

槍使いと、黒猫

S T R A N G E R & B L A C K C A T

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Glossary

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*Be aware that some of the names here were not translated by Shasu, as such there is the possibility that they may be changed after being mentioned in the novel, after chapter 74, and thus receiving Shasu's personal attention. Those that have been mentioned after chapter 74 are already in their final form.
Sincerely, The Editor Team.*



Magic System:

Magic exists and can be used according to a person's affinity to the elements. Using magic consumes mana. Magicians can mostly be divided into three classes with the first class being the stronger, there are however those who surpass them, yet they are rare. Magic can be learned through reading magic characters, but it's not guaranteed that by reading them you'll learn and they disappear after being read once. Magic can be cast with language (chant) or with the aid of a crest (has a higher difficulty) which will increase the power.

Magic art's, which are a special way to manipulate mana can be divided into three categories:

Magic Combat Style: consists of reinforcing your physical body with mana to enhance your abilities.

Guidance Sorcery: the manipulation of mana outside your body, can be used in a variety of ways.

Sage Art: consists of dispersing your mana to your surroundings aligning yourself with a part of nature to affect it, consumes an immense amount of mana.

Currency:

Coins:

iron < small copper < large copper < silver < gold < platinum < large platinum

Exchange value:

ten small coppers = one large copper

ten large copper = one silver coin

ten silver coins = one gold coin

ten gold coins = one platinum coin

one hundred platinum coins = one large platinum coin

Characters:

Characters are ordered alphabetically within their categories.

The Main Character:

Shuuya Kagari: Our MC, sent to a different world through what seemed to be a dimensional fissure and given the opportunity of remaking his body, chose to become a Lucival, a type of mutated vampire with immunity to light, after releasing his partner Rollodeen from where she was sealed, he agreed to look for two peculiar items that would allow her to regain her former abilities.

Main Character's travelling companions:

Rollodeen: Also known as Rollo, is the MC's partner who used to be powerful enough to be considered a divine beast. Having the form of a giant feline and bearing the name of Lohse among others, she was sealed in a war millennia ago, managed to be released from the seal with the MC's help by forming a contract, but lost most of her power as well as the ability to express complex thoughts. Travelling with the MC ever since in the form of a cute cat with red eyes.

Helme: A water fairy the MC had a meeting while in the mountains he was

being trained at, after the meeting the MC gained a mark similar to a paw print. Later, after receiving the blessing from water goddess Akreshys, managed to recover her former powers as a spirit becoming able to take physical form, afterwards, absorbed the MC's mana entering into a contract with him.

Popobumu: the MC's trusty mount, lizardlike in appearance.

Nobles and their direct subordinates:

Archbishop Golgan: a clergyman which accused the MC of being a Demon for causing a reaction on a demon repelling barrier at the Throne Room of the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Bertrand: swordsman subordinate of Princes Swane.

Bimiyal: A civil official under the employ of Earl Makfol.

Chloe Leaf Tigri: Sorceress serving as a vassal under Princess Aurora Phi Arkamneris.

Claude: Templar Knight leader of the advanced unit of the Holy Crusaders sent from the Religious State Hesliphat to the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Earl Makfol zen Rakolazei: Feudal lord of Holkerbaum, nicknamed Earl Oddball, supposedly is supported by powerful people.

Elmes Ingway: the female knight who commands the Third Princess Knight Escort Unit Hundred Flowers, from the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Jared: Prime Minister Zamdo's subordinate, called Captain by his subordinates.

Kiki: Marques Chardonnay's maid and bodyguard.

King Thalium: King of the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Marquess Chardonnay von Anaheim: A noble of the Oseberia Kingdom and

the feudal lord of Hekatrail, involved in the plot concerning Princess Narskeri.

Marquis Hewso: A noble of the Zamalia kingdom met with the MC through a coincidence when he passed through Royal Capital Fa Dyke, involved with a plot concerning Princess Narskeri.

Prime Minister Zamdo: A nobleman of the Terramay Kingdom, involved with the plot concerning Princess Narskeri.

Princess Aurora Phi Arkamneris: the Third Princess of the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris, met the MC when she and her escorts were being attacked by a group of centaur-like monsters.

Princess Narskeri: Princess of the Terramay kingdom.

Princess Swane Phi Arkamneris: the First Princess of the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris, fighting against demons in Sole Fortress alongside her subordinates.

Sahia Lorenz: middle-aged male knight, adjutant in the Third Princess Knight Escort Unit Hundred Flowers, from the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Shark: Marques Chardonnay's subordinate, head of her information gathering group.

Talyad: magician subordinate of Princess Swane.

Yui Furgman: Assassin originally seen under the employ of Marquis Hewso, possessor of an extra skill called "Death eyes", tried to kill the MC several times.

Adventurers and those affiliated with them:

Allen: A child adventurer which, together with his younger sister Ina, makes up the S rank adventurer clan "Icy Mausoleum of Blue Waters."

Azora: A young beastwoman with rabbit ears and contracted with a white bear, participated in the evil dragon king subjugation in a group with the MC, lost her life to the Evil Dragon King.

Banabi Ze Kreuz: Adventurer and noble, described as cow-faced and being a magical-artist, met the MC at Pelneet inside the Krishna Sorcery Tools Shop, behaved suspiciously after seeing Rollo.

Belize Mafon: A blond-haired elven woman, member of the clan “Tempest of the Crimson Tiger.”

Bon: A dwarf and genius magic enchanting specialist who’s Zaga’s younger brother, only speaks the word ‘enchanting’ and other variations of it.

Butch Zema: A beastman male, member of the clan “Tempest of the Crimson Tiger.”

Carban Fafunade: Guild Master of the adventurer guild in Hekatrail.

Eris Fafunade: human woman, leader of the adventurer clan “Eight Maidens”.

Fran: A female B rank adventurer with an invisible hawk following her. She has red hair.

Ina: A child adventurer which, together with her brother Allen, makes up the S rank adventurer clan “Icy Mausoleum of Blue Waters.”

Luciel: A human woman, a black-haired magician and member of the clan “Tempest of the Crimson Tiger.”

Rebecca: a half-elf C class adventurer based at the Labyrinth city Pelneet joined a temporary party with the MC when he first arrived at the city. Nicknamed Angel of Death by other adventurers after several members of her party being killed constantly. Has good magical abilities.

Rubia: A child with mixed blood possessing outstanding abilities in recovery magic, was entrusted to Zaga and Bon by the MC.

Sarah Floraid: The leader the clan “Tempest of the Crimson Tiger,” a red-haired beastwoman.

Skola Tortzeta: The leader of the adventurer clan Aria’s Wanderer.

Quiche Bakunda: An elven woman and member of a village destroyed by the Evil Dragon King that lived on Mt. Baldok.

Zaga: A dwarf blacksmith first encountered in Hekatrail, after the dragon king

subjugation moved with his brother to Labyrinth City Pelneet.

Dark Guild's Members:

Ange: A member of the dark guild "Bell of Twilight," servant of Porusen.

Beck: One of the executives of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs", sworn-brother to Oze.

Bill Sokuudo: Boss of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs", seems to be the second in the command of the guild under Eribol.

Clydosus: An elven woman and a member of the dark guild "Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale," invited the MC to join the dark guild when he was in Hekatrail.

Curél of the Rebellious Sword: A leader of the dark guild "Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale."

Deyma Hegway: A member of the dark guild "Scales of Gaia", died in battle.

Eribol Macabyn: Master of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs".

Jane: a leader of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs" responsible for Holkerbaum.

Lane: One of the executives of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs", rabbit-eared woman.

Mia Aftotol: Last leader of the dark guild "Scales of Gaia," first met the MC in Holkerbaum, assumed command of the guild after her family's death, after the guild's destruction went to Pelneet.

Morabi: One of the executives of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs", a man dressed in black.

Oze: a leader of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs" responsible for Holkerbaum.

Pili: One of the executives of the dark guild "Owl's Fangs", a giant simple-minded man.

Porusen: A member of the dark guild “Bell of Twilight,” invited the MC to join the dark guild when he was on Hekatrail.

Serva: One of the executives of the dark guild “Owl’s Fangs” treated as vice-president, uses an eye-patch. Killed by the MC when he tried to assassinate a merchant the MC was protecting in Holkerbaum.

Victor Oladom: A member of the dark guild “Scales of Gaia”, died in battle.

The Goldiba:

Achilles: A member of the horned race, the Goldiba, and the man who found our MC underground and brought him to the surface, after recognizing Rollo as the divine beast worshipped by his people, he decided to help the MC, eventually became his master in spearmanship and trained the MC on the mountain he lives with his family. A former adventurer and God Spear of the Wind Spear Style as well as King Sword of the Flying Sword Style.

Raglen: Leifa’s father, Rabi’s husband.

Leifa: Achilles’ granddaughter, has a good relationship with the MC, a child.

Rabi: Refaa’s mother, married to Raglen.

Others:

Cecily Fadasso: A commanding officer of the Third Griffon Corps of the Oseberia Kingdom.

Cherry: A barmaid in Hekatrail, introduced to the MC by Quiche.

Dino Hildecore: head of the thieves guild Belgard.

Erica Sobelis: Melissa’s little sister.

Henkai: A dwarf from the destroyed Langur Kingdom, rescued by the MC from the Magic Labyrinth near Hekatrail after a long imprisonment.

Iriel: servant at the Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth inn.

Kalii: A man with a tattoo of black wings, had infiltrated the dark guild Thorny Tail in order to destroy it as a mission, met the MC in Hekatrail.

Keragan Kyaneras: A slave-trader who owns a dark elf and belongs to an organization named Oath of the One Horn, seen by the MC on Hekatrail for the first time. Afterwards gave access to the underground auction to the MC.

Larai: A woman related to the same organization as Kalii.

Lanfa Seyaruka: An elven woman met by the MC when he left his master's home, guided him through the elven territory to human lands.

Lazu: An elf hailing from the same village as Quiche.

Loirr: A dwarf met by the MC on his time underground, had been exiled by his homeland, the Langur empire, but managed to return by gathering a valuable kind of plant on the underground and bribing the guards.

Marin Peradas: Priestess of the Holker Temple on Holkerbaum, has a very peculiar appearance.

Mel: landlady of the inn called Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth which the MC stayed at when he arrived at the Pelneet. Is known to be good at manipulating mana inside her body.

Melissa Sobelis: A low ranking member of the thieves guild Belgard.

Mysty Gustave: She was a noble of Hekatrail from the Gustave family and is the sister of Sol Gustave, when her brother became a criminal it caused the fall of her family, has the ability to create wogan dolls.

Nora Eagbayn: The current head of the vampire hunter clan, the Eagbayn household, travels looking for her missing younger sister which disappeared during an investigation, met the MC in Hekatrail.

Phile Elizard: Owner of an workshop in Holkerbaum, targeted by a dark guild for her involvement in the construction of a bridge.

Pubramanti: Supposedly a sage affiliated with Ernst Magic University, wrote a book about magic read by the MC.

Sazihali: An Ancient Dragon known as the Witch of the Sedia Wasteland, her formal name as a dragon is “Haiesoshesoto Dragonia”.

Sheridan: Cecily Fadasso’s subordinate.

Sol Gustave: A former noble from Hector. Became a criminal after trying to bring back his dead wife to life as a Wogan doll.

Taijiki: merchant from the luxor firm, was in charge of a caravan going from Hecatrail to Holkerbaum which the MC was an escort of.

Theta: Sol Gustave’s wife who’s, in fact, a wogan doll.

Gods:

Akreshys: Water Goddess.

Arotosh: God of Life.

Baykala: Goddess of Geath, depicted as a beautiful woman with pure white eyes.

Bofun: Hunting Magic God, depicted as a centaur-like monster with six eyes, six arms and eight legs.

Boshiado: Tyrannical King, depicted as a man with a broad chest and bearing a black lance.

Desalobia: The Evil God of Demon Eyes, depicted as having an amoeba-like shape.

Evil Ogre Mephalla: Princess of Dark Plays: depicted as a heroic looking soldier with four arms, blond hair and different coloured eyes.

Gaia: Earth God.

Lulodis: God of Light.

Kyulha: King Tree of Wisdom Storage, in his half-finished depiction there was a giant tree.

Lebra: Queen of Twilight, depicted as a beautiful woman with a seductive and haughty figure, has long black hair and a hexagram on her forehead and her eyes.

Lugunado: Vampire God, depicted as a black knight with sharp fangs sticking out of his mouth.

Meliady: Goddess who governs Demonic Life, a woman with long raven-black hair and three eyes.

Misea: Goddess of Magic Poison: a beautiful woman with a large grey snake for hair and slitted eyes.

Orimiru: God of Order.

Rashinzu Lebioda: King of Destruction, on this place of his depiction destroyed mountains and a cracked pitched-black world was shown.

Dark God Rivograph: depicted as a child with red eyes bearing a dark red long sword.

Sadeyula: Goddess of Plants.

Shakidaos: King of Insanity, he is depicted as a large human figure with countless black wings, red eyes, honey colored hair and six arms.

Terrifying King Nocturne: depicted as a tall human with a shaved head and a cloth with dripping blood over the place his eyes should have been.

Totogudius: King of the Ten-Layered Hell, depicted as a humanoid with curved black horns, completely black eyes and deep crimson skin, holding a long yellow staff and a golden book dripping blood, sitting on a throne of bones.

Vaamina: Queen of Nightmares, depicted as a blindfolded woman tied to a chair and with her neck half cut.

Zansuyn: King of Desire: depicted as a frog type obese monster.

Zea: The Enraged, depicted as having a roundish shape with features like that of a bald man.

Groups and Organizations:

General:

Disorte: A demonic being extermination organization, under the control of the Holy Kingdom Hesliphath.

Eagbayn Household: A clan of vampire hunters, located in the Zamalia kingdom.

Eight Lights: A group formed for the duration of the Underground Auction by eight renowned leaders of dark guilds.

Magician's Assembly: A meeting of powerful magicians which manage the magic guilds.

Oath of the One Horned: management organization of the Dualbell Company.

Spearmanship styles: meaning the three main styles of spearmanship which are, the Strong Spear Style and the Wind Spear Style from the Strong Techniques Faction as well as the Ruler's Spear Style of the traditional faction, the three seem to have no connection to one another.

Swordsmanship styles: meaning the three main styles of swordsmanship, Flying Sword Style, Absolute Sword Style and King Sword Style, the three seem to have no connection to one another.

Dark Guilds:

Apostles of the Blood Mark: Evil adherents who worship Totogudius, active in Holkerbaum.

Bell of Twilight: A dark guild first seen in Hekatrail.

Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale: A dark guild related to the Ancient Befaritz Empire, their boss is rumoured to be one of the “Eight Lights”, their headquarters is supposed to be in Senapua..

Darkness of Gaigal: dark guild which was making transactions with Kuna, seem to be based on the mining city Tandart.

Owl’s Fangs: A dark guild currently wrestling power in Holkerbaum from Scales of Gaia, their boss is rumored to be one of the “Eight Lights”.

Remains of the Moon: A dark guild whose headquarters is located in Pelneet.

Scales of Gaia: A dark guild which used to control Holkerbaum, currently fighting a losing battle against Owl’s Fangs.

Thorny Tail: A dark guild first seen in Hekatrail, Kuna was a founding member and considered a leader in the guild.

Thieves Guilds:

Belgart: The largest thieves guild operating in Holkerbaum, related to an unknown dark guild.

Commandment of Rosen: Thieves guild controlled by the Oseberia Kingdom.

Sarmalli Kingdom: Thieves guild controlled by the Oseberia Kingdom.

Sizark: Thieves guild with great influence in the Leften Kingdom. Seem to have deep ties with the special unit of the secret Agency Twilight Knights.

Gate of the Calm Demon: Thieves guild with influence across several countries, especially in Fortress City Hekatrail, Violent City Senapua and Labyrinth City Pelneet.

Locations:

The Underground:

Langur Empire: An underground kingdom of the dwarves.

The Surface:

Fortress City Hekatrail: A city of the Oseberia kingdom.

Great Ancient Empire Befaritz: elven nation destroyed centuries ago.

Halphonia: The seaward capital of the Zamalia Kingdom.

Holy City Southermund: important city in the Holy Kingdom Arkamneris.

Holy Kingdom Arkamneris: located east of the Religious State Hesliphath.

Imperial Capital Kishiria: capital city of the Great Ancient Empire Befaritz, was destroyed 700 years ago, rumoured to be as a result of a magic ritual gone wrong.

Oseberia Kingdom: the human kingdom which Hekatrail belongs to, located south of the Whirlpool Forest of Demon Fog.

Pelneet: The labyrinth city.

Radford Empire: located to the west of Oseberia, currently the two countries are at war with Oseberia having the advantage.

Religious State Hesliphat: A country which follows the teachings of the God of Light Lulodis.

Royal Capital Fa Dyke: Terramay's Kingdom capital city.

Royal Capital Gromheim: Oseberia's kingdom capital city.

Sole Fortress: fortress belonging to the Holy kingdom Arkamneris, located at the Forest of Demonic Haunts.

Terramay Kingdom: The first human kingdom the MC reached after leaving his teachers home and crossing the elven forest, located southeast of the mountain the MC was trained at.

Violent Tower City Senapua: A city with superior magic technology, located in between the countries of Zamalia, Oseberia and Terramay, governed by Councilors.

Zamalia Kingdom: A human kingdom located close to Terramay kingdom.

Whirlpool Forest of Demon Fog: A forest located between the kingdom's of Terramay and Oseberia.

Outer World:

Sebdola: the spirit world, one of the godly domains surrounding Sera.

Sera: the material world (where the MC resides).

Seuros: godly domain (nothing else mentioned so far).

Named Creatures *Monsters* Demons / Devils:

Black Zemeckis & Red Admos: Hellish Darkbone knights who evolved after being named by the MC, they can be summoned from Sebdola through a ring.

Evil Dragon King Baldok: a dragon of the High Dragon class, used to live in Mt. Baldok, was subjugated by adventurers and forces of the Osberia kingdom working together.

Mabaon: Pegasus from the Haiserukon clan, freed from captivity in Hekatrail by the MC, gifted him a bugle horn in thanks.

Kuna: was masquerading as a human adventurer in Hekatrail when in fact was a leader of the dark guild Thorny Tail and a demonic being of the Kushanan race, she was working together with the Labyrinth master of the magic Labyrinth near Hekatrail, Sabido.

Sabido Kentsiru: Labyrinth master of the Magic Labyrinth near Hekatrail serves the Dark God Rivograph as one of the seven demon commanders of the dark god.

Items:

Ancient Magic Book Zohedron Trap: item obtained by the MC from Kuna, can create a space gate between it's location and several others where certain mirror-like objects (the Paredes Mirrors) are located.

Crow Boots: magic boots obtained by the MC after his meeting with Sol Gustave, destroyed during the Evil Dragon King subjugation.

God towers: elevators that connect the surface to the underground, constructed by the dwarves millennia ago, most no longer function.

Light Sake Drops: one of the items searched for by the MC, supposedly would, together with Orb of wisdom, restore Rollo's condition to what it was before being sealed, it comes from the mysterious trees of light and is also called "sake juice of life".

Magic Spear Baldok: spear made from the materials obtained from the Evil Dragon King's body.

Magic Sword Bitou: a magic sword with the shape of a bastard sword, obtained from Kuna, was stored inside the solar bracelet, seems to be an item related to the God of Darkness.

Notes of Ancient King Permon: a note written on aged parchment with several pieces missing.

Orb of Wisdom: one of the items searched for by the MC, supposedly would, together with Light Sake Drops, restore Rollo's condition to what it was before being sealed, comes from the Tree of Wise Law.

Picture Scroll of the Gods of Sebdola: contains paintings of 18 beings akin to gods.

Slave Trader License: obtained by the MC from Kuna's house.

Solar Bracelet: item obtained by the MC from Kuna, has an item box function

and can only be used by those with the space-time attribute.

Tanza Spear: first spear obtained by the MC given to him by his master.

Chapter 74 – Demonic Steel-City

Holkerbaum

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Chapter 74 – Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum

I survey the city at once.

After entering the eastern gate, there was immediately an intersection of four roads.

Plenty of people were coming and going, bringing horses and cattle along as suited to the beautiful weather.

Making Popobumu stop at the edge of the street, I address Mysty.

“Mysty, I will release you at an inconspicuous place.”

“Got it.” (Mysty)

Well then, I wonder where will I release her?

On the left side of the crossroads, the southern avenue becomes narrow. On both sides various small and large old-fashioned houses were lined up, connected by small alleys.

Turning to look at the right-hand side of the crossroads next, I examine the northern avenue.

Going uphill, there were newly constructed, vertical, high-class estates, painted in white and yellow, built on either sides of that avenue.

Given that they ascended towards the top of the hill, the houses seemed to form something similar to a stairway.

The road at the upper part of the intersection, which is wide enough to be considered a main street, continues into the west.

“Let’s head towards the hilltop on the right? I will release you over there.”

“Okay.” (Mysty)

We enter a sloped alley and climb the hill.

Lowering Mysty to the ground, I remove the magic shackles which were fastened to her arms.

Retrieving ten-odd gold and silver coins from my item box, I let Mysty take them after putting them into a suitable leather bag.

“This is...” (Mysty)

“It will be troublesome without anything, right?” (Shuuya)

I will probably be regarded as soft-hearted fool by Mysty, won’t I?

“... Why... this far?” (Mysty)

She alternately looks between my face and the bag with gold coins in it. Tears gather at her eyes and one, then two drops stream down along her cheeks.

“I’m a half-assed meddler. It’s limited to women. Besides, if you have that money, you can comfortably charter a horse-drawn carriage. It should become simple to start over.” (Shuuya)

“... Thank you, fufufu, a meddler, huh? You have taken a hard-hearted attitude by deliberately saying such a thing. Even if you try to conceal your kindness, it’s futile. However, it was great that I met you. Although it was a short time, you ended up changing my view of life. Until now I just lived for the sake of my own pleasure, but... knowing an existence that is kind like you, made me want to believe in the word “good” which didn’t exist in the lies filling this world. Shuuya... will we meet again?” (Mysty)

Mysty talks while wiping away the flowing tears with her hand. Honestly, her words touched my heart. The matter of saving her, and goodness,

in the end are...

However, I don't show those emotions on the surface.

"... We will be able to meet. If you live earnestly, we will meet again without fail, Mysty." (Shuuya)

"Really?" (Mysty)

"Yeah, well, stay in good health." (Shuuya)

"Meow." (Rollo)

"Ah, wai—" (Mysty)

The farewell of a far-away-parting finishes warmly.

I realize from Mysty's expression that she doesn't want to separate, but visibly ignoring her words, I make Popobumu gallop and descend the hill.

After returning to the intersection of crossroads, we blend into the crowd.

I ended up releasing a woman who was originally a noble then became a thief.

Honestly, there's also an aspect of me ending up pitying her after realizing that she's the younger sister of Sol.

When I saw the picture of the crest, I recalled the events at that time after all.

The event of Sol and Theta smiling as they died, and also the matter of the rejected Yui...

Well, I'm no good.

I desire a reunion, but there's nothing I can say after driving off Mysty by bribing her with money.

I advance on the main street while feeling my guilty conscience.

I go ahead on the main street which continues to the west.

In the corner of a group of buildings there is a gorgeous inn built on a large plot.

In addition there are old-fashioned trading companies and new weapon and armor shops standing in a row.

There's a certain atmosphere around here.

I wonder if many of the shops are blacksmiths? There are many chimneys after all.

Black smoke rose densely into the air.

Because its interest is piqued, Popobumu advances after drawing close to the shops.

It's a shopping street.

There was a shop that had a cluster of black minerals set up instead of a signboard.

【Hadi's Shop related to Steel and Fire】 has been carved into the cluster as name of the shop.

The shop in this direction used a huge, artistic long sword which had 【Gateou & Fuzuman】 engraved.

At the neighbouring shop, 【Elizard's Shop of Smithing General Goods】 is engraved on a round, thick steel rod.

In addition there are many shops with sign boards which have symbol marks like hammers, shields and crystals drawn on them.

There is a single common feature between all those sign boards.

Dragonfly accessories, made with small wood carvings at the shops' eaves, are hanging on the signboards with strings and wires.

Even now, dragonfly models, which were hung up under the overhangs of the roofs, are swaying in the wind.

Those are not wind chimes, but might be items serving as trademark of the shopping street, which implies that the shops are dealing with "Demonic Steel Alloy."

They could be mascots if they had a gentle character.

That was the impression of the shopping street if you only looked at it from outside.

Small alleys continue to the sides of the shopping street.

Narrow, inner paths as if diverging to the inner parts of the city.

It's nice to come across casual streets and back alleys, right?

Has the TV program of trailing back alleys restarted?

Let's go out of my way and take a little peek.

Maybe I might find the withered large tree I'm looking for beyond this point.

The style of each house is different from Hekatrail. There are a lot of houses that use plenty of stones. Popobumu advanced in a stroll.

Have the sewers been maintained? I don't know, but there were round, iron manhole covers on the ground.

Popobumu firmly steps on those covers with its feet, and it advances on the narrow-seeming path, which was slightly dirty just like a back alley.

Once we passed through several small roads — I heard jeers alongside screams. I wonder what it is as I get closer.

“Surround them, enclose them. They are cornered.”

“Ben, did you confirm it?”

“Yea, it’s 【Scales of Gaia】’s “Victor the Hammer”. Besides, that woman is the leader “Mia of the Fireball.””

They are fighting in a dead-end.

The unshaven men, who look like bandits while wearing worn-out, torn, dark brown robes, were surrounding a few with a large group at the actual site.

“Ooh, that hammer fellow, and the woman next to him is the leader, eh?”

“That’s right. My subordinates became victims of his hammer. There ain’t no mistake.”

The filthy pack of men continue their leisurely conversation.

“However, “Deyuma of the Four Arms” isn’t there. It’s necessary to be cautious.”

A weakly, lean man advised the fat men.

“Zoha-ani, you are way too wary. There ain’t no reason to be cautious, is there? If Deyuma ain’t here, that’s somethin’ convenient. Look. They the only troops remaining. If we take the head of that female leader in this place, it will finish off the well-established 【Scales of Gaia】.”

The one who rejected and laughed at the advice is a plump man. Watching him from the side, It was a guy who possessed a face that dripped with excitement

“I guess so. Did luck come our way with this?”

“Yeah. Uhyahya, chance, chance. Before taking her head, with that woman... hehee.”

The fat men with weapons in their hands breathe roughly through their noses after looking at the woman on the enemies’ side.

“Aah? Are you also aiming for her?”

“Saldo, are you an idiot? There ain’t no way for me to miss out on such a good woman, right?”

“In that case it’s a competition, Ben. We’ll decide with the number of soldiers killed.”

“That’s greeeat, I’m overflowing! Do it. Did you lot hear? Goooo, crush them, crush them and crush them.”

He incites the other soldiers. Even if these guys are dressed as bandits, he appears to be the leader.

“It’s a bloodbath festivaaaaaaaaaa!”

“Hyahaa, I will finish you off!”

I try to close in as it will be fine even if I’m noticed.
Hitting Popobumu’s belly lightly, I make it advance.
We approach from the flank of that group.

“Oy, it’s fine to get excited by doing whatever you please, but what have you guys said about a competition or such? It’s been decided that I will take that lass from the very start.”

The slim guy speaks while a sharp glint dwells in his hollow eye sockets.

“Haaa? Zoha-anijaa*, what are you spouting there? I’m first! *(T/N: honorary way of elder brother but a bit slangish with the extra “a”)*

“Ben and Saldo, as eldest brother, I’m first. I will devour those smooth-looking thighs as the very first, hehe.”

The men are showing vulgar, smiling faces to his sleazy words.

“Agaain? Since it’s aalwaays you, Zoha-ani, who gets them first, let us savour it sometimes, too.”

“No, no, even that woman would rather be raped by a thin man like me than fat men who look like you lot.”

“— Oy, Ben, Saldo and Zoha, you perverse brothers, currently that’s not allowed. We have been ordered by Oze-san and Jean-san to take Mia safely as a prisoner.”

Huh? It looks like those annoying brothers were the viceleaders
The large man, who talked at the very end, is the leader, huh?
While holding a long sword, he ordered his suspicious-looking men with an authoritative voice.

However, it's all so sudden.

Once I entered the back streets, I ended up encountering a battle between groups of organizations

Although I say that, with a battle of around 40 people against 12 people, it feels like it can also be called a massacre. It's a situation where the side with low numbers has been driven into a back alley.

This is one-sided.

— Mmh. oh?

There was a beauty on the cornered side, just as the suspicious-looking men had said while getting excited.

Beauty-san has long, straight black hair.

Black eyes, with thin eyebrows. Those were aspects in a woman you might call a display of old Japanese feminine virtues.

She has a stern look due to being cornered, but her motivation to definitely survive is dwelling in those black eyes. That was the intention I keenly sensed.

Her attire is an one piece that reaches to her white thighs.

Her coat is torn at several places, and the leather armor worn underneath is visible.

Those apparently soft thighs are magnificent as well.

The torn one piece strikes home with me, too.

I understand the perverts' feelings of shouting if she's in that state.

Since she has prepared a wand in her hand, she's likely a magician.

Next to her is a middle-aged man who is frantically protecting that Beauty-san.

With a grim expression he wielded a big, iron hammer, which he held with both hands.

Oh, the enemy was blown away by the big hammer.

Good going there, that parent-san.

How cool. He perfectly stands in their way, like the image of a guardian Deva King.

The fine wrinkles on his face stand out. He is a bearded elderly Deva King who

possesses a big hammer.

“— Guaah.”

“Tsk, Victor the Hammer, eh? As expected, he’s strong.”

It’s now. Shall I assist the side with that Beauty-san and the Deva King old man?

Actually, my thoughts are mostly about rescuing if it’s a woman.

The place to park Popobumu is... oh, found it, found it. Let’s have it stop at the alley on the opposite side of that place.

I head to the alley in a hurry.

“Popobumu, wait patiently in the shadow inside here.” (Shuuya)

“Buboo.” (Popobumu)

Popobumu makes a cheerful sound.

I tie Popobumu to the metal fittings installed on a large barrel after guiding it into the shadows of a building, and gently stroke it.

“Rollo, go. Prepare for battle.” (Shuuya)

“Meow.” (Rollo)

Alright, I summon the cursed sword Bitou and the magic spear wand.

Wearing the cursed sword at my waist as reserve weapon, I draw a magic square by putting strength into the magic in my hands —.

I suppress the mana consumption and write.

It has been slightly developed based on what I used at the Evil Dragon King battle.

Centralized model, minimize the scope, shrink, create... and put together.

The magic crest was immediately complete.

The finished magic crest moves into the sky.

Drifting in the air, it stays in position.

It follows me while I walk in the dim alley.

The preparations are perfect.

“Rollo, I plan to fire magic, stay on standby at the beginning. After that, play it by ear.”

Once I finish the simple explanation, I head towards the location of the fighting group.

I stand behind the group trying to rape Beauty-san.

When I came back, the situation had already deteriorated.

The group of soldiers led by the black-haired, beautiful woman and the middle-aged hammer wielding man has decreased in number, and the encirclement has become even narrower.

The Deva King parent-san, who holds an iron hammer, is struggling strenuously by himself.

While bloodstained, one of the approaching enemies and then another are dealt a blow by the hammer and collapse after being directly hit on the head with the sharp pickaxe-part of the hammer, but... he is outnumbered.

Even now after he defeated the third person who closed in.

“Surround Victor the Hammer in a group, attack him at the same time with two, no, three people.”

“— I won’t let you do that.” (Shuuya)

I shout from the side at the group of assholes.

“Mmh, who is it!? What bastard are you!?”

The large middle-aged man, who instructed them from behind, glares at me and raises his voice.

“I’m a passing wanderer, or an adventurer as another name.” (Shuuya)

“What was that? You have been hired as bouncer of 【Scales of Gaia】?”

“Well, it’s something similar.” (Shuuya)

“Is that guy an idiot? Expressly showing up in this area with these numbers as opponents.”

Let an idiot play together with fellow idiots and...

I answer while smiling accordingly,

“... Being an idiot is fine. So, will you guys become my **enemy**?” (Shuuya)

“— Impertinent shit, finish him off.”

The large man, with a fully grown beard, wields his long sword and thrusts at

me.

I obediently wait until he enters the range of my spear.

The instant the large man entered the spear's sphere, I lift the magic spear wand in an easy, slow motion. The red axe blade strikes the nether region of the large man and cuts halfway through his stomach in one go. From there I bisect the upper half of his body by raising the spear overhead, as if drawing a moon.

“— Bo.”

While releasing a voice that doesn't say anything as his head slides off sideways, the two lumps of meat split left and right and fall down.

“— Let me decrease the numbers since there are many of you!” (Shuuya)

After I yelled that and powerfully swung the blood-smeared magic spear wand once, I pointed the spearhead directly in front.

Selecting the target of the red axe blade, which makes a sound as the blood evaporates, I aim at the enemy group.

Dark

Bullet

《Darkness Sphere》

— I invoke an ancient spell.

The magic crest, which floats in the sky, appears in front of my eyes in a flash as if being the scope of a huge gun.

A black cluster materializes from the magic crest without even a second passing after the command and shot a darkness sphere at the spot I aimed for.

The small meteorite-like darkness sphere crashes vigorously into the ground while blowing away the enemies.

With a piercing sound of collision, it scatters the soil in a circular area and a small shockwave alongside a cloud of dust is generated in the surroundings.

Victor, who holds his hammer, drops to the ground on a knee due to the impact.

Even the black-haired woman, in her one piece appearance while her black hair flutters in the wind of the shock wave, opens her eyes wide as if to ask “What happened?” while staring at me.

There isn't even a shadow of the group on the enemies' side which had around 40 people. Those who were directly hit by the darkness sphere immediately became pieces of meat, and half of them who were close-by collapsed due to

the shock wave.

I attack them instantly at that point.

“Rollo, finish them off—”

“Meow.”

The black cat Rollo has already switched over into a stance of hunting. Extending her tentacle bone swords to the live men who had fallen to the ground, she stabs them to death one after the other.

Following her, I also mercilessly pierce the spear part of the magic spear wand into them, who are wriggling while trying to escape by crawling on the ground. Did Deva King Victor the Hammer judge this as chance after seeing the state of affairs? He quickly gets up.

“Uoooooh—, it’s a chance. Akoos, attack! Show them the willpower of 【Scales of Gaia】.” (Victor)

While revealing a furious facial expression, Deva King releases a yell close to a roar to encourage his allies.

He swiftly swings down his hammer at the men who are rolling around on the ground.

They were crushed one after the other, just like whack-a-mole.

“Yes, Victor-san!”

As if lured by the demon Victor, who handles his hammer while yelling, several young men, who were at a disadvantage earlier, join in on the counterattack.

Like this the enemy was annihilated in the blink of an eye.

Right after that, Victor, holding his iron hammer, approaches me taking along the surviving soldiers while breathing heavily.

“Oy, you, the hell...” (Victor)

“My name is Shuuya Kagari. Please call me Shuuya.” (Shuuya)

“What kind of person are you? Why did you help us?” (Victor)

Victor accumulates mana at his feet.

I grasp that he is putting strength into the hand holding the hammer.

Even if I assisted them, once they saw the ancient magic just now, they suspect me, huh?

It was a bit too flashy.

Let's help with ordinary military power next time...

"... I'm a passing-by adventurer. The reason, why I saved you, is that I couldn't leave alone that black-haired Beauty-san over there." (Shuuya)

"— What was that!?" (Victor)

"Victor-san, who's this person?"

A red-haired young man, who was next to the grim elder addressing Victor, turns the tip of his long sword at me.

"— Don't make a move, you lot. Didn't you see what happened just now? — Ojou, did you hire this guy?" (Victor)

Using the hammer which is his personal weapon, Victor pins down the body of a red-brownish-haired man's sword and turned around while calling the black-haired Beauty-san, who was behind him, "oujo."

"Adventurer? ... I'm not aware of any. He is a completely unknown person."
(Mia)

The black-haired Beauty-san reveals an unpleasant expression once she hears "adventurer".

She sets up her magic wand while glaring this way.

Well, that's only natural.

"That's right. I assisted you out of my own volition." (Shuuya)

I'm a strange old man, er rather, young man.

With such a feeling, I talk while showing a jesting smile.

Once the black-haired Beauty-san hears my simple words, her expression softens.

Was she relieved? After storing her magic wand at her back, she turns her black eyes to me.

"Is that so? Your magic is excellent, that axe spear is excellent, you have first-class abilities... to have destroyed the soldiers of 【Owl's Fang】 in an instant..."

(Mia)

She talks while casting her eyes down.

Are you prompting me to ask your name since I'm dull?

"— Rather than such matters, I believe it to be fine for you to at least teach me your name since your lifesaver introduced himself like this, beautiful ojousan?" (Shuuya)

Once I talk in such frivolous manner, the young man, who pointed the tip of his sword at me, scowls.

"Victor-san, this guy..."

"Listen up, you guys fall back. Me and ojou will talk in this place." (Victor)

"Haa, but..."

"Akoos, don't make me say it a second time." (Victor)

"Y-Yes—." (Akoos)

Did the young, red-haired man, who has the atmosphere of being a typically frivolous lad, understand? After he glared at me, he withdrew to the rear while taking along several injured people.

And, the black-haired Beauty-san briskly steps up.

"You are right, excuse me. Shuuya-san, I thank you once again. I truly thank you for saving us of the dark guild 【Scales of Gaia】 on this occasion. I'm called Mia Aftotol, the head and also leader" (Mia)

"Also from 【Scales of Gaia】, I'm called Victor Oladom and work as an advisor to the leader. Shuuya-dono, you have my gratitude for saving us." (Victor)

Dark guild 【Scales of Gaia】, huh?

It looks like the opponent they fought against was 【Owl's Fang】, but even the thieves group who came attacking us were members of 【Owl's Fang】.

Since they are a common enemy, it might be fortuitous.

"... Mia-san and Victor-san, it was good that I encountered you by chance." (Shuuya)

"Why did you save us?"

“? I will repeat it over and over again, but it’s because you are a pretty and beautiful person, Mia-san. A pretty woman being violated by such vulgar men is something I can’t stomach. Honestly speaking, although it’s nasty towards Victor-san, the probability of me ignoring you if Mia-san wasn’t here is high.” (Shuuya)

In the middle of talking I return to a normal tone.
It likely doesn’t give a good impression, but it’s the reality.

“Hey, ojou...” (Victor)

Returning to a grim expression, Victor the parent-san tries to protect Mia-san.

“You are a direct person. Victor, it’s alright.” (Mia)

Mia-san talks to Victor with a smiling expression.

“Yes, even without being alert, there’s no deep meaning. I just explained it honestly.” (Shuuya)

“Meow—.” (Rollo)

At that moment the black cat Rollo jumps on my shoulder.

“Oh, my! It’s a black cat-chan. It’s cute... but, is its size is slightly different from before?” (Mia)

“Ah yes, this is Rollodeenu. For short, Rollo. She’s something like my familiar and bodyguard.” (Shuuya)

“It seemed as if this cat grew bone swords and tentacles...” (Victor)

“Those are Rollo’s weapons.” (Shuuya)

“Nnh, meow, meow.” (Rollo)

Moving one leg on my jouge with a tap-tap, the black cat, Rollo, expressed her reply by hitting my shoulder with her soft paw.

“Fufu, a cute bodyguard.” (Mia)

“Meow.” (Rollo)

The black cat Rollo smugly displays a self-satisfied-look.
Well then, I saved a precious Beauty-san. Shall I go search for my targeted,

withered, large tree?

“Well then, although I participated in it as well, I will leave this place which reeks of blood, I guess? Mia-san and Victor-san, let’s once again ((meet)) somewhere—” (Shuuya)

“Ah, please wait. There’s still a reward.” (Mia)

“I don’t need such a thing. Bye then.” (Shuuya)

I wave a hand left and right while showing them my back.

Like that I hurry to the alley where I parked Popobumu.

Once I straddle him by lightly jumping on Popobumu, I grasp the reins, hit Popobumu’s belly with my feet and gallantly escape the alley. I return to the main street.

The goal, the reason I came to this city, is to locate where Holker, the withered, large tree, is located, I guess.

I advance to a place on the main street where shopping streets are lined up on both sides.

A caravan of carriages, parties of adventurers, a herd of horses and cattle transporting fish, and the people who live in this place, pass through this street. Once I got through the shopping streets which have such hustle and bustle, I came out at a vast, open place.

Oh, found it.

That is... the withered, large tree Holker, huh?

This place is a crossroad similar to a circular plaza.

One old, withered, large, tree, surrounded by an oval area of soil, has grown in the centre.

What the grey-haired, middle-aged Shark, a subordinate of the Marquess, was talking about is probably this “withered, large tree.”

It might become a clue to the Orb of Wisdom and Genju’s Sake Drop of Light, and is something important for the black cat, Rollo.

The roots of the withered, large tree emit the atmosphere of a sacred tree that might be in a Shinto shrine, surrounded in a circle by a white rope to cordon off a consecrated area.

It’s a large tree that makes one feel its history. Spanning in time across countless generations, there’s no doubt that this huge trunk and its bark, that

seems to be dried up, remember the stories of the people living in this city.

I'm fond of large trees which possess such a holy ambience.

Ah, there are bonchichi child spirits.

There's one child spirit with a shape like a goatee.

It walks ploddingly on top of the root's cordon.

It's not limited to only one spirit, but it seems there's only one that's called large tree Holker.

Below the withered large tree in the centre of the plaza, there was a person acting eccentrically in front of the place surrounded by a fence, which looks cool with the ample-feeling tree shade.

With a hood on his head, his entire body is covered by a grey robe.

He feels suspicious. After that person fell down on both his knees on the ground, he put together both hands.

Is he praying to god?

Once the suspicious person finishes praying, he turns around this way while slowly standing up.

And he exposes his face by pulling the hood of the concealing robe to the back.

Whoa, it's an amazing face...

The colour of the skin is blue. He is obviously not human with such a deep blue.

Without hair growing on his head, his ears had an oblong shape.

The ears are different from elves.

He has arbitrarily long earlobes like those of a giant Buddha.

The bone atop the eye socket has a large width and protrudes to the outside.

His cheeks, which looks as if it was treated with quilting, have a vertically-long characteristic giving him a certain look.

That kind of peculiar race, wearing an ashen robe, is moving his lips.

"Everyone, please listen. I'm the priest Peradas who takes care of the Holker Temple. I plan on telling a story concerning this large tree today. This large tree has even become the source of this city's name. It's famous as "Large Tree Holker" which was said to shelter the spirit of Holker." (Peradas)

He isn't a suspicious person but a priest? He began his speech by talking in a loud voice.

There are few people that can be said to listen, but he narrates enthusiastically.

“However, its current appearance is like this... more than five years passed since this large tree ended up withering. However, I believe that it will “revive.” Unfortunately, talks about felling this large tree Holker have appeared. — What to say? Isn’t this a sinful-minded act!? I, as believer of Holker, strongly oppose this. With my desire to sacrifice this body, I intend to stop the felling. The god of plants, Sadeyula-sama, definitely mourns this as well—.” (Peradas)

The priest’s voice is husky.
Sometimes he speaks in a sharp tone as if scolding.
He truly gives the impression of a monk in pursuit of enlightenment.
The people, who are coming and going in his vicinity, look at the priest in surprise at those occasions.
The felling of the withered, large tree, eh? It seems to be grave.
No, it is foolish if they fell it.
It might have a relation to the precious orb of wisdom and the Genju’s Sake Drop of Light. I have to prevent it.
I want to talk with the priest who possesses that characteristic face, but it seems that his speech is continuing...

Chapter 75 – The withered large tree and the priest with the space alien face

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His speech is long...

As it doesn't look like it will end anytime soon, I will inspect this city.

This place is an intersection. Roads branch to the left and right.

On the left as seen from my side, there's the harbour. The way up ahead leads towards the western gate. The northern road on my right goes uphill and splits into numerous alleys. There are many high-class buildings as the northern side of this Holkerbaum terrain gradually becomes higher, but that might be related to a quarry.

The right is rejected. Shall I follow the road which leads to the harbour and has the most pedestrian traffic?

Putting strength into the reins, I pull Popobumu's head towards the south and we go ahead. There are various shops lined up on both sides.

As we approach the harbour, leaving the street together with the merchants and their ox wagons and carts... the smell of fish drifted over.

And then the wharf becomes visible. The harbour is larger than expected.

Countless ships are anchored in the vicinity of the long wharf which was paved with planks. Gangways are extending from the ships' decks. Sailors, who had

headbands tied around their head are carrying out luggage which looks heavy, while walking on top of the gangways. Since pulleys were also used, they worked busily.

This area completely has the atmosphere of a port city.

Plenty of boxes are stacked up on an ox cart which is on the wharf. When that cart started to move, it came this way. The cart lets loose a chilly air as it passes next to Popobumu whom I have mounted.

Is there tuna in those cargo boxes? Whale? Huge lean meat, which was cut apart, and part of a large octopus was inside. In addition there were fishes which had a strange jaw, like deep-sea fishes, several had large mouths and fishes with just a head which couldn't be regarded as anything but monsters no matter how you look at them. Most of these were frozen. Someone probably froze them with Life Magic. The cart has become distant.

I discovered a signboard written by the adventurer's guild at the edge of my sight. Over there is the adventurer's guild of this city, huh?

Many wooden stakes stuck into the ground were lined up outside the terrace of the front door. Plenty of ropes fastened to horses and magic beasts were tied to those stakes.

The small stable next to those seems to be over its capacity.

It's an opportunity. I can receive the reward for the request completion by entering the guild.

Making Popobumu head there and dismounting in front of the guild, I tied Popobumu's reins to a stake located at the front door.

I enter the building of the adventurer's guild. With a slight delay Rollo followed me in as well.

The adventurers are gathered around the wooden bulletin board, which has been placed in the hall. They are picking various requests. It was a guild-like spectacle.

It's a display of all kind of races such as tiger faces, snake faces and scaled faces. Next to them is a race which has a face similar to a cat and has four arms. I also caught sight of humans, elves and dwarves. Ah, that big one. I happened to see them some time ago. The whole body of the large race is covered in a rampant growth of hair. I wonder what the name of that race might be. It's walking heavily and sluggishly.

“Oops, nii-chan, you are in the way.”

The one who said that as he came entering from behind was a small, plump man with a stature which made it likely that he was a dwarf.

“Ah, sorry...” (Shuuya)

I quickly move to the side.

Rollo who was next to me, likewise moved to the side.

“Good grief, a human’s...”

The small dwarf walks away while mumbling an idle scolding. This state of congestion is more than 【Hekatrail】?

No, it’s because this building of the adventurer’s guild is somewhat smaller than Hekatrail’s.

It might only feel like that because it’s small.

Avoiding the bulletin board at the hall, which is an area of such tumult, I head to the location which can be considered to be the inner reception area.

There a female adventurer and a receptionist are arguing back and forth.

I tried to sneak a look while listening attentively.

The female adventurer has placed countless shells of snails on top of the table.

“It’s a request for 10 Baum shells. If I’m not mistaken, this is the share for 10 shells. They have no damages either. The reward is 5 silver coins. Here you go.”

The receptionist is a beastman who had cat ears and light brown hair in a wavy hairstyle.

“Yea, that’s correct. Well then.”

Once the female adventurer grabs the money placed on the table and puts it into her pocket, the simple talk finishes and she leaves the receptionist.

I go to this receptionist as well.

I presented my guild card to the beastman receptionist.

“I arrived some time ago from Hekatrail on an escort request. This is my card.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, I will take care of the wooden tag where your name and the completion note were written down. Please wait just a minute —.”

An official took the card and performed the task of inserting the card into a magic tool with a crystal ball located in the back.

“Thank you for waiting. The request is complete. Here is your reward and your card.”

“Certainly, bye then.” (Shuuya)

I receive the card and one gold coin as reward which I put in my breast pocket.

Just like that I turn my back on the receptionist.

It was at the moment when I tried to leave the guild.

“Shuuya, you are late.” (Fran)

“Oh, Fran.” (Shuuya)

She smiles.

“Did you already get your reward?” (Fran)

“Yea, a moment ago. What are you doing here without even looking at the request board, Fran?” (Shuuya)

“A-Aah, I waited for you, Shuuya.” (Fran)

“For me? How can I help you?” (Shuuya)

Fran’s freckled cheeks are dyed red.

A transparent falcon perched on the left shoulder of Fran.

“I want to take a request together with you, Shuuya...” (Fran)

Fran explains while scratching her cheek with her right hand.

I have been invited by a beautiful woman.

Usually I would join up with her right away, but...

Fran is somewhat suspicious.

“This is a bad time. Sorry.” (Shuuya)

“Hey, you are turning me down? ... Is it hopeless no matter what?” (Fran)

Mmh, does she want to join up this much? Did she maybe fall in love with me?

No, it is certainly not that...

I have learned it the slightly hard way with the shady Kuna.

Let's decline here with heartrending grief.

"... Yea, sorry." (Shuuya)

"I-I see." (Fran)

"Yea. Well, then we will meet somewhere again?" (Shuuya)

"Yea." (Fran)

Although Fran smiles mutually, she bid farewell at that place stiffly.

Returning outside the guild, I untied the reins, which were fastened to a stake and energetically mounted Popobumu.

Once again I slowly survey the shops in the harbour's neighbourhood.

Diagonally opposite of the shopping street, along the Heim River, a place where people are gathering was visible.

Since it piqued my curiosity, I made Popobumu run there.

It seems to be a wharf. Is it a liner terminal?

I look at the signboard.

Liner traffic towards 【Hekatrail】.

Liner traffic towards 【Senapua】.

Direct ship towards 【Halphonia】.

Direct ship towards 【Gromheim】.

Direct ship towards 【Fa Dyke】.

Liner traffic towards 【Pelneet】.

A great number of dressed-up, rich-looking people stood in line at the landing place where the signboard is located at.

The opposite shore is vaguely visible, but I wonder whether there is no ferry ship or bridge in case someone wants to go there?

When I looked around restlessly while holding such a doubt, I heard the voices of children.

"Mister, mister, please give me money."

"Me too, me too."

"Buy my medicinal plants."

“I will polish your shoes.”

In the surroundings of the rich people who are waiting for their ship at the landing place, children who are wearing poor-looking rags gathered.

“— Shut up, shut up! Stupid brats, don't come this way!”

“Don't touch me with your filthy hands! Do not touch my clothes!”

“Good grief, Holker stinks. Go over there, shoo, shoo.”

The rich-looking men and women show scornful expressions.

While gesturing with their hands, they drive away the children with a “Shoo, shoo.” Glaring and disparaging the children as if they are garbage, they don't allow the children to approach them.

Even though it would be fine if they gave them a bit...

Even I, who remains a spectator without doing anything, is a badger of the same hole, huh?

Well, it might be some kind of business with an adult boss backing them though.

Where are you staring while just glaring?

Popobumu goes forward while the rich folks are glaring like that.

Leaving the place for boarding a liner, we advanced along the paved wharf.

I look at a ship which is anchored after stopping Popobumu.

This ship has the same size as the ship that was in Hekatrail.

Rowing with the oars is probably difficult...

Baggage is loaded as well as unloaded and passengers embark and disembark from the ship.

At that moment a group, which wore black collars, went ashore.

“— Ora, you humans and waste fish people, who possess gills, hurry up and disembark. You will probably be late for the transactions at the trading company, but there are other parties who will purchase slaves of a savage tribe of ocean light wannabe's like you lot! Stay more firm!”

The merchant, who was behind the group of slaves, is hurling instructions with a raised voice at the slaves with a whip in one hand.

A large quantity of slaves.

The rowers of the boat are slaves as well... there might be a person among

those slaves who walks into a legend like Ben-Hur.

Given that I have roughly examined the harbour, we return to the southern street.

At that moment — I saw the construction site of a bridge out of the corner of my eyes.

A bridge in such place?

Since I was slightly bothered by the bridge, I had Popobumu head there.

The bridge is in the middle of construction... even the foundation works haven't been completed yet. The construction has finished in a half-assed state.

This bridge seems to be for foot travel to the opposite shore, if it's finished.

However, the location is weird.

It's slightly away from the harbour. The entrance is at a narrow place located in an alley...

Why here? Won't it extend to the main street as well...?

Well, even if I thought about these questions, it will be fine either way.

Well then, any time soon now, I guess?

The speech of the priest has probably finished. Let's go back.

We return to the northern street.

And then we came back to the plaza with the large, withered tree.

Oh, just right, the priest finished his speech now.

Once the priest put up the hood of his robe, he leaves the plaza with the large, withered tree by walking.

— I follow him.

The priest entered an antique-looking mansion which was right in front of the crossroads square.

It's close... I make Popobumu move until right in front of that mansion.

There was a slightly dirty wooden board, which had "Holker Temple" carved into it, at the front door of the mansion.

Even though things may appear this way, a temple...? It feels like a run-down mansion though.

Dismounting Popobumu in front of that run-down mansion, I tie the reins to a post.

Rollo, who was sitting on the back of Popobumu's head, moved over to my shoulder.

Pushing open the light brown, large door of the mansion, we enter inside — ooh, isn't the interior totally different?

Different from the run-down-like outer facade, it had a simple interior design with wide space and a central room and ceiling ridge beams which were supported by pillars with the characteristic trait of being naturally thick made out of wood.

Right in the center there is an altar. Through an open hole in the ceiling sunlight, like magic light, pours down onto a crooked bonsai which is on top of the altar.

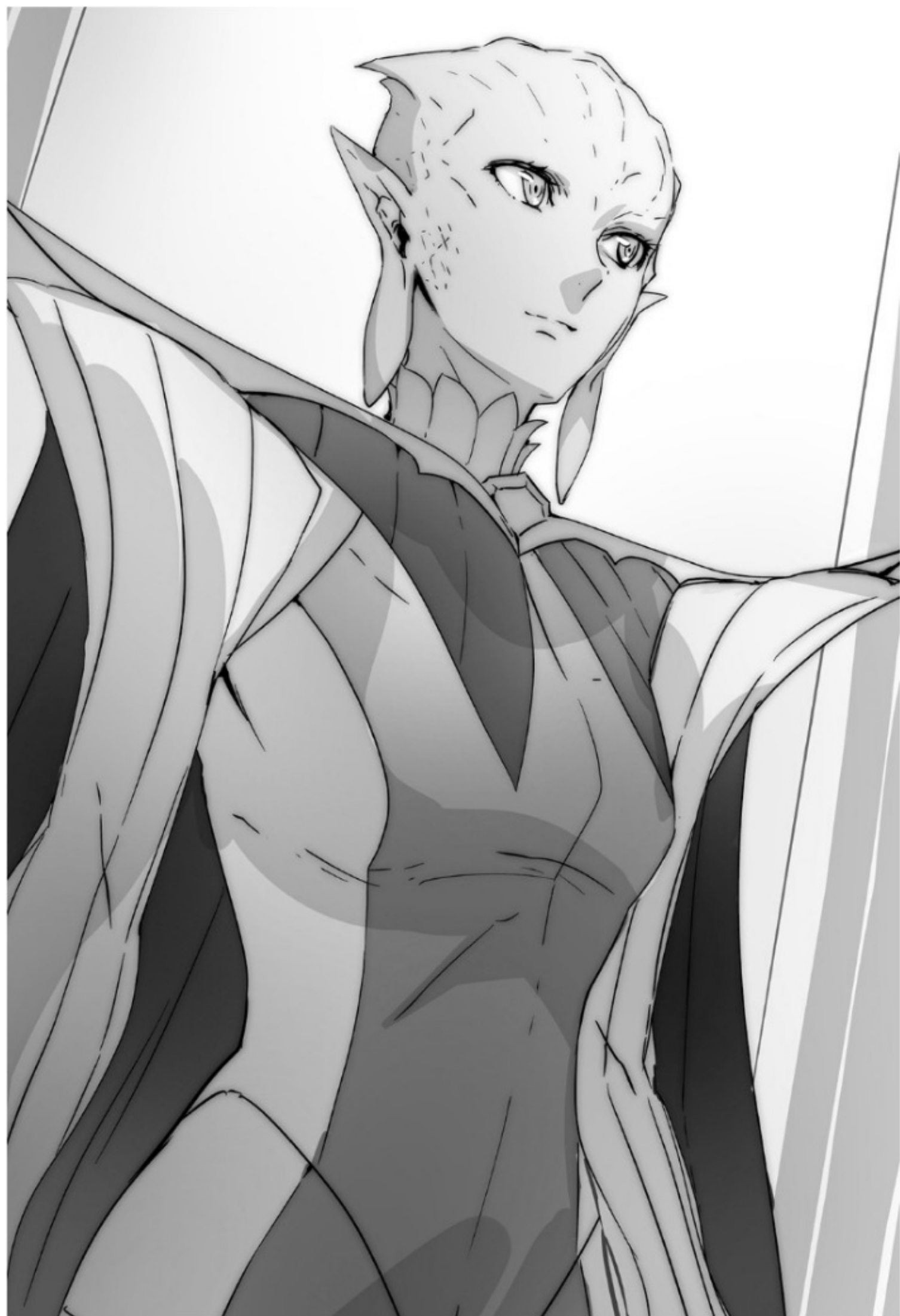
Green light, from which you could feel mana, clad the bonsai.

Together with the beam of light, it intermingled to give off a mysterious, sacred sensation.

It gives off a mood as if God will descend any time soon.

The priest sits on a chair with inlays of evergreen oak which is close to the pedestal that makes one feel such peculiar mood. He is scribbling down something on a parchment with a quill.

Feeling an atmosphere like he is creating a magic document, I feel slightly tense, but I try to address him... I head to the pedestal in the centre by walking on the floor which has a tawny carpet spread out. However, did the priest notice my approaching presence? He stops writing in the middle, stands up and comes over to talk with me.



“Welcome to the Temple of Holkerbaum. How may I help you?”

I examine the face of the priest with his husky voice and as expected he isn't human.

His skin is a mix of deep blue with light red and has a tinge close to purple.

The bones of his eye sockets are protruding out sideways.

I would agree even if I were told that he is a space alien or a demon...

Though he looked like a being from a splendid kind of race, I innocently think after all.

I, for a short while... stared at the face of such rare priest.

“... Are you alright? Do you hear me?”

The strange-looking priest asks while tilting his head to the side.

“... Eh, ah, yes. Sorry. I'm someone who listened to your story at the plaza just now.” (Shuuya)

“Oh, my goodness.”

“However I wanted to hear that story properly once more and thus I immediately came here.” (Shuuya)

Once I say so, the priest moves his large cheekbones while looking delightful. He had an abundance of expressions.

“Good, of course I don't mind. Rather, I'm just happy for you having shown an interest. Although I have brought up the previous talk again, the appearance of that large Holkerbaum tree has withered, but even now its roots are healthy. A restoration is possible.”

Hee, those are words brimming with confidence.

“Restoration? That withered, large tree can recover?” (Shuuya)

“Aah, yes. Though many people, including the feudal lord, apparently don't believe so...”

The priest earnestly explains while having a slightly downcast look.

“Being able to restore would be great if it is the truth.” (Shuuya)

“Are you an adventurer?”

“That’s right. I’m the C-rank Shuuya Kagari.” (Shuuya)

Once I named myself as adventurer, this priest had a different light dwelling in his eyes.

“Ooh, that’s godsend. Shuuya-san the adventurer, you say? I’m the priest called Peradas. I sent a request to the guild. Did you see the request “Restoration of the large Holkerbaum tree”?” (Peradas)

“No, I haven’t seen that request yet. As a matter of fact, there are things I want to ask... do you know the words Light Sake Drops or Orb of Wisdom?” (Shuuya)

The priest tilted his head.

If it’s this reaction he unfortunately seems to not know about them.

“... Light Sake Drops and Orb of Wisdom? No, it’s something I never heard at all... what kind of things are these?” (Peradas)

Not at all, huh?

I replied after looking at the face of Rollo, who is on my shoulder, for a bit.

“... Gaining wisdom, growing intelligence, returning to her former figure, blessed with intellect or such it is. It might also be something that can be eaten. And I heard the fairy-tale that those were created by the god of plants Sadeyula, but...” (Shuuya)

Once the priest hears that they are created by the God of Plants, Sadeyula, his facial muscles shifted into something that might be considered an expression of surprise. However, since the shape is different, it might be something else as well.

“— What was that? This Holker Temple revers the spirit Holker-sama, but the God of Plants, Sadeyula-sama and the God of Earth, Gaia-sama, who are of higher class are the gods said to have given birth to the spirit Holker-sama, aren’t they? By some chance that Light Sake Drops and the large Holker tree, which withered here, might have a relation.” (Peradas)

The speaking style of the priest is agitated with a rapid speed.

Well that's why I came to ask though.

On this opportunity, let's question him about the gods.

"Gods, huh...? Can I talk with them if I go somewhere?" (Shuuya)

Without having a displeased expression even with my ignorant question, the priest shows an expression of kindness.

"... Fufu, a conversation with god? Something like talking with them normally... that cannot possibly come true. Gods and spirits don't attempt to get in contact with those possessing a predestined length of life overly much. Unless a large incident doesn't occur..." (Peradas)

The priest talked as if admonishing me in a gentle tone, but once he reached the end of his sentence, his countenance makes a change as if he hit on some good idea and he moves his mouth.

"— No, it might be possible to talk with them. The spirit of the large tree, Holker-sama, is a descendant of a family which is connected to the gods, the God of Plants, Sadeyula-sama, and the God of Earth, Gaia-sama!" (Peradas)

The priest has become excited.
However, is that true...?

"What do you mean by that?" (Shuuya)

"If you are able to restore the "withered large tree of Holker" of this city, you will be able to gain the blessings from the God of Plants, Sadeyula-sama, and the God of Earth, Gaia-sama. It's something that might enable you to have a conversation with the gods!" (Peradas)

"Nn, nyao nyao." (Rollo)

Rollo, who was on my shoulder, reacted with an odd voice to the words of the agitated priest.

Looking at the strangely excited face of the priest, she seems to think that it appears to be the truth.

"That black cat-san is?" (Peradas)

"Aah, she is my familiar and partner." (Shuuya)

"I see, she is cute." (Peradas)

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo moves one of her feet up and down while tapping my shoulder. As usual she was appealing by tapping it with a *pon pon*.

“I want to give Light Sake Drops and the Orb of Wisdom to my familiar. Do you believe that I can obtain those artifact if I succeeded in talking with the gods?” (Shuuya)

I talk while gently stroking the head of Rollo.

“Yes, if you are able to make the large tree of Holker revive and can obtain the blessings by the “God of Plants Sadeyula-sama” and the “God of Earth Gaia-sama,” it might be possible to get those Light Sake Drops and Orb of Wisdom.” (Peradas)

The priest said with a serious look. It’s “might obtain” though. Since the story might just match suitably, I test him a bit.

“God’s blessing? You said that something like the restoration of that huge, withered tree is possible. But, is that really true?” (Shuuya)

I said with a look filled with doubt. Once the priest hears that, he opens his eyes widely. The priest opened his mouth with an eager posture while breaking into a smile.

“— This way of being able to converse with god due to the grace of a blessing exists since the old times. Besides, the large tree of Holker is still alive. Therefore, it’s definitely possible to restore it! As priest of Holker I have an exclusive skill to stimulate the regeneration. That method has been written and handed down in other scriptures as well.” (Peradas)

The handing down of a skill, eh. The priest placed a hand on a thick book which is located on top of the altar. Those are the scriptures?

“Why don’t you try to restore it by yourself in that case?” (Shuuya)

When the priest hears my remark, his expression immediately changes because of his stiffened attitude and a shadow shows on his face.

“... That is, certainly. By all rights it’s wrong if I don’t move in order to restore it by taking the initiative. However there are two materials indispensable for that restoration. The first is in a “mountainous city located at a lake” of a distant foreign country in the north which you reach after crossing the desert and the Mahaheim Mountain Range. The second is in the “Forest of Sadeyula” which is deemed to be located within the territory of the 【Ancient Befaritz Empire】 in the northeast after likewise crossing the Mahaheim Mountain Range.” (Peradas)

Those are exceedingly far away, I think...

“That’s far...” (Shuuya)

“Yes, it’s too far. I have the position of a priest, but you won’t find too many of my race in this city. In addition, although it is a very important matter, I won’t be able to protect the large tree of Holker, which guarded this one’s father and mother, from the “evil people” once I end up leaving this place. If I don’t strengthen the barrier by devoting my life, it might end up withering away for real... And not just that, it’s a situation where I don’t know of when the feudal lord of this place will begin the felling of the large tree... Therefore, I can’t separate from 【Holkerbaum】...” (Peradas)

I wonder who those “evil people” are.

Well, it’s fine for now, huh?

The priest sent a request to the adventurer’s guild since he can’t leave.

“Is that how it is? That’s why you made a request at the adventurer’s guild.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It’s as you say. However, the present state is that there’s no one has accepted that request even though it has been handed in for a long time due to its difficulty.” (Peradas)

No one accepted it, huh...?

Two materials are necessary and on top of that those are at distant places.

And yet I don’t know whether there might be some truth to it.

Though I believe it depends on the reward, but...

“What is the completion bonus when handing it in at the guild?” (Shuuya)

The priest watches me with a look that expects something from me.

“The rewards are “Holker’s Holy Flower” and a “Splinters of Holker’s Large Tree.”” (Peradas)

Ummm, only those? That’s why no one has accepted this.
Well, let’s ask just to hear it.

“... What kind of things are these?” (Shuuya)

“According to the scriptures, a special flower will bloom at the time when it is restored from being dead wood.” (Peradas)

“A special flower?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. The petals, which bloomed in the beginning, are special petals which were called “Holker’s Holy Flower.” They seem to be white, glittering, thin and transparent petals. If you mix new buds with those petals, though their numbers are few, you will be able to create an overcompensating medicine which is effective against all kinds of sicknesses and heals all kinds of injuries.” (Peradas)

Effective against all kinds of sicknesses, huh... it would be amazing if it was true though.

“The splinters of Holker’s large tree are?” (Shuuya)

“It is said that those are splinters which would fall at the time of its restoration from being dead wood, but the power of Sadeyula and Gaia dwell in those splinters and one will become able to use the power of Holker. Meaning, it’s written that it’s a holy charm.” (Peradas)

“That’s it? There’s no money?” (Shuuya)

“Nya nya?” (Rollo)

While Rollo was riding on my shoulder, she purred towards the priest in order to match with me.

“Yes. The donations are too little. There’s no money... if anything, there’s this temple, the title deed of this mansion and my shabby body, I guess...? Is that alright with that, I wonder?” (Peradas)

“Huh? You will sell the house? The priest’s body!? Is that fine?” (Shuuya)

Or rather, you are a woman!?

Is what I wanted to blurt out but I held back.

“Yes. I name myself a priest, but I’m a single woman as believer of the Holker Temple. If I can experience the restoration of the large tree, it will be fine.”
(Peradas)

You will sell your body for the sake of your faith?

That might be devout, but... I can’t say anything.

“... However, what will you do if that large tree is felled while I search for the materials after having accepted the request?” (Shuuya)

“Thus I have asked the feudal lord of Holkerbaum time and time again. I will go to petition, once again, tomorrow as well.” (Peradas)

Time and time again, huh?

Once I listen to the reason, it doesn’t look like the feudal lord will that simply agree to it either.

“Even I know that the other adventurers won’t accept this request with such an unprovable story. For example, even if they brought in the request’s materials, it will be meaningless if the large tree has been felled.”

“Eeh? That’s certainly correct...”

At that point the priestess bows her head.

At last she ended up starting to prostrating herself on the ground using both hands.

“Shuuya-san, no, Shuuya-sama, please, I request it of you somehow or other. Having listened to the matter of the large tree up to this point, Shuuya-sama, you are the first of the adventurers to have done that. It might also be in line with your wish of Light Sake Drop from just now. Please, accept this request. And, I will go to feudal lord-sama’s place tomorrow to petition, but... can’t I ask you to accompany me just once? I’d like to request you to persuade him, if possible... to ask for the suspension of the large tree’s felling.” (Peradas)

She is terribly desperate.

It's that precious to her, huh?

Persuade the feudal lord -> gather the materials at great pains -> talk with god after having restored the large tree -> get a hint for Light Sake Drops or the Orb of Wisdom -> get a house and an old lady space alien as wife?

I tried to forecast it simply. However, the clue to Light Sake Drops and the Orb of Wisdom seem to be only these at the current location...

Shall I try to attempt accepting this request by taking the house and the priestess as space alien wife which is a joke at the present?

"... That's right, isn't it? Got it. Let me accept the request. I will go to take it at the guild. Don't you have any confidence about whether the persuasion of the feudal lord will go smoothly? Also, please stop with the "-sama."" (Shuuya)

"Ooooh, thank you. Yes, then, Shuuya-san, I will do my best at persuading the feudal lord." (Peradas)

Was she happy to such large extent? All of a sudden she is high-tension.

"Yes, Peradas-san. Although there are materials necessary for its restoration, please tell me a bit more details about those." (Shuuya)

"Y-Yes. Then it's also fine to stop attaching "-san" to my name. My name is Marin Peradas. Please freely address me with priestess or Marin without attaching any honorific titles." (Marin)

"Got it, then priestess." (Shuuya)

The priestess displayed a delightful smile that lifted up her cheeks as if quilting was processed.

This smile, I wonder if it's fine for me to say that it has a strange charm...?

"Yes. Then I shall explain about the materials. The first one is located at the huge "Akreshys Lake" which is at the foot of the "Fortuna Mountain" in the western area of the 【Religious State Hesrifat】 which is the destination after you crossed the 【Great Goldigs Desert】 and the Mahaheim Mountain Range. I need the "Akreshys Spring Water" which overflows from the idol which deities "Water God Akreshys" somewhere around there." (Marin)

Fortuna Mountain, ah, it's the area where Rubia was. A region with a religious state, huh...?

“The second seems to be in an area called 【Forest of Sadeyula】 in the large woodlands of 【Ancient Befaritz Empire】 which is right east of 【Holy Kingdom Ahkamunerys】 that is east of 【Religious State Hesrifat】. I have been told that the “Giant Tree of Sadeyula” is located there, and one of its leaves, “Sadeyula’s leaf” is necessary from that giant tree. However, it appears to currently be a harsh place with scars from past wars and is called “haunt of wicked men.” It’s in the far distant northeast once you pass Mahaheim Mountain Range from here.” (Marin)

Spring water flowing out from the idol of the water god Akreshys and Sadeyula’s leaf...

