King's fragments even better. A notable benefit is that he can activate the fragments now without having to say, "Activate."

And the second Guider Job, Dark Guider. So far, he thinks that this Job is fine, as he does not seem to have guided anyone around him into committing suicide.

By speaking with the gods of the southern region of the continent, he was able to learn various things and set his sights on his heartfelt desire to resurrect his mother Darcia.

To achieve this, he must challenge the high-difficulty Dungeon created by the evil god of labyrinths that nobody has successfully cleared. But because he possesses the Labyrinth Creation Skill, he believes that it will be possible if he has everyone assist him and prepares properly.

If possible, he intends to recover the remains of Martina, a spirit user Elf who was a companion of the 'Blue-flamed Sword' Heinz. If he feels the same hatred that he felt towards Gordan and Riley when he actually sees the remains, he intends to not turn them into an Undead. However, there is the precedent of having used the remains of Mikhail's companions to create Rapiécage, so he thinks that he will end up turning Martina into an Undead.

He feels responsible for having a half-baked attitude and being negligent with the Sauron Liberation Front's defenses, which caused them to be unable to defend themselves against an attack from the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. As the Amid Empire came to threaten him under the pretense of a negotiation, he feels even more hostility towards them now and made an informal declaration of war. He did this by kidnapping Duke Marme and leaving behind Rickert's bisected head at the scene of the crime.

But it seems that he does not view the entire Amid Empire and everyone living in it as an enemy, so he currently has no plans to conduct indiscriminate attacks through disease and poison.

He had already become enough of a threat that there are no problems with his individual strength, but now that he has developed Dark King Magic spells, his power is equivalent to an S-class adventurer's on his own.

If he doesn't use his special Skills or the Demon King's fragments, he is somewhere between B-class and A-class level.

Budarion – Noble Orc Abyss High King, 15 years old, male

The low-key protagonist of the seventh volume. Immediately after his father's death, his younger brother yielded to an evil god's temptations and began a rebellion that drove Budarion from the throne. After that, Budarion defeated his brother with the prophesized Holy Son who appeared later, a battle that culminated in a battle to the

death against a descended evil god... there is no mistake about this.

As he is a Noble Orc, he was quite shocking to Vandalieu and his companions, as the only Noble Orcs they had known were Bugogan and his sons who appeared in the first volume, and the Noble Orcs who spawned in Dungeons.

A blonde bowl-cut that produces a halo when light shines upon it; gentle, intellectual eyes; a well-featured pig's snout; round cheek lines; manly fangs. A peerlessly handsome individual among Noble Orcs.

He was born when his father was already quite old, so from a young age, he was made to diligently study how to become a good emperor (by the standards inside the Boundary Mountain Range), as well as training in magic and combat. Fortunately, he was blessed with the abundant talent necessary to absorb all of this without being overwhelmed, but because of this, the time he spent with his brother Bugitas became less. He regrets that he was too late to sense the change in his brother.

After being defeated by Bugitas once, Budarion escaped the Noble Orc empire. Due to Vandalieu and Legion's (Isis's) surgery, he regained the eye and arm that he lost.

And by being guided to the Demon Path and defeating the generals that served as Bugitas's subordinates, he increased his Rank and became a Noble Orc Abyss King.

He took back his nation after that, but as his nation could not stand above the nations that it had caused trouble for or realistically fulfill the role expected of it, he declared that it would return from being an empire to an ordinary kingdom.

He has known his fiancé, Princess Kurnelia, since he was born, and she is his first love. He intends to marry her within the next few years.

There are also currently talks of a marriage between him and Princess Lulu of the High Kobold nation. He is indeed a King.

Incidentally, strictly speaking, the next generation's rulers are not technically determined by bloodline in the nations inside the Boundary Mountain Range, but by the candidates' own abilities and whether they are acknowledged by the gods who protect their nations. But in some nations, this is merely an official stance. This was especially true in the Noble Orc empire.

By awakening superior Skills such as Demon Path Fang Swordsmanship, Monstrous

Strength and Spirit Clone Descent, Budarion's combat abilities have improved rapidly. His strength is somewhere between that of the 'Light-speed Sword' Rickert and the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine.

If an Adventurers' Guild were to send out a request for his extermination, they would request an S-class adventurer by name or dispatch multiple A-class adventurer parties.

- **Name:** Budarion
- **Rank:** 12
- **Race:** Noble Orc Abyss High King
- **Level:** 1
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Monstrous Strength: Level 1 (Awakened from Superhuman Strength!)
 - Endless Sexual Stamina: Level 1
 - Strengthen Followers: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attribute Values when equipped with a Sword (Large)
 - Inferior Race Domination: Level 7
 - Self-Enhancement: Demon Path: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Magic Resistance: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 1
- **Active skills:**
 - Demon Path Fang Sword Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 9
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 6
 - Mount: Level 4
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 2
 - Mana Control: Level 5
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 3
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 9
 - Alchemy: Level 1
 - Commanding: Level 7
 - Coordination: Level 8
 - Dismantling: Level 2
 - Spirit Clone Descent: Level 1 (Awakened from Familiar Spirit Descent!)
 - Transcend Limits: Level 5

- Transcend Limits: Magic Sword: Level 5
- Surpass Limits: Magic Armor: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - Mububujenge's Divine Protection

Gizania – Arachne Samurai Master (Large-build), 35 years old, female

A large-build member of the Arachne race, possessing the bottom body half of a spider. She is a beauty with a short haircut, but her upper body is large as well, giving her a height of about two and a half meters including her lower body, and she possesses sturdy muscles so beautiful that Vandalieu enjoys having her strike poses for him.

According to Vandalieu, she possesses beautiful white skin and gemstone-like compound eyes.

She has the appearance of a dignified female warrior, but her personality has some serious and naïve aspects to it, and she is something of a sis-con as well. She respects all of her older sisters equally, but she is particularly close to Kurnelia. She believes that Budarion is a respectable man, one worthy of marrying her sister.

Her dream is to become a legendary Bushi, a Job mentioned in the records left by the champion Hillwillow that is said to require the acquisition of a hundred Skills to obtain, and then challenge the Trial of Zakkart, a warrior's greatest honor.

She acted as bait in order to allow Kurnelia to escape, was heavily wounded and then was saved by Vandalieu. At the time, she thought that Vandalieu was a little girl and gave him a Necklace of Deep Affection, an act equivalent to a marriage proposal.

But not wanting to undo this action upon learning that Vandalieu was a member of the opposite gender, she decided to continue serving him.

In fact, Gizania has devoted her life to combat, and she has feelings for Vandalieu, who saved her from danger and healed her wounds. There is a large age difference between them, but it seems that the astounding first impression he left on her has caused her to not mind how young his appearance is.

Also, because of his partially mature actions and bizarre behavior, she takes almost no notice of the age difference.

Of course, even if something causes her to suddenly become aware of the age difference, they are both members of races with long lifespans, so it can be assumed that she will not consider the age difference to be significant. In fact, her sister Kurnelia's age is more than triple that of her fiancé Budarion.

The hair on the lower half of her body looks fluffy but is actually very hard. But due to Vandaliu's insistent brushing, it is becoming softer.

As another person with eight legs, the Scylla Privel sees her as a particular rival, but Gizania simply considers her as another friend.

Through the fierce battles she went through, she has increased her Rank and changed her Job. She went from being a Rank 6 Arachne Samurai Adept to a Rank 7 Arachne Samurai Master, and her Job has changed to Samurai Master as well.

When she first appeared in the story, her abilities were similar to those of a C-class adventurer, but now, she is equivalent to a B-class adventurer. But because she gained Experience Points so suddenly, her Skill levels haven't caught up with her Job, so she still needs more training.

Incidentally, Surpass Limits: Magic Katana is something like a variation of the Surpass Limits: Magic Sword Skill.

- **Name:** Gizania
- **Age:** 35 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Rank:** 7
- **Race:** Arachne Samurai Master (Large-build)
- **Level:** 3
- **Job:** Samurai Master
- **Job level:** 2
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Swordsman, Samurai, Magic Sword User
- **Passive skills:**
 - Night Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Agility: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a katana: (Medium) (LEVEL UP!)

- Enhanced Physical Ability (Carapace, compound eyes, body fur): Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
- Strengthened Attribute Values: Loyalty: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Strengthened Attribute Values: Demon Path: Level 1 (NEW!)
- Thread Refining: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Katana Technique: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 5
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - High-speed Travel: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Coordination: Level 2 (NEW!)
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Katana: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique Skills:**
 - Zanalpadna's Divine Protection

Myuze – Empusa Shadow Kunoichi, 70 years old, female

A member of the Empusa race, a race created by Vida that possesses the sickles and wings of a praying mantis. She was serving as the captain of a team that guarded one of Zanalpadna's gates. She is an old acquaintance of Gizania's; she is something like a neighborhood onee-san to her.

She is young but possesses considerable skill. She has a bright, friendly personality and is loved by those around her.

However, she does not have the coolness commonly portrayed in ninjas.

She has a strong yearning to become a ninja, so she considers herself fortunate to have met Vandalieu, who possesses knowledge regarding ninjas. She anticipates that she will become able to master the way of the ninja if she continues to follow him. Incidentally, the definition of the way of the ninja in her mind is to 'kind of be an amazing ninja,' a very vague, ambiguous definition.