After crossing the mountain range, I head due east from northwest? For a normal adventurer this is severe. It’s an excessively long trip. However, I have the gate. I should be able to gather these with quite the speed. I’m slightly scared to pass the sphere of influence of a religious state though...

“... These two will become the materials.” (Marin)

“Understood. I will remember it. Well then, tomorrow is the persuasion of the feudal lord.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I look forward to working with you. I shall wait for you tomorrow morning.” (Marin)

“Yea. Well, then till tomorrow.” (Shuuya)

Saying that I go outside the temple’s mansion.
She was a peculiar priestess.

Next is, for the time being, I will accept the request... an search for an inn, huh?
Mounting Popobumu, I head towards the guild.
Once I return to the guild, I look for the priestess’ request on the board.
I found it immediately.

Request Content:

B-Rank – Collection of “Spring Water of Akreshys” and Sadeyula’s Leaf.”

Subjugation Target: none

Application Period: indefinite

Search Area: Outskirts of Fortuna Mountain, large forest of a haunt of wicked men.

Reward: Holy Petal of Holker, Splinters of Holker's Large Tree

Subjugation Proof: none

Key Points: It's necessary to be cautious of the "Hell's Chasm" which has now become a nest of demons in the ruins of a place which was the imperial capital of 【Ancient Befaritz Empire】. A-ranks are encouraged, but since it's basically an exploration, the degree of difficulty has been set to B-rank.

Note: You have to consult the particulars.

Naturally, there is no sign that anyone touched the wood tag which had the marks of this request written down.

Well, as it's ambiguous whether the rewards really exist or not, it's only reasonable.

Holding the wooden tag which no one has tried to touch, I carry it over to a receptionist.

The request was immediately accepted.

It's an opportunity. Shall I ask the receptionist about an inn?

"Sorry, are there any recommended inns or such?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, there are several. There is a high.class inn with the name "Hotel Alando" situated in the Arom Shopping District. My recommended inns are "Hotel Kireara," which is close to the Lord's mansion located in the northern developing block and "Wind-Sounding Pavillon" which is close to the western gate."

"Thank you. I will remember those." (Shuuya)

I was told about three inns by the receptionist. Shall I head to the hotel-named inn, the high-class inn in the shopping district?

Leaving the guild, I went towards the shopping district. Exiting the plaza with the large, withered tree, I return to the northern street and advance on it.

Oh, that place, eh? I discover a signboard which had Alando written on it.

Reserved by a square, there was a depression which drew a path from the main street just in front of that hotel.

Steering Popobumu, I step inside the plot of the hotel.

Chapter 76 – Hotel Alando ✖

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High-class inn, Hotel Alando.

Befitting of its name as a high-class inn, the stable was also awfully pompous. Everything from the railing at the signboard, which had the symbol of a horse drawn on it, to the surrounding fences for the horses is uniformly hued in a beige colour.

After entrusting Popobumu to the stable, I walk on a stone-paved path which leads to the front door.

This place is the foyer?

It's an entrance with a door that has glass windows which are divided by a cross.

The knob was made with a stylish silver pearl-of-mother inlay at the hinge. I enter the high-class inn by pushing against both glass doors possessing a hinge.

Rollo climbs onto my shoulder and crawls into my hood.

There's a hall with a spacious and deep interior. The reception is located at the centre.

The floor is covered in gorgeous, white, high-class stones.

It looks like there are nobles are residing here, but there are even guests that

might be considered to be adventurers visible.

Once I surveyed the situation in the vicinity by restlessly looking around at the entrance, a hotel-keeper, who wore a hat came to address me.

“Dear guest, welcome. Please proceed to the centre.”

I’m greeted with a smile.

After maintaining an angle of lowering his head to bow, he raises his face.

What polite conduct.

This place reminds me somewhat of Japan.

Ah, that reminds me, I wonder whether it’s alright to bring a pet?

For the time being I will try to confirm that at the reception.

I nodded to the inn-keeper while wearing an awkward smile and headed to the reception in the centre.

“Welcome, dear guest.”

“I want to stay for a while, but is it possible to keep a familiar, or rather a pet at this place?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, that’s fine. How big is that pet?”

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Making an appearance on my shoulder from within the hood, it’s Rollo.

“Around this big.” (Shuuya)

The receptionist nodded while showing a smile of acceptance after seeing the black cat.

“I see... it will be fine if you can do us the favour of treating the furniture carefully. Well then, one night with meals costs 8 silver coins. 10 silver coins with the extra option.”

It was okay. The price is after all that of a high-class inn.

If it’s 30 days... that will be 240 silver coins, huh?

There is something that seems to be a calender next to the acceptance fee.

Today is the 59th day of spring.

There are 31 days remaining until the season of summer, ... 248 silver coins.

Let’s pay for the period of 31 days until summer plus 10 days on top, adding up

to 41 days.

Lastly, what's the extra option, I wonder.

“What's this extra option?” (Shuuya)

“The meals will be high-class cuisine and a “hostess” will attend to you. There's also a system of nominating one, but that will be available for you starting with the next time.”

A hostess! I want to try that out.

“Well then, I'd like to stay for 41 days with the extra option added for just the first day.” (Shuuya)

“It's an extended period of time. In that case the extra option during that time will be free of charge. Please utilize the dining hall on the second floor freely. Then, please wait for a little moment as I will carry out the formalities.”

Is that fine? For it to be free of charge?

Is it because the receptionist is calculating? They have withdrawn to the back.

Calculating with 8 silver coins per day... it costs 328 silver coins.

I placed three silver plates, which I retrieved from within my item box, on top of the reception table in advance.

Next I place plenty of silver coins, which exceeded 200 coins, there with a clinking sound.

Did they finish the calculation? The receptionist came back.

He stayed calm even after seeing my item box.

“The costs will be 328 silver coins.”

“... It's just right with this, I think?” (Shuuya)

“... I see. You are quick at calculating...”

The male receptionist moves his eyebrows slightly in surprise and looks at me. He calculated by using several connected metal rods or a calculation tool with his utmost effort.

“... Certainly. Well then, please sign your name over here.”

The names of the guests were written in a row in the registry on the reception desk.

I write my real name instead of an alias in the entry field.

“I’m done.” (Shuuya)

“Do you have any wishes regarding your room?”

“On the first floor.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Then, at the right end of the first floor, the Sword Room No. 10 is empty. Is that alright with you?”

“That place is fine.” (Shuuya)

“Understood. Here’s the key.”

I was given the key.

“Then, please wait a moment as you will be guided by the clerk in charge.”

I waited for a little while in front of the reception.

My rented room is the Sword Room No. 10.

That’s easy to understand as there’s an information board installed on top of the reception desk.

“Sword room”, “Shield room” and such were drawn on it with arrows attached.

I believe I will know the way even without a guiding clerk, but... while I was pondering about such stuff, the guiding clerk approached.

“Dear guest, I shall lead the way.”

The guiding clerk starts to walk after giving a light bow.

Besides the reception in the hall, on the right hand side close to the front door, there was the dining hall’s large entrance which was situated between a pair of small ox statues made out of brass.

Advancing towards the right after leaving the reception, the guiding clerk proceeds into the inner part of the hall.

The stairway leading to the second floor of the inn was on the inner left of the reception.

... The toilet is here?

“N-Nya.” (Rollo)

Then Rollo appears from within the hood which is at my head’s back and purrs.

“Rollo, you want to pee? Currently we are heading to our room though.”
(Shuuya)

Rollo didn't want to pee but to stare at the back of the hotel-keeper, who is leading us, by placing her head on my shoulder after yawning.
Ah, does the pattern like a long string on the back of the hotel-keeper catch her eyes?

However, the way is really easy to understand because the guiding board with arrows, which was also at the reception, is installed on the ceiling and the side of the walls.

As if natural, the guiding clerk walked without looking at the guiding boards.
We turn at a corner of the hall's inner right and follow the corridor.

The corridor has a big width, too. The laid-out stones are illuminated by light and have changed into a grey tone.

The No. 10 room is at the end.

Obvious signs of the room numbers are visible in the corridor.

Found it. That place, huh?

We have arrived at the last room.

Using the key, the guiding clerk opened the door of the No. 10 room.

“Here we go, please enter.”

“Yes.” (Shuuya)

“Dear guest, once you place your laundry in this container, it will be washed by the person in charge every morning. Please tell us if you have any other requests.”

There is certainly a wooden box in front of the room.
It seems to be for laundry. How convenient.

“Nothing in particular.” (Shuuya)

The guiding clerk bows at that moment, turns around and returns to the corridor.

It appears that something like a tip isn't necessary.

Immediately I enter room No. 10.

It's spacious. The size of this side of the room is at least 10 tatami mats, I guess?
A huge light brown round table and chairs are in the middle where beautiful,

rouge floorboards are laid out.

A plate filled with plenty of fruits stood on top of that table and a luxurious water jug, albeit simple, was placed on a round plate tile.

Paintings of Holkerbaum's scenery are lining up on the walls.

I head into the inner part of the room while touching the huge, round table.

The room located inside is spacious as well. The tidy windows of the room have curtains made out of extravagant fabric.

There were three beds, or rather, western-styled beds.

As expected, they don't have the gorgeousness of having canopies attached to them.

Three small side tables, which had jars of water on them and turned-off lamps placed on top, are lining up vertically to the beds.

It's like day and night in comparison to the inn at Hekatrail where I stayed at.

"Nnnh, nya~." (Rollo)

Rollo immediately dives into a soft-looking bed.

She didn't bounce up and down like usual.

The springs of this bed are amazing? It looks like the impact gets absorbed.

I wanted to dive into the soft-looking bed as well, but first I lower my rucksack, remove my breast belt and take off the overcoat.

Since there were several mannequins for decorating with clothes, I hang the breast belt and overcoat there.

Removing the greaves on the feet and Danbara Kyuss around the waist, pulling out my fingers from the gloves and taking off the arm guard Liabreath which had a purple dragon on the left arm, I carefully place those on the floorboards. Sitting down on the bed in my lightened state, I savoured the soft sensation with my butt.

It's a fluffy bed which possesses a sensation of a sudden *munyuu*.

You can't call it a waterbed, but it possesses a nice feeling of being gentle.

Without any particular meaning, I play by rolling around on the bed.

It doesn't matter that I'm bumping into Rollo.

At the time when I was playing and rolling around, something white frilly entered my inverted field of vision.

The curtains?

Standing up at the side of the bed's edge, I open the white, frilly curtains.

Since there was a wooden window installed, the door can be opened fully by sliding it open to the side.

Hyu~, there's a large veranda?

It's a veranda made out of deep red planks.

There's even a proper drain hole for water on the veranda's floor.

Sideways there was a large, light brown bucket. A large bucket with a solid hoop attached.

As it's a large bucket for bathing, it's apparently possible to swim in it.

However, the outside scenery is lacking.

You can only see a bit of the rear garden.

Moreover, the laundry is blocking the view...

My eyes met with the female employee who wore a platok* on her head while drying the laundry. (T/N: Traditional headgear worn by Russian women independent of seasons, supposedly)

The girl shows a pleasant smile.

I returned to the room after smiling back at her.

As this place is on the first floor, it can't be helped.

Well then, shall I clean and polish the ancient dragon armour?

It's still quite clean, but... I pick up the purple ancient dragon armour while sitting in a corner of the bed, wipe it carefully and line up the armour pieces on the floor after having polished them in order.

"With this, all of them are done", stretching my spinal muscles on the bed, I rest while lying spread eagle.

What to do... until eating time. I will enter the bath after staying here for a bit longer?

Before that.

"[Open]." (Shuuya) (T/N: English word in the raw here, so put it in brackets)

I fiddle with the item box.

I operate the bracelet type item box to access the computer with a *Pippoopaa*.

I select the soap and leather cloth I bought in 【Hekatrail】 and take them out.

On the occasion, I get the ancient dragon knife for shaving as well.

After I filled the large bucket by pouring hot water into it with life magic, I take off all my clothes.

Swinging my hips without any meaning, my balls are dangling.

It felt like Rollo watched me with strange eyes, but without minding it, I slowly submerge myself in the hot water starting with the feet.

Rollo came next to me as well.

While putting her forepaw on top of the bucket, she delivers a paw punch at the water's surface like usual.

“Rollo, come in without playing around.” (Shuuya)

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

After purring once, she jumps into the swaying water surface of the large bucket.

A rebound of water spraying splashes around and I end up having my face covered by water.

— Puha, once again she leapt in all of a sudden.

“That's sudden.” (Shuuya)

Rollo ignores me... dives underwater and swims unhindered while fully enjoying the size of the large bucket.

Before realizing it myself, I hate her becoming skilled at swimming.

Her small face, which is properly blocking her ears, is still cute though.

While watching the appearance of the swimming Rollo, I completely submerge in the water.

— Fuu.

Suddenly I thought of a question; Water that has been created with this life magic, is that pure water?

Since I wasn't overly aware of it until now, I try drinking while tasting it.

Opening my mouth, water tries to pour in.

Mmh~ it has no taste. Does the taste change depending on the image?

There's no change. If it becomes sweet with the taste of sugar or such, the path of a major sugar dealer would open up here. But, well, it satisfies my dry throat.

... Rather than such stuff, tomorrow is the meeting with the feudal lord.

I don't even know the name of the feudal lord. Well, it seems like a hostess will come at the time of eating. Won't it be fine if I ask about the name of the feudal lord at that time?

Let's check my abilities.

[Status].

Name: Shuuya Kagari
Age: 22
Title: Transcendental One
Race: Light Demon Lucival
Combat Occupation: Magic Spear Darkness Warrior – Chain User

Strength: 20.0 -> 20.1
Agility: 20.8
Stamina: 19.1
Mana: 24.3 -> 24.4
Dexterity: 19.2
Mind: 24.6 -> 24.7
Luck: 11.2

Current Status: Calm

Skill Status

Obtained Skills: <Throwing>, <Demonic Brain Speed>, <Hide>, <Night Vision>, <Banquet of Blood Chains>, <Thrust>, <Meditation>, <Demonic Beast Rider>, <Life Magic>, <Guidance Sorcery>, <Magic Combat Style>, <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, <Sage art>, <Summoning>, <Ancient Magic>, <Crest Magic>, <Darkness Drill>, <Darkness Drill – Magic Spear Break>, <Language Magic>

Permanent Skills: <Power of True Ancestor>, <Natural Gift of Magic>, <Torrent of Light Darkness>, <Drain Soul>, <Immortality>, <Trickster Adaptation>, <Blood Mana>, <Suzerain of Household>, <Nimble Magic Mind of Super-Brain>, <Understanding of Magic Combat Style>, <Understanding of Guidance Magic>, <Spear Sparring>, <Chain Sense Guidance>, <Magic Crest Arts>

Extra Skills: <Instant Translation>, <Granted Seal of Light>, <Chain Factor>, <Magic Cerebral Spine Revolution>

They grew slightly, I guess?
Erasing the status screen while getting up, I wash my body with the soap.
I rubbed my crotch with my hand briskly and cleaned away the dirt between my nails.
My beard has grown slightly long, but well, it is as it is, I judge.
I'm trying to pursue dandyism.
I wash Rollo, too.

I rinsed her deep black hair off in order for it to be neat.

If the hair on a cat's body gets wet, one can clearly see its muscles.

Although being slender, her muscles were developed.

Wiping that black hair with a new leather cloth, we move from the large bucket to the veranda together.

Uh-oh... the water absorption is rapid. The expensive leather has a strange water permeability.

The shop clerk, who had the atmosphere of a Miss, said that this leather cloth is the skin of a mermaid or such.

For this to be a freebie, that shop is quite a good one.

Having finished wiping my body while admiring the leather cloth, I dive into the bed once again.

While I indulged in the soft sensation by lying down, Rollo waited together with me.

Shall I go to the dining hall soon as I'm getting hungry?

Getting up from the bed, I equip my armour.

I put on the overcoat and head to the dining hall as an adventurer.

Rollo got on my shoulder.

It's a meal in a high-class inn. I might be unable to enter if I don't wear a full dress...

Is what I questioned myself, but it seems to be alright.

Once I enter the dining hall by passing in-between the small ox statues, a hotel-keeper addresses me.

"Dear guest, I shall lead you to your reserved place. This way, please."

I apparently have a reserved seat.

Is it a service belonging to the extra option?

I'm looking forward to see what kind of service it will be... my expectations are big.

While following the guiding hotel-keeper, I study the dinner hall's interior.

I guess this place is the dining hall of a high-class inn after all.

Clean, black and white tiles, like in an Othello game, are laid out on the floor and pure, olive brown desks and chairs are lined up. Matching those, the quality of the customers extends to nobles, merchants, *etc.* I caught sight of rich-looking people eating an extravagant meat dish.

There's only few people who can be considered to be adventurers.

As for the attires, there's a huge variety. There are also adventurers who haven't removed their arms.

It looks like the formality isn't strict.

The guide climbs a splendid stairway which was situated in the middle of the dining hall.

It has wooden handrails with a round shape.

While I admired the form of the handrails, we ascended to the second floor by firmly stepping on the wooden planks of the stairway which is like a spiral coil.

Trunks of large trees, which were designed as arbour and were spread out on the rouge floor of the second floor, exhibit their presence as pillars.

Do they want to create an image of a waterfall by installing bent driftwood towards the vertical destination between wall and pillars? Water vigorously streams from a depressed location in the middle to below. A small pond, which was enclosed by natural rocks, was provided ahead of the driftwood which drew an arc and carried the water.

As it's a pond, fishes are swimming in it.

You could even say that only this place had an ambience like a traditional Japanese-style garden.

The shape of the hall with its elaborate interior design is magnificent.

Rollo, who was on my shoulder, looks at the decorative trees, too. Did she want to climb them? Stretching her head suddenly towards the garden, she tried to start playing by raising one leg to show her paw.

“Rollo, if it's playing around, isn't that not allowed?” (Shuuya)

“Nnh, nya.” (Rollo)

Hearing my words, Rollo lowered her ears. However, I can understand Rollo's feeling of wanting to play.

The interior design of this place is really amazing... between the lower and upper floor, the atmosphere is different.

Eating while enjoying the view of the garden? Unexpectedly the extra option might include that.

Furthermore, it's something provided free of charge.

But, I have to confirm the good quality of the dishes and the woman with these

eyes.

“Dear guest? This way, please.”

“Aah, sorry.” (Shuuya)

The guiding clerk waited while revealing a fresh smile.

Sorry for being a country bumpkin.

I return a wide smile towards the guiding man.

Devoted to his job, the guiding clerk showed no reaction to my smile at all.

... Without change, I'm guided in silence.

The place, where I was guided to, is slightly high due to a flight of stairs, even if I'm able to enjoy an unrestricted view of the second floor's interior design. It was a gorgeous, exclusive private room that was gouged out within a reddish, light brown large tree.

A woman is sitting inside.



“Here you are. Well then, since I will call the clerk with the menu at once, please spend your time relaxing.”

The guiding clerk withdraws.

Thereupon the blonde-haired woman, who sat inside the private room, stood up and came next to me.

She is a woman wearing a long cardigan.

She wears a thin, frilly, white silk neckband.

Her cleavage is slightly visible.

“Shuuya-sama, please treat me well today. I’m called Melissa and belong to 【Belgart】.” (Melissa)

She seems to know my name, but has she received the information I wrote at the reception?

The pretty woman, who introduced herself as Melissa, bows splendidly.

When she bowed, I could see her barrettes and hair needles.

The length of her hair is average but it might be a lot longer actually.

A slightly nice scent wafted over.

“... The same here, please take care of me.” (Shuuya)

I took out both arms by opening the overcoat to the left and right and bowed lightly.

However, I wonder what’s that “Belgart” is about. And she belongs to it?

“Nnh, nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo speaks up as well. *(T/N: The author mentions everytime that the cat’s on his shoulder. I think after writing it ten times, we all know, so skipping that) (E/N: That’s not the only unnecessary repetition)*

“Oh my, a neko-chan.” (Melissa)

” This is Rollodeen. Her nickname is Rollo. She is something similar to a familiar.” (Shuuya)

“Is that so? Please treat me well, Rollo-chan.” (Melissa)

“N, nya.” (Rollo)

“Well then, Shuuya-sama. Come this way.” (Melissa)

Melissa’s slender hand grasps my hand.

While having joined our hands, I was gently led into the private room.

Somehow it also felt like being invited into paradise.

The round desk, which is similar to a big, tawny stump, and the chairs are in the private room, I was invited in, and have been built so that they are connected into one.

Once I looked properly, animal designs were carved into the corners of the round desk.

And, glue-napkins, which are folded in a way so that some crest appears in their centre, are placed on top of the tableware which was spread out on the desk.

It seems there’s a high-class store around here.

Soft cushions are put on the chairs. The place, where I sat down, was exactly structured so that I could clearly see the natural garden spreading on the second floor.

Rollo jumps from my shoulder on the desk.

Once she places her feet on top of a cushion after walking to a chair on the opposite side, she begins to circle round on top of the cushion.

It appears that while curling up, Rollo is going to sleep until the food arrives.

Without sitting down face to face, Melissa sits next to me. Once again — she has a nice scent.

I watched the face of her who allured me with her scent. She has thin, blonde eyebrows that are slanted upwards.

Clear blue pupils and a small nose bridge.

Is it the effect of make-up on her cheeks? They had a slightly reddish tinge.

Her upper lip is slightly bigger than her lower lip... I want to stick to them. Her chin as well as her small nape are seductive.

Her breasts are slightly visible through her reddish brown outer garment.

She seems to be wearing a sleeveless dress below.

What a beautiful necklace...

Mmh? Something that seems to be an injury could be seen at the lower right of her collarbone.

“Fufu, Shuuya-sama? Having my face and body examined this thoroughly is embarrassing.” (Melissa)

Once she noticed my perverted gaze, she concealed her breasts with the frill of her neckband.

That's unpleasant for her, isn't it? Let's apologize.

"... Sorry. Since you are beautiful, Melissa-san, I just ((couldn't resist))."
(Shuuya)

"Oh my, you are flattering me. And, please cease with the "-san." There's no problem to address me without honorifics." (Melissa)

While Melissa hides her mouth with a hand, she tilts her head somewhat and produces a smile.

I can talk to her freely? Well, then I will kindly accept her offer.

"Got it. Well, then leave the "-sama" away in my case as well. However, calling you beautiful is no flattery. Well, I think you have gotten used to hearing such lines though..." (Shuuya)

"True. I will obediently accept your compliment. I feel an unique manliness from you, too, Shuuya-san. It looks like the muscles around your right hand and arm are tempered as well. Your overcoat is tinged purple and beautiful. I peeked at your armour, too, but it's purple." (Melissa)

While saying that, she touches the skin of my right hand, which exposes the bare skin, and traces it with a finger.

— Kuu, She's a technician? She touches my body in a casual manner.

"Haha, I give up —" (Shuuya)

"Dear guest, here's the menu and a drink."

Just when the mood improved after ogling her, a hindrance called waiter entered while bringing the menu and drinks.

A goblet is placed on the desk.

It's a wooden goblet with a design of a dragon imprinted.

A colourless liquid and some ice was inside. It seems to be cold.

Once I grab it, only the part with the dragon design has a chilly reaction.

When I look at it with my magic appraisal eyes, only this part has traces of mana.

Going by the glass, it's a magic tool, this shop isn't half bad... while admiring it, I

place the goblet to my lips and drink the liquid inside it.

Wow, are you for real? It has a sour nature though it isn't sweet.

By no means... being able to drink something carbonated, moreover, it easily courses through the throat since it's chilled. The refreshing, herb-like aroma is great, too.

And then, I have him show me the menu.

Noticeable are the Harunga meat dishes. There's plenty of them.

However, can I occasionally request something else?

Reeme's Roast originating from Hauzando.

Kajizook Fruit Wine Stew.

Real Lantaayu and Pesoto soup.

Cold ale and beer.

I ordered these four. One of them is for Rollo.

"I take Helzeyka Roast, Quaritreme Bean Stew and one cold ale." (Melissa)

She ordered such dishes.

The waiter memorized all of the dishes ordered by me and Melissa without having to write it down.

"Certainly. Please wait for a short time. I will bring the appetizer soup afterwards."

Once he answered swiftly with such feeling, he bowed and took away the menu.

His movements are carried out naturally, with no gaps.

"Going by your appearance, you are an adventurer, aren't you, Shuuya-san?" (Melissa)

When I was admiring the stylish manner of the waiter doing his job, Melissa asked me that.

Chapter 77 – Thieves Guild 【Belgart】

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“That’s right. By the way, though you previously mentioned being affiliated to 【Belgart】, what’s that about?” (Shuuya)

I felt like Melissa’s blue eyes shone with a momentary light due to my words. Lifting the corners of her mouth slowly, she moves her lips while revealing her unique smile.

“... 【Belgart】 is the name of a thieves guild. It’s the organization I belong to. I’m still a member at the lower end though.” (Melissa)

Thieves guild? That’s also different from a dark guild, I guess. Other than such stuff, “courtesan” is that kind of trap*? (T/N: カラクリ (karakuri) is a “scheme/plot/trap/trick to win over allies” and it also describes mechanical dolls which move by strings)

I have a bit of a misunderstanding.

“If you speak of a thieves guild... what kind of guild is it?” (Shuuya)

Once Melissa heard my words, her thin eyebrows moved with a twitch and for an instant her beautiful face stiffened.

“Is it maybe the “first time” for you to stay in such an inn, Shuuya-san?” (Melissa)

Uh, that's certainly true.
But the part she highlighted feels as if she's making fun of me.
Well, there's no point in lying.
It's my first time. Let's go with that.

"... It's just as you say. Until now it has been only cheap inns. As a matter of fact it's a virgin's first high-class lodging." (Shuuya)

"I haven't put such sarcasm into the meaning of first time, but it's your first time after all, huh? Something like a guest, who uses this inn, not knowing about thieves guilds and 【Belgart】 is usually impossible." (Melissa)

Impossible?

"So, what's a thieves guild?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, although the finer work details change from town to town, most of those are spy contracts with clients. In case of a high-ranking guest, there will be various accommodations so that our side receives the nomination. ... In summary, it's basically a job of mainly trading, protecting, stealing and processing various information and spreading that information into society on purpose. There is a connection with governmental officials of the declaration field. Furthermore there is, spying, warring, power reconnaissance... I can't tell you beyond that. By the way, 【Belgart】 is the largest thieves guild here in 【Holkerbaum】." (Melissa)

Hee, they cover a lot of ground.
An assembly of information dealers? If you phrase it in modern terms, the media.
There's probably an implication of them being newspaper-like for nobles and merchants who use them here.
Even though it would be fine if they changed their name to information guild or such and didn't use the naming of thieves...

"... Got it. Does 【Belgart】 have influence in other cities as well?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. Although on a small scale, they are in each city of the 【Oseberia Kingdom】." (Melissa)

Even in other cities, eh?

... If I think about it now, Cherry, who was in the small bar in Hekatrail, might have been at the lower end of a thieves guild as well.

Since she was associate with Quiche, she gave me advice by teaching various information to me. She told me to not go to the store of a dark guild.

Though saying that, it's probable that she is related to a dark guild as well...

“... Any connections to dark guilds?” (Shuuya)

I ask bluntly.

Due to that question, Melissa immediately switched her expression from being composed to her business expression with a sharp look.

“There are.” (Melissa)

She won't give any names, will she?

“How many dark guilds exist in this city?” (Shuuya)

“Five.” (Melissa)

What I encountered was a quarrel between 【Owl's Fangs】 and 【Scales of Gaia】.

There are three more, huh?

That not what you said before, but let's try asking my questions naively.

“Understood. I'm altering my question all of a sudden, but are thieves guilds actually “robbers” as the name suggests?” (Shuuya)

“**They don't do it.** In a remote past it was apparently widespread. But, if they did such things nowadays, they wouldn't obtain any information. However, although they won't go as far as robbery, there seems to be parts where intelligence is procured in a forceful manner that resembles robbery. But, I don't do such physical labour, or rather I can't do it.” (Melissa)

I see, was my way of talking a bit too blunt?

I'm able to feel a vague feeling of tension from Melissa's way of talking.

Compared to putting your life on the line, it's a different kind of tension, or rather...

“... Really? Got it. Sorry for asking you about boorish stuff. Melissa, I'm not familiar with such things. It might have been a bit too abrupt.” (Shuuya)

“No, not at all. It’s my job, thus please don’t mind it. I will explain it in the scope I can talk about it.” (Melissa)

As if interfering, the appetizer soup was brought in at that point. The waiter puts spoons and plates on the table. Thinly red-tinged beans and red vegetables similar to tomatoes were inside the plate. Scooping up the red liquid with the spoon and carrying it to my mouth, I try drinking it. It has an average temperature. It’s a bit cold. A soup that’s not hot. The saltiness and sourness of citric acid like shredded dried plum gives the soup a smooth texture and increases the appetite. A faint aroma similar to Japanese apricot gently stimulates the nostrils. It’s yummy and gives a refreshing feeling. Although I’m bothered by the Japanese apricot, it appears as if beans or soya beans exist. That means it’s possible to make tofu or such. The beginning of a record of different world tofu war is close, eh...? I’m sipping the soup while thinking about such stupid things.

“... Shuuya-san, even if you don’t sip that much at once, you can get a second serving.” (Melissa)

Melissa cautioned me with a smile.

“Oh, is that so? However, the deliciousness of this soup is...” (Shuuya)

I gulp it repeatedly down quickly.

“Fufufu, certainly, it’s tasty. Is the faintly remaining after-taste the fragrance of the **Sume Fruit**, I wonder?” (Melissa)

Ohh, the ingredient that brought about this flavour isn’t Japanese apricot but a fruit with the name Sume Fruit?

“Sume?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It apparently can be harvested in an **archipelago** located in the east and divided by the sea of **【Zamalia Kingdom】**. Although it happened in the old days more than 100 years ago, a certain female adventurer discovered this fruit and

officially announced that it can be used as food. She apparently taught the art of cooking some to various places. And this taste conquered the cooking world of South Mahaheim for a period of time. Circulating from 【Zamalia Kingdom】 to the south of 【Oseberia Kingdom】, it has spread to every city nowadays.”
(Melissa)

Such ingredients are used for the appetizer soup?

“Whoa, you are amazingly well-informed. As one would expect from a thieves guild?” (Shuuya)

“Fufu, if it’s such things, I can offer you a lot* of teaching.” (Melissa) (T/N: ippai)

Melissa has an expression filled with pride.

“Haha, that’s true. What I would like you to teach me is **a lot.**” (Shuuya)

“About what?” (Melissa)

Going by the flow of the conversation, teach me about “boobs.” (T/N: oppai)
I tried to say such weak, too lame old man pun, but I restrained myself.

“... For example, are there many beautiful women like you, Melissa, members of thieves guilds? Are there no men?” (Shuuya)

I say while staring into Melissa’s blue eyes.

“Like me... you ask? I don’t know, but there are many beautiful courtesans of thieves guilds which make use of being attached to high-class inns. There are also men. There are situations where a business man attends them if the guest is a woman.” (Melissa)

It feels like it will be an ikemen host in the case of a man?
It’s an exchange of information, however it seems there are various troubles of men and women...

“I see. Understood. The rest is, ah right... Melissa, why are you working for a thieves guild?” (Shuuya)

“For money and a debt of gratitude.” (Melissa)

Money and debt of gratitude, she says. Well, is a collusion fine in those circumstances?

I wonder, shall I probe for her real intentions a bit?

“You said it’s a trade of information, but can you sell my information for a lot of money?” (Shuuya)

“... I wonder about that? Shuuya-san, you were never noticed much. I have obtained information at the level of the adventurer’s guild, but...” (Melissa)

She looks at my face in order to investigate my situation.

“Have you memorized all of the many adventurers?” (Shuuya)

“No, even for me all of them is impossible. However, the number of high-ranking adventurers, who are in this city, is low. All key classes are busy with the hunt for the large Arom Dragonflies of Demonic Steel.” (Melissa)

“I see. Since I’m not a high-ranking adventurer, it’s unlikely for my information to be expensive.” (Shuuya)

“... That can’t be said easily. It’s impossible to reply in regards to “quality.”” (Melissa)

High rank sells expensively, but that can’t be said unconditionally for lower ranks as well, eh?

Well, I don’t know about things like the rules of thieves guilds, however it mainly depends on who buys it and whether interest appears.

“Who would buy the information of an adventurer for example?” (Shuuya)

“Other adventurers, adventurer clans, a country’s institutions, nobles, all kinds of companies, dark guilds and such.” (Melissa)

Mmh~, adventurers will buy my information?

No, it’s probably better to assess it as Melissa starting to sell my personal information as “seed.”

As for me, I don’t want it to be sold too much.

Well, if it’s somewhat profitable, there are ways of doing it, aren’t there?

“Don’t sell it. Though I might say so, you will still sell, I guess?” (Shuuya)

“True. The points I mentioned depend on the compensation. If you tell me that you’d like information, it will be business for me as well.” (Melissa)

Ooh, she has a confident attitude.
Her perceptive blue eyes with the thin, neat golden eyebrows have captured me.

“If I’m being told like that, I want to do something...” (Shuuya)

I also put strength into my eyes and made a cursed sword appear in my “left hand” on purpose.

“Hii—” (Melissa)

Melissa makes an expression of being completely frightened once the weapon materializes.

I looked at Melissa with my Magic Scanning Eyes.

Though she is able to sense mana, she can’t use magic combat styles.

Bringing my face close to Melissa, I make my body deliberately stick close to her while feeling her sweet sighing.

— A nice smell.

Slipping off the reddish brown tunic from the nape of her neck, I stared at her dress and then into the cleavage of her breasts with its conspicuous injury.

My vampire blood gets excited, no, it’s better to say that I as man got aroused, I guess?

“I’d like all information you possess, Melissa...” (Shuuya)

I begin to ask a question close to her ears with gentle persuasion while having an intense look.

Melissa’s eyes seemed to be wet.

But, once she bites her lips looking mortified, she awkwardly slides away towards the other side of the chair using both her hands while her face is directed at me.

Did I intimidate her a bit too much?

Thus I removed my glare.

Revealing a smile, I strongly place the cursed sword on top of the table.

“Aau—” (Melissa)

Melissa screamed in a low, surprised voice with that sound.

“— Nya?” (Rollo)

Even Rollo got up after the loud sound.
Lifting and turning her face, she looked at Melissa and me.
Just right then, the main dish gets carried in.
The cursed sword was moved to the table's edge.

“Dear customer, thank you for waiting. Here's your Reeme's Roast originating from Hauzando, Kajizook Fruit Wine Stew, Real Lantaayu and Pesoto soup, cold ale beer. And here's the Helzeyka Roast, Quaritreme Bean Stew and cold ale.”

The dishes are lined up on the table.

“Please call a waiter in case of additional requests.”

“We understood. Thank you.” (Shuuya)

The waiter withdraws.
Even while the dishes were carried in, Melissa was only looking at me with frightened eyes...

“Melissa, won't you eat?” (Shuuya)

I urge her to eat with an unconcerned expression.

“Eh, y-yes. I will...” (Melissa)

Melissa eats after pulling herself together.
That's great. We will eat as well, I guess?
Let's give this to Rollo.

It's the Kajizook Fruit Wine Stew.

The soup's colour is red. Overall it has a reddish hue, but fish having white flesh surrounded by finely cut vegetables that seems to be like colourful bell pepper and long and narrow vegetables can be considered to be the main of the dish. The red juice is melting into the white of the fish or it was tinged red somewhat.

“Rollo, I will give this fish dish to you. There's alcohol in it, but I guess it'll be okay.” (Shuuya)

If it was a normal cat, I would never give it to them, but it's alright as long as it's Rollo.

Moving to the other side of the table, I carried the Kajizook Fruit Wine Stew to in front of Rollo (Black Cat).

“Nyanya~n.” (Rollo)

Once Rollo released a delightful voice, she started to eat greedily.
Not just the white flesh of the fish but she also properly ate the vegetables.

“Fufu, Rollo-chan. You are eating while looking as if it’s delicious, aren’t you?”
(Melissa)

Seeing the appearance of a cat eating, Melissa laughed.
I wonder whether her previous unrest has already vanished?

“Aah, it might actually be quite tasty. It looks like she’s eating it with twice the
usual speed.” (Shuuya)

I start eating from the Reeme’s Roast.
Is this the leg meat? I carried it to my mouth.
It’s tender meat with a crunchy texture. Close to grilled chicken?
The salty spices do their work. A flavour that has become a habit.
Moreover, once I eat the meat by dipping it into the jelly-like, yellow-green
sauce, this was delicious as well.
A sweet waft is blowing through my throat. It matched well with the taste of
meat.
Hee, they have come up with something good.
Each time I discover a new dish, I become happy. It’s a joyful time.

“This Reeme is delicious.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It’s originating from Hauzando. It’s famous since Reeme, who were
raised in the region of Oseberia’s East with its differences in high and low
altitudes, turn into delicious meat.” (Melissa)

“Hee...” (Shuuya)

Let’s try tasting the Real Lantaayu and Pesoto soup next, too.
Its appearance is completely that of corn.
It appears that they are cultivating grain resembling maize.
Once I touch it with the spoon, it feels a bit sticky.
Scooping up the sticky liquid with the wooden spoon, I bring it to my mouth.
Its taste is similar to corn soup after all.
However, this one is delicious.

Different from expectations, it has a sensation that feels a bit rough at the beginning. But then sweetness spread on the tongue thickly.

Yummy. Yea, grains are inside as well, aren't they?

There's a feeling similar to nuts.

Heee, once you chew it, it turns into yet another flavour.

Above being twice as delicious with corn and nuts, it becomes three times as delicious.

It seems to be the seed of Pesoto of the nut family.

Usually, once you finish eating, you drink cold ale beer.

gulp gulp

It's the same goblet model from some time ago, but it's made out of porcelain.

Bluish-white porcelain that had a bear-like design engraved into it.

I drink it in one gulp with its cold contents and the taste having a refreshing flavour.

Different to before, has the carbonic acid been omitted? Was there none from the beginning? The taste had a deep flavour.

I thought that it's bitter due to putting saprophytic bacteria inside, but that's not so.

The kind of wheat might be different?

Once I looked at Melissa's meal, she was just at the point where she finished eating the roast meat which was sliced finely.

The bean dish has vanished to around a half.

"Melissa, it's delicious, isn't it? As expected, the meal here is nothing but high-level." (Shuuya)

"That's true. It's appetizing for me, too." (Melissa)

Well then, is it a suitable time? For the information business.

I attack Melissa's mind.

"By the way, Melissa, I intend to give you **information**, but... what can you tell me as **compensation**, I wonder?" (Shuuya)

"Eh?" (Melissa)

Going by Melissa's expression, she apparently understood the meaning of the words.

Or didn't she grasp it?

"A little while ago, you understood that I'm an **adventurer** implied by my appearance, didn't you? The **items** I'm wearing and my familiar **cat**. I **suddenly took out a weapon** and even as much as the **type of weapon**. It's personal **raw information** from the person himself. That will become quite the good information I believe, won't it?" (Shuuya)

It's just a sword that I made appear though.

"... Certainly, that's right. Rather than the information you can learn from the adventurer's guild, meeting with the person himself and being able to verify their face is a big plus after all. ... Sharp outlines, features of a master of martial arts, a flat face and an expression like a tree which lost half its leaves. And, it's information that comes to life through the person himself. However, is it really the first time for you to visit a **high-class inn**, Shuuya-san? To stage a comeback and make sport of me..." (Melissa)

Half the leaves lost, she says. Is it because I have no beard?
It's good if I shave it without considering dandyism and such.

"... Haha, it's really my first time." (Shuuya)

"So, although it's about the compensation, what kind of information do you want to hear about?" (Melissa)

At that point my heart of mischief gushed out once again.

"Do you have a boyfriend, Melissa?" (Shuuya)

"Haa? I don't." (Melissa)

"Hoo, even though you are a beauty. And then your three si—" (Shuuya)

"— Stop. Are you screwing around or being serious? Which is it, Shuuya-san?" (Melissa)

She doesn't allow me to finish speaking to the end.
She has a serious expression. She put it on along the conversation.
Her slender index finger is pointing at my face as if stabbing me.
Melissa-kun has narrowed her eyebrows and uses a strict look.

"... Sorry, sorry. That I like you are my true feelings, Melissa. Thus I wanted to

ask you while messing around a bit. I will ask properly from now on, okay?"
(Shuuya)

Melissa stares at me with scornful eyes after the strict look.

"So?" (Melissa)

Well then, after dropping the fooling around, unknown information...
First I have to obtain information about tomorrow's negotiation partner, don't I?

"... First, the name of the feudal lord here, his family structure, his hobbies, things he is bad with, his weaknesses, organizations he has connections with, etc." (Shuuya)

"..." (Melissa)

Looking in my eyes, did she judge it as serious information?
Melissa switches suddenly from scornful eyes to cold eyes.
She revealed a slightly relentless expression.

"Yea? I'm asking you earnestly, you know? Is the compensation insufficient? If it's money, I will pay, but..." (Shuuya)

"... No, it's satisfactory. Well then, starting from the name, it's Earl Makfol zen Rakolazei. His nickname is Earl Oddball. With his mother having died from illness and his father having passed away 2 years ago, he has no family. Given that he still hasn't married yet, he is a considerably unusual unmarried man."
(Melissa)

Earl Oddball?

"An unmarried person as an oddball?" (Shuuya)

"His hobby is gathering jewels, gold, magic tools and such. He wastes money. In addition, he gathers capable people with strong physical prowess and employs them as lower retainers. Those employed subordinates are his pride?"
(Melissa)

"How common." (Shuuya)

"Isn't it? Things he is bad with are vegetables. His weakness is having been raised while being spoiled or wasting money regardless of expenses?" (Melissa)

Something like hating vegetables, is he a little child?

“Also, his relationship with nobility is very bad because of his entanglement in political disturbances. Having few closely related children too, he has dismantled the Baron Becker household, the Baron Nightray household and the Baronet Oralias household in order to absorb them. Compared to a normal Earl, the number of lower retainers is low as well. And he participated in the coup d’état in Holkerbaum 3 years ago? Such are the rumours. There was apparently discord in the generation of the present feudal lord’s father with the previous feudal lord’s Livie household. However, it appears he has a special connection to the second prince. It seems he’s also on good terms with a part of the navy. Furthermore, it’s been whispered that a dark guild stands behind Earl Makfol. Currently that dark guild is even making **【Demonic Steel City Holkerbaum】** their own and that enhances the authenticity of that rumour.” (Melissa)

As expected of an information dealer and member of a thieves guild. Melissa smoothly narrates the information.
Earl Makfol zen Rakolazei.

Nickname, Earl Oddball, huh? His hobby is gathering strong people and boasting with them as his subordinates... besides, he hates vegetables. A stereotypical rich boy type?

Moreover, the rumours of him having connections to a dark guild keep going?

“... The name of that dark guild?” (Shuuya)

Melissa shows a strained expression due to my question.
Or rather, it’s an expression filled with fear.
And then she told the truth while being wary and checking that there’s no one in the vicinity by turning her head left and right.

“— **【Owl’s Fangs】**.” (Melissa)

【Owl’s Fangs】, huh?

“Is that **【Owl’s Fangs】** throwing its weight around here?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Far from freedom, you can say that **【Holkerbaum】** is currently under the control of this dark guild. Until **【Owl’s Fangs】** came to this city, the veteran dark guild **【Scales of Gaia】** exerted its authority in **【Holkerbaum】**. Them having their turf stolen and being driven into a corner by **【Owl’s Fangs】** is the current state

of things.” (Melissa)

I see.

“Are there any other dark guilds besides those two?” (Shuuya)

“There are 【Gloves of Stone】, 【Remains of the Moon】 and 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】.” (Melissa)

“Are those dark guilds opposing 【Owl’s Fangs】?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. 【Gloves of Stone】 has fought with 【Owl’s Fangs】 and is now in a state of being mostly annihilated. A small part of the port’s neighbourhood is assumed to be the turf of 【Remains of the Moon】. There’s always strife unfolding in regards to that turf with 【Owl’s Fangs】 and even though 【Remains of the Moon】 had its office destroyed, it seems they have rebuilt their office once again in the neighbourhood of the port after a little while. It’s strange. It might be because the headquarters of 【Remains of the Moon】 is situated in 【Pelneet】?” (Melissa)

I don’t understand even after hearing about such stuff, but there are various dark guilds.

Moreover, Melissa’s expression changes and she speaks openly while looking reluctant.

“Next, the 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 are... I don’t want to talk about them overly much, but it’s a gathering of evil adherents who believe in **Totogudjus**, the king of the ten-layered hell of the spirit world. For some reason the meetings of the evil adherents are carried out all over Holkerbaum and they are very active. Opening a meeting every night at the graveyard, they are offering a sacrifice, which had a blood mark carved in, to the god of the spirit world. It’s detestable information.” (Melissa)

Melissa’s face is scary.

She definitely hates 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】.

Her unpleasant feelings have been transmitted terribly and without holding anything back.

Thus, let’s change the topic a bit.

“Hoo, there are various of them. I heard valuable information. Thank you.”

(Shuuya)

If Melissa's information network is correct, I can imagine for the thieves guild called 【Belgart】 to have quite the scale, but...

For a thieves guild it might be standard to possess information of that kind.

"No, not at all." (Melissa)

Well, I'm grateful for getting to know the information about the feudal lord and about the dark guilds in this city.

Shall I also ask about 【Owl's Fangs】 and the situation with 【Scales of Gaia】 who have been driven into a corner?

The black-haired beauty I rescued, the name of that woman was Mia or what-its-called?

"【Scales of Gaia】 was the strongest power in this city in the past, right? Why was such guild superseded by 【Owl's Fangs】?" (Shuuya)

"It's what's called the difference in personnel, money, connections and organizational capability." (Melissa)

"Then the difference is excessive." (Shuuya)

Is 【Owl's Fangs】 a considerably large dark guild?

"Yes... 【Owl's Fangs】 is the leading power in South Mahaheim. Even their public face is a famous, big company. They are one huge maritime transportation company. Their sales route don't just include domestic routes but also extends to overseas... in reality, the amount of ships docking in this city is large as well. Their boss is said to be one of the **Eight Lights**. He has changed them completely from a small dark guild possessing a turf in only a single provincial town." (Melissa)

Eight Lights, eh? The matters I talked about with the Marquess cross my mind.

Going by this name, it's a gathering of a group of bosses or large companies.

"The difference between enterprises and smaller companies?" (Shuuya)

"Sma, ller, com, panies?" (Melissa)

Melissa reacts to the Japanese.

As if natural, she has a questioning expression.

“No, that’s something private. Please continue.” (Shuuya)

“... Yes. For example, though it’s a battle in the early stages between Gaia and Owl, in the beginning Owl will just observe and after Gaia went down, it will be an overwhelming difference.” (Melissa)

“Only observe... is it magic?” (Shuuya)

Once I return a question, Melissa explains after unintentionally revealing a smile.

“... No, that’s not it. At that time **【Owl’s Fangs】** had tied a secret agreement with **【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】**? **Curél of the Rebellious Sword**, who is a leader of **【Bloody Long Ears】**, attacked **【Scales of Gaia】** the other day.” (Melissa)

So that’s the reason.

Curél of the Rebellious Sword, going by his name, he seems to be a strong person.

“... Hoo, a powerful-sounding name.” (Shuuya)

— Bloody Long Ears, are they a group of elves!?

A long time ago I received contact from a fellow considered to be a member of the same group in **【Fortress City Hekatrail】**.

Since then I haven’t met them, but...

I don’t have the spare time to care about such kind of conflict occurring, do I?

“... Yes, as a result of him having done in the head of **【Scales of Gaia】**, **Lanzel Aftotol**, the leader **Totoka Charaway**, who was said to be the brains of the same guild, was done in as well. After that, the leaders of **【Owl’s Fangs】**, who took the position of being spectators, participated in the battle, too, and it became a large offensive. Unable to endure, **【Scales of Gaia】** collapsed. They lost their influence in **【Holkerbaum】** immediately. Nowadays the novice daughter **Mia Aftotol**, who succeeded the will of her father, is the head of **【Scales of Gaia】** and there are only the leaders **Victor Oladom** and **Deyma Izemule**.” (Melissa)

Only the novice daughter Mia and two leaders, is it?

“Around how many times per week do they fight?” (Shuuya)

“As both parties fight in the back alleys, quarrels occur every day.” (Melissa)

Every day... it is.

Are disputes taking place like the other day?

“I see. Also, I wonder how much is the difference in the ratio of war potential and the scale of the turf protected by 【Scales of Gaia】?” (Shuuya)

Melissa start to speak after showing behaviour of thinking for a bit.

“Let’s see. One way or another 【Scales of Gaia】 is in a state of protecting a small turf... but, just now the information, that **Oze of the Blue Silver** and **Jane of the Two Whips**, who are leaders of 【Owl’s Fangs】, have come to this city, got in. It’s been said that only the soldiers, who are in the surroundings of the leaders, are exceeding 100. ... In exchange to that, 【Scales of Gaia】 is in a situation where it’s unknown whether they have 30 or not, thus... even if you consider the difference in the leaders’ abilities, the ratio of war potential is approximately 8 : 2?” (Melissa)

The soldiers of 【Owl’s Fangs】, which I destroyed today, are just an extremely little part?

From now on it might also happen that we kill each other.

Shall I also try asking about information regarding 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 which I ignored more or less?

“What’s your impression and what kind of scale has the dark guild called 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】?” (Shuuya)

Melissa lowers her eyebrows.

“Even if I’m asked what impression, let’s see... in the dark society of South Mahaheim they possess war potential of the strongest class. It’s said that their leader, who is their boss, is one of the “Eight Lights.”” (Melissa)

Once again, is the “Eight Lights” an alliance organization of dark guilds’ heads?

“Their parent organization are the special forces of the ancient elves’ 【Ancient Befaritz Empire】 and they are called by the nickname survivors of 【White Whale】. That Empire has perished close to 500 ~ 800 years ago, but the

lifespan of elves is long after all.” (Melissa)

Survivors of the Ancient Befaritz Empire, is it?

That means that the members of the leadership class of Bloody Long Ears are all older than 500 years...?

“The headquarters of this 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 is said to be located in 【Violent Tower City Senapua】. Moreover, they are boasting of having the biggest influence in 【Fortress City Hekatrail】 and 【Royal Capital Gromheim】 of 【Oseberia Kingdom】.” (Melissa)

Hee, however, my stomach is already full with stories about dark guilds. (T/N: *Mine too*)

Next another matter, about Rollo... let’s pass on that, shall we?

If I told her that I’m searching for information about the Orb of Wisdom and Light Sake Drops, which are treasured divine relics, it will turn into a business. I cannot afford to easily spill the information of my important objectives. Thus, shall I ask her about **that**?

“... I see. I understand re~ally well. The last is about the **underground auction**. How can I participate there?” (Shuuya)

“... Just who are you, Shuuya-san...?” (Melissa)

Melissa faces me with cold, piercing eyes.

“As humble adventurer, I care about you, Melissa-tan...” (Shuuya)

“— Geez, it’s fine. Besides, the **-tan** at the end, what’s that? tan, it is. You can just call me normally as **Melissa**.” (Melissa)

“— So, can you please tell me?” (Shuuya)

Even though I revealed a smile of fooling around, I gave weight to my words and tried asking.

“Haa... yes, I will explain. It’s said that you need **connections** with important slave traders, huge dark guilds and large companies to participate in the **underground auction**. The capital starts with at the very least 50 platinum coins.” (Melissa)

If it’s the money, I have it.

Ah, what degree is the Luxor Company, I wonder?

The other day I've been told to come for greetings. Will that turn into a connection?

"... Does it take that much money? By the way, what degree of company is the Luxor Company?" (Shuuya)

"Luxor Company? Umm, if I remember correctly... it's a mid-scale company owning land transportation and slave companies. At the very least they aren't a large company." (Melissa)

My connections are no more than at this level...
Ah, I remembered my conversation with the dwarf Zaga.
Once the items of the ancient dragon were bought by leaders of large companies... however, he probably has already travelled to 【Pelneet】.
Impossible, eh?

"... I see. Melissa, do you have connections?" (Shuuya)

"There's no way for me to have them..." (Melissa)

Just now, for an instant, her speech became unadorned. I don't particularly mind her causal speech though.

"Connections, huh? If I request the thieves guild 【Belgart】, can you make such connections?" (Shuuya)

"... It might be possible if it's boss." (Melissa)

"It's possible? Mmh~ I actually wanted to decide after asking and just listening. I'm sorry Melissa, but I'd like to meet with your boss." (Shuuya)

Due to my words, Melissa makes a pondering face.

"For the moment it will be after I have reported, but... is that alright?" (Melissa)

"It's fine. I understand." (Shuuya)

"Acknowledged. Around tomorrow night, do you have the fee though?" (Melissa)

"It's okay. It's free of charge for me." (Shuuya)

“Huh? You are really a rich person. So, anything else?” (Melissa)

“There’s nothing else I’d like to ask.” (Shuuya)

“Really? Thank you very much for this time. Well then, I will go back.”
(Melissa)

Melissa quickly stands up and leaves from the other side of the round table.

“— That’s quick. Spending tonight together is impossible?” (Shuuya)

I challenged her with a pickup line on the way.

“It’s impossible. But, I’m happy about your feelings.” (Melissa)

Tsk, I was rejected easily.

I’m funny.

Well, it’s only natural if I do such things?

“... Got it. Please take care of me again once there’s something.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Well then.” (Melissa)

Melissa goes back with blushing cheeks.

She turned back once and looked at me, but she left after immediately turning on her heels.

At that point Rollo climbs on my lap.

“Are you comforting me for being rejected? What’s up?” (Shuuya)

“Nnn.” (Rollo)

Rollo looks at me with her round and cute red eyes and makes a small voice with her throat.

It held the impression of “Reflect on it” since she was pushing her paw against my arm.

Because she can’t actually convey feelings through her feelers, it might be different though.

However, for an instant I ended up remembering the **Monkey Performances** which were often a tourist attraction in my previous life.

Rollo curls up her body and starts sleeping on my lap.

“Haha, next you are sleeping? Are you satisfied after eating well? But.”

(Shuuya)

It's evil as she just started sleeping, but... we have to go back to our room. Grabbing the scruff of the neck of Rollo with her drowsy eyes, I put her on my shoulder against her will.

Rollo dives inside my back hood with slow motions.

Once I return to my room, I will lay down, huh...?

Chapter 78 – Earl Oddball

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We headed towards the mansion of the feudal lord by riding a carriage together with Priestess Marin Peradas.

The priestess explains.

“The feudal lord’s mansion stands in the north of Holkerbaum. It is in the stylish district, Hightown, which is located on top of a hill, and where many newly rich people live. Although the buildings aren’t large, they have been refined by the addition of gardens.” She explained while smiling.

At the moment the priestess finished her explanation, the carriage stopped with good timing.

“It looks like we have arrived. Let’s get off.” (Marin)

“Yea.” (Shuuya)

The priestess and I climbed off the carriage with its difference in elevation. Right after descending, a big gate became visible. Ram figures made out of brass, looking as if they are going to move any time soon, stand out on both sides of the gate.

Ahead of that way we could see the guards’ office.

Did they confirm us getting off the carriage? Largely-built guards come

approaching from that office.

“This place is the feudal lord’s mansion. What’s your business?”

A guard asks in a practised manner.

“I’m Peradas. We have an appointed meeting with the feudal lord.” (Marin)

Since the priestess is always coming to petition, the guard’s attitude is gentle.

“Ah~, you seem to be that priestess. Please go ahead inside.”

Even with Rollo and me next to her, we advance on the grounds after being easily allowed in with a feeling of Peradas being let through due to being well-known.

However, let alone having stylish parts, isn’t this a considerable size?

There is still 100 meters from the gate to the mansion?

All over there are flower beds spreading out on the lawn, which had been maintained on both sides of the stony path, that continues until the entranceway. Oblong garden lanterns, which cast a pale light that dots the garden sparsely, create an unique atmosphere.

The sculpture of a young lady, which is offering a prayer, was created out of one huge natural rock and was placed in the centre of the lawn on the left side.

The scattered, pale light of the garden lanterns has different shapes, but I remember that they were also installed below the hill of the Sol family in the Whirlpool Forest of Demon Fog.

Once we progressed on the stony path, I was able to grasp the details of the mansion where the Earl lives.

It’s an elegant, two-storied building with a horizontal wideness.

White stones and white birch are its main building material.

At the front there is an entranceway with a roof terrace, which was supported by two spiralling pillars, on top of it.

The priestess and me head to the inner entrance door, which is located below the terrace, after climbing a low set of stairs.

The entrance door has a greenish brown colour which is enclosed by dark brown with conspicuous curly grains.

Since it’s a craftsmanship that surrounds an emblem believed to be the Earl’s family crest, which was put up in the centre of the entrance door as decoration,

that is showing the design of a gallant woman and animals in a greenish brown tinge, the entrance door is overflowing with a feeling of high-classiness. Given that the entire building is close to the white colour of a Deutzia flower, this greenish brown and dark brown entranceway looked strangely nice. Even the door knockers have the extravagance of being golden craftsmanship. While checking the touch of a curly grain changing from greenish brown to dark brown, I push open both doors and step inside.

Although we haven't reached a hall yet, the inside is spacious. The floor was covered by stone which can be considered being natural marble. Reflecting the light from the sky, the floor's surface is sparkling. When I walked on it, I ended up feeling unusually nervous as the floor appears to be slippery.

Close to the entrance, on the left and right side, there are small rooms. Servants are cutting vegetables on top of a cooking table in the right room.

In the middle there were wide stairs which continued to the second floor. On the left and right side of the central stairway passages are apparently continuing towards the inside as well.

At that point an elderly man, who's likely a butler, appeared.

"Priestess-sama, please come this way."

Butler-san follows the passage on the left side without climbing the stairs. At its end there was a waiting room.

The priestess and me sat down on the waiting room's high-class sofa and waited.

"Well then, please wait here for a little moment."

Butler-san, who guided us here, leaves after bowing his head. It was just for a bit but Priestess Marin, sitting next to me, began to talk.

"Shuuya-san, since the petition has been delivered in advance, we should be let in right away." (Marin)

"Got it. I will wait." (Shuuya)

"Priestess-sama, please, this way."

Just as the priestess said, the butler-san returned immediately. He resumes guiding us. After being led through a hallway and going through

several doors, an imposing, great door was reflected in our line of sight. Is the room behind that great door the place where the Earl lives? Gatekeeping soldiers were on standby on both sides of the huge door. Their appearance is that of mercenaries. Dressing formally in leather armour with light brown rivets, conspicuous red cloth has been coiled around the gaps at the arms and curved swords are hanging at their waists. Since there's a red feather crest displayed on their chests, it's probably their characteristic logo.

“Earl-sama is waiting in this room here, well then.”

Butler-san turns back and withdraws.

Together with the priestess, we advanced to the front of the door. Thereupon, one of the mercenary-like gatekeepers stretches out his hand in silence. Mine and the priestess' movements ceased. After watching us with a piercing look and furrowing his eyebrows in silence, as if saying “Don't enter” any further here, he went for a body check... To make sure that we are safe? Rollo, who hates being touched, gets down on the ground and runs away below my feet.

They are quite wary, is what I thought, but it doesn't seem to be the case. It appears to be only for form's sake.

A dagger is affixed to my chest with a belt, but they didn't confiscate it. Does this mercenary just want to touch bodies? I'm suspicious of him having ulterior motives.

Though it didn't feel like us being safe had been confirmed, the large door was opened and we proceeded inside.

That person is the feudal lord and an Earl?

A fat Caucasian. Although there's still distance left, I can grasp his roundness. He turned his look on us from the other side of his desk used for official duties. The fat person who can be considered to be the Earl is sitting in an armchair with a high back.

A woman with her body covered by a navy blue robe stood next to the Earl. On the opposite side several large men, wearing mercenary clothes and hats with flashy red feathers, are staring at us with looks as if they want to coerce

us.

Just like the gatekeeping soldiers who were at our sides, a red feather crest was stitched on the chests of the largely-built men.

The commander class of the same mercenary band?

Because the priestess walks ahead while gathering the looks on her, I follow her with a slight delay.

Rollo slightly showed her face from within the hood.

I walk while observing the interior of the room.

The interior design is gaudy. The room, which had decorations added on the walls and pillars, is spacious.

It's all over decorated with furnishings which were arranged with silver and golden craftsmanship.

... How amazing. The shelves, which can be considered to be plain storing desks for exhibiting items, have glass cases.

It's an art gallery all over. Among the items there is a special longsword, which had a threefold blade and which seemed to be a magic item, an axe, which is emitting light green light and which had magic letters engraved, a dagger, which possesses a wicked-like presence with blood sticking to its distorted shape, a long wand which has a crystal skull at its tip, an eerie item that looks like moving intestine parts, an electric fan which had small magic gem slots, a grimoire which is showing the phantom of a person, *etc.* The room was decorated with a great number of items.

It makes me want to steal them by opening the locks with lock-picking.

Well, I won't do such thing. I can't do it.

A stuffed doll that seems to be a goblin with an uncanny greenish grey skin was placed in a corner.

Though I haven't seen such a goblin yet...

When I'm examining the various articles of rare beauty which were displayed here, the priestess bowed her head towards the Earl.

The Earl begins to speak first.

"Peradas, huh? Is it again about that large tree?" (Makfol)

"Yes." (Marin)

"So, who's the man, that is looking restlessly around my treasure collection,

behind you?” (Makfol)

The Earl pointed at me.

I’m sorry for my curiosity having been stimulated by the treasures.

“Yes, this person is—” (Marin)

“— Earl-sama, my name is Shuuya Kagari.” (Shuuya)

Faster than the priestess, I greeted the Earl while bowing respectfully.

“Hou, so, what’s your impression after having looked around? My treasures are amazing, aren’t they? I still possess plenty besides the collection here. I was even praised by the second prince.” (Makfol)

“Oh, how admirable. Your Excellency, the Earl, must possess magnificent observation skills to see through such treasures.” (Shuuya)

It’s acceptable to flatter him here. It’s for sucking up to him.
Actually his treasures can be considered to be worthy items.

“Ooh, you understand? So, then, how his is your adventurer rank?” (Makfol)

“I’m a rank C adventurer.” (Shuuya)

“What, it’s C?” (Makfol)

The Earl looks at his secretary-like civil official with a feeling of being disappointed.

“... So, Priestess-sama, why did you bring this adventurer along for your petition?”

The beautiful civil official asked.

“Yes, I had him receive the request regarding the large tree of Holker.”
(Marin)

“Hee, you accepted Peradas’ request? ... I planned to fell that withered large tree though...” (Makfol)

The Earl mentions arrogantly. Thereupon I look at the Earl’s face.
His feature seem to be young for a yet long time to come. A Westerner with blonde hair... with a mushroom cut as hair style.
His eyes are blue and narrow with an impression as if they are losing to the

fleshy eyelids.

The cheeks are red like apples.

And, the presence of the meat on the double chin stands out. With his clothes that are rich in colours and the protuberant fat belly, you can perfectly call him a member of the rich boy archetype.

“Lord-sama, please cease the felling. I humbly request you to do so. It’s even written down in the scriptures that the withered large tree will be revived. I have the skill for it. Besides, the large tree is a historical heritage remaining in this city. Holker’s Large Tree is said to even have something to do with the origin of this city.” (Marin)

The priestess talk while frantically trying to explain it to the Earl, but Makfol only shows a bored expression.

“I heard that before.” (Makfol)

“... Please let Shuuya-san, who is an adventurer, succeed in the request by accomplishing the revival of the withered large tree. Please, postpone the...” (Marin)

The Earl, who heard the priestess’ talk, takes out an item similar to a conductor’s stick from his pocket.

“Hmm. It’s an established fact of the scriptures, but... Bimiyal —- have you grasped the contents of the scriptures the priestess has mentioned?” (Makfol)

The Earl extends the conductor’s stick and asks the beautiful civil official with the light brown hair who wears a navy blue robe.

The name of the secretary civil official is Bimiyal?

“Yes.” (Bimiyal)

“Is there really a mention about the possibility of reviving that withered large tree?” (Makfol)

After nodding lightly, Bimiyal, who can be considered a close aide, answered the Earl.

“— I wonder about that. I feel sorry for priestess-sama, but the needed ingredients are in too distant places. Besides, if it’s really possible to revive it,

why was it neglected in a withered state without anything happening for five years? I believe that's a bit questionable." (Bimiyal)

"So she says, but?" (Makfol)

Hearing the words of Bimiyal, the feudal lord points the point of the conductor's stick at the priestess' face while displaying a broad grin.

"It wasn't neglected. My personal reason is that I wasn't able to. I can declare that while swearing on the pride of my race of Sosari." (Marin)

The priestess Marin Peradas holds her head high.
Stretching the buccinator muscle, which was processed in quilting, a peculiar strength entered her eyes and she conveyed a strong sense of purpose.

"Even if you refer to the Sosari... Bimiyal?" (Makfol)

The Earl shrugs his chubby shoulders.
He calls the name of his close aide Bimiyal as if telling her "You answer."

"Haa, they are said to possess a belief resembling that of the ancient elves. Being known as race who loves the earth and flowers, the Sosari mainly believe in gods like the Plant God Sadeyula, the Earth Goddess Gaia, the spirit Holker and such. Living deep in the forest, they are an unusual race referred to as hermits of the forests." (Bimiyal)

The close aide Bimiyal gave a well-reasoned explanation as if being a talking wikipedia.

She's a good subordinate, that beautiful secretary-like magician, isn't she?
Really excellent eh?

I was enlightened as well.

The race of the priestess Peradas is the Sosari.

She isn't a space alien but of a nature loving race, huh...?

"I see. Then let's call that pride into question. What's the reason for you having been unable to do it?" (Makfol)

The Earl narrowed his eyes, but talks while properly fixing his eyes on the priestess.

"Yes. My parents were killed by evil people at the same time of the Holker

Large Tree's withering. Succeeding the will of my father, I investigated those evil people over a span of many years while protecting the Holker Large Tree after becoming the priestess." (Marin)

From the words spilling out of the priestess, I can certainly sense fluent integrity.

However, it's also the first time for me to hear that her father and mother were killed.

That's why? ... That's the reason why she prostrated herself in front of me like that all of a sudden at the time when I met her for the first time.

She was probably at her wit's end. Her kneeling down on the ground hadn't a Japanese style-like feeling, but a natural sentiment that might have been the resulting action of her pride.

"... They were killed? Without coming to a result after investigating it for five years, you neglected the withered large tree while holding the position of priestess..." (Makfol)

The priestess shakes her head and say "That's not it" due to the remark of the Earl.

"I haven't neglected it. I protected the Holker Large Tree. I have maintained the barrier by offering life-force every day. By its appearance it's surely withered, but it's still barely alive. I can vaguely sense the undulations of the large tree." (Marin)

Mmh, which reminds me, just one dead spirit child was there, too.

The large tree is faintly alive. Are those words true as well?

I don't know whether it's unique skill of the "Sosari Race" or the "priestess' " skill, but if she feels the tree's undulations, it certainly must be so.

Examining my chat with the priestess, I can't consider it as lie.

Even I myself am a member of a nonsensical race...

Anything is possible.

"Hm~m. I see. Bimiyal?" (Makfol)

"Yes. I'm also one who has set her sights on magic. Therefore, I judge the possibility of understanding something as high since she is priestess-sama. Surely she was able to acquire the blessing of the God of Plants Sadeyula-sama

or Earth Goddess Gaia.” (Bimiyal)

Bimiyal

Thereupon the female close aide magician altered her opinion.
Hearing that, the Earl reacts by moving his thick eyebrows.
Going by his expression I was able to read a colour of hesitation.
Moving his chin that has plenty of flab, the Earl turns towards the priestess and me with his small blue eyes.

“... Hee, today you have quite the persuasive power. Let me consider it for a bit as well? The adventurer over there, Shuuya, was it? Is it your influence? It seems you accepted this request as C rank, but are you confident?” (Makfol)

The point of the conductor’s stick, which the Earl held in his hand, points at me with a *whoosh*.

My opinion was requested.

“I am. I will revive that large tree without fail.” (Shuuya)

It was a bit, exaggerated, but... I ended up declaring it.

“Ooh, those are reassuring words. Judging from appearance you seem to be only one though. You are active as individual and not in a clan, right?” (Makfol)

“Yes.” (Shuuya)

“... I’m surprised. And you have declared it distinctly in front of me. — Haa, are you possibly a strong person who can’t be distinguished by rank? It’s something I have heard in rumours. You have quite the confidence in your abilities and opinion, right? ... Fuhaha, it became something to look forward to. You or my subordinates, which side is stronger, I wonder? I’m curious.” (Makfol)

“Your Excellency — you have interest in such a greenhorn brat?”

The one who provoked me by calling me a brat was a largely-build man who had listened silently until now.

Wearing a military hat with a red feather attached, it’s a middle-aged man with a grown beard and a sharp look.

There’s an arched, curved sword on his waist. A weapon called shamshir* is hanging down. (T/N: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamshir>)

“My curiosity got the better of me. Right, I came up with something fun. Hey

Shuuya, you will fight with Cellonias over there. Shall I promise that I won't fell that withered large tree if you win the fight with Cellonias?" (Makfol)

"Is that true?" (Marin)

The priestess shows a rejoicing reaction.

"Your Excellency, you are joking around again... you want me to have a match against this low-ranking adventurer, such brat...?" (Cellonias)

The large, middle-aged man looks down on me and talks while obviously making fun of me.

... Certainly, that person called Cellonias, who wore the military hat with its red feather, is considerably powerful, I think. His height is slightly higher than mine. I can confirm movements of mana operations, which likely belong to the magic combat style, inside his body. Mana is stored in his arms and feet.

"That's right, Cellonias. It's my order. Fine? Pushing aside the group of lower retainers I know from my old days, I employed you guys. If it's you who is the Knight Commander of my Earldom's army, you should be able to win with leeway, shouldn't you? Originally you were the commanding officer of the "Red Feather Mercenary Band." In the past you played an active role in the wars of **【Amef】** and **【Heslifat】** in the north. Demonstrate your nicknames of being called "50 assassinations of the Red Feather" and "Cello of the Red Feather" you obtained after destroying the Fishmen Pirate Crew Attenborough in the south." (Makfol)

Hearing the words of the Earl, Cellonias puts a hand on his large pigeon breast and bows.

"Ha—" (Cellonias)

After Cellonias' bow, he turns a light glance towards me and nods. He is facing me with a smile.