She is the niece of the previous queen, but both she and those around her don't think anything of this other than that she had an amazing aunt. In Zanalpadna, the queen

serves as more of a priestess than a ruler, so the next ruler is not decided by bloodline alone.

She is highly capable; she would be able to defeat a B-class adventurer if they fought one on one, face to face. But as a scout, her Lockpicking and Trap Skills are of low Level, and she does not have the Intuition Skill, so that is quite disappointing.

This is because doors, treasure chests and traps protected by high-difficulty locks do not spawn very often in Zanalpadna's Dungeon. And other than conducting some reconnaissance, she has not performed many scout-like tasks, as her job is to guard the gate.

- **Name:** Myuze
- **Age:** 70 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Rank:** 8
- **Race:** Empusa Shadow Kunoichi
- **Level:** 0
- **Job:** Kunoichi Master
- **Job level:** 99
- **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Assassin, Dark Fighter, Kunoichi
- **Passive skills:**
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Night Vision
 - Strengthened Agility: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Duty: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Enhanced Physical Ability (Carapace, sickles): Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Camouflage: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Throwing: Level 5
 - Armor Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 8
 - Lockpicking: Level 2
 - Trap: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Assassination Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 1

- Wind-Attribute Magic: Level 1
- **Unique Skills:**
 - Zanalpadna's Divine Protection

Eleanora – Abyssal Vampire Marquis – 12 years old (20 years old at time of Vampire transformation, 32 years old in total)

A female Vampire who is flustered by the fact that her rival (Isla) has rapidly increased her presence. With flames of jealousy burning towards Isla, who has acquired a Title that shows that she is Vandalieu's hound and received a collar from him. Through a lot of blood, sweat and tears, including much training in Dungeons, she became a Rank 10 Vampire Countess.

...Other than the Vampire True Ancestor and Pure-breed Vampires, she is likely the only Vampire in history who has increased their Rank to this extent within just over ten years of becoming a Vampire.

Through experiencing the battle against Ravovifard's incomplete incarnation in Bugitas's body, her Rank increased even further.

As she was not mistaken for Vandalieu's mother during recent events, she has a favorable impression of the nations inside the Boundary Mountain Range.

In terms of fighting strength, she is capable enough to fight against an A-class adventurer, but in order to defeat opponents like Rickert without any danger to herself, she needs to awaken superior Skills.

If she fought Rickert in single combat head-on with her sword, taking into account that her weapon would be poorly matched against his, she would have about a 60% chance of winning. If she were to build a strategy centered around her time-attribute magic, that chance would increase to about 90%.

- **Name:** Eleanora
- **Rank:** 11
- **Race:** Abyssal Vampire Marquis
- **Level:** 1
- **Job:** Blood-sucking Swordsman
- **Job level:** 58

- **Job history:** Slave, Servant, Apprentice Mage, Apprentice Warrior, Mage, Demon Eye User, Vassal Warrior, Slave Warrior, Vassal War Princess, Time-Attribute Mage, Magic Swordsman
- **Age:** 12 years old (20 years old at time of Vampire transformation, 32 years old in total)
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Self-Enhancement: Subordination: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 5
 - Mental Corruption: Level 3
 - Automatic Mana Recovery: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 5
 - Sunlight Resistance: Level 4
 - Allure: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Enlargement: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mining: Level 1
 - Time-Attribute Magic: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Life-Attribute Magic: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 3
 - Mana Control: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Swordsmanship: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 4
 - Steal: Level 1
 - Housework: Level 3
 - Shield Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Chant Revocation: Level 3
 - Magic Combat Technique: Level 3
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Sword: Level 3 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - Charming Demon Eyes: Level 7

Vigaro – Ghoul Arch-Tyrant, 172 years old, male

A successful individual who will likely gain more wives due to his deed of defeating Bugitas's subordinate, General Budirud, who invaded the Ghoul nation in the Boundary Mountain Range. Because he defeated all of the Ghoul nation's men including the king in contests of strength, his popularity is second only to Vandalieu's.

But Vigaro himself says that he already has too much on his plate and doesn't want any more for now. However, he did say 'for now,' so he likely will have more wives in another decade or so.

You'll have more and more half-siblings! Isn't that great, Basdia!

He is called Aniki by the Ghoul nation's king (Vandalieu is called Great-Aniki), and has been granted the divine protection of Zozogante, the evil god of the dark forest, the guardian of the Ghoul nation.

Borkus – Zombie Folklore Hero, male

He is always terrible at impersonating a Zombie. His power has reached levels that very few Zombies have attained in the course of history; he is a man who tried to tear an evil god apart, limb from limb.

As a result, he has been acknowledged as a hero even in the nations south of the marshlands and is greatly bewildered by the flood of marriage proposals that he is receiving. He wonders, why would marriage proposals be made to an Undead? Isn't Vigaro in charge of that?

When he asked Vandalieu to do something about it, Vandalieu ended up telling him that he would try to do something so that Undead can create children as well.

He has grandchildren and thinks that he was plenty old enough even before becoming an Undead, but once he remembered Talosheim First Princess Levia and his party member, the Second Princess Zandia, he realized that even without his own circumstances, Vandalieu would have done that kind of research sooner or later.

Borkus accepts that this is how things are now, but he has refused all marriage proposals as it is uncertain as to whether this research will be successful.

Vandalieu has misinterpreted this, thinking that Borkus is trying to rush him.

Upon learning that her father received marriage proposals, Borkus's daughter Gopher thinks that if there really are such whimsical Ojou-sans, then perhaps having new families would make her adventurer father settle down a little.

Incidentally, at the point of the story at the end of the seventh volume, Borkus is guarding the former Scylla territory, where the Sauron Liberation Front's base lies. There are rumors that he reaps lives with each swing of his sword and that his bellows can be heard from the temporary fort at the foot of the mountains, causing the soldiers there to tremble in fear.

- **Name:** Borkus
- **Rank:** 12
- **Race:** Zombie Folklore Hero
- **Level:** 2
- **Title:** Sword King
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Monstrous Strength: Level 1 (Awakened from Superhuman Strength!)
 - Physical Resistance: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Sword: Large
 - Strengthened Defense Power when equipped with Non-metal Armor: Large (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Corruption: Level 5
- **Active skills:**
 - Sword King Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 8
 - Archery: Level 7
 - Armor Technique: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Transcend Limits: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dismantling: Level 6
 - Commanding: Level 2
 - Coordination: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Teaching: Level 1
 - Transcend Limits - Magic Sword: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)

Kurt Legston – Human, 29 years old, male

The third son of the Legston family of earls from the Mirg shield-nation, who has fled to Talosheim. He is a plain individual who is not as gifted in combat as the eldest son, nor as exceptional in the role of a military official as the second son (Chezare), his only special characteristic being his ability to work steadily... or at least, that is what he is supposed to be, but for some reason, he was dispatched as a diplomat in these recent events. This is the fault of his older brother, who is doing work suitable for a prime minister despite being a general.

He has seen with his own eyes nations being managed not only by Vida's races, but monsters such as High Goblins and High Kobolds as well. His own stereotypical views, which he had thought were already thoroughly broken after seeing Talosheim, were shattered even further.

This is because although legends did say that there was a Noble Orc empire "somewhere out there," no humans had ever imagined that the empire would be a well-managed nation that was not at all inferior to human societies.

Like Borkus, Kurt has also received marriage proposals, but even though he is the third son, he is still a nobleman, and as such has dealt with them flawlessly. But as he is already quite old and far from home, he is currently consulting Chezare as to whether he should settle down.

Several noblemen from the occupying army in the Sauron region capable of working as civil officials, including Cuoco, have deserted and fled to Talosheim. He thought that his workload would decrease because of this, but his new subordinates were all strong-willed (though not as much as Cuoco), so he is struggling to bring them together.

A paid vacation policy will soon be implemented, so he is working hard and enduring until then.

A long time ago, he was on the side that hated the resistance, but that hatred was mainly due to his occupation and mostly directed towards the Reborn Sauron Duchy Army led by the now-deceased Raymond; he does not have any particular feelings towards Iris and her companions.

Legion – Great Legion, 0 years old, gender = ?

The mysterious flesh-sphere creature that continues to increase in size as their Rank increases. They play an important role with their Teleportation and ability to conduct surgery, and they have acquired the 'Holy Flesh-wife' Title.

They have never directly crossed swords with anyone in a war, but they are feared because of their appearance. But conversely, they are loved in places where they have performed medical care.

They received the 'Holy Flesh-wife' Title as a result, but Isis thinks that this is good, as she feels like it has made it easier for her to perform medical care.

By leveling in Dungeons during their spare time, they became a Rank 7 High Legion. After that, they become a Rank 8 Great Legion through their battle against the 'Light-speed Sword' Rickert.

Nothing has changed about them except for their size since their Rank increased, but since their size can be controlled freely by the Size Alteration Skill, even this change is not apparent.

They have also gained a Unique Skill called Encroachment Fusion, but how to use it is currently unclear. As a result of discussion, they can imagine what it might be for from its title, but it seems that they have decided not to test the Skill carelessly.