It's an expression that can be called fully motivated with a composed face. However, have they arbitrarily decided a duel without my opinion?

"Has the matter of fighting been decided already?" (Shuuya)

I got pissed off a bit~. I display my typical acting expression.

“Are you against it?” (Makfol)

“Yes, I don’t like it. Mainly the conditions though.” (Shuuya)

“— How impertinent.” (Cellonias)

Cellonias warns me.

“— I don’t particularly mind. The conditions, fine, fine, try stating yours.”
(Makfol)

The Earl set aside Cellonias opinion.

As my words were apparently unexpected, the Earl seems delighted.

He is strangely enthusiastic. I make my mouth shift as if surfing on top of the greasy belly of the Earl.

“Well then, on top of specifying “Earl Makfol zen Rakolazei absolutely won’t fell the revived Holker Large Tree or the withered Holker Large Tree” in a document, Priestess Marin Peradas will own the rights of that Holker Large Tree. That’s what I ‘d like you to specify clearly. Moreover, I want you to officially investigate the criminals who are considered to have murdered Marin’s parents.” (Shuuya)

Hearing my words, the Earl obediently nods a few times.

And, as if he was struck by an idea, he opened his mouth after revealing an expression that showed signs of him smirking evilly.

“... That’s fine, I guess. However, what will be the condition in case of your defeat?” (Makfol)

Can I pay it with some compensation?

This rich boy Earl is negotiating unexpectedly.

I already got on the ship, er rather, on the plank. Going with the flow, there’s nothing but going straight ahead.

“... I bet all of me.” (Shuuya)

“Oooh, got it. Stick to your words. Oi, Bimiyal, prepare the contract paper right away.” (Makfol)

The Earl seems to be excited with his blue eyes sparkling.

His chubby head is swaying and his nasal breathing is rough as well.

“Yes.” (Bimiyal)

Bimiyal shows a glad-looking response, too, and returns to the back. She headed to a file cabinet which has been installed at the wall.

“Cellonias and Shuuya, you will fight in the front garden right away.” (Makfol)

Once the Earl urges us on like that, he stands up from his chair and moves his fat body that looks heavy.

“I leave it to you.” (Cellonias)

Cellonias bowed respectfully.

“Roger—” (Shuuya)

I acknowledge it as well.

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

Rollo, who was curled up inside my hood, moves to my shoulder. She purred with an out-of-place voice, but no one pointed that out. Everyone in this place, including the Earl, heads to the entranceway in succession.

While walking, the priestess Marin Peradas had a worried expression and opened her mouth as she felt depressed.

“Shuuya-san, is it alright for you to form such an agreement? In addition, because of me...” (Marin)

“No, it’s fine if you don’t worry, Marin. Well, I will try to go with the intention of boarding a large boat.” (Shuuya)

... By no means will I get on a boat made of mud that is boarded by racoons*.
(T/N: Here in the meaning of “sly foxes”)

“Nn, nyao.” (Rollo)

Rollo also releases a meow similar to 『It will be alright nya』 with a throaty voice and taps my shoulder with one paw.

“Haa...” (Marin)

Is the priestess Marin not fully satisfied with the explanation? Breathing a sigh, her expression is oozing with the colour of anxiety.

Even after hearing my words and seeing Rollo's attitude, her uneasiness apparently hasn't been wiped away.

While having such an exchange, we arrive at the front garden.

It's a beautiful garden which had stone tatami, spreading out on the natural lawn, set up sporadically.

It's a place where flower beds and pale stone monuments, which are goddess statues, have been placed.

Simple chairs and tables have been put on top of the pretty lawn of the garden.

The servants prepared the setting by working briskly and restlessly.

Sitting down on an arranged chair, the Earl holds a tea cup, which was put on top a brand new tablecloth, in his hand and brings it to his lips.

While sipping on the black tea, he moves to cross his legs, but since his legs are fat, he repeated and failed several times to cross them.

“... Well then, start at any time.” (Makfol)

The Earl raises one hand to signal that it's fine to begin.

I advance to the centre by walking on the pavement.

And, shifting my sight to Rollo who is on my shoulder, I told her in a whisper 「Leave me for a bit」.

Rollo separates from me while releasing a short, throaty voice.

Once the mercenary-styled man, who was called Cellonias, draws his curved longsword from his waist, he side steps on the lawn and measures the distance while examining my state.

Even though I have confirmed his gaze with a sidelong glance, I deliberately check the surroundings.

I have thought about it a number of times, but it's a really beautiful garden.

It's probably the hobby of that Earl? Well, it's not a bad hobby.

Rollo appears to be observing after climbing on a narrow opening of a small brick flower bed.

She has arranged her two forepaws on top of a platform as if being a doll.

The priestess was next to the Earl.

Placing both hands over her chest, she stands still while looking worried.

“Youngster. Do you have the leeway to look away? What about your weapon? If it's the carriage, it's stopped at the front.” (Cellonias)

I'm not at an age to be called youngster though.
Cellonias in front of me says with an appearance of looking down on me.
It's an one-on-one showdown. It's quite the exciting development.
I'm yearning for excitement.
For some reason such words are played back in my brain with a deep voice.
It's not a line that should come out in this place.
I have confidence that I would laugh and suddenly spit out milk from my mouth completely like that if that fat Earl had mentioned such thing.

"Oi, I'm telling you to take out your weapon. What are you smiling for?"
(Cellonias)

"... Sorry, if it's a weapon, I have one —" (Shuuya)

Accordingly I summon the Magic Spear Baldok into my right hand.
Watching me who made a weapon manifest abruptly, even the Earl, who drank black tea while sitting, was surprised, just like Cellonias, and spurt out the tea he was drinking.

"Hou..." (Cellonias)

What's with that "Hou?"
Though you didn't expect it either...
I want to punish that composed bearded face, but... to improve the Earl's impression, it's not good to torment his subordinates too much.
I will follow that master swordman's example here and go with waiting for the "counter."
Setting up the magic spear on my right shoulder while being in a stance of the legs being in a L-shape, I glared at my opponent with a look as if killing them.
Raising my left hand, in order to invite my opponent... I repeatedly beckon him with several fingers.



“Come. Is that curved longsword a decoration just like your nether region?”
(Shuuya)

“Shut up, brat. Aaah!! Pshaw —” (Cellonias)

— Caught him.

Just like a commander of some warring state, Cellonias shouts while giving me a piercing look and drawing his arranged eyebrows towards the centre.

And, once he prepared his longsword, he ran up to me in one go.

“Chesttt —” (Cellonias)

He releases a yell of fighting spirit.

It was similar to a stance like the revelation style handed down in Satsuma.

It looks like he is aiming to diagonally slash his sword from the shoulder from the left side.

He entered the spear’s distance.

However, I make Cellonias swing the sword on purpose.

Cellonias lowered the sword to cut without using any feints.

While confirming the trajectory of sword which has been swung down, I shifted my torso half a step with the least motion and avoided the beheading sword while feeling the wind pass by. In that moment Cellonias changes the movement of the curved sword, which had been swung down, into a following rising slash after turning it over.

As expected of the Knight Commander. But, that second sword strike, the slashing attack isn’t allowed to thrive — swinging the magic spear, I held shortly, bit by bit, I create the character ∞ by drawing an 8 with the spearhead. The ∞ trajectory of the red spear clashes with the overturned curved sword of Cellonias.

The curved sword, which entered diagonally, gets stuck in, as if being sucked in, between the red spear’s little trench and the red axe blade. The hand grasping the hilt of the curved sword gets twisted instantaneously.

“— Oww.” (Cellonias)

Unable to bear the pain in the arm that was twisted, Cellonias let go of the sword.

The curved sword falls down as if leaping to the ground.

Having been made to abandon his weapon, I entered the opponent's bosom and tread on Cellonias' right foot's backside with a vertical heel kick with my left foot's bottom.

"Gyaa —" (Cellonias)

Cellonias stops moving after being pinned to the ground.

From there I aimed for a plain grapple.

Rotating my magic spear, which I had transferred into my left hand, I fix it on Cellonias' back.

At moment I switched to a stance of being glued closely to him, I make him eat a blow to his solar plexus with the iron on my right elbow while taking even less than a second. I move back diagonally while hitting Cellonias' flank with the underside of my right hand similar to swinging down a hammer.

When I retreated, I was able to insert the magic spear's end between Cellonias' both legs and made him tumble down.

Cellonias, who fell to the ground, doesn't even move with a twitch.

Originally I would finish it with a hit to the crown of the head after cutting his legs, but changed it into only making him fall down without cutting his legs either.

Cellonias, who is lying on the ground, can be considered to have lost consciousness at the moment he received the elbow attack to his solar plexus. On top of not moving while kissing the ground as if he was brought down by Akebono*, he is incontinent and defecating, but... well, since he hasn't died, it's probably alright. (T/N: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akebono_Tarō)

His magic combat style wasn't loaded with much mana either.

As the duel finished too quickly, the vicinity was wrapped up in silence.

The Earl's side seems unable to believe how easily Cellonias was defeated.

"Nn, nya." (Rollo)

Rollo, who observed, comes back.

Getting on my shoulder she hits it with a tap-tap as if saying "Good work."

I look at the Earl's group.

The priestess is repeatedly blinking her eyes in surprise while being taken aback.

The Earl let his teacup fall to the ground.

His subordinate Bimiyal doesn't seem to be capable of understanding what has happened.

Making the magic spear in my right hand disappear, I walk towards the location of the Earl's group who is dumbfounded.

While the other largely-built men are scared by that action, they ran to the Earl's side in order to protect him.

The magician Bimiyal prepares by holding a pen instead of a wand for some reason.

It's a dangerous atmosphere, but —

“Umm, Earl-sama, please keep your promise.” (Shuuya)

I make an archaic smile.

“A-Aah, I-I know. I will definitely keep my promise. Bimiyal.” (Makfol)

“Y-Yess.” (Bimiyal)

“Hand over the pen and the contract.” (Makfol)

“Yes, there they are.” (Bimiyal)

The Earl scribbles on a high-class-looking parchment that was placed on the table.

The contract was finished quickly.

“I certainly received it. Well then, please cast recovery magic on Cellonias who is sleeping on the ground over there.” (Shuuya)

“Yea, Bimiyal and the others, treat Cellonias.” (Makfol)

I hand over the document to the priestess.

“With this it will be alright for the moment, I think?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, thank you very much. Shuuya-san, you are strong. I got startled...”
(Marin)

“Well, I guess so.” (Shuuya)

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo purrs with a voice as if saying 『That's natural nya』.

She hit my shoulder with a strengthened cat punch.

Once Cellonias has recovery magic cast on him, his consciousness returns.

When observing the state of Cellonias being looked after, the Earl addressed me while having a flushed face. Is he agitated?

“You are amazing. You are more powerful than I expected. Shuuya, your movements just now were really great. Albeit saying that, I wasn’t able to see them well, but I admired your technique to have ended it with a non-lethal blow. I was pleased. ... Won’t you become my subordinate once you finish the request?” (Makfol)

“I’m sorry Earl-sama, but I have to decline.” (Shuuya)

“W-Whaaatt. R-Really? ... In that case, money, women, items...” (Makfol)

The Earl displays a disappointed expression. Similar to Tokugawa Ieyasu* he started to chew on a fingernail. *(T/N: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokugawa_Ieyasu)* Repeatedly muttering to himself, he starts to speak while opening his narrow eyes.

“Right, if it’s 10 gold, no, platinum coins, how about it? I will prepare the best woman as well. In addition, exceeding the rank of lower retainer, let’s accept you as my Rakolazei household’s Knight Commander? It will be fine to even grant you Treasured Sword Fingeldo...” (Makfol)

“Your Excellency, what are you losing control of yourself for? That treasured sword is not allowed. It’s a memento of your late father, isn’t it?” (Bimiyal)

His confidant Bimiyal told him to stop.

“Shut up, Bimiyal! If a sacred beast of protection like Shuuya joins, Holkerbaum will become peaceful. Besides, someone who pleases me once is...” (Makfol)

What’s a sacred beast of protection? I ain’t no Godzilla.
Do I have to emphasize it since he seems to be insistent?

“— Earl-sama, no matter what I receive, I will never become your subordinate. Since I have an objective, being shackled down will be troublesome. Freedom is comfortable for me.” (Shuuya)

“Objective? That’s about the request, isn’t it?” (Makfol)

Is the Earl still unhappy? Such feelings have been put into his question.

“That’s included as well. But it continues even after finishing the request.”
(Shuuya)

“Gunununu, does it go that far? You say you don’t want money, women, honour and items because of that objective?” (Makfol)

“Yea, that’s correct.” (Shuuya)

However, does this Earl want me to become his subordinate to such an extent?

“... As my subordinate, you will acquire as much money as you want, but does that disagree with you?” (Makfol)

“Only becoming your subordinate is disagreeable. ... Honestly speaking, I want money and women.” (Shuuya)

Makfol showed further change due to my honest remark.

“Puu, ahahahaha, you are an interesting man. You are a honest man. You make me want you even more.” (Makfol)

“No, as I said...” (Shuuya)

“— For me there is nothing but subordinates who listen to what I say...”
(Makfol)

Putting out a hand, the Earl interrupts my words.

Earl Makfol talks while lowering his look in order to leave behind the shadow in himself after seeing the faces of Bimiyal and his servants.

“... A person who refuses my temptations in such way, there isn’t a single person in my surroundings. It seems to be always the case since my childhood. ... I’m, I’m really lonely.” (Makfol)

Once again he is biting his nails.

Being delighted, being depressed, he is a busy guy.

He begins to mutter to himself at the end of the sentence.

“— Your Excellency, am I not always at your side?” (Bimiyal)

The female secretary reveals a frantic expression.

“Bimiyal... that’s true, but then again not.” (Makfol)

Being told such thing by a beautiful female secretary... isn’t she praiseworthy? Earl Makfol looks like he is leading a luxurious life, but as a matter of fact he is isolated within that. It might be a life of loneliness. I don’t feel any sympathy towards his character at all, but watching Bimiyal, her look was pure. Therefore, affinity welled up in reverse.

It’s an opportunity. Shall I help that beautiful secretary?

“Earl-sama, it’s just as Bimiyal-san says. Don’t you have fine subordinates?” (Shuuya)

“True. But, even if they are good subordinates for me, they aren’t my friends — ah, right, Shuuya, if becoming my subordinate is no good, won’t you be my friend?” (Makfol)

Friend, huh? Subordinates, since he is bossy with subordinates, it will be settled safely if I become his friend, I guess? It’s only for now anyway.

“In case of friendship, I’m fine with becoming your friend.” (Shuuya)

Though I’m talking as if it’s fine for me to become one with a condescending attitude, the only person I can call my friend is Quiche... Moreover I ended up bidding farewell to her. In reality, we are fellow loners. Although a gloomy expression has appeared on my face, it doesn’t matter.

“Ooooh! You really mean that?” (Makfol)

“Yea... not more than a normal friend. Therefore I’m not your subordinate. That’s because I’m free, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Right. That’s right, friend. Ahahaha, it’s freedom. That’s why friend. You are my friend... from now on we will talk normally without holding anything back. Friend. Because we are free.” (Makfol)

“Yes, that’s true. Haha, I’m freeeee. What a, haha.” (Shuuya)

I feel like there was a person announcing a minor accomplishment by

shouting such line.

“Nya nyaa.” (Rollo)

At that point even Rollo, who reacted to my gambolling words of “I’m free,” started to grumble something.

Rollo stretches out one of her feelers to my cheek and conveys her feelings.

『Friend』『Partner』『Here』『Siblings』『Liking』『Playing』『Sisters』『Playing』.

I have a feeling that sisters is a bit different, but countless deeply affectionate emotions had been conveyed to me...

“Thank you. Your friend is me.” Does she intend to say that?

— Did you read my heart from my expression?

... I’m deeply moved. I’m about to cry.

“What’s that black cat?” (Makfol)

The Earl stared at Rollo looking very interested.

“She is my partner. She’s also my familiar and precious friend.” (Shuuya)

“Oooh, that kind of animal...” (Makfol)

“Nya?” (Rollo)

Rollo looked at the Earl with her round and cute, red eyes.

“I’d like to have her too...” (Makfol)

“Nn, nya, nyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo turns away her head in a bad mood and dives from the shoulder into the hood.

Somehow she has transmitted the feeling of 『For you it’s impossible nya』.

“Mumu, she hid herself. I got the impression as if I was made fun of.” (Makfol)

“... That’s just your imagination. If you are my friend, it makes you her friend. Isn’t she big-hearted?” (Shuuya)

“Mu, that’s right. Yes.” (Makfol)

The Earl is in an awfully happy mood after that.

“Let me give you some money since you are my friend.” “How about this furniture?” Or “If the treasured sword is no good, how about a treasured tool

like this magic wand?”

Thus I warned the Earl with a feeling of scolding.

“A friend isn’t someone that gives presents unreasonably.”

“Giving something sometimes is a good custom.”

Once I explain it with suitable enthusiasm, the young Earl-kun shows his understanding by nodding many times. The Earl’s “let’s give a gift” attack ends without a hitch.

“Won’t you let me invite you to a feast today?” (Makfol)

Having said that, a dinner party was carried out that evening in the Earl’s mansion.

Having invited dancers and provided plenty of delicious dishes, it has turned into a gorgeous dinner party.

With the priestess Marin Peradas and Earl Makfol getting along well at that location, the Earl with his high tension decided “You are my friend as well.”

Once it became clear that she’s a woman, he started talking with an agitated tone as if making a pass at the priestess with her space alien face. The priestess was confused.

However, the dinner party gets very exciting and this time’s persuasion finishes in a huge success.

At the time of going home from the Earl’s mansion his subordinate Bimiyal quietly started to talk close to my ear.

“We have really troubled you greatly this time. And, thank you very much for the matter with the treasured sword. In case of Makfol-sama’s character, he won’t listen if he decides something once.” (Bimiyal)

This person seems to have her own hardships as well.

“Please don’t mind it. I simply declined it because I really don’t want it.” (Shuuya)

“After all... that’s not the way of thinking of a mere adventurer. As expected of the gentleman who was recognised as friend by Earl Makfol zen Rakolazei. This Bimiyal is also happy as if it’s about me.” (Bimiyal)

“I’m glad that you are pleased, beautiful Bimiyal-san.” (Shuuya)

Due to my words, Bimiyal-san laughs with a “Fufu.”

“... Thank you very much. With you being Makfol-sama’s friend in the future, I shall call you Shuuya-sama.” (Bimiyal)

“Huh?” (Shuuya)

“Shuuya-sama? Something wrong?” (Bimiyal)

Sama all of a sudden, eh?

Well, I don’t think we will meet anymore. It doesn’t matter, I guess.

“No, it’s nothing. Well then, we will go home now.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, Shuuya-sama. We will be waiting for you at all times.” (Bimiyal)

And then we board the carriage to go home and head down the hill.

Within that carriage I discuss the matters hereafter with priestess Marin.

“The matter with the feudal lord is probably alright now.” (Shuuya)

“Everything is thanks to you, Shuuya-san. Thank you very much.” (Marin)

Makfol, who is the feudal lord, was saved in such manner.

He was able to create a bridge to become good friends with the priestess.

“... That was just by chance. Rather than such stuff, the raw materials are the problem. Since they are far away, it will take a bit of time. Although it might not take as much time as you are expecting, Marin.” (Shuuya)

“What do you mean by that?” (Marin)

“That’s a secret. Oh, we arrived. Well then, as I have got some errands to run, see you. We probably won’t meet until the raw materials are fully gathered.” (Shuuya)

“Is that so? How regrettable. However, please do your best. I will wait and protect Holker’s Large Tree.” (Marin)

Bidding farewell to the priestess at that point, I get off the carriage. I returned to the inn.

Chapter 79 – Bloody Fireflies flutter about in a dim alley

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Night on that day.

I met the two beautiful women, Melissa and director Dino, who is actually the boss of the thieves guild 【Belgart】 and Melissa's superior, on the second floor of Hotel Alando.

Dino-san is a female elf.

She has a boyish hairstyle and emerald coloured hair.

With elaborate make-up on her face she really gives the impression of a woman who is able to get things done.

Because of the green eye-liner extending thickly, she gave off such atmosphere all the more.

Jade green, diamond-shaped earrings are embedded in her long, pointed ears.

Given that there are traces of rich mana from the jade gems, they are probably some special magic items.

As the earrings' hue is the same emerald green as her hair and pupils, they suit her well.

There was a bear-like animal tattoo, which is the elves' characteristic mark, on her cheek.

With a feeling of having a mixer with those beautiful girls, I have continued a light conversation about trivial events while tasting high-class dishes.

Once we finished eating, Dino-san, who is sitting opposite of me, wiped the area around her lips carefully in order to not wipe away the thin, glittering, green lipstick with a pretty leather cloth she had prepared herself.

Those lips... are lovely.

Did Dino-san, who finished wiping her mouth, switch into her work mode once she saw my lewd gaze? Her look became sharp as she stares at me.

“Well then, shall we move to the real business about now? Shuuya-sama, I have heard the story from Melissa, but I think I want to confirm it with you once more. You want to participate in and attend the Underground Auction held in the 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】?” (Dino)

“Yes, that’s right.” (Shuuya)

“Excuse me, but what kind of budget do you possess?” (Dino)

Previously Melissa told me that at least 50 platinum coins are necessary. There is the large amount of 13 large platinum coins (*T/N: 1300 platinum coins*) inside the item box I possess.

Furthermore, since I own plenty of items related to the ancient dragon which I haven’t sold yet, I have absolutely no worries about money.

However, I refrain from informing them about the total sum.

It’s not clear yet whether I can really trust this 【Belgart】.

I can believe Melissa somewhat though.

Therefore I will inform them indirectly about it.

“... If it’s around 50 platinum coins, I can pay that with no problems.” (Shuuya)

“Certainly, if that’s the case, it’s possible for you to attend. However, excuse my impoliteness, but if you don’t actually let me see it...” (Dino)

Show me the goods first, eh?

Well, it’s surely dubious whether an adventurer like me really possesses the money.

— It can’t be helped.

Operating my item box, I took out just one large platinum coin and showed it to them.

“—Ooh, this is... if I remember correctly.” (Dino)

“A large platinum coin!” (Melissa)

Dino and Melissa lift their eyebrows and their eyes open widely. Each of them shows a reaction of surprise.

I store back the large platinum coin I took out.

“Was I able to convince you with this, you two beauties?” (Shuuya)

Sticking out my chin a bit, I burst into a triumphant look.

Dino-san opens her mouth while revealing a fearless smile.

As expected of the boss of a thieves guild.

Splendidly ignoring my triumphant look, she makes her small lips, which glisten in light green, move.

“— You convinced me. Well then, I shall introduce you to the management organization of the Large Dualbell Company, ^{Pledge of the Unicorn} 【Oath of the One-Horned】, to whom we are indebted.” (Dino)

The management organization of the Large Dualbell Company?

The name is oath of unicorn?

I remember having heard that somewhere.

“... A large company?” (Shuuya)

“That’s great, Shuuya-san.” (Melissa)

“N, Nya!” (Rollo)

Melissa was delighted as if it was about her.

Rollo hits my shoulder with a *pon* and shows a self-satisfied look by raising her whiskers with a twitch.

I don’t know why the self-satisfied look, but me smiling likely makes her happy.

“Then, let me explain what kind of event the Underground Auction is.” (Dino)

Dino-san put both her elbows on the table and started the explanation with a gentle tone while entwining her fingers with the nails being conspicuous due to the sparkling, light green manicure.

“South Mahaheim’s biggest underground auction has been a meeting where

large companies, which exceed a single country's scale, firms and all of the local dark guilds gather. Though the scale of auctions sponsored by kingdoms are large, it became the biggest in scale behind the scenes as an auction of the underground world. There are also cases where royalty and titled nobility participated while hiding among the participants. And it's also famous for fellow dark guilds to not cause a single disturbance on this very day. That's because all of it is managed by the dark guild community 【Eight Lights】.” (Dino)

I heard that name just a bit ago.

A dark guild community, huh?

It's indeed a name similar to a top-ranking dark organization.

“... What's that dark guild community 【Eight Lights】?” (Shuuya)

“The Eight Lights, that is, it feels like they are called **Administrative Organization Members of the Underground Auction** and they are formed only for the duration of the auction by gathering eight renowned leaders, all of them heads of dark guilds who possess authority?” (Dino)

“... Administrative organization?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It's an organization only in name though. That's because they move a large amount of money. And there is a First Department and a Second Department at the Underground Auction. The first department is an auction where high-class combat slaves are sold. The second department is an auction for special magic items of unique, legendary and mythological grade coming from the labyrinth. It will be split into those two.” (Dino)

The first department has the high-class combat slaves?

Buying a high-class combat at the auction, leading a mufufu-like* life after getting an excellent secretary. *(T/N: mufufu is a laughter often used in content regarding lewd or suggestive behaviour)*

Something like an erotic secretary play, that's dangerous, my delusions are going wild...

The second department is an exhibition of special items including those originating from the labyrinth?

Even the item collection, which the Earl was so proud of, probably has grades of unique, legendary or such.

“... Understood. I’m looking forward to it.” (Shuuya)

“And then, as soon as your Underground Auction attendance has been successfully verified, I will receive 10 platinum coins as referral fee at the same time. Is that alright with you?” (Dino)

Dino-san talks while placing parchments, which seem to be a written contract and a letter of introduction, on the table.

“Yes. I will keep my promise.” (Shuuya)

“Then please sign the document here after Melissa and me.” (Dino)

On the document...



Thieves Guild 【Belgart】

Contract

Item regarding the matter of referral fee: Once the conditions are fulfilled, the party to the contract will offer 10 platinum coins to Director Dino Hildecare, who controls 【Belgart】’s headquarters, as reward.

In case the conditions aren’t met, the contract will become invalid without any need to pay 10 platinum coins.

Signee, Melissa Sobelis.

Signee, Dino Hildecare.



Just for caution’s sake I confirm it with my Magic Observation View.
It’s a normal, roughish parchment, however it’s thin paper.
It doesn’t appear to be something like special parchment with mana dwelling within, but be it rough as it may, there is the technology capable of creating thin paper.
It’s not a trap or such.
By the way, Dino-san can be considered a magician who possesses considerable power.
The mana manipulation inside her body smoothly moved the mana from her fingertips to her toes.

She excels at mana control, I guess.

However, I wonder what will happen if I revoke the clauses written on the paper.

“... Hey, what will happen if I break the promise that is written on the paper?”
(Shuuya)

“Since this document is an expensive contract paper, which was sold wholesale by an expert parchment association which is recognised by the trade guild, you will be judged as a criminal for contract breachment if filed to the governmental system of a city. The adventurer’s guilds will also be contacted in order and it might result in you being chased as criminal by countries and guilds.” (Dino)

Uhya, that’s unpleasant.
It’s foolish to ask about worrying things after establishing a contract.

“As I believe I will be in Pelneet at the time the contract was fulfilled successfully, to whom shall I give the money?” (Shuuya)

“To me. Given that I will attend the underground auction as well, it will be alright if you are able to give it to me on-site.” (Dino)

“Got it.” (Shuuya)

I see, Dino-san will be present, too.
Mmh, well, let’s sign it?
Melissa and Dino-san have finished writing their names on the contract paper.
Only I have to write it down.
It’s still a long way off, but let’s establish the contract.

“— The contract has been formed. A transcript of the contract and a letter of introduction are over here. Please take them. And, do you have any wishes for the timing to introduce you to the large company?” (Dino)

“There are plans for me leaving for a while, thus can you please tell me when it’s possible?” (Shuuya)

Dino spreads a parchment book, which seems like a thick notebook, on the table and confirms the schedule.

“Let’s see... how about inside the grounds which serve as headquarters of 【Belgart】 on the first or second day of the summer season in 30 or 31 days?”
(Dino)

— 30 or 31 days?

If it’s around that much time, I guess I will have found the raw materials to revive the “withered large tree.”

Even if I haven’t found them by then, for example, I can return here right away if I leave a mirror in this place.

“... Then please make it the second day of summer.” (Shuuya)

“Understood. I want to work on the preparations immediately — Melissa, please take care of the rest.” (Dino)

“Yes!” (Melissa)

Dino-san stuffs the documents into her bag, suddenly stands up and leaves dashing.

I put the transcription of the contract and the letter of introduction into my item box.

“Melissa, Dino-san is busy, isn’t she?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, of course. Meetings, contracts, suppressions, recruitment, she has various jobs.” (Melissa)

“I see. Which reminds me, I don’t know the location of 【Belgart】’s headquarters, but...” (Shuuya)

“Ah, that’s true, isn’t it? If you like, how about me guiding you there now?”
(Melissa)

“How nice. A date?” (Shuuya)

“Wha-! That’s not it. Are you an idiot?” (Melissa)

Melissa says while scowling.

Although she has called me an idiot, it wasn’t in a tone that felt too malicious. Once I look at her face, I can see that her cheeks seem to be dyed slightly red. Geez, Melissa isn’t honest.

“Haha, just forget the business and become natural?” (Shuuya)

“Aah, jeez... please don’t tease me too much~” (Melissa)

“Fine, fine. For the time being, let’s go there. Please lead me.” (Shuuya)

“Yes—” (Melissa)

And then we left the high-class inn, Alando, behind.

Since it’s already night, magic lights have been lit all over the place.

Entering a southern alley from the main road, I follow Melissa.

Mmh~, I don’t have overly fond memories of such alleys...

There are streets in the front and rear and walls continue on both sides, left and right.

Moreover, it’s night. The visibility is bad.

Thereupon, — sure enough, magic sources are caught in my Grasping Perception.

There are presences following us from behind.

Oh shit, see, there’s several of them.

Melissa hasn’t noticed them.

Me having met with the boss of a thieves guild stood out as expected.

“Melissa, how much distance is left until the grounds of your headquarters?”
(Shuuya)

“It’s still a bit.” (Melissa)

“I see.” (Shuuya)

The presences have become stronger.

It doesn’t seem like we will make it in time, does it?

“Rollo, get ready.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo jumps down from my shoulder. She climbs a wall and runs along it.
They can come to attack at any time now.

“What’s wrong, Shuuya-san?” (Melissa)

“Melissa, it looks like someone came. Be cautious just in case, okay?”
(Shuuya)

“Eh?” (Melissa)

Thereupon, a sound coming from behind is audible.
The true identity of the sound is a duo clad in dark brown robes.
No, in addition, a group of dark brown robes appeared one after the other from behind alongside magic lights.
The duo in the vanguard passes us and blocks the front.

“Wait a moment, the two over there.”

Making the dark brown robes of the leading group flutter, one stretches out his arm and raises a finger.
What’s visible within his robe is a leather armour with rivets attached and two longswords hanging down from his waist.

“Got any business with us?” (Melissa)

“We do. Especially with that tall, young black-haired niisan over there.”

The other person spoke while showing a nihilistic smile.
That guy holds a spear and points its sharp end towards me.
Melissa can’t conceal her unrest.

“What’s this!? All of a sudden! We are people of 【Belgart】!” (Melissa)

Melissa raised a loud voice and checked the front and rear.
Once she realizes that we are surrounded, her face turns pale.

“Shut up, will ya. Stay silent! We know that already, stupid woman of a hyena thieves guild!”

“What!” (Melissa)

Melissa displays her anger at the words and actions of the strange man and glares at him.

“Don’t get so angry. We are 【Owl’s Fangs】. We got business with that niisan over there.”

A voice that became hoarse. Members of 【Owl’s Fangs】, huh?
I fought with these guys even before coming to this city. Since I also fought them at the time of rescuing 【Scales of Gaia】, I had expected to be dragged into it sooner or later.

“Billy, I will do this woman in as well. She might be with Belgart, but since

she's currently together with this guy, she becomes a target for killing as well. Well, she's a fine woman, thus I will enjoy raping her a lot. Uhyahyaha."

The spear-holding man laughs while showing his filthy teeth.
A low-life.

"— Oi, stop threatening the woman with your smelly breath. So, what's your business with me?" (Shuuya)

I spread my overcoat and extended my arm in order to protect Melissa.

"Mmh, see, see, a gentleman-sama showing off in front of a woman, eh? What bullshit. A handsome mug despite being plain, haven't you!? Don't make me laugh, eeeh?"

It's a way of talking filled with scorning curses...
Although even you got a face like a badly beaten shrimp.

"... I've asked you what business you have with me, damned shrimp face."
(Shuuya)

"Aaah!? Whaa-, it's something simple. I wonder whether I wanna have a disgusting guy like you fucker die?"

After the shrimp-faced man scowls, he reveals a faint smile to show his dirty, uneven teeth.

"Hee, why's that?" (Shuuya)

"S-Shuuya-san?" (Melissa)

Melissa's body trembles and she has an uneasy expression. It complies with a feeling like she's asking "Is it alright?"

"Yes, after all, that's your name, isn't it? Shuuya Kagari. Getting in touch with a thieves guild was unwise? The news have spread quite widely already. Jog, let's get him." (Billy)

"Ayes, Billy. Don't fall behind." (Jog)

Once the two comrades nod to each other, he draws the two swords from his waist and releases them.

"Kyaa—" (Melissa)

Melissa screams.

The dual sword user and the spear user came attacking me.

At the instant when the dual swordsman, who was in front, swings his weapons at me,

“Guee.” (Billy)

As he squints his eyes and raises a strange voice, he collapses to the ground while having a hole in his forehead.

It's Rollo's tentacle bone sword.

She pierced the skull of the dual swords guy from behind.

While facing the spearhead towards me, the other man using a spear looks back wondering what's up.

Oi, oi, that's foolish, I believe.

I make the magic spear appear in an instant and dash at the spear user who is looking at the back.

Unleashing a <Thrust> at the base of the throat of the spear user who revealed a gap, the red spear stabbed his neck.

Due to the spurt of blood, a straight red line is lit in the dark alley.

The spear user's head flies high into the sky and the torso, which was the spear user that lost his head, collapses while gushing out blood from the torn neck.

“— W-Whaat? Jog and Billy were killed in the blink of an eye.”

Shaken voices can be heard from the front.

I will kill them as well. I run past them from behind in the dim alley.

“Ooi, ain't the information a bit mismatching?”

“Dun' mind it. We got six people. Surround— guuh.”

I used <Throwing> on the dagger while running.

I'm sorry for it being in the middle of talking, but there's no way I will let you escape.

The dagger hits the one who is talking.

— Five people left.

While diagonally holding the magic spear in my right hand with it being slanted downwards, I mowed them down in a fan shape as if scooping up the magic spear while closing the distance by rushing over with Magic Feet.

— A red moon illuminates the darkish alley.

The red axe blade digs through the knee of the man standing in front without any resistance. One leg is cleanly amputated. Next the red axe blade also passes through the kneecap of the man who was besides the previous guy. I inflicted a laceration and a flower of blood bloomed in the alley.

“Higyaa.”

“Aaaah—”

The two scream as if weeping and their shrieks tear one’s ears.

At that moment a man, who was outside the range of my blow, extended his long sword directly from diagonally to the right and tried to stab my flank.

— I rotate on my toes with the balls of my left foot as a pivot.

Dodging the stabbing sword with a rotating motion, I swing the magic spear while using the centrifugal force of that evasion. I made the other party receive the magic dragon gem in the solar plexus.

A dull collision sound, that felt like a *duff*, hits my earlobes after the internal organs around the solar plexus of the man, who unleashed the stabbing sword, are destroyed.

It’s a direct hit with a counter.

Though I can’t identify it due to the robe, something like a leather robe likely has been irrelevant.

The stabbing sword man drops the long and thin sword, he held, on the ground. He tried to crouch in order to hold his stomach while showing an expression of shock, but I can’t let him die that easily. Kicking the sunken-in face with my right kneecap, I slashed the axe blade of the magic spear, which I made rotate crosswise towards the neck of the man that moved to the back, diagonally from the shoulder.

I move in a trot to the diagonal right side while continuing the rotation roulette from the shoulder.

Once I took some distance, I made the rotating magic spear stop with my whole right arm as if a washed away driftwood came to a halt at a riverbank.

I change it into a stance of aiming at the eyes and ensure the distance while shifting the grip of the grasping hand by sliding the violet metal rod in my palm. Well then— two left.

One is a beastman type with dog ears growing out.

Holding a two-handed axe, he prepares the heavy-looking weapon without even showing a slight quiver.

However, sweat streamed down on his face and for some reason a shadow of fatigue and languor was visible.

Did the other guy decide that me having taken a distance is convenient? He starts to run away while showing his back.

“Rollo!” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya.” (Rollo)

Comprehending my intention, Rollo chases after the escaping opponent.

“Guaaaaaa! —”

At that time— the beastman, who held a two-handed axe, scattered his sweat and came rushing while raising an ear-splitting war cry.

He brandishes the blade of the two-handed axe from an overhead stance.

It’s the power of bashing with a blunt weapon. This guy— is he on dope? He isn’t calm at all.

Twisting my body quickly, I evade the attack of the downward swung two-handed axe.

Though the heavy-looking blade of the two-handed axes showed its might by cleaving open the soil after crashing into the ground, the axe blade ends up being stuck completely.

The beastman frantically tries to extract that axe.

“Sorry—” (Shuuya)

I arbitrarily wield the magic spear while apologizing for some reason.

Once the red axe blade seizes the beastman’s head with a 「Gubyo!」, it bisected him until half way through the chest while generating a strange smashing sound.

“Hiiaaaa, h-helppp...”

There’s a voice pleading for its life from behind.

Once I turn around, the enemy, who bore lacerations on his legs, tries to flee by crawling on the ground.

The guy, who had his other leg cut off, already died after losing a large amount of blood.

Ignoring them, I recover the ancient dragon dagger I used with <Throwing>.

“Nyaa~.” (Rollo)

At that point Rollo came back.

The tentacle bone sword was still stuck in the back of the man who escaped.

Rollo places the corpse before my very eyes as if boasting about her prey.

Apparently being toyed with by the tentacle bone sword, the corpse, which was placed on the ground, is riddled with a large number of holes. Blood flowed endlessly and the robe was tinged in the colour of bloodstains.

Is Rollo waiting for a comment? She is standing still like a doll.

She stared at me with her red round and cute eyes.

“... Rollo, good work. You did well. It’s fine to release him.” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nyanya.” (Rollo)

Rollo twirls around on the spot and frolics around happily.

With this we settled it all the way.

Chapter 80 – Hidden Blade, Ice Claw

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“Uuh...” (Melissa)

Was Melissa unable to stand up due to the shock? She slowly falls on her backside by sliding down, while leaning her back against a wall. Despite being dumbfounded, she produced mumbled groans.

“Melissa, you aren't injured are you?” (Shuuya)

“Hiiii...” (Melissa)

When I approach her, she screams.
Oh, shit, her abdomen is wet due to the shock...
It doesn't look like she has an injury, but her state is slightly weird.

“Melissa, oi, what's wrong? ... No good, huh? Rollo watch her.” (Shuuya)
“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollodeen

Once the black panther hears my words, she swiftly moves her limbs and draws near to Melissa in large strides.
Since it turned dark after the magic lights created by the enemies naturally went out one after the other during that time, I had to create lights from my Triforce ring with its matching triangle on level surface for Melissa.

Although Melissa has her face looked at by the black cat, she's still in a blank state. I'm worried, but there's nothing I can do. I will prioritize the interrogation for now.

I move over to the guy who is crawling in order to try escaping with his injured legs.

"Guaaaaa."

"Oii, how about I stop stepping on you if you talk about what you were asked?" (Shuuya) "I-I got it it. Please remove your foot."

I was stepping firmly on the injured part but took my foot off him.

"So, on whose orders did you target me?" (Shuuya)

"... Oze-san and Jane-san."

Again those names, huh?

"Those two are leaders of 【Owl's Fangs】, aren't they?" (Shuuya) "Yea, it's as you say. Oze-san and Jane-san are responsible for 【Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum】."

"There's also a boss who controls the leaders, right?" (Shuuya) "There is. The boss is President Bill Sokuudo-sama. He should be in the 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】."

The wire-puller is in Pelneet?

"Did you buy my information from Belgart?" (Shuuya)

"That's right."

"I see. Well then, let's have you tell me what amount of information you obtained about me?" (Shuuya) Did the member of 【Owl's Fangs】 resolve himself? His mouth gets going after he nods.

"... In the beginning it started with the unit, which had chased after 【Scales of Gaia】, being annihilated as if they had vanished all of a sudden. ... Oze-san knew that there's no way for the enemy forces, which were missing **Strong Arm Deyma**, to have such level of spare power. "It's definitely odd", is what he said in a strong tone. Similarly Jane-san asked "Was there a **master bodyguard** who

was hired by the enemy?” That was the occasion when we noticed it first.”

From that time, eh?

These guys

【Owl’s Fangs】 apparently still don’t know what happened to the guys who hired Mysty and attacked the caravan.

hyenas

“And, after obtaining information from the thieves guild several times, Jane-san mentioned that you, the spear user, are suspicious. Then, freely using our own information network, we observed you. Jane-san, who confirmed that you stayed at a high-class inn, had an interview with the boss of Belgart and the matter with the feudal lord, judged that you are no ordinary person. ‘After the all the possibility of you being a bodyguard, who was hired by 【Scales of Gaia】, is high’, she said. That’s why we chased after the back of the spear user after receiving the order to do so.”

He leaked a variety of things.

I haven’t been officially hired by 【Scales of Gaia】 yet though.

Well then, let’s run a little experiment...

I concentrate thick mana little-by-little in the magic spear I held in my right hand while controlling the mana minutely... Ripples of mana are visible on the surface of the magic spear.

Those clung to the surface of the violet metal for a moment and the small bloody dirt fell off.

However, what I’m trying to do is something else. It’s about gathering and minutely controlling the mana towards the magic dragon gem which looks like a large, blue, clean crystal that is located at the spear’s end.

The deliberate manipulation of mana... made the mana permeate into the crystal. At that juncture the the mana makes the crystal’s body glitter with a blue colour and it shines strongly as if it obtained a soul, in the the small circle-like compass which is located in the centre of the crystal’s body. Making an ice spear, just as I have imagined, grow from the tip of that bluely shining crystal body, I formed a broadsword of blue ice which is enveloped by a thin white mist on its surface.

The power of imagination is important.

Freeze Sword

It has a name like Ice Sword.

However, my opponents should pay attention the red axe blade of the red spear, which is my standard weapon, in the beginning.

The bottom end of the ice broadsword is said to be retractable and you can call it a hidden blade.

If it's possible to use it like a gimmick, it will probably be usable for feints. However, as there are peculiarities in mana control, I have no other choice but getting used to it by practising with it little by little.

“... Ahnn, w-what's that? Won't you please save me?”

“... Who knows, I asked about what I wanted to hear. Wouldn't it be for the best if you prayed to some god?” (Shuuya) “G-God-shaamaa, heeelpp.”

“Well, such a convenient god— doesn't exist though!” (Shuuya) I swing down the magic spear, which has grown the hidden blade, as a farewell gift with an arched smile.

The double-edged blade of ice was absorbed by the chest of the crawling man without any resistance while making a crunching sound.

“Gahaa.”

Once I ceased the release of mana, the hidden blade, which popped out from the bottom end of the magic spear, vanished in an instant. Just the chest wound was left.

Blood spilled from the cut without stopping, and only cold air and the stench of blood wafted about.

Well then— now that it has come to this, it would be better to directly contact 【Scales of Gaia】?

But, that's for tomorrow and after that.

If I don't go to the headquarters of Belgart now...

I store away the magic spear while spinning it and look at Melissa's condition. As she was apparently still mentally slow, she stared blankly into empty space. Still no good, huh?

If it's a state of losing your mind for a long time like this, a simple psychological trauma and stress syndrome seems unlikely... anyway, I will have her return to sanity in a slightly forceful manner.

“Melissa, Melissa, oi, wake up!” (Shuuya)

“Nya, nya.” (Rollo)

I shook both her shoulders vehemently.

Rollo extends her tentacles and joins in shaking her.

“... Y-Ye-Yes...” (Melissa)

“Great. Did you come to yourself? Can you stand?” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yeshh. ... A, n-no, it looks hopeless...” (Melissa)

It seems to be completely hopeless for Melissa as her hip has given in and her feet are staggering.

Although she is in a Jovi Jova* state, it can't be helped. (T/N: ^{ammonia}じょひ^{smell}じょぼ – *only found Jovi Jova for that one. It's a J-Pop band that performed comedy acts, acted on television and sang songs consisting of 6 people. I think they are famous for their silliness? No idea, I didn't research them much more than reading the Japanese wiki about them xD*)

“Got it. In that case—” (Shuuya)

I hold Melissa forcibly in my hands.

I end up holding her in a princess carry.

“A-Au, that's not allowed—” (Melissa)

“Look, it's alright now. So I wonder if we shall go to Belgart's headquarters, but... Melissa, are you okay with such a pose?” (Shuuya) “Eh? Eeeh...? T-This is, umm, unpleasant... Sorry. I smell, right? This...” (Melissa) Once she realizes that her lower body part is stained with pee and in a Jovi Jova state, her cheeks are dyed red and she shrinks her body. Is she embarrassed?

“I don't mind. Shall we return to the inn where I'm staying at for now?” (Shuuya) “N-No. Ah, my home is around this neighbourhood. Can you please take me there?” (Melissa) “Understood. Please tell me the route. Rollo, come.” (Shuuya) “Nya!” (Rollo)

“Yes.” (Melissa)

We are guided through small alleys while being verbally instructed by Melissa. Being carried in my arms, she is somewhat embarrassed. Most likely she is minding the ammonia smell which stinks with a *phoo*.

Rollo, who goes ahead, turns around and waits for me who is carrying Melissa who stays small and quiet. She advanced ahead once again swinging her tail when we caught up.

For a while I proceed through alleys according to Melissa's voice while watching Rollo's appearance from behind.

"Ah, here we are. It isn't locked." (Melissa)

"Roger." (Shuuya)

We arrive at Melissa's home.

It's a small house which was built with a wooden framework in a grid pattern. I immediately open the entrance door while holding her in my hands.

"Huh? Onee-chan?"

A girl, who wore a plain one-piece, stood there.

"Ah, Erika, this person is a guest. I got his help. Let's talk later since we will head inside now, okay?" (Melissa) "Eh? Y-Yea." (Erika)

Her younger sister? She resembles Melissa a lot.

"Shuuya-san, the inner part is that way." (Melissa)

"Aah, okay." (Shuuya)

Leaving behind her younger sister at the front door, I was led to a small room and we entered it.

Since there are woman-like accessories here and there, this place is probably her room.

While being slightly nervous, I gently put Melissa on top of her bed.

"Can you move? Are you alright?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. I've calmed down for the most part." (Melissa)

Certainly, she appears to be relieved.

Her swollen cheeks look a bit slack.

"That's how it seems. Is there anything I can help you with?" (Shuuya) "It's fine." (Melissa)

"Well, then I will leave the room." (Shuuya)

“Ah, yes.” (Melissa)

Once I exited the room, her younger sister came to see me.

“Ah, hello.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, good evening.” (Erika)

“Your elder sister is inside her room.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, looks like it. Are you by any chance onee-chan’s boyfriend?” (Erika)

“Umm, it’s different. I was rejected? That’s the feeling, I guess?” (Shuuya) “Oh my, is that so?” (Erika)

At that point Melissa jumped out from her room after having finished changing.

“E-Erika~ Don’t say odd things to Shuuya-san!” (Melissa)

“Ah, Onee-chan. Just now you said that he had helped you though...” (Erika)

“Yes. That’s true. You know about my job, right? Therefore, it’s related to that.” (Melissa) “I see. It’s enough already. Since 【Belgart】’s work is dangerous, it would be best if you stopped it.” (Erika) “Er, well... there’s no way I can do such thing. Even though I’m experiencing risky ((situations)), there are people who are saved by my information after all.” (Melissa) “... Haa, that’s the usual. Even though I could calm down and feel relieved if you had powerful physical strength...” (Erika) “Fufu, Erika. Thank you.” (Melissa)

Saying that, she hugs her younger sister closely.

“Ah, onee-chan... mmh, does something smell like pee?” (Erika) “Eh? Ah! T- There’s no such thing. You are imagining it.” (Melissa) “Reaally?” (Erika)

“Nya?” (Rollo)

At that point Rollo peeked at our situation from below while looking very interested.

“Waaaaah— How cuteee.” (Erika)

Erika showed an innocent smile, caught Rollo with childish, quick movements and hugged her.

“That cat’s my partner. Her name is Rollodeen. Please call her Rollo.” (Shuuya)

“Hee, Rollo-chan. That’s lovely.” (Erika)

“Nnn, nyanya.” (Rollo)

Rollo meows displeased and escapes Erika’s embrace by twisting around. She ran away in a dash.

“Aah, Rollo-chan, that’s too soon.” (Erika)

Erika chases after Rollo.

“Fufu, jeez, Erika.” (Melissa)

“Ahaha, Rollo has become desperate.” (Shuuya)

Melissa regained her smile.

Some time ago I was worried...

I think there’s some kind of reason for her to leak pee and to be befuddled though.

However it’s a topic that’s difficult to ask...

“... Melissa, umm, why did such thing happen some time ago?” (Shuuya) “It makes you wonder, doesn’t it? I will explain the reason. Please come inside my room.” (Melissa) My hand was grabbed by her and I was taken into her room. Having closed the door with both her hands across her back, Melissa cast her face down.

From that behaviour and her expression I got an inkling that she’s trying to talk about something important.

She lifts her face, puts strength into her eyes by apparently mustering her courage and moves her lips.

“I have... for me to have reacted in such a way...” (Melissa)

Melissa takes off her clothes while while talking with a feeble voice similar to the grazing of a bird’s feather.

Her laying her upper body half bare exposed a certain fact.

Eh...? Ah, that’s how it is?

I comprehended after looking at her upper body half.

There are terrible scars on her chest and one breast was missing.

There was a fake item, in order to pretend it being a breast, embedded into the clothes she took off.

“... It’s because of this injury. In the past I was kidnapped by the religious fanatics Totogudius, 【Apostles of Blood Mark】, and in a ritual of sacrifice... I was told that it was for the sake of the King of the 10-Layered Hell, Totogudius, and my chest was pried open to steal my heart. I was rescued by the boss of a thieves guild in the middle of that ceremony. My life was saved with healing magic, but since then—” (Melissa) I didn’t want to make her talk to the end. I pick up the clothes which fell to the ground, place them on Melissa’s body and hug her over her clothes.

“I got it, thus wear these clothes.” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yes.” (Melissa)

Melissa, who was hugged by me, returned the embrace by burying her face in my violet armour and placing her arms around my waist.

“... However, bit-by-bit, please let me talk to the end while staying like this.” (Melissa) “Okay.”

“Since my life was saved by magic, I’m absolutely bad with seeing blood and being approached by men. I end up feeling excessive dread... me being mentally slow and incontinent some time ago is a consequence of that.” (Melissa) Huh? Just now...

“However, I seem to be mysteriously alright now. I’ve been embraced closely by you like this, Shuuya-san. It looks like it’s fine if it’s you, Shuuya-san... though my chest is throbbing...” (Melissa) Even if she says that, her body is trembling slightly.

Do I make her show courage?

“Are you okay? If you are fine with me, I will help you practise hugging whenever you want.” (Shuuya) “— Really? My chest is...” (Melissa)

Melissa looks up at me while looking insecure.
The boob research society is an infinite garden. It accepts everything.
Despite the smell... let me show my courage as well.

“... Idiot, such things don’t matter at all. I will embrace your heart.” (Shuuya)
“Shuuya-san...” (Melissa)

Sexual passion dwells inside her eyes.

“Melissa...” (Shuuya)

Our gazes turned towards each other’s lips. I naturally lift up Melissa and steal her charming upper lips while indulging in the gap that’s located on the surface of her soft lips.



Entangling and overlapping out tongues, we exchange saliva... of course I hugged Melissa's body closely.

“— It hurts.” (Melissa)

Damn! I got too excited.

I separate my face in a hurry. A thread of saliva is drawn from both our mouths.

“S-Sorry.” (Shuuya)

While apologizing, I lower her, whom I held tightly to lift her up, to the ground and separate from her.

“Fufu, it's fine. Please hug me gently this time...” (Melissa) “Yea.” (Shuuya)

At such good time—

“Onee-chan~, what about our guest?” (Erika)

“Aua!” (Shuuya)

startle... which reminds me, there was a younger sister.

“Erika~, wait over there.” (Melissa)

Melissa puts on her clothes in a hurry to keep up her appearance.

Once she wore her clothes, she opens the door after sending a lovely wink and revealing a smile towards me.

Behind the door was the cock-blocking* Erika who held Rollo in her chest. *(T/N: originally hindering/nuisance/obstacle as verb but I consider my term more appropriate in this situation)*

“Ehehe, I caught Rollo-chan~” (Erika)

Rollo looks completely exhausted with her whiskers hanging down and her red eyes being dilated.

“I see. Good work, Erika-chan.” (Shuuya)

Saying that, I grabbed Rollo at the scruff of her neck and placed her on top of my shoulder.

Was Rollo finally liberated? While completely exhausted, she dives inside my hood.

“Dear guest, your name is Shuuya-san?” (Erika)

“That’s right, please take care of me, cute Erika-chan.” (Shuuya) “Yes, best regards.” (Erika)

“Erika, it’s not allowed to bully Rollo-chan? As a matter of fact she is a very powerful familiar.” (Melissa) “Eeeh? Really?” (Erika)

“Correct. And I’m an adventurer.” (Shuuya)

“Hee, an adventurer, huh? Shuuya-san, you give off the feeling of being strong. How cool—” (Erika) Saying that, Erika came to cling to me. N, ooh, this child has a splendid chest. Erika-kun! You are great. You smell nicely too!

“Oh my, what a delighted expression...” (Melissa)

It was a dry voice.

“Haha... guess so.” (Shuuya)

I smile while pretending to be calm. And I looked at the owner of the dry voice.

— Hiiya, chilled air is drifting about where Melissa stands. Although she’s smiling, she has an expression that doesn’t smile.

“Shuuya-san, just now you told me that you will hug me whenever I want to, but are you actually hugging whoever?” (Melissa) “No, this now is something inevitable.” (Shuuya)

“Hu~mph.” (Melissa)

“Huuuh? Fufu, onee-chan, are you angry?” (Erika)

Since Melissa has puffed up her cheeks to some extent, it’s completely obvious.

“I-I’m not particularly a-angry.” (Melissa)

The younger sister Erika is revealing a somewhat triumphant look...

“Is that sooo? I wondered whether you might be jealous.” (Erika) Uhaa, though it’s somehow hot, the looks of the elder sister and the younger sister are clashing against each other.

Let's do a follow-up at this point.

“Heey, it's almost night. Wouldn't it be better for the two of you to go sleep?”
(Shuuya) “Ah, yea. That's right.” (Erika)

Erika separates from me obediently like a child.

“Erika, go back to your own room.” (Melissa)

“Yea. Shuuya-san, will you come with me?” (Erika)

Erika tempted me by switching from the expression of a child to that of a woman.

“Hey! Erika, don't get cocky!! That's not allowed.” (Melissa) “Hehe, I understand. I will go to my room~” (Erika)

Erika skips towards the neighbouring room after sticking out her tongue.

“Haha, a lively younger sister, isn't she?” (Shuuya)

“Eeh? Yes, indeed.” (Melissa)

Melissa nods with a smile.

... However, I ended up involving this woman who is able to enchant someone with her beautiful smile.

If I recall it now, I did something horrible at the beginning.

If I don't apologize...

“Melissa, I must apologize. I'm very sorry.” (Shuuya)

“Huh? What's it all of a sudden?” (Melissa)

“It's from the time we first met. When we exchanged information, I took out a weapon and scared you by getting close to you, Melissa. I'm sorry, okay?”

(Shuuya) I became engrossed in the bargaining to extract information.

Were her eyes wet or wasn't she just close to crying completely...? I want to hit the me from that time.

“... Aah, it's about that time? Well, I don't mind it. It's fine. Like this I was saved in “various” ways. ... Danger is an unavoidable part of working for Belgart.” (Melissa) Melissa swings her slender hand left and right. Good grief, she was able to reply with “I don't mind it” while smiling.

“You being able to say that makes me happy, but there’s also the matter of me having dragged you into a dispute between dark guilds, Melissa.” (Shuuya) “It can’t be helped. I’ve told you many times, but it’s my “job.” However, saying such thing, am I in the wrong? After all it’s “me” who spread your information through Belgart in the beginning.” (Melissa) She, who scowls and produces a stern expression, decides to show a self-satisfied look. In the end she smiled pleasantly though.

“Haha, that’s true as well. In that case we are of equal status in this regard?” (Shuuya) “Fufu, seems so, doesn’t it?” (Melissa)

“However, it’s probably for the best to inform your boss Dino-san about you being attacked, right? Besides, if you befriend me, it will result in you being targeted by 【Owl’s Fangs】.” (Shuuya) Melissa nods meekly and ponders about it.

“... Yes, I will report it tomorrow. Certainly, your information can’t be distributed carelessly anymore, Shuuya-san. If it’s about the annihilation of a 【Owl’s Fangs】 unit, we can circulate it though.” (Melissa) “If you do such thing, won’t 【Belgart】 itself end up getting dragged into the dispute?” (Shuuya) “I think this much is alright. If 【Belgart】’s headquarters got attacked, the personnel would go into dormancy while hiding. Above all, there are also other dark guilds who are fighting against 【Owl’s Fangs】. Not to mention that if they attack 【Belgart】 which isn’t a dark guild, they will just create enemies and get entangled in various complicated situations, and that will cause their own reputation to take a hit.” (Melissa) The possibility of Belgart being attacked is low, huh?

“I see. I feel slightly relieved.” (Shuuya)

“Oh, did you worry about me?” (Melissa)

“That’s natural, isn’t it...?” (Shuuya)

I answered while scratching my cheek with a finger.

“— Thank you.” (Melissa)

While stating words of gratitude, Melissa suddenly became bright with this and came to cling at me to some extent.

The soft touch of a woman is somehow transmitted even through the violet armour.

... I want to enjoy the sensation, but since I want to get in touch with 【Scales of Gaia】 who is hostile towards 【Owl's Fangs】, I need information.

“Melissa, I need a few bits of information.” (Shuuya)

“Eeh, yes. What is it?” (Melissa)

Melissa asks me with upturned eyes while clinging to me.

“Do you know the location of the office of 【Scales of Gaia】, their current headquarters?” (Shuuya) “Yes. I know of it.” (Melissa)

“Please tell me.” (Shuuya)

“Understood. Please wait a moment. I will draw a map on a leather cloth.” (Melissa) Melissa removes the hand which hugged me and sits down at a desk located in the living room.

I had her roughly draw the location where 【Scales of Gaia】' store happens to be.

“Thanks for the map. It's at the end of a backstreet off the central main street, eh? The last turf in the shopping district's sphere which keeps being protected by 【Scales of Gaia】.” (Shuuya) “Yes. You are going to head towards 【Scales of Gaia】, aren't you?” (Melissa) “Yea, just a bit ago I saved a “beautiful woman” and a “middle-aged, grim man.”” (Shuuya) “Those are “Mia of the Fireball” and “Victor the Hammer?”” (Melissa) Melissa's look completely shifted into work mode.

Her thin eyebrows are tensely slanted upwards and her blue eyes are shining sharply.

As expected of 【Belgart】, her conjecture is fast.

However, speaking of a beauty, she immediately corresponds to it, doesn't she?

“... As expected, you know them?” (Shuuya)

“That's only natural.” (Melissa)

Melissa starts to speak while putting her slender hands against her hip.

“I won't ask you what you are going to do. However, I'm certain that I'm

participating in the turning of a new page for the underworld of this 【Holkerbaum】.” (Melissa) “... Haha, it ain’t something that grandiose. Well then, it’s already late in the night. I will go back soon.” (Shuuya) “Eh? Ah, i-is it wrong for you to s-stay over today?” (Melissa) Honestly, I want to stay with her, but isn’t her younger sister...

After embracing Melissa, who cast her eyes down looking embarrassed, I whispered closely into her ears, “Next time I will turn into a wolf.” (Shuuya)

“— Ah, yes.” (Melissa)

Melissa has a red face.

I separated from Melissa leaving behind a slight after-taste of my breath.

“Well then, it will be fine if you can guide me to the headquarters of Belgart tomorrow morning. If you are busy, I will patiently wait in my high-class inn while nominating you.” (Shuuya) “Okay, as long as my work isn’t hectic, I will head over there once it’s morning.” (Melissa) I exit through the entrance door.

“Then, see you tomorrow—” (Shuuya)

In the middle of saying that, I was once again hugged closely by Melissa.

“Really, thank you very much for today.” (Melissa)

Although it’s through my back, her feelings are properly conveyed.

“Ah, I told you it’s fine.” (Shuuya)

“Nya!” (Rollo)

It seems Rollo gives an answer after making an appearance from within the hood.

“Rollo-chan, you as well, thank you.” (Melissa)

“N, nyanya.” (Rollo)

At that point I reluctantly bid farewell to Melissa.

I follow the path leading back to the high-class inn.

However, although it’s fine that I left the house of the attractive Melissa... I end up getting lost in the alleys even after using <Night Vision>. I try going back and forth on small paths.

At last I arrived at the high-class inn right at midnight in such manner and I was

able to return to my room.

Chapter 81 – The Dark Guild 【Scales of Gaia】

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Early morning of the next day.

Being led by Melissa, who had arranged to meet at the high-class inn, we arrived at the residence which serves as 【Belgart】's headquarters.

“This is the place. Let's go inside.” (Melissa)

“Okay.” (Shuuya)

Its exterior is that of a normal mansion.

However, its interior was different.

It's a huge open-ceiled hall with a wooden floor, where tables and long horizontal shelves are lined up, similar to a library.

On those shelves there are thick parchments made by various races, thin parchment with stuff written on them and rolled-up parchments which were stored away. There was someone on a stepladder trying to get a book from an upper shelf. There are men and women repeatedly discussing matters across the tables. Belgart's personnel worked while looking quite busy.

While greeting her busily working colleagues, Melissa proceeds towards an inner passage leading away from the hall.

“Usually everyone's mood is sort of cheerful, but once it becomes hectic, the personnel keeps increasing. As it has already turned into a frenzied whirl of

busyness, it's quite grave." (Melissa)

Did Melissa recall her busy times while walking through the passage? She speaks while showing a displeased expression.

As I had such a conversation with her, I was led to a room located in the inner part.

That room is a parlour which had a gorgeous interior design added to it.

It's decorated with a sofa, which was treated with high-class cowhide, a desk with inlays embedded, chairs and paintings on the walls.

An incense set, similar to a huge anthill, was dispersing aroma and was placed in the middle of the room. A round cushion chair, with a wide structure, has been installed in a circle around that incense set.

I want to get massaged by a beauty while sprawled on it.

"Negotiations and entertainment for the people from large companies are performed here." (Melissa)

Entertainment, huh? Seems like I can really get a massage here.

"Hee..." (Shuuya)

"Well then, since I have official work to do, my guiding ends here." (Melissa)

"I see. Thank you for your guidance." (Shuuya)

"Yes, please nominate me again, okay...? Please take care afterwards."
(Melissa)

"I know, see you." (Shuuya)

Once she gives a serious nod, she leaves the extravagant parlour.

Well then, what to do from now on?

Sitting down on the high-class sofa, I lightly ponder about the matters hereafter.

There's still a bit time until I can get the ticket for the **Underground Auction**.

I memorized the location of the thieves guild **【Belgart】**, which is the meeting place with the management organization of the large company.

Next is...

1.) Head to the office of **【Scales of Gaia】** and help in the destruction of **【Owl's Fangs】**'s branch. Or directly search for **【Owl's Fangs】**'s branch and destroy it.

2.) Ignore all of it, search for the raw materials of the **Withered Large Tree**, which I was requested to do by the priestess Marin, and get clues about the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Tree and the Orb of Wisdom.

3.) Simply explore outside the gate.

A no for 2.) and 3.)

After all my sole preference lies with what I've considered at first.

Even if I once again come back to Holkerbaum after finding the raw materials for the withered large tree, it's obvious that the soldiers of **【Owl's Fangs】** will search for me and attack me again.

Therefore, by intervening in the conflict between **【Scales of Gaia】** and **【Owl's Fangs】** before it is too late, I will just crush **【Owl's Fangs】**'s base in Holkerbaum and beat the leaders and soldiers there?

Besides, there's a beautiful, black-haired female guild leader in **【Scales of Gaia】**. Her name is Mia. I want to help a beautiful woman.

That is the tiny justice of me who is fully loaded with ulterior motives.

Thus I stand up from the sofa and start acting swiftly.

Taking Rollo along, we went outside from Belgart's mansion.

While looking at the leather cloth map I received from Melissa, I head towards the store grounds which serves as the headquarters of **【Scales of Gaia】**.

Entering alleys off the main road, I advance straight through crossroads.

I came out at a promenade where stone lanterns were lined up just like street lights.

If I remember correctly, it should be around here, but... there's a lot pedestrian traffic here.

Oh, found it. Though I was a bit puzzled, I arrived somehow.

A wooden store estate with a stairway attached stands there as if occupying one corner of the intersection.

A painting of scales in a bordered circle crest has been drawn in black on its side wall.

Loitering around in front of the old-styled store estate was a beastman with characteristic traits.

A cat beastman. Seems to be strong for a gatekeeper. A member of the dark guild?

Going by appearance, it's a race that combines humans and cats.

Since navy blue hair pops out here and there, although he is wearing a ‘leather armour with rivets attached’ (studded leather armour), it’s possible to judge that his entire body is covered by navy blue hair.

The four, thick-looking, arms, which he crossed in front of his chest, were covered by deep blue hair.

His imposing standing posture reminds me of those intelligent cat creatures who appear in the fairy-tale worlds of Mizayawa Kenji* (*T/N: Famous writer and poet in Japanese literature, one of his major works is “Night on the Galactic Railroad”, check him out here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenji_Miyazawa*)

What I grasp is that he is coating his arms and feet with delicately powered mana.

There are four broad leather sword belts, which were wrapped around his waist and integrated into his armour, on the left and right. Four longswords were dangling down from the waist to his thighs.

While paying attention to that cat beastman, I turn towards the front of the store grounds.

Stoneheads, which resemble garden lanterns, and huge rocks made of granite, similar to those used in traditional Japanese-styled gardens, are set up at the store front with gravestones, stone tables and stone chairs lining up there.

Nothing but an image of a stone artisan-san surges forth from this store.

However, for some reason no clerk-like personnel could be found on the first floor inside the store.

Having published a stone signboard at the front roof, it had the name 【Scales of Gaia】 carved into the stone with big letters. Just as one could understand from the merchandise and the stone-carved signboard, this wooden estate has the impression of being a stone store with a specialization in making things out of stone. However, even though they sell stones, stone isn’t used much as the house’s building material and it’s an aged wooden estate.

For starters shall I try to talk with that strong-looking cat beastman? I will approach him.

Since his three eyes are each looking in different directions, he seems to survey the surroundings.

The cat beastman put the sole of one foot against the store’s wall with his back leaning against it.

I made my mouth move while being slightly nervous.

“Umm~, is this the headquarters of the dark guild 【Scales of Gaia】?” (Shuuya)

“Haa!? What’s it all of a sudden? Who are you?”

The colour of his three pupils are light green surrounded by a dark blue.
It’s a hue close to navy blue.

Two eyes seize my figure while the remaining eye observes the vicinity.

Rather than him having three eyes, it’s more amazing for him to have four arms as well.

From among the four arms, he folded the upper two arms in front of his chest in a proud manner, extended the lower left arm straight ahead while creating a fist with its palm and already moved the lower right arm to a sword at his waist. Given that he’s touching the sword’s hilt with his fingers, it feels as if he can draw the longsword from the sword belt at his waist at any time.

Anyway, if you have that many arms, it seems to be handy in **various** ways. Though I mainly end up imaging the wild delusion of that being in the category of lechery right away...

Well then, I’m about to greet him.

“... I’m someone called Shuuya Kagari, a passing-by adventurer.” (Shuuya)

“Passing-by, you say!? What’s your business then?”

“Nya? Nyanya.” (Rollo)

Rollo, who hid in my hood, moved to my shoulder and greeted him while bending forward.

He, who is a cat beastman, apparently had an interest even in a cute black cat as he is no more than a cat after all.

“W-Who’s this fellow?”

He moved his three eyes sharply in a glaring manner and stares at the figure of Rollo.

“She is my partner, friend, familiar and pet.” (Shuuya)

“Aah— Maybe the one who talked with the guild leader and boss Victor...”

“Did you hear about it? Yes, I saved those two before. At that time you weren’t there.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, that’s correct. Sorry for my rudeness. I’m Deyma Hegway. The guild leader is on the second floor. Please, come inside.” (Deyma)

The cat beastman has suddenly become polite. His four thick arms, which were covered by navy blue hair, are pointed towards the stairway behind him.

Alongside the cat beastman, I climbed those stairs and was guided to the second floor of the store.

The second floor is a vast room in proportion to the size of the first floor. In the middle there are chairs and a deep brown, oblong table lined up, the room appears to be used as conference room. Young men are sitting on those chairs.