Their efforts have gone in an extraordinary direction, such as repeatedly receiving flame and lightning treatment and then recovering the damage caused by them repeatedly in order to acquire the Fire and Lightning Resistance Skill to overcome their weakness. But they consider this to be ordinary.

Incidentally, despite possessing the Throwing Skill, Pluto still has no control in her throws. This is because the objects they throw are irregularly-shaped masses of flesh that meet heavy air resistance, and because of her unstable posture when protruding from the mass of flesh that makes up Legion's body. It seems that the Skill's bonuses have their limits.

They were able to defeat Rickert, who would have been A-class if he were an adventurer, but they have analyzed their victory and acknowledged that it was because Rickert was badly matched against them and Ereshkigal's Counter determined the outcome of the battle. But in truth, if Rickert had devoted all of his

efforts to escaping, it is possible that Legion would not have been able to stop him from reaching the fort at the foot of the mountains and the villages and towns beyond it. Though Rickert didn't notice it, Legion is capable of floating through the air, but not moving at high speeds.

Legion can roll across the ground at high speeds, but if Rickert avoided them and took shelter in a town or village, Legion would have chosen to back off. Although it wouldn't matter if soldiers and knights got involved, Legion believes that innocent civilians should not get involved.

Legion is now reflecting on the battle and trying to improve their strength and learn how to fight without relying on their abilities. Using Size Alteration without separating to act with the form of a single person is a part of that.

Iris Bearheart – Obscene-Majin Succubus, 19 years old, female

She was the leader of the Sauron Liberation Front, the resistance organization active in the Sauron region that is occupied by the Amid Empire. She has kept her face hidden behind a mask and gone by the name of 'Liberating Princess Knight' so that the resistance could continue even if she were to be killed by the enemy, but now that she has become a Succubus, she has officially become a leader that hides in the shadows.

The only daughter of the Bearheart family of knights becoming a Succubus. The truth is that this means that Iris can no longer revive the Bearheart family, as the Orbaume Kingdom considers Majin to be monsters, but nobody has realized this, including Iris herself.

She was a noble, but an unimportant one. Iris hadn't been particularly eager to restore her family to begin with, but it seems that she has forgotten this idea entirely ever since Vandalieu gave her the sword that contains the spirit of her deceased father George.

Debis, Haj and the other core resistance members also think that she would be happier as a citizen of Talosheim than of the Orbaume Kingdom, so nobody even bothers thinking of the fact that her family line has ended.

In fact, as a Cursed Weapon, George would be considered a monster rather than a person in the Orbaume Kingdom, no different from a filthy Undead, so a countless

number of troubles would have awaited Iris had she returned to the Orbaume Kingdom.

When she was fatally wounded, she decided that she never wanted to disgrace herself again and asked Vandalieu to transform her into a powerful race, becoming a Succubus as a result. She had thought that she would become a Battle-Majin Diablo.

The colors of her skin and eyes have changed, and she has gained horns, wings and a tail, but her overall appearance hasn't changed from when she was a human. However, perhaps because the Vitality price required for the Majin transformation was paid by Legion's flesh, her figure has become slightly more abundant. And because she has acquired the Passive Skill called Allure, the feminine charm that she unconsciously exudes has also increased.

And she has been given clothes that are the latest trend in the Majin nation... her Chichi-ue is worried about her.

Godwin, who has become her other 'parent,' does not seem to be worried, however.

When she was a human, her ability in combat was actually inferior to Kasim and Fester. She was perhaps equal with them only because she wielded George as her weapon. This is because adventurers like Kasim and his companions spend their days in the Dungeons to continuously gain experience, while the leader of a resistance organization does not experience battle very frequently.

Her potential has increased greatly since she transformed into a Succubus, but as she has only just transformed, she cannot make good use of this potential yet.

But because her talents as a monster have increased, it will likely not be just a dream for her to be as powerful as an S-class adventurer if she wields Nemesis George, the dark magic sword.

Isla – Vampire Countess Zombie, mid-30's in physical appearance, female

She was formerly one of the 'Five Dogs,' the close aides of the Pure-breed Vampire Ternecia. Now, she serves as captain of the Dark Night Knights' Order, an order of knights that are all Vampire Zombies. Though she appears to be an evil female executive, she actually works very seriously, and everyone around her including

Vandalieu appreciates this.

After her guard duties at the southern side of the marshlands, she was equipped by Vandalieu and taken to the Sauron region. And now, she is using her skills to work as a research assistant for Vandalieu and Luciliano below Talosheim's royal castle.

In Talosheim, she has never had the opportunity to make use of her Torture Skill, with which she is very proficient, but she is happy that she has had the opportunity to use it recently.

Her Rank increased when she defeated the 'King Slayer' Sleygar; she now has the same Rank that she had when she was alive and 'Broken' has been removed from her race title. Her Skills have developed as well, so it is thought that her overall strength surpasses the strength she possessed while alive.

- **Name:** Isla
- **Rank:** 10
- **Age:** Approximately 30,000 years old
- **Title:** The Eclipse King's Hound
- **Race:** Vampire Countess Zombie
- **Level:** 12
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 10
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mental Corruption: Level 7
 - Slaughter Healing: Level 8 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Attribute Values: Loyalty: Vandalieu: Level 7 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Water-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - Fire-Attribute Magic: Level 5
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Mana Control: Level 5
 - Swordsmanship: Level 10
 - Armor Technique: Level 9

- Surpass Limits: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- High-speed Flight: Level 5
- Pursuit: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Torture: Level 5
- Commanding: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)
- Housework: Level 2
- Coordination: Level 2 (NEW!)
- **Unique Skills:**
 - Transformation: Level 7

Kasim – Human, 18 years old, male

A former adventurer who migrated from a cultivation village in the Hartner Duchy. Because the events in the cultivation villages of the Hartner Duchy were covered up, the Adventurers' Guild believes that he is deceased.

But he has gained remarkable strength after migrating to Talosheim; he possessed abilities beyond those of an average C-class adventurer before participating in the war.

And then he was suddenly called upon by Vandalieu to take part in the war. Kasim is not quite sure why...

Though he had collided with a wall in his development, he was able to overcome it in one fell swoop by dealing the final blow to Gargya, the High Kobold Beast King. He will likely be able to go through his next Job-change soon.

He has been acknowledged by the men of the Centaur and Ghouls nations, expanding his circle of friends, but... the all-important spring still hasn't come for him. Even though it has come for his two close friends that are his party members.

When will spring come for him...? But there have been unconfirmed reports that he has recently been frequently visiting a certain woman, so spring might visit him unexpectedly soon after all.

- **Name:** Kasim
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 18 years old
- **Title:** None

- **Job:** Super-heavy Warrior
- **Level:** 98
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Heavy Warrior, Guardian Warrior
- **Passive skills:**
 - Augmented Stamina: Level 6
 - Augmented Vitality: Level 6
 - Night Vision
 - Pain Resistance: Level 3
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Strengthened Defensive Power when equipped with Metal Armor: Medium
 - Strengthened Defensive Power when equipped with a Shield: Medium (LEVEL UP!)
 - Detect Presence: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Farming: Level 1
 - Club Technique: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Shield Technique: Level 6
 - Armor Technique: Level 6
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Shield: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)

Zeno – Human, 18 years old, male

Like Kasim and Fester, he is an adventurer that was once an inhabitant of a cultivation village. He has kind of guessed why Vandalieu suddenly summoned him. Ordinarily, people would not invite someone to participate in a war for a reason like that, but Vandalieu is far from ordinary.

But like Kasim, he feels like he was not able to fulfil that reason. The Empusa Berserker Gaol kind of called out to him after he saved her life on the battlefield, but he seems to be under the impression that she was inviting him on a trip as adventurers.

This is because Zeno is ignorant when it comes to love, and because Gaol's words of invitation were phrases that are not associated with love at all, such as "Let's go hunting" and "Won't you go to a Dungeon with me?"

Perhaps because of this, even Kasim and Fester are unable to point out to him that she might be inviting him to a date.

When will Zeno see the spring that has come for him?

- **Name:** Zeno
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 18 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Dark Fighter
- **Level:** 1
- **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Assassin, Explorer, Dagger User
- **Passive skills:**
 - Detect Presence: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Intuition: Level 4
 - Night Vision (NEW!)
 - Disease and Poison Resistance: Level 4
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Dagger: Medium
- **Active skills:**
 - Dagger Technique: Level 6
 - Archery: Level 3
 - Trap: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Silent Steps: Level 5
 - Dismantling: Level 2
 - Unlocking: Level 3 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Throwing: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 3
 - Assassination Technique: Level 4 (LEVEL UP!)]
 - Surpass Limits: Level 1 (NEW!)

Fester – Human, 18 years old, male

A former inhabitant of a cultivation village, now an adventurer. A second spring that he was never looking for has come for him. He is currently discussing things with Lina.

He is flustered, never having expected that such talks would be brought before a mere adventurer (explorer), one who was born in a poor cultivation village at that.

Lina was an employee of an Adventurers' Guild branch, but she is not particularly knowledgeable about these matters. "It's not abnormal for high-ranking adventurers to have multiple wives, but you're still medium-rank, aren't you?!" she said to Fester, scolding him when he told the other party that he would take the topic home to discuss.

In any case, the two of them have decided to meet this Ojou-san and discuss things with her.

Incidentally, Fester's abilities place him beyond what the Adventurers' Guild would consider an average C-class adventurer, so it shouldn't be long before he becomes as capable as a high-ranking (B-class) adventurer, but in Talosheim's Adventurers' Guild, where the average capabilities are high, he is still "medium-rank."

- **Name:** Fester
- **Race:** Human
- **Age:** 18 years old
- **Title:** None
- **Job:** Magic Swordsman
- **Level:** 99
- **Job history:** Apprentice Warrior, Warrior, Swordsman, Magic Sword User
- **Passive skills:**
 - Enhanced Muscular Strength: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Night Vision
 - Strengthened Attack Power when equipped with a Sword: Medium
 - Strengthened Defensive Power while equipped with metal armor: Small (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Fishing: Level 1
 - Swordsmanship: Level 6
 - Dismantling: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Armor Technique: Level 5 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Surpass Limits: Level 5
 - Surpass Limits: Magic Sword: Level 3
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Mana Control: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Earth-Attribute Magic: Level 1 (NEW!)

Miles Rouge – Abyssal Vampire Count, several hundred years old, male

A former subordinate of the Pure-breed Vampire Gubamon. He was dispatched to assist the Sauron Liberation Front.

Though he possessed the flexible thinking and decisiveness that allowed him to completely discard his pride, at the time, he looked down on humans as inferior creatures that were merely prey for him and his kind.

This was a sense of values that was necessary to have in order to live in a society of Vampires that worshipped an evil god, but that sense of values has fallen apart completely since he came to Talosheim. This has been especially true since he was dispatched to the Sauron Liberation Front; every time he remembers his former self, he sighs and thinks, “I have no idea what I was thinking back then.”

He learned from experience that one’s sense of values is heavily influenced by their position and the community they belong to. Thus, he shows an understanding for the actions of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords. Just because he understands them doesn’t mean that he intends to get along with them, however.

He transformed into an Abyssal Vampire by sunbathing while drinking Blood Potion, and he has become even more effective in combat than Ternecia’s Five Dogs. However, he was unable to overcome Ervine.

- **Name:** Miles Rouge
- **Age:** Several hundred years old
- **Title:** None
- **Rank:** 10
- **Race:** Abyssal Vampire Count
- **Level:** 58
- **Job:** Assassin
- **Job level:** 97
- **Job history:** Apprentice Thief, Thief, Mage, Fire-Attribute Mage, Unarmed Fighter, Magic Warrior, Clawed Fanged Warrior
- **Passive skills:**
 - Dark Vision
 - Superhuman Strength: Level 10 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Rapid Regeneration: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Status Effect Resistance: Level 5

- Mental Corruption: Level 1
- Enhanced Physical Ability (Claws, Fangs): Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
- Strengthened Attack Power while Unarmed: Medium
- Detect Presence: Level 2 (NEW!)
- Mana Enlargement: Level 1 (NEW!)
- **Active skills:**
 - Bloodwork: Level 2 (Awakened from Bloodsucking!)
 - High-speed Flight: Level 8
 - Transcend Limits: Level 2 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Trap: Level 4
 - Silent Steps: Level 6 (LEVEL UP!)
 - Dagger Technique: Level 3
 - Unarmed Fighting Technique: Level 9 (LEVEL UP!)
 - No-Attribute Magic: Level 1
 - Fire-Attribute Magic: Level 6
 - Mana Control: Level 2
 - Magic Warrior Technique: Level 3
 - Chant Revocation: Level 1 (NEW!)
 - Assassination Technique: Level 3 (NEW!)
- **Unique skills:**
 - Warning

Cuoco Ragdew – Human, 32 years old, male

A former baron of the Amid Empire. The founder of his family, which was founded three generations ago, was an adventurer whose achievements allowed him to become a nobleman by marrying into the previously-fallen Ragdew family of dukes.

And Cuoco, the child of the current third generation is a strange one, having been brought up on the stories of his former-adventurer grandfather since he was old enough to understand them.

He has been educated in the social etiquette and courtesy that a nobleman should show, but also educated in a way that he would be able to survive as an adventurer or mercenary because nobody knew when the family would collapse again. Thus, he shows glimpses of nobleman-like demeanor and words, but he has actually turned out to be quite the strange person.

Ever since his grandfather's generation, the family has been fanatical about delicious food, and even though his grandfather possessed the ability to achieve enough to become a baron, the reason he became an adventurer was his insatiable desire to eat delicious food to his heart's content. The reason he became a nobleman was so that he could eat the imperial court's food, which he would be unable to do as a commoner.

With a grandfather like this, Cuoco himself is a true glutton as well.

But because Cuoco's father, the second generation, repeatedly spent extravagant amounts on food, the finances of the Ragdew family of barons are in dire straits. That was why he had led a private force of adventurers and mercenaries who had been close to the family since his grandfather's generation, exterminating monsters to acquire food ingredients and a daily living.

Even though he was a nobleman of a military family, he wasn't a member of a knights' order, encroaching on others' occupations despite being a baron with no responsibilities. This gained him the suspicion of the other noblemen.

On top of that, he was always wary that his house could collapse at any time, so he was lacking in patriotism. Because his superiors knew this, and because he had a vast debt, they sent him to the Sauron region.

He has a wife, a young daughter and a son who can walk. He does not have any concubines or illegitimate children. It is not that he believes in true love; it is simply that he does not have the desire, money or the pressure from those around him to have more women.

Even a servant would not offer his daughter to marry a debt-ridden family of barons that would likely collapse within the next generation.

As a former nobleman of the Amid Empire, he was a follower of the gods that support Alda. He prayed to not one, but many of them... though that was simply because he didn't have a deep enough belief to worship a particular god.

Those cooperating with the resistance realized this and saw him as a potential informant, and he yielded easily to the syrup that Iris offered him.

Now, following his desertion to Talosheim, he is working as a civil official under Kurt's command. But he is still engrossed by delicious foods, and whenever he has free time, he and his family walk behind Eisen, who offers the base ingredient of the syrup that

he loves.

He actually has the combat skills of a D-class adventurer and an ability to command beyond that, so he is useful as a commander on the battlefield as well.

David Marme – Human, 50 years old, male

A member of the Amid Empire's imperial family and current head of the Marme family of dukes, which possesses a vast amount of land. He truly believes that nobles are completely different creatures from commoners. Incidentally, those of Vida's races are not people to him. Those he can collect taxes from are livestock, and those he can't are pests.

He is the son of the younger brother of the current emperor, and he became a duke by being adopted into the Marme family of dukes that had no heir.

This has allowed him to live a luxurious life up until now, but it also caused him to fall back in the line of inheritance to the throne. Thus, he resents Marshukzarl whom he believes took the throne from him, and this is the root of his antagonism for Marshukzarl.

He tried to make the 'Thunderclap' Schneider exterminate Vandalieu by placing a request for him to investigate the region beyond the Boundary Mountain Range, but that was just another plot to gain an achievement for himself and lower Marshukzarl's standing.

A zealous follower of Alda, he is heavily attached... connected, to the Church of Alda. It is simple for him to force priestesses to live secular lives and allocate them to people as a part of a reward.

In truth, David was actually on the top of Schneider's list of noblemen that he wants to beat to death. But there are no settlements of Vida's races in the duke's land, and those who were able to move already moved to regions ruled by other noblemen before David became the head of his house. And despite his incompetence, David holds a high position in society, so it would cause a large incident if Schneider were to lay a hand on him. Thus, David is quite low on Schneider's overall list of priorities.

When he was at the army headquarters, he was captured by Vandalieu and abducted

after having the skin of his head from the neck up removed by Isla's knife.

Currently, the various 'horrible people' among the military and civil officials David brought from his own realm are being used for various experiments such as transplants of body parts made of the Demon King's fragments.

Bugitas – Noble Orc Plunder King, 12 years old, male

Bugitas had a strong complex due to the differences between him and his older brother, and he fell to the temptations of Ravovifard, the evil god of release.

With his desire to surpass his brother released, he received Ravovifard's divine protection and the False Guidance: Beast Path Skill, gaining power beyond that of his brother.

But after surpassing his brother, he did not possess any concrete outlooks for the future. Ravovifard whispered to Bugitas that he should conquer all of the lands enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range. He pushed forward for this reckless objective, believing that it was his own ambition.

He did not realize he was nothing more than Ravovifard's puppet until the moment Ravovifard took over his body.

His main subordinates were Budirud, Bufudin, Bumogan, Bukyap and Bugoba, who were generals of the empire, and Chief General Buzazeos.

He also gained the High Kobold Gargya, the Majin Gerazorg and the High Goblin Gido as allies, as they had previously studied abroad in the empire and felt similar feelings towards their kings as he did.

He is currently the enemy who has provided the most memorably delicious meat that Vandalieu has tasted.

Ravovifard – Evil god

The evil god of release. When he was a part of the Demon King's army, he was in an even lower position than Fidirg, but he rose to power after the Demon King's fall.

He has a self-serving personality as evil gods do, thinking of his followers as nothing but pawns or livestock.

He originally ruled the Dark Continent, but he was defeated by Zantark and Farmaun. He fled to the area within the Boundary Mountain Range on the continent of Bahn Gaia and plotted his revenge against Zantark and Farmaun, using Bugitas to try and regain his power.