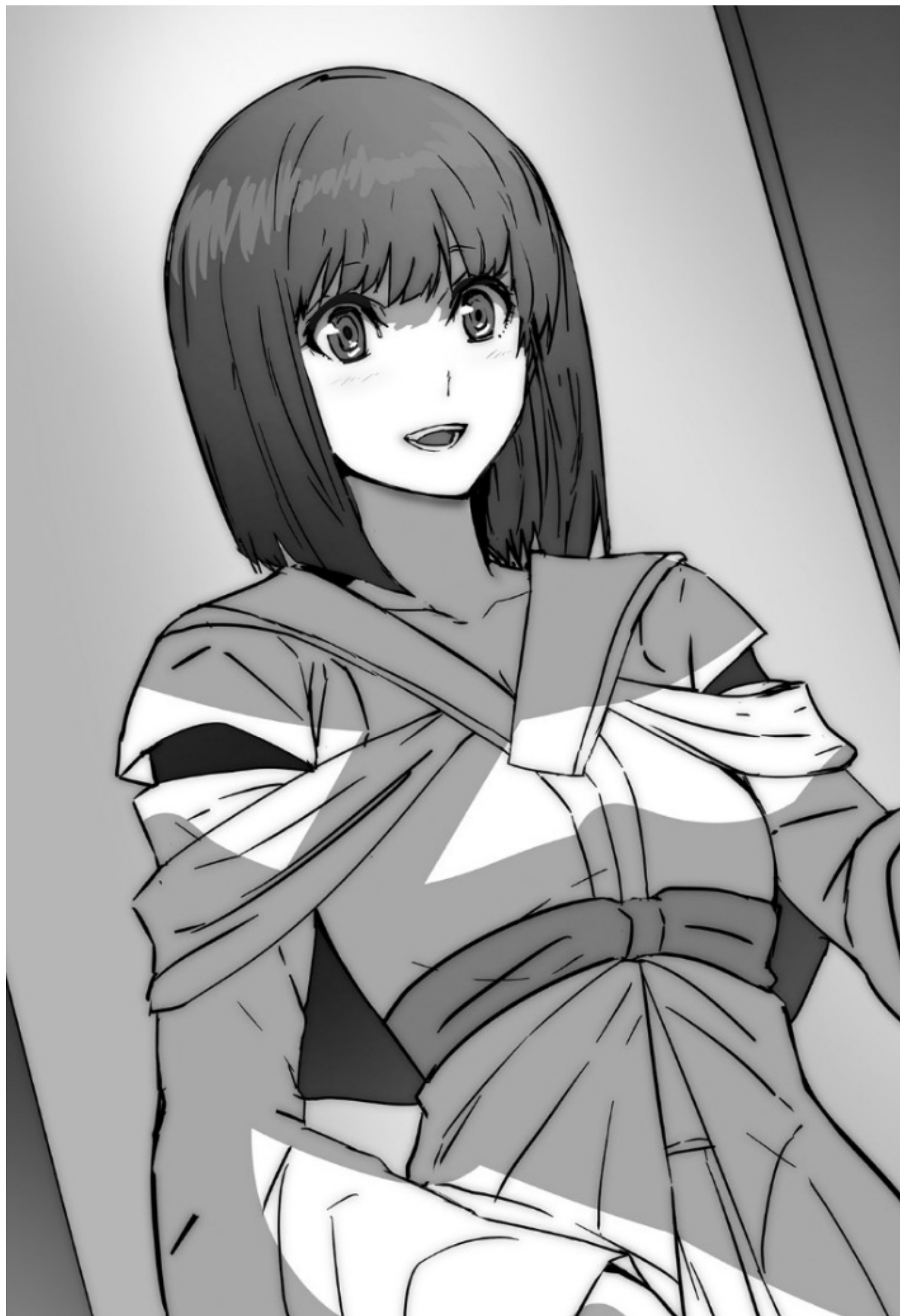
Everyone turned their attention to us who entered. Inside there’s also a large door visible.

“Guild leader! The gentleman we searched for has expressly come to us.” (Deyma)

“Eeh—” (Mia)

Once informed by Deyma with a loud voice, a female voice resounds. The large door, located inside the conference room, was vigorously opened all of a sudden.

“— Shuuya-san! We searched for you all the time since then. We tried to obtain information by even paying money to a thieves guild.” (Mia)



Ooh, as before, she is a neat and trim woman.
Her long and glossy black hair. Her black pupils with just the right size.
Her nose and lips which balanced out with her well-featured eyebrows.
Her faintly red lips are self-indulgent and could be seen as thin line.
In addition, there's a tiny birthmark on her right cheek.

"... Haha, sorry. I felt like it would be bad to stay for a long time back then."
(Shuuya)

"I'm sorry for not having taken that into consideration." (Mia)

She bowed her head while holding down the edge of her black flared skirt with its grey top with a slit at the collar.
Once Mia-san, who is the guild leader, bows, everyone at that place starts to bow their heads.

"Ah, no, I wanted to do so as well. Please raise your heads." (Shuuya)

"No, Although you are an adventurer, Shuuya-san, you are a gentleman who is my, no, this 【Scales of Gaia】's benefactor. Therefore, without even properly showing our gratitude..." (Mia)

She is quite the level-headed young lady ojou-san.
However, if she continues to bow like this, it will cause my heart to itch.
Besides, I want to see more of Mia's beautiful.

"Mia-san, please lift your head. You conveyed your feelings plentifully."
(Shuuya)

"Okay. It's not only my feelings. It spreads through every fibre." (Mia)

She says obstinately after raising her head and approaches me.

"Shuuya-san, since everyone is in this place..." (Mia)

She talks in a low voices and grasps my hand.
— At that moment, blood thirst spreads from all the scary faces of the youngsters in the vicinity.
Uhe, they apparently can't allow her grasping my hand.

“— Guild leader!? Oi, the man over there, what are you touching there!?”

Huh? The one who is touching is Mia-san as she grabbed my hand though. “What are you selfishly touching our ojou for? Rawrrr” can be heard as well. The one who raised a loud voice from behind was the beastman warrior Deyma who had guided me here a moment ago.

Changing completely from their previously shown polite attitude, he is angry while his blue hair stands on end and a blue vein visibly pops out on his forehead.

He ground his fangs while baring them.

It seems that he cannot forgive me carefreely grasping Mia-san’s hand.

“— Deyma, don’t get so angry.” (Victor)

While emitting such dignity, a lad and Victor-san appeared from the entrance behind Deyma.

There are many wrinkles, similar to knife cut wounds, on the forehead of “Victor the Hammer.”

His eyes had an unchanged glare just like the first time I saw him.

This old man has an atmosphere that seems to kill someone with just his gaze.

“Boss Victor!” (Deyma)

“Yeah. We came back from our patrol. And, Deyma, this person is really a **benefactor** who saved the guild leader’s and my life. However, it’s best if you don’t hear the reason why he saved us...” (Victor)

As if adding to Victor’s words, Guild Leader Mia’s words continue,

“That’s right. Since you weren’t there at that time, I think you don’t know, but... Shuuya-san was able to eradicate the members of 【Owl’s Fangs】, of whom there were dozens, because he liked me. If Shuuya-san wasn’t at that place then, I likely would have been raped and killed by the men of 【Owl’s Fangs】...” (Mia)

Due to guild leader Mia-san herself talking humbly, the location fell silent. The cat warrior Deyma closes his three eyes and nods.

“... Was that so? Shuuya-dono, first remove that hand. I will see that ability—” (Deyma)

“Deyma, you don’t understand even though I explained it?” (Mia)

Mia-san interrupts Deyma and accuses him with an enraged tone. It seems that Deyma wants to measure my strength.

“N-No, but...” (Deyma)

Deyma turns his three eyes at Mia-san and me while looking as if he still wants to say something.

“Jeez, it’s fine. Shuuya-san, let’s go...” (Mia)

Mia-san knits her eyebrows and stares at the beastman Deyma. As is, she puts strength into her hand and pulled me along. Due to the guild leader’s sudden action, the surroundings end up dumbfounded.

I was taken out of the conference room in a half-forceful manner. Closing the door roughly, we enter a place that seems to be the guild leader’s office.

Furthermore, opening the door that was at the right in the guild leader’s office, we proceeded through a hallway that continued straight ahead.

There are stairs at the end of the hallway with its wooden planks. Descending the stairs, she selfishly continues to walk along another hallway again.

“Mia-san, where are we going?” (Shuuya)

“Just follow me.” (Mia)

Well, the sensation of being grabbed by a beautiful, slender hand is pleasant. The place she took me along to was a private room which is located in a corner of the first floor.

It contains huge bookshelves, a writing desk, a chair and a bed.

I discover a tattered doll made out of wood near the pillow on her bed.

Rather than ladylike, it’s a room where a girlishness dwells in all corners.

This is her own room?

A white one-piece on the back of the chair and clothes which appears to be an uniform with a hood attached, hung at the wall.

Of course it’s not an uniform that’s worn by modern female high-school students.

It might have a resemblance to those, but by its appearance one can

understand that it's completely the clothes of a student of a Magic Academy.

It probably suits Mia-san if she wears it.

It complies with her neat and trim image.

Perhaps it's an outfit I'd like her to wear as cosplay.

While imagining such erotic stuff, I examined the room.

There are document parchments, an accessory case and writing tools on the desk.

The contents of the accessory case were a gadget similar to a hourglass, a small jar of incense, a ribbon hair ornament, a large toilet set and a quill pen.

It's the room of a girl after all.

However, on a bookshelf located on the desk there are:

"The Illusionary Kingdom at the Depths of the Earth"

"Subjugation Chronicle of the Evil King of Depravity Totok Gol by Hero Mutou"

"The Death of Hero Mutou who experienced the Wrath of Totogudius"

"The Love between Ayla and the Evil Knight Velzey who was caught in the
Vale
Interstice"

"Morning Star Saideyl's Immortal Love"

"The Eight Sword and the Eight Spear God Kings"

"The gentle Tiger who boasts of a fierce god-like strength"

Continuing from books of the literary type, it switches over to books related to magic.

Gods and Stars, The Disgrace of Interstice, The Phenomenon of Eyesight Loss by
Vale

Void Magic Resonance, Wizards and the Interstice, The Transcendence in the
Vale

Interstice and Methods to connect with the World of Spirits and the World of the Dead, Life and Comrades, Immortality of the Soul, Life and Death, The Road to Seuros, The Wall against the Demons, Existence and Nature, An Anthology of Lamentation, Resonante's Boarding School Guide.

Books, which are mixed with works related to complicated-seeming philosophy, are lined up.

According to the imagination from these book titles, the philosophers of
Sera

this world likely have a great variety of discussions. They carry the credibility of stories related to the Hades of Socrates and such. Since the gods and magic exist close to them, it rather turns into a study of religion than philosophy?

However, it looks like Mia-san went to some academy before becoming the guild leader.

Her head is likely better than mine.

“... This is my room. Sorry for bringing you here all of a sudden. It’s bad towards Deyma, but since it’s easier to grant you your reward here, Shuuya-san, and in addition, it’s logical* that you receive it from me directly.” (Mia)

Muscle*, muscle, does she like hard muscles? (T/N: Word play here as suji (筋) has various meanings and two of them are logic and muscle)

I will praise her in a safe way without messing around and asking her that.

“This is a cute room.” (Shuuya)

“Really? Since I haven’t seen the rooms of girls my age much...” (Mia)

A shadow befalls her expression.

The information I was told by Melissa passes through my mind.

Both her parents were done in by leaders of 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 which were hired by 【Owl’s Fangs】 and because of that the novice Mia-san became the guild leader of a dark guild...

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

When I recalled the talk about her past, Rollo jumped on the bed.

Rollo, as usual, appears to love this playing around.

Every time she sees something that looks soft like a couch or bed, she will always do “this.” Once she gets tired of hopping up and down, she trots to the pillow while being caressed on her head.

“— Fufu, how cute, black cat-san. It was Rollo-chan, right?” (Mia)

“Yeah.” (Shuuya)

“Nya?” (Rollo)

She turns her round and cute red eyes at Mia-san.

“What do you want nya?” It might be something like that.

“Oh my, she listens and understands properly.” (Mia)

“Nn.” (Rollo)

The black cat purrs shortly with a throaty voice while looking troubled.

It felt as if she said 『That's natural nya』.

Just like that she completely curls up on top of the pillow.

“Oh, she went asleep.” (Mia)

“Rollo is selfish, sorry...” (Shuuya)

“No, it's fine. Rather than that, please sit down on the chair over there or the bed. I want to have a serious talk.” (Mia)

“A serious talk with me?” (Shuuya)

Just as I was told, I sit down on the edge of the bed.

Mia-san sat down on the bed as well and looked at me.

Her expression changes into a serious one.

Will we kiss and embrace each other?

However, she looks at me with unwavering, black pupils.

I don't have such intention... sorry.

Her pupils light brown to close to black. I feel as if the deep darkness of her heart keeps appearing and disappearing within her pupils.

“... I'm truly happy that you were able to rescue us. You have my thanks as well. However, originally you are an adventurer, Shuuya-san. There was no request neither do you belong to a dark guild. You told us that “you like me” as reason for saving us even though **you have absolutely no relation to us**. However, as that seems to be truth, why did you expose yourself to such danger?” (Mia)

That doubt is reasonable. The reason is that I have a mind that doesn't consider danger to be dangerous.

As a matter of fact, even if I get injured, I will heal it. Since I dislike pain, I will pick evasive manoeuvres though.

The rest is my conceited self-satisfaction and my mindset of half-baked meddling.

Although there are various other aspects, after all, this is the most natural and simple answer.

“... I wanted to rescue you. It's because I thought I “want to save Mia-san.””
(Shuuya)

“Me...?” (Mia)

I notice that her snow-like white skin gets faintly dyed red.

“Is it no good if it’s only that?” (Shuuya)

“No, you are a “gentle one”, Shuuya-san. Got it— Here you have 20 gold coins. I can’t give you anymore than this currently, but it’s the reward for having saved us.” (Mia)

She takes money out of a hidden cash-box from below the bed and offers it to me.

There were other sturdy-looking chests visible below the bed, too.

Is it fine to show those to me, I wonder?

Although she was saved by me, I feel that it’s too careless, but...

It’s because she seems to be a earnest child.

Well, it would be best to accept it properly if it’s her gratitude?

“... I certainly received it.” (Shuuya)

“That’s great. You accepted it properly...” (Mia)

“Why?” (Shuuya)

“That’s a matter of my pride. Although I’m small, I still lead a dark guild.”
(Mia)

Changing her look slightly, she gazes at me sharply.

“Well then, let’s return to above.” (Mia)

It’s my opportunity. I shall tell her at once.

“Wait. There’s something I want to talk about before that.” (Shuuya)

It’s an important matter.

“What is it?” (Mia)

“It has been decided that I will fight against **【Owl’s Fangs】**. As a matter of fact, I intruded on this place with the intention to tell you that.” (Shuuya)

“Eh? Even if you tell me who received your help, what is that about... I’m against it. There no further necessity for you, Shuuya-san, who is an adventurer, to get involved in a battle between dark guilds.” (Mia)

I shouldn't get involved? That's a harsh way of talking.
However, she seems to misunderstand something.
It's inevitable since I would go attack 【Owl's Fangs】 right away even if she refused it.
Do I have to explain?

"Getting involved or not. I was attacked by 【Owl's Fangs】 on the way to the city here. By the way, that's before I rescued you in the back alley, Mia-san. Thanks to them, a great number of adventurers, who received the same request, died." (Shuuya)

"Nya." (Rollo)

Rollo also purrs while being apparently disgusted.

"S-Such a..." (Mia)

"There was a skirmish even after I rescued you, Mia-san. Therefore you can't say that I'm not related to this anymore. In other words, I will assist 【Scales of Gaia】..." (Shuuya)

The moment I stated such, she changed completely.

"— That's not allowed!!! I don't want to drag you, who is an adventurer, into the fight with 【Owl's Fangs】!" (Mia)

She is persistent.

She scolds me. Did I incur her wrath? Her voice is loud and offended.

"Well, since I told you what I wanted to tell you, I will go back to above."
(Shuuya)

"Ah, I will go back, too." (Mia)

And then we return to the office on the second floor after ascending the stairs from the hallway.

Once we enter the meeting from the guild leader's office, Deyma bows to me and tells me in passing "sorry" for just now. The young members of 【Scales of Gaia】 bowed to me one after the other.

They are a busy bunch in getting angry and apologizing for it.

Without complaining about trivial matters, I dealt with them normally.

“Since you understood it, please lift your heads.” (Shuuya)

“No, Shuuya-san, you are the guild leader’s precious person. Being rude to such a person is...”

Precious person? They seem to misunderstand something...
Even when I check Mia-san’s face, she only slants her face while looking strangely.

Well, even if they misunderstand, it’s all good.

I told them no more than I wanted... I decide to go back.

Ah, shall I ask where I can find the leaders of 【Owl’s Fangs】?

I turn my face towards Mia-san who is in the back.

“Mia-san, do you know the location of the branch of 【Owl’s Fangs】, their office?” (Shuuya)

Hearing that, she glares at me while her eyebrows twitch.

“What will you do after hearing about that?” (Mia)

She has no intention of telling me?

Even though it’s fine if she tells me as they are hostile anyway.

In that case, I guess I will ask Melissa?

“I don’t have any plans to tell you... well then, I will go back to my inn at this point today.” (Shuuya)

Saying that, I leave the office of 【Scales of Gaia】.

I go directly to the headquarters of 【Belgart】 to meet with Melissa.

However, the mansion of Belgart is crowded and overflowing with people. By no means was it a place where I could specifically call out to Melissa in private.

Did they suddenly receive some big job?

It can’t be helped. I will go back to the inn.

I judge that it’s probably the best if I call her out as courtesan.

However, being busy with work even when it became night, Melissa didn’t come.

Entering the bath early on that day, I spend my time laid-back while brushing Rollo.

— The next day.

Even if I go to the headquarters of Belgart, there's a bit of a distance. Since I believed that Melissa was busy, I once again intruded upon 【Scales of Gaia】. Once more I talk with Mia-san in a polite manner while keeping a low profile about me assisting their side.

"That's rejected." "I won't allow it."

"Go and hunt Parpii at the quarry where the slaves are labouring."

"If you like, how about cutting stones at the quarry by blending in among the slaves?"

"Like an adventurer, you should also go for large dragonflies."

Determinedly she was harsh while using a firm tone.

At that time there is the sound of someone running up the stairs next to the office.

The door was opened strongly.

"Guild Leader! Victor-san! It's terrible!" (Akoos)

"Akoos, what's wrong?" (Victor)

Victor the Hammer stands up and listens.

^{raid}
"It's an attack group of 【Owl's Fangs】! They have gathered in front of the promenade." (Akoos) *(T/N: The "raid" has the meaning of an attack against a hostile criminal organization)*

"What did you say!!? How many soldiers?" (Victor)

An instantaneous wrath.

A vein appears on Victor-san's forehead due to his temper.

I had a feeling that his wrinkles swelled up.

"T-That is, the figures of both the leaders, Oze and Jane, were seen as well. The soldiers exceed 100 and are close to 200...?" (Akoos)

Is the reddish-brown haired Akoos scared? He covered his face while reporting.

Next, Victor the Hammer speaks while raising his tone.

"The leaders, too? Damn! Even the soldiers, if it's such number, it's the same as an army. Besides, if Oze and Jane came out expressly, we have to resolve ourselves as well. Deyma, we will go. They can't be allowed to go beyond the

promenade.” (Victor)

“Aye! Previously I was only protecting. This time I will go nuts. Even if I lose all of my four arms for example, I will crush 【Owl’s Fangs】!!” (Deyma)

Deyma swings his four arms in circles and shows his well-developed biceps. Leaking his fighting spirit causes the surrounding to get animated.

“I will too, with magic—” (Mia)

“No, because of what has happened last time, please stay here, ojou.” (Victor)

Mia is surprised at Victor’s objection.

She bluntly reveals an expression of disagreement which tells “Even in this situation?”

“Why? It will be advantageous if there’s magic. Can’t my fire magic be treated as extreme rank which surpasses advanced level? I should be able to reduce a great number of enemies in one go if it’s handled skillfully.” (Mia)

“No, didn’t you end up getting isolated last time due to that? Besides... this time there are **leaders** among the enemies. It’s different from until now. I probably have to battle while putting my life on the line—” (Victor)

“In that case, that’s all the more—” (Mia)

“You must not! — Ojou! Please listen.” (Victor)

Victor apparently doesn’t have any intention to listen to her arguments anymore. He interrupts Mia’s sentence.

“It’s possible that there’s an unit which will come to directly attack this store here. Besides, if me and Deyma don’t fight while standing at the front, we won’t be able to defend against this time’s enemy. I entrust this place to you, ojou. If there’s an opportunity... run away, no... this place is the last store of your predecessor, isn’t it?” (Victor)

It felt like Victor wanted to say something to Mia at the end.

He corrected and rephrased it in the middle of his statement, but his eyes are slightly wet.

Maybe... he has resolved himself for death?

“Victor-san, I will protect the guild leader here.” (Akoos)

Does the reddish-brown haired Akoos intend to show his bravery after seeing Victor's expression? He talks with a sharp look as if showing it to Mia-san. Oh? Reddish-brown haired man, did you somehow suppress a laughter just now?

Protecting the female guild leader, do you want to show off your good parts or such?

"Got it, I will leave some troops with you, Akoos. Protect the ojou here."
(Victor)

Mia-san slowly shuts her eyes and ponders.
And, opening her eyes, Mia-san made one step forward while revealing a grim face.

She looks around and glares at all present.

Scenes from "**Yamato Nadeshiko**" and "**Gokudou no Onna-tachi**" float in my mind. (T/N: First is a TV series – Yamato Nadeshiko is generally used as term describing women who display the virtues of old Japan – and the second is a yakuza movie from 1986 where women seem to play the major role)

"... Victor, I understand. Deyma, everyone, I won't tell you to not die. Instead of that, please exterminate 【Owl's Fangs】. Show them the pride and backbone of 【Scales of Gaia】. Let's avenge my father Ranzel, my mother Chichka and my elder sister Totoka who loved me!" (Mia)

"Yes!!!"

"L-Leader!!!"

"Leader, I will do it."

"Leader!! Me too."

"Leader." "Leader!!" "I will, too, leader!" "Leader!!!"

The young men fire themselves up by yelling "Leader" severally.

"You guys, did you hear the leader's spirit? We will show them the willpower of Gaia!"

"Let's goooooooooo."

Victor and Deyma released powerful words with sparks of fighting spirit and

the sounds of them vigorously descending the stairs to run outside could be heard.

The young men, who were on the second floor, follow them as well.

Only me, Mia-san, Akoos and five of the troops, who are led by him, remained in the room.

Owl

Just right... the opponents I tried to attack came by themselves.

From the beginning it was me who decided to assist Gaia. Shall I go all out?

Chapter 82 – Battle without Honour and Humanity in the Garden Lantern Avenue

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“Well then, me too.” (Shuuya)

“Shuuya-san, will you as an adventurer once again plunge into danger?” (Mia)

Mia-san voices such a question while showing a sorrowful expression. This person has been like this the whole time for a while now. Being rescued is detestable to her.

“Is that how it will turn out, I wonder? It looks like you have some complaints, but those are for next time...” (Shuuya)

I talk with Rollo who was on my shoulder. At that point I part from Mia after lightly waving one hand towards her. Leaping out from the conference room, I descend the stairs while hurrying. I search for the figures of Victor and Deyma. The battle has already started in front of the stone lanterns at the store front. It's a fierce fight with war cries being hurled about. This is a war. Having broken the stone lanterns of the promenade, humans and beastmen yell and kill each other. They cut each other with hatchets and longswords, brandish spears and knock

each other down with mallets or their bare hands.

Countless corpses are scattered on the ground, and puddles of blood were created all over.

According to the Laws of Lanchester, a war is decided by the numbers, or so it says, but it seems to be really true.

The dark-brown group of enemies is obviously the one applying pressure.

I joined the battle late. Immediately ten-odd people, who were smeared with blood and revealed crazed expressions, gathered in groups in my vicinity.

Sensing the atmosphere of a battle, Rollo jumps off my shoulders with her hairs standing on end and changes into a black panther without a sound and bared her fangs. In an instant she extended her tentacle bone swords towards a dark brown enemy, who was closing in, and killed him after stabbing his head and torso. Furthermore, she moves around by jumping around with her powerful limbs.

She already went for the next prey.

Haeeh, as expected... you are going to show a part of your divinity as a divine beast.

“This guy is an unarmed idiot, get ‘im!”

I ignore the bullshit. While feeling some fighting spirit to do my best as well, I summon the Magic Spear.

The dark-brown robed bastard, who made fun of me, gets startled and opens his eyes wide due to the sudden appearance of a weapon while he is extending his sword, but it's too late.

I swung the magic spear, which I summoned, diagonally at him and caused the red blade to directly hit the area below the robed bastard's belly. Just like that his body was divided horizontally into two parts and I caught them with a rope in one go.

While his entrails are being scattered and his blood dances in a circle as I rotate the two pieces of flesh, which were originally one, several times in mid-air, enemies preparing to release arrows, enter my field of vision.

Since they are ranged-type enemies, they get priority.

I shoot <Chain> at the archers.

The chains plunge forward as if creeping along the ground. Piercing the feet of the archers, the chains swallow their bodies by coiling around them and kill

them.

There were several archers, but it doesn't seem like there are any magicians. Their numbers are still many.

Stabbing the red spear part of the Magic Spear into the ground, I jump into the crowd while treating the magic spear as pole vault— With a 「Nun!!!」 I perform a drop-kick while releasing a voice filled with fighting spirit causing the dark-brown robed archers to be blown away. Right after that, I swept up the magic spear from the ground and carry out a rotational slash towards the surroundings. The red axe blade dived into the crowd of enemies, who have come to attack, and several of them were slaughtered in one breath. Immediately following that, an enemy who was in my vicinity, shows his back and starts to run away at full speed.

Do you think I will let you get away!? Kicking the ground, I shorten the distance to the escaping guy in an instant and swing down the end of the Magic Spear at his back— The mass of the magic blue dragon gem at the butt end seizes his back flesh and crushes the spine.

Did the other escaping enemies judge that it's pointless even if they run away? They stopped moving as if they have resolved themselves to their fate. They shortened the distance and prepared their specialized weapons, but since I'm restraining them by swinging my magic spear in circles, they can't get close. However, that's my aim.

Since they stopped moving, I mowed down the soldiers close-by while preferentially bringing them down with chains. Having reaped the feet of several, I invoke the hidden blade by charging the magic gem at the end of the magic spear with unadjusted mana without looking back. The chests of several people, who approached from the back, were pierced by the suddenly extending ice broadsword.

“Hiiii, does he also have eyes in the back!! Damn it—”

Is it in desperation? A man throws his sword at me while screaming. Defending against the thrown sword by shielding against it with <Magic Hand guided by Thought> in a hurry, I grab the sword with a Hand of Distorted Mana in reverse and throw it back.

That caused a new sword to grow from the nether region of the guy who threw

his sword.

“Ahiya.”

It’s a strange shriek of death agony.

And then, diving into an area densely packed with enemies, I mow them down with the magic spear.

The red axe blade looks as if a flame has been lit.

Each time it ran through an airspace, a flash of sparks blows up.

One after another several people are slain.

Cut, avoid, hit, dodge, pull and thrust.

As if saying that, the battlefield was dominated by crimson flashes. One by one, the dark-brown enemies, who fight against me, continue to be slaughtered.

This guy is the last one around this area.

“Hiiaaa, d-don’t c-co-come t-this w-w-wayyyy!”

I invoke <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

Since he tried to run away as well, I stopped his movements by grabbing his feet from behind with the **Hand of Distorted Mana**.

“W-Wha, I can’t move!—”

After skewering the immobile man’s back by piercing it with the spear, I pull out the Magic Spear and kick the corpse to the left side— With this, I killed all the enemies in the surroundings.

I defeated 50-100 of them?

Confirming the vicinity... garden lanterns were torn off... the ground was drenched in blood, corpses and entrails were scattered about and pools of blood had formed.

... A heterogeneous scenery.

The enemy only avoids my vicinity.

It can’t be helped, I preferentially rushed at the enemy at places with few allies. It was true that 【Scales of Gaia】 recovered its momentum after me joining, but it’s inevitable that the number of allies is too scarce, even with an uncertain element like me.

The young men have died one after the other.

At that moment I caught sight of the site where Victor and Deyma are fighting

fiercely.

Victor is fighting against a swordsman who wields two swords.

He parries the sword attacks with his large hammer. Given that he unleashes hammer strikes causing shock waves that can be considered to come from the repelling or from a skill, the battle can be seen as equal on a first look, but since his movements dull each time he suffers an injury, I was able to judge that he's getting overwhelmed.

While Deyma is surrounded by a woman who uses a whip, and dark-brown soldiers, he is putting up a good fight, no, are his injuries that bad? He fought while retreating.

Both of them are in for a hard fight.

Shall I help Deyma whose injuries are terrible? I dash towards Deyma's direction.

While running, I throw a dagger I took out from my chest belt, with <Throw>.

— It restrains the whip woman.

While the whip user repels the ancient dragon dagger with her whip, she moves her body back.

Seeing that— I release <Chain>.

I make <Chain> entwine around the feet of one of the soldiers surrounding Deyma. Lifting the man who had his feet entangled with the chain, I threw him at the other dark-brown soldiers.

Since I was able to create a gap, I accelerate even further to get close to Deyma. I aim from behind at another one of the soldiers surrounding Deyma.

I stretch out the Magic Spear directly ahead while running.

It's a normal spear thrust and not <Thrust>, but the spear penetrates the back of the dark-brown robe.

“— Gueeh.”

The blood smeared red spear protruded out from the soldier's chest in front of his eyes.

“Sorry, you saved me!” (Deyma)

Even while being attacked, Deyma expresses his gratitude.

However, there are several traces of Deyma's abdomen being pierced by countless swords and spears. Blood spilled out from those wounds and a part of

his entrails was visible.

The wounds are deep—

However, Deyma's eyes haven't died yet.

Just as the enclosure collapsed completely due to my attacks, he bends down and kills a dark-brown enemy, who was confronting him in front, with a sword attack of his four arms.

The cat beastman Deyma switches over to crossing swords with the enemy group as is.

Although I try to protect him as well— A whip attack shaved off the ground with a *slap* in order to stop my momentum.

“— You, you are a spear user, you are the magic spear user Shuuya Kagari!”
(Jane)

The whip user yells after she fixed her stance.

This one is the whip user who cornered Deyma and his four arms?

She's a beauty with fox eyes. Her voluptuous breasts are nice as well.

“Who are you then?” (Shuuya)

“Hmph, my name is Jane Slaib. I'm one of those entrusted with this place—”
(Jane)

The whip user raises one arm.

Once she did so, the the thorny end of the whip approached my face at high speed.

— Tsk, although I avoid the whip at that time, the whip's tip is fast.

It was able to cause an injury on my cheek.

One after the other, attacks from the flexible whip are unleashed at me.

Not just this thorny part but the “whip” itself seems to be made out of iron or steel.

— What a beautiful woman. Her breasts shaking each and every time is great as well.

I didn't want to encounter her as enemy.

However, even if she might be a beauty, I will make her regret turning her weapon at me.

Though I possess such confident notion...

— Taking distance is difficult.

Each time Jane, who showed an evil smile, swings her arm up and down, the irregularly moving whip heads in my direction continuously— *slap* — *slap*. Each time I dodge and avoid, ochre soil is gouged out.

— The whip’s trajectory is irregular and hard to read.

“Ahahaha, you are skilful at evasion, aren’t ya!? But, how about this?” (Jane)

While continuing the whip attacks with one arm, Jane rolls up her skirt with the other arm and exposes her thighs. “Another whip” was attached at her thigh, tied to her black garter belt.

She swiftly picks up that whip.

Dual-wielding whips, huh?

Jane moved the steel whips, she held in both hands, alternatively.

The two steel whips draw near like snakes.

— Her tits are bouncing.

— Oops, I was slightly late in dodging and the upper part of my violet armour was grazed.

This woman, although she’s a beauty, what she does is nasty.

I don’t have spare time to think about funny stuff.

Moreover, Jane’s figure was blurry due to her being hidden by a cloud of dust. She seems to blow up and shave off the dirt with her whip dance.

“How about this, eh? It’s difficult to see me, right? Spear User! You have utterly killed my soldiers... I won’t let you die easily!!” (Jane)

The ground is hollowed out with slapping sounds.

The infinite barrage of whip attacks doesn’t stop.

The continuous attacks of the two whips— I continued to dodge and evade them.

Certainly, I’m only showing a composed expression. This is troublesome.

However, it was still a barrage.

Thanks to that, I was also able to grasp the distance.

Well then, is that the start of the counter-attack? Long-range against long-range.

First, a restraining <Throw>— I aim for the woman’s head.

I threw several daggers. Although they will be repelled by the whips, I don’t mind.

I invoke <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and at the same time also <Chain>. And, I myself will rush at her as well— I began to run towards Jane. The whips approach from right and left, but <Magic Hand guided by Thought> defends by grabbing the whip on the right side. The other whip, which drew close from the left side, was blocked by getting entangled by <Chain>. With this both whips were sealed. And, I approach the defenceless Jane.

“Hiii.” (Jane)

Those are whip user Jane’s last words. The twisted spear part of the Magic Spear. — It penetrated the woman’s chest with <Thrust>. Due to the thrust, a round-shaped wound is created at the chest part of the leather armour. Tearing off the leather, Jane’s chest becomes exposed, but her plump breasts were cruelly and hideously burned and began to carbonize. Right in the centre there was a big, pitch black, drilled hole. Blood spews out from the round-shaped wound. Jane lets go of her whips and collapses while showing a pained expression. With this one of the leaders was dead. Therefore I check the surroundings. It was right at the moment when Deyma cut down the last remaining soldier of 【Owl’s Fangs】 on the right side. However, just as he defeated the soldier, he staggers and collapses.

“Deyma!” (Shuuya)

I got close to the fallen Deyma. It was probably a hard struggle for him. In the vicinity the soldiers, who wore dark-brown robes, were turned into corpses while easily exceeding 10 people. While bearing those injuries, he defeated such a number of people...? But, Deyma was also at death’s door now.

“Oi, are you alright?” (Shuuya)

“D-Did you get that whip woman?” (Deyma)

Deyma is talking, but each of his three eyes is moving without focus.

“Rather than that, I will take out medicine now.” (Shuuya)

“N-No, all’s good. Leaving that aside, did you get her?” (Deyma)

“Yea, I finished her off...” (Shuuya)

“Hehe, I-I see. I-It was a short t-time, but I-look after, gufuuoa, I-le-leader, I lea... you. To-o-o, lead, leav...” (Deyma)

With a low voice, he leaked his last words from between his blood-smeared teeth while being painful to look at.

Deyma of the Four Arms passed away.

“— Got it. Just this fight you have entrusted to me.” (Shuuya)

Deyma’s three eyes with their dilated pupils were still open.

I silently extended a hand and closed the eyelids from top to the bottom eyes.

— Rest in peace.

“Nyanya~” (Rollo)

At that point Rollo returned with her whole body drenched in blood.

Three corpses each are hanging down from her tentacle swords. She seems to have brought them by dragging them along.

Once she casts away her prey’s corpses, she shakes her body and blood is sent flying to the surroundings.

“Don’t do that close to mee—” (Shuuya)

Wiping the blood, I drink some of it while at it.

“Nya?” (Rollo)

“No, rather than that, you killed an amazing number...” (Shuuya)

“Nnn, nyaan.” (Rollo)

She is bragging.

Rollo answers by turning around in circles at the spot.

At that moment I hear footsteps running over here.

The response of one magic source, footsteps of one person as well.

I separated from Deyma's corpse and Rollo took distance, too.

The one who came running is the man holding two swords who fought with Victor some time ago.

"Hey, Jane, were you done in...? Are you going to die in this place!? What about your usual hysteria? The one who refined the strategy is you, right!?"
(Oze)

As soon as the man who came running, saw the corpse of the whip user Jane, he rushed over to the corpse while holding his two swords and shouted that as tears gathered in his eyes.

"Rollo, this guy seems to be an expert. I will handle him myself." (Shuuya)

"Nya." (Shuuya)

Rollo takes some distance, climbs on top of a stone lantern which collapsed in the back, sits down while putting her legs together and takes the stance of a spectator.

"... The one who killed Jane was you?" (Oze)

The man holding two swords asks that while looking at me with **bloodshot eyes**.

He had a small build and wore a reddish-brown mantle over his back.

As result of that hue, he seems to be blood-coloured all over.

Since he is actually wearing a leather armour with rivets attached and blood clinging to it, I probably seem to feel like that.

— He has a dark bloodthirst.

Blood is trickling down from the point of the long and narrow sword in his right hand.

What he is grasping in his left hand is a shortsword, that shines with a special silver-blue colour, with a size in-between a dagger and a longsword.

Either are special-use swords?

Him having coming here apparently means that Victor the Hammer was done in.

"... That's right." (Shuuya)

I replied curtly.

“Are you the spear user? It ended up happening as Jane mentioned...” (Oze)

Even if you talk about such stuff, I don't know about it and I don't want to know about it either.

No, even if I get irritated here, there's no point in that.

I shall ascertain in a calmer manner.

While I question myself like that, I prepare the Magic Spear I grasped with my right hand.

Extending the left arm, which has an arm protector equipped, quietly in front, I provoke him by moving my fingers a bit.

“Enough of the tedious talk, right? Come.” (Shuuya)

“Hmph, so you know what I mean. Here comes **Oze of the Silver-Blue**, Oze Sarigan.” (Oze)

Huh? Oze introduced himself and bowed as if having a polite match.



「青銀のオゼ、
オゼ・サリガンが参る」

黒いオーラに縁取られたオゼは
右手に握られた細い長剣、
レイピアとグラディウスを合わせたような
特殊剣をゆつたりと動かす。
何かの剣法を感じさせる。
だが、注目すべきは、あの左手に持つ短剣だ。
やはり、色的に魔法の短剣か？

“Thief God of the Dark Night Noctar — I swear. I offer this guy’s blood and flesh to Jane’s soul who likely resides in the realm of the dead.” (Oze)

Once he yells that in a loud voice towards the sky, dark steam gushes forth from his entire body with a *swoosh*.

What’s that? God’s grace?

Oze, who was covered by a black aura, grabbed the thin longsword in his right hand and moved the special sword, which seem to match with a rapier or a gladius, in a relaxed manner.

However, what I ought to notice is the shortsword he holds in his left hand.

Going by its appearance it’s a magic shortsword after all?

Once I check it with my Magic Observation Eyes, red and blue magic characters are being created, as if swirling around on the shortsword’s blade. I realize from the unique light it’s releasing.

He took a stance of putting his left foot a bit in front while changing the angles of the shortsword and the one-handed sword.

It’s a stance peculiar to dual wielders.

He moves his green eyes around in order to grasp me. Oze gradually shortened the distance while keeping it at a set range and showing a composed smile.

He seems to be a careful fellow.

It looks like he won’t easily succumb to provocation.

Extending my Magic Spear unable to take a wait-and-see attitude, I start with a normal thrust.

As if he had waited for that thrust, Oze repels the spearhead of the Magic Spear with the silver-blue shortsword. And, he quickly stabbed his narrow longsword towards my chest in a smooth motion.

riposte

— His counter is fast.

Warding off Oze’s sword thrust with the centre of the Magic Spear, I release a lower kick. While dodging that with a slight jump, Oze swings down the longsword from an overhead stance in order to strike my head.

I turned that overhead attack aside to the left with the top part of the magic spear— While a sound of metal clashing resounded, Oze stabbed the shortsword, he held in his left hand, towards my face as he closed the distance

to me even further.

— A sharp series of thrusts.

Following his alias of Silver-Blue, it creates a trajectory of silver-blue flashes.

I kept evading it by moving my head left and right in order to see through it.

— I receive one then two lines of horizontal cuts on my face.

Gah, ouch, it's freezing? Cold?

Next the longsword approaches my chest with an irregular trajectory— I retreat while dodging that by shifting my body left and right.

I moved forward slightly in order to relax towards the left— Violet sparks scattered due to Oze's shortsword and longsword attacks on my overcoat.

I also feel like my mana decreased a bit after I sensed something like a freezing chill from the shordsword's wounds I received on my face.

It might have been absorbed by that shortsword.

If I get close to my opponent, the shortsword is a nuisance, isn't it?

I took a bit of a distance with my Magic Battle Feet.

“— Incredible! If you receive even a small wound from this shortsword, one's mana will be absorbed. Even though you should be **dizzy**, your expression hasn't changed... Mmh, the injury is regenerating!?” (Oze)

It seems he noticed that my face injury is regenerating.

“Aah, that's a special condition of my body.” (Shuuya)

“Oi, oi... really?” (Oze)

Oze is surprised at my regeneration speed.

Rather than that, I had an interest in the 'magic shortsword' which Oze possesses.

“What's that shortsword? Is it magical?” (Shuuya)

Was there leeway in my wording? Oze changes his expression into a broad grin.

“Yes, just as you say... are you worried after all? This magic is—” (Oze)

Did Oze try to lure me into an instant of negligence? Before saying the remaining words, he wields the longsword as if fencing and starts a barrage of thrusts while advancing.
anew

I once again repeatedly move my body to the left and right as if blurring and avoid those sword thrusts. I return a thrust with my Magic Spear in revenge, but Oze countered the thrust of the magic spear cleverly by holding the magic shortsword in a backhand grip and using it for defence.

Even when it repels the red spear of the ancient dragon, the shortsword shines. — It's a sturdy shortsword. It doesn't have a nick in the blade either.

Besides the rhythm is good. Isn't he quite good despite his small build...?

No, in this case, it's certainly the case because he is small?

The shortsword and the the narrow longsword, it feels like there's a **suitable space between those two**.

Yet I enjoy it. He's a tough enemy after a long time.

Oze doesn't use long-range weaponry but only a two-sword-style.

I will use his unique shortsword technique as reference. I want to steal his way of walking* as well. *(T/N: In martial arts and such that is)*

Therefore, me too, with just my Magic Spear, as a spear user... shouldn't I try fighting him like that?

While thinking about such stuff, I start to consecutively thrust with my Magic Spear.

However, that simply resulted in the spear attacks being handled well by the irregular difference of Oze's two swords.

As it seems that he got even more excited, Oze twisted his longsword, trapped the red axe blade, repelled the upper part of my magic spear, lowered his stance and shortened the distance.

His feet were filled with mana— He swiftly moves close with a type of Magic Combat Feet.

Oze handles the shortsword irregularly in addition to a circular slash of the longsword after rotating his body sideways on the way and making use of the centrifugal force.

His arm stretched forward while making it bend loosely back and forth.

Uhiyo—

My evasion ends up to be slightly late as effect of the Magic Spear being repelled.

I dodged the rotational slash of the longsword by twisting my body, but— the silver-blue blade moves smoothly on top of its irregular trajectory. Evading this

is impossible. A line of blood is created on my right arm due to the cut being pulled down from the elbow. Following the flow, the blade of the shortsword stabbed towards my eye socket.

After sustaining a cut wound, I step back.

“Ouch—” (Shuuya)

I take a distance in hurry— and separate from him.

He perfectly aimed at the weak point of my right arm at the part where there’s no armour or overcoat.

After all it is unguarded in the moment before I attack.

Due to being cut, my body feels sluggish and a light feeling of fatigue encroaches upon me.

Is it similar to having consumed mana?

“Is this shortsword maybe absorbing not only mana but stamina as well?”
(Shuuya)

“Ahh, that’s correct. To be precise it’s vitality though. Hehe, Because of just now you should have suffered a deep wound. You should be feeling quite weary...” (Oze)

Does he feel confident after inflicting an injury on me? Oze is revealing a rapt expression.

Blood trickles down from the shortsword he grasped in his left hand. Oze shook off that blood, fixed his stance and faced me.

While making a black aura ooze out, Oze sways his body forth and back with a tap-tap, ta-tap-tap and gets into a rhythm.

Just what the hell would happen if I was stabbed by that shortsword...?

If I was a masochist, I would probably be happy.

But I have to hasten my observation and stealing of his movement further.

I will make a bit of a serious effort... I cause my entire body to be clad in magic combat style.

And then I glare at Oze.

Oze reacts to my bloodthirst right away.

I don’t know whether he predicted my intention, but he holds out the longsword before I move and tries to shorten the distance in order to make good use of the short sword.

However, I can already read the **sword's trajectory**.

Once I easily avoided the thrust of his sword, which Oze grabbed with his right hand, as he advanced with a “half-rotation using the ball of the feet” to the left, I unleashed a <Thrust> for the first time at him at the moment of turning around.

The sound of air being cut apart resounds and a shrill metallic sound can be heard.

Oze responded.

Making a cross with his longsword and his shortsword, he defends against the . But, his face warped.

From then on the composure vanishes from Oze's expression.

I consecutively thrust at him indifferently.

I repeat the magic spear thrusts while changing the timing and delicately combining it with a different Magic Combat Feet from some time ago.

Sometimes I add normal thrusts into the <Thrust>'s and mix them up.

Oze is forced into only defending against the connecting attacks which change in power and pace.

I close the distance with Magic Combat Feet without giving him any breaks. I unleashed continuous rotational attacks with the butt end, which is the magic dragon gem, and the red axe blade which is the spearhead.

Heavy blows rain down on him from left and right. He, who had a warped expression due to the connecting blows, has his arms pushed upwards due to the recoil which he can't withstand.

Accordingly Oze's “suitable space between the two swords” broke apart completely.



The butt end breaks into his flank and the spearhead pierces deeply into his right chest. The finishing <Thrust> seizes his throat and drilled into his neck. His head with the neck attached vigorously revolves in mid-air. The headless torso fell over as if being slapped into the ground due to the impact of the thrust. It's a vivid banquet of blood spraying sounds and dull sounds of bones breaking. As if adorning the finale of the banquet, Oze's head with neck falls to the ground. Rolling around, a 「Gubuo」 escapes from his mouth, as if he's still alive. He dies while his blood pours out as he groans.

Without even a lingering memory of having overcome the one-on-one duel, I ran up to Rollo and rubbed against her head.

However, he was worth of holding the nickname **Oze of the Silver-Blue**.

Honestly, he was strong... he was definitely better in close combat than Kalii.

Oze, the name is simple and cool as well... it's truly irrelevant, but the mysterious name Keyser Soze*, which appeared in a masterpiece movie, pops up in my mind. (T/N: From "The Usual Suspects")

Well then, let's take this magic shortsword and the unique narrow longsword. I toss them into the item box.

Then I checked the vicinity once more—

Only the stench of blood and gore is spreading and the battlefield is calm and littered all over with corpses without any relation to friend or foe.

No one is fighting any more.

Did Victor die after all?

There are many dark-brown robed corpses, but there are many corpses of my allies as well.

If it's this many, my allies have been annihilated as well, huh...?

I verify the corpses.

I recover the ancient dragon dagger which fell down next to Jane's corpse.

I search for Victor's face with its conspicuous grim wrinkles.

If he has dropped the hammer...

— Found him.

Victor has collapsed in the shape of 大.

With a feeling of a peaceful death, he passed away while holding his hammer.

There are countless wounds which were cut into his body.

Those are undoubtedly the cuts he received from Oze.

For a normal human it's severe if they suffer wounds from that magic shortsword.

Rest in peace...

However, I defeated the leaders.

With this 【Owl's Fangs】 in this city should fall apart.

Although it's sad news, I have to inform their guild leader Mia. Although it's probably painful that her comrades died, it can't be helped.

Let's return to the store of 【Scales of Gaia】.

I retrieve Victor's hammer as well.

And then, being led by Rollo, we hurried back to the store.

— Huh? Why?

Once I return to the store, the first floor was extremely destroyed and the second floor was burned.

Was there really a detached force?

However, I should have done in all of the leaders of 【Owl's Fangs】.

Mia and the members, who stayed behind, are...

I head to the stairs outside while anxiety swirls in my heart.

Oh, blood? Those are remains of blood.

Traces of blood remained on the stairs. Moving to the first floor, I continue my investigation. The traces of blood seem to continue to the other side of the alley which passes through at the store front.

I followed those blood traces.

Chapter 83 – The gentle Tiger who boasts of a fierce god-like strength

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I proceed to an alley, which is diagonally opposite, while following the trail of blood.

However, the bloodstains, which are clinging to the road, had become sporadic. I use— Grasping Perception.

But, there are reactions of magic sources all over. Honestly, I don't know. Since there are homeless people and those who live under panel sheet roofs in the alley, there are too many magic source reactions.

... It can't be helped.

Now that it has turned out like this, shall I use "that" since it's fine even if I get apprehended by vampire hunters?

Pheromone's Touch

<Inhalation of Odour Technique>

Once I use this, I end up shifting my nose unintentionally.

With a *sniff sniff*, I immediately perceive the odour of a woman's sweat.

— I notice several. Oh, found it. The dense stench of blood.

The reaction of a woman. Moreover of a young and fresh woman.

The source of the smell comes from down the alley on the right.

It's not like there's a borderline, but I run towards the origin of the smell.

Over there? Inside the deserted house.

Was it originally some store or such? There are beams all over inside. It's sturdy for the interior of a building.

"Rollo, we have to be careful from here on out. You don't have to reply to my instructions once we enter inside." (Shuuya)

"N, nya." (Rollo)

After instructing Rollo, we head to the inner part of the first floor. According to <Inhalation of Odour Technique> the smell of blood becomes even more intense.

Mia-san, who might have the blood of a virgin, seems to be feeling fear.

There was a magic source, meaning Mia-san is alive.

The stinking sweat of five men and one woman.

A voice resounds over there.

"Ahahahaha."

"Ouch—" (Mia)

"Do you feel frightened? Former guild leaderrr."

"Oi, Danhill. Don't injure her too much. Leader, no, that woman is merchandise. Be careful."

"Akoos-san, is it wrong to have some fun with this woman before handing her over ~ssu?"

"Idiot—"

— The sound of something being broken was audible.

Hide

They are on the other side of this wall. I invoke <Conceal Oneself>.

I make eye contact with Rollo and give her instructions with my fingers.

I had Rollo move to the opposite side by going around from the other side.

I travel along the wall.

The place where the voices are resounding is a dim passage.

The voices were clearly audible.

"Ouch ouch. Won't it be fine even without you kicking me, Akoos-san? It hurts ~ssu."

"Shuddap. Why are you trying to make a move on her? For what reason did

you think that we kidnapped her? You low-life. This woman can be sold for a lot of money. I made a promise to Jane who is a leader of 【Owl's Fangs】. That she will be handed over in good condition.” (Akoos)

“With that aforementioned whip-using “female” leader?”

“That’s right. As proof of that, I was given this owl brooch and taught the code **The owl will fly if it’s hungry.**” (Akoos) *(E/N: Well that’s some stupidity right there)*

“If it’s hungry...”

“Tack, what will you do if this talk falls through because of you? Won’t we end up being unable to join 【Owl's Fangs】?” (Akoos)

“T-That’s right. Sorry.” (Tack)

“Humph— Including you, everyone is “garbage.”” (Mia)

It’s Mia-san’s voice.

“You are a stupid girl. Wasn’t 【Scales of Gaia】 crushed by that garbage? Well, at first there was an obstacle, but matching it with the surprise attack this time, it’s become a huge success.” (Akoos)

“... At first?” (Mia)

“Yes, at that time we were obstructed by the **extremely powerful magic spear user**, but...” (Akoos)

“So that’s how it was... you are garbage after all.” (Mia)

“Hmph, you are babbling. You put on airs albeit being a female greenhorn who doesn’t even notice getting betrayed. It’s laughable that such a piss-stinkin’ lass was a guild leader.” (Akoos)

“...” (Mia)

“What’s your problem? For those eyes to contain a haughty self-importance at such time now.”

“Is that so? Will you traitors be happily welcomed by 【Owl's Fangs】? Traitorous sleaze-bags— ugueh.” (Mia)

A dull sound can be heard.

It sounds like it, but was she hit?

Damn! Mia-san is...

“Oiii, I told you to shuddap. Do you want to run around down-town stark naked?”

“Gu, geho, cough...” (Mia)

“Eehh, even you, Akoos-san, aren’t you hitting her?”

It’s clearly understandable that it’s a subordinate-ish voice.

“Ah, it’s fine. Her stomach can’t be seen, right?” (Akoos)

“But didn’t you hit her face some time ago?”

“I’m special.” (Akoos)

“Well, then let me be special as well, please. I want to rape this woman.”

“Puh, are you a dog in heat? Anyway, now’s not allowed.” (Akoos)

“Now, it is, roger.”

These guys...

I approach the direction of the sounds.

I started to search for the enemies in order to make a cleared ring from the wall.

It’s a narrow room. Two men are likely standing outside.

Inside Mia is tied to a thick beam with a rope.

There are three men, who tortured her, around her.

Dealing with the two guards in an instant, we will finish off the three inside at the same time?

It depends on Rollo’s timing.

I also check the enemy’s possible field of vision.

— I can kill them.

Mia-san is in an unladylike state.

There were traces of her being beaten and blood was flowing from her nose.

Her chest clothes are torn off and her nipples can be seen.

Her skirt has been shredded to pieces.

Her beautiful face... anger gushes forth from it— she is enduring it, isn’t she?

I stormed in.

A horizontal sweep— with the Magic Spear. The head of a guard is sent flying. Before the disconnected head falls to the ground, I draw a dagger from my chest belt and approach the other guard from the side. While pinning the chin of the target after stabbing the dagger into his chest, I thrust the dagger into his neck and lowered his body gently on the ground.

My hand is drenched with blood, but I don't let any single sound leak.

The two guards went down within a soundless assassination.

Cancelling <Conceal Oneself> at this point, I advance.

I cast <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

I knock off the man, who was next to Mia-san, with a mana fist.

At the same time I shoot <Chain>.

The chest of the reddish-brown haired bastard is pierced by the chain.

The remaining man had his skull pierced by Rollo's tentacle sword.

For caution's sake I check the man whom I beat down with <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

That man died after having his head and neck pierced by splinters of wood.

In a hurry I return to the location where Mia-san was tied to the beam.

“— Mia-san, are you alright?” (Shuuya)

“Aaaaah, Sh-Shuuya-san—” (Mia)

Did Mia-san feel relieved? Tears start to burst out from her eyes.

After cutting the rope which bound her body, I gently hugged Mia's body.

Since her clothes are in pieces, I cover her with one of my larger leather clothes.

“I will give you a potion now. Drink it.” (Shuuya)

“... Yes.” (Mia)

I take out a healing potion from my item box.

Since Mia's hands were trembling, I raised it and made her drink it.

It can't be said that the shape of her mouth is seductive.

Is it the effect of the medicine? The blood, which trickled down from her mouth and nose, stops and her injuries heal up.

“Thank you. It's easier now.” (Mia)

“That's great. At any rate, a betrayal by Akoos, huh?” (Shuuya)

Due to my remark, Mia glared at Akoos, who died after being pierced in the chest, and reacted coldly.

“— Yeah, that’s right.” (Mia)

I won’t talk about his subordinates...

“However, even if it’s only you, Mia-san, it’s great that I could save you. ... Everyone was killed.” (Shuuya)

“Eh? S-Such a, no way...” (Mia)

Once she hears my words, Mia-san opens her eyes widely and her pupils repeatedly dilate and constrict.

I nodded silently.

While her body trembles, both her legs fall to the ground with a *flop*, she sheds large tears and... she sinks into a stricken state.

“I-It’s a lie. A lie, lie lie, why...” (Mia)

I can’t find any words to offer to Mia-san.

Though it will be painful, if I don’t speak.

“I saw through the end of Deyma. Even Victor, by the enemy’s leader... the allied young men are probably all dead as well. However, it’s also the destruction of the opponent 【Owl’s Fangs】. I finished off the two leaders. There’s no one who will become an enemy of 【Scales of Gaia】 in this city any more.” (Shuuya)

I don’t know whether it will turn into a consolation, but...

Once she heard my words, it developed into an even bigger weeping.

Mia-san sobs while bending her trembling body. She hits the ground...

It’s probably the defeat of her heart which felt depressed, gloomy and anguished.

I was unable to do anything but watch her quietly from the side for a while.

After some time passes, her weak panting abates.

Was Rollo worried? She licked Mia-san’s arm.

Although ((such emotions)) were affixed to her expression, she cast a gentle look at the black cat.

After she stared at Rollo, she gazed at me with upturned eyes.

However, her beautiful eyebrows are ruffled and her eyes have cooled down. While standing up, she starts to talk furiously bit by bit.

“... Shuuya-san, I’m thankful that you rescued me. However, why did you intervene in the conflict?” (Mia)

“That is—” (Shuuya)

Mia-san doesn’t allow me to talk.

“— If it’s you, you should have been able to run away by ignoring the conflict, I believe. There should be no necessity to leap into a conflict of the dark society and even go as far as expressly exposing your own life to danger. ... It’s wrong for you... for you the “adventurer”... to join in a conflict in the darkness in order to save me.” (Mia)

“Nya?” (Rollo)

Rollo’s voice feels like she’s saying 『What are you angry for?』. However, even if you tell me that...

“But...” (Shuuya)

Mia-san furrows her eyebrows and looks at me while scolding me with an expression she didn’t show until now. It appears that she doesn’t want to let me speak.

“— For you, there might be some wish or stimulus you can’t gain as adventurer. But, you aren’t a person from our dark side.” (Mia)

That’s natural. I’m not in a dark guild. I’m not a human either. Yes, rather than something like a dark guild, I’m of a new race, which are monsters possessing a far deeper dimension of darkness. Though that’s not something I can tell her.

“... That’s true.” (Shuuya)

I answered her calmly.

“Y-You are an adventurer! A normal adventurer! It’s unfair! It’s no good! You are not allowed to end up being involved with the wickedness of the dark society!” (Mia)

“Nnnn, nyao.” (Rollo)

Rollo gives an answer or something like that.

However, unfair to be an adventurer? Somehow she’s merely in a state of being jealous.

This is the person I rescued?

Well, currently it can’t be helped.

She’s venting her anger, I guess.

This is for her sake.

Do I listen **a bit** for the sake of her heart not breaking?

“... Certainly, that might be so.” (Shuuya)

“Even though there were people I should protect, people for whom I should be responsible... in the end I wasn’t able to save them...” (Mia)

The hands and body of Mia-san tremble.

While tears accumulate in her eyes, she glares at me.



“... In the beginning you said “I want to save you,” Shuuya-san, didn’t you?”
(Mia)

“I did.” (Shuuya)

“If you can save me, please save everyone... Victor, Deyma, all of them!!”
(Mia)

Sorry, dead people are impossible.
There might be a resurrection spell in this world, but I don’t know it.
If Sol lived, they might have revived as existences like Theta.

“...” (Shuuya)

Even if she asks me the impossible, Mia-san continues to speak.

“However, there’s no way that you can do that, is there? Everyone, all of them ended up dead.” (Mia)

“Certainly, but—” (Shuuya)

Mia-san “once again” overlaps her words with mine.

“— You saving me is just because you want to feel good.” (Mia)

She’s trying to offend me. But, it’s just as she says.
The fact of me not wanting to watch women getting oppressed is in the end excessive complacency.

“... That might be true.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, if you ended up letting me die without helping, your feelings as an adventurer, no, you would lose your own pride. That’s why you **try to not take responsibility for anything.**” (Mia)

Haha, this time it’s a really wicked straight punch.
It can be called a <Thrust> of words that is distinctive and filled with sarcasm.
Nevertheless, I’m lost for words. It’s completely right. “Trying to not take responsibility”, huh?
She might have said that unintentionally, but for the irresponsible me that’s a pinpoint critical hit.

“... That’s correct.” (Shuuya)

While she sheds large drops of tears, Mia-san once again looked at my face while showing a mystified look.

“... Shuuya-san, w-why don’t you blame me?” (Mia)

Changing from attacking me, she asked with a frail voice this time.

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo purrs while sitting on the ground like a doll.

Honestly, my heart was pierced by those stabbing words of her, but it made me consider my irresponsibility, in a good and bad way.

... I have received it as medicine of words.

That’s why I will listen now.

Once I become unable to tolerate it, I will clearly say so though.

“... That is for your sake, Mia-san.” (Shuuya)

“Such a thing, even if I die, it will be fine. For such a me... someone like me, the worst guild leader, the worst woman. The one who forced everyone into an inescapable situation is me. Stuff like **don’t tell me to not die**, mentioning such a convenient thing at the end... after all, the one who guided all of them towards death under the pretext of revenge for father, mother and Totoka-neesan is me myself.” (Mia)

It’s an echo of her sorrowful thoughts.

“However, at that time and place those were your words as the leader of a dark guild. I guess it was inevitable. If I was in a similar situation, I would likely have used words close to that.” (Shuuya)

“... Then, what’s a good method for the person, who was saved, to compensate those who died? Can you really save me even after such feelings?” (Mia)

Mia-san weeps at that point.

“It doesn’t have the meaning of outcrying and anger.”

A paragraph from Macbeth pops up in my mind. *(T/N: Not sure about the concrete phrasing in Macbeth)*

No, is it a bad omen to remember Macbeth here? I recall the statement of the

sleepwalking lady to be like 「Vanish, this abominable spot...」 during the scene of her washing her hands. (T/N: Same as above)

Lady Macbeth's mind ends up falling ill...

Phew... as I was only told complaints for a bit, my thoughts ended up derailing. As she was unable to endure any longer, she, who is sobbing, doesn't attach "-san" to my name any more.

"... It's impossible to save everything." (Shuuya)

"What does that...?" (Mia)

"Nothing in particular. These are common words, but I can at least tell them to make your thinking a bit easier, Mia." (Shuuya)

"Easier for me?" (Mia)

She asks visibly pretending to be tough with a tearful voice.

"Yea, a part of your subordinates has been eliminated, Mia, but they should have died with a desire to **protect** and **save** you while being fully aware of 【Scales of Gaia】's disadvantage. The leader Victor stopped you at the very end, didn't he? Didn't he want you to run away by chance?" (Shuuya)

"Really...?" (Mia)

It might be different.

But I won't say that.

It's none of my business, but I want to release her from the chain of negativity. Even if I might become a hypocrite.

"That depends on your feelings. Shouldn't you live **happily**, even if it's just a bit, in the future from now on to compensate those friends?" (Shuuya)

"... Me being happy? And then living normally?" (Mia)

She furrows her brows a bit and asks with a baffled feeling.

"That's right. You know that it's whitewashing. But, if you live ordinarily, it might become a farewell gift to those who died..." (Shuuya)

Even after hearing my words, Mia doesn't change her grim expression. However, without minding that, I continue to talk.

“If you divert from your path to get revenge... that’s also fine. But it might not please those who died.” (Shuuya)

She shakes her head.

“— At this point in time it’s impossible for me to live normally. If I consider the wishes of the people who risked their lives for 【Scales of Gaia】... I won’t be able to sustain my heart by spending my life care-freely.” (Mia)

In the middle of talking about herself, Mia directly looks at me.
The stagnated colour of hatred dwelt within the depths of her pupils which were overflowing with her tears.
Well, that’s only natural.

“But you know... it’s said **Hating people means personally drinking poison...**” (Shuuya)

“... You are remonstrating me by repeating something from some priest? That’s fine. You don’t understand. Our readiness.” (Mia)

Uh, did I bungle it?
Certainly, it might be impossible to try comprehend and guess the feelings of others for me.
No, that in itself is foolish and presumptuous thinking.
However, there’s something even this me can say.

“... What you want to say is only this much? It’s true, I never had any subordinates. Currently I’m a simple adventurer. Half-assing my daily life as adventurer, I went beyond it and walked my feet into a dark guild. In my case you might even say that I crushed it underfoot...” (Shuuya)

At that timing, I take a break and express my mind while putting strength into my gaze.

“Like that, I wield my power thoughtlessly and immerse in a sense of justice by saving people in a half-assed manner. Just as you said, my actions are for making me feel good. I think about something impolite like wanting to be popular by saving beautiful women. It’s completely for my own satisfaction. I’m probably a hypocrite.” (Shuuya)

Though it’s too masochistic, Mia should be able to judge after listening

properly.

“H-However...” (Mia)

I don't have any intention to let Mia speak. Now it's my turn.

“— While leading a non-committal adventurer life, I have joined in on the killing. I'm completely an outsider party. Therefore, even you might regard me as half-crooked, Mia? Certainly, that half-assed hypocrite is **me**. However, that half-assed hypocritical bastard saved you. And, I will save you from now on as well. No matter what dark guild it might be, if they stand in my way, I will crush them. ... As expected I think I will negotiate if the opponent is a nation, but if it's for my beloved woman or my friends, I intend to go wild without hesitating to even cause a genocide even if the opponents might be common people.”

(Shuuya)

“... S-Such a thing. This is our battle. The fight of my friends of 【Scales of Gaia】 who died.” (Mia)

I understand Mia's feelings.

Even I, if my subordinates, friends or family was killed, I would definitely get revenge.

However... something like revenge without strength...

Do you call that plainly harsh?

“Your battle? Don't get conceited. In the first place, what are you able to do by yourself? Although you might say that the branch of 【Owl's Fangs】 was crushed in the previous fight, that's something **I** did.” (Shuuya)

Did Mia receive a shock? Opening her eyes widely, he mouth flaps open and shut.

“...” (Mia)

“Besides, I have told you a few times, 【Owl's Fangs】 has started meddling with me since before I got involved with this case. Therefore it's also **my battle**. Also, before Deyma died he told me that he leaves the rest to me.” (Shuuya)

She talks in a state of being dumbfounded while her lips quiver.

“I-I want to take full responsibility as **leader**. I want to defeat 【Owl's Fangs】

...” (Mia)

The words she says are splendid, but there’s no ambition in them any more.

“I guess so? Therefore, I will help— no, that’s impossible. I can’t believe that **【Owl’s Fangs】** will stay silent in the current situation. They will likely search for me and come attacking. Each time they do, I will turn the tables on them. If they are obstinate, I will go crush them.” (Shuuya)

“That’s not allowed. Because, because, I’m from a dark guild. Shuuya-san, you are an adventurer.” (Mia)

She’s quite particular about that, isn’t she?

“Are you still fixated on that? Don’t take it to extremes, even if you are a serious-chan. You probably have the pride that it’s about your dignity, but even for me, telling you that I want to protect a woman like you is my **little justice!!**” (Shuuya)

Oops, I got passionate. I ended up speaking my mind in a loud voice in order to cut her caustic words. How embarrassing. However, is it the effect of my loud voice...? Mia stops crying. Energy returned into her eyes.

“... Fufu, haha, ahahaha.” (Mia)

When I thought that she would laugh a bit at that part, Mia trembles and bursts into laughter while smiling broadly.

“What’s wrong?” (Shuuya)

“No, sorry. Somehow I got it. Your **gentleness** since the first time I met you hasn’t changed. It’s a part of the man called Shuuya-san.” (Mia)

“Whether I’m gentle or not is—” (Shuuya)

In the middle of my words, Mia hugged me.

“Umm, what’s it all of a sudden...?” (Shuuya)

She lowers the outer corners of her eyes and returns to a kind expression.

“Thank you... I calmed down greatly. Accepting **all** of my forced, vilificated, dark wrath... and scolding me, it made me happy. It gave birth to a warm light

within in my chest. There's already no 【Scales of Gaia】. As former guild leader... I want to live my life without having to feel ashamed.” (Mia)

I don't mind something like that, but...

Your tits are hitting me, Mia-kun.

I wonder whether it's alright to return her hug with a tight squeeze in this case?

“... Ah, no, well, it's okay.” (Shuuya)

“You are truly an open-hearted, gentle person. It's completely as if you are a **gentle tiger who boasts of a fierce god-like strength.**” (Mia)

Saying that, Mia placed her face on my chest and hugged me strongly and powerfully.

I know of it even if it's above the armour and overcoat.

The— instant I earned the sensation of her boobs being crushed.

Is it because of the eroticism once tension gets alleviated? A trial in my brain is proclaimed in a hurry.

I, who turned in several miniature-me's, cause a showdown between angel and demon forces within my brain.

The angel group is...

“Separate from her and remonstrate her gently. That will show her the behaviour of a **man among men** as a gentleman.”

Is what they calmly say.

The demon group is...

“Embrace Mia's body closely as is and push her down YO. If things go well, you might end up doing her YO. It's GO, it's Sato Hiro o YO.” *(T/N: Last part refers probably to Sato Hiromi, a J-Pop singer. He sang songs which seem to have “GO” in their lyrics, but I don't understand the reference too well here as I don't know the singer at all)*

Is what they scream severally.

The influence is completely split in two.

— Eei, yea, I will squeeze her tightly.

The judgement is guilty. The referee's fan easily falls towards me being in the wrong.

“Ah—” (Mia)

I ended up hugging Mia.

“You are soft.” (Shuuya)

“Yes...” (Mia)

If it continues like this, it might really go according to the brain trial.
Let’s talk calmly about... something different here.

“... However, I’m not gentle. I just didn’t want you to die, Mia. Originally I’m a monster who likes blood.” (Shuuya)

Yes, originally I’m not a human. If it’s this place, it belongs to the humans, doesn’t it?

“Noo, for me you really are a **gentle tiger**, Shuuya-san.” (Mia)

“Just now you mentioned fierce god-like tiger or such, what’s that about?”
(Shuuya)

“Yes, that’s a book of a story I love very dearly. Didn’t you see “The gentle tiger who boasts of a fierce god-like strength” when you came to my room? It should have been in a bookshelf in my room. A male tiger repels a monster and a bear to protect the female tiger. He ties the knot with the female tiger and creates a family with her. It’s such a wonderful story.” (Mia)

Family... is that some kind of flag?
I can’t mention that though.

“Hee... you were a diligent worker who is also a bookworm?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, until my father and mother died, we lived in 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】. Since I went to the Magic Academy for the sake of becoming an adventurer, my scores were quite excellent, although that’s what I’m saying myself, and I dived into the labyrinth many times as well?” (Mia)

“Was that so...?” (Shuuya)

Ah, that’s why...? Was that Mia’s reason for persisting in her view of being an **adventurer** to such an extent?

Comparing the adventurer me with herself, she couldn’t easily forgive me getting involved with a dark guild even though I’m an adventurer?
She dreamed of a life as adventurer.

In reality she didn’t want to succeed something like a dark guild?

“... Please don’t make such sad-looking expression. However, you are right. I know what you are thinking about, Shuuya-san. Yes, I wanted to become an adventurer. However... everything changed when father, mother and Totokane, who took care of me in my childhood, were killed. When I got the notice that “both your parents were killed,” I returned to 【Holkerbaum】 in a hurry so that I could be protected by the personnel of 【Scales of Gaia】. And, remembering that my family was killed at that time... I was overwhelmed by my emotions and cursed everything. The ones who saved and supported such me were the leaders of 【Scales of Gaia】. It was Victor and Deyma...” (Mia)

A drop of water flows down from Mia’s eyes.
Why did the ordinary her become the leader of a dark guild?
If it’s now, I understand it well. The store, which was left behind by her family, the subordinates who stayed and the dark guild which her father left behind. She wasn’t able to abandon the lives of the subordinates who encouraged and supported her.
Is that why she succeeded even if she was teased as an amateur?
She’s a far too diligent child that has a sense of responsibility.

“However, everyone of that 【Scales of Gaia】... I was unable to protect them... I-I wanted to protect... e-everyone—” (Mia)

Mia ended up crying once again. I hug her strongly and tightly.
Holding her without saying anything, I stroke her black hair.
I will lend you my chest as long as you want...
My erotic mood is blown away completely.
For a while Mia wept while raising her voice.