He possessed Bugitas's body and descended upon the world, even if his descent was not complete, but he was attacked countless times by Budarion, Borkus and others who were wielding weapons made of the Demon King's fragments, and then half of his body was destroyed by the enraged Vandalieu. Finally, the gods of the southern region of the continent sealed him away.

On top of that, he was completely destroyed as his soul was eaten by Vandalieu, who didn't think of it as any more than a snack.

An evil god who would have been delicious boiled or roasted, but was best eaten raw.

Godwin – Battle-Majin Diablo, several thousand years old, male

The current king of the Majin. He has a three-meter tall body covered in muscles, blue skin, golden eyes, two thick horns, a pair of wings and a tail.

He is a man who loves drinking and fighting more than anything else, and he hates work, especially deskwork. His term of office as king will soon come to an end, so he is excitedly waiting for that to happen.

He was taken care of by Gerazorg's great-grandmother, so he has taken care of Gerazorg in various ways, but the coup d'état attempt cut his last thread of patience.

In a fit of anger, he personally departed the nation and grouped up with the other nations. He tried to tell everyone that he needed to "set things straight" and "this is a

problem that I'm dealing with not as a king, but as a man." But since his disposition was well-known among the leaders of the other nations, nobody believed him.

Of course, he was scolded by his subordinates upon returning to his nation.

As for why such a person became the king of the Majin in the first place, it was because the tournament to select the Majin king had a bonus prize of alcohol, which was of a brand that he liked.

It seems that Vandalieu will become the emperor, and Godwin gained a daughter (Iris), so he plans to retire once his term is over.

Incidentally, the relationship between Godwin and Xerx, the god of battle flags, is not one between that of a god and his follower, but more like that between an obstinate old man and a selfish kid.

Mububujenge – Guardian deity of the Noble Orc kingdom

The evil god of degenerate corpulence. A goddess who was imprisoned this volume. However, her appearance is the kind that would cause insanity if looked upon.

She has a generally lazy personality, she will go to any lengths to spend her time lazing about and sleeping.

Her passion for being lazy was the reason she accepted Zakkart's invitation and betrayed the Demon King's army, the reason she joined Vida to fight Alda's faction and the reason she protects the Noble Orcs that are her servants.

The reason she gave the Orcs flesh-wives made from her own flesh was so that the Noble Orc empire would stay stable and they would continue to worship her.

Unlike Ravovifard, she is not self-serving; she takes action believing that as a god in a higher position, giving those in lower positions what she can will lead to her own desires being fulfilled.

She possesses considerable affection for the Noble Orcs and those who live in their nation. But she has none for Noble Orcs and Orcs of nations that do not worship her and those that spawn in Dungeons.

Rishare – guardian deity of the High Kobold nation, subordinate god of Vida

The god of hunting, one of Vida's subordinate gods.

In the age of the gods, there were eleven great gods in Lambda and eight gods of the attributes. Thus, there were countless discussions over which gods would rule over the sun and the moon.

For the sun, the god of the fire attribute Zantark raised his hand because the sun emits heat; the god of the time attribute Ricklent raised his hand because the sun gives the time through sundials; the goddess of the life attribute Vida raised her hand as the sun gives blessings to living things; and the giant god Zerno raised his hand as well. In the end, a clear decision could not be made, so it was decided that the subordinate gods of these gods would have the role divided among them. The 'Sun Giant' Talos, parent of the Titans, was one of them.

In the same way, there were discussions over which god should rule over hunting. But unlike the discussion over the sun, no god wanted this role.

This was because this would be a difficult role, having to work with both the beast-kings that were the subordinates of the beast-god Ganpapllo and the humans.

Though creatures had been made to serve as nourishment for the humans, over-hunting would be a problem. The god in this role would have to teach and regulate the humans, who at the time had only just been born, and keep the beast-kings appeased. Thus, everyone expected that the god in this role would go through a lot of trouble.

The one who volunteered for this role was Rishare. And so, Rishare, a familiar spirit of Vida's who was fired up with ideals, became the god of hunting... and learned of reality through enduring hardships upon hardships.

As for why Rishare became the guardian deity of the High Kobolds, it is because the evil god of Vida's faction who created the High Kobolds was sealed during the battle that occurred a hundred thousand years ago.

With that being the case, the High Kobolds would have ended up with no guardian deity. They would have been left with no choice but to divide themselves among the other nations, unable to form their own. That was why Rishare had volunteered to become their guardian deity.

Even after he learned of reality, it seems that he drew the short straw.

Incidentally, as he was a god who was originally created by Vida as a familiar spirit, his gender is not defined. Depending on the era, some followers treat him as a goddess and others as a god.

Zozogante – Guardian deity of the Ghoul nation

The evil god of the dark forest. In the ranks of the Demon King's army, his position was low, equivalent to Fidirg's.

He has the appearance of a black tree with eyeballs hanging from its branches like fruit. His appearance is repulsive, but as his appearance suggests, his nature is similar to that of a plant; he has always been considered relatively quiet, even when he was still a part of the Demon King's army.

After the founder of the Ghoul race was defeated, he became the Ghouls' guardian deity and gave them a D-class Dungeon that he himself created, Zozogante's Great Forest, for them to live in.

Because every floor of the Dungeon is a forest, large-scale agriculture is impossible, but there are Gante trees that grow fruit that replace grains in the Ghouls' diet growing here and there in the Dungeon.

These Gante trees are actually something like immature forms of Zozogante's familiars, and if they gather enough Mana, they transform into Gante Ents, which are Rank 4 plant-type monsters.

He is currently planting trees in Talosheim. Unlike Gante Ents, these trees have fruits that look just like eyeballs. They have the same properties of Gante fruit in that the flesh of both fruits tastes similar to that of lychees, and both fruits have hard seeds at their cores.

Marshukzarl Von Bellwood Amid – Half-Elf, ? years old, male

The person who has made the worst of moves this volume.

But to explain his actions, judging from currently-known theories and common knowledge, the dispatchment of four members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords was not an incorrect decision.

It is clear that Vandalieu utilizes Undead and that he is capable of conducting large-scale contamination with disease and poison, but according to previous magical knowledge, this would require extraordinary costs in terms of Mana and live sacrifices.

Marshukzarl considered the possibility that Vandalieu was using the Demon King's fragments, but since it is only possible for someone to use only one or perhaps two fragments at most without losing their sanity, he thought that members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords wielding Artifacts would have no problem defeating him.

But because Vandalieu is in another dimension from currently-known theories and common knowledge, everything backfired.

The loss of Rickert in particular was a hard blow on Marshukzarl. The reason he had assigned Rickert to being an advertisement for the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords was so that Rickert could still carry out his duty as a member of the imperial family while still staying safe. Marshukzarl had also ordered the 'Five-headed Snake' Ervine stay close to Rickert for that reason.

With the violent death of a national hero that he had personally dispatched, as well as the abandonment of the Sauron region, he took heavy political damage. But Duke Marme, the main opposition, was abducted, so his position on the throne is currently still stable.

But the loss of four members of the Fifteen Evil-breaking Swords and a considerable number of members of the Hilt was heavy damage indeed.

Farmaun Gold – Heroic god of fire

A heroic god who has ruled over the fire attribute as a member of Alda's faction ever since Zantark fused with evil gods.

Before he became a god, he made many efforts to revive humanity, such as founding the Adventurers' Guild.

When he lived on *Earth*, his name was Touyama Kinji. He was a university student who wished to be an adventurer, a sports-minded older-brother-like figure.

TLN: The kanji for his Japanese name probably explains his current name. The kanji for his surname is 'far mountain' (Farmaun), his given name being vaguely related to gold.

After this, he was summoned to Lambda. Rather than listening to Zakkart's mature, realistic arguments, he listened to Bellwood's simple-to-understand arguments whose surfaces were covered by the ideals of a young person (that were hollow beneath those surfaces).

For Farmaun in particular, who enjoyed being physically active and liked the ideas of adventure and fighting, Bellwood's arguments sounded pleasant to listen to and convenient because he just needed to fight.

But after Bellwood and the evil god of sinful chains struck each other down, he was forced to think with his own head, and he began to doubt his actions up until then for the first time.

Now, he continues to rule over the fire attribute as he remains close to Zantark on the Dark Continent.

Bust rankings:

Consultant: Princess Levia

Unmeasurable: Yamata, Legion (Each of their upper halves have different sizes)

Judgment on hold as the results may change after adjustments: Jeena, Zandia

Ranking from the top:

Bellmond, Eisen

Tarea, Basdia, Darcia (spirit), Kurnelia (NEW!), Isla (NEW!)

Saria, Rita, Eleanora, Rapiécage, Gizania (NEW!), Gaol (NEW!)

Iris (NEW!)

Periveil, Myuze (NEW!)

Orbia, Kachia, Bilde

Privel, Zadiris

Isla, Gizania, Myuze and, for some reason, Princess Kurnelia, have participated in the rankings! But as Vandalieu was busy with the war, the introduction of the cup system has been delayed.

The introduction of the system is being hastily worked upon now.

The development of Talosheim

Population: Approximately 15,200

Ghouls, Undead, Black Goblins, Anubises, Orcuses, Titans, humans, Beast-people, Dwarves, Scylla, half-Elves, Lizardmen, Armans, Vampires
Golems and Cursed Weapons are not included in the population.

Facilities in Talosheim

Mercury mirror Golems

Explorers' Guild (Trading post, distribution center, Job-changing room)

Church of Vida (with statues of subordinate gods, Zuruwarn and Ricklent)

Public bathhouses

Carts of all kinds

Publicly managed casino

Immortal Ent forest (Has had Gante Ents planted)

Golem factories of all kinds

Monster Plant fields

Training dummy grounds (inhabited by Undead heroes from Alda's faction)

Theater (Construction continuing)

Artistic paintings that remain in the minds of those who view them (entire paintings cannot be viewed except from the sky)

B-class Dungeon x1, C-class Dungeon x2, D-class Dungeon x3

Marshlands, Lizardman district

Capricorn farm

Capricorn milking factory

Explorers' Guild branch

Small shrine to Fidirg, the Dragon God of Five Sins

Mental Encroachment stone circle (NEW!)

B-class Dungeon x1, D-class Dungeon x1

Marshlands, Scylla district

Paddy fields

Mud bath hot springs

Small shrine to Merrebeveil, the heroic goddess of the Scylla

Explorers' Guild branch

Huge Capybara farm

Duck farm

Mental Encroachment stone circle

Small Dungeon for teleportation (NEW!)

Sauron Liberation Front base (Former Scylla territory)

Mental Encroachment stone circle (Has been repaired)

Temporary base for the Dark Night Knights' Order (Knochen, camouflaged to blend into the mountain)

Automatic Undead-creating magic circle (Used to recycle members of Duke Marme's army) (NEW!)

D-class Dungeon (NEW!)

Small Dungeon for teleportation (NEW!)

Nations within the Boundary Mountain Range under the influence of the Dark Demon Path (Nations personally visited by Vandalieu):

Noble Orc kingdom

Zanalpadna

Ghoul nation

High Kobold nation
High Goblin nation
Majin nation

Appendix 6

An introduction to the races - Arachne, Empusa and Majin + Extra

Regarding the strength of Vida's races (An excerpt from manuscripts held by the Mages' Guild branch of the city of Niarki in the Hartner Duchy)

In addition to their Jobs, those of Vida's races that originated from monsters have Ranks displayed in their Statuses like monsters.

Depending on these Ranks, their Attribute Values can become higher than those of races such as humans.

They possess both bonuses from Jobs and the physical abilities of monsters, and they are capable of equipping themselves with arms.

Thus, they are capable of undergoing repeated Job-changes, and if they are in an environment where they can equip themselves well, it is obvious that races like Arachne, Scylla and Lamia can become stronger than the average human adventurer. This is also the reason why Vampires and Majin are viewed as threats.

While there are many monsters that never increase their Ranks even once during their lifetimes, the members of Vida's races that increase their strength in these environments increase their Ranks at least twice on average. (The time required for this depends on the individual and the race that they belong to.)

Also, it is dangerous to judge the strength of members of Vida's races from their Rank alone. When they have bonuses to their Attribute Values and Skills from their Jobs and are well-equipped in addition to that, it can be assumed that they are more effective in combat than their Rank may suggest.

Whether for better or worse, members of Vida's races that originated from monsters are often restricted from becoming adventurers or members of the national army as

soldiers and knights.

But caution should be taken, as there are Vampires who have penetrated deep into human society.

An introduction to races – written by Luciliano

The following accounts might differ in parts from those of the Adventurers' Guild and Mages' Guild, but I have written them after directly seeing and talking to members of each race within the Boundary Mountain Range and conducting my own investigations.

Arachne

One of the two races born between Vida, the goddess of life and love, and Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes.

They possess the upper body halves of beautiful women and the lower body halves of spiders. At present, they are divided into three types – large-build, medium-build and small-build – each with their own special characteristics.

Immediately after the birth of the race, it is thought that only one type of Arachne existed, likely the medium-build Arachne, and they diverged into three types after the war between Vida and Alda that took place a hundred thousand years ago.

Incidentally, according to materials that I borrowed from Zanalpadna's Chief Mage Bakota-shi, it seems that aquatic Arachne do not exist.

It is likely that the aquatic Arachne described in the Adventurers' Guild's manuscripts refer to Arachne that have developed cultural practices, such as using their thread to create pouches filled with air, that make an aquatic lifestyle possible. It seems that their biology is no different from other Arachne.

Because they are a race of only females, their upper halves are those of beautiful women from the perspective of humanoid races, and many Arachne resemble humans. They have compound eyes on their foreheads and backs, but if those are kept hidden,

it would be difficult to tell whether they are Arachne just by looking at their upper halves.

Unlike Scylla, the features of their upper halves can vary greatly; individuals can have hair, eyes and compound eyes of a variety of colors.

But if they give birth to males of a certain race over multiple generations, it seems that the characteristics of those males appear in the upper bodies of the Arachne.

Their spider-like lower bodies have an armor-like exoskeleton and eight legs with strange claws at their ends. Small-build Arachne often have bright colors reminiscent of fish that live in tropical regions, while medium-build Arachne are divided roughly evenly into those with plain colors and those with venomous-looking colors. Many large-build Arachne have plain colors but have tufts of fur growing on their lower bodies.

Medium-build Arachne still have the traits of the race's founder and are the most common type of Arachne. Their base Rank is 3.

Their upper bodies look like those of women in their late-teenage years to their twenties, and they have lifespans of about three hundred years. They have a good balance of qualities for combat and magic. They are well-suited to become adventurers of all kinds.

Also, they are the type of Arachne that can produce the highest quantity of thread in a single day, and their threads are the most stable in quality as well.

Small-build Arachne are a type of Arachne specialized in using threads in an agile and dexterous way, and many of them have an affinity for the wind attribute. Their base Rank is 2.

They are even smaller in size than adult human men. Their upper bodies have the appearances of women in their early-to-mid teenage years, and they have lifespans of about two hundred years. They are well-suited to becoming scouts.

Many of them have childish personalities that match their appearance, often playing pranks with their threads. Even during my short stay in the nation, I witnessed Master falling for these several times.

They produce the highest-quality thread among Arachne, and they are adept in

creating delicate structures with their thread. However, the amount of thread they can produce in a single day is less than the medium-build Arachne.

Large-build Arachne are the type of Arachne that are fewest in number, and they are powerful, heavy warriors. Though they do not have much talent for magic, they make up for it with exceptional physical qualities. Their bodies are about as large as a carriage, and they have considerable horsepower as well. Their upper bodies look similar in age to medium-build Arachne, but their proportions match their lower bodies; the upper bodies are about the same size as those of Titan women. They have lifespans of four hundred years, and with a heavy weapon in hand, they could easily scatter a group of average adventurers.

But as they are not good at tight turns, even if they become adventurers, there are many places that they cannot go... or at least, places that they would not be able to go in human societies. This does not apply in Talosheim or the region enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range.

But perhaps because their ability to create thread has retrogressed, their thread is of low quality and they produce far less in quantity than small-build Arachne.

All three of these types are categorized as Arachne, and there is a chance of any of these being born to parents of any type. It is possible for a small-build mother to have a large-build daughter and vice-versa.

Also, the ability to cover ground quickly is another feature that all Arachne have in common.

In Zanalpadna and the rest of the area enclosed by the Boundary Mountain Range, there are almost no Arachne living as ordinary citizens, but it seems that they all generally become craftsmen that create cloths, clothing and arms from their own thread. This is the same for Arachne outside the Boundary Mountain Range as well.

The difference is that they acquire their own original Jobs such as Spider Tamer, Samurai and Kunoichi. The existence of these Jobs was not recorded in documents in the Amid Empire, Mirg shield-nation or the Orbaume Kingdom.

There is the possibility that the Arachne outside the Boundary Mountain Range are in hiding, but it is likely that the worship of Zanalpadna and the knowledge of the culture from another world left behind by the champion Hillwillow are the reasons for this.

Zanalpadna's citizens mainly live on materials hunted and gathered from nearby Devil's Nests and Dungeons, as well as grains such as wheat that is harvested in low-difficulty Dungeons such as the Shell-less Open Field.

But they generally enjoy meat and fish. It seems that mammoth meat is their soul food.

In Zanalpadna's case, their romantic behavior comes down to group marriages; it is ordinary practice for multiple men and women to live in the same tower-shaped dwelling. It seems that nothing is considered an affair as long as one dates one of the men or women within their group.

Incidentally, it is apparently also normal for individuals to leave their group and move to another group.

It seems that for a long time, there have been cases of Arachne leaving Zanalpadna and marrying into families of other races in other nations – Noble Orcs and the other main races of the other nations. The Arachne likely see this as a rare opportunity for themselves to find partners that are stronger than themselves – in other words, companions that they can rely on.

Outside of the Boundary Mountain Range, they form settlements like the Scylla and live together with males of other races.

They give birth about once every ten years, and they lay several eggs at once. They often repeat this process several times over their lifetimes. All Arachne children have similar appearances regardless of which type of Arachne they are, but as they repeat their yearly molting, their sizes and the colors of their exoskeletons change and their fur grows, allowing them to be distinguished.

This molting allows the healing and regeneration of any injuries in their legs or exoskeletons, as well as the compound eyes of the upper body. However, it seems that multiple molts are required to regenerate legs that have been completely lost.