“Well then, crying ends here— for the time being, wear this leather cloth.”
(Shuuya)

I look at Mia’s tear-stained, sad face. I wiped away her tears with my thumb.
“Ah— yes.” (Mia)
It’s a matter of course that I turn the other way while she changes her clothes.
“Is it alright now?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, I finished changing.” (Mia)

“What will you do from now on?” (Shuuya)

“... I want to return to the store.” (Mia)

“Got it. Let’s go?” (Shuuya)

I return to the store of 【Scales of Gaia】 while taking Mia along.

Because there was a lot of stones and soil, the fire of the store went out.

However, the store’s foundation is scorched and has lost its shape.

Mia recovers the cash box from her own room which barely escaped being burnt completely.

The books, which were in such quantity inside the room, have been completely burnt and disappeared.

I discover what can be considered to be a part of a book’s front cover.

“Fierce god-like strength—”

The cut-off piece has become black in the middle.

Only this much was saved from getting burnt.

“It was this book, but... it ended up getting burnt.” (Mia)

“Yea...” (Shuuya)

“... Everyone really died...” (Mia)

“Are you alright?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, since I made my emotions burst out just now, it’s less of a shock than I thought.” (Mia)

Even while saying that, Mia shows a clouded expression.

I realize that she’s subduing the negative emotions which are dwelling in the depths of her eyes.

She goes around and indifferently looks for luggage that seems usable.

Fortunately she finds the treasure chests, which look sturdy, besides the cash box.

Some of those treasure boxes had an abundance of different potions, a light-brown robe, a leather armour, a wand which had a magic gem of fire attached to it and a hair clips.

Mia faithfully handed me a potion trying to return it to me, but I decline it while

telling her that I don't need it.

"Did you finish your retrieval?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, the title deed of the plot is safe as well. However, since I don't have the money to rebuild it, I will abandon it." (Mia)

"Closing up shop, huh?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, to begin with there weren't any masonry craftsmen since they were head-hunted away. Since there's no merchandise remaining either... I will close the store. It's the end of 【Scales of Gaia】." (Mia)

Is that so? Which reminds me, there weren't any clerk-like people.

"Going out of business? That's regrettable." (Shuuya)

"Yes, I will put on this equipment then." (Mia)

"Oh, the leather armour— Got it." (Shuuya)

I face the back once again.

"— I'm done." (Mia)

Once I turned around, there was a black-haired beautiful magician. Gathering her long hair into one plait, she lets it flow down on top of her robe. I see. Even if she gathers her hairstyle into one, it's lovely.

"Shuuya-san, what are you nodding for?" (Mia)

"Ah, no, it's nothing." (Shuuya)

"Fufu, you are weird, Shuuya-san. I will return this to you." (Mia)

She neatly folds the leather cloth she wore and gave it back to me.

"And— Shuuya-san, I really thank you very much for helping and saving me."
(Mia)

"No, well, that's true, but don't mind it." (Shuuya)

Even if I tell her that, it's unreasonable, isn't it?

"When I reach the point where I can earn money properly by myself, I will return this favour to you." (Mia)

“Yea, but, will you be able to search for me that easily?” (Shuuya)

“Since I will track down **Shuuya-san**, who bet on his **little justice**, at that time without fail, please resolve yourself for it. Well then—” (Mia)

Once Mia mentions it with an honest smile while saying words which had a touch of sarcasm, she turns around after bowing and briskly walks away.

Haa, good grief.

Chasing after the back of her, who turned around, I grab her arm.

Chapter 84 – A beauty

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



(T/N: Explanation for the title: 花顔柳腰 – Words expressing a beauty (female) – 花顔: A lovely face like a flower – 柳腰: Slender and flexible hips like a willow. Localizes very badly into English, thus this explanation in attempt to lower the loss of the original beauty of the kanji)

“Wait.” (Shuuya)

I grab Mia’s hand.

“Where are you going?” (Shuuya)

“— Ah, umm, a funeral for my subordinates. I think that I have to hold a memorial service for them, even if it’s just for Victor and Deyma.” (Mia)

“I will help, too. The location of the battlefield is this way.” (Shuuya)

“Okay.” (Mia)

Finding the corpses of Victor, Deyma and several other subordinates in the garden lantern avenue which became the bloody battlefield, I helped her carry the corpses to the remains of the burned store.

Mia created simple tombs and held a memorial address while crying.

“I won’t forget those who died while fighting for the sake of Scale of Gaia. For me everyone wasn’t just subordinates but also my family. I won’t forget this

grudge. Sooner or later I will definitely destroy 【Owl's Fangs】. I will continue "living" while being driven by that desire... Goddess Gaia... please allow everyone's souls to continue resting in the ground while being enveloped by tranquillity." (Mia)

Identical to the poses in Christianity, Mia put both her hands together in front of her chest while putting her knees on the ground and prayed to the goddess. A few minutes later...

She stands up slowly and fixes her eyes on me.

"What will you do from now on?" (Shuuya)

"... I will head to 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 to change my **name** and locate lodging and the adventurer guild there." (Mia)

Change her name?

Though I think it will be fine if she doesn't go that far since 【Scales of Gaia】 was already crushed.

"Changing your name and becoming an adventurer, eh?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, for the meantime I will earn money and become strong by working as adventurer. In 【Pelneet】 there are my old friends with whom I grew up in the academy. Above all, the headquarters of 【Owl's Fangs】 is located there." (Mia)

She was fixated on becoming an adventurer to that extent.

However, even if I forcefully detained her here, it's something the person decided herself.

Some time ago she told me "Please save me" with eyes filled by stagnating hatred and rage, but I can feel determination from the current Mia's eyes. She completely recovered her self-control.

Even though her objective is revenge, it's important to have survival as guiding principle.

You can say that her carefully considering her friends, and not committing suicide out of pessimism, is **less objectionable**.

However, they will probably search for information about me who destroyed 【Owl's Fangs】's branch.

I think I can slow down the leak of information by having a thieves guild on my side, but I have to expect the other side to come pick a fight from now on, too.

Thus it's possible that I will end up destroying them before Mia can do anything. However, she is someone who clearly told me to not try taking responsibility. Maybe I should consider protecting her even if she gets dragged into my objective while at my side.

"... I see. But, although the branch was destroyed, 【Owl's Fangs】 is one big dark guild. I believe they will come to deal with me once they find me. Therefore, I think that you will accomplish your **revenge** faster by staying with me?" (Shuuya)

Honestly spoken, if the beautiful Mia is close to me... I will be happy.

"Yes, that might be so. However, since I can grasp my own strength the best, I will just become a burden if I act together with you, Shuuya-san. Thus I won't mind it even if you end up crushing 【Owl's Fangs】. Rather than that, currently I want to get purely stronger... like you, Shuuya-san. That's why I want to at first make an effort... in anything and everything from the scratch by myself." (Mia)

Oh-ho, has she changed revenge into her own nourishment...? She's an intelligent adult.

Or perhaps I should say that my vulgar looking down on her from above is disgraceful.

Shouldn't I root for her? For the departure of a young person.

"... Indeed, got it. We will work in the same business after this, won't we? Let's do our best. I also plan to head to 【Pelneet】 once I completed several tasks. We might meet there sometime." (Shuuya)

"Yes, perhaps that might happen. After I become a lot stronger, and then, definitely..." (Mia)

We gently smile at each other.

"Yea, I know." (Shuuya)

"Yes! Shuuya-san—... Then—" (Mia)

Suddenly Mia ran up to me, jumped a bit and gave me a clumsy kiss on my cheek as if hitting it with her lips.

And then she leaves after showing a bashful smile.

“Huh...?” (Shuuya)

I have been taken by surprise.

I followed the back of the beauty with her swaying black hair with my eyes until she was out of sight while enjoying with my fingers the feeling of her lips remaining on my cheek and the faint scent of a woman.

“N, nya?” (Rollo)

Rollo purrs and moves from the hood on my shoulder.

She is probably wondering “Is it fine to let her go like this?” or such? I sense such nuance from Rollo’s attitude which is slightly different from usual. After joking around by repeating a few times the pose of an influential comedian and sticking out my tongue towards Rollo, I say,

“It’s fine. She chose it herself, Rollo. That girl is smart. She probably judged herself that it will hinder her growth if she has me as guardian... besides, we are following the trail of the **Orb of Wisdom** and the **Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Tree**, aren’t we?” (Shuuya)

“Nya? Nya.” (Rollo)

Due to me explaining it in a jest, Rollo’s red eyes turned into dots.

... Without minding it, I continue to talk to Rollo.

“I will talk with Melissa once we return to the inn... using the **Paredes Mirror** tomorrow or today night, we will leap to the church where Rubia was, I guess? From there we will head for Fortona Mountain and get the spring water of Water God Akreshys. The other material, **Leaf of Sadeyula**, comes as very last.” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya, n, nyaa~n.” (Rollo)

Apparently understanding the details once she hears my explanation, Rollo sat up from my shoulder and started to hit my shoulder with a nice rhythm of *tap tap tap* using both her hind-legs.

And she touches my cheeks by extending her feelers from below the nape of my neck.

『Play』『Promise』『Hunt』『Play』『Play』『Happy』

That’s the emotions she sends to me one after the other.

I hugged Rollo closely as she became adorable.

I savour the soft sensation of her belly to my heart's content.

I get on my way back to the high-class inn after placing Rollo, who purrs throatily, on my shoulder.

However, on the way back— I felt a presence behind me.

No way! A survivor of 【Owl's Fangs】? A vampire hunter? Though I ponder and worry, it's different from either.

This unique tailing is similar to what I sensed when I departed from 【Hekatrail】. For a first-class pursuer it's particularly easy and not uncommon to change their pattern.

Well, this is a talk of having Grasping Perception though.

Identical to the pursuer who chased me from 【Hekatrail】, this one seems to be the type who doesn't try to get in touch with me.

I arrived at the high-class inn with nothing happening.

... The presence, which stuck to me from behind, has vanished.

Only tracking me? Just as I entered the grounds of the inn, the response disappeared.* (*T/N: Negative emotion attached at sentence end i.e. hate, disdain etc.*)

Well, just for caution's sake... I go out of my way to the stable, which is located sideways of the inn, while checking my back.

I greeted Popobumu.

As soon as it sees me, it lets out a friendly cry of a short, refined *puboppubo*. Rollo as usual climbs on Popobumu's head from behind with nimble movements and sits there.

Is the fodder high-class as well? Its physical condition management seems to be flawless.

Popobumu's skin is lustrous for some reason.

As expected of a stable provided by a high-class inn.

However, the guy who trailed me from behind... won't show his figure, will he?

I looked outside while playing around with Popobumu, but nothing happens.

Entering from the entranceway of the inn, I return to my room.

"Rollo, even if you enter the room, diving into the bed is prohibited until you take a bath, okay?" (Shuuya)

"Nya! Nya~n." (Rollo)

I warn Rollo while grasping the door knob of the room.
Rollo gave a reply while making her ears wilt, but stormed into the room moving her limbs lively.
Just like that she climbed on top of the table with a jump and nuzzled her head against a part of the plate where fruits are laid out.

“Don’t drop the fruits~” (Shuuya)
“Nyanyaan.” (Rollo)

Not understanding what she wants, I wash the Luilias Overcoat, which has dry spurts of blood clinging to it, while casting a sidelong glance at the black cat. I entered the bath after carrying out some maintenance on my armour.
While just coming out of the bath, I peek into my item box.
Making it scroll downwards, I checked the names of the short swords and long swords.

-
- Trapezohedron x1
 - First-class Slave Trader License x 1
 - Blue Eyes of the Ancient Dragon x 1
 - Dagger of the Ancient Dragon x 35
 - Long Sword of the Ancient Dragon x 4
 - Large Scale of the Ancient Dragon x 138
 - Small Scale of the Ancient Dragon x 243
 - Whiskers of the Ancient Dragon x 10
 - Sword of Rendil x 1
 - Shortsword of Yazekapos x 1
 - Navy-Blue Dull Steel Hammer x 1
-

Sword of Rendil and Shortsword of Yazekapos are the weapons Oze owned.
Navy-Blue Dull Steel Hammer is the one Victor used.
Going by the name of this magic short sword, there appears to be an interesting story attached to it.
Shall I use it in actual combat and put off selling it? Taking out the Shortsword of Yazekapos, I affix it to my chest belt.
Once I finish checking, I lazily spend my time until evening on top of my bed

while tampering with the other armour that hasn't been maintained.

A few hours later I went to the second floor of the high-class inn to exchange opinions with Melissa.

“I see, I see... but, right after we split the the other day?” (Melissa)

“That's how it turned out. Even you, Melissa, talked about leaving a page in the history books or such, right? Besides, you also told me the location of 【Scales of Gaia】.” (Shuuya)

“However, that's unprecedented. The previous day the information that 【Owl's Fangs】 is gathering a large number of soldiers came in and I already grieved that today would be a busy day with bustling activity and the next day the leaders of that 【Owl's Fangs】 have been killed and the soldiers have been totally annihilated!? or such. Since the news came in... the information within 【Holkerbaum】 has become complicated and not only my 【Belgart】 but all other thieves guilds are in a complete state of confusion. Jeez, it was really terrible, you know?” (Melissa)

Melissa is showing an expression, while squinting, like I'm a bit shocked~.

“I'm sorry for that, okay? Though it was busy, are you alright?” (Shuuya)

“No, no, I'm happy how it turned out now. Of course it was hectic, but it has become special to be nominated by you, Shuuya-san. I will be nominated by you who is the perpetrator of that uproar. Thanks to that I was able to come here.” (Melissa)

“Mmh? What does that mean?” (Shuuya)

“To be honest, there was a dispute over various things between us...” (Melissa)

Melissa talks while slanting her sight.

“A dispute?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Actually it ended up in a **scramble**... for collecting information about you in 【Belgart】, Shuuya-san.” (Melissa)

“Scramble... finally my hidden charm burst forth...” (Shuuya)

“... Shuuya-san, you are making a strange face... Is your head alright?”

(Melissa)

“Sorry, I was out of it.” (Shuuya)

“Fufu, as I said, it became a scramble for information about Shuuya who has become a good customer. And, on the other hand, since I was nominated by that Shuuya-san, I was officially chosen by 【Belgart】 and became able to come here.” (Melissa)

Melissa suddenly and forcefully raises her golden eyebrows proudly and reveals a smile.

“So that’s how it is.” (Shuuya)

“Yeah, by the way, there is a message from boss: 「I was able to learn of your activities and the events in 【Fortress City Hekatrail】. Such being the case, about this time’s matter, I understand. I intended to advice you to not do it, but it’s none of my business.」” (Melissa)

I wonder whether she heard rumours about the battle with the Magic Dragon King?

“I see. Please tell Dino-san “Please treat me favourably from now on as well. You have beautiful manicure. Next time let’s definitely have tea together” from me.” (Shuuya)

“I will pretend that I didn’t hear the last part...” (Melissa)

Haha, her glaring is amazing.
Let’s change the topic.

“However, is it really good for me to nominate you...? Won’t the thieves guild be genuinely targeted by 【Owl’s Fangs】 from now on?” (Shuuya)

“Don’t worry about that point. Actually, as it seems, boss was greatly pleased with you, Shuuya-san, *mumble mumble...*” (Melissa)

Then Dino-san, who’s the boss of Belgart, seems to know about my activities. Laying the groundwork in all directions, she apparently restricted the information.

Therefore information about me won’t leak out from 【Belgart】’s side, including Melissa as well, it seems.

My situation appears to have been exposed a bit, but...

“Dino-san’s information manipulation, huh?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. We will be alright. There might be a bit of information leaking from the low-ranking soldiers who were hired by 【Owl’s Fangs】 and got away, but it’s within the range of measurement error.” (Melissa)

“Measurement error?” (Shuuya)

The measurement error seems to give perfect birth to confusion by mixing lie and truth.

“Yes, and thanks to that, my **rank** went up.” (Melissa)

Rank, eh? A promotion? She has a happy expression.

“Rank? Tell me the details.” (Shuuya)

“They are called ^{Low}low rank, ^{Middle}medium rank, ^{High}superior rank and ^{Ultra}highly classified information rank. I was at the ^{Low}low rank nicknamed courtesan, but suddenly got a big promotion to the top of ^{High}**superior rank** which is office work. With this I will be able to make it easier for my younger sister.” (Melissa)

Melissa is cheerful.
Her smile is incessantly lasting since a while ago.

“What happens once you reach superior rank (High)?” (Shuuya)

“Your crisis management authority becomes 5. You will be obligated to equip several magic tools. You can receive a private office. You are in charge of ^{intelligence}subordinates. You can call yourself a member of the organization or ^{officer}agent. I have graduated from being a courtesan.” (Melissa)

Melissa has put on earrings and rings as well as bracelets on her hands. I realized that all of them contained mana.
But, once I hear agent, I end up imagining CIA or the National Security Agency NSA.
Is that really a thieves guild? Well, I can’t ask such thing though.

“... Being in charge of subordinates?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. In addition to you, Shuuya-san, special customers have been prepared and together with my new subordinates it’s a hectic whirl of busyness.”
(Melissa)

The trade of information seems to be difficult as well.

“Information about a good customer is expensive after all, I guess?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, it becomes terribly high-priced. Especially information about you has been restricted to highly classified information, Shuuya-san.” (Melissa)

It seems information about me is treated as highly classified.
Do I give such impression to a thieves guild?
I feel uneasy about the existences of thieves guild except 【Belgart】.

“Are there any other major thieves guilds besides 【Belgart】?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, of course. There are many rivals. 【Sizark】, 【Commandments of Rosen】 and 【Gate of the Calm Demon】 are the famous ones, I guess?” (Melissa)

There are four famous, major thieves guild?

“How about 【Intelligence Agencies】 owned by 【Countries】 or ruling 【Underground Organizations】?” (Shuuya)

“【Oseberia Kingdom】, you mean?” (Melissa)

That means there are such organizations in all countries, I guess?

“Yea, other countries have them as well.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, that’s only natural. I told you that 【Oseberia Kingdom】 has one, or to be more direct, the White Nine, nicknamed as 【Nine Great Knights】 or 【Nine White Great Knights】. In addition, though not being controlled, there are countless thieves guilds, including 【Belgart】, in a cooperative relationship with 【Oseberia Kingdom】. When talking about being controlled that would be about 【Commandment of Rosen】 of 【Sarmali Kingdom】, though I’m not well informed about it.” (Melissa)

White

Nine

Nine White Great Knights, eh...?

Previously I heard rumours about them from adventurers at the time of eating meat in Hekatrail.

However, if you jumble together countries, dark guilds, underground organizations and thieves guilds like this, there's more than plenty of possibility for double agents and threefold spies in reality.

It might be my imagination, but there seems to be a dark society in a different meaning with **sealing one's mouth** or **mind manipulation** by skills or magic, let alone **assassinations**.

Let's ask about the other thieves guilds, too.

“Does Sarmali Kingdom control the thieves guild **【Commandments of Rosen】**? Where are the headquarters of the other major thieves guilds?” (Shuuya)

Countries and large cities are limited. Thus I can predict it to some extent.

“**【Sizark】** has great influence in **【Leften Kingdom】** including the **【Royal Capital Fa Dayk】**. It seems they have deep ties to the special unit of the secret agency **【Twilight Knights】**. **【Gate of the Calm Demon】** possesses influence spreading across countries and is strongly represented in **【Fortress City Hekatrail】**, **【Violent Tower City Senapua】** and **【Labyrinth City Pelneet】**. I don't know any more than that. The detailed locations of their headquarters might be a secret. There are also cases where they change the location.” (Melissa)

I guess that's how it will turn out?

Lastly let's ask about the intelligence agency with the name **【White Nine】** which is owned by the major power **【Oseberia Kingdom】**.

“... About that **【^{White}Nine ^{Nine}White Great Knights】**, are they simply nine greater knights as the name suggests?” (Shuuya)

“No, there are thousands of staff members and soldiers gathered under the name Nine Great Knights.” (Melissa)

Quite the large-scale organization.

“The name Nine Great Knights seems to be powerful though.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. The Nine Great Knights has a hierarchy dependent on strength. It's been said that the **【Royal Capital Gromheim】** has been peaceful for 500 years thanks to the existence of the **Divine Beast of Protection** and the elite guards led by the famous First-ranked Great Knight.” (Melissa)

Rankings, huh? There is such a system in the Nine Great Knights.
Let's remember it.
I heard the words divine beast of protection before as well, but let's ask for the time being.

"What is that divine beast of protection?" (Shuuya)

"It's an intelligent gentle-natured ancient dragon. Since generations the crown prince of the royal family serves as partner of the ancient dragon being a dragon tamer. As leader of the Draconic Magical Chivalric Order, he is the top of the dragon knight order." (Melissa)

I'm surprised that it's an intelligent, gentle-natured ancient dragon.
It might be a High Ancient.
Is that ancient dragon also an acquaintance of the old witch?

"... **【Oseberia Kingdom】** is a powerful nation because of its dragon rider corps in addition to those greater knights." (Shuuya)

"That's true. The empire boasts of a military camp with a similar scope, but due to the circumstances that Luluzak, which is called Meadow City and City of the Lake, was recaptured, I have heard that at present a single unit of of the Draconic Magical Chivalric Order led by the Crown Prince is active. It seems to be going well." (Melissa)

"When I hear that, that white whatever can't be called an underground organization." (Shuuya)

Melissa nods upon hearing my opinion.

"Certainly, **【White Nine】** is a military force but at the same time they are also an organization which gathers intelligence." (Melissa)

According to what I learned, White Nine is an organization combining military forces and intelligence work, isn't it?

If I compare it with America, is it something like a combination of the intelligence support activity unit ISA and the army's delta force? *(T/N: Joint Special Operations Command would be the term the author is looking for, I guess.)*

Although I'm bothered about other organizations as well, I think I got enough information already... it seems my brain will burst if I cram any more trivial

information.

“... I see. This much information is fine for today. And, since I will depart tomorrow, expect that I won’t be here even if you come.” (Shuuya)

“Are you leaving the city?” (Melissa)

“Secret—” (Shuuya)

I move next to Melissa while smiling.

“Therefore, before we are separated... okay?” (Shuuya)

I fix my eyes on the flowery face of the lovely Melissa.

“I’m bothered about it being a secret, but yes, I came here today with that intention—” (Melissa)

Melissa leans her shoulder against me.

I put my hands around her waist and hugged her closely while watching her somewhat small shoulders.

It has a flexible sensation like a willow.

“Shuuya-san, you are surely popular, aren’t you...?” (Melissa)

“I wonder about that. I wouldn’t know.” (Shuuya)

“Jeez, you don’t have to deny it—” (Melissa)

Melissa doesn’t poke her nose much into insensitive things.

Both of us are adults, man and woman.

As we aren’t boyfriend and girlfriend, a sexual relationship is probably fine as well.

“Nn, nya.” (Rollo)

Just when I attempted to kiss her lips, Rollo moves from my hood to my shoulder.

She jumped on the table. She quickly gets down on the floor and descends the spiral stairway.

“That Rollo seems to be considerate.” (Shuuya)

“Rollo-chan...” (Melissa)

“Well then, let’s go to my room.” (Shuuya)

“Yes.” (Melissa)

And then I had sex with a woman after a long time.

I don’t know whether Rollodeen was disgusted, but we repeatedly loved each other until past midnight.

Because we did it that intensely, Melissa ended up fainting in the middle of it. She showed a completely lively expression in the morning though.

First thing in the morning she shows a smile with a slovenly appearance.

There was Rollo’s face at the feet of the arousing figure of Melissa.

Did she trespass from the veranda? It looks like she returned without me realizing.

She apparently noticed the smell of man and woman since she moves her nose with a *sniff-sniff*.

At the time of departure, Melissa whispered close to my ear “See you soon again” and gave me a passionate kiss.

And then she leaves the room as if skipping.

Haha, she seems to be happy. I’m happy too though.

Well then, it’s the preparation for heading toward Fortona Mountain.

I let the receptionist know that I will be absent from the room for a while.

I have paid the inn for the period from the end of spring until past the start of summer.

Since there’s still beyond 29 days until summer, I think that I will be able to return until then, but I hope I will return until **the second day of summer** as it’s the promised day with the leaders of the large company.

I believe I can finish early if I can use **chain** as I plan to.

“— Alright, we leave from here. It will probably be alright since I cautioned them to not touch the mirror I placed in this room.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

I have placed the **Paredes Mirror** in a corner of the room.

To begin with, it can be regarded as furnishing fitting this room.

Given that the mirror’s design is Western-styled, there was no sense of it being out of place.

The gothic-styled streamline pattern is beautiful. Although old-fashioned, it’s a

simple design.

Trapezohedron

Then I take out the 24-faceted orb.

The destination is on the other side of the gate of the third facet, the place where Rubia lived.

On another facet... ahead of the gates where I only peeked through, there might possibly be a location close to the destination. However, it will be easier if one knows the names to some extent.

Investigating each and every single of them is difficult. That's why I go on the other side of the third facet.

But, sometimes, in a distant future... I want to explore all the other gates by jumping on the other side.

Tracing the symbol on the surface of the third facet, I make the gate start up. The 24-faceted orb rotated as usual and a gate of light appeared after folding. Beyond the gate the room, where Rubia previously lived, is projected.

“Rollo, let's go.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Passing through the gate, we entered Rubia's room.

With this we once again entered the sphere of 【Religious State Hesphirat】's influence.

Chapter 85 – The Plan B liking Chain User

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



It seems there's no one in the church.
However, dust hasn't accumulated either.
The room, where Rubia lived, is still neat.
It looks like someone living in the city does the cleaning.
The mirror is spotless as well. By the way, I won't retrieve the mirror.
If something happens, I will return here. It will be fine if I explore from the surroundings again. I can use this place as a relay point.
I won't place a bone knight here either. To the bitter end the building's appearance is that of a normal church. It's all well if it's regarded as a normal **mirror** no one is interested in, and no one suspects.
Eventually I might retrieve it, but let's leave it here for the moment.
I go outside the church building.
Corn fields and a muddy road.
It's the same scenery like the last time I came here.
The other day I didn't check the place where the corpses of the pursuing soldiers were buried.
Well then, even if I head towards the Fortona Mountain...

Popobumu

I cannot do that without a map and the magic beast, which is my cherished legs, isn't here either.

I don't know whether Popobumu can pass through the gate. Well, I think it will be possible if go through the gate together with Popobumu being close to me or me touching it, but this time I intentionally didn't bring it along.

I'm trying out two plans I prepared to begin with.

I took out the Horn of Kalamabaon from my item box.

Maybe, if I blow this...

Putting it to my lips, a sound of an ocarina *pyuu*~~ resounds.

Time and time again I blow while creating a nice tune, with a rhythm like the protagonist of a game who wore green clothes, but... nothing happens.

There's no way that a pegasus will come flying that conveniently and nicely, is there?

At that time I considered it a joke, but it might really have departed on a journey around the universe's galaxies in search of Ideon.

Plan

B

Oh well, the other plan is certainly the real deal.

“Rollo, it might get dangerous being on my shoulder. It would be better if you are inside my hood at the beginning.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Once Rollo answered lightly, she dove inside my hood and only had her face peek out slightly.

Alright, I invoke <Chain> and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

Jumping on the spot, I expand <Magic Hand guided by Thought> towards the sky.

Creating a foothold with ‘Hand of Distorted Mana’ (Magic Hand guided by Thought) in mid-air, I landed on that.

— Success.

Magic Hand guided by Thought

Since it's a foothold created by the transparent Hand of Distorted Mana, its state of transparency can't be seen with Magic Observation Eyes.

From that foothold of <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I once again leap forward into the sky. And then I created a new foothold with <Magic Hand guided by Thought> right away and landed on it.

Repeating that many times, I run up high into the sky.

“High...” (Shuuya)

I reached a splendid altitude.

“Nyanyanyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo is excited. She left the hood and moved to my shoulder.

She won't be blown away since the wind is at a level of being a gentle breeze. Thin clouds are hanging in the sky. The horizon in the far distance is only distinguishable by its green colour.

I turn around in a circle and survey my surroundings, but there's nothing that seems to be a mountain.

If I had a map, I would probably know, but...

Well, that's asking for the impossible though.

I looked with a bird's eye view at the city of 【Beltzam】 with the church, which became small, directly below me.

Corn fields and field ridges continue like a patchwork in the surroundings. Although there were farmers on the fields, it's such an altitude.

They likely haven't noticed me.

Ah, in a slight distance there's a relay station at the highway.

Shall I procure information at the inn over there for the time being?

I warn Rollo before moving.

“Rollo, it's fine to get down if you can see this <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, but if not, it will be safer to stay inside the hood.” (Shuuya)

“Nya? N, nyaa.” (Rollo)

Oh, she went down.

Her two red eyes are shining due to the accumulated mana.

It seems she can use something like Magic Observation Eyes.

“Rollo, you are a divine beast after all, aren't you? However, it would be better if you stayed inside the hood. I don't know when the wind might pick up.” (Shuuya)

Once I said that, Rollo silently returned into the hood.

I'm probably able to move through the sky by just jumping if I use <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, but I attempt to add a little twist to it.

At first I maintain it with leeway—

I travel while carrying out five processes at the same time as I jump into the air.

- 1.) I make <Magic Hand guided by Thought> move ahead.
- 2.) I shoot a <Chain> towards the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> in pursuit.
- 3.) I affix it in the air by directly stabbing the magic hand of <Magic Hand guided by Thought> with the chain or the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> directly grabs the shot chain.
- 4.) I'm transported to the location of the , which is at the front, by making the chain, which is extending to the front, contract like the cord winding of a vacuum cleaner.
- 5.) Finely adjusting the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> which is in the sky, I make it move under my feet.

I move in such a manner.

I should be able to raise the speed remarkably once I get used to it.

I expect that I will be able to move by jumping through the air if I can handle the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> like a spring and if I can also increase the speed of the <Chain> pulling.

Oh, I got a nice idea.

If I release a far longer version of this <Chain>, it might also be nice to create a chain chair.

It's a strange idea, but I will try it at once.

I manipulate the chain into extending.

Making the grown chain gather in one place, I create a simple chair according to my mental image.

I'd like something to grab on. I make a small loop with a string out of chain similar to those in buses and trains like a wire puzzle.

I confirm its strength by sitting in the simple chair made out of chain.

Though it has a slightly rough feeling on my butt, the sitting experience is like being on top of a steel plate or like being on a ski lift.

If it's here, I'm slightly uneasy. I will try it after I descend to the surface.

I go down by using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>. Once I got down to the ground, I immediately started the experiment.

This time it has a different shape. I create a simple iron foothold with the chain.

It gives an impression similar to that of a bike's pedal.

Placing both my feet on that iron foothold, I affix my body by coiling the chain around my waist. I grab the chain, which I allowed to have some leeway, with

both hands. It's an image of travelling by being on a rope-way lift.

I extended the tip of the chain aiming at the top of a tree.

Piercing the thick trunk with the chain, I affix the chain by having it wrap around the tree.

Being properly affixed to the tree, we are tied together in a straight line.

I confirm the strength by pulling the chain. Alright, it won't come off.

Therefore I transport in one go my body, by making the chain contract towards my left wrist— the movement started. The chain foothold moves smoothly without any agitation at all. Arrival at the tree's trunk is a success.

It's really a sensation as if I got on a rope-way.

My chain is coming out with an unusual speed. If I think that I want to lengthen it, I can extend it to an extent which I can't grasp any more.

In addition, I realized that I can tamper with its shape quite a bit if I make the chain gather.

Its abilities have grown a lot.

Ah, not only as a rope-way lift but it seems that I can also use it as shield if I gather the chain... it reached the point that I want to try out various things.

In such a mood I forgot about my original objective and enjoyed various shapes by using the chain.

From a shield that has a hidden degree of directionality in my left hand, to a concealed round shield that protects my whole body, to a fake spear which imitated a real one, to creating a shape like a snake sword which extended and couldn't be cut, to trying to crush the ground with an iron ball punch by covering my left fist with the chain, to making a steel hammer and so forth. I had a good time.

Maybe I will be able to fly if I create wings with the chain...

However, that didn't proceed that smoothly.

I ended up having my entire body covered by chain in the middle of creating it...

As expected, it seems to be impossible to go that far with <Chain> as it is now.

However, although it was a chain that I could only let fly directly ahead in the beginning, it has now reached the point of being effective with a high application due to its degree of freedom at this point.

At first, when I learned <Chain Sense Guidance>, I lightly thought that I will probably be able to use it for moving and in various tactics, but as a matter of

fact it is a deep skill.

Despite me having the designation **Chain User** as my combat occupation... I shall reflect on it a bit.

Although if it's wings, I can consider them as possible if it's in the range of <Guidance Sorcery>.

If I imagine the details of mana wings with <Guidance Sorcery> just like with <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and if I practise it naturally every day like eating, it might become possible sooner or later.

However, right away is absolutely impossible.

Even though I was able to **embody** <Magic Hand guided by Thought> as a skill at last, after needing a long time and many hardships, constructing wings by imagining them from scratch once again is a next to impossible skill.

At the present time it's impossible to largely remodel the guidance sorcery.

Or rather, I think there is no need to do so beyond this point either.

The more you practise with the spear and experience combat, the more you are able to see the future ahead... moreover, magic, swordsmanship, other weapons and sage art, there's still an infinite amount of things I should do.

Quite a lot... it would be different if I had free time though.

First, I will make a chair and a foothold with this <Chain>.

After remaking it many times over, I was able to produce a chain chair with a good state.

Since I have a foothold sitting on the chains, I don't need a foothold made out of <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

After I swiftly practise movement and the fixation, it's complete.

With the simplification, I can travel in the sky with just two processes. Just by moving the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> to the front, I can travel in the sky while sitting with my butt on the chains.

Alright, let's try it.

I move up towards the sky while imagining the air trip.

After the <Magic Hand guided by Thought> floats in mid-air, I sit down on the chain chair and start the travel.

The sensation was like instantly moving to the outskirts of a town with a limited express train which got onto a lift.

Right below me is the inn at the edge of the city which I saw far in the distance

some time ago.

Erasing the chain I sat on, I descend to the muddy road close to the inn by using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

My first objective is to obtain information in the inn.

The inn is an oblong log-house.

Going up the small wooden stairs at the entrance door, I open the door and step inside.

Similar to a bar, there were several guests inside drinking alcohol.

Ignoring those guests, I try asking the inn's owner about Fortona Mountain.

Since I'm asked by the owner whether I'm doing a pilgrimage, I answer vaguely confirming that.

I was informed by the owner that Fortona Mountain is in the north-western direction from here and that I will come upon a large forest if I go straight ahead along the ridges of the fields.

Once I cross the large forest, I will see the mountain sooner or later.

It's sketchy, but I have no more business here as I have obtained the information I needed. I left the inn right away.

After confirming that there's no one travelling on the highway in the vicinity, I once again move up into the sky using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

After reaching a fixed altitude, I create a chain chair.

Sitting on the chain chair, I began the journey.

I have fun travelling in the sky while fully enjoying the refreshing wind.

Two hours... already passed, I think?

Sitting on my right shoulder, Rollo gazed at the sky's scenery while looking happy.



We are fast since there are no obstacles in the sky at all.

It's rough when measured with the eyes, but haven't we travelled around 50 km by now?

A dust storm rises on the earthen road below us and envelopes the fields in a vortex.

Let's move steadily in this manner. We travel several tens of kilometres.

Before long a region with a large forest spreading out became visible.

Will I see the mountain soon?

Thinking that, I check the front, but I can't see it.

Several tens of minutes after that— since I got tired of moving normally, at the moment I travelled through the sky like Tarzan while raising my voice, I ended up being seen by a resident who was below.

In a panic I immediately use <Hide>.

Launching <Chain> towards a tree in a hurry, I dived into the space between the trees.

I conceal my figure in the shadow of the forest. The resident, who wore a straw hat, looks up to the sky, and moves his head around restlessly, but enters his house after tilting his head to the side.

Phew, I wasn't exposed.

It seems he wasn't able to identify me since the chain's movement speed was fast.

Or rather, it doesn't matter even if I'm exposed.

I spontaneously ended up hiding with a feeling that I have done something bad.

Well... this is the territory of the religious state.

It might have been correct to hide... while thinking about such stuff, I fire a <Chain> into the upper part of a tall tree and make the chain contract— my body is transported with a momentum of crashing into the tree. Kicking the approaching trunk as stepping stone, I fly forward in one go.

I move by weaving through the spaces between many trees.

After a short time... I land by placing a knee on a thick branch.

I looked diagonally below from the branch. A small village was there.

Broad-leaf trees cover the expanse on the right side and the highway continues on the left side. There's also a field of flowers that resembled sunflowers.

Are they doing apiculture over there? Small straw boxes were placed there, too.
A rural village surrounded by abundant nature, huh?

There are many lumberjack-like people. The people, who carried axes in their hands, raised them overhead and fell trees while causing low and high sounds. The scent of what can be considered to be the sap of pine trees is wafting around as well.

Even now the lumberjacks are felling the trees with all their might. Wood splinters were rapidly scattered about in the surroundings.

Their figures are smaller than that of Raglen, but they are macho-man like people.

I still can't see the mountain if it's from here.

Shall I try to check from a higher location?

"Rollo, stay in the hood since I will head above for just a bit, okay?" (Shuuya)

"Nnn." (Rollo)

Rollo answers with a throaty voice, and gets into the hood.

I begin jumping while feeling Rollo's weight through my back.

I move high into the sky using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

It's an elevation of around more than 600 meters measured by eye, I guess?

... Cold. At this altitude there are strong winds.

I protect against the wind by making the chain transform into something like a wall creating a small enclosure.

There are gaps, but the force of the wind settles down considerably.

At once I observe the far distance which is in the direction of my travel.

Ooooh, found it. It's a mountain... I can faintly see it.

I was able to discover a large mountain and something that seems to be a lake far away.

Let's head over there.

Given that the wind's strong, I enjoyed a walk in the sky after descending.

After around three hours passed, the number of monsters, which floated in the upper reaches of the sky, suddenly increased.

I stop for a moment. Is it because there are many woods around here?

In the sky spreading above the forest large bat types, dragon species and monsters with the appearance of a creature having gorilla faces and possessing

ashen wings, which I haven't seen before, gathered in large swarms and flew through the air.

Those numbers are eerie. Since it's not like I have grown wings, I don't want to fight in the sky.

I decided to lower my altitude and to advance through the woodlands.

Driving a <Chain> into the trunk of a high tree, I travel by contracting it with my wrist.

Changing the direction by kicking the trunk just like before, I extend <Chain> a second time towards another tree trunk and advance by making the chain contract in the same manner.

This fits me well. This place is a forest that seems like elves live here.

Given that trees, which have thick trunks and branches, are crowding together plentifully here, there are many scaffolds. Therefore I was able to advance quickly and very steadily by using <Chain> and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

Even in the middle of travelling while using the trees, I catch sight of large amounts of strange monsters who live in the forest.

However, they don't approach me.

To be more precise, is it the correct interpretation that they can't get close?

My current speed of going forward isn't that different from my speed advancing in the sky while sitting on the chain chair.

In such situation it seems possible to hunt monsters swiftly by capitalizing on my three-dimensional manoeuvring.

However, for now travelling is the priority.

I jump by kicking and stepping on the ends of thick branches like in a famous ninja manga— using <Chain> and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I advance comfortably while jumping over the trees.

The air travel is nice and also has a great scenery, but if it's about moving swiftly, this way is easier.

After a few hours I leave the grove of trees.

I could see the mountain and lake nearby. There's also a highway.

Oh, ahead of that highway, it's a town? A town surrounded by a wall.

It looks like there's a small town between the lake and mountain.

I jump on the ground.

I land while rotating. I advance by kicking the ground deeply while leaving my footprints.

— I run along the highway.

Once I was close to the town, I run up a high tree. I observed the town while kneeling with one knee on a thick branch.

Being enclosed by a low wall, wooden houses are lined up inside.

It's a town since it's smaller than 【Holkerbaum】.

I was able to see that there is a large amount of ships anchored at the blue edge part of the large lake.

Since it seems that 【Fortona Mountain】 is really close, I should be able to obtain information about Water Goddess Akreshys if it's this town.

I jump off the branch while suppressing my high spirits, and run along the highway.

Rollo runs ahead on the highway to let her limbs move.

It seems that she wants to check ahead.

Well then, rather than that...

I wonder whether it will be alright if I enter this town while wearing this overcoat.

Although Rubia mentioned the possibility of me being persecuted...

If this town is tainted by a religious atmosphere, it will be dangerous.

There might be a culture that is strongly influenced by the monotheism of only believing in the Light God.

However, if I consider it geographically, it might be different?

The name of the lake is that of Water Goddess Akreshys, but it crosses over the southern 【Great Desert】 and reaches even 【Oseberia】... well, shall I try to summon my courage and go there?

The town's wooden gate, ahead of the road, was open.

I uneventfully enter inside the town by passing through it.

There were soldier-like people, wearing ochre uniforms, on top of the gate, but they didn't take notice of me.

Rollo, who went ahead, comes back running from down-town.

She jumped on her usual spot.

Shall I look for an inn and bar first then...? Continuing from the small town gate, I advance straight down the street, where people come and go, which can be

considered to be the principal street.

The people, who come and go along the street, don't notice my clothes, or rather they ignore me. There are no surprised people.

It seems to be alright. It was unnecessary to worry.

Rubia might have said that because she spent a long time in the church.

It's a small town, but it appears that the population is quite high. However, the race going past me is only humans.

The number of dwarves and beastmen is low.

I toured around the town to inspect it.

In the right corner a group of horse traders, located at a horse enclosure, has assembled.

Oh, it's the guild. In the left corner there's a signboard which had Adventurer's Guild 【Fortona】 written on it.

So there's an adventurer's guild here as well, huh?

Besides, the name of this town is Fortona.

You can say that's only natural as the Fortona Mountain is right in front of their eyes.

Next to the adventurer's guild I could see an alley with various shops lining up. In the small alley there is a weapon shop, armour shop, general store, funeral parlour, souvenir shop, an inn and a church.

The inn seems to operate as an establishment that incorporates a bar.

A signboard, which had a woodcarving of Fortona's Alcohol Inn on it, leans against a wall.

Two wooden shops are overlapping, and turned into one large store.

First, going by the standard, I will stay in the inn here and get some information.

Without delay I push the wooden door open and enter inside.

The service counter lines up lengthily on the left side of the inn. From the centre to the right side there's the dining room and there was a corridor continuing towards the inn's rooms.

I discover a middle-aged woman who seems to be the landlady and who possesses a light brown coloured skin.

She is dealing with a great number of guests on the other side of the service counter.

I was able to start a conversation once I got close to her.

“Welcome. You want to lodge? Or just have a meal?”

“Can I lodge for around two days while having a pet with me?” (Shuuya)

“Of course. Staying for a night by yourself with dinner included costs one silver coin. And, if you can’t use life magic, it’s fine to request a bath of my helper Lepoi for five small copper coins. If you can use it, there’s a large bucket on the veranda of the room. It’s alright to use it freely.”

Operating my item box, I take out two silver coins.

At that moment the looks of the surrounding guests gathered on me all at once. An **item box** seems to be rare.

“Wow, it’s first time I’ve seen such magic item. You, are you a remarkable adventurer who has challenged a labyrinth?”

Even the landlady is no exception. She reveals a surprised expression. She sent an intense gaze at my bracelet instead of the silver coin payment.

“No, well, that is, I’m an adventurer though. I placed the money here.”
(Shuuya)

“I know— So, what’s your business in this town where pilgrims gather? Ah, do you possibly want to exterminate the Snake Dragon of Akreshys Lake, Hesp, or the Blue Dragon Rastis? Or do you want to subjugate the seven-legged monster Loperion which lives on Fortona Mountain?”

Once the landlady took the money, she repeatedly fired questions in rapid succession.

Are there such monsters which need subjugation?

“I haven’t decided on the request yet. Speaking of Akreshys Lake, is there any temple and idol of Akreshys?” (Shuuya)

“That’s only natural. If it’s the temple, it’s close to the port of this town. And there’s also **Akreshys statue** being passed around in the vicinity of this town of Fortona.”

It seems there are many statues existing in the outskirts.

“The port, huh? Lastly, is there a famous location around here?” (Shuuya)

“Sure, there is. I dare say they are famous places. On Fortona Mountain

there's the **Marvellous Rock Art** of the Light Spirit Fortona-sama. The **Voice-raising Idol** of Light God Lulodis-sama is especially famous. After those, the **Akreshys' Spring Water**, brought about by Water Goddess-sama, is also famous."

Is the landlady proud of her home town? Or is it her business instinct? She talks while looking happy.

"A Water Goddess-sama? I'm curious." (Shuuya)

"Oh, do you intend to go pray to Water Goddess-sama before the request?"

"Yes, that's the plan." (Shuuya)

"I see. I told you just now, but the temple is in the direction of the port, right? Do your best no matter what request you take. So, about the room for you to stay at, the room's name is **Room of the Spirit** and it's located the deepest inside at the end of the corridor. This is the key."

"Yes— Well then." (Shuuya)

I receive the copper key.

Everyone looks at me, but I ignore them.

Leaving the dining room, I head towards the room through the corridor.

Opening the door which had Spirit Room written on it, I entered inside.

It has an average size. There are two beds.

Next to them there are only purely wooden side tables and plain, dark-coloured drawers.

Does it only feel spacious because there's a veranda?

I confirm the large bucket as well.

"N, nya." (Rollo)

Once I check the bucket for bathing, Rollo crawled out from my hood and moved from my shoulder to my right arm.

While skilfully walking atop my arm, she kicks my arm, jumps on top of a bed and plays around.

"Ouch, that, you like it, don't you?" (Shuuya)

It was painful and blood was flowing as she scratched my skin with the small

claws which grew on her hind legs, but... since Rollo is playing around by happily jumping around, I didn't get angry.

“Nn, nya.” (Rollo)

I guess the room's check-up is fine with this.
I decide to head to the port at once.

“Rollo, I will go ahead.” (Shuuya)

“Nn.” (Rollo)

I call Rollo who is playing on top of the bed.
I exit the room leaving Rollo, who only released a throaty voice while playing around by jumping up and down, behind.
Leaving the inn, I walk along the street.
Once I did that, Rollo chased after me while purring as if complaining about something.

Did she jump from behind? She gets on my shoulder just like usual.
Did she get back in a good mood when I gently stroke the head of the adorable Rollo who is dissatisfied and has lowered her whiskers? She made the purring sound of the pampered child Tareko-chan.* (T/N: 甘えん坊のタレ子ちゃん – *Seems to be a specific baby or something, but no idea about the reference here*)

While flirting with such cute Rollo, I walk along the main street. I head towards the port while peeking at a street stall which is roasting meat sticks that are similar to fish meat sausages.

Oops...

There were presences of some people following me from behind.
Is it the group that stayed at the inn, I wonder?

Chapter 86 – The Vampire of the Back Alley

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



I look at the vicinity of the port without minding them.
I can actually feel that it's a city at a lake from the scent of water hanging in the air...
The shapes of the ships anchored at the port resemble the shapes of the ones I saw in Hekatrail and Holkerbaum, but there are many undersized fishing boats. I wonder where I can find a temple-like building...
Shall I move to the top of a slightly high building?
I will also give the guys, who are following me the slip if I do that.
Running towards the shadow of a building, I confirm my surroundings while close to the wall which was jagged and angular.
I check whether there are any onlookers. After I confirm that there isn't anyone, I climb on the roof while making use of drain carvings located at the windows and pillars, window-sills and lintel protrusions.
Right after I reached the roof, the guys, who chased me, showed their figures on the road below.
Going by their appearance they are either adventurers or those who prepared appropriate equipment.
Turning their heads left and right restlessly, they seem to search for me desperately.

What's their objective? Is it because I showed my item box?

If it's that what they are looking for... they appear to be a bit too persistent.

However, I will leave them alone for now.

While stretching myself carefreely, I look at the panoramic view of the port as I hold up my hand over my head and walk on the roof.

— Is it that building? Or rather, that's probably it.

I can observe a great number of people climbing what appears to be a long stairway at the left edge of the wharf.

There was a temple-like building, which was made out of cut-out limestone, at the top of the stairway.

Let's try going over there.

Running on the roof, I jump over it as if crossing a rectangular stone vaulting horse and grab a rod, on which laundry is drying, to use for sliding down.

I jump over to the neighbouring stone roof and land with a roll.

I cross over obstacles with a fixed rhythm as if performing dance steps.

I recall the artistic group movements in France.

As if I turned into a performer of Yamakasi* in a parkour. *(T/N: A france group organized by practitioners of parkours and other acrobatic techniques, according to wiki)*

Furthermore, just like an achievement among samurai, I run along a thin rope which was tied to a building by using Magic Feet after lightly accumulating mana in my feet and cross over to the neighbouring roof.

I arrived on a red roof which was close to the temple.

While doing a cartwheel with no particular meaning, I move on top of its roof.

On the roof in front of my eyes, after finishing the rotation, a long and thin board like the perch of a falcon, enters my field of vision.

Since I got slightly interested... I proceed forward, walking towards the thin and long board.

The landscape is great. I'm watching the town with an overhead view.

And, just below me, I can see that there's a carriage filled with straw.

It's that, isn't it? A sign that I have to jump down from here, right?

It's not bungee jumping, but... jumping down?

“Rollo, hold onto me. Pretty much prepare for an impact after we fall down below.” (Shuuya)

For the time being I give a warning to Rollo who has moved from the hood to

my shoulder.

“Nya.” (Rollo)

I jump down from the wooden tip, which protruded out from the roof, while simulating the wings of a falcon with both arms—.

It’s a swoop down towards the straw-loaded carriage located on the ground.

I felt like a high sound of *pyuu* could be heard alongside a sensation of my nether region shrinking with a *kyun*.

I safely plunge into the straw after turning my back towards it.

Is it because the cushioning nature of straw is excellent?

I remember Assassin’s Creed. (T/N: *Not sure why the author bothers to censor it at this point, neither do I get the reference as I had never anything to do with Assassin’s Creed – Marco: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFfT3svTn_w*)

Rollo is safe as well.

Was she uneasy? She landed and extended her tentacles into the straw in front of her.

“Rollo, we are going to the temple. Will you return into the hood?” (Shuuya)

“Nn.” (Rollo)

Rollo, who is crawling around inside the straw, transforms into a black panther.

She gets off the wagon while using her tentacles and forepaws.

I swiftly spring up in order to fling away the straw, too. Then I escaped from the wagon.

I can see that there’s a stone corner ahead of a gap in the alley.

Approaching that corner by running, I kicked the clean stone floor to the extent of causing a squeaking sound with my feet and arrived in front of the temple’s stairs once I went around the corner.

When I turn my sight towards the top of the stairs which have a shape similar to the character U, I can plainly see the temple’s outward appearance.

It’s pure white with the presence of an old church.

The building’s material isn’t limestone, but close to coarse marble with a Greek meander pattern. (T/N: <https://ameblo.jp/pancada/entry-11458827122.html>, first picture)

It’s an arabesque pattern typically displayed on the outer side of Japanese

ramen bowls.

Were those symbols of authority in ancient China?

Even while I'm pondering about such stuff, a lot of people are coming and going on the stairs.

Female adventurers who wear light green platoks, merchants wearing shoes which had gold-inlay soles, elder women who wear skirts wrapped around their body in the old style and who can be considered as vagrants, youths which are dressed in brand new cotton clothes and elder people who wore woollen caftans... as might be expected from a temple, there are also many people, most likely believers, covering their bodies with light blue robes which are open at the front.

A mix of those people go up the long, white stairs.

Ahead, once I climbed the stairs, I was greeted by an arched entrance.

Together with many men and women I advance inside by passing through the arched gate.

Inside, a narrow, vertical hallway continues onwards, but the dome is high... Many marble pillars supporting the ceiling are lined up along the left and right side of the hallway.

At the end of the hallway there was yet another arched entrance.

I proceed inside by going through that entrance.

From there on the number of people, who had a believer-like appearance, increased.

They have layered the light blue clothes with a blue gown.

I don't see any elves.

This place is within the sphere of influence of the【Religious State Hesliphat】after all.

Heading down a passage, I came out at a drafty, large hall.

The form is certainly that of a church which serves as temple.

Various large and small candlestands have been set up along the wall and corners of the hall as if paying attention to symmetry. With plenty of fires lit, the candles are a source of bright light.

The vicinity is filled with the sounds of bells and beautiful singing.

It was dignified, but it made me feel strangely as if I was being invited into heaven by the timbre of a boy's soprano, gushing forth like the water from

inside a spring.

Even Rollo on my shoulder, shuts her eyes. She looks as if she's attentively listening to the singing voices. Though she might also be just asleep.

My gaze is naturally drawn to the tunes which can be heard.

There's a place similar to a tiered gallery on the left side. There was a choir of boys and girls standing on the platform wearing blue garments. Along with the choir, there was also a group holding iron pipe instruments in their hands.

Although the boy with the soprano is still small in stature, he's singing at the top of his voice with all his might.

Is that soprano granted for a short time by god?

Once his voice breaks, he will shift to alto, I guess?

The motions of the conductor's hands resemble the movements I know of.

Are the instruments held by the children similar to handbells?

While I'm thinking about such trivial matters, the solo part of the boy finishes and it develops into a combined singing, like howling, with the altos. They carry out a transition from a melody which resembled the arias of Mendelssohn.

While savouring the wondrous piece of music, I turn my line of sight to the center.

In the middle there was a huge statue of Water Goddess Akreshys.

In the form of a woman who is holding a large water jug over her head with both hands, it's certainly a sacred icon.

Even the the shape of her garments have been given a design certainly befitting the body of a goddess.

There are traces that water streamed from the water jug she supported with both hands. Distinct traces of water were left behind at the lower part of the statue.

However, currently there's no water flowing out of the water jug.

Is the water, which poured out from the water jug, the spring water?

A priest-san, who wore a light blue robe, joins his hands together in front of the idol holding the water jug. He offered prayers to Water Goddess Akreshys.

Various believers have gone down on their knees as well, and imitate the motions of the priest while making the sign of a cross with their fingers. They are praying with their utmost effort while pressing the fingers towards their platoks located on their foreheads.

A solemn mood drifts about as the choir's singing voices reduce in volume in concert with the prayers of the priest-san.

However, I want to ruin this atmosphere by releasing a fart with a *puu*.

Setting aside that childish idea of a joke, I addressed the priest-san with a serious expression and without messing around.

"Umm, sorry." (Shuuya)

"Yes?"

"Can I receive the Spring Water of Akreshys?" (Shuuya)

"Sorry. As you can see, spring water doesn't come out of the water jug currently."

Did it stop after all?

"Is that so...?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. **Snake Dragon Hesp** has captured one of Akreshys's idols located in the **【Forest of the Goddess】** close to **【Akreshys Lake】**. The spring water of the main temple here ended up stopping."

Snake Dragon Hesp? Are there several idols?

"Are there other idols as well?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, that's right. In total there are six idols, but because of the power of the idols scattered about in various places, the idol, which is located in this main temple of Water Goddess Akreshys, gets supported and gives birth to the spring water from the **Water Jug of the Water Goddess**."

The idols' power, huh? So he is saying that the snake dragon is hindering that.

"Will the spring water come back if that snake dragon gets killed?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, that's correct. We have requested its subjugation through a request in the adventurer's guild. ... However, close to seven days have already passed, but for some reason no one has been successful in subjugating it this time. Since I have heard talk that the hunt will be carried out by an alliance of adventurer clans, I think that it will be defeated soon, but... if they can't defeat it, it might be hopeless if we don't wait until Snake Dragon Hesp's egg hatches."

The power of an idol is amazing... it seems to grant an effect even to the egg of a monster.

Well, it's an ingredient making it possible to revive the **withered large tree**. It has such strange power, I guess.

"How long is the time until Snake Dragon Hesp's egg hatches?" (Shuuya)

"It will take one year, I think...?"

"That's long, isn't it...?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, if it results in the spring water not coming out during that period, it will cause a heavy negative influence to not only drinking and medical treatment, but also to agriculture, the planting of medicinal plants and the production of potions."

It has various utilities.

The spring water is an important item after all.

"That will be... terrible. If it isn't defeated quickly, that is." (Shuuya)

"Yes. That's how it is, but regarding circumstances in relation to anything besides Light God-sama, we can't hope for an ounce of support from this country. There's no other option but relying on adventurer-sama's. Therefore I believe a swift solution to be impossible."

Then they can't expect anything.

【Hesliphat】 gives the impression of a monotheism of Light God Lulodis. Once I consider that, it's great that this temple hasn't been torn down.

"Indeed, I guess you are right. And, it's about Snake Dragon Hesp, but does it always take an idol at the time of laying eggs?" (Shuuya)

"No, it's not always. It's only in the case it gives birth in a lake or a forest. However, if the snake dragon lays its egg close to Akreshys' idol, it knows that the egg will turn into a strong snake dragon by absorbing the idol's power. Therefore such a thing has happened several times in many years."

So that's the reason. There's no other option but to defeat it then.

"I see, is that so? Got it. Then ***I will subjugate it.***" (Shuuya)

"Eh? You by yourself?"

The priest-san puts on a long hat.
Was he surprised by my words? Shaking his head, that hat slipped off a bit.

“Nyaa nya.” (Rollo)

Having intently listened to the words of the priest on my shoulder, Rollo reacts as well.

If I judge by her purring, it’s probably 『I will be there as well nya』.

“You are my partner, it’s alright. I plan to accept the request at the adventurer’s guild for the time being, but you said that the clans are hunting with an alliance, right? I still don’t know whether I will associate with them.”
(Shuuya)

The priest-san looks at me as if admonishing me.

“Snake Dragon Hesp is a gigantic, powerful monster. I won’t say anything bad. But it might be better if you join up with the clans if you are going to hunt the dragon.”

“Let me think about it. So, do you know any of its weak spots?” (Shuuya)

“I have heard that lightning is its weak point. However, I’m a simple priest. Since I don’t fight, I ((know)) only this much... sorry. You should get the details at the adventurer’s guild.”

“That’s right, I guess. I will head to the adventurer’s guild then. Thank you very much for especially giving me your time to answer my questions.” (Shuuya)

I bow respectfully towards the priest-san.

“No, not at all. This also Water Goddess Akreshys guidance. Please accomplish your task safely—”

The priest took out a small rod from his pocket, and started to pray while swinging it left and right.

After bowing lightly once more, I take Rollo along, and head outside the temple. Well then, shall I try going to the adventurer’s guild?

I walk along the main street after descending the stairs.

When the guild’s building came into sight after walking on the street, I encountered those fellows who chased me a while ago.

“Rollo, get ready. I think you are aware of it, but, basically it’s in town.”
(Shuuya)

“N, nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo takes action swiftly.
She runs behind the guys we encountered.
There are six of them who might be considered to have laid in wait there for me.
The leader, who held a spear, is a blonde knight with a big stature.
A medium-built, middle-aged man with two swords visible at his waist.
A small man wielding an one-handed sword and a shield.
A giant-like man who carries a halberd.
A woman with brown hair who had a small rod and wore the clothes of a magician.
A black-haired woman possessing fox-like eyes who seems to have strong character and holds a bow.
Six people in total, four men and 2 women.
Except one of them, the others don’t make mana circulate in their bodies.
It’s only the woman, whom I consider to be a magician, who is able to perceive mana.
With the six of them, they block the road in order to surround me.

“Leader’s prediction was correct after all.”

“Yea, he told us that he will probably come here sooner or later, if we keep watch here, since he’s an adventurer. As expected of leader. His predictions are excellent.”

Each of the six stated their foolish impressions.
What’s this about excellent prediction... it makes me laugh.
The knight-like man, whose head towers high due to his long neck and who wears leather clothes on his high stature, took one step in front from among that group of retards and addressed me with a composed attitude.

“You came after all, huh? It’s because we both have the same occupation as adventurers. I expected that you will come here.”

“So what about it? What’s your business with me?” (Shuuya)

“That bracelet of yours, looks quite high class.”

“Ah, that might be so?” (Shuuya)

Once I talk to him ^{without} including ^{any} emotions, ^{intonation} the knight-styled man glares at me with his blue eyes while furrowing his golden eyebrows. And then he pointed his spear’s tip at me. Do these fellows know what it means to turn their weapons on someone? This place is the main street... Why take such action while being basked in the attention of the surroundings? ^{item box} There’s probably no small numbers of guards. Do they want this this much?

“Really? Since we are drawing attention here, won’t you go into the back alley over there?”

He urges me to move by giving two or three light pushes with the spearhead. Each of the other five people also drew their weapons.

“Shaaaaa!” (Rollo)

Rollo, who is behind the adventurers makes a threatening sound. Meeting eyes with the angry Rollo, I shake my head slightly sideways telling her “not yet.”

Rollo immediately stopped her threatening.

Well, it will be convenient if they invite me into a back alley. I decide to deliberately go along with them.

Let’s give them plenty of the return gift called “death.”

“Got it, let’s go.” (Shuuya)

“It helps that your understanding is good. Kukuku.”

What’s with that “Kukuku?” Thin lips with a skinny face. I wonder how long he will be able to continue that faint, scornful laughter... We advance into the back alley.

“— Here will probably be alright. Well then, please hand that bracelet over to us.”

The blond-haired Westerner, who was called leader, says with a smirking face. ... There’s no way that I will hand it over, is there?

“Haa? I don’t want to.” (Shuuya)

“Do you grasp your current situation?”

The blond-haired Westerner asked while contorting his skinny face.

“Leader, let’s finish him off. We expressly came to a place where there are no people.”

The bow-holding woman, who is behind the spear-carrying blonde man, says such thing.

Moreover, the sword-holding middle-aged man butted in.

“Youngster, hand over that bracelet quickly. It’s for your own good.”

He has already drawn his other sword from his waist. He warned me while pointing both swords at me.

Next the short, bearded man, holding a shield, turns a sharp look at me and starts to talk.

“You black-haired bastard’s attitude is quite rude. You were told to do it without delay, so do it accordingly.”

making fun

“— Leader Sauza, there are no people coming from behind.”

It seems that the halberd-carrying giant is monitoring the narrow path at the end of the back alley.

“Sauzaaa, though this youngling is refusing to hand it over, what will we do? Kill him?”

“That’s right. We won’t kill him if he hands it over obediently though.” (Sauza)

“Leader, if you order it, I will kill him? Shall I shoot?”

The fox-eyed female archer with the bobbed, black hair tried to prepare her bow.

Good grief... they are doing as they please.

Including Sauza, do they really warn someone before killing them promptly? Let’s wait for three seconds.

“Oi, you guys. If you can’t properly judge after looking at your opponent, only death will be waiting for you, no? Since nothing has happened until now, run

away obediently.” (Shuuya)

I talk to them with the intention of mercy. I wave my arm with a “shoo!” I don’t know whether these guys will accept it obediently, but I implicitly show them “Go away somewhere.”

And silence drifts about for a short while.

“... Ahaha, how ridiculous.”

“Hahaha, you are really a rude guy. Do you intend to win against this six people?”

“Puhahaha.”

“Haa, it can’t be helped, there’s no other choice but to finish him off—”
(Sauza)

The blonde-haired man with the high stature who was called Sauza, breathes out a sigh and turns a triumphal expression towards me.

He approached me with a battlecry while wielding the point of the spear he held in his hands.

Haa, *“it can’t be helped”* is my line.

I take action while thinking such idle complaint— <Throw> in an instant.

While piercing the forehead of the black-haired female archer with a dagger, and not the man who charges while holding his spear— I dashed in front with Magic Combat Feet.

I purposely challenge them to a close combat.

I will use them as guinea pigs.

The tip of the long spear, handled by Sauza, approaches my chest, but I lightly parry such long spear with my left hand.

While maintaining my magic feet, I draw the short sword, possessing a silver-blue blade, from my chest belt and swiftly slouch my entire body— this is a reference to Oze’s movements. You can even say I ripped it off him.

Leaping into the bosom of the blue-eyed, spear-carrying knight Sauza, I make use of his long neck.

“Wh-, fas—” (Sauza)

Grabbing his long neck at the base of his throat with one hand, I pull him towards myself.

While drawing the silver-blue blade of the short sword to the nape of his neck which was bent forward, I tear up Sauza's neck by sinking the shortsword's blade into it in order to make his neck eat a neckbreaker in the style of a half rotation.* I went around towards Sauza's back with a horizontal rotation. (T/N: <https://matome.naver.jp/odai/2143057932562741901/2143556550814955403>)

Blood gushes vigorously out in a spray from Sauza's severed carotid artery of his neck— it covers the woman, who was next to him, in the style of a shower.

“Kyaaaa.”

The female magician, who was completely bathed in blood, screams due to the sudden event.

Since I'm standing behind Sauza after going around, I have no spurts of blood. Oh? Is it the effect of the magic shortsword's absorption? I get filled with vitality.

After convulsing, Sauza stopped moving.

Let's use this guy as shield.

“Leader! Damn—”

The dual-wielding man came to counterattack.

However, has he lost the presence of his mind? He only unleashes reckless and random sword thrusts.

His swords got stuck in the corpse of their leader Sauza which I changed into a shield.

“Ah—”

“Oops!” is the feeling he voices out.

— I <Throw> the shortsword, which cut Sauza's neck, in that opening.

The dual-wielding man can't react to the quickly thrown silver-blue shortsword. He collapses to the side with the silver-blue sticking into his middle forehead with its conspicuous wrinkles.

Once it leaves my hands, it won't absorb mana and vitality, huh?

“— What's that? A black cat? Guaaa, hyuuu... pogooh.”

The hoarse voice of the giant, who was standing watch in the rear, resounds at that point.

The giant, who stood at the rear, became bloodstained. He fell down with a thud while holding the halberd at his chest.

It seems Rollo had defeated him by drilling her tentacle bone swords into the giant's neck.

Meanwhile I fling Sauza, whom I used as meat shield, at the still-alive, small man who holds an one-handed sword and a shield.

“Gunuo, fuck! Move aside!”

He tries to repel the corpse of Sauza, who was his friend, with the shield he held in his left hand.

— I won't overlook such opportunity.

Drawing close to him with my magic feet, I release a roundhouse kick from a low position in order to crush the man's feet.

The sound of bones breaking with a *snap*, as if a baseball bat had snapped off, reaches my ears.

“Ugyaaaa, ah, my feeth are aaaaah.”

The man screamed while simultaneously enduring the pain— then trashed about on the ground.

Dropping his sword and shield on the ground, he holds his legs.

Did the woman, who was bathed in blood, recover from her state of panic? She opens her mouth while glaring at me.

“Even Aegis! This monster! Eat th—”

Shouting the name of her friend who is rolling around on the ground, she turned her upward-slanted eyes at me and I was wondering whether she will fire magic at me with her raised wand, but a thick sound reverberates.

Rollo's tentacle bone swords pierced through the woman's belly.

While dropping her small wand, the female magician assumes the posture of the character くらげ, gets launched to the rear and crashes into a wall.

“Gue.”

The woman spits out blood from her mouth due to the impact. As if she was stitched to the wall, the woman limply hangs there.

“Rollo, *nice**—” (Shuuya) (T/N: word in English)

I take the Magic Wand into my right hand while praising Rollo. I lowered the red axe blade onto the head of the man, who was lying on the ground with his legs broken, and pulverized his skull.

“— A-Aegis has... gu, gaahaa...”

Even while being crucified to the wall, the woman was still alive. That fits just right. Let's absorb her soul and blood after talking to her for a bit.

“Oi— what's your name?” (Shuuya)

I slam my hand into the wall in front of her. I closely look at the face of the woman who had Rollo's tentacle bone swords stuck into her belly.

“L-Lanya.”

“Lanya, eh? Did you guys see me at that inn? What's your true identity? Did you came attacking me with this bracelet as your objective?” (Shuuya)

While showing her the bracelet, I investigate this woman's background. There might still be dark guilds around this area.

“Guuh, it hurts...” (Lanya)

“If you don't answer honestly, you will end up dying while experiencing even more pain though?” (Shuuya)

“G-Got it. I will talk. We are simple adventurers. Our goal was your bracelet. Leader said *“Let's steal it even if we have to attack and kill him”* or such. Because of that we chased you...” (Lanya)

... Are they really adventurers? It seems that the quality of the adventurers around here is quite low.

There's a world of difference to the adventurers who worked with me at the time I spent in 【Hekatrail】.

Even if they saw me possessing an item box, their thoughts of stealing it or such were non-existent. They also had looks of respect. They were adventurers who possessed the backbone called ambition that they will obtain it sooner or later as well.

The adventurers here are no different from thieves without any morale... I want

to believe that it's only by chance though.

"... H-Hey, please. Since it's fine for you to use my body freely, release..."
(Lanya)

Lanya reveals a frantic expression while buttering up to me.
Well, as the person herself told me, "let's make free use of her body."

"Got it. Before that, Some time ago you laughed and said *"Ahaha, how ridiculous,"* but is it amusing for you now as well?" (Shuuya)

"W-What are you talking about? It's not amusing!" (Lanya)

"Oh, really—" (Shuuya)

I show a wicked smile, and once I bring my face close to kiss the woman, pretend that is, I bite the nape of the magicians neck— I drank her blood.

"Eh? Hiiiiii, ah, aaaaah..." (Lanya)

Delicious. Fresh blood is tasty after all.
The woman faints and become incontinent while revealing an expression of ecstasy.

I take her soul just like that, too. The entire body of the female magician dries up completely in the blink of an eye and turns into bones. Those bones turn into dust and vanish as well.

The clothes, which were wrapped around her body, the ornaments she possessed, her backpack and her purse dropped to the ground.

It's not like there's a fingerprint search, but... for the time being, I cover my hands with with leather clothes and examine the bag which serves as purse. I get 10 silver coins and 5 large copper coins from the bag.

I collect the Shortsword of Yazekapos, which I used with and rummaged through the corpses of the others.

Wiping off the blood which clung to the silver-blue blade, I put it back in my chest belt.

Once I finish the looting of the corpses, it totalled to 1 gold coin, 25 silver coins and 18 large copper coins.

That's the monetary spoils? There are guild cards as well.

Rank D and their names were written on them, but since it doesn't interest me, I won't take them.

I break the cards in pieces and cast them away into a corner of the back alley. I fought with this shortsword as main this time, but it went surprisingly well. Regarding spear combination moves, it has a good affinity with shortswords and longswords in close combat.

That head-twisting throw is originally a technique to trap a neck by using the stick part of a spear. But, if it's a shortsword I can cut directly. In that way ((the opponent)) will also turn into a meat shield.

The last meat shield was able to show its effect with some ad lib though. Besides, the movements of Oze, who handled two weapons, still remained in my head.