In Zanalpadna, there is a culture of using the molted husks to create 'necklaces of deep affection,' which are used as presents to symbolize friendship and love. Accepting such a necklace as a male is equivalent to accepting a proposal, so caution should be taken.

There is a ritual used to turn a member of a non-Vida-created race into an Arachne. A priest of Zanalpadna blesses a special spider (which takes several years to raise), and the spider and the target (limited to females) are wrapped in thread. It is said that the

target is reborn as an Arachne after ten years.

Many who undergo the ritual become medium-build Arachne. But there are apparently rare cases of the target becoming a small-build or large-build Arachne if a small-build or large-build spider is used for the ritual.

Incidentally, there is a race known as Andro Scorpions that live in deserts; could they possibly be related to the Arachne? I am interested in this topic, but it seems that at the very least, they do not exist within the Boundary Mountain Range.

I shall have Master assist me in researching this when he steps foot into human society.

Empusa

One of the two races born between Vida, the goddess of life and love, and Zanalpadna, the evil god of carapaces and compound eyes.

They have appearances that look as if praying mantises and women have been combined, and they have a pair of sickle arms in addition to a pair of arms that look like those of a human.

But like praying mantises, it seems that they have a limited ability to fly and they are unable to fly freely over long distances. Their wings are mostly used to glide.

Many Empusa individuals are tall compared to human women, and some have heights of over two meters.

Their existence has been forgotten outside the Boundary Mountain Range for a long time, but they are certainly a fully-fledged, Vida-created race.

Their exoskeletons are about as strong as those of small-build Arachne, about the same as leather armor. But the sickles of even Empusa children are far stronger and sharper than cheaply-made weapons.

The sickles of those who have increased their Rank multiple times are apparently not inferior even when compared to magic swords made of Mythril or Adamantite.

Empusa have a base Rank of 4. But they are a race with a meager talent for magic, so

few of them use elemental magic.

They have lifespans of four hundred years, and in Zanalpadna, they co-exist with the Arachne and live in the same marital groups. It seems that when they marry into other nations, they adopt the marital customs of those nations.

There are even less Empusa living as civilians than Arachne; it is safe to say that they are non-existent. As their bodies resemble those of humans more closely, it is likely that they can work as adventurers in a greater variety of environments.

About half of Empusa choose to be scouts while the other half become frontline warriors, and there is no small number of offense-oriented shield-bearers who use their sickle-arms to attack and their other two hands to hold shields.

Like the Arachne, many Empusa individuals yearn to become Ninja and Bushi. Like the Arachne, they can acquire the Samurai and Kunoichi Jobs, but with Zanalpadna's divine protection, they can acquire the Mantis Tamer Job, a special Tamer-type Job that allows them to tame praying mantises rather than spiders.

The Empusa's view on love is... so strange that one cannot help but to question whether they are really women.

When appealing to members of the opposite gender, they put a heavy emphasis on showing how strong, attractive and rich they are.

This is the reason the Empusa Berserker Gaol invites Zeno to clear Dungeons and go hunting.

It would seem that the gender roles are reversed, but if one thinks about it rationally, the Empusa are a race specialized for hunting and combat as their sickles would suggest, and this might be only natural if one considers that they live within the Boundary Mountain Range, an environment surrounded by Devil's Nests.

I very much hope that Gaol and Zeno can overcome this cultural difference.

Empusa have the same culture of giving necklaces of deep affection as the Arachne; they symbolize friendship if given to members of the same gender and love if given to members of the opposite gender. They use the husks from their molts to create the necklaces like the Arachne, but as Empusa cannot produce threads, they request Arachne individuals with whom they have close relationships to provide threads in

order to assist in the creation of the necklaces.

For the Arachne being requested to do this, this holds the same meaning as being given a necklace of deep affection.

They produce children at the same pace of once every ten years or so like the Arachne, laying clutches of multiple eggs twice or three times over their lifetimes.

The ritual to turn a member of a non-Vida-created race into an Empusa requires the same methods as the Arachne ritual. The difference is that a praying mantis is used instead of a spider, and they are wrapped in foamy mucus instead of threads.

Majin

Human societies, not only Alda's followers but Vida's followers as well, believe the Majin to be a race created between Vida and a powerful monster. They are believed to be evil and peerlessly cruel. They are thought of as manifestations of evil that enjoy every immorality there is in this world, and requests to exterminate them are sent out by the Adventurers' Guild as soon as they are discovered.

But the truth is that they are a race born between Vida and Zantark, the war-god of fire and destruction, who fused with two evil gods.

They are a separate race from the Kijin, whom human societies believe to be a single race with the Majin. It seems that this misunderstanding stems from the fact that the ancestor of the Majin race and the ancestor of the Kijin race are twins, just like the ancestors of the Arachne and Empusa.

They do not have particularly virtuous personalities, but they are not evil or peerlessly cruel, nor do they enjoy every immorality. They do have strong pleasure-seeking, hedonistic tendencies, but compared to Master or myself, many of them seem to be within the realm of being ordinary.

In the region within the Boundary Mountain Range, it is said that Zantark's child that inherited more of the evil gods' blood founded the Majin race, while the one that inherited more of Zantark's own blood founded the Kijin race.

At present, the Majin race is divided roughly into three types, but like the Arachne,

only a single type of Majin existed before the war that occurred a hundred thousand years ago, and the other types appeared after the war. There are records of Pure-breed Majin left in the Majin nation, so I shall include them and describe the four types of Majin.

First, the Pure-breed Majin that were simply called Majin at the time, from which the current Majin race originated. From legends and such that are left, it can be concluded that they had a base Rank of 5. They apparently had the simple appearances of humans with blue skin and a pair of horns on their heads.

Because they didn't have wings, they could not fly through the air, but just like the Majin of the present, they possessed exceptional physical qualities and dispositions for the use of magic, so it seems that they were still a powerful race.

Next, the Battle-Majin Diablos. Godwin, the current king of the Majin, belongs to this category.

They possess two horns, membranous wings, a tail with a triangular tip and blue skin. They also have muscular bodies that are as large as those of Titans. They are a combat-oriented race, exceptional both in combat techniques and the use of magic, and their base Rank is 7.

The Adventurers' Guild fearfully refers to these Majin as Majin of flames; many of them are masters of Fire-Attribute Magic and possess a strong resistance to fire. There are eyewitness accounts of them swimming in lakes of magma.

Obscene-Majin Succubi... Males are referred to as Incubi. Iris Bearheart has transformed into this type of Majin, and Gerazorg, the one responsible for the failed coup d'état, apparently belongs to this category as well.

Features such as their horns, membranous wings and the color of their skin are the same as the Diablos, but their physiques are similar to those of humans, with many individuals having balanced bodily proportions... Also, there are rumors that many have tails with heart-shaped tips rather than triangular ones.

Their base Rank is 6, and though their physical abilities are not poor by any means, their magical qualities are more exceptional. However, the most characteristic thing about this type of Majin is that they all possess the Allure, Spirit Siphon and Illusory Transformation Skills.

It is said that Succubi use these Skills to seduce men while Incubi use them to seduce women, and they suck the 'spirit' of their victims.

But because their Illusory Transformation Skill does not work on members of the same gender, it was said in human societies that couples with poor relationships that slept in separate rooms were suitable targets for Obscene-Succubi.

When I said this to Obscene-Succubi, they told me that it would be more normal to target unmarried people living on their own. This is a very reasonable argument.

In addition, it seems that they have no problem in continuing to live without using Spirit Siphon. Human 'spirit' is apparently nothing more than a luxury item like alcohol to Obscene-Majin.

Beast-Majin Vandals. Other than having two horns and blue skin, they have little in common with the other two types of Majin. It is a mere coincidence that their name is similar to Master's.

Their bodies have beast-like characteristics... or rather, they simply possess beast body parts, and it is possible for two Vandals to appear to be completely different races.

Those who simply have fur, scales or shells covering over half of their bodies and those with beast-like ears, tails, fangs and claws are the plain ones. There are some with the upper bodies of wolves or tigers, and some with the lower bodies of enormous four-legged beasts or serpents.

Their base Rank is 6, and they have better physical ability than aptitude for magic. It seems that many of them have beast-like personalities as well.

What all Majin have in common is that they have no lifespans; unless they encounter unexpected accidents, become sick or die in battle, they continue living forever. Perhaps because of this, they have a strong sense of unity as a race.

They treat those who have relations with them with particular importance. Thus, they have strong bonds within the groups that they belong to. But as this is not limited to members of their own race, it seems difficult to say that they are exclusive.

As for Gerazorg, who betrayed the Majin nation, it is thought that he felt more of a bond with Bugitas and his subordinates than he did with Godwin and the other Majin.

There are generally no ordinary civilians among Majin. Those of the Majin nation believe it right to polish one's skills and fight, so all Majin acquire combat-related Jobs. However, as they have unlimited lifespans, it seems that many of them become absorbed in hobbies to keep themselves busy and end up becoming as skilled as first-rate craftsmen.

Their suitability for becoming adventurers does not even need to be written about.