It's learning by imitation, but I intend to try mimicking his slight fluent movements to handle the shortsword.

Since I haven't been able to gain any skill either, it's probably still far too comical and clumsy if compared to my main job, but... while thinking about such things, I put away the money I retrieved.

I only put one silver coin into my chest pocket, and stored the gold coin of the rest in my item box.

“Rollo, we will go to the adventurer's guild.” (Shuuya)

“N, nyanya.” (Rollo)

Though Rollo had applied her small tongue to a pool of blood and used it to lick up the blood, she returned to my shoulder.

After leaving the back alley, which reeked of blood, we went back to the street and headed towards the Fortona Adventurer's Guild.

Chapter 87 – Snake Dragon Hesp

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



Stopping in front of the 【Fortona】 Adventurer's Guild, I check its exterior. It's a building which conforms with the dark brown wooden architecture around here.

Its size is approximately the same as the guild which was in 【Holkerbaum】, I think.

Its entrance is a wooden double door like those in western movies. I push open the door, which has remains of dirt caused by countless adventurers on it, and enter.

Right after going inside, I discover sideways a room where it's possible to hold meetings.

The interior isn't spacious but neither is it narrow.

A crystal magic light source is installed on the ceiling and illuminates the adventurer's guild's interior brightly.

The floor was made out of wood and there was a crowd in front of the board where the requests have been posted as usual.

As for races, there are only human adventurers... beastmen are a minority, huh? Blending into the large number of humans, I look at the request papers which were posted.

There should be a request for subjugating the snake dragon... oh, found it

immediately.

The request for the Snake Dragon Hesp.

It's written on a large, high-grade-looking parchment.

It seems to be an emergency request and invites those at B rank, A rank or above.

Client: Water Goddess Akreshys' Temple's Main Priest Kyulele

Request Contents: Emergency Request A++ Snake Dragon Hesp Subjugation

Application Period: Indefinite, until it's been defeated

Subjugation Target: Snake Dragon Hesp

Habitation Location: 【Goddess Forest】 ▪ Akreshys Idol

Reward: 30 Gold Coins

Subjugation Proof: The snake dragon's fangs, the snake dragon's venom and the snake dragon's egg. Usually it's those three, but since spring water will flow out of the temple's statue if you defeat Snake Dragon Hesp, it's not particularly required this time.

Suggestions: It bites with venomous saliva, blows one away with its trunk, performs ramming attacks and has thorns at the tail, those are what requires special attention.

Remarks: Adventurers above B rank are encouraged to participate. However, since it's an emergency request, you won't be asked about your rank. By the way, the snake dragon's fangs, the snake dragon's venom and the snake dragon's egg are items that can be sold for a high price.

Grabbing a wooden token which had the request number written on it, I take it to a receptionist.

Isn't it great that one of the receptionists is a beautiful child.

Though there's only a small number of receptionists.

Among them there was a pretty child.

It has bright, light brown hair and light brown pupils.

Only at the spot of this receptionist a queue has formed.

Mmh~ ain't that a handshake event of an idol...

But, well... I can understand it.

Only her hairdo is stylish, too. The white flower decoration close to her ear suited her.

She's a beauty matching a flower.

However, to even expressly line up there, well.

Having said that, once I look at the faces of the other receptionists...

There's a muscular guy with a shaved head, an old person with a skinny face, and a plain woman.

Well, isn't that fine? Let's go to the plain child this time.

As for that girl, I feel like she looks gloomy, but...

Rather than the skin-headed, muscular male receptionist, she's a woman.

Ignoring the line at the idol receptionist, I walk briskly.

I came in front of the plain receptionist.

"I wonder whether I can accept this request as well?" (Shuuya)

I present the wooden token with the request's number written on it and my guild card.

"Err, err..."

The plain receptionist turns her huge eyes from me, the wooden token and my card back and fro... this woman, too much indecision...

"It's an emergency request though." (Shuuya)

"A-Ah yes desu. You possess a title desu. Amazing desu."

Ah, dragon slayer.

"Just by chance. But, thanks. So, can I accept this request, I wonder?"
(Shuuya)

"Yes desu. Please wait a bit desu."

The receptionist brings out the usual silver plate with a crystal ball attached to it.

However, the way she holds it is awkward.

This receptionist, is she a newcomer?

Finally she placed the silver plate on the reception table.

"Please put your hand on this crystal desu."

"Roger." (Shuuya)

The crystal shines when I place my hand on it. It was accepted right away.
The receptionist picks up the card and confirms it by bringing her face close to

the card with all her might.

Does she have a tendency to squint or does she have a bad eyesight, I wonder...?

“It’s done desu. Here’s the card desu.”

While twitching her eyebrows, she bows with a force and grandiosely hits the desk as she returned the card.

“Certainly.” (Shuuya)

“Please do your best with the request desu. This request has caused a large number of casualties desu. As it seems that the C rank 【Fortona’s Light】 clan and the likewise C rank 【Golden Sword King】 clan are going to hunt Snake Dragon Hesp in an alliance from now on, everyone from the clans has currently gathered in the parlour on the right desu.”

She politely explained.

“Got it. I will go and have a look.” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yes desu.”

At that point I bid farewell to the plain receptionist who adds the expression “desu” to the end of her sentences.

I headed towards the parlour.

“Rollo, stay quiet, okay?” (Shuuya)

“N.” (Rollo)

Rollo purrs shortly with a quiet, throaty voice.

It seems it’s sleeping time for her while buried inside the hood.

Well then, apart from entering the parlour, will I hunt together with the clans? I don’t want to be constricted in my actions overly much, but... it might be fine to slip into the group until we are in the middle of it.

Someone will probably know the exact place of Snake Dragon Hesp’s location. While thinking about such convenient matters, I push the handle of the room’s door and go inside.

They were in some kind of strategy meeting.

“We should call out to a bigger number of clans.”

I sat down on a free chair and joined the meeting.

“I wonder about that. This place isn’t a large city. Even so, comparatively large damage has accumulated. There are also around ten individuals, who are participating, here, right? In addition there are three magicians, who can use healing magic, in our 【Fortona’s Light】, too.”

“It’s merely three magicians, isn’t it? Our 【Golden Sword King】 has also two people who possess a priest-type combat occupation which can use healing magic. Thus it means we have to challenge Snake Dragon Hesp with five people as rearguard.”

After those leader-like men talked, a woman stood up to appeal.

“Wait a moment. Please don’t advance the talks as you please with the clans.”

“Mmh, what is it?”

“I’m a magician called Lalaa Dolkamen who participates individually. I can use healing magic more or less.” (Lalaa)

“I see. What’s your rank?”

“It’s D.” (Lalaa)

“Hah, then it’s a bit worrying. However, it will likely be alright if you devote yourself to being a rear guard. Can the others able to use healing magic please raise their hands.”

The leading man talked while turning his look at the other participants. I get lured into it as well and check the surroundings. The ones raising their hand are— none.

“Six people, eh? Well, as for the number, it’s appropriate. In that case lightning magic, which is its weak-point, will become the key.”

“If it’s lightning magic, I can use it.”

“She is a cornerstone of our clan. It’s fine with this, right? Won’t we continue with the strategy soon?”

A representative of the other clan says so.

“... Got it. Let’s head to the Goddess Forest after creating a strategy and

affirming it once more. The vanguards and middle guards in this place, please raise your hands.”

The vanguards, including me, participating individually are 8 people. There are 2 archers for the rear guard and a single magician.

【Fortona’s Light】 has 4 vanguards. 2 archers for the rearguard and two magicians.

【Golden Sword King】 has 4 vanguards and two magicians as rearguards. That’s the combat potential.

By the way, I raised my hand as vanguard.

“Mmh, did we increase by one? You are...”

It seems to be about me.

“C rank. Shuuya Kagari participating individually. Basically I’m a spear user. I have quite the confidence in handling it. I have a familiar as partner as well.”
(Shuuya)

“Hou... looking forward to working with you.”

“The same here.” (Shuuya)

After that there’s no obvious objection.

The meeting continued favourably.

Since there’s one magician who can use lightning magic which is the snake dragon’s weak-point, the archers will spread out and shoot their arrows while she hits the dragon with lightning.

During that time, the vanguards will rush in. After causing damage, they will retreat right away. With that timing, the lightning attack will be repeated twice. We will carry out the hunt in such pattern. It was decided in such manner. Will it go that nicely and conveniently?

Although I wondered about that, I stayed silent.

Once the meeting ends, I head towards the 【Goddess Forest】 together with those adventurers.

Everyone walks. There’s no one riding a horse.

Is it because we will enter a woodland, I wonder?

I immediately understood the problem once we entered 【Goddess Forest】. The ground of this woodland has a lot of uneven, complicated terrain.

The rotten bushes on the ground and such probably obstruct the movement of forms of transport such as magic beasts and horses.

Therefore everyone advanced on foot.

In my case I can move swiftly by walking among the trees, but this time it's a group action.

All of the adventurers proceed while staying organized.

Once we enter the forest, monster groups such as goblins and human-shaped hedgehogs appear, but the adventurers, including me, easily defeat those monster groups.

We continue walking in the Goddess Forest while killing monsters.

And then a blue lake surface became visible from in-between the forest's trees. It's a beautiful lake.

The adventurer group stops there.

Then the leading adventurer pointed towards a different woodland at the other side of the lake.

He gives instructions as our target is over there.

When I look at the indicated place, I could see that the idol is definitely there.

A big serpent is coiled around the idol.

I see. That's Snake Dragon Hesp, eh?

It's certainly a large snake. I understand why a dragon has been attached to its name.

The idol is a huge statue which has a height of 10 meters and a width of several metres.

It wrapped its long, thick trunk around the idol as if eating the statue.

Seeing the coiled-around appearance of the snake dragon from here, it's mysterious since it also looks like an objet d'art.

In the vicinity of that idol there is a great number of what can be believed to be the snake dragon's eggs.

"Then, let's mobilize according to strategy at first."

"I will do it!"

"Aye."

""Yaaa.""

The lightning magic of the female magician, who is clad in a purple robe and is

the fuse of the strategy, began.

Numerous strikes of lightning hit the area around Snake Dragon Hesp's back. The snake dragon somersaults and topples over, falling off the statue. It seems to be indeed the snake dragon's weak-point.

The snake dragon convulses and goes numb.

The adventurers raise a cheer at that sight and release fireball and fire arrow spells one after the other. The archers shot their arrows as well.

Although the fireballs hit the snake dragon's scales directly and cause an explosion, the snake dragon is mostly unhurt.

However, the arrows pierce the scales and stick in its body.

It seems to be going considerably easily.

After that the fighters in the vanguard rush in right away.

However, I wonder if one attacks the body or if one should aim for the head...

While pondering about that question, I materialize the Magic Spear in my hand. Rollo descends to the ground from my shoulder and increases her size with a billowing.

Well, as I'm an individual participant, I will have them let me act freely.

If it's a snake, it's the head, I guess. I will crush the head first.

"We will aim for the head while observing. Follow me." (Shuuya)

"Nya!" (Rollo)

Taking Rollo along, we separate from the vanguard group.

The snake dragon's trunk is long, thick and is covered with blue scales.

The vanguards started to attack that trunk.

A single, large-built warrior forcefully strikes his hammer on the long, thick trunk causing it to shake.

It's an incredible, heavy-looking blow.

Destroying the scales with one mighty blow, which might be considered to be a skill, blood and torn pieces of blue flesh fly into the surroundings from within.

Next the attacks from the other vanguards began.

They destroy the scales with hammers, cut the flesh with swords, and stab spears inside.

Driving in the spears which were lost after being stuck inside the flesh, with hammers, they completely embed them into the deep wounds.

At that time— at the end of the snake dragon's long trunk, a loud roar resounds from the direction where the head's located.

It seems to have been fairly effective. Screams of pain can be heard as well.

Did the vanguard group, who heard the roars, get carried away? Without separating from the trunk, they stacked up additional attacks.

Huh? Ain't that the timing for the lightning attack?

What the hell did they do at the strategy meeting?

That was a boasting speech of fellow clans after all... they wasted my time.

Without saying anything to the vanguards, I head towards Snake Dragon Hesp's head.

Did the snake dragon get mad? It swiftly reacted by wriggling its huge trunk.

Uwa— the vanguards were caught by a wave of the trunk which made a sound of *don*.

Almost all vanguards have been trapped under the large trunk as if being swallowed inside it and are getting crushed to death.

There are some survivors, but the follow-up spells are a drop in the bucket.

Seeing that, screams can be heard from the rear.

“Stop the operation! Start the retreat!”

O~i. What about additional lightning magic?

Even though it will be fine if you shoot it while also dragging the vanguard into it, the retreat is far too quick, isn't it?

Oh well, having ignored the strategy from the beginning, what can I say about it though.

“Rollo, don't obey such order— we will do it by ourselves.” (Shuuya)

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo gave me a proper answer even while following at my side.

We dash while aiming for Hesp's head.

Snake Dragon Hesp constricted its trunk, expanded its tail and stretched it.

Countless long thorns grow from the swollen tail and are launched high into the sky one after the other as if a mortar's shooting.

The number of thick thorns reaches up to several tens of hundreds.

Pouring down atop the people, who were retreating, like a large rain of needles, the magicians were pierced and skewered one after the other.

Is the agility of the adventurers using bows high? As they survived the large needle attack by successfully dodging it, they escape while showing their backs. At that point I could see the snake dragon's head.

A pair of purplish red pupils with vertical slits.

The both sides of the head are bulging like an elephant's ears.

You could even say it transformed sideways into a vast and huge cobra head.

eye contact

I send my look towards Rollo who is running next to me.

Meeting my gaze, Rollo separates to the side without saying anything.

I stand directly in front of the snake dragon.

“Look heree, Snake Dragon Hesp!! I’m your demise!!” (Shuuya)

I deliberately shout.



Was it attracted by my voice? I don't know, but Snake Dragon Hesp opened its mouth wide while releasing a snake-like sound.

Two long fangs are growing from its mouth.

A poisonous-looking liquid trickled down from the tip of the fangs.

Going by the appearance, I go into a state of MAX alertness.

“Vasshaaaaaa.”

It came after all! Poison spit comes flying alongside a hissing sound—
I swiftly avoid that poison spit with Magic Combat Step.

At the place where I was previously standing, a venomous violet smoke rose up from the ground while giving off a heterogeneous, disgusting sound as if being chemically changed by acid with a *shuaaa*.

I definitely understand that it's “poison” as an intense sulphur stench hangs in the air as well.

Once I stop moving even for a bit, it spits poison once again.

Employing Magic Step, I freely use footwork as if performing repetitive side leaps with a nice rhythm and avoid the approaching poison spit attack.

The snake dragon turned towards me, who keeps dodging swiftly, shook its head frantically to scatter the spit and continued to spew venom.

I continue to avoid the poison spit, but— the stench.

The poison spit came flying once again— I avoid it.

It's a stench at the level of burning your throat.

At that timing the snake dragon's movement stops and it didn't spit any poison.

Oh, did she do it?

Rollo climbed on the head of Snake Dragon Hesp.

Directly biting the head of Hesp, she is stabbing her tentacle bone swords all over with warped movements. The snake dragon seems to be confused by receiving an unexpected attack.

“Rollo, nice.” (Shuuya)

Snake Dragon Hesp's awareness was completely set at “only me.”
— I rush at the enemy in front while avoiding the decaying ground which is generating an offensive smell due to the venom.

Hesp moves its purplish red eyes desperately up and down and wriggles its

trunk.

Rollo bites as if eating the flesh while clinging to the trembling head of the snake dragon and at the same time tearing into the scaly skin with her limb's claws.

Bluish purple blood gushed vigorously forth from the head of the injured snake dragon. Going by the state of that injury, it doesn't just seem like she's eating it, but she's actually really eating, I guess.

Thanks to that, the snake dragon has completely lost its awareness of me.
— It's a chance.

While running, I extend left hand out towards Snake Dragon Hesp and fire a <Chain>.

The chain advanced swiftly through the air and pierced into the cobra-like head of Snake Dragon Hesp.

I understand from the sensation directly transmitted by the <Chain Factor> at the left wrist that the chain's pointed end is penetrating inside while tearing up Snake Dragon Hesp's flesh and bones.

I continued to move the chain in order to penetrate Hesp's head.

As is, it will even directly destroy the brain, but I will personally beat the daylight out of it.

I glare at it and make the chain contract with my left hand while setting up the magic spear.

Just like that my body was transported towards the snake dragon's head.

Becoming gigantic in my field of vision, the snake dragon's head occupies all of it.

I invoke <Darkness Drill> and put it on the magic spear I'm grasping in only the right hand with the force of clashing into the head which has that impressiveness.

The red spear of the magic spear spiral clad in darkness pierced an eyeball of Snake Dragon Hesp.

“Gyaaaaa.”

The snake dragon screams.

Then Rollo's tentacle bone sword stabs into the back of the snake dragon's head.

The snake dragon quivers as if having become numb including its trunk and its movements grew dull.

While watching that, I land diagonally on the snake dragon's head with both feet.

I jump lightly while treating the chain like a rappelling rope for the act of descending off buildings.

I pull out the magic spear, which was embedded in the eyeball, at that time. The bloodstained, huge eyeball stuck to the red spear, but without minding that, I pushed out the magic spear with enough power to sew the eyeball to the middle of the snake dragon's forehead.

The magic spear pierces the middle of the snake dragon's forehead.

The crushed eyeball makes it feel like a certain work of ^{modern} art.

However— not yet. Supported by the chain, I jump once again.

Next I pull out the magic spear with <Darkness Drill – Magic Spear Break>.

The intense thrusting technique of the red spear spiralling with the <Darkness Drill> clad in darkness breaks through the eye socket while destroying the remaining brocade-coloured eyeball.

And, without even taking a split second, Demolition Spear Grand Pulse appears.

With a force surpassing the pushed out magic spear,

^{Huge} ^{Lance} ^{of} ^{Darkness} Demolition Spear Grand Pulse spirals towards the enemy while while raising a hum.

It invades the snake dragon's head as if breaking through soft tofu.

It's the darkness lance which once opened a wind hole even in the Magic Dragon King.

While making a strange noise similar to being dragged into a fiendish mixer drill, the snake dragon's head's meat is sent flying into the surroundings.

Without the spiral rotations of Demolition Spear Grand Pulse weakening, it broke through the back of the head after enveloping the upper skull's surface of Snake Dragon Hesp in a maelstrom and going through it by hollowing it out.

A part of gooey brain mass droops out from the cross-section of the head which was pierced through in the shape of an ellipse, and Snake Dragon Hesp stops moving with a slump and then collapses to the side it inclined on.

With the darkness lance having gouged out more than half of the head, it

naturally disappeared after Demolition Spear Grand Pulse broke through into mid-air on the other side.

Alriiiiight!

The four-layered thrust in combination with the skill went well.

As it's to the bitter end a consecutive hitting, it has a difficult timing though.

Rollo is stabbing her tentacle bone swords into the long trunk of the snake dragon which is still convulsing, but Snake Dragon Hesp's cramps gradually weaken and it stops moving.

It's completely dead.

I hurry towards the head of Snake Dragon Hesp.

Trying to recover its fangs, I also collect its venom.

Once I enlarge the faucet of the corpse, venom trickles down from the fang's tip...

Even if I collect this poison, a regular jar will apparently melt.

What to do... shall I dismantle and examine it?

I cut up the head into round slices towards the throat.

Once I investigate the venom gland continuing from the small hole at the tip of a fang, what connects to the source ahead of it is... oh, found it after all. I have discovered the poison bag.

It was contained between the bones inside the throat. It will be fine if I recover it directly.

There's plenty of sickening poison, like a blend of purple and green, in the poison bag.

Making an incision by using an Dagger of the Ancient Dragon at the source, I succeed at cutting out the fangs and poison bag.

... I retrieve the poison bag carefully to not spill anything. Tying the end of the bag, I sealed it by melting that bound end with the red axe blade.

Extracting the snake dragon's fangs from the root, I cut off the fangs, which are tightly sticking into the bone, with the Dagger of the Ancient Dragon.

I finished the rough collection.

Shall I return while retrieving the snake dragon's eggs at the end?

Following the trunk from the snake dragon's head, I store the snake dragon's eggs in my item box while on the way of returning.

And then I returned to the site where the vanguards fought.

The surviving adventurers are... just two.

They are sitting down on the ground.

“Oh? There were survivors...?”

“The snake dragon suddenly stopped moving, but do you know the reason for that?”

A largely-built man and a normal-sized man looked at me and asked that.

“Yea, I defeated it.” (Shuuya)

I honestly tell them.

The largely-built man, who has a wound on his forehead, opens his eyes widely in surprise due to my words.

“W-What was that?”

“You defeated it...? Your name was, if I remember correctly...”

Ah, this person was the leader at the meeting.

It seems that he doesn't remember my name.

Shall I introduce myself for the time being?

“I'm the C rank Shuuya. Rather than that, the guys in the rear guard abandoned the vanguard and ran away, you know?” (Shuuya)

“Yea... after all they are a mishmash mob. My name is Saji Grefy. I participated individually as C rank. It's not like I don't understand the feelings of those who ran away either. We got carried away and disregarded the strategy. Receiving the counter-attack, we collapsed straight away. However, as those, who escaped, were done in by the attack of the tail in the end, we can't say anything...” (Saji)

That rain-like, large needle attack, eh?

“Certainly.” (Shuuya)

“However, you are quite hot-blooded to defeat the snake dragon, Shuuya, aren't you? I remember you definitely said that you have confidence in your spearmanship. It's a honour to meet a remarkable adventurer.” (Saji)

Once Saji praises me, the man next to him opens his mouth as well.

“That’s right. Let me introduce myself, too. I’m the leader of the C rank 【Golden Sword King】 clan, Gunto Elibuzen. Saji and me were saved by you. Thank you. And, I look forward to working with you as adventurer from now on.” (Gunto)

The person who was a leader-like existence at the meeting, huh?
Since he survived, he’s probably considerably powerful.

“It’s great that you survived. Best regards from now on from my side as well.”
(Shuuya)

“Well then let me get away first. There were heavy losses, but the request is complete.” (Saji)

Saji stands up unsteadily, picks up his favourite weapon, places it on his shoulder and leaves while dragging his feet a bit.

“Roger... I will withdraw after collecting the cards and hand luggage from the corpses of my friends.” (Gunto)

The leader of 【Golden Sword King】 looked at the corpses of his friends and talked while looking sad.

Though it’s somewhat awkward...

There are still things I have to do.

“Then I will go back after collecting the eggs around here. See ya.” (Shuuya)

I spend my time by recovering the eggs which were in visible range.
At the time when I tried to go back after finishing the retrieval, evening had passed and it had already turned into night.
Let’s use the trees growing in 【Goddess Forest】 for the return in the dark night.
Using <Chain> and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I move along the trees.
Like that I was able to swiftly return to the guild.
Once I enter inside the guild, the looks immediately focus on me.
It seems the rumours of the Snake Dragon Hesp subjugation have already spread.
Since the rumour is that I did it by myself... it’s a seed of troubles, but well, I don’t care.
I don’t have any intention to stay here for long.
Throwing out my chest, I boldly walk towards the reception.

I took out the fangs, venom and eggs, which are the proof that I defeated Snake Dragon Hesp, and my card from my item box for the plain receptionist, who was in charge of me in the beginning, and placed it on top of the reception table with a *thump*.

“I-I’m surprised desu. You were successful. Congratulations for completing the emergency request. Now I will liquidate it desu.”

“Please treat me favourably.” (Shuuya)

The beautiful receptionist glared at the plain receptionist, who is working briskly in the back of the office as I’m waiting, with a warped mouth. How scary. The white flower close to her ear seems to wither in an instant. Did she notice that I’m looking strangely at her state? The glaring, beautiful receptionist fixes her expression right away and returns a pleasant smile to me. Ye~a, I might have ended up seeing the human relations in this workplace. However, it’s not like I can do anything either though. Plain receptionist, do your best, is what I secretly murmur in my mind. When I did that, the receptionist came back.

“Thank you for waiting desu. The total amount is 40 gold coins desu. Here’s your card, too, desu.”

Huh? The design of the gold coins, which I always looked at, is distinctly different from what I remember.

Ah~, because the country is different, huh...?

Shall I try asking about that aspect?

I take out one gold coin from my item box.

“Is this gold coin being circulated here? I wonder whether the value changes depending on the country...” (Shuuya)

” That gold coin is an 【Oseberia】 gold coin. It’s an Osel gold coin desu. It’s being circulated here as well desu. Since it has the same value as the Hes gold coin which is used in this 【Hesliphat】. Its value doesn’t change. The Hes gold coin should have the same value in the 【Oseberia Kingdom】 as well.”

I see, if they have the same value, there’s no necessity to exchange them. It seems to circulate here even though the country, which is beyond the desert, is quite far away.

However, why is the value of gold coins of different countries uniform?
There might be some agreement between the countries, I guess?
If the content of gold is different or if there are fake gold coins, which used a gold coin mould, it will contribute to the profit of villainous third parties, therefore they are probably judging whether it's real or fake with skills or magic tools around here. If counterfeit money spread in town, detection will be difficult, but...

Ah, which reminds me...

At the time when I paid money in the inn, I also used Oseberia's currency. 【Oseberia Kingdom】 is a major power, thus they have gained a certain extent of trust. It might have the feeling of a common currency of this region...
Well, it can't be helped even if I, who is no more than a single adventurer, ponders about such troublesome matters.

“... I see.” (Shuuya)

While agreeing, I put the received reward into my item box and take the card.
I looked at the adventurer's card.

Name: Shuuya Kagari
Age: 22
Title: Dragon Slayer
Race: Human
Occupation: C Rank Adventurer
Affiliation: none
Combat Occupation: Spear Warrior – Chain User
Completed Requests: 12

The number of completed requests is 12.
The completion number is growing well.
If I remember correctly, I can't take the B rank ascension trial if I don't complete 30 with the exception of pioneering missions in unexplored areas.
It's a faint memory.
Once I completed 30 someday, I will try asking.
I put away the card into my chest pocket.
Well then, shall I go to the temple? It would be great if the spring water has come back.

Chapter 88 – Blessing of the Water Goddess

Akreshys

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



Ah, wait. Next after the spring water is the Leaf of Sadeyula.
The destination, where I can find the Leaf of Sadeyula, is a large forest in the far distant east.
Therefore, I'd like to get a map of this area.
Do they sell maps around here? I will try to ask.

“Hey, hey. Are there any maps where you can understand the position of neighbouring countries, including the area around 【Hesliphat】?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, there are. They cost one gold coin. Most of them are made out of high-grade parchment. Given that detailed maps are kept in absolute secrecy, the one you can buy is an extremely simple map, is that alright with you?”

Expensive, isn't it?
Well, guess it's fine since I've got the money?

“Sure.” (Shuuya)

“Please wait for a short moment... here.”

The receptionist retrieves a sheet of animal skin paper from a shelf situated in

the back.

It was a really simple, hand-drawn map.

It roughly shows the mountain areas, rivers, roads and forests. 【Sect's Capital Heslipha】 is written in small letters at a place northeast. 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】 is due east, 【Great Desert Goldix】 and 【Country of the Religious Founder Amef】 are due south. That's all that's written on it.

Paying the rip-off price, I receive the map.

“Thanks. Well then, see you again somewhere.” (Shuuya)

After showing the receptionist a smile, I bid farewell to her.

I folded the map, put it into my chest belt and left the guild.

I got a map now. Shall I go to the temple to get the spring water?



I enter the temple after climbing the stairs at its front.

Once I exited into the drafty area of the main temple after proceeding through the congested hallways, I understood the reason why it was more crowded than the other day.

Spring water was released vigorously, like a waterfall, from the water jug which was held up overhead by both hands of the Akreshys' statue.

Since the spring water is falling down while clashing against the statue's body, a sheet of spray scatters into the surroundings and a pure atmosphere filled the temple's interior as if wrapping it up.

The sound of water, with its pleasant sensation, caused a yet different, natural noise from the choir.

An air, which is vibrating with holiness, drifts about. The vicinity of the idol, which shines with a sparkling glitter, emitted a magic source which wasn't there the first time I saw it.

And it reflects the people that are in its field of vision.

It's child spirits. A large amount of child spirits was created.

Whenever I see those, it's mysterious. All of them have delicate differences in their shapes.

The bonchhichi* child spirits walk in a happy mood around the water jug. They uniformly walked with their feet going at a steady pace just like a parade of a small military unit. *(T/N: A cutish mob appearing in Ancient Dungeon. There are also*

plush toys of it)

The song of the child spirits can't be heard due to the close sound of water, but... as there are child spirits, who are showing their unique dance all over the statue, there are also child spirits who are swimming in mid-air as if doing breaststroke.

It's far too strange.

However, I could also feel the magnificent, solemn atmosphere.

At that point, I shift my attention to the noisy place at the feet of the idol.

There's a slight inclination on the floor and the spring water is guided towards a small hole on the floor. The accumulated stream of the spring water transformed into something like a shallow fountain.

Plenty of people have noisily gathered there shouting "Wa~ wa~" while holding metal wash basins, jars or large bottles in their hands.

All of them scooped up the spring water towards their tools with all their might, raised it to their mouths and drank it.

Moreover, they are putting the spring water into different wooden containers. Rollo jumps into the fountain as well.

Did she think that the people, who gathered at the fountain, are playing around? She apparently wanted to join them.

Rollo peered into the fountain, soaked one paw in the fountain of the spring water, brought back the wet paw to her snout, licked the hair ends of her wet paw using her tongue with a *pero pero* and drank the spring water.

And then she executes a cat punch against the thin water surface, hurls herself into the sheet of spray, and finally starts to play by gliding on the floor as if water sliding.

While watching the cute appearance of Rollo, I put spring water into my magic jar as I blend into the crowd.

The magic jar was filled with spring water right away.

Alriiight, with this I got one of the ingredients. I hold up the magic jar with one hand.

I obtained "Spring Water of Akreshys!"

Unintentionally I hum the level-up sound of a certain national RPG.

Sure enough I try to drink it while looking forward to what kind of taste it has.

I bring the magic jar to my mouth.

— Nuooo, this is amazing. Although it's water, it seems to not be so. It has a nice feeling as it passes through my throat. It's a feeling of being filled with pure vitality. It permeates into my body. How delicious.

When I was gulping down the spring water while putting a hand against my waist in a style similar to drinking milk when just out of the bath, I was addressed by the head priest-san who gave me an explanation in the beginning.

“— How's the taste of the spring water?”

“Hmm, how to say it? You can call it a taste that heals your heart? It's delicious.” (Shuuya)

I'm sure that my eyes are sparkling. It's tasty, this water.

“I see, I see. However, is it really only that?”

The head priest-san is fidgety.
He seems to be expecting something.

“You told me that you would defeat the Snake Dragon Hesp. And, you really defeated it. By chance, is it one of the adventurer-sama's who brought down Snake Dragon Hesp?”

The head priest speaks while showing an expression as if a god of fortune was dwelling in him.
I wonder, is there some kind of effect right after drinking the spring water? However, the head priest-san looks really happy.
His entire face is all smiles.

“... That's right. Me and my partner defeated it.” (Shuuya)

Hearing that, the head priest-san changes to a humble attitude.

“Ooohh, so it was like that after all? Excuse my impoliteness. I really thank you very much on this occasion. Water Goddess Akreshys is also very delighted about this.”

I'm bewildered by the head priest-san's change, but a god is delighted?

“Delighted?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I'm the head priest Kyulele. Because of the head priest's unique , I can

feel a bit of the power of Water Goddess Akreshys-sama.” (Kyulele)

Hoo, that’s amazing.

However, I’m originally a Japanese.

I’m close to being not religious. I indirectly believe in Buddhism and Shintoism though.

When I reincarnated, there was that, but I don’t actually feel like it can even be called a god...

“... The power of God?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Since the moment you entered this temple, the spirits have been overflowing and the sound of the idol’s surge got stronger.” (Kyulele)

“A blessing?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It should have happened when you drank the spring water. Do you perhaps not believe in Water Goddess Akreshys-sama?” (Kyulele)

Well, if I’m asked whether I believe in her 100%... then I don’t believe in her.

“Ummm, in front of you, head priest-san, hmm, how to tell you, yes, I don’t believe in her overly much.” (Shuuya)

I honestly answer him.

“Is that so? How regrettable. However, it’s not too late. Isn’t it possible that you will be able to obtain her blessings if you possess faith, even if it’s only a bit? Since such event is really rare...” (Kyulele)

His attitude became obviously arrogant.

That is, well, he’s the head priest.

“Got it. I will turn over a new leaf...” (Shuuya)

Faith, eeh? Shall I try to believe in her a bit although it doesn’t suit me? I take a praying pose in my own style.

— Water Goddess Akreshys-sama.

— Let me thank you on this occasion. I received your spring water. It was delicious.

— Thank you for the spring water. I shall try to believe in you a bit.

Piing ※ Title: Divine Protection of Water Goddess Akreshys ※ acquired.

※ Title: ※ Transcendental One and Divine Protection of Water Goddess Akreshys ※ have transformed after being unified.

Wow, this the moment I believed in her?

I ended up getting the title from the goddess with a speed similar to a tsukkomi in a skit.

Moreover, light is released towards me by the idol.

What's that? A weapon similar to a translucent cane that was tinged with a rainbow-coloured light floated within the released light.

Wh-! The translucent cane weapon plunges into my body.

It was a speed at a level I couldn't avoid.

— Power penetrates me.

※ Title: ※ Super-Warrior of the Water Goddess ※ acquired.

※ *Piing* ※ <Instant Wand of Water> ※ Permanent skill acquired.

Wow, this time it's a skill?

“This is—”

Mmh?

“— Kyaa.”

“Nuo?” (Shuuya)

The voice of a woman? My bottom is wet?

The impact inside my overcoat is... when I try to strip off my overcoat...

I didn't understand at all what happened at this time.

All of a sudden a woman was born from my butt.

Shameplay? No, this ain't that simple.

Although I wore an overcoat, the butt of a man gave birth to an adult woman in a temple and in front of a priest and moreover in presence of the general public?

Just what the hell did I do?

In my search for help, I look at Rollo.

Rollo is also surprised and confused.

Showing an odd expression as she is stretching her tentacles right overhead, her hair was standing on end.

The information about me acquiring the title and skill lacked common sense.

Though I have no memory of having had anal sex, I properly look at the born

woman.

Mmh? Light blue hair and a blue, leafy skin. She isn't human.

I have a child that's not human... there's no way that's true, is it?

The instant I retorted with a force of driving a chain into myself, it crosses my mind.

Ah, aaah, I remember!!!

This woman is the female spirit from the time when I was at the lake.

If I remember correctly, her name was Helme?

In that moment—

『— Oh, fated one. I'm Water Goddess Akreshys. You did well to exterminate Snake Dragon Hesp. Let me thank you once again. — However, that matter is trivial. I'm grateful for you keeping the infant life, which is my family, in your body.』 (Akreshys)

Her voice resounds in my mind.

"I kept a life in me?" (Shuuya)

『— That's right. For me to directly convey my intention is the first time in several thousands years. Therefore it's fine if I can successfully give you my gratitude.』 (Akreshys)

By any chance,

"Goddess?"

『— I'm the Water Goddess Akreshys.』 (Akreshys)

The goddess directly addressed me in my mind after all.

Due to my words, the head priest shows a startled expression.

『— Originally I won't do such thing to the Fated One. However, being at your side, the infant crystal spirit survived by absorbing your mana. — Alongside offering you my feelings of gratitude for saving my family by keeping its body, I shall grant you some of my power as present. However, what you have received from me first is...』 (Akreshys)

Since the expression of the head priest is scary, I switch to conversing in my mind.

Sorry for that, okay?

But, with this I understood the reason why I obtained a skill.

Even if it means that my head has turned weird, there was no way that I gave birth to a woman.

That's great...

However, this woman, no, the crystal spirit, I wonder whether it's alright for her to leave my body?

『— It's fine. Being touched by my power, the crystal spirit has regained its original power.』 (Akreshys)

In that case, all's well.

Since it's not that often that I have the chance to talk with a god, there's something I want to ask, but is that fine with you?

『— Certainly. An oracle like this consumes quite the power even if it's received in the sanctuary of the temple. Therefore, I don't have that much time, however it's fine for you to talk without reservations.』 (Akreshys)

I understand. I will keep it short.

I'm acting in order to revive the **Withered Large Tree of Holkerbaum** with this spring water and the Leaf of Sadeyula, but is it really possible to revive the large tree?

『— Hoo hoo, that's an admirable endeavour. To even revive it. You are doing a deed which will be liked by the gods quite a bit. Are you perhaps even searching for the **path to Seulos**?』 (Akreshys)

The path to Seulos? What's that? Like a narrow path of a banana-like inside?

『— No, not at all. It's fine if you don't understand. If you revive their family member, Gaia and Sadeyula will likely be very delighted.』 (Akreshys)

Oh, is it possible that I will receive the **Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Tree** and the **Orb of Wisdom** if I revive it?

『— Hahahaha, you are a daring Fated One. You will have to discuss this properly with Gaia and Sadeyula. Well then, this is how far I can last. I have to leave. Oh, Fated One...』 (Akreshys)

Ah, her presence is gone.

Her divinity, which brought about a solemn atmosphere, completely vanished

from inside the temple in an instant.

There are still things I wanted to ask though.

The nearby head priest looks around restlessly.

He apparently comprehends that the situation changed.

“The presence of Water Goddess-sama vanished. You talked with the goddess just now, didn’t you? Besides, this woman has... a blue, leafy skin although she’s similar to a human? Is it by chance a matter related to Water Goddess-sama?”
(Kyulele)

The priest-san stares at the crystal spirit which has a blue human shape.

Helme was a small lake spirit, but I guess it’s different now.

Rather than that, we are attracting the attention of the surroundings here.

Shall I change the location while suitably swindling my way out of it?

magic jar

Before that, if I don’t store this which is an important ingredient...

Once again fetching the Spring Water of Akreshys, I store the magic jar in the item box after I filled it up completely. I addressed the head priest who is staring at the spirit.

“... Well, priest-sama. This child lives in a distant area of an acquaintance. She is a woman of a different race. She has no relation to Water Goddess-sama.”
(Shuuya)

“R-Really...?” (Kyulele)

The priest-san changed his expression and apparently agreed though being doubtful.

“Helme, it’s been a while.” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yes. Can I call you master as well?” (Helme)

Uhyo, all of a sudden it will become like this?

“For starters, let’s move outside since we are standing out here too much. Priest-sama, let’s meet again when there’s an opportunity.” (Shuuya)

“Ah, yes. Please come to the temple again anytime.” (Kyulele)

“— Yes. Then, Rollo, we are going back.” (Shuuya)

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

Taking the hand of the spirit Helme, we pass through the hallways at a quick pace, leave the temple and descend the stairway with its U shape. Rollo diligently follows by running right next to me, too. Like that I brought the spirit Helme to the shadow of a building located close to the temple.

“... So, Helme, what’s this about you calling me master?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I continued to survive barely by absorbing the mana of master for a long time. Not just that, I minutely received the taste of blood and the taste of souls. Therefore my body and mind ended up being tainted. ... Please, form a contract with me, as vassal... I want to be allowed to serve you, master.” (Helme)

She replies looking embarrassed while wriggling her naked body, covered by the blue-coloured, leafy skin, seductively.

“Nya.” (Rollo)

“Rollodeen-sama, you always sensed me. It’s the first time that I see your esteemed countenance. You have a beautiful face.” (Helme)

“Nya, nyaan.” (Rollo)

Was Rollo happy being praised? She jumped on Helme’s shoulder and licked her face. Then she returned to my side again.



「まあ、ロロ様。可愛い口付けありがとうございます」

黒猫は褒められて嬉しかったのか
ヘルメの肩に飛び付いて彼女の頬をぺろと舐めてから、
また俺の方に戻ってきた。
ロロがあんなことするのは珍しい。

“Oh my, Rollo-sama, thank you very much for the lovely kiss.” (Helme)

It's rare for Rollo to do such thing.

“... Helme, what contract?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I will officially receive a **name** due to the contract. I will become a **new spirit** by fusing with your magic source, master. And, stronger than at the time of the provisional contract, a **symbol mark** as your spirit will be imprinted on your body, master.” (Helme)

“A name, eh? That is, did I have the symbol mark of a provisional contract placed on me since **a long time**?” (Shuuya)

“Yea, that's correct.” (Helme)

Maybe, the reason why Helme appeared from my butt is...

“Is it by chance on my butt?” (Shuuya)

“R-Right.” (Helme)

“Why again at such place...?” (Shuuya)

“That is, umm... at the time when I united with master for the first time, your cute butt suited me... I slipped into it on my own accord.” (Helme)

That time, eh...?

Though she's a spirit...

She has the memory of doing something absurd...

“I-I see. And, what kind of things can you do?” (Shuuya)

The instant I said that, Helme's blue body falls to the ground visibly melting. A pool of water was created on the ground. Helme, which turned into a watery liquid that moves by creeping like a slime, crawled along my footwear Gleebs, and invaded into my feet through the gaps of the armour.

And then, travelling from the feet to my butt, she apparently assimilated with my butt.

I see...

After a short time the blue liquid leaks out through the gaps in the armour.

The blue liquid moves on the ground and the appearance of Helme, who smoothly grew from the water into the upper part of her body, changes into that of a woman.

I don't understand how it works, but on top of the places, which Helme passed through, like the overcoat and armour not being wet, they became clean.

Water Control
"It's as you can see. In addition there's also water current manipulation, Water Screen water curtain which is capable of resisting spells with the fire attribute, Water Jail water chamber which can imprison someone in water, the water attribute's Water Cutter Ice Bang Icicle Lance attack spell water blade, ice sword, throwing of ice, and ice spear available **without chanting**. Those are my basic abilities at the present time. Moreover, it's deemed that those will change in various ways due to a contract." (Helme)

As her appearance suggests, she can use water and ice magic, huh? Isn't it amazing that it's without chanting.

"... That's great. Helme, you are definitely a spirit. You have now regained your original power, haven't you?" (Shuuya)

The human-shaped Helme adopts a behaviour of showing gratitude.

"Yes. It's thanks to you, master. Being touched by the principle of Water Goddess-sama, I achieved a sublimation as a water spirit." (Helme)

"That's great. I'm happy that I was useful, though it was at an unknown place. Even so, as expected of Water Goddess-sama." (Shuuya)

"Yes. For a humble **distant, disconnected spirit** like me, the family's god is an existence above the clouds." (Helme)

Thinking of the goddess, Helme hits her breast with her hand due to a feeling of respect and shuts her eyes for a bit.

"So, assuming we form a contract, for you to hide in my butt is somehow unpleasant. Is it possible to change the location of the symbol mark?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. You can change it freely countless times to anywhere, even its **size**." (Helme)

"Hoo, in that case it's fine. Alright, as for deciding your name, is the same

name Helme no good?" (Shuuya)

"If it's a name you like, master, anything works." (Helme)

"Then I decide it to be Helme. Let's form a contract." (Shuuya)

"Yes—" (Helme)

Helme's eyes shine bluish and she reveals a smile.

The blue leafy skin on her entire body stands on end and causes a wave like a ripple.

Like that, she gets close by taking one and then two steps.

Mana overflowed from her bewitching body.

Due to that appearance— I remember.

The time when I first met her at the lake...

Helme extends her slender arms towards my chest.

The instant her blue fingers touched the scaled armour of the ancient dragon— those blue fingers become transparent and the entire body of Helme transforms into a **liquid** starting from the fingertips.

The water, which turned into a liquid, continued to sink in while visibly spreading and penetrating the surface of the armour's scales.

I immediately understand that Helme's liquid is permeating into my body.

It's mysterious. I can sense that there's a spirit inside my body.

Being absorbed into my chest, I grasped that the spirit's magic source and mana was fusing and blending with my mana.

Uh, guoh, so suddenly?

... Mana to the extent of surpassing that of a burning bone knight is taken away.

※ *Piing* ※ Spirit Employment ※ Permanent skill acquired.

At the same time of acquiring the skill, I grasped that Helme is moving inside my body.

The moment the sensation of her moving shifted from the right shoulder to the right arm, the liquid oozes out from the right arm. Helme's **liquid** is released while drawing an arc in mid-air.

The released liquid stopped in mid-air and trembled while creating two slowly swaying spheres which resemble a crystalline lens and a black orb.

The trembling, bluish black orb slowly changes into the body of a woman.

Moreover, the ribs at the chest opened up to the left and right like the feathers

of a peafowl, the wriggling crystalline lens sank into that open chest, and was embedded inside.

The peafowl-feather-like ribs are pounding like bellows and the heaving chest is shut.

And, eventually... it turns into an awfully nice woman. *(T/N: Last part uses Toyama ben, a dialect spoken in Toyama prefecture)*

I unintentionally ended up reacting by speaking in a strange accent.

Her hair is long with a colour mix of blue and black, and has a cute ornament of a water drop mark.

Her characteristic cuticles possess a lustre and her long eyelashes are blue-coloured as well.

She is a beauty-san which has a small chin, a slightly high nose and large pupils with a bluish black colour.

From her large pair of breasts to her slender waist, it continues with her having a big butt.

... A top-class model. Her style is extraordinary.

As there's a strong inclination towards dark colours on the whole, the leafy skin, which had a blue colour added in, swayed like a living creature.

Is it fine to call the bluish black a complex tint that's close to navy blue?

Her colour and figure became more glamorous, but her basic appearance of possessing a **leaf** like skin hasn't changed, it seems.

“... A new family of water and darkness. It's the birth of the **Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme**.” (Helme)

Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme? Did her voice tone become slightly deeper?

Her changes have gone even that far?

“Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme, huh? Your appearance and voice changed, but are you alright?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I'm very calm, Your Excellency.” (Helme)

Excellency, she says. Her verbal expressions have changed, too. Somehow she reminds me of the burning bone knights.

Though I haven't summoned them recently, they are doing well in the world of spirits, I guess?

Rather than them, now it's about Helme. Everlasting darkness means she has the darkness attribute.

“... I wonder whether it'll be okay with you being a spirit of water and darkness? Also, can you use darkness magic as well?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Since my magic source fused with Your Excellency's mana thanks to the contract with you, Your Excellency, I apparently obtained a new attribute.” (Helme)

“Have a go and check what kind of spells you can use.” (Shuuya)

“Yes!—” (Helme)

Helme turned around and suddenly created a dark cloud with a blackness of ink, like the one used with a writing brush, in the surroundings. A dark mist forms on the ground right under the location where the dark cloud has been created.

Once I looked properly, a magic square floated inside the mist.

From that magic square many spears, which were dark-coloured stakes with sharpened tips, are created like bamboo sprouting while making whooshing sounds.

“I have only these two spell types of the darkness attribute. After all water is my speciality.” (Helme)

I see.

“Being able to fire them smoothly without chanting is great.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, thank you very much.” (Helme)

“So, the new mark, on what part of my body is... the new mark imprinted?” (Shuuya)

“Please decide yourself, Your Excellency. You can modify it freely at any time.” (Helme)

“I see. So, how about my eye?” (Shuuya)

“Okay. Then—” (Helme)

Turning into liquid, Helme drew an arc and plunged into my left eye.

“Nothing has changed, right?” (Shuuya)

『Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

Nuo, it's a distorted Helme.

She's floating in my field of vision like an AR* function? (T/N: *Augmented Reality*)

“This is...” (Shuuya)

『I'm existing in Your Excellency's eye.』 (Helme)

How strange.

“I wonder why Helme's existence is like a three-dimensional small CG anime character?” (Shuuya)

『Your Excellency? I don't understand the meaning of those words.』 (Helme)

Since she's like a distorted character, her gestures are cute.

“Is it only me seeing you like that? I wondered whether you read it from my memories?” (Shuuya)

『... Reading your **memories**? I'm definitely unable to do such a thing. Since I have been employed by Your Excellency, I can become Your Excellency's **power** by using this body, but there's no way that I can do such hostile action. To the bitter end I'm currently in a state where I can be stored in Your Excellency's body, in Your Excellency's eyes.』 (Helme)

Hee...

『Though it's an assumption, it might just be Your Excellency who is viewing and feeling my magic source like that. However, I'm also conscious when I take this small appearance. If this is connected to reading your memories, then please let me dwell in your butt.』 (Helme)

No, my butt is no good.

It's fine as it's now.

“Even so, currently I can hear your voice resounding directly in my mind, Helme, but does that only happen when you are inside my body?” (Shuuya)

『Yes, that's correct.』 (Helme)

Does that mean that long distance communication is impossible?

“Well then, what do you mean with turning into my **power**?” (Shuuya)

『Yes. I can give advice to you, Your Excellency. Although Your Excellency’s mana will be consumed, you will be able to use a part of **spirit sight** through my eyes. If used, it should become possible to **detect heat** within the range of your visual field.』 (Helme)

Heat detection... thermography, eh?

Isn’t that a pit organ which snakes possess?

“Ooh, for real? How much is the mana consumption?” (Shuuya)

Icicle Lance

『For me it’s one cast of ice spear. For Your Excellency it should be quite the small quantity.』 (Helme)

“Hee, so how can I use it??” (Shuuya)

『If you are conscious of me being in your visual field and **look** at me with the impression of catching me, the alignment will be started by pouring mana into me.』 (Helme)

“I see. Let’s try it out.” (Shuuya)

I caught Helme, who is reflected in my sight, as if clicking her with a mouse. And then I look—
Helme vanished from my visual field.

『Ahh— Ann, aaaaah, ufuu.』 (Helme)

Uhe, she starts panting seductively.
However, the left visual field changed into colours similar to thermography. The places with high temperatures become orange and red, those with a low temperature become green and black...
Heat detection. This is spirit sight, huh?

“... I see.” (Shuuya)

『Hahiiiiii, ufun, the feeling, it’s, nice. Mnnh.』 (Helme)

Uh, it feels like I’m listening to AV on radio.

“Stop that voice.” (Shuuya)

『Y-Yeeesh.』 (Helme)

“Why do you speak like that?” (Shuuya)

『T-This iiish, becaaaaauuse of Your Excellency’s manaaaa.』 (Helme)

Does she like my mana?

“Having to listen to that each time I use **spirit sight** is unpleasant. Please keep it down from now on.” (Shuuya)

『Hiii, ahn, g-got it. I-I will do my beeesht.』 (Helme)

“You vanished from my sight, but what’s the difference between the time when you reflected in my visual field and the time when you are not?” (Shuuya)

『If Your Excellency pours mana into me, I disappear from your sight. Later I will be able to appear and disappear if you order me to do so.』 (Helme)

I understand.

For the time being I have stopped looking with spirit sight.

“I see, even so, I wonder whether I can do something like telepathic communication, words that can only be heard in someone’s mind, just like you, Helme.” (Shuuya)

『It’s possible. If you are conscious of me and wish for it to happen, it will become reality.』 (Helme)

Conscious, eh? Let’s try talking to Helme by wishing for it.

『Helme, can you hear me?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

『This is telepathic communication? How magnificent. However, if you, Helme, leave my sight, telepathic communication becomes impossible?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes, it’s not possible if I’m separated from you, but if we grow and evolve... it might one day become possible to do something like telepathic communication from a distance.』 (Helme)

Growth, eh? Right now that’s impossible.
It won’t work out that conveniently, will it?

『Understood. I will wait patiently.』 (Shuuya)

『Ha!』 (Helme)

Alright,

“Helme, it’s fine for you to come out.” (Shuuya)

『Yes!—』 (Helme)

Watching from nearby how a liquid is released from my own eye is somehow weird.

“Your excellency, please treat me well from now on...” (Helme)

Just where did the anguished voice from just now vanished to? She is calmly bowing her head while keeping one knee on the ground.

Helme’s skin is leafy with a mix of blue and black making her entire body look smooth.

She’s able to change into liquid. I wonder whether I can freely tamper with it?

“... Yea, best regards. I do have a question though. Can you freely change your appearance?” (Shuuya)

“This is my basic appearance, but by making the colour of a part of my leafy skin change, I can disguise it as clothes like those worn by humans.” (Helme)

“Hoo, have a try.” (Shuuya)

“Yes—” (Helme)

Thereupon, what were bluish black leaves changed into smooth leather clothes like those worn by female humans.

Her hair and pupils are bluish black, but the skin of her nape of her neck and face are light blue.

It will be alright like this, I think?



“Way to go! Please always change like that when we go outside.” (Shuuya)

“As you wish.” (Helme)

“Well then, we are returning to the inn where we are staying at.” (Shuuya)

“Yes.” (Helme)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

I decide to return to the inn and have Helme go back into my left eye temporarily.

Chapter 89 – Taking an arrow in the knee

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



Once we returned to our room, Rollo runs to the bed as usual.
I confirmed my skills while still standing at the room's entrance.

[Status]

Name: Shuuya Kagari

Age: 22

Title: Super-Warrior of the Water Goddess

Race: Light Demon Lucival

Combat Occupation: Magic Spear Darkness Warrior – Chain User

Strength: 20.1 -> 20.2

Agility: 20.8 -> 21.1

Stamina: 19.1 -> 19.3

Mana: 24.4 -> 24.9

Dexterity: 19.4

Spirit: 24.7 -> 25.1

Luck: 11.2

Current Status: Calm

Skill Status

Obtained Skills: <Throwing>, <Demonic Brain Speed>, <Hide>, <Night Vision>, <Inhalation of Odour Technique>, <Blood Chains Banquet>, <Thrust>, <Meditation>, <Magic Beast Rider>, <Life Magic>, <Guidance Sorcery>, <Magic Combat Style>, <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, <Sage Art>, <Summoning>, <Ancient Magic>, <Crest Magic>, <Darkness Drill>, <Darkness Drill – Magic Spear Break>, <Language Magic>

Permanent Skills: <Power of True Ancestor>, <Natural Gift of Magic>, <Torrent of Light Darkness>, <Drain Soul>, <Immortality>, <Darkness Adaptation>, <Blood Mana>, <Suzerain of Household>, <Super Demonic Brain Nimble Sensation>, <Magic Combat Style Knowledge>, <Guidance Magic Knowledge>, <Spear Sparring>, <Chain Sense Guidance>, <Magic Crest Construction>, <Instant Staff of Water>, <Spirit Employment>

Extra Skills: <Language Comprehension>, <Granted Seal of Light>, <Chain Factor>, <Demonic Cerebral Spine Revolution>

I touch Super-Warrior of the Water Goddess first.

※ Super-Warrior of the Water Goddess ※

A transcendental being who obtained the water goddess' protection.

Effects of Water Magic UP. All Growth Corrections +.

The effects go up, eh? If you combine it with <Instant Staff of Water>, the effect doubles.

Next time I want to get my hands on crest or language magic of water, but...

I understand its effects more or less, but next I check the permanent skill <Instant Staff of Water>.

※ Instant Staff of Water ※

Staff of Water Goddess Akreshys which serves as symbol of her protection.

It raises mana and mind abilities. It enables a simplification of magic squares without the necessity of casting, only for water magic, and allows for the magic to be activated immediately.

Without casting, huh?

As a matter of fact I still haven't learned water magic, but if I consider the chants of darkness language magic, the effect of no-cast will probably be

outstanding.

As it seems that magic squares will be simplified, I can expect for them to be quite usable.

As expected of Water Goddess-sama.

Well then, let's wrap up the confirmation at this point...

Shall I maintain my equipment?

I remove the chest belt while walking and throw it on top of the bed.

As I take off my overcoat, I contact Helme who is dwelling in my left eye.

『It's fine for you to come out now.』 (Shuuya)

『Ha!』 (Helme)

It's very unlikely that I will ever get used to her being released from my left eyes by water drawing an arc.

“Helme, it's okay for you to take it easy and take a nap on the bed. I'm going to do the maintenance of my armour after all.” (Shuuya)

“Your Excellency, I shall assist you.” (Helme)

“Nah, today I want to do it myself.” (Shuuya)

“As you wish.” (Helme)

After bowing in a courteous manner, Helme sat down on the floor in a cross-legged posture, closed her blue eyes and began to meditate. And then her lower body liquefied while she was sitting there.

For some reason she starts to float in the air.

... Are you training?

Is the retort I wanted to throw at her, but I stayed silent, and hung the clean overcoat, which I took off, on a mannequin.

After that I undo the clasps of the arm protector, place it on the ground and examine it.

Every time I see it, this arm protector, shaped after a dragon, looks great. Though they aren't very dirty, I pick up each piece one after the other and carefully wipe them.

... Finishing the rough wiping, I polish the entire armour set.

Uh huh. The purple lustre is wonderful.

After I was satisfied with its sparkling condition, I lied down on the bed.

— This bed is hard.

I turn over heavily.

Once I started playing around by turning over several times, Rollo, who got interested in my playing, brought her face close in front of me.

And then she licks the tip of my nose.

“That tickles.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanyaaa.” (Rollo)

She presses her tentacle against my cheek while purring.

『Rolling around』『Playing』『Together』『I’m hungry』『Playing』『Rolling around』
Does she want to play with me by lying down next to me?

What a funny cat. However, shall we go eat as there was a “I’m hungry” mixed in there as well?

“Helme, I’m sorry to disturb you during your meditation, but we plan to go eating. How about you?” (Shuuya)

“For me eating as humans do is unnecessary. My food is your mana, Your Excellency. Thus I shall wait here.” (Helme)

“Got it. Then you will stay here, Helme. Let’s go, Rollo.” (Shuuya)

Just for caution’s sake I put my overcoat and armour in my item box.

Taking Rollo along, I left the room in casual clothing.

Once I walk towards the dining hall through the corridor, a nice smell tickles my nose.

Lively sounds reach my ears, too. I went to the dining hall as if being lured by those sounds.

Isn’t it filled with guests? The inn’s flourishing.

Not only guests but also customers, who came only for the food, are there.

The amount of people sitting there is to the extent that there isn’t even an open spot at the round tables surrounding the counter’s location. They are chatting pleasantly and enjoying eating the dishes peacefully.

The landlady and her employee were busy placing the dishes on the tables.

“Oh, aren’t ya the Shuuya who defeated the snake dragon?”

An adventurer, who accepted the same request as me, addressed me

casually.

He's a survivor of the vanguard. If I remember correctly, his name was Zaji, wasn't it?

"You were at the same inn?" (Shuuya)

"Appears so. Rather than that, did you order your food?" (Zaji)

"No, I planned to do so now." (Shuuya)

The warrior smiles broadly while showing his yellow teeth. It's a refreshing smile.

"I see, I see. Well, sit down." (Zaji)

That fits greatly. Zaji was the only one at this round table.
Let's intrude upon him.

"Got it." (Shuuya)

"Oy— landlady! I order today's meal for this remarkable lad!" (Zaji)

He requested in a loud voice from the landlady whose skin colour was that of aloe wood.

"— Yeah, yeah, I will bring it over right away, okay?"

"Ah, please put Rollo's portion on another plate, too." (Shuuya)

"Nya." (Rollo)

Rollo jumps on the round table and skilfully stands up on her hind legs. She charmingly appealed with her forepaws to bring her fodder with a "come, come" as she raises her forepaws while putting both of them together at her chest.

Kuh, this fellow... I don't know where she picked that up, but she has definitely acquired a cute technique.

"Oh my, isn't that a lively and cute cat? I understand. I will prepare an extra-large fish. Look forward to it, okay—"

Did the landlady admire the pleading movements of Rollo? After raising her elbows, she gets enthusiastic while obviously pushing out her chest and heads into the kitchen located behind the counter.

“You heard her. Isn’t that great for you?” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo purred while looking satisfied and returned on my shoulder.

“That’s your familiar?” (Zaji)

The adventurer Zaji apparently felt bothered by Rollo’s actions.

“That’s right. Something close to that.” (Shuuya)

“She seems to be a bright cat. Did she also contribute to the defeat of the snake dragon by chance?” (Zaji)

“Yea, she did.” (Shuuya)

“Nya!” (Rollo)

Rollo raises one of her paws and hits my shoulder with a *pon*.

“She says “that’s only natural.”” (Shuuya)

“Hahaha, I’m sorry then, cat-dono. But, why is someone of your skill working as adventurer in this remote area of 【Hesliphat】?” (Zaji)

“Weelll, there are various reasons for that.” (Shuuya)

Did Zaji sense something from my words? He waits for a bit.

“... I see. I won’t dig any deeper. Both of us have various reasons. After all I’m working as adventurer in such a remote area as well... but, you know, please listen. I’m thankful to you.” (Zaji)

Thankful? Is it about me defeating the snake dragon?

“Thankful?” (Shuuya)

“... I saw your strength, which defeated the snake dragon, directly in front of my eyes, Shuuya. That made me suddenly remember my **old** feelings of yearning.” (Zaji)

He saw me...?

“Old?” (Shuuya)

“Yea, the old me... crossed the Mahaheim Mountain Range after getting

through 【Great Desert Goldix】. I did have the strength to at least aim for the labyrinth city located in 【Oseberia Kingdom】. But then I took an arrow in the knee.” (Zaji)

Zaji shows me his knee and hits the remaining scar with a slap.
Did he just now say that he “took an arrow in the knee”?
To hear these words in this world.
Are you a palace guard from some place!
Is not what I tell him. I store away those dear memories in my brain.

“... It was probably bad that I wasn’t able to immediately treat this wound at the time when I received it. The healing magic I had cast on it was late and it was apparently rubbishy magic. The knee ended up recovering incompletely. Ever since then the movements of my knee are sluggish... therefore, I have continued to drink the spring water here for the sake of my knee. Doing this for many years, I settled down in this inn before I realized.” (Zaji)

There are also cases where even healing magic and potions won’t cure a wound completely...

“... I see. That means you are working as an adventurer while at the same time recuperating? However, the labyrinth city’s name is quite famous, isn’t it?” (Shuuya)

“That for sure. You can get quickly rich not only because of the magic gems, weapons and armours, but also due to the magic cores looted from defeated monsters, magic items you can take from treasure boxes, minerals produced by the labyrinth, and new magic tools as well as new sorcery devices obtained there.” (Zaji)

Various imaginations are gushing forth within me...

“Well, if you only talk about labyrinth cities, it’s not just the one in the southern major power 【Oseberia Kingdom】 though. There’s another one in the 【Lazaford Kingdom】 which is located in the west of the Oseberia Kingdom. Even in this religious state, there’s a labyrinth called 【Great Labyrinth of Shandol】. One more is located in the eastern 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】. It’s said that there’s one inside the northern 【Rollorizza Kingdom】.” (Zaji)

I feel like I heard a bit about these.

Though I wasn't that well-informed about the countries they are located in.

"Hoo, even in this country... 【Great Labyrinth of Shandol】 is yet another labyrinth with a exaggerated name." (Shuuya)

"True. But its entrance has been sealed by the Holy Ancient Ruins Excavation Department. The ones who can enter are limited to only those who belong to this country's pope's army, the church' knight-like high ranking nobles or a part of the top-ranking adventurers. That doesn't mean that all of the adventurers can enter by just paying a small amount of money like in 【Oseberia Kingdom】 and 【Lazaford Kingdom】. Well, you might also be able to say that 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 and 【Labyrinth City Sazardelri】 are **special**? Most of the foreign labyrinth cities are monopolized by a part of those who are strictly regulating them." (Zaji)

It's the first time for me to hear of the Holy Ancient Ruins Excavation Department.

However, one can enter if they pay money. That means, restricting it only to this aspect, 【Oseberia】 and 【Lazarford】 are possibly nice and liberal countries? They probably have some objectives by releasing those labyrinths though.... Even so, I didn't know that there's a labyrinth in this country as well.

"... I see. so where's that 【Great Labyrinth of Shandol】?" (Shuuya)

"It's located in this country's 【Sect's Capital Heslipha】." (Zaji)

Then it's impossible.

"Ah, okay." (Shuuya)

"You are not aiming for the **Treasure of Shandol**, are you? Do you intend to go to the sect's capital?" (Zaji)

Calling it treasure; that word has a certain charm that attracts people. Yea. But, it's in the sect's capital, right?

It's clear that I was targeted by the Demon Extermination Doll Disorte. I won't go there.

"... No, not at all. I won't go there. I just heard about it." (Shuuya)

Given that the landlady brought the food at that point, me and Zaji, who were

lured in by the delicious smell, talk less as we focus on the dishes.

What was served is soup with bread and grilled fish.

Next to the grilled fish was a sauce that seemed to have been shaved off a vegetable, which resembled pea green grated radish, and was then mashed.

The grilled fish is close to Japanese cooking in its preparation.

It's a combination that makes me crave for soy sauce and rice.

The hot soup has a thin, salty taste.

Something fluffy, that resembled wheat gluten, and a green vegetable similar to brown seaweed have been abundantly put into it.

Since the bread is *as* hard as usual, I eat it by dipping it in the hot soup before biting into it.

The soup's taste is average.

The fish was delicious. Though it's salty, it has a simple, refined taste.

It gives the impression of a freshwater sweetfish. The white meat is soft to a degree that you can scoop it up with a spoon. Once I hold it in my mouth, even its large main part has a gentle sense of touch and the combination of the saltiness and the fish's original sweetness is appetizing.

The pea green, grated sauce was delicious, too.

I was able to experience a sourness like lime, a flavour like celery and the sweetness of an onion from its bottom.

Though I can't describe it well somehow, it has a mysterious taste.

I enjoy the fish' good flavour a second time by combining it with the sauce and the soup.

Aah, if there was only some rice...

At first I thought "if there was only soy sauce," but since there's the sauce, it's the rice what matters.

Well, I shouldn't plead for something that doesn't exist.

Rollo munched on a fish which has been prepared on a different plate.

She devours it down to the bones while making crunching sounds.

As long as it doesn't get stuck in her throat, it's fine, but...

While watching Rollo, I realized that worrying about her was needless.

Eating up the fish on her plate in the twinkle of an eye, she repeatedly cleans her paws with a satisfied expression.

I also eat all of the fish's white flesh and am basked in the feeling of satisfaction.

Phew, that was great.

As last I drink the alcohol here. It's beer but at ambient temperature.

As such I add a small twist to it by putting a bit of ice into it with life magic.

After cooling it down to ice-cold, I put the chilled goblet to my mouth and gulped down the refreshing beer.

Watching me drink it, Zaji gulps while looking envious and talks to me.

“Ooooy, jeez, is that ice? You are sure drinking it happily.” (Zaji)

“Haha, do you want me to put some into your goblet as well, Zaji?” (Shuuya)

“Oh, that's alright with ya?” (Zaji)

“Sure, right away—” (Shuuya)

Refining ice with life magic is a speciality of mine.

“Oh, there's certainly ice inside the goblet. The water attribute's friend is a friend of alcohol, eh? Thanks.” (Zaji)

Though I don't know that proverb, I face Zaji with a smile.

He immediately drinks while tasting the ice.

He has a good drinking style. He ordered another beer.

Don't drink it while looking so happy... jeez, this man.

I also pour the chilled beer into my stomach in one go as if being enticed by him.

Once we drank a while together, Zaji stretched himself and stood up.

“— Thanks for the ice. I will return to my room now. I sated my hunger by eating, now there's only sleeping left. Well then, let's meet again somewhere, okay?” (Zaji)

“Yea.” (Shuuya)

While heartily slapping his swelling belly, Zaji says aesthetic words that befit a fellow adventurer and returns to his room.

Well then, shall I go back, too?

Rollo is still licking her paws as if scratching her head.

“Rollo, we are going back.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo climbs on my shoulder.
A slight stench of fish drifted over from her muzzle.
I thank the landlady.
After standing up from the seat at the round table and suitably flattering the landlady's cooking, I returned to my room.
When I returned there, the spirit of everlasting darkness, Helme, was meditating.
Moreover, she's creating a strange sheet of spray in the surroundings.
Once she realizes that I returned, she stopped meditating and bowed her head with one knee on the floor.

"Helme, is there any meaning to that meditation?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. I feel happy due to the meditation." (Helme)

"Due to it?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, on top of being able to experience a state close to that of being stored inside you, Your Excellency, I'm improving my mana control." (Helme)

"I see... are there any other things that make you happy?" (Shuuya)

"Sprinkling water on plants." (Helme)

She's a strange spirit who's not human, isn't she?

"Roger, got it. Well then, please return inside me." (Shuuya)

"Yes!" (Helme)

Helme turned into water in an instant, expanded and settled into my left eye.
Well, shall I refresh myself by cleaning my teeth and taking a bath?
I cleaned my teeth with a wooden brush and went into the bath.
Cleaning Rollo in the bathtub, I wash myself as well and spend my time relaxing.
After wiping my whole body with a leather cloth, I lay down stark naked on top of the bed in the shape of a 大, and fall into a shallow slumber.
I woke up in the dark, early morning.
Holding once again the small brush, I head to the veranda.
I brushed my teeth lightly and washed my face while discharging water with life magic.
I wish I had tooth paste, but I endure with a bit of salt for now.

Rinsing my mouth's interior, I spit out the water and return to my room. I carefully equip one piece after the other of the purple armour which I placed yesterday at the mannequin's feet.

The purple armour is sparkling. After all I cleaned it yesterday.

As the dark-violet scales and bones of Magic Dragon King Baldok have been used lavishly in its creation, its appearance is elegant and cool.

I put on the overcoat and after that hoisted the chest belt on my shoulder.

I also check the daggers in the simple iron box for putting in potions which have been installed on the belt.

After properly making sure that the Ancient Dragon Daggers are sheathed in the belt before putting it on, I applied the metal fittings and equipped the belt.

Rollo has also woken up.

“I think we will stay in the sky for a long period of time today. We are heading straight east.” (Shuuya)

“Nya? Nn.” (Rollo)

Is the meaning of what Rollo purred at the end with a throaty voice “Roger?” Without minding it, I look at the rough map.

【Sect's Capital Heslipha】is located in the north-east. 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】can be found in the distant east after passing Hesliphat's border. The area, where my destination 【Ancient Great Empire Belfaritz】can be found, is a huge woodland that is spreading further ahead east of 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】. Somewhere there I will find “Sadeyula's Forest.”

There I can get the ingredient required to revive the withered Holker Large Tree.

One of the ingredients, Spring Water of Water Goddess Akreshys, I did obtain already.

Next up is the Leaf of Sadeyula.

However, I have another objective as well.

I will be introduced by 【Belgart】. With there being such an agreement, I'm promised to meet with the top brass of a large company on the second day of summer.

Today is the 60th day of spring, thus there are 30 days left until that promised date.

It will probably be alright since I have still plenty of time to spare.
Therefore, shall I gather the ingredients for the revival of the Withered Holker Large Tree?

First I will exit at 【Beltzam】, located in the south-east, by using the a mirror.

“... Well then, I have decided to return to 【Village of Beltzam】 once. Helme and Rollo, I’m going to use a mirror.” (Shuuya)

『Yes!』 (Helme)

“Nya.”

Trapezohedron

I take out the 24-faceted orb from the chest belt.

I tamper around with the sphere by rolling it around on my palm.

— Third facet. Tracing the code of the third facet, I had the gate start up.
The spell of the gate, which was bordered by light, appears.

『This is gate magic... it’s the first time for me to see that.』 (Helme)

『Really? You’re seeing it for the first time?』 (Shuuya)

It’s because she was always in my butt.

『We will travel by passing through this.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes, my heart’s pounding due to excitement.』 (Helme)

Let’s go— I pass through.

We returned to the church in Beltzam in the blink of an eye.

— Alright.

I check for magic sources in the vicinity with Grasping Perception. There are none though.

『It happened in a flash.』 (Helme)

『It’s an instantaneous transition just like that.』 (Shuuya)

Mmh, shall we leave this church then?

Leaving the room, I climb up the stairs and jump outside the church’s building.
Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain> I run up into the sky.
High in the sky, I sit down on the chain chair and enjoy the view while ascertaining the direction.

I won't head to the 【Sect's Capital】 of this country which lies north-east.

Is it north from Beltzam?

I will head straight east. It will be fine if I arrive at the large forest directly, but...

Even so, the cathedral of the church and the 【Great Labyrinth of Shandol】, which is said to be located in the 【Sect's Capital】, are places I want to see someday.

However, the pope, the holy church... and the worrying factor called Disorte. I can vividly imagine it as den of the vampire hunters who attacked me before. Therefore I will hold back on sightseeing. I shall resign myself to give the “Goal of obtaining the Leaf of Sadeyula” priority.

I begin to travel with <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and the <Chain> chair.
— Clouds are hanging in the sky.

Since my altitude isn't too high, the wind feels good.

I plunge forward through the beautifully blue sky on the assembly of chains.

Moving while sitting on a iron-plate-like chair, that's me.

It's perfectly suspicious if seen from the side.

It's the definition of a space alien, far too surreal.

... A flying humanoid moves through the sky.



In such manner I continuously advanced through the sky until evening.

While endlessly sitting on the chain chair, I travel the sky with my chains and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

Pheew—

Since I haven't had anything since morning, I became slightly hungry.

Did a few hours pass? I wonder if I travelled several hundred kilometres since then?

Thus this area should already belong to the domain of the 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】.

Below me there's a highway surrounded by forest.

Shall I descend a bit and have a meal?

Making <Chain> disappear and using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> as a scaffold, I descent by leaping with a *tack, tack, tack* down on the scaffolds in the sky.

Since I found a suitable thick branch growing from a large tree, I went down and

stood on it.

“Rollo, the view is nice here. We will eat here. I will take out the food and prepare it now.” (Shuuya)

While talking to Rollo, I let both my legs dangle at the edge of the thick branch.

Let’s eat the meal without setting up at the highway-like snake path continuing inside the forest.

“Nyaa nya.” (Rollo)

As it’s a thick branch, it will be alright for me to even place a hot pot on it. I take out a thermos flask from within my backpack.

Steam with a nice aroma rises from the hot pot cooking.

Rollo thrust her head into the pot, slurped down the broth and munched on the meat and vegetables.

I’m going to eat as well. Itadakimasu~.

I scoop up the broth with a wooden spoon and bring it to my mouth.

Delish~, it’s piping hot and soft.

The broth has been absorbed by the vegetables, too. They are great.

Oh, the sensation of the meat at the bottom. Well, it has been put in it from the start though.

This hot pot cooking is something I bought at the market of 【Hekatrail】.

It’s in the same state as when I put it into the item box, freshly-made.

It’s correct to say that this has large amounts of stock.

Let’s drink it once it’s cold, too.

I drink it in order to eat the chilled blood juice which was inside the thermos flask.

This finishes my replenishment.

Oh? I wonder what’s that...?

What I saw at the time of finishing my meal is black smoke rising from ahead of the highway.

Chapter 90 – Assisting the pink-haired Beauty-san

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



That's not burning off the fields.
Is there some trouble?
Did Rollo sense the abnormal event, too? She had already returned to my shoulder.
Alright, let's have a look?
The forest stretches on both sides of the highway here.
Moreover it's only trees with thick trunks and a considerable height.
That's convenient for me.
I move forward along the thick trunks and branches of the trees like the wind.
Then the site, where the smoke is rising from, came into sight.
It appears that fire magic is the cause of the black smoke.
Carriages were turned over. Have they been attacked?
Nuo? Magic beast monster types? And moreover a group of them.
Stopping on a thick branch, I start observing.
The monsters are four-legged with their large builds covered by black hair.
They are a combination of both human and horse, resembling centaurs.
The herd of pseudo-centaurs surrounded several overturned carriages.

A great number of human soldiers are fighting against the pseudo-centaurs.

My eyes focused on one of the pseudo-centaurs.

Four oval, red eyes are located on its squarish face which was hidden by black hair.

Its chest is massive and muscular, with broad horizontal stripes of white and black hair overlapping each other in jagged patterns.

It has developed abnormal muscles, from the shoulders to the arms or both its arms are fat. In its hands it grasped a bastard sword.

It's killing the human soldiers with that sword.

The soldiers, who fought against the muscular pseudo-centaurs, wore military uniforms with red and white as basic colours.

They are probably warriors from either the Religious State or the Holy Kingdom.

There is also a carriage which hasn't fallen over. Choosing that one as the centre, a person, who might be called a magic user with a tricorn hat on the head, deployed a spherical field spell.

Is it a defence spell? Heavy knights, who seem to belong to the commanding officer class, are fighting against the pseudo-centaurs while issuing instructions to several soldiers, as if protecting the light blue magic field dome.

Ooh? Found a princess-like pink-haired person behind the largely built heavy knights!

Pink, it's pink. Pink-coloured hair. Seriously!? That's nice.

Her face is cute as well. What's more, even though her eyes are glaring at the monsters, they are adorable.

However, the soldiers are sent flying with the hooves, hit and cut one after the other by the pseudo-centaurs.

Those pseudo-centaurs are quite strong.

I can also confirm that from the motion of the magic sources within their bodies.

The motion is somewhat different from other monsters and resembles that of humans.

Ah, soon after developing a crack, the defence field vanishes.

No, did that magician switch over to offence?

The magician holds up a large wand with one arm and handles it as if shaking it off.

Several balls of flame are generated at the tip of the swung wand.

Those flame spells wound around like thin snakes, twined themselves around the bodies of the pseudo-centaurs and wrapped their bodies in fire, burning the black hair in an instant. In the blink of an eye the bodies of several pseudo-centaurs turn into carbonized, burnt-black sculptures.

The attack of the magician is still ongoing.

Retrieving a small rod from their waist with the left hand, the magician swung the rod which they grasped with the left hand in the same manner as they did with the large wand in their right hand, and generates a large quantity of ice pebbles from its tip in that instant. The ice pebbles pour down on the pseudo-centaurs like rain while chasing them.

The majority of the pseudo-centaurs were pierced by the large amount of ice pebbles and collapsed after getting injured.

It's an amazing spell. Good going, magician.

However it seemed the magician attracted the attention of the enemies. The pseudo-centaurs focus their on the magician.

It looks like the pseudo-centaurs judged the magician to be a threat.

Fired arrows and swords, which had <Throw> used on them, are flying towards the magician.

The magician dodges skilfully by running away, but the soldiers, who stood against the attacks trying to protect the magician, collapsed successively from being shot through, mowed down and pierced.

Thereupon a sole heavy knight jumps in front to protect the magician.

Seems like she is shouting. The shrill voice of a woman reaches my location.

Did she merely shout or was it a provocation skill? A pseudo-centaur, who focussed on the magician, suddenly changed its target to the heavy knight.

Ah— the provocation doesn't have much of an effect.

It didn't seem to have any influence on a centaur which had a blue horn growing from its head.

Is that guy maybe the leader of the pseudo-centaurs?

With just a horn it moves three times as fast, isn't the feeling I get though.

An arrow fired by that blue-horned pseudo-centaur directly hits the magician's foot.

Getting their foot injured, the magician collapses and becomes unable to

maintain the front.

The number of the soldiers, who are wearing equipment in red and white colours, is still a lot, but... you could say that they are at a disadvantage.

— My justice throbs.

Even if god permits for the pink-haired beauty-san to depart from this world, I won't approve of it.

Let's help them.

『Helme.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes!』 (Helme)

『Show yourself in my field of vision』 (Shuuya)

Helme's distorted character appeared at the edge of my vision.

『Okay! I'm here.』 (Helme)

『Lend me your view.』 (Shuuya)

I catch Helme—

Helme disappears from my sight, but...

『— Ha! Ahn, haa haa.』 (Helme)

“Though I'd like you to cease that agonizing voice...” (Shuuya)

『S-Sorry...』 (Helme)

I investigate the vicinity without minding it.

I also activate Grasping Perception at the same time.

I check the enemy's location by the difference in temperature.

There are no ambushes lying in wait in the forest behind the pseudo-centaurs.

It's the same with the magic sources, too.

— I cancel Spirit Sight.

『Helme, can you circle around into the back of the group of pseudo-centaurs in your water state?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

I switch over from telepathic communication to common speech.

“Well then, Helme, you will look for an opportunity and attack that leading

horned magic beast. Rollo and I will attack from the front.” (Shuuya)

『Understood.』 (Helme)

The Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness, Helme, ejects in a spiral from my left eye.

Helme, who transformed into a liquid that landed on the earth’s surface, wriggles forward with a strangely smooth speed.

“Alright, shall we go with a normal pre-emptive strike this time?” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

I materialize the Magic Wand in my right hand.

Then I rushed out by jumping off the thick branch— at that spot.

Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain>, I fly into the sky.

It becomes a case of us assaulting the pseudo-centaurs, who are fighting against the human soldiers, from overhead.

A gravity free fall* after landing from the sky. *(T/N: Seems to be a reference to Gravity Daze on PS4)*

I swing the Magic Wand vertically.

— And gift a centaur’s head to the red axe blade.

The centaur’s head is bisected into two with a single stroke while I experience a slight resistance.

The muscular torso, that’s similar to a horse gorilla, was split in left and right with the surfaces of both cut sections singed.

After the landing.

Without giving them any time, I raise the Magic Wand overhead and bury its red axe blade in the head of a pseudo-centaur who was next to me.

The red axe blade passes through without much sensation while causing a splatting sound. After, I performed a horizontal rotation as I extracted the Magic Wand by swinging it as is, a diagonal line of blood appears on the neck of the cut pseudo-centaur, and the head sliding down along that line of blood was reflected in my sight.

Rollo, who jumped down from my shoulder, assaults from the right side as well. Having stabbed her tentacle bone swords into the head of a pseudo-centaur, she reels in the tentacles and gets close immediately. Using the collapsing large body as a stepping ladder, she leapt at another pseudo-centaur while baring her

claws.

Kicking off from the corpse offers a quick trajectory, huh?

The screaming voices of the pseudo-centaurs can be heard at that time.

“Goofa? (What?)”

“Bofugal (It is dangerous) bofuga (danger).”

They could understand words.

“Dzogodza (Human) dazfan (movement not)—”

Oh, the monster, which was speaking, has been cut from behind.

The one who cut it was one of the disadvantaged heavy knights.

“— It’s a chance! You lot, start attacking as well!!”

It’s the female heavy knight’s screaming voice.

“— Yea!”

“Even we...”

“Ooooh!”

The soldiers, who protected the princess, regain their spirit due to heavy knight’s courageous deeds and her fervent, encouraging yell.

I understand the meaning of the language the pseudo-centaurs used, but it was a language I hadn’t heard yet.

Oh well, I will clean them up.

“Gajii, dorai, ramajarz, aah!! (That spear user, us, killing!!)”

The blue-horned pseudo-centaur set up its bow while shouting that.

“Your Excellency! — I won’t allow you to fire the arrow.” (Helme)

It was the Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness, Helme, who appeared alongside those words.

She assaults the blue-horned pseudo-centaur from behind.

Helme appeared to be floating in the air since she had jumped up.

She’s spreading her left and right hand just beside her.

A spherical cluster of blue water floated in her right hand while a round darkness mist wafted in her left hand.



Once she makes a sweeping stroke with her right hand, from the the blue water — a number of ice spears are shot.

The ice spears soar towards the body of the blue-horned pseudo-centaur.

At the same time Helme waves her left hand— and, a dark cloud was created around the heads of a great majority of the other pseudo-centaurs.

While groaning, the pseudo-centaurs try to ward off the cloud of darkness around their heads by using both hands, but the magic cloud of darkness doesn't leave.

On the other side, the body of the blue-horned pseudo-centaur is pierced by the ice spears, and it drops the bow it held, on the ground while blood flows from its abdomen.

“Gua, gu, gaji, (Who is it? She is) pazodoo (it's two spells at the same time).”

The blue-horned pseudo-centaur shouts while looking frustrated.

It reveals an expression of gnawing its fangs in its closed mouth.

Helme, nice.

The pseudo-centaurs, who had their vision snatched away, are moving about in confusion.

First I will finish off those guys.

Kicking off the ground, I close in on a pseudo-centaur in one breath. The instant it entered the range of my spear, I simply raise the Magic Wand overhead.

— A flash of red and purple. It sliced the pseudo-centaur from its belly.

A different pseudo-centaur close-by is also cut down from its head by me swinging down the Magic Wand while leaping a bit.

Even if there's a distance, it doesn't miss the targeted aim.

Closing the distance between us with Magic Step, it's changed into prey for the Magic Wand.

Rollo not only killed the pseudo-centaurs with attacks by her tentacle bone swords, but also with her muzzle's fangs and her limbs' claws.

It might be fine to say that the situation has completely changed due to this.

Were the surviving heavy knights and soldiers encouraged by our peerless attacks? They shifted into a full-blown counter-attack as if venting their anger for everything up until now.

Having stolen their sight, the pseudo-centaurs are defeated one after the other

by the soldiers and die without being able to mount any decent resistance. Apparently they grasped the defeat of their leading blue-horned pseudo-centaur.

Once again gnawing its fangs, it shows a mortified expression.

After it raises a war cry while glaring at me with its four red eyes, it retreats inside the forest behind it while accompanied by the still alive pseudo-centaurs, and vanishes.

They ran away in the end, huh?

Seeing that, the knights break into cheers.

After them, joy erupted among the soldiers.

“Victory, we wooodnnn!!”

“Yeeaaa.”

Meanwhile Helme turns into water and returns into my left eye.

Rollo returned to her usual spot, my shoulder, as well.

It appears that the magician, who suffered an archery attack, receives treatment for their wound.

A woman, who seems to be the pink-haired princess, is chanting a healing spell which appears to be crest magic.

A crest is floating in the air.

It's a crest I'm seeing for the first time, different from the darkness crest.

A short while later the magician was carried inside the carriage.

Alright. Shall I extend my greetings to these people?

Let's put emphasis on talking to that pink-haired woman.

I approach the pink-haired princess-like person.

At that moment, two heavy knights stand in my way.

One of them obviously wears equipment designating her as the leader.

She wore a helmet with a visor and a massive plate armour which expanded at the chest.

A woman?

An apron cloth in red and white hangs down from the top of the massive armour.

An emblem, which was a combination of flowers, a cross and a shield, was drawn on the cloth on the left side of her chest.

Going by its hue, it resembles the flag of Croatia.

“... Please wait. I thank you deeply from the bottom of my heart for having helped us on this occasion.”

The heavy knight greets me politely, takes off her helmet and bows her head. Her golden hair is long. She’s a woman after all, eh?

“You’re welcome. It’s great that I could be of assistance.” (Shuuya)

I will play it safe with my greetings.

“Yes. Thanks to you, princess-sama was saved as well. I’m the leader, Elmes Ingway, of the 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】 Third Princess’ Knight Escort Unit, Hundred Flowers.” (Elmes)

“Likewise, I’m the Hundred Flowers Unit’s adjutant Sahia Lorenz.” (Sahia)

The female leader, Elmes-san, it is?

She is a beautiful woman with a firm nose bridge between her blue eyes, but there was a large scar as if she was injured by the fangs of a beast from her right cheek down to her jaw.

The adjutant-san is Sahia.

A swarthy, middle-aged man with many wrinkles on his forehead and thin eyes.

Bizen*

The white, beautiful beard stood out on his chin. *(T/N: Bizen – splendid and beautiful whiskers)*

I greet them as well.

“... I’m a C-ranked adventurer. My name is Shuuya Kagari. Please call me Shuuya.”

“W-What! Being C-ranked with that much combat prowess and ability... I can’t believe that all of a sudden...” (Elmes)

“Leader, I have heard that there are cases of outstanding people even at low ranks among adventurers.” (Sahia)

The middle-aged man, who introduced himself as the adjutant Sahia, gave his opinion with a refined voice.

“Hoo...” (Elmes)

“Shall I show you my card in that case?” (Shuuya)

“N-No, it’s alright. Sorry for being impolite. I will believe you.” (Elmes)

Elmes was surprised but apparently assented without me showing my card. Oh, the pink-haired princess-san approaches.

“— Elmes? This person kindly helped us, didn’t he?”

“Ha, Princess Aurora. That’s indeed so.” (Elmes)

Princess Aurora-sama, huh?

The princess-sama’s hairstyle is that of a pink-coloured divided bob cut.

— The pink is magnificent.

Her eyebrows are also pink with thin hair. Her perfectly round pupils are emitting a lovely tint of emerald.

The gallant appeal of her small face’s chin line enhances her great look all the more.

Her attire is that of a white, silken long dress with a small and simple shoulder armour.

It has a characteristic of brass buttons mixed into the pale pink colour which suppresses the swelling area of her chest.

A wand, which was enveloped by a silver thread, is visible at her waist.

Going by her appearance, those are simple, high-class clothes apparently worn on trips, I think.

“I see. I’d like you know your esteemed name by all means. Would you mind telling me?” (Aurora)

The pink-haired princess-sama stares at me.

Though it’s annoying to do it many times, shall I introduce myself once more?

“Yes, princess-sama. Do pardon my lacking manners. I’m a C-ranked adventurer. Shuuya Kagari is my name.”

I say while bowing my head respectfully.

Even as I bow, Rollo clung to my shoulder by using her tentacles without falling off.

Given that she doesn’t release any complaining purrs, Rollo seems to watch the course of events from her position on my shoulder.

“Shuuya-sama, it is? I don’t care about manners and such. You are my, and

the knight order's, lifesaver. I'm truly thankful for you having saved us from the hands of the **Grizbell** demons." (Aurora)

The name of the earlier pseudo-centaurs is **Grizbell**?
However, this princess-sama is... a beautiful person.
I will interact with her truthfully while praising her properly.

"No, I just did what was natural and that resulted in the honour of me being able to save a **beautiful** princess-sama." (Shuuya)

"Beautiful, or such... you are just flattering me." (Aurora)

Her cheeks turn red with a *poof*.
You incessantly blinking your round eyes is dangerous, you know? How cute.

"No, not at all. Those are my true feelings after all." (Shuuya)

"Thank you. But, Shuuya-sama, you are a very strong adventurer-sama, aren't you...? Ah, I still haven't properly introduced myself. My name is Aurora Phi Arkamneris. I'm the Third Princess of the **【Holy Kingdom】**. Please call me Aurora."

The princess presents her hand. Is she telling me to kiss it?
I don't know the etiquette, but I'm probably right.

"Yes, Princess Aurora-sama—" (Shuuya)

While saying that, I kissed the back of her slender hand while bowing.
I was able to feel a somehow indescribable softness.
At that moment I look at the princess' slender and beautiful fingers.
A ring with a diamond-like gem embedded was put on the index finger of her right hand.
It's an expensive-looking ring. Ah, damn it!
Staring for too long is rude as well.
Hoping to gloss over my gaze—

"... Princess-sama, as I'm no noble, there's no need to add a -sama to my name, is there?" (Shuuya)

"No, it's only natural since you saved us." (Aurora)

Her two emerald eyes are gazing at me intently.

“cough Well then Shuuya-dono? I’d like to offer our gratitude for you having saved us this time, but...” (Elmes)

Deliberately releasing a cough, the knight leader Elmes spoils the mood well. Elmes-san talks with a smile after pointing a glare at me for an instant. She apparently saw it as me making advances on the princess. I will decline since she’s scary.

“... I don’t need something like gratitude.” (Shuuya)

“— Please don’t say that.” (Aurora)

Princess Aurora appears by stepping in front in a swift and vigorous manner. She frantically complains while bringing her face close to me. I exchanged looks with Knight Leader Elmes, who stood next to the princess, with the demanding meaning of “Say something to her as well.”

“... Shuuya-dono, it’s a request from my side as well. It’s cowardly for me who is leading the escorting knight order, but with our veteran sorcerer injured, we require a safe and quick response. I’d like to request **protection** from the remarkable you. It’s also possible that will be attacked a second time by the demons beyond this point as there’s still some distance left until the 【Holy City】. It’s not an official request since it won’t go through the guild, but... won’t you possibly accept it as privately designated request by the 【Holy Kingdom】?” (Elmes)

The princess continues to talk while visibly applying pressure.

“I request it as well. I will be able to feel relieved if it’s Shuuya-sama who was able to save me and the knight order. Let’s agree on a reward as well. If there’s something you desire as reward, I will arrange for it as long as it’s possible for me to do so... thus, please act as our guard by all means.” (Aurora)

The princess crosses both her hands in front of her chest and takes a posture of praying to god. She has a frowning, frantically pleading expression.



It's an opportunity to go east anyway.

She's a beauty. See here, I will end up with a feeling that I must do my best as a guard.

Ah, my nostrils might expand...

It won't do if I don't respond to her gentlemanly.

"... I have business in the east, that's right. Ah, but will it be alright although I'm no more than a mere adventurer?" (Shuuya)

"Of course. It's fine! Isn't it, Elmes?" (Aurora)

Seeing the princess' face, Elmes shows a smile all over her face.

"Yes, Princess-sama." (Elmes)

However, there are worrisome elements.

The possibility of them having strong relations to the church like the neighbouring country Hesliphat is extremely high.

The name's Holy Kingdom as well... I feel uneasy, but it's a request of a green-eyed pink-san.

"... Then I shall accept acting as your guard for just the time while we are heading east. Though it will be just a short time, I look forward to working with you." (Shuuya)

"That's great, Shuuya-sama. Please treat me well." (Aurora)

The princess is hopping up and down a bit. You are that happy?

"Yes." (Shuuya)

"Nya." (Rollo)

Watching the development on my shoulder like a doll, Rollo began to appeal.

"Oh my! What a lovely cat-chan." (Aurora)

"This is Rollodeen. Rollo is her pet name. She's my partner and also my familiar." (Shuuya)

"Waah, it's your partner Rollo-chan. Did you watch the previous fight? It was amazing, you know? It seems that she can change her shape a bit, too. The

tentacles with their black, glossy hair extended.” (Aurora)

“N, nya nya~ n.” (Rollo)

Rollo’s triumphal look burst out after a long time.

“C-Cuteeee, can I hug her?” (Aurora)

“G-Go ahead. Unless Rollo runs away though...” (Shuuya)

Rollo didn’t escape.

She is gently caressed by the princess while being held at her chest.

Given Rollo’s whiskers hanging down and her displeased expression, she might be enduring, but...

With that impression, Elmes-san gave various instructions to her adjutant Sahia while the princess and Rollo were flirting with each other.

Ordered by Sahia, the soldiers recover the scattered luggage, fix the carriages and collect the items of the deceased soldiers.

In total there are four carriages, but it didn’t seem that there was a shortage of wheels with the carriages having just turned over. Among the carriages there was a single luxurious carriage.

As expected of royalty, I suppose.

“Shuuya-sama, this way.” (Aurora)

Moreover I ended up being directly led inside that carriage by the princess. Because there’s no way for me to decline, the situation proceeds into me sitting opposite of the princess due to the course of events.

The female Knight Leader Elmes next to me stays reserved, but the princess cheerfully talks to me with a happily smiling face the whole time.

“Shuuya-sama, why are you heading towards 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】?” (Aurora)

“Yes, I have business in the eastern, large woodlands. If I remember correctly, it’s a place located in 【Great Ancient Empire Befaritz】 or such...” (Shuuya)

“East, you mean that 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】? Isn’t that a place which has a **Tear of the World of Spirits** where Grizbell, lesser demons and such appear?” (Aurora)

The princess is surprised. Lesser Demons or similar appear there as well? I heard about the **Tear of the World of Spirits** already. It was also mentioned on the paper of a guild's request. It's about a crack located in the Sera World previously mentioned by the burning bone knights. They said that one is passing through it towards the World of Spirits, Sebdola. I'm aware of it, but I pretend to not know.

"... Yes, it's that eastern great forest. However, what's that "Tear of the World of Spirits"?" (Shuuya)

Upon my question, the princess and the Knight Leader Elmes-san reveal a mysterious expression. That Elmes-san moved her lips heavily.

"... Let me give you an explanation about it. The Tear of the World of Spirits is a scar remaining from a past war. It's said that it was caused around 600~700 years ago. As a result of the elves' sages performing a large taboo spell at the **【Imperial Capital Kishiria】** of **【Great Ancient Empire Befaritz】**, the magic failed and **【Imperial Capital Kishiria】** suffered serious damage from causing a large explosion. That's what started it. For the elves the tragedy continued even further. A dimensional tear was created due to the after-effects. This is the so-called **Tear of the World of Spirits**. Once a huge amount of demons poured out from there... the entire elven capital, which was said to be a beautiful imperial capital, was destroyed in one day. That's what's written in old historic books." (Elmes)

The elves' forbidden magic, huh? Were they cornered in the war to such an extent that they had to rely on that? Well, I won't know unless I check the history books in detail... Mmh, which reminds me, Oseberia and the human countries were created around 500~600 years ago according to what master said in the classroom lecture. Demons from the tear... in an instant I remembered the black ring Zalalarp, which I found deep in the underground, from that phrase. The black ring should still exist in the current underground. Rollo's previous existence, Rozes, mentioned that several of the rings with that size exist on the surface as well. Well, just like the burning knights said before, this is a story that has no relation

to the Tear of the World of Spirits.

“... From the tear, you say? Those Grizbells, too?” (Shuuya)

Elmes-san nods.

“Yes. The 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 has become the habitat of the demons. Since more than 500 years ago until today, we have been called to arms for a holy war called **Crusade** and the crusaders were gathered many, many times to suppress the demons starting from the 【Holy City Southermund】, but being opposed by a large army of Grizbells and demon types, the crusaders have been repeatedly annihilated or had to retreat. Even now the 【Soul Fortress】 at the front line exists to protect the national border of 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】, but... as you can understand from the previous attack by the group of Grizbells, it's not like we can perfectly control the national border.” (Elmes)

Hee, that's terrible, I suppose.

“I see, if the border is dangerous... will the 【Holy City Southermund】 be alright?” (Shuuya)

“In regards to that, it will likely be fine. There's the fortress at the front line. Also, a solid protective wall has been built, a barrier against demons was erected and equipment has been assembled in the 【Holy City】. I think that the grizbells, who attacked us this time, circumvented the holy city from their demonic haunt and migrated with no more than one group into the forest. However, to permit them to invade into the holy kingdom like this is...” (Elmes)

Barrier against demons = connected to Light?

Image-wise holy water or such immediately pops up in my mind, but it might be field magic using a special spell.

“It's as Elmes says. Even I didn't expect something like grizbells appearing in the backwoods of the western holy kingdom. This place is close to our border with 【Religious State Hesliphath】 after all.” (Aurora)

The princess' emerald pupils appear to be sparkling as usual.

Her skin with its light make-up is beautiful and looks supple.

Her expression is serious, but her skin makes one want to stick to it, I guess...

No, not good. I end up getting distracted right away.

However, as for my conjecture from their stories...

Even if the attack just now by the Grizbell demons was beyond expectation; if we keep getting attacked by demon type monsters on this highway from now on as well, isn't it likely that the 【Holy City】 has already been surrounded by demons...?

Well, I don't have any intention to voice out these thoughts though.

“... It was beyond expectation, you say?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. That's right. With the sorcery veteran Chloe suffering an injury, we were on the brink of getting annihilated. It was truly a blessing that you were there, Shuuya-sama...” (Aurora)

Now that she mentions it, there was a magician who got injured.
Though she got carried away...

“... Is the condition of that sorcerer leader okay?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Chloe fainted, but she's alright. We made her drink a potion and cast healing magic on her. Her wounds are closed. She is now sleeping in the rear carriage after our healing specialist performed poison treatment on her.”
(Aurora)

“I see, it's great that she survived.” (Shuuya)

We continued our conversation in the carriage in such manner.
Orange light is shining through the trees outside the carriage.
We advance on the highway towards 【Holy City Southermund】 while experiencing the evening sun.

Chapter 91 – An escort request while I’m at it

Join the  Game
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



While continuing a friendly conversation with the princess and the leader of the escort knights in the carriage, we advanced on the road through the forest.

“I see. Shuuya-sama, you want to go to that place called **Forest of Sadeyula**, don’t you?” (Elmes) “Yes. Do you know the place?” (Shuuya)

“I have only heard rumours, but it exists in the distant southeast of the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 or so. It doesn’t continue until the base of the Mahaheim Mountain Range, however it was given such a name due to its vast, wide woodlands alongside the mountains, is what I heard.” (Elmes) This is decent information.

There’s value in her being called an escort leader.

“Even if it’s just rumours, thanks, Elmes-san. Do you know of any other such information?” (Shuuya) “No, I marched with the crusaders in the past, but I wasn’t even able to see 【Imperial Capital Kishiria】 which should exist after becoming a ruin... Chloe, if it’s the escort unit’s sorcerer leader Chloe, she might know something about it, but whether that’s true...” (Elmes) The crusaders, huh?

“Chloe-san? Is it the person who is currently injured?” (Shuuya)

“Right.”

“It might be fine to ask Chloe as long as her wounds allow for it.” (Elmes) “Yes, we shall find out.”

At that moment, the unit leader Elmes turns her sight towards the wooden window of the carriage.

While watching the light darkness of evening,

“— The day has gradually gotten dark.” (Elmes)

she said while speaking to the princess.

“That’s right, isn’t it? I feel slightly uneasy...” (Aurora)

While the princess agreed to the words she heard from the escort unit’s leader, her complexion turned poor.

She’s probably recalling the incident of the previous attack.

Though she’s a princess, it’s her escort request. Relieving the anxiety of a beautiful female client, it’s a man’s vanity and also a job he has to do.

“Princess Aurora, Elmes-san, who is the escort knight unit’s leader, is here as well. Even if monsters come attacking us, “I” will do something about it.” (Shuuya) “Nn, nyanya.” (Rollo)

Matching my speech of showing off my vanity, Rollo, who should have been sleeping inside the hood, purred in concert.

“Fufu, I heard the voice of cat-chan.” (Aurora)

The princess-san turns her face slightly to the side and talks while looking at my back.

“She probably intended to say *I’m here as well nya.*” (Shuuya)

“How cute. Though it’s disappointing that I can’t see her...” (Aurora)

“Ah, shall I take her out of the hood?” (Shuuya)

“No, no, please let her sleep.” (Aurora)

Waving her hand, the princess shows a sweet smile.
Each of her actions are... cute. I’m sure she’s popular.

“... That’s alright with you? Got it.” (Shuuya)

Though I tried to move the hood on my back, I stopped.

Before long the sun sank down completely and it became night. The coachman lowered the speed of the carriage.

The carriages following at the back and the mounted soldiers likewise slow down.

Is it impossible for the horses to gallop throughout the night?

For the time being, I’m cautious and repeatedly use Grasping Perception.

“Princess-sama, we have to prepare the campground soon—” (Elmes)

Elmes-san addressed the princess while grasping the handle of a wooden board.

“Understood. Please stop at a spot where we can have an unobstructed view if at all possible.” (Aurora) “Carlos, you heard her, right?” (Elmes)

“Aye.” (Carlos)

Nodding at the words of the princess, Elmes-san gave the necessary instruction to the soldier serving as coachman.

According to his orders, the coachman pulls the carriage over to the road’s edge.

Before they become busy with the preparations of the camp, I try asking something I was slightly curious about.

“... By the way, why did you take this road?” (Shuuya)

“That’s because this is the way back from the neighbouring country 【Religious State Hesliphat】.” (Elmes) “I see.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It’s our return trip after I finished my official duty as messenger. Handing over a handwritten letter to His Eminence the Pope, Nostarius the Third-sama, we were in the middle of returning to the 【Holy City】 after concluding the discussions successfully. Although I’m the third princess, I also serve as the goodwill ambassador of the 【Holy Kingdom】.” (Aurora) Pope... he’s the top of the 【Religious State Hesliphat】, isn’t he? The princess’ group is a diplomatic delegation, huh?

“The discussion being important, y...” (Shuuya)

At that moment there are reactions of magic sources moving about outside. It's not the soldiers. It's from further out.

"What's wrong?"

The princess looks at me, who stopped talking in the middle, while puzzled.

"I don't know whether it's monsters or bandits, but presences are approaching us." (Shuuya) "— What was that!?" (Elmes)

"— Oh, dear." (Aurora)

The knight unit's leader Elmes and the princess were surprised.

"Elmes-san, stay here with the princess. I will go to intercept them outside. Rollo, wake up, it's time for work. We are leaving." (Shuuya) "Nyao." (Rollo)

"... Let me go outside for a bit, too." (Elmes)

I left the carriage while taking Rollo along after nodding at Elmes-san's words. The surrounding soldiers are preparing the camping site.

It seems that none of them has noticed yet.

I tried to give them the necessary instructions, but Elmes held up her hand from the side.

It looks like Elmes-san will give the soldiers their orders.

That's only natural, isn't it?

"Oyy, Sahiaaaa, monsters are approaching in the vicinity. Get ready for them." (Elmes) "Haa—, you lot heard the leader's words, didn't you? Form a defensive perimeter!" (Sahiar) "Yes!"

"Leave it to us!"

In accordance with the adjutant's, Sahia's, orders, the soldiers start surrounding the carriage in a circle.

The magic source responses, which are likely monsters, are approaching from the left forest and the woodlands' side which is facing the road.

They seem to be moving in order to surround us.

"Rollo, I will leave the left side of the forest to you. Have fun hunting them freely. I will go to the right side." (Shuuya) "N, nya." (Rollo)

Once Rollo jumps down from my shoulder, she vanished into the forest

without turning around.

Helme, lend me your eyes.

The deformed Helme appears in my field of vision.

Catching Helme, she vanished once I grasped her with a mental image.

『Yes.』 (Helme)

I made her invoke Spirit Sight.

『Ahn.』 (Helme)

It appears that your heavy breathing calmed down considerably, doesn't it?

『Y-Yesh.』 (Helme)

... I ignore Helme's weird voice.

I check the vicinity with the heat sensor called Spirit Sight.

I look at the right side of the road.

What appeared on the road is...

Going by this silhouette, it's monsters, I guess.

I properly saw them with Grasping Perception, <Night Vision> and Spirit Sight.

The responses are increasing bit by bit.

Spirit Sight is amazing, isn't it? I completely grasp the enemies' shapes due to its luminance.

The monsters have two horns and long limbs.

It appears that they are holding weapons in their hands.

Those were still only silhouettes, but it made me imagine the typical figures of devils.

Alright, shall I get going? I materialize the Magic Wand in my hand.

Before that, let's tentatively talk to Elmes-san and the soldiers in the vicinity.

"It looks like monsters appeared. As I will head out to defeat those on the right side, please prioritize the princess-sama's protection, everyone." (Shuuya)

"Affirmative. — Did you guys understand as well?" (Elmes)

Making a stern expression, the leader of the escorting knight order, Elmes addresses the soldiers in the surroundings.

""Ha!""

Including the adjutant Sahia, the surrounding soldiers gave their reply all at

once after straightening themselves.

The soldiers are brimming with fighting spirit.

Once I nodded at the soldier's behaviour showing their determination, I went into action right away.

Kicking against the ground, I head towards the road's right side.

I confirm them with <Night Vision> and Spirit Sight.

Even at night I can clearly see the monsters' figures.

Just by their silhouettes, they have a height of 3 meters, I suppose?

The two long, deep black horns growing along from the top of their ears stand out.

Their hair looks like black wool. Their eyeballs are large and they have inverted triangle sheep-like faces.

With them growing sheep beards on their chins and having sunken-in wrinkles on their cheeks, they are ghastly.

Their limbs are long beyond my imagination.

They are holding two-handed long spears.

I stopped in front of those devils.

Shall I try to talk with them a bit before killing them?

“Oyy, if you come this way, I will attack you.” (Shuuya)

“Gaago? (A human?) Gaagogolbe? (Is he an idiot?) Gyhahaha. Dzugojide, dzugojide, bar, odzugojidelun (Kill, kill, everyone, kill all of them).”

They talked in a different language than the pseudo-centaurs.

From now on I want to omit the gross languages.

Ending up understanding them incompletely is too unpleasant.

The laughing, devil-like monster prepared its spear and charged at me.

His three-pronged spearhead (*E/N: trident*) draws near.

It's a fork-styled weapon similar to the pitchforks used by farmers.

It's a nasty spear with a wide range, but the thrust is slow.

I won't be hit by such thing—

I unleash the Magic Wand from above.

I used the red axe blade to intercept the blades of the trident.

With a sound of metal scratching against metal, I pin down the trident, held by the devil, to the ground.

“Gukikikii, fugah.”

The sheep-faced devil frantically tries to move his trident, but the red axe blade, which is at the Magic Wand’s spearhead, doesn’t bulge even a bit. This monster is releasing a stinky breath.

Let’s finish it right away.

While holding down the trident, I swiftly rotate my body in front.

At the same time, I rotate the Magic Wand, which suppressed the trident, vertically through a small angle.

The part of the Magic Wand’s spearhead, the red axe blade, sinks into the middle of the devil’s forehead. There wasn’t much resistance against the blade and thus I drove it down until halfway through the chest in an instant.

Dark red blood gushes forth from the cleaved chest alongside a sound of the blood evaporating with a sizzle.

There’s no way that the devil, who had its head split right in half, has the power to hold its trident, so it falls on the ground.

“Shiit! Surround him, suuurround hiim!”

The other devils shout.

They seem to have a sense of companionship. They were apparently indignant because their comrade was killed easily.

Devils on the left and right approached while thrusting their tridents.

The ones coming from the left side will be first, huh?

Kicking the corpse of the devil which has the red axe blade buried into it, I hold the metal staff at my right side while swiftly pulling out the magic spear.

After properly adjusting the purple metal staff of the Magic Wand with my right arm, I dodge the trident, which attacked me from the left, with a sudden **horizontal rotation**. While slipping into the chest of the devil, I directly struck its flank with the red axe blade.

The devil, who had its belly pierced by the blade of the red axe, falls to the ground while saying something in pain.

Next, two tridents from the right, and one from the front approach.

I fire <Chain> at the enemy in front— and it easily collapses after the chain directly hits its chest.

I circle around to the side with light side steps, while evading the trident thrust

out by a devil at my side, and blow away the devil's body by delivering a roundhouse kick from the left.

Using the Magic Wand, which I switched to my left hand, for the trident lowered by the remaining devil, I locked the trident's blade with the spearhead of the red spear.

It takes the form of me holding down the opponent's trident with the Magic Wand I held in my left hand.

Deducing the time it will take for the devil's trident to travel upwards, I draw an arc with the magic spear by moving my left arm in a circle as if forcibly drawing a moon.

At a good point, I deliberately lower the strength of my grip on the Magic Wand and unlocked it from the opponent's trident.

The devil releases a questioning sound of 「Giaa?」 and its trident becomes loose for an instant.

However, did the devil think that it's an opportunity instead? It changed the direction of the trident's spearhead towards my chest and thrust it out.

The trident approaches my chest.

— He fell for the bait.

Treating my entire body like a spring by using Magic Steps, I jump up and turn around in mid air. I land while avoiding the the approaching trident. After that I stabbed the spearhead of the Magic Wand into the belly of the devil while slamming my body into it. The red axe blade and the red spear sink in with a dull sound. Thereafter I pull it out while twisting it in there. Once I defeat the devil by tearing up the devil's belly with rotations similar to a mixer with the red axe blade, I shake off the blood, which clung to the Magic Wand, at the spot and fix my stance into that of seigan.

Were they overwhelmed by my movements just now? The devils didn't plunge in thoughtlessly anymore.

If they keep a distance, I will simply deal with them using a different method. I dematerialize the Magic Wand in an instant and holding up my left hand, I unleash <Chain>.

But, without allowing the chain to travel straight forward, I changed it into a hammer.

I don't hold the hammer created by the chain.

I use <Throwing> on it.

The sheep devils in front of me aren't able to react to the abruptly manifested huge hammer missile.

The devils after having their heads crushed, their necks twisted and their heads inverted from being directly hit by the hammer fall to the ground.

Gotcha. It's a success.

Though it's a chain changed into the form of a huge hammer, it still remains a chain.

Suspending the chain extending from my left hand, I turn my left hand in circles and brandish the hammer.

It feels like it had evolved into a morning star, doesn't it?

With the devils in front of me getting defeated, I became excited and got caught up in the moment.

Extending my left hand while holding the chain with my right hand, I move my body and the hammer as if dancing while striking the devils with it.

Although it's not like anyone's watching, I rotated pointlessly and decided a pose to show off while handling the chain hammer.

The chain-made huge hammer, which transformed into a hunter chasing its prey, has become bright red with blood trickling down from it.

Crushing their heads, caving their torsos in and smashing their feet and arms, I massacre the devils.

Did the devils feel the threat of the chain hammer? They tried to get away by opening up the distance further.

However, the chain has a long range.

Since I'm also advancing while dancing, the distance doesn't widen.

However, as I had never used a weapon like a morning star until now... which is only natural, I'm unable to do anything but unskillful, simple movements.

Gradually the devils adopted a countermeasure against the hammer.

The devils start to defend against the hammer with the spearheads of their tridents.

Finally the hammer got caught by several tridents and was sealed away.

But, I expected that to happen. I reveal a broad smile.

I immediately made the chain, which had changed into the hammer, disappear.

Since the devils invested their power in pinning down the chain hammer with

their tridents, their posture pitches forward together with their tridents due to the chain hammer suddenly vanishing and they fall over.

I swiftly released <Chain> once again at that opportunity.

This time I don't play around with something like a hammer. I pierced the torsos of the devils, who had their stance broken, with the pointed end of the chain.

"Hiiiiii."

"What is that fellllllooooooww?"

The devils' expressions were completely different from the ones they showed at the beginning.

"Hyaaaaah."

"Make way, out of the way, we have to retreat!"

"Run awaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaay!"

The devils rapidly talked in their sloppy, disgusting language. Contrary to their eerie faces coming from their appearance, several of them spoke with frightened voices and it completely turned into a cauldron of chaos. Even the devils who had reached the vicinity of the carriages stop fighting against the soldiers and run away. With the soldiers suffering only lesser injuries, there were no signs of losses among them.

"The demons are retreating!!!! We won!!!" (Sahia)

The adjutant Sahia yells.

"Ooooh!"

The soldiers raised their voices in delight.
At that moment Rollo came back as well.

"N, nyanya~n." (Rollo)

Two devils were hanging down from her tentacle bone swords.
Once again her round and cute eyes are beaming with a "Praise me, praise me."

"You did great, Rollo. Please drop those over there." (Shuuya)

"Nn, nya." (Rollo)

Once Rollo lowered her prey to the ground, she stretched out a tentacle.

When it touches my cheek, her feelings are transmitted.

『Hunt』『Hunt』『Fun』『Together』『Play』.

“I see, I see. It seems you enjoyed the hunting.” (Shuuya)

At that point Princess Aurora, holding a magic light, approached together with Elmes-san and her adjutant Sahia.

Since it's dazzling, I cancel <Night Vision> and Spirit Sight.

『If I have <Night Vision> and your eyes, Helme, even late in the night is no problem.』 (Shuuya) 『It's a great honour for me to be of service to Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

『Yea, I will rely on you next time again.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

“— Shuuya-sama, you aren't injured, are you? Are you alright?” (Aurora)

The princess-sama looks at me with a worried expression.
At the same time the Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness, Helme, vanishes from my field of view.

“Yes, I'm fine.” (Shuuya)

Elmes-san addressed me as well.

“As expected of you. Shuuya-dono, not only have you defeated the Grizbells, but you also easily brought down the Lesser Demons.” (Elmes) The knight unit's leader Elmes looks at me in admiration.

“These guys were demons, weren't they?” (Shuuya)

“That's correct. Those characteristic two horns identify them as Lesser Demons. Now that it has come to this, the previous attack of the Grizbells is understandable, too. It's appropriate to think that the front line has been broken through. Princess-sama, it's possible that the 【Holy City】 is under siege.” (Elmes) Elmes-san turned around to the princess, faced her with a serious expression and spoke up to her.

“Oh my goodness... for such a thing to happen while we had left the country... ah, no way, are you saying that Swaney-ane-sama lost?” (Aurora) The princess-sama's voice shakes and she is obviously trembling.

She has an elder sister called Swaney?

I wonder whether she resembles Princess Aurora?

“I wonder about that? I can’t imagine Swaney-sama, who is called the Dual-wielding War Princess, getting defeated, but... she might be confined to the front line fortress, have sortied into the Great Forest or have withdrawn to the 【Holy City】? (Elmes) “You might be right there.” (Aurora)

“Yes. Let’s also return to the 【Holy City】 in a hurry to learn of the current state. But, although I say that, nighttime is dangerous without Chloe. Therefore, as soon as it is morning, I plan to depart... and I’d like to ask you, Shuuya-dono, to act continuously as Princess Aurora-sama’s guard.” (Elmes) Hasn’t it somehow become something quite serious?

“... I understand.” (Shuuya)

“Shuuya-sama, thank you.” (Aurora)

My hand was grasped by the slender hand of the princess.

I will fall in love if I’m stared at by your emerald eyes.

Her lips are small and adorable, too. Far too cute.

No, that’s no good, let’s deal with her as gentleman here.

“... Please leave it to me. I will protect the charming princess.” (Shuuya)

“Oh my, to call me charming...” (Aurora)

“*cough* Shuuya-dono, Let’s not get too close to the princess, okay?” (Elmes) I ended up getting scolded by Elmes-san.

Mmh~ but Elmes-san’s face is pretty as well, isn’t it?

She has an atmosphere of a knight with abundant experience as warrior, but her crisp blue eyes are emphasizing her dignity.

“... Ah, yea, I know. I don’t have any intention to cause trouble to you, Elmes-san. Sorry.” (Shuuya) “There’s no need for you to apologize, Shuuya-sama. Elmes, you are worrying too much.” (Aurora) The princess being a princess puffs up her cheeks while expressing her anger with a *pun pun*.

“Nyanya?” (Rollo)

It’s Rollo.

She calls out while looking up with a feeling of asking “What’s wrong nya?”

“Ah, Rollo-chan! It’s terrible. You are smeared with blood!” (Aurora)

“Princess-sama, it’s alright. This is the blood of her enemies.” (Shuuya)

The princess began to wipe Rollo’s body with her own pretty cloth handkerchief.

“That’s how it seems. But let’s get her clean and lovely.” (Aurora)

“Princess, please order a servant or me to do such an errand.” (Elmes)

「綺麗綺麗にしておきましょう」

ふきふきと姫は自分の綺麗な布ハンカチで
黒猫の体を拭きだしていた。



“No, Elmes. That’s no good. This is about me wanting to **touch** cat-chan.”
(Aurora) Rollo seems to be happy about being brushed gently.
She releases a low purring sound.

“That’s not allowed. Princess, your clothes will get dirty—” (Elmes)

Elmes picked up the black cat obviously hugging her.

“Aah, geez, Elmes, you meanie.” (Aurora)

Or rather, what are the princess and the knight doing, I wonder?
Even Rollo lowered her whiskers as if saying “It can’t be helped nya”, revealed a cute expression and was held at her stomach by Elmes.

“Sorry. I will do it, thus...” (Shuuya)

“Ah, that right, isn’t it? Then...” (Elmes)

Once I receive Rollo from Elmes, I hold her as if carrying a baby in my arms.
While releasing water in trickles with life magic, I wiped her belly and back with a leather cloth.

“... Princess, please return temporarily to your carriage until the preparations for camping are in order. Sahia, start the preparations—” (Elmes) “Haa—”
(Sahia)

The adjutant Sahia made his white beard sway and received the order in a brisk manner.

“I-I see.” (Aurora)

The princess-sama returns to her carriage while watching Rollo being wiped clean by me with an envious look.

After I cleaned up Rollo’s body, I returned to the carriage as well.

Wow! A tent all of a sudden?

Once I went back, the camping place, where the princess will likely sleep, had been already set up.

A tent with a imposing curtain was set up next to the carriage.

“Shuuya-sama, please come in as well.” (Aurora)

The princess-sama invited me while showing a smile with a hidden meaning.

“Yes.” (Shuuya)

Uwah, what does this...

Inside the tent there are four beds with a canopy and there are even water jugs in a cabinet.

Is incense burning? Smoke is continuously rising.

Alongside the smoke, the fragrance of flowers drifted over.

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

Ah, Rollo ended up leaping on one of the beds.

“Sorry, Rollo is...” (Shuuya)

“No, not at all. Please let Rollo-chan do as she likes. Ah, jumping this much, she’s amusing, to jump up and down like this.” (Aurora) “Haa, sorry. However, this tent...” (Shuuya)

“Did it surprise you?” (Aurora)

The princess-sama laughs.

“Eh? This is?” (Shuuya)

“This is one of the high-grade magic items. It’s called ^{Magic}Magically-built Home or also Magic Miniature House. Originally it’s dwelling within this crystal.” (Aurora) ^{Tent}What the princess-sama showed me from within her waist bag was an assembly of dazzling, sparkling crystals.

How beautiful. Such magic items exist as well.

Inside the crystals something like houses can be seen.

Their shapes are completely different, but they look like the small houses in snow globes which can be found at souvenir shops. It seems to be also fun to set it up inside your home like a collection and gaze at them without using them.

Besides, it reminds me of Dragon Balo.

“... That’s amazing. It’s the first time for me to see such item.” (Shuuya)

“Fufu, everyone who saw that the first time was astonished.” (Aurora)

“Yes. For such a large tent to enter into a small crystal is...” (Shuuya)

“That’s right, isn’t it? I was also surprised when I saw it for the first time. I’m told that it is an item that can’t be created unless you are a space-time attribute possessor while also possessing an inherent special skill to handpick the best among them. It’s truly a gem made by a craftsman chosen by a god.” (Aurora)
On top of possessing the space-time attribute, they are produced with a special innate skill, huh?

I guess they are being made by compressing air, but...

I have the space-time attribute, but it seems impossible for me to create it since I don’t have any talent in crafting.

“... What do you have to do to return it to its original state?” (Shuuya)

“That’s simple. If the owner touches the crystal, located next to the bed, and says “Storage,” it will turn back into a crystal. In reverse, if you say “Deploy” while touching it, the crystal will transform into this ^{Magic}Magically-built Home.” ^{Tent}
(Aurora) At that moment Elmes appeared at the entrance of the tent.

“Princess-sama, Chloe opened her eyes. According to your order, I had her carried over.” (Elmes) “Got it. Lay her down on one of the beds.” (Aurora)

“Yes.” (Elmes)

The female sorceress is carried in while lying on something like a stretcher. She lifted her head and spoke up to the princess.

“Princess, in such a high-grade tent...” (Chloe)

“Chloe, what are you talking about? Currently it’s the most important for you to rest. You are my cherished vassal after all. Sleep in the bed over there.”
(Aurora) The female sorceress is Chloe-san, eh...? This woman is beautiful as well.

She had blonde hair with a tinge of red and oblong, brocade eyes.

There’s a birthmark at the bottom of her left eye, her nose bridge is broad and her nose is high.

“Princess, thank you very much...” (Chloe)

Chloe laid down on one of the beds.

And, our eyes meet.

“You... kindly saved princess-sama and the others?” (Chloe)

“I’m a C-Rank adventurer with the name Shuuya.”

“Is that so? An adventurer... I’m Chloe Leaf Tigri. You have my thanks.”

Chloe tried to get up.

Going by her name, she’s a noble?

“Yes. Ah, don’t force yourself.” (Shuuya)

“No, given that the poison has already vanished and my wounds closed up, I’m fine. Besides, as a noble, I do have backbone.” (Chloe) Chloe mentions that and sits up. She fixes her brocade-coloured pupils on me.

Mana dwelled in her brocade pupils.

Hoo, it seems like she’s checking my whole body.

I examined Chloe with my Magic Inspection Sight, too.

Ooh, she possesses mana manipulation without any stagnation. She is focussing her mana in her eyes.

Gathering rich mana in her eyes, something like a tiny magic square was created.

As expected of one being called a sorceress.

『Your Excellency, this human saw me existing in your left eye. It seems she noticed the mark placed at Your Excellency’s left eye.』 (Helme) Helme was noticed?

It’s not like I personally confirmed the mark in my left eye in a mirror.

『Has my eye changed so much that it’s obvious?』 (Shuuya)

『For an ordinary person there shouldn’t be any difference. However, if one can see mana, they might realize to a certain extent.』 (Helme) So that’s the reason.

“... This is... Shuuya-dono, it looks like there’s a reason why you can kill that many demons easily.” (Chloe) It just like Helme said after all, I guess? It appears that she can see a part of my mana manipulation.

“Chloe? I requested Shuuya-sama to guard us until the 【Holy City】.” (Aurora)
“... Yes, princess-sama. This person is reliable.” (Chloe)

It's an opportunity. Shall I try asking her about the **Forest of Sadeyula**?

"Chloe-san, there's something I'd like to ask you, but..." (Shuuya)

"What is it?" (Chloe)

"It seems that the Forest of Sadeyula is located in east of the **【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】**, but is there anything you know about the Forest of Sadeyula?" (Shuuya) "Forest of Sadeyula? I don't know the place, but I remember that there was such a word in the books, left behind by the elves, in my house. It's said that there's a forest blessed by the God of Plants, Sadeyula, somewhere in the Great Forest. Located at a small spring, there's a large tree carrying beautiful leaves on a hill that was blessed by Goddess of Earth, Gaia. It seems that the elves loved the large tree, located on Gaia's hill, throughout many years. Apparently there was also a legend that elven lovers will be blessed with a child if they spend a night there." (Chloe) Hee, Gaia's hill at a small spring, eh?

And in addition, a large tree that carries beautiful leaves.

It looks like I will find the **Leaf of Sadeyula** if I search for the hill located at the spring by heading east as I had intended from the start.

"I see. That was good information. Chloe-san, thank you." (Shuuya)

"No, but, why do you need such information?" (Chloe)

"It seems that Shuuya-dono is heading for **【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】** spreading in the east. He is looking for the Forest of Sadeyula or such." (Elmes) Before I could say it, Elmes-san explained the circumstances to Chloe-san.

"Wh-! No way. Do you intend to leap into a nest of demons?" (Chloe)

Chloe-san is surprised.

"Yes, that's the plan." (Shuuya)

Once the princess-sama heard my words, she came briskly walking in front of me.

"— Shuuya-sama, is the **【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】** really dangerous? I'm against you going there after all. Besides, I don't want to let my benefactor head into a perilous place." (Aurora) The princess-sama cannot understand, is

how she's talking.

However, even if I'm told that...

"Princess-sama, sorry, I will go even if you are against it. However, I have no intention to die there. It will be alright since I have confidence in my abilities."

(Shuuya) "I do know that you are strong, Shuuya-sama, but..." (Aurora)

The princess-sama turns her look towards Elmes as if looking for help.

"Shuuya-dono, princess-sama is worried. Besides, I as someone who received this wound in the demonic haunts of the Great Forest... can't you consider giving up on that?" (Elmes) Elmes-san spoke while touching the long scar at her cheek in the middle of her speech.

"You have told me that you participated in the crusade that marched into the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 a little while ago, but..." (Shuuya) "Yea, I did. I joined the subjugation unit of the crusaders. The unit withdrew after a partial annihilation. The scar on this face... was caused by the Rank-A++ demon Gubechalat which I confronted at that time." (Elmes) Such a monster exists?

"I see. I understood properly that it's dangerous. However I have to go." (Shuuya) The princess-sama looks into my eyes and sighs as if saying that it can't be helped.

"... I understand. It looks like it's impossible to persuade you otherwise. However, Shuuya-sama? Can you please wait a while before going to the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 as I wish to reward you once we reach the Holy City?" (Aurora) To spend time with a beautiful princess-sama for a little while might also be nice.

"Yes, if it's for a short time." (Shuuya)

"That's great..." (Aurora)

"— Princess-sama, it's a good occasion. Shuuya-dono is a precious, talented person. Shouldn't we try to add him to our faction by all means...?" (Chloe) Faction?

Chloe-san says something like that.

"Chloeee, don't be so aggressive. Certainly, Shuuya-dono is powerful, I share your opinion on that. But we still haven't explained Princess-sama's standing."

(Elmes) “Elmes? What are you dragging your feet around for? Shuuya-dono will come to the Holy City, right? What will you do if Archbishop Yaiel’s faction beats us to the punch? It’s obvious that it will turn into a contest if the other nobles and upper nobles see Shuuya-dono’s strength. Besides, going by what I can see, I can judge that it’s no exaggeration to classify Shuuya-dono’s strength as **King Maker**.” (Chloe) Why does her thinking accelerate this much after having taken only a fleeting glance?

Moreover King Maker or such. Is the Third Princess Aurora actually aiming for the crown?

Is Chloe... a person similar to a strategic commander?

“Wh-, you are saying that he’s a person of such extent?” (Elmes)

It seems the conversation between Elmes-san and Chloe-san will continue for a while.

“Yeah, even after seeing my eyes, he continued his observation without being perturbed. Let alone that his mana manipulation is first-class, it has an unreachable extent of knowledge which exceeds that of a sorceress like me. Besides, due to his words brimming with confidence that he will go by himself into the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】... I was convinced... if it’s this person, it might be possible to increase the influence of Princess Aurora-sama and at the same time reduce the influence of the War Princess.” (Chloe) I looked into your eyes without being perturbed, you say? Certainly, a tiny magic square surfaced in her eyes.

『Helme, do you understand? Is there something in Chloe-san’s eyes?』
(Shuuya) 『She might be an owner of skill like Magic Eyes or have the favour and divine blessing of a god. That human saw through Your Excellency’s greatness as supremely blessed person in an instant. I recommend her as new subordinate of Your Excellency.』 (Helme) Helme gave me such an advice.

“I-I see, if you are going to say this much, Chloe...” (Elmes)

Elmes-san stares intently at me.

“It’s impertinent in front of my master, but Shuuya-dono—I have a request. Without telling you that it’ll be temporary, please, can’t you possibly work under the 【Holy Kingdom】, no, under Princess-sama?” (Elmes) Err...

Pardon me from being involved in politics and being used in a political situation. Elmes-san began to lower her head in front of me many times. At that moment, the sharp voice of princess-sama reverberates.

“Elmes and Chloe, what are you saying? Just a moment ago Shuuya-sama said that it will only be for a short period. Besides, that talk is far too sudden.” (Aurora) “However...” (Elmes)

“This is also for your sake, Princess-sama.” (Chloe)

... Elmes and Chloe apparently want me to become a subordinate of the princess' camp no matter what. Let's properly refuse and add an explanation as well.

“Is it fine for me to speak for a bit? Honestly, I have no interest in whatsoever faction. Even if I accompany you, I have no intention to stay for long, no matter what reward you might offer. I'm an adventurer. I do have a proper request. Besides, I should have told you in the beginning, Elmes-san. An escort request.... I only accepted it as request because I'm incidentally heading east as well.” (Shuuya) “T-That is certainly...” (Elmes)

Since it's bad for the mood to get worse, I speak while mixing in a little joke into my true opinion.

“However, if I speak honestly, there's also the fact that I'm accompanying you because Princess-sama is beautiful and cute without having a condescending attitude.” (Shuuya) “— Shuuya-sama! Is that really true?” (Aurora)

Hearing my jesting words of exposing my ulterior motive, the princess reacts by looking happy and jumping as if she's dancing in joy.

“Yeah, it is.” (Shuuya)

I agreed even while being taken aback by the princess' lively face.

“Thank you. Just these words make me happy. Elmes and Chloe, with this you understood, right? Please make sure to not speak of troublesome matters to Shuuya-sama from now on.” (Aurora) “Yes, if it's the princess' order.” (Chloe)

“... Understood.” (Elmes)

Elmes-san and Chloe-san reluctantly agreed.

“Then, please take a light rest until dinner time, Chloe. We will take a break, too. Shuuya-sama, please also take a rest using that bed, okay?” (Aurora)
Afterwards...

I have my own meal. While talking, it resulted in me showing my item box and everyone ended up being surprised.

However, since I was told by the princess “I have a pouch of item boxes as well”, I once again end up thinking that royalty is different.

And then I rested inside the tent in the same room as three women.

While changing clothes I go outside the tent.

Though I have the desire of wanting to peek a bit.

I endured. Well, as far as sleeping was concerned... of course I couldn't fall asleep.

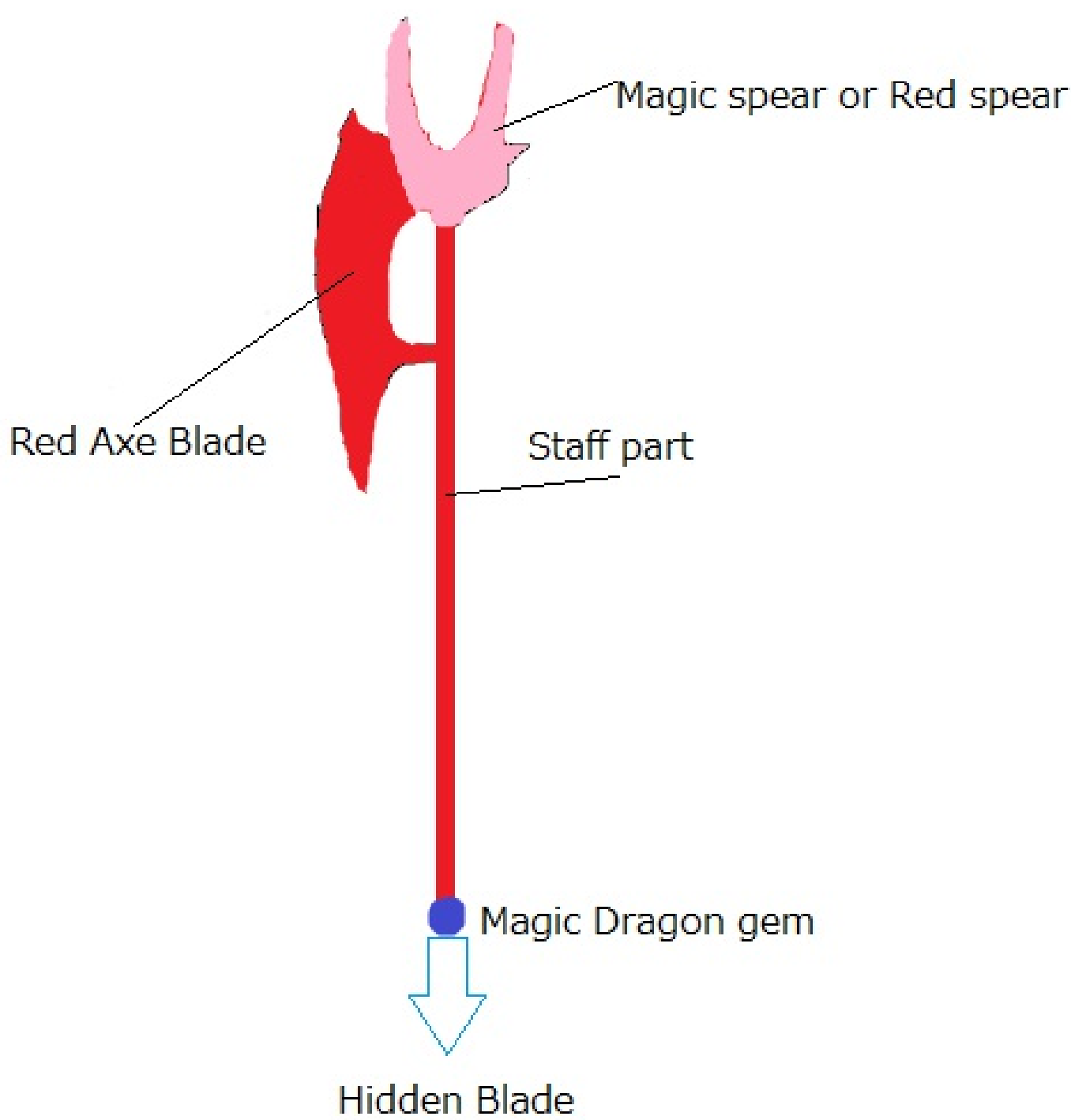
A Princess is a princess after all. Just because I saved her several times, I'm not a saint.

I'm a man who revives Mokkos* between my legs. I don't care even if it explodes. *(T/N: Err it might refer to two things... the figure of an evil god appearing in Xenosaga 2... the fictive character Igo Mokkos from the anime Galactic Gale Baxingar)*

Well, I don't have such guts though.

Even while stretching out a different antenna into the vicinity, I try to close my eyes until I become sleepy.

T/N: A short description of the weapon Shuuya uses. With a little sketch. And before you tell me, I know, I suck at drawing, otherwise I would work for a scanlation group after all, wouldn't I? :p



The whole thing is referred to as “magic wand spear” by the author. I haven’t seen so far any special naming for it, so I changed it to Magic Wand to signify that the whole weapon is meant. Its other parts are mentioned during the fights as you can see.

Check the volume 5 cover in the ToC to see a part of the real colouring *etc.* This sketch is just to help understand a bit what parts of the weapon are used when. 😊

I’m open to any naming ideas for the entire thing. Someone suggested to simply call it magic halberd. Well the shape comes close, but what do you think?

Chapter 92 – See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



(T/N: Refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_wise_monkeys if you wonder about the title)

The next day—
It happened just as usual.
A pleasant floral scent from early in the morning.
It was the scent of incense that was left in the tent.
However, this bed, its soft snugness was great.
Honestly, if I were drowsy I would have slept more.
I am a light sleeper after all, aren't I?
I looked at the tent's interior after sitting up.
Princess Aurora is carelessly sleeping on another bed.
I could also see Elmes' and Chloe's sleeping figures.
Both of them are still breathing a sleeper's breath.
It's none of my business, but... this princess, I wonder whether she will be alright from now on?
I wondered about that before going to sleep as well, but no matter how much I was her lifesaver, I'm still someone she just met.

I feel like it's too trusting to share her sleeping place with me.

In order to not wake up the princess and the others, I quietly get up from the bed.

Rollo was awake, too.

I wonder whether I ended waking her up?

Did she sleep at my feet? She lifts her small face slowly.

When I headed outside the tent after getting off the bed, Rollo followed me as well.

The outside is still dim. I guess the sun will rise very soon.

Once I leave, the soldiers who stood on both sides in order to protect the tent, and the adjutant Sahia bow their heads.

“Ah, hello.” (Shuuya)

Giving a natural greeting, I bowed politely.

It's not Pavlov's dog, but still a conditioned reflex. (T/N:

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/pavlov.html>)

The adjutant Sahia's narrow eyes became even narrower and he bowed.

The other soldier shows a startled expression while standing around.

Is it that surprising?

Am I a guest of royalty?

I might be in a position close to it, but for the time being I'm a nameless adventurer...

Since it's awkward, I walk down the road while scouting and at the same time distancing myself from the tent.

The road's width is a little more than 20 meters, I think?

There are no monster presences.

Shall I wash my face here?

I clean my face by creating water with life magic.

Oh, the water gushes out more vigorously than before.

It came out immediately and rapidly.

Is it because I obtained the divine protection of Water Goddess Akreshys?

Well, since it's not with a force that can be used for attacking, it's a bit questionable, but...

I wash my face and brush my teeth with a wooden brush.

They became spotless.

Well then, there's still quite some time left until dawn.

Let's practise as usual?

I will do that while keeping up Grasping Perception in case of an attack by demons for the time being.

“Rollo, since I'm going to train, feel free to play around as you like.” (Shuuya)
“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo jumped onto a carriage and laid down leisurely after rotating her body once.

Haha, as ever she likes high places.

Because her head is facing this way, it looks like she's going to observe my spearmanship training.

While watching such Rollo, I happily began my practise.

The Magic Halberd in my right hand, the cursed sword in my left and then switching between them in alternation, I repeat the movements of thrusting, crushing, elbow striking, slashing diagonally from the shoulder, reversing that, cutting vertically and cutting downwards.

While I was continuing my practice in such manner, the vicinity became noisy. It seems the soldiers were infatuated by Rollo's appearance of chasing the spear's motions by frolics around on top of the carriage.

The soldiers gave dried meat to Rollo and they ate portable food while watching the state of my training.

I'm bothered by their stares, but decided to continue without minding it. And, when I finished my training at the time of sunrise, the soldiers who observed applauded.

They didn't drink any alcohol, but some soldiers are still putting bread and meat into their mouths.

While at it, I took out bread from my item box as well and tossed one, two mouthful into my stomach.

The Knight Unit Leader Elmes and her adjutant Sahia are among the soldiers as well.

Once Elmes and Sahia noticed my look, they approached while clapping.

“— As expected. Those were splendid movements. A refined spear handling without any hesitation dwelling in it. I can also accept you slaughtering this

many demons..." (Elmes) "That's true. It's just as leader says. For us, the Escort Knight Unit Hundred Flowers to not devote ourselves like this." (Sahia) If you praise me with such serious face, frankly, I will feel embarrassed.

"... Haha, I have confidence in my spearmanship after all." (Shuuya) "It's to a reliable degree. There are still three days until the Holy City. I look forward to your assistance from now on."

It will take three days with a carriage to reach the 【Holy City Southermund】. It seems we still have quite a way to go.

"Three days, huh? Ah, are we going to depart soon?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, it's possible to depart right away since the soldiers finished a light meal and Princess-sama as well as Chloe have already boarded the carriage."

Did I make them wait?

Which reminds me, it's possible that the holy city has been surrounded, but... I ended up doing my training carefreely.

"... Sorry. I stole your time." (Shuuya)

I apologized lightly.

"It's alright. The Princess-sama boarded the carriage just now after all."