Several unique Jobs that only Majin can acquire have been confirmed. The most well-known among these is the Demon Tamer Job. Demons are likely creatures that are coagulated masses of the contaminated Mana of one or perhaps both of the evil gods that fused with Zantark. This is likely the most well-known Job because the Majin with these Jobs can command Demons, or perhaps because the Demons resemble them.

Because of this Job, there is an overwhelming number of people in human societies who believe that Majin are a superior race of Demons.

To explain this as a former citizen of human society myself, Arch-Demons and Greater Demons do resemble Diablos, and Lesser Demons, which have the heads of goats, have many features in common with Vandals. While they are rare, there are also Demons that resemble Succubi, so I do not think that this misunderstanding is surprising.

There are many other unique Jobs such as Beast Majin Warrior, Majin Swordsman and Battle Majin General.

The Majin's views on love and marriage depend on the individual. While many live an ordinary married life with a certain man or woman, there are also those who assist each other in raising children and then separate once the children are raised. There are also some who do not stay together even with children, and the mother raises the children with her parents and siblings.

There is no marriage system in the Majin nation; they have a system where men and women can have relationships with each other as they like. In other words, the nation's official stance is, "Do what you like." But it seems that if one is too irresponsible, one will end up like Gerazorg.

Perhaps as a side-effect of Majin having unlimited lifespans, the race as a whole has difficulty creating children, and it seems that many of them do not feel the need to have children. As a result, many of them have more than one child, but it is not

uncommon for it to take them many years to do so.

However, though this is an extreme exception, there was apparently an Incubus who had over a dozen children, so it seems that there are still large individual differences.

That applies for the development of Majin children as well; there are those who develop at the same rate as humans and become adults after fifteen years, and those that develop like Elves and half-Elves, their development slowing down in their early teenage years and requiring between twenty to thirty years in order to reach adulthood. There are also those whose appearances remain fixed as those of children.

That is why in the Majin nation, a system has been adopted where the individual and their parent must acknowledge that the individual has become an adult and the individual must pass an examination at a government office before they are certified as an adult.

As adulthood for Majin is a certification, it can be invalidated or revoked if individuals do very foolish things.

Incidentally, Gerazorg did such foolish things repeatedly, and planned his coup d'état after having his adulthood certification revoked multiple times... nobody approved of him.

Regarding rituals to turn members of other races into Majin. Majin are able to turn not only humans, Elves and Dwarves, but other races of Vida that do not originate from monsters (Those with no Rank in their Statuses), into Majin as well.

The most well-known ritual is... It is questionable as to whether it can be called a ritual, but it is the method of repeated intercourse with an Obscene-Majin. Simply having repeated, continuous intercourse with an Obscene-Majin over a long period of time can turn one into a Majin, so if one ignores the time and process, it is the simplest method.

It is thought that the Mana in the Obscene-Majin's body is transferred to the partner through intercourse, and once it passes a certain threshold, the partner transforms into a Majin.

The required time is... As no detailed records remain, it cannot be said with certainty, but it is a year at most. As for the required frequency... I will deliberately refrain from recording it here. It seems that the higher the Rank the Obscene-Succubus is, the less

time it takes and the less frequent the intercourse must be.

If such a thing is possible, one might think it strange that the Majin population is not exploding. But a partner that an Obscene-Majin would have repeated, continuous intercourse with would naturally be someone who is special to that Obscene-Majin... so it seems that the population will not explode.

The next most well-known ritual is the one used by Godwin on Iris Bearheart, the Battle-Majin's 'Blood Cocoon' ritual. The required time period is as short as seven days and seven nights, but a special magic circle and a holy grail are necessary, and a great quantity of live sacrifices must be prepared. It is normally a very difficult ritual to carry out.

Thus, this ritual was not conducted very often in the Majin nation. Human societies are not even aware of this ritual's existence.

The last ritual is the Beast-Majin Vandals' 'Beast Majin Den,' but it is a bloody ritual that involves the candidate being placed inside a small, consecrated hole in the ground and then fed only the flesh and blood of Vandals to finally emerge as a Majin.

It is likely that the same effect as intercourse with Obscene-Majin is being used through the act of eating. There are even fewer cases of this ritual being conducted than the 'Blood Cocoon,' and there are almost no records of them, so the details are unknown.

The kind of Majin that the target of a ritual becomes is determined not by the race of the Majin that conducted the ritual, but the birth... the body of the target.

Those of races less than two meters in height, such as humans, Elves, Dwarves and Dark Elves, almost always become Obscene-Majin.

Those with heights of a little over two meters, like Titans, become Battle-Majin.

And Beast-people and those who have inherited remarkable beast-like characteristics often become Beast-Majin.

But the Majin nation also possesses records of Incubi with muscular, three-meter tall bodies, Battle-Majin as tall as the chest-height of an adult and Succubi with the ears of beasts being born as a result of these rituals.

Half-Noble Orc

A race born when Master conducted a pseudo-reincarnation for the first time... indeed, it is a new humanoid race rather than a new monster. She can acquire Jobs, so there is no doubt about it.

She is a young girl with special characteristics such as ears and a tail resembling those of a pig's, and an enormous... at this point in time, three-meter-tall, body. Judging from her current pace of development, it can be assumed that she will reach the appearance of a fifteen-year-old human by the age of ten; in other words, she will become an adult by that age.

Would she likely be mistaken as a half-Titan, half-Beast-person by those who look at her appearance? Boar-type Beast-people do not exist, so they may realize that something is strange about her afterwards.

She has possessed great strength since birth, and her stamina is exceptional. She is still six years old at present... in human terms, she would be just short of nine years old, but she already possesses the muscular strength to crush a Rank 3 monster with her bare hands.

But it seems that she is not adept with magic. It is unclear as to whether this is a characteristic of her race or whether learning magic is too difficult for her at this age.

...It is meaningless to compare her to Master, even if they are of the same equivalent age, so I shall refrain from doing so.

There is still only a single individual of this race, so investigating the race as a whole is impossible. It is also unknown as to whether males of this race can exist. After hearing that Master would advance into the Noble Orc empire, I had thought that this would be a chance for the birth of a large quantity of new half-Noble-Orcs, but...

Once Master works as an adventurer in human societies, I would very much like him to accept many requests to exterminate Orcs and Minotaurs.

If he does, we will likely know whether Orcs can become half-Orcs and Minotaurs can become half-Minotaurs.

Legion

They are a human. Some would disagree, but... they are a fully-fledged human that can acquire Jobs.

Their appearance is that of a sphere made of around a dozen mannequins made of flesh (different from being skinless with their muscles exposed) entwined around each other... and there are countless pieces of flesh that look exactly like human limbs and heads protruding from the sphere's surface.

Of course, this is only their original form; they can change their size and form at will with the Size Alteration and Form Alteration Skills.

Their body does not contain skin, hair, bones, viscera, hearts... or even brains; they are simply made of flesh.

They are like a Slime made of flesh, but even if they are to be compared to a Slime, Slimes possess a core inside their body. Legion does not even have such a core. In other words, there are no parts of their body that can be considered vital spots. In addition to this, they possess a tremendous amount of Vitality and astounding regenerative abilities.

They were weak to heat and lightning before, but as they have acquired a resistance Skill, it can be said that this weakness is now gone.

And the thing that I find most difficult to believe is that Master is not the one who caused Legion's birth.

Master simply created the 'base form of life' and the 'base form of spirit' that became Legion's foundation, and the ones mainly responsible for Legion's birth were Ricklent, the genie of time and magic, Zuruwarn, the god of space and creation and the god of the foreign world of Origin.

Have these three gods not surpassed Vida? However, I will deliberately refrain from recording which aspect they have surpassed her in.

Their personalities, or rather, their minds, are... extremely difficult to comprehend. They have shared memories and senses, so it is apparently similar to Master's clones that he often creates through Out-of-body Experience, though they all possess different personalities.

It seems that Pluto generally takes leadership of them most of the time, but this apparently does not mean that she is the center of their personalities. In fact, even when her personality separates from the rest with the Long-distance Control Skill, the remaining personalities of Legion can continue functioning with no problems in her absence.

According to Enma, one of Legion's personalities, "One person is everyone, and everyone is one person."

And since they are a race, they should be able to reproduce... produce children, but that is a mystery as well.

One could assume that it is highly likely that they can reproduce through fission like Slimes... In fact, there is a theory that Slimes can reproduce by laying eggs rather than through fission.

This is a theory that an egg of the same color as the Slime grow inside its body, and the egg hatches as it is laid, making the process appear to be fission.

As for which method Legion would use... I would certainly like to know.

Luciliano put his pen down and let out a deep sigh. "My lifespan is not long enough for me to find that out. Should I become a Vampire after all? I can't imagine my own appearance if I were to become an Incubus... But which of them would I choose a 'parent' from? I suppose for now, I will ask Master to increase my lifespan through Youth Transformation."

As if setting this matter aside, Luciliano set aside the paper upon which he had written details about the half-Noble Orc and Legion, and then prepared a fresh piece of paper.

"I must record the details of the Vida-created races living within the Boundary Mountain Range while I can. Master will likely not hold back in influencing them in a way that will greatly change their culture and lifestyles. Once that happens, it will be a lot of trouble to find out how things were before."

Luciliano was supposed to be an Undead specialist, so why was he making these natural-history-like records?

He did ponder this question himself, but he didn't think that this was a bad thing.



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