(Elmes) "Really? I will go right away—" (Shuuya)

Taking along Rollo, who is dozing on top of the carriage, I enter the carriage with a jog.

Once I sat down in my seat, the princess spoke up to me.

There are faint remains of bread and blueberry jam remaining at the edges of the princess' mouth.

According to what was reported a little while ago, the princess finished a light breakfast since she's holding the food in her item box, I guess.

"Shuuya-sama, did you train or something like that?" (Aurora)

"Yes." (Shuuya)

"Several soldiers talked about it. The movements of the axe spear making purple and red dragons appear in the air. The motions of the spear, which eyes can't follow, were too amazing and in addition to that you also handled a

sword... A skill to slaughter that many demons. I wanted to watch it as well.”
(Aurora) “It’s not something to flaunt.” (Shuuya)

“Fufu, I want to see more of your spear handling, Shuuya-sama. Please let me see it someday.” (Aurora) Does she want to watch my training that much?

“Understood. If you tell me to, Princess-sama, I will gladly oblige in my spare time.” (Shuuya) “Yes! I look forward to it.” (Aurora)

The carriage had already started moving as we were continuing such conversation.

“Princess-sama, it’s very likely that demons will appear more frequently the closer we get to the 【Holy City】. If their numbers are low, we will force our way through with the carriages. If there are many of them, I plan to leave the Hundred Flowers Unit with my adjutant behind and advance with the three of us, Shuuya-dono, Chloe and me, while eliminating the demons.” (Elmes) “I understand. Elmes, Chloe and Shuuya-sama, I leave it to you.” (Aurora) “Yes.”

“Of course, princess.”

“Leave it to us.”

Elmes and Chloe lower their heads in a polite manner.

I replied while imitating their behaviour.

The carriage proceeds in a straight line towards the Holy City.

Since there are also road sections, which zigzagged, our speed dropped, but...

Oh, the presence of magic sources.

Their numbers aren’t many.

At that moment the coachman’s shouting voice resounded.

“I confirmed Lesser Demons and Grizbells in the forest on the right by sight. Their numbers are low.”

“Ignore them. The demons are probably observing the situation as well. Advance.” (Elmes) Just as Elmes guessed, the demons didn’t attack. Our contact with the demons on this day ended with only that much. On the next day a different kind of demon appeared.

“Macquire demons spotted. Their numbers are low.”

“Tsk, a strong enemy with a rank of B+... ignore them, if their numbers are low. Keep the carriage going forward.” (Elmes) On the way we could only see the figures of scattered demons inside the forest and thus we were able to follow the road without having to face them.

However, on the third day demons begin to show up as if crowding the road. Each time Rollo and me went out to deal with them.

We are disposing the demons similarly to cleaning the road.

In the middle of it Elmes and Chloe started to participate in the demon extermination as if competing over the accomplishment of defeating them. These two are considerably strong. They are reliably slaughtering them while cooperating with each other.

Thanks to them, the monster extermination is wrapped up swiftly.

Just past noon on the fourth day, the walls of the 【Holy City Southermund】 became visible.

However, the carriage stops completely at that point.

The coachman’s voice trembled in fright.

“E-Elmes-sama! Demons, that many demons are... they are attacking the walls.”

“... It looks like the 【Holy City】 has been besieged after all.” (Elmes) It’s once again our turn, isn’t it?

“Well then, we will once again clean up the demons around this area.”

(Shuuya) “But... this time their numbers are indeed large.” (Elmes)

Even if she’s the unit’s leader, Elmes-san is likely feeling shaken.

Oh well, that’s only natural.

The 【Holy City】 is getting attacked by a great number of demons.

“Elmes-san, in these four days you should have seen mine and Rollo’s fighting.” (Shuuya) “Yes, surely... however, these numbers are...” (Elmes)

Oh, it seems that she is worrying about me.

Her cheeks have a tinge of a slight blush.

With her knightly expression vanishing, I was charmed by her feminine expression.

Let’s give her a peace of mind.

“... It’s alright. Certainly, the number of demons is high. But compared to the Magic Dragon King and a large crowd of dragon types, those are simple enemies.” (Shuuya) “A large flock of dragons, that kind of experience... got it. Then I sincerely promise as Escort Knight Unit Leader to protect Princess-sama together with my adjutant Sahia.” (Elmes) Did Elmes-san imagine the dragons’ appearances? After she showed a smile for an instant, she spoke while looking at the state of Chloe and the princess.

Chloe-san also holds her wand in one hand and nods after hearing Elmes-san’s words.

“As head of the sorcerers I will also protect the princess here. Shuuya-dono, please rampage around at the front to your heart’s content. Lastly, though it might not be necessary, but let me inform you just about the important points **just in case**. The demons called Macquire have a B+ rank. They also possess intelligence enabling them to order monsters around. Please think of them as formidable enemies that can’t be measured by rank and who skilfully use swords and magic.” (Chloe) Swords and magic, it is? I will remember that.

“Thank you. The information is welcome. Chloe-san, please take care as well. I entrust Princess-sama to you.” (Shuuya) “Yes, of course.” (Chloe)

After Chloe-san answers curtly, the princess looks at me while leaning forward.

Since it’s inside the carriage, her face is close.

Her emerald eyes have tears in them. She moved her small lips.

“— Shuuya-sama, as well, okay? It would be great if I could fight like my elder sister, but I don’t have anything but healing magic. Therefore, I will pray for your safety here... may the fortunes of war be with you!” (Aurora) The princess was serious.

I respond to her feelings.

I lower myself by shifting my position away from the princess and her close face and then, after placing my knee on the carriage’s bottom planks, I bowed my head while putting my earnest feelings into it.

From the beginning to the end I perform the bow of a retainer.

“Yes, leave it to me. I will thoroughly carry out the request without fail. Then —” (Shuuya) After standing up and flashing a smile, I leave the carriage.

I examined the demons, who are attacking the Holy City's walls, while walking. I wonder just how many of them there are. The numbers easily surpass a hundred or two hundred, don't they?

An archer unit of grizbells occupies the road, forming a line.

The platoon of grizbells in front was extended by a crowd of adjoining units of grizbells and lesser demons.

The grizbell archer unit faces the soldiers on the wall while yelling encouragements and continuously fires arrows.

『Helme, come out.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes!』 (Helme)

The fluid Helme ejects from my left eye in a spiral.

She materialized in a state of having a knee on the ground.

“You know the circumstances, right?” (Shuuya)

“Ha!” (Helme)

Once Helme stands up on the spot, she refines an ice spear in her right hand and lets loose a dark mist in her left hand.

She runs to the left side of the road in her human shape while her surface waves as if the bluish-black, leafy skin all over her body is fluttering.

The Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness swung her left hand while running.

The sight of countless grizbells was stolen by a dark fog making them confused. Furthermore she stabs ice spears into the anuses of the grizbells who got their aiming in disorder.

“Hahahahahahaha, those are impertinent asses! Prostrate yourself in front of His Excellency's power!” (Helme) She laughed... Helme. She's slightly scary. However, she can't contain her laughter. I'm struggling as well.

Sweeping away my overcoat while glaring at the herd of grizbells, I summoned the Magic Halberd in my right hand and stretched it out towards right beside me.

And then I look at Rollo who descended from my shoulder to the ground. It seems that even Rollo was surprised about Helme's state. She watched Helme's movements while her black hair was standing on end.

“Rollo, we shall go as well. We will hunt the demons haphazardly.” (Shuuya)

“Nya—” (Rollo)

My partner changes into a black panther.

Kicking off the ground with her hindlegs, she leaves behind scratches on the ground which shows her panther-like powerful limb movements. She heads towards the right side while raising a cloud of dust.

Different from Helme, it seems that Rollo is going to finish off the demons in the forest on the right.

Shall I aim for the demons who are crowding on the road and against whom Helme is fighting?

I rush over to the demons' location after holding the red axe of the magic spear horizontally.

The archer unit of the grizbells continues to shoot arrows.

While running, I mow them down by swinging the magic spear in an arc.

The grizbells' bodies are sliced up by the mowing down of a red dragon flash.

Being split into the lower half of a horse and an upper half holding the bow, they scattered their blue entrails and blood into the surroundings.

Facing the group of demons in no time— I shoot <Chain>.

The initial velocity of the chain, which is released at its maximum speed, is fast to the degree that it can't be perceived by an ordinary person anymore.

The chain pierces the back of a grizbell, who was in front of my hand, as if being a pile bunker, pushes its way through while destroying the grizbell's internal organs, flesh and bones, and penetrates other lesser demons and grizbells in the same manner.

The blood-stained chain was pulled straight in a state of having pierced several tens of bodies.

The bodies of the penetrated demons look just like dango.

Dango-like siblings made out of demon bodies.

Let's use them as meatballs.

As if making a giant swing— I brandish the meatballs drawing a large circle with the chain.

While blowing away the demons of the archer unit and those adjoining them, I forcibly wrenched open the space which was tightly crowded by demons.

From here on it becomes my field of expertise.

I erase the chain which was swung around in a 360° circle to the extent of

making one dizzy, and send the dozens pierced bodies flying into the surroundings all at once.

Then I swirled around my Magic Halberd and took a seigan stance.

“You shitty demons! Come and get me!!!” (Shuuya)

They probably won’t comprehend the words, but I provoke them in a loud voice.

I waited until the enemy entered the spear’s range.

shout

I don’t know if they were lured by the provocation, but the platoon of grizbells nearby gathers around me in a circle successively while growling.

— The grizbells entered the magic spear’s range.

No matter what kind of thing enters its sphere of influence, justice won’t prevail unless wrongdoers are beat and beheaded.* (T/N: 悪・即・斬 ... *literally “evil instantly behead”, it’s said that those words shaped the mind of the shinsengumi*)

The red spear— pierces the chest of a grizbell.

The red axe blade— mows down the body of a grizbell.

The dragon magic gem— crushes the balls of a grizbell.

I even perform dance steps in mid air with the magic spear.

In an instant three grizbells were slaughtered.

However, the number of enemies is still quite high.

Performing an upward cut with the magic spear while drawing an arc as if doing a golf swing from a low position, I separate the legs from an enemy’s torso.

Even a diagonal slash of a bastard sword which approached me from behind; while dodging with a half-rotational evasive maneuver by nimbly using my toes as focal point like the fluttering of a willow’s leaf, I released a counter thrust and skewered the body of the grizbell with the red spear.

“Higyaaaaaah.”

“What’s that, that spear! It’s burning!”

“I don’t wanna return to the world of spirits.”

“Me neither. Run away! Uwaah, this way a leafy woman is rampaging around! Be careful!”

Their voices of anguish, which were mingled with fear that was unusual for demons, are spreading to the surroundings like a disease.

In the direction of the escaping grizbells, the violent movements of the Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme were visible.

The instant she's surrounded, Helme changes her body into a liquid and avoids physical attacks in such manner.

While creeping on the ground in a slime state, she released countless ice pebbles and by hitting the grizbells' feet with the ice pebbles, she caused them to go down to the ground.

Furthermore, being in a liquid shape, Helme invades the mouth of a grizbell who collapsed on the ground.

The grizbells reveals an expression of anguish... did she make it suffocate? Did she invade its brain? I don't know, but it was fatal either way.

Exiting out of the dead grizbell's mouth, Helme instantly transforms into a human shape.

With her long eyelashes and dilated pupils, Helme wraps a hand around her head and places the other on her lips. While seductively twisting her body, she takes a 'unique pose' (almost standing) and moves her small lips,

"Ahahahahaha! Inferior demons, though your blood is unpalatable, you shall offer it for the sake of His Excellency!" (Helme) Showing an ecstatic expression, she shouted that.

It's a battlefield, but one person, no, a female spirit is standing out.

The grizbells were running about trying to escape, but there were still some who opposed me as well.

Left Wrist

Accordingly I release a chain from my <Chain Factor>.

Transforming it into a fake spear, I held that fake spear in my left hand while holding the Magic Halberd in my right.

It's the creation of a self-taught dual-spear style.

At once I unleash <Thrust> with the pseudo spear at the chest of a nearby grizbell.

At the beginning it was a response like smoothly cutting a cake, but it gets stopped midway.

Nothing can be done about this.

Pure Drop

The chain's tip is sharper than the red spear, but in the end it's a fake spear which was constructed with an ad-lib image. Except its tip, the rest of it is rough. It has a feeling similar to a thick iron bar.

Well, I say with this— while jumping I swing down the fake spear towards the head of a grizbell that attacked from the left. It's relatively usable against the watermelon skulls.

There's power if it hits. It's also useful for feinting.

Brandishing the magic spear in my right hand and the fake spear in alternation, I turn the grizbells into lumps of meat one after the other.

“Don't falter! This guy is just a leafy woman!”

“Uoooooh!”

Given that I can understand the demons' words, such things are being said. I found a Platoon Leader Class demon.

Shall I finish these guys normally? Erasing the fake spear, I pick the usual wind spear style and get ready.

This time it's lesser demons.

The lesser demons are all around me who made easy prey of a herd of grizbells. They start to surround me so that I can't run away.

That's also a theorem of war.

Lanchester's

Law

They apparently want to crush me with the logic of numbers.

However, since their movements are all over the place, the demons might not possess such a thing.

war knowledge

In order to kill me, four tridents approach me from the front in a fan shape.

But I don't move as I keep the Magic Halberd prepared in a seigan stance.

Not yet, I will wait until the last second— now!

Launching a blow of the Magic Halberd's red axe at the spearheads of the four tridents at a timing when the tridents were stretched out, I flipped up the tridents.

The lesser demons have their stances broken grandly and expose their bodies. — There's no way that I will let that opportunity pass by.

While rotating the Magic Halberd in order to fully focus it on the left side, I release the hidden blade from the Dragon Magic Gem at the spear's end by charging it with mana.

Ice

Claw

I pierce a lesser demon who was behind me by extending the two-handed ice sword backwards. Then I swung the Magic Halberd, which had grown the two-

handed ice sword from the left to the right forcibly drawing a large half-circle of 180°.



The bodies of the lesser demons are sliced in two.

From the lesser demons' bodies, which turned into lower half only, blood overflows as if a volcano is erupting.

I'm also hit by several spurts of blood, but I don't mind that.

Swinging my Magic Halberd, I gain total control of this location with the force of a maelstrom.

I guess I finished off 30 – 50?

It's more, huh? Once I noticed, a large amount of corpses is scattered on the ground and a large number of blood puddles had formed.

Therefore I make the hidden blade, which had grown from the magic spear's end, vanish.

Did Helme move to the left side of the forest? She vanished.

I defeated quite a few and the moment when I took... a short break, an approaching fireball is reflected in my sight.

— It's fast.

— I won't avoid but crush it.

I bisected the approaching fire ball with the spearhead of the Magic Halberd—the red axe blade.

“— Hoo, to cut my flame, you seem to be quite capable for a human.”

A demon approaches while saying that.

Its eyes have a dark brass colour. Red hair is growing rampantly over its whole body.

Holding a longsword in its right hand which was swirling like a snake with a vortex of flames reaching up to the top of the shoulder.

Rather than human shaped, its a type of monkey, like Sun Wukong*, I guess.

(T/N: Fictional character in Journey to the West)

This guy seems to be the boss leading the group here.

“Are you the one called macquire demon?”

“That's right. It's the name of my race.”

“Monkey macquire, huh? Come. You seem somewhat tough.” (Shuuya) I rotate the Magic Halberd and place it on my right shoulder.

Holding out my left hand, I invite it by beckoning with a finger.

“For the likes of a human to be rude towards me!”

I’m not underestimating you in particular though.

The macquire’s red hair stood on end as it attacked with a battle cry.

Though I feel sorry, I will finish it with a swift attack— I shoot <Chain>.

The target are the macquire’s feet.

The chain assaults it by slithering along the ground and pierces the macquire’s foot.

Twining around its feet, it’s made to fall down.

The macquire kisses the ground with a splendid momentum.

“Guaaah, w-wh—”

The macquire tries to use both its hands to stand up.

However I advance with Magic Steps towards the fallen macquire.

Closing the distance, I have no intention to let the monkey or whatever open its mouth anymore.

See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

While recalling the Nikko Toshogu Shrine, I once again release the hidden blade with a size of a two-handed ice sword by charging mana towards the spear butt part at the lower part of the Magic Halberd. Lowering down the Magic Halberd

like that, I stabbed the monkey’s middle forehead with the hidden blade.

The red monkey, which was pierced in-between its eyes, creates crossed eyes like a kabuki actor and loosely hangs out its long red tongue from its mouth, it stops moving.

The red monkey turned into a non-talking monkey and died.

At that moment all demons in the vicinity single-mindedly retreat.

It’s just like a rout.

The archers on the wall of the holy city cheer loudly.

“... A too quick end of the act. Oh well, I guess it’s fine since we won?”

(Shuuya) “Nn, nyanya!” (Rollo)

Mmh, it’s Rollo.

Once again she returned to boast about the prey she caught.

Or rather, just how many of them did she kill?

Dozens of grizbells and lesser demons were hanging down from the tips of her tentacle bone swords.

Amazing, she defeated far more than me...

As ever her handling of the tentacles is skilful.

The corpses have become jam packed. They are crammed together to be grilled as grilled skewer.

“Rollo, aren’t you amazing... you did really well. It’s fine to put down that heavy-looking prey.” (Shuuya) “Nnn, nyanyaa.” (Rollo)

Rollo throws off the prey by retracting her tentacles.
She shook her body as is and the blood stains were blown away.
It happens every time. You* make me want to retort with a “Are you a dog?”
(T/N: *in Kansai dialect*)

Or rather, I ended up bathed in blood spurts as well.

Shall I clean it off with water from life magic?

At that point Helme came back.

“Your Excellency! All enemies on the left side were annihilated.” (Helme)
“Yea, I watched a bit, but you were amazing.” (Shuuya)

“Haha! It’s an honour for me to be of service to you, Your Excellency.”
(Helme) “Well then, shall I clean off the filth...?” (Shuuya)

“Your Excellency, please wait. If I wrap around your whole body after turning into liquid, Your Excellency, I will be able to clean the dirt off. I can also directly absorb the blood then and there. Once I return your left eye, Your Excellency, it will be possible for me to let the blood circulate inside your body. Moreover it’s possible to have me stock the blood inside my body.” (Helme) Ooh, such a thing is possible?

“That’s great. Quite handy.” (Shuuya)

“Yes.” (Helme)

“Well then, absorb the blood clinging all over my body at once. Clean off the dirt.” (Shuuya) “At your command.” (Helme)

Helme liquified in an instant.
With it happening suddenly, the liquid hangs in mid air. She makes her shape

change into a liquid sphere.

Once that sphere burst, it rained down on my entire body just like a shower. The liquid, which clung to the surfaces of my hair, face and armour, turns into a wriggling, transparent membrane. From the overcoat to the Ancient Dragon's Scale Mail's surface, all of my body is covered by it.

The instant I was wrapped up by it, the dirt vanished.

I have already become clean. Though the water membrane is thin, it's strange. Though this might be because of Helme, I guess.

Once the cleaning was finished, the liquid raised to the surface all over my body.

The liquid gathers in front of my eyes and forms a sphere. Feet grow out of the sphere, a blue leafy torso appears and Helme takes shape. She appears in a pose of having one knee on the ground.

It's a period of less than a second, but going by her odd movements, I was reminded of the liquid metal cyborg who was Shuwa-chan's enemy.

T1000

"You are fast, aren't you?" (Shuuya)

"Yes, Your Excellency. Do you want to absorb the blood?" (Helme) "Yea, I will take it." (Shuuya)

"Yes, then—" (Helme)

hug While making her small body float, Helme embraced me and gave me a kiss.

Absorb it from here? Oh? Blood pours into my mouth.

While hugging Helme's soft body and having my fill of her small lips, I gulp down the blood.

Ye~a. This might be erotic.

But, for some strange reason my nether region didn't act up.

We are on a battlefield now. I'm not a pervert who gets an erection out of excitement.

While pondering about such things, I savour the deep kiss.

Once the blood's transferred, I separate from Hele with an indecent slurping sound.

"Your Excellency... was it delicious?" (Helme)

“I’m satisfied. I might request it again from you sometime.” (Shuuya) “Yes. With pleasure. Please leave it to me.” (Helme)

Helme flutters her bluish-black coloured beautiful hair and enchants with a bewitching smile.

“Well then, come back into my eye.” (Shuuya)

“Yes!—” (Helme)

“Shuuya-sama~, Shuuya-sama~.” (Aurora)

Once Helme returns into my eye, the voice of princess Aurora reaches me. The princess waved her hands while showing her face from the carriage. I, who fully devoted myself to killing, wanted to say something, but the carriage with the princess on it cruelly drives over the corpses of the demons.

“Princess-sama, were you alright?” (Shuuya)

“That’s my line. Rather than that, what happened?” (Aurora)

“Yes, once I defeated a red monkey demon of the race called macquire, the other demons withdrew all at once...” (Shuuya) “Wow, amazing. That’s great. You defeated the demons’ commander.” (Aurora) “Princess, the demons retreated, but we don’t know whether there might still be something else. Let’s hurry and enter the holy city.” (Elmes) I could hear Elmes-san’s voice from within the carriage.

“T-That’s right, isn’t it? Shuuya-sama, please get on as well.” (Aurora) “Is that fine?” (Shuuya)

“Of course. You are a “hero” after all. Please board the carriage quickly. Let’s immediately go to holy city’s castle where my father resides.” (Aurora) Hero, eh? That doesn’t fit me. It’s flattery, I suppose... I’ve learned the hard way that beautiful things got thorns, the Kuna shock crosses my mind.

“Then I shall accept your offer...” (Shuuya)

Though I pondered how to stay on my guard, I’m a person who fawns over beauties after all.

The carriage with the princess on it arrives at the wall’s gate while running the

demons' corpses over.

The coachman loudly announces that it's the Third Princess Aurora.

"We have returned from official business. Open the gate immediately!"

Once we were kept waiting for several dozens minutes... the gate opened. The carriage passes through the gate and enters the town of the Holy City. Soldiers were awaiting us.

Once the coachman yells in the same manner as before, the soldiers clear the path while cheering.

The carriages advances on the main street where a large number of soldiers had gathered.

Gradually the soldiers' figures become distant.

Because the townscape came into view, I stick out my face through the wooden frame at the carriage's side while bending myself forward.

Hee, it's a beautiful city.

So this is the Holy City's townscape.

It's a complete change in comparison to the road where the forest grew thickly. The road with its white stone paving proceeded in a straight line, and on both sides of the road rows of trees had been planted.

On both sides of the stone paving there are many houses which have been built out of yellow ochre bricks and stones.

This townscape makes me unintentionally remember the scenery of Florence. And, what was visible on the other side of the townscape, ahead of the road, was a large, white royal castle.

Chapter 93 – The White Castle

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Dukoku



There are many humans among the people travelling to and fro the main road.

As expected, there wasn't a single long-eared elf.

The white castle far in the distance, comes into sight as we get closer.

Spires uniformly stand in a row on the left and right. The white walls have an elegant facade.

"Shuuya-sama, what do you think about the Holy City?" (Aurora)

"Yea, it's beautiful and in good order. It's a townscape with a magnificent castle." (Shuuya)

"I'm happy to be able to receive such praise from you. It's my pride as well, this beautiful city and its castle." (Aurora)

The princess replies with pride.

And then the carriage arrives in front of the castle's gate.

Thereupon a strange sensation ran through my body.

The instant the carriage went through the castle's gate— I had a chilling feeling that I went through something similar to a slimy membrane.

What was that?

When I was having such strange thoughts, the carriage stopped inside the

castle.

“We have arrived. Princess-sama, we will get off first.” (Elmes)

Elmes and Chloe disembark first.

Then I got off and lastly the princess did.

“Shuuya-sama, since there will be a reception ceremony, please accompany me for a short while. It would be great if you would do me the favour of walking next to me.” (Aurora)

The princess said so to me in a whisper.

“Understood.” (Shuuya)

Once I replied to the princess, the soldiers who came to greet us and had formed a long line, blow the trumpets.

“It’s the return of the Third Princess Aurora-sama~.”

“I have returned home from official business.” (Aurora)

A gong is sounded alongside the loud announcement and I am made to walk on top of a red carpet.

Somehow I feel out-of-place here.

I walk diagonally behind the princess.

In front of the carpet, nobles adorned in elegant attires, have come to greet us.

“Princess-sama, good work on your esteemed official business.”

“Thank you very much for your hard work.”

“Yes, Prime Minister Rengryph, Rorgan Margrave Fuan, Beauty Official Sadia, everyone. I safely concluded the discussions with Pope-sama and the dispatch of a Holy Crusade was decided. Moreover, I was given a handwritten letter.”
(Aurora)

“”Ooh.””

The nobles show a delighted reaction.

“My goodness, then, please report to His Majesty as well. He is waiting on the Holy Throne.”

“Yes.”

The princess bows lightly to the higher-ups and starts to advance forward. I pass through the arch gate right behind the princess and enter the castle. When we come out in the castle's reception hall, after following a passage that had a green carpet spread out, harp-like music and the sounds of flutes could be heard.

There's an idol on the ceiling which was designed as if walking on the heavens, it's unknown how they built it.

Moreover, mana was emitted from the idol. The idol's surroundings are decorated with special crystalline lenses, similar to chandeliers, in a circle around it.

When I look with Magic Observation, a great number of magic lines are radiating away from the pointed ends of the crystalline lenses. It might be a special magic barrier tool since it seems to be shooting through the reception hall's ceiling.

Red and white flags were drawn on shields and coloured mosaic frescos with a dignified feeling were beautifully lined up along the left and right walls.

While I admire the special ceiling magic tool and the beautiful walls, we walk through the reception hall and head towards a stairway located in its centre. As if making use of the place below that stairway, a band performed musical pieces and small men, who had the appearances of clowns, danced.

The sounds of the harps and flutes are coming from here, huh?

When the princess passes them in a straight line together with me, everyone stops their musical performance and bows.

We head towards the second floor by climbing the wide stairway.

On the second floor, there's a corridor continuing right ahead and two circular pathways to the left and right.

On the rims of the circular pathways beautiful red and white designed banners are hanging down towards the reception hall on the first floor and are moving as if fluttering in the wind. It was an atmosphere causing one to feel the religious solemnity.

The princess and the others proceed into the corridor with its stone arch, that had been carved into a curved shape on the ceiling, and not the circular pathways.

The brick-coloured two-sided door, which is at the end of the corridor, opened.

Heavy knights holding silver halberds were lined up while rigidly standing on both sides of the other border of the red carpet.

Is the audience hall over there? It's the centre of the royal palace, I guess.

Noble people are visible, gathering behind the solid figures of the knights.

While being noisy, the nobles turned inquisitive gazes at us.

The princess enters the room with the red carpet which is the audience hall.

At the time I made a step forward with my foot, I **once again** felt like I passed through something like a membrane.

At that moment— an alarm-like bell sounds and gong sounds reverberate.

The surroundings got noisy wondering what's going on.

“— It's the sound of the third level barrier reacting! Protect the king! A demon has infiltrated the royal palace!”

Eh? What?

While yelling loudly, a knight-styled ikemen with blond hair turns the point of his longsword at me.

This man wore a conspicuous priest robe with an other cross crest on top of his chain mail.

It seems he is a soldier of a country different from the other red and white attired soldiers.

The royal palaces falls into a noisy uproar.

However, rather than such uproar...

Currently I was glad about the picture I caught sight of in this place.

Ahead of the red carpet there's a small podium.

The throne is on top of there and a gray-haired, king-like person wearing a golden crown, is sitting there.

It's a king, a king, a monarch in a different world. Amazing.

Him sitting on the throne is great. Him wearing an extravagant, silken attire is great. It truly feels like I time travelled to the Middle Ages.

However, I don't have time to continue observing him with such easygoing attitude.

Elmes-san and Chloe-san who entered together, and the princess, who was next to me, seem to be confused by the reactions of the surroundings. They moved their heads while looking around restlessly.

The armoured knights holding halberds surround the area outside the red

carpet as if protecting a great number of the clamouring nobles. And then, knights with conspicuous other cross crests closed in. The blond-haired ikemen, who turned his sword's point at me, is at the front. Next to that man, there were not only knights but also two priests. One of the priests wore a plain robe with a green underlying colour. The other one was clad in a gorgeous priest robe that had a sparkling crest attached to it and which used red as the primary colour.

“Tell me, Claude-sama, what's happening for you to bring along church knights in addition to a priest and the archbishop?” (Aurora)

The princess seem to know the name of that knight with the yellow cross. His name is Claude?

“That's my line, Princess Aurora. For you to be accompanied by a demon and to allow him to trespass until your king, Thalium... did you lose your mind? Or is it by chance a rebellion, revolt, are you trying to turn His Majesty into a dead man?” (Claude)

Rebellion? There's no way that's true. What is he saying?

“Turn father into a dead man? I won't let such thing happen even if heaven and earth get reversed! Whom are you calling a demon?” (Aurora)

The princess was unusually angry. As if to further elevate the anger of the princess, the priest-styled man with the gorgeous, red robe, takes one step forward with his expression warped in a disgusting smirk. The big-shot of the church wore a hanging cloth with sparkling yellow cross embroidery seemingly covering it. A stole?

“Princess-sama, I'm Archbishop Golgan. Thank you very much for your mission on this occasion. However, to enter accompanied by a demon... that's going a bit too far, you know?” (Golgan)

Elmes-san reacted faster to those words than the princess.

“Excuse me! Where's that demon?” (Elmes)

Suitable to a escort knight leader, her tone is rough. The elderly man, who introduced himself as archbishop, pointed at me while

glaring with his small eyes that were surrounded by wrinkles.

“... It’s that black-haired man. The man wearing a gray overcoat while being behind the princess. The instant that man entered this place, the demon detection barrier reacted. Since it’s a high level barrier, it’s capable of detecting high-ranking demons. It’s very likely a subspecies of the Kushanarn race which disguises as humans or...” (Golgan)

Oops, it’s me after all, huh?

Pheromone’s

Touch

It will react even if I don’t use <Inhalation of Odour Technique>?

However, there’s no way for me to be a Kushanarn. I ain’t Kuna.

At that moment Rollo, who has been sleeping in the hood on my back, squirmed around.

Uh, now’s bad. Please stay asleep.

Rollo didn’t wake up.

... Great. Even a cute black cat would become a target for slander right now.

“That’s absolutely not true. This gentleman is a person who did me and the escorting knight order the favour of rescuing us. He’s a gentleman who saved us from a demon attack. And, he is a great man who was able to defeat the commander of the demons who attacked the west gate. Isn’t it also this gentleman who drove away the demons who attacked the 【Holy City】. Archbishop Golgan-sama and Church Knight Claude-sama, you are wrong.” (Aurora)

The princess objected vigorously.

The surroundings raise voices of admiration due to her words.

“... Oh my, for you to cover for a demon... no way, have you been placed under **influence by evil**?” (Claude)

The ikemen knight Claude speaks with obvious scorn denying the princess’ words.

“Please wait. I’m the escort knight order’s Head Sorcerer Chloe, but since there’s something I have to say, I’d like you to let me speak. Something like **Influence by Evil** doesn’t exist. Since me and Elmes, including Princess-sama, are wearing **defensive equipment against mind attacks**, an influence is impossible. Besides, this gentleman is a common person who shows no reaction

to the effects of the evil repellent incense. It's also true that he defeated a great number of demons. It's impossible for him to be a demon." (Chloe)

An evil repellent incense?

Such thing, just when... Aah, inside that tent, eh?

It means that the shrewd Chloe monitored me.

I wonder whether she also monitored me at the time when my nether region stood tall... no way, how embarrassing.

Even after hearing her words as magician, the ikemen knight Claude doesn't seem to care.

"Humph, it's the foolish prattling of a magician. Let's not get carried away even if you try to pull a fast one, okay? Anyway, that man reacted to our barrier. If you stand up to cover for him, you will have to face the **suspicion of heresy** carried out by the church' crusader knights even if you might be the **princess' retainer**, won't you?" (Claude)

The blonde-haired knight Claude swings his swords and turns the tip of the longsword at Chloe.

In response to his movement, Elmes-san tried to draw the longsword at her waist.

『I can't forgive those humans who are insulting His supreme Excellency. I will annihilate them with my water. No, that's lukewarm, I will stick 1.000, 10.000 ice spears into those conceited butts. Let's appreciate the art of that.』 (Helme)

Helme, who is in my left eye, reacted by releasing her wrath,

『No, wait, wait, even if something happens, Helme mustn't come outside. I will be unnecessarily suspected if water comes flying out of my eyeball right now in this place. Keep watching until I give you the order, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes...』 (Helme)

Helme thought while seeming disappointed.

When we had such back and forth conversation, the princess took a step forward.

"— The talks won't go anywhere with you. Father-sama? You believe us, right?" (Aurora)

The princess calls out to the king who is watching attentively while sitting on the throne in the back.

“Y-Yea. Aurora, you did well to come back here.”

“King Thalius— currently it’s bad to get close. It’s a fact that the barrier reacted.” (Golgan)

When the red robed archbishop said so, the king stopped.

In the current state, the princess’ position will get only worse.

Damn it! This is my miss.

I’m at fault as I underestimated it thinking that it will probably be alright unless I use <Inhalation of Odour Technique>.

I guess it would be the best to directly defend myself here.

Let’s go in front?

I don’t particularly need the reward either. And if I’m caught, all will be fine with me breaking out by myself.

“Umm, excuse me. I’m sorry for the suspicious parts, but... I’m no demon. As you were told by Princess-sama, I rescued Princess-sama and the others who were under attack by demons. Since I showily fought the demons and the one commanding those demons at the west gate, there would be a great number of soldiers who have seen me doing that from atop the wall.” (Shuuya)

Saying that, I took a detached attitude.

“What was that? For a demon to play around like this.”

The church knight Claude looks at me with a steel-like, sharp gaze.

This church knight seems to have the ability allowing him take a high-handed attitude.

He clad his hands and feet in mana.

Well, he’s probably stronger than the small fry soldiers.

“... In that case, please use something that is effective against demons on me. And, if nothing happens after doing so, can I somehow get you to believe me?” (Shuuya)

“Humph, Archbishop Golgan, you probably have holy water with you. Try sprinkling it on that demon.” (Claude)

“Yes. Then—” (Golgan)

The red-robed Archbishop Golgan took out a vial from his pocket and threw it at me.

I’m hit with a *splash*. It’s water. Water is streaming down from my head.

It’s simple water.

It’s the same result as with the vampire hunter before.

“Wh-, there’s no reaction... Archbishop, is that really holy water?” (Claude)

The temple knight speaks to the archbishop with a confused look.

“Y-Yes. This is high-grade holy water I created directly with my skill. If it’s an ordinary demon, you can expect it to scream in agony while its skin melts in an instant. Even in case of a high-ranking demon, their skin should become red from being burned. T-This man is a... human.” (Golgan)

The archbishop looked down awkwardly.

“What did you say!? Is that true holy water?” (Claude)

“It’s the real thing.” (Golgan)

“It’s unusable holy water, I guess.” (Claude)

The temple knight talked while glaring at the archbishop who is holding a vial with holy water in it.

“Even if it’s you, Sir Claude, I can’t overlook that. A priest at Bishop class mixes the feather of the Holy Bird Kunkuld with a liquid that was extracted over many years from the leaves of Ahdo, which is considered to be loved by the Light God Lulodis, by using a special skill. Only then, at great pains, holy water of value gets completed...” (Golgan)

The archbishop’s face reddens in anger and white spots appear around the edges of his mouth.

“Claude-sama? That’s what I told you, didn’t I? He is my benefactor and despite the fact that you are temple knight, any further insults won’t be forgiven.” (Aurora)

The princess sides with the archbishop and reproaches the ikemen bastard.

“Ah geez, shut up! Who’s the one insulting who here. I’m the leader of the church’ heavy knights chosen by His Eminence the Pope!! It’s I who leads the advance unit of the Holy Crusaders dispatched from my country. Chosen heavy knights of the church who belong to Holy Church’s Pope’s knight order. Um, I designate this man as demon! Listen up! Arrest that man—” (Claude)

Upon Claude’s order, the men, who wore the yellow-crossed armour of temple knights, started to surround me.

Mmh~, do I have to get violent here?

If I slaughter these guys now, it will be completely demonic.

In addition it will likely cause troubles for the princess and the others. I guess I have to hold back and endure for a little while.

“I won’t allow such a thing! Elmes, Chloe!” (Aurora)

“”Ha!””

After the princess’ outburst, Elmes draws her longsword and prepares to strike.

Chloe holds up her large wand while manipulating her mana. A flame lights up on the tip of the wand.

“Oh, if the princess resists... it will spell the end of the crusade-cross-alliance which is the country’s core project, moreover, this country 【Holy Kingdom】 will fight against our 【Religious State Hesliphat】 where the Holy Church resides. Do you want that?” (Claude)

This impertinent ikemen yellow-crossed knight said that he was dispatched. As nothing but an ikemen he’s a heavy knight who at the same time serves as the foreign ambassador of 【Religious State Hesliphat】?

If that’s the case, he’s quite the influential person in Hesliphat with the backing of the pope or he might be a big gun of an organization that rivals the pope.

However, I give up. I even considered obediently letting them arrest me.

Does the princess intend to start a war with a fellow human country in order to protect me?

I’m happy, but it’s probably unwise to do so.

A way to get the princess to withdraw here would be convenient for me.

Going by the attitude of the king who is silently furrowing his eyebrows behind

the archbishop...

I do understand 【Holy Kingdom Arkamneris】 doesn't want to fight against 【Religious State Hesliphat】.

Therefore I approach the princess and secretly whisper in her ear.

"... Princess, please withdraw here. I will let them arrest me." (Shuuya)

"Why do you want to do such thing?" (Aurora)

"Are you fine with the diplomatic relations breaking down as is? If things go badly, not only you, Princess-sama, but also Elmes-san and Chloe-san will be held responsible." (Shuuya)

"But... it's not your fault, Shuuya-sama." (Aurora)

"It's fine. I'm an outsider after all. I don't mind if you discard me." (Shuuya)

"There's no way I can do something like that to my benefactor, is there?" (Aurora)

The princess is angry. Lowering her eyebrows, she glares at me. Well, she's a kind hearted princess. I can agree with her reacting like this. However, she doesn't see the state of affairs.

"... Is it better if I get violent here? It seems that that temple knight is quite powerful as well, but he's no enemy for me after all. Naturally, if I do that, your country's soldiers will attack me as well, right? I will kill everyone unless they plead for their lives... The time I spent together with you, Princess, is short, but you should know that what I have said about killing everyone is no lie. If I fight, it will turn into a horrible tragedy... Also, please consider your subordinates, the escort knight order, as well, Princess." (Shuuya)

I spoke to the princess using words with a half threatening tone. The princess shows an expression as if she's about to cry. Uh, such expression is... pitiful, but it can't be helped.

"... T-That is... understood." (Aurora)

Hoo, you were able to understand?

"Elmes, Chloe, step back." (Aurora)

"Eh, y-yes." (Elmes)

“Are you fine with that?” (Chloe)

“I’ve told you to withdraw.” (Aurora)

“”Ha!””

Upon receiving the princess strong statement, Elmes and Chloe lowered their weapons and moved back behind the princess.

“— Alright. The foolish farce stops at this point. Grab the demon.” (Claude)

I allow the yellow-crossed knights to arrest me there and then.

My chest belt, which was swollen with the things in it, was confiscated, but somehow or other it looks like they want to hurry. My overcoat and armour was left untouched.

They haven’t noticed Rollo, who is sleeping in my hood, either.

Of course the bracelet that functions as item box is safe as well.

Since I haven’t resisted, we leave the castle and I’m guided to a place with a jail.

Well, I guess I will stay here until tomorrow morning.

I will break out in the morning.

Several hours pass after I entered the jail.

Strangely there’s nothing like interrogation or torture.

It’s because the knights, who are wearing yellow-crossed clothes, couldn’t enter the prison I’m in.

Soldiers of the 【Holy Kingdom】, who are wearing red and white coloured uniforms, stopped the temple knights of the 【Religious State】 and as if stealing me, they moved me to a prison cabin.

They are cursing at each other.

“From here on you guys aren’t allowed to move freely.”

“Are you defying us temple knights?”

“Yes, that’s right. This isn’t your country. Please stop loitering out here any further.”

The quarrel of verbal abusing with each other is repeated between the soldiers of the Holy Kingdom and the temple knights for a while.

“Who’s a hero! I will officially report this matter to my country. That will definitely hurt the crusade-cross-alliance. Make sure to not regret it!”

Leaving with such parting threat, the quarrel, which was even audible in my prison, can't be heard anymore.

It seems the the quarrel came to an end.

I'm sure that the last voice was that of the temple knight called Claude.

Haha, soldier of the Holy Kingdom, you rock.

Although I say that, it doesn't change the fact that I'm spending my time in a prison cell...

"Nya." (Rollo)

Rollo returns to my shoulder from the hood on my back and looks at my face.

"Rollo, it's fine for you to keep sleeping. I think we will stay in this prison for a little longer. Once it becomes morning I intend to leave even if it has to be forcefully." (Shuuya)

"Nnn, nya, nya." (Rollo)

Rollo answers with a throaty voice, leaves my shoulder and walks up to the bars.

— Ah, that Rollo.

She went outside through the gap in the bars.

"It's fine for you to act as you like, but only until early morning, okay?"
(Shuuya)

"Nyaa." (Rollo)

I think that she understood me properly, but without looking back, Rollo ran outside and her figure vanished right away.

And then, a few hours after Rollo left.

The sun went down and it became night.

I am aware of the fact of the outside becoming dark through a small lattice located at the upper part of the back wall.

Speaking of jails, there are dungeons, but this place is a jail house located on the grounds of the castle.

I was seen by all soldiers before coming to this jailhouse.

There was a building similar to a lodging house or quarters where the soldiers might stay at.

Since it also serves as measure against escape, it's a layout that kills two birds

with one stone, I guess.

When I was pondering about such stuff while lying on top of the hard bed, I could hear footsteps that were different from those of the soldiers.

Who might it be? I place my hands on the bars and wait.

“... Elmes-san and Chloe-san together with the princess?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, Shuuya-sama. I’m very sorry for things to turn out like this...” (Aurora)

“Shuuya-dono, we retrieved your luggage. The cell’s lock has been opened as well. You can freely leave outside.”

Saying that, Elmes-san and Chloe-san pass me the chest belt through the lattice.

All daggers are there as well. I ask while equipping the chest belt,

“— Thank you, but I think that the temple knights won’t stay silent if you do something like this... is that okay?” (Shuuya)

“That’s true, isn’t it? Although they are foreign knights, the Holy Church wields a definite amount of influence in this country. And, if you are found by those temple knight, it will become a serious matter... therefore, it will be bad if we don’t release you from here right away.” (Aurora)

Once they realize that I escaped, one can assume that they will place responsibility for that on the Holy Kingdom, but...

Well, since I believe that the complicated political situation will become chaotic, I will pretend to agree with the princess without listening to the details and depend on her kindness.

“... I see.” (Shuuya)

“Shuuya-dono, to dismiss my and Princess-sama’s benefactor in such a manner is inexcusable, I think. It’s a bitter decision...” (Elmes)

Elmes-san bowed her head in a dignified manner befitting a knight. As if following her lead, the princess and Chloe-san bow their heads as well. I can’t believe that these are the words of a person who invited me that desperately into the faction of the princess’ side.

Well, I don’t know how the power struggle will play out...

Isn’t it better if I know that it finished without me being used?

“... No, not at all. I don’t mind. I was the one who decided to accompany you. Besides, I can now leave outside after all.” (Shuuya)

Hearing my words, the princess raises her head. She moves her lips with her eyes quivering while putting her hands on her chest.

“... It’s said that the sea doesn’t reject any river, but such generosity makes you a great person, Shuuya-sama. Thank you very much.” (Aurora)

The princess compared me with the sea. I feel somewhat embarrassed. And then she holds out the bag she held in her small hands.

“This is your reward. Please accept it.” (Aurora)

I confirm the contents of the pouch I received.
Large gold coins and a small crystal were inside.
Oh, isn’t this a magically-built house?

“This is... that magic item?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. I quickly searched for an unused Magic Miniature Home Magically-built house. It’s a small one of the same type I used the other day.” (Aurora)

“Ooh, amazing. It’s a very welcome item for an adventurer. Thank you.”
(Shuuya)

This is great.
I don’t know whether I will actually use it though.

“Great. I’m happy that you are pleased with it. In reality I wanted to talk a lot more with you... and I wanted to watch your spear practise from nearby. And, I wanted to give you a proper reward, but... I’m sorry.” (Aurora)

No, it’s plenty with that already, right? It’s a high-grade magic item.
I have received it gratefully.
There is a proverb saying “If there’s too many flowers, there will be few seeds,” but it doesn’t apply for this princess. *(T/N: The meaning is roughly: people with a beautifully arranged outward appearance tend to be insincere)*
She’s a sincere woman.

“... Please don’t worry about it. The reward is plenty with this. Since it will become bothersome if you are discovered by the temple knights, it might be

better for you to go back at this point. I will make my move a few hours after you leave.” (Shuuya)

“Got it, Shuuya-sama. Please stay healthy.” (Aurora)

Saying that, the princess and the other two leave while wearing apologetic expressions.

After I waited until early morning, I went outside the prison.

— Rollo, where did you go?

“Nya?” (Rollo)

It looks like she was on the top of the roof.

Rollo looked down at me as if saying 『You finally came nya』, came down and returned to her usual place on my shoulder.

“Mmh, well then let’s leave this place.” (Shuuya)

I activate <Night Vision> and <Hide>

I search the surroundings with Grasping Perception.

— Magic sources, check.

— Clear.

Alright.

I rise into the air on the spot while using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and leap highly in order to fly in the air.

I went beyond the white walls by flying in the air.

At that moment the sensation that I passed through something like a membrane afflicts my entire body.

Is it fine to call it a chill running down my spine...?

I wonder whether this is maybe the barrier?

Probably that’s it.

At a high enough altitude above the walls, I changed <Magic Hand guided by Thought> into a foothold and looked behind while standing in the wind.

The magic lights and torch lights from the white castle are beautiful and bewitching.

It looks as if they are illuminating the castle at night.

To create such scenery naturally... it’s a dazzling castle.

Speaking of white walls, this one is whiter than the Himeji Castle with its other

name, Shirasagi Castle.* (*T/N: White Heron Castle if translated literally*)

I wanted to look at the interior of this castle in a little more relaxed manner.

I can see guards walking in the watchtowers.

Well then, I better leave before I'm found.

I survey my surroundings restlessly.

In that direction is the point from which I entered this city...

This way is the eastern gate.

Once I determine my bearing, I move by flying through the air above the city.

I might as well look at the city and inspect it a bit while heading towards the eastern gate.

Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I lower my altitude.

While creating footholds in midair, I descended in rapid strides and landed on top of a red roof.

Ah— the footing is bad.

However, it looks like Rollo is alright.

Jumping off my shoulder, she walks atop the roof.

I walked along the unstable rooftop in a hurry and jumped down on the ground.

It doesn't flow into the Five-Steps-Landing-Methods*, but I land and roll on the ground.



Using her tentacles in a skilful manner, Rollo gets down following along the wall while performing a triangle jump.

What's that? How cool.

It looks I can do that as well if I use my chain and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>.

Rollo comes back below my feet and nuzzles her head against my foot.

I start walking down the back alley while taking such a cute Rollo with me.

Since it's still dim, the back alley has an eerie atmosphere.

It feels like some monster might pop out.

At this point I cancel <Hide>.

I don't have to worry since there are no magic source reactions.

Oh, just when I thought about it, I get a magic source reaction.

... Or rather, a bar, huh?

Balmunt's get-together is written on a wooden signboard.

Several drunkards were staggering around in front of the store.

The magic source reactions come from these drunkards and from inside the store.

It's an opportunity. I guess I will gather some intelligence while getting a drink inside.

I open the push door and enter inside the bar.

Even though it was early in the morning, the bar's interior was overflowing with people.

At once I'm chatted up by a prostitute whose face was dyed vermillion, but I proceed forward while ignoring her.

The bar has a wide structure in the inner part. The table seats continue lengthwise and counter seats were visible on the left inner side.

Mmh? It's a sound.

On a table on this side, a rhythmic sound of hitting a desk with a *ta-ta-tap* reverberates.

I tried to take a peek since I got interested.

The sound's true identity is a knife.

It was in the middle of a hand knife trick.

— Uwah, as soon as I look, they make a blunder and the knife suddenly stabs

the hand.

However, the injury was closed by immediately using a potion with well-accustomed movements.

The person, who failed the trick, looks disappointed and pay money to the man sitting on the opposite seat.

A bet whether he fails or succeeds, huh?

Rather than the dangerous bet, my interest is drawn over there.

They played something appearing to be a card game on a table in the middle.

The tokens have designs on wooden tags. Pictures similar to the tarot cards in the Middle Ages are drawn on them.

The game seems to resemble poker.

Is it that?

Is it time for the debut of the man among men who was called God Gambler in his mind...?

Oh, the table is moved back to the inside where those card games are played, and a prizefighting bout started.

There are also many onlookers who are merry-making with booze in one hand. This also happened in Hekatrail, didn't it? It seems to be a standard procedure in bars.

I think I will enter the fight club as well after all?

Swinging my head in the Peek-a-boo style, I will make them lose conscious with a Gazelle Punch after a Dempsey Roll? But I might end up going down after receiving Heart Break Shot since it's a crow imitating a cormorant.* *(T/N: Err yea, the first three techniques belong to Ippo from Hajime no Ippo... The Heart Break Shot was from one of Ippo's opponents, Date Eiji... and as for a crow imitating a cormorant, read here: <http://thefortyfive.blogspot.com/2012/01/crow-and-cormorant.html>)*

Well then, it's fun to happily indulge in this place, but let's put priority on the things I have to do?

I head to the counter where I see a master-like person.

Chapter 94 – The Awakening of Templar Knight Leader Claude

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“Will you let me have some booze?”

“Ayes, one drink, 3 copper coins.”

The master places the alcohol on top of the counter.

Receiving the change after giving him one large copper coin, I drank the alcohol. The booze is cheap. It was disgusting beer.

It makes me want to frown since it’s bitter and has no carbonic acid either, but I ask the master about the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 without letting it show on my face too much.

“Master, is there anything you know about the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】?” (Shuuya)

“The 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】, eh? I dun’ know nothing but it bein’ filled with swarms of demons.”

Even if you tell me something that obvious...

“Only that?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah, however, even though ya ain’t a knight of the kingdom, asking such

stuff, you a newcomer adventurer, ain't ya?"

"Right." (Shuuya)

"In that case ya gotta go to the fortress 【Sole】 located at the eastern front. Dare-devilish adventurers gather over there. Ya will be able to get plenty of information and there's probably an abundance of demon extermination jobs available."

The master explained while wiping a wooden goblet with a cloth.

"Hee, I see. Thanks." (Shuuya)

Accordingly I wrap it up here.

Sole Fortress, eh?

Leaving a bit of the nasty booze, I left the bar.

Coming out of the alley with its many drunkards, I enter the main street.

As expected, unlike during the day, it's quiet now.

The shops located on both sides of the street are closed.

It's inevitable for this time of the day, I suppose?

If there was a magic tool-like shop, I wanted to search for books about water magic.

Though I guess it's not necessary at the moment since Helme is with me?

However, sooner or later I will go to a professional store, I think.

As I walk along the street, the bright sunlight of the morning glow dyed the scenery.

While feeling a refreshing wind on my cheeks, I pass the tidy street that continues with a carefully laid-out stone pavement.

And then I arrive at the east gate.

Since the east gate was closed, I kindly asked the guard at the station and had him open the gate.

"You a travelling adventurer? Do your best and defeat lots of demons at the front-line fortress."

For some reason the soldier encouraged me.

It seems there are many adventurers who head to the fortress.

After returning a suitable smile to the soldier, I pass through the pulled-up east gate and go outside the city.

The earthen road supposedly leading to the eastern front-line vanished into a forest.

It's not that different to the road to the holy city I travelled together with the princess.

Basically the geographical topography around here is a forest adjoining to the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】?

I walk along the road while harbouring such an impression.

『Your Excellency, there's an abundance of vegetation, isn't there? I'd like to come outside.』 (Helme)

『Okay, that's fine with me.』 (Shuuya)

The Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme is released in a spiral from my left eye.

She materializes on the ground turning into a beautiful woman's body and runs up to the flowers blooming along roadside. She stretches out her arms, which have blue, leafy waves on their skin, towards the pretty flowers.

Water sprinkled from her fingertip in trickles like a water pistol.

gradually standing up

Adopting a peculiar pose, the appearance of Helme admiring the flowers is truly lovely.

I think it's nice to advance in a laid-back manner while marvelling at her like this?

The way of advancing through the sky or along the trees is faster, but this time I will pass.

Currently I want to savour the travelling feeling as it's not the usual back alley walk.

It will be fine if I get rid of demons once they appear.

While enjoying a stroll with the Helme in such an idle mood, we walk the road towards the east.

At the time when I pondered whether I should have a look ahead from above once after calling back Helme since she lost interest in watching the flowers.

I felt magic source responses closing in from behind.

“Your Excellency, something's approaching from behind.” (Helme)

I know. Helme seems to have realized it as well.

Their speed of coming this way is fast, isn't it?

Looking back, I wonder whether it's a carriage heading toward the fortress?

Pondering that, I carefreely take a look...

The ones who appeared behind me were mounted temple knights wearing yellow crosses on their chests.

Them, huh?

Did they maybe expressly chase after me?

A knight, who's wearing a priest's robe and galloping at the lead, stopped in front of me.

He is carrying a silver plate with a crystal attached in his hand.

That crystal was flashing redly.

"You were here after all! The recently detected reaction matches the reaction we pursued! Even the magic tool of black curse Grasselya shows a **strong reaction**."

"In the end it was correct to chase after it."

There's Claude who had ordered my arrest in the royal palace.

"It's the people who insulted His Excellency. Here I will—" (Helme)

"Helme observe. I have a little idea." (Shuuya)

"Ha!" (Helme)

Helme knelt down on one knee, bowed her head, stood up swiftly and took some distance.

"Captain Claude, this guy is indeed..."

"Yeah, Seni Almayer, be careful. I suspect him to be a demon of the highest rank. It's also possible that he manipulated the soldiers of the 【Holy Kingdom】.

What's this about, to manipulate them... involuntarily I smile bitterly. It's also possible to escape by quickly firing a chain towards the trees located in the vicinity here.

But I decide to talk directly to them with my fists for a bit.

At any rate...

What's that red-flashing silver plate held by one of the knights?

Though I guess it's a magic tool, going by its name.

“Helme, do you know that?” (Shuuya)

I asked Helme who’s at the edge of the road.

“I feel mana from it. It’s a mysterious tool.” (Helme)

falls over

“That’s obvious.” (Shuuya)

“I’m sorry.” (Helme)

“Don’t mind it.” (Shuuya)

That blinking seems to be a reaction towards Helme and me.

Is the new race Light Demon Lucival treated as demon* as well? *(T/N: demon here as in 魔族 (mazoku) aka demon race)*

Is it reacting to the powerful darkness attribute I possess?

While I’m staring at the magic tool and thinking about such questions, the yellow-crossed knights dismount their horses.

They started to encircle my vicinity centring around their leader Claude.

There are eight knights in total wearing yellow-crossed clothes.

As it was merely three when they were at the audience hall, they apparently gathered their comrades.

I confirm with Magic Observation Sight.

All of them manipulated mana in their bodies.

The knights’ equipment are yellow-crossed priest robes worn over chain mail, longswords, round bucklers and maces.

By conjecture the combat jobs are around the types of magic heavy knight, monk and armed priest?

That might be the case since they introduced themselves as temple knights?

I guess they use light magic after all?

“Don’t let him escape! Finish that man before he can, he’s a demon!” (Claude)

“Keep surrounding him!”

They seem to be brimming with the will to kill me.

“Your Excellency—” (Helme)

Helme created a water ball in her right hand.

“Helme, be patient.” (Shuuya)

“Yes...” (Helme)

Helme bows, transforms her lower body into liquid and floats in mid air.

“Rollo, hide yourself. I will deal with them. You don’t have to help me.”
(Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo jumps off my shoulder and leaves towards the back.

It looks like the knights don’t mind Rollo leaving either.

They shortened the distance, the fighting* distance, by shuffling. (T/N: 間合い (maai) ...
basically the distance/range between martial artists)

Let’s try talking with them once as I have nothing to lose anyway?

“I’ve told you several times, but I’m no demon. Please don’t misunderstand.”
(Shuuya)

“There’s no use in arguing—”

Uhe, he slashed at me.

All of a sudden when I started a conversation?

I swiftly take my left and right hand out of the overcoat and switch over to a stance of interception.

I summon the Magic Halberd in my right hand. While dodging the sword I slashed diagonally from the shoulder by turning my body to the left side with a half rotation and made him eat the spear butt on the left side of his stomach as counter.

“Gueeh.”

The slashing knight groans and falls to the ground with an expression full of anguish.

I immediately took some distance by stepping back.

While keeping up my fighting distance, I set up the Magic Halberd in a seigan stance.

It was a counter, but I kindly took it easy on him so that he doesn’t die.

As I’m thinking about that, knights holding maces and longswords come attacking from the left and right direction next.

I make free use of **Gyration** by lightly using the tip of my toes as pivot centre to turn once.

I avoid them. I take the side of the knight using a mace while moving in order to avoid being surrounded. I slowly swing the Magic Halberd diagonally downwards.

I **lightly** cut the knight's shin.

“— Uaaah!”

The knight topples over while blood sprays from his foot.

Do I pursue the fallen knight a bit more—!? There, the other knights extended the blades of their weapons from my front and back trying to pincer attack me. In reverse, I will use that against them.

Dodging a sword thrust from the front by tilting my head slightly, I performed a light half rotation using the balls of my feet as if I had eyes at the back of my head and shifted into dodging motions.

The longsword, which was thrust out from behind me, painfully grazes the side of my ear.

While evading with the bare minimum distance, I got to the back of the knight using that longsword.

I consciously decide to twist the joint of his arm which he stretched out straight ahead.

“Hiiyaaaa.”

Because of having his deformed arm entangled by the magic spear, he raised a scream not befitting a knight and dropped his longsword to the ground. I seize the back of the knight who had his joint immobilized.

“It's a shame, isn't it? My rotational evasion has penetrated your position.”
(Shuuya)

While addressing the knight who's screaming from behind I put strength into my arms with Magic Combat Steps, forcibly pushed him by pressing my hands against him, and made him collide with the knight who came assaulting from the front.

“— Guahh.”

“Ouch.”

The knights, who had their heads crash into each other, stagger as if seeing stars and collapse.

At that moment half of the knights have fallen into a state of being incapable of fighting.

Their high-spirited vigour from the beginning has vanished.

Each of them revealed expressions filled with panic and they didn't close the distance anymore.

Well, I guess it's my turn then?

I slowly close the fighting distance with the way of walking initiated by the Achilles style.

"Wh-What's that? This guy's movements are far too strange and fast. You guys, Seni, stop this spear user's movements. I will stop him with high-ranking light magic." (Claude)

"— Yes!"

"Got it!"

"Let's go."

Three of the instructed knights raise battle cries at the same time.

"Oh, Light God Lulodis, in response to my mana—" (Claude)

Having taken some distance, Claude began to cast.

The straight-ahead-like movements of the knights raising battle cries are easy to understand.

They attack me while freely launching series of blows with their longswords and maces.

As I dodge the vertically-lowered mace and evade the longswords' sweeping strokes, I counter the assaulting knights while going easy on them so that they won't die.

I gave them counter-kicks to their solar plexus and against their feet as presents.

At the time when all the knights went down to the floor,

"Representing the beam of light which serves as light of lurid judgement, materialize what will become the punishing spear of light—" (Claude)

Claude finished casting in the rear.
It's a text that's easy to remember.

^{Shining}
“《Light Spear of Punishment》!” (Claude)
^{Lance}

Claude creates a thick light spear while revealing a triumphant and broadly grinning face.

He released the spell.

The thick light spear heads towards me as ray in a straight line as if it's a flash of lightning.

“Your Excellency! As a high-ranking spell rank—” (Helme)

In accordance with Helme's warning— phheew, it's fast.

I will move to dodge it— geh, it pursues!?

Moreover, when I tried to hit the approaching light spear with the red axe blade of the Magic Halberd, it **smoothly** evaded collision with the magic spear and the light spear followed my right arm which has no armour.

A shield with <Chain>, no, it won't be in time!

The light spear clashes against my swinging arm.

— O-Oouchh, ouch! The head of the light spear dug into my arm and scattered blood.

However, it only hurts at the beginning.

While causing a sound similar to the *chyupon* when pudding stands up after being pressed down, the light spear was absorbed below the right hand's wrist.

“— Eh?”

“Huh?”

There's no impact on my right hand anymore. It hasn't pierced my arm?
The spirit Helme reacts with surprise as well.

※ Extra Skill: Confirmation of Multi-Chain ※

※ Extra Skill: Conditions for derivation skill of Granted Seal of Light cleared ※

※ Extra Skill: Conditions for derivation skill of Chain Factor cleared ※

※ Piing ※ <Chain Spear of the Ray System (Shining Chain Lance)> skill
acquired ※

Oh, lucky~, got a skill.

Aah, which reminds me, my race had invalidation and absorption of light and

darkness, didn't it?

“Amazing. It got absorbed!” (Helme)

Helme was delighted and caused sheets of spray to be created from her waving and trembling dark bluish, leafy skin.

“An Extreme class spell of light v-vanished!? F-For r-reeeall? A-Aaaaahh, n-no way, Holy King.... -shama...” (Claude)

Claude was apparently quite shaken. His mouth trembled with an “awawawa” and white mucus is sticking to its edges.

Is this facial cyanosis and consternation?

“Well, that's how it is. I'm no demon. I'd like you to understand with this.” (Shuuya)

While erasing the magic spear, I approach the blue-eyed Claude-kun.

“Hiiyaaaaaa, I, I, I am, aah, pleash, my goodness, doon't coome o-o-o-oover h-here. Pleash f-f-fooorgive mee.” (Claude)

It seems Claude's mind went completely haywire.

Though it's an exaggeration to say that his hair has grown grey and long out of worry, he retreats timidly while showing a pale expression as if his blonde hair has changed into white hair.

I clench my right hand into a fist similar to a stone.

“That's no good. I won't be able to settle down unless I give you one good punch. With that said— I will break that illusion of yours*— or rather, I will crush it!!” (Shuuya) *(T/N: Probably a reference to Touma from Toaru Majutsu no Index)*

Tightening my flank and twisting my waist, I launch my right arm in front— divine punishment!

His ikemen face received my right straight Galactic Magnum.

“Bubuh—” (Claude)

His nose is broken by my normal fist and his body makes one revolution. Claude fainted with his body twitching and spasming while kissing the ground. I think he will be alright since I didn't clad myself with magic combat style. Given that I went easy on him... he shouldn't have died.

With this all knights became incapable of fighting.

“*gasp* C-Captain... everyone was defeated...?”

The knight with the injured foot looks at the current situation while being out of breath as he endures the pain of his injury.

This person might die if left alone like this. In a hurry I directly sprinkled a potion over his wound.

The wound heals.

“Your Excellency, you are kind... even though it’s fine to thrust the jar into his ass...” (Helme)

I pay no attention to Helme’s scary remark in a manner of Hoichi the Earless*, no, with utter indifference. *(T/N: Hoichi the Earless is the name of a tale and title character in an adaptation of Japanese mythology. I think the meaning here is clear though)*

“... Thank you very much.”

The saved yellow-crossed knight showed an uneasy expression, but still thanked me.

I don’t really care if I’m labelled as demon by these guys, but did the misunderstanding get resolved, I wonder?

However, since I more or less have the blood of demons in me as Light Demon Lucival, I understand the reason for these guys chasing me.

“... No, I just did what is to be expected. However, please don’t spout such **screwed-up stuff** such as me being a demon anymore, okay? Please tell that captain-san as well. After all I saved your life.” (Shuuya)

I speak with a “friendly” smile.

“Y-Yes! Your kind words are wasted on me... Saint-sama...”

Saint? Claude called me Holy King or such as well.

Therefore I sent a look at the magic tool tied to a horse’s saddle.

“Saint? Putting that aside, I have a question; what’s that magic tool bound to the horse saddle?” (Shuuya)

Grasselya

“It’s the magic tool of black curse. It’s a valuable item created in the Vatican where the Demon Extermination Agency resides. It works against high-ranking

Disorte

demons, pursues them and discovers hidden demons. It's an important magic tool we directly borrowed from the Vatican's 8th Demon Extermination Agency ."

Disorte

"Hoo. Is it fine for me to take it?" (Shuuya)

"Y-You must not... n, no... please take it."

The knight hates it, but as he seems to be scared, he lets me have it.

Let's try accepting it, I guess?

But, if I use it, it will end up reacting to me, won't it...?

There's no point, is there? Let's stop.

"I see. If you are against it, I will stop. I'm no bandit but an adventurer after all. And it's fine for me to heal your collapsed comrades since I'm carrying some healing potions with me." (Shuuya)

Saying that, I retrieve several potions from my item box and place them on the ground.

"Thank you very much."

"And, please don't pursue me anymore." (Shuuya)

Glaring at him, I present him with the smile I have shown many times.

"Y-Yes, though it might be an abrupt question, but..."

One of the knights speaks while staring at me.

"What is it?"

"Just now you have absorbed the holy spell of light... there's a famous phrase in the 16th verse of the holy script Azaya. "The one who absorbs light skills, bears a light cross on his chest. They are someone who will proven as Holy King, saint, holy woman, shrine maiden or divine child", it says. Aren't you the reincarnation of the Holy King-sama, the Divine Son-sama... or Saint-sama?"

Certainly I bear the cross of the Granted Seal of Light on my chest. But, since I'm not suitable for being a holy king, shrine maiden or saint, I naturally tell a lie.

Since his look is completely like that of seeing me as god, I don't think he will

believe me, but...

“... I don't care about something like holy king, divine child or saint. For me...”
(Shuuya)

There's something I have to do.

“It's farewell. Helme, come back.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, Your Excellency—” (Helme)

Helme, who changed into liquid, returns while spiralling into my left eye. I turn on my heels and advance on the road by walking, extending a chain towards the trees and flying through the air.

“Nnn, nyaooon.” (Rollo)

Rollo come running while releasing a throaty voice like a bell from behind. Erasing the chain, I used <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and landed on the road.

“Sorry, I hurried ahead too much.” (Shuuya)

Once Rollo jumps on my shoulder and assumes her usual place, she stretches out one tentacle directly ahead as if saying 『Go forward nya』 with a short purr of 「Nya!」

“I know.” (Shuuya)

Seeing such Rollo, I laugh a bit while walking.
Shall I try the skill I acquired previously on this occasion?

Skill Status.

Obtained Skills: <Throwing>, <Demonic Brain Speed>, <Hide>, <Night Vision>, <Inhalation of Odour Technique>, <Blood Chains Banquet>, <Thrust>, <Meditation>, <Magic Beast Rider>, <Life Magic>, <Guidance Sorcery>, <Magic Combat Style>, <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, <Sage Art>, <Summoning>, <Ancient Magic>, <Crest Magic>, <Darkness Drill>, <Darkness Drill – Magic Spear Break>, <Language Magic>, <Chain Spear of the Ray System>

Permanent Skills: <Power of True Ancestor>, <Natural Gift of Magic>, <Torrent of Light Darkness>, <Drain Soul>, <Immortality>, <Darkness Adaptation>, <Blood Mana>, <Suzerain of Household>, <Super Demonic Brain Nimble>

Sensation>, <Magic Combat Style Knowledge>, <Guidance Magic Knowledge>, <Spear Sparring>, <Chain Sense Guidance>, <Magic Crest Construction>, <Instant Staff of Water>, <Spirit Employment>

Extra Skills: <Language Comprehension>, <Granted Seal of Light>, <Chain Factor>, <Demonic Cerebral Spine Revolution>

I check <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

※ Chain Spear of the Ray System ※

A native light attribute skill resembling the Extra Skill <Granted Seal of Light>. It has additional effectiveness thanks to the effect of the Extra Skill <Chain Factor>.

A unique derivation rip and pierce skill of the Extra Skill system. It turns into a special Light Chain Spear.

The explanation ends with only this much, huh?
Even when I touched it, it wasn't displayed in detail.
I guess I have to test it?

“Rollo, I will test a skill.” (Shuuya)

I invoke ^{Shining} <Chain ^{Chain} Spear of the Ray System> ^{Lance} and place the aim on the centre of a tree's trunk.

After creating the light spear in an instant, it flies out and the chain revolves in a spiral like a trail of light in its rear.

As planned, it pierced the centre of the tree's trunk.

It seems to possess a pursuing ability.

Moreover, there's a light chain growing from the rear of the light spear like a sea anemone.

— I will also test it out while running.

— Oh, it's useful.

Can I make the light chain move? The instant I wondered about that, the chain located at the rear of the light spear stuck into the tree's trunk draws a small spiral and completely split.

It's shredding vascular cracks as if a net was spreading throughout the surrounding bark of the trunk which had the light spear stuck into it.

Does it have a capture function as well? Rather than capturing, it's a net attack,

huh?

This is handy. I can use it for attacking and restraining.

My choice of long-range attacks besides <Chain> has increased.

Let's lightly test things around this area. I hasten my travel speed a bit.

"Rollo, I will ascend to the sky to check our location. Can you go inside my hood?" (Shuuya)

"Nn, nya." (Rollo)

Rollo dives from the shoulder into the hood.

While feeling the weight of her cute back, I used <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain> and climbed high into the sky.

After forming a foothold out of the Hand of Distorted Mana, I float in mid air... and confirm our destination.

I can faintly see a part of the Mahaheim Mountain Range at the far horizon. It's inevitable for it to look distant right now. On this side, the road curls ahead like a small snake.

Ahead of it there was an artificial area that has no forest. I realize that it's a cleared up land.

And, something like a fortress was visible as well.

The front line fortress is over there, I suppose.

Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I descend from the sky while shooting a <Chain> aiming at a tree with thick branches and a tall height. I advance swiftly along the road by jumping along the trees.

After a few hours.

The road vanished and a large fortress surrounded by a wooden wall with fields spreading in front of it became visible.

On the other side of the large fortress there is a large forest covered densely with tall trees.

Furthermore, once I approach the fortress, magic light suddenly flew about and the scene of a battlefield came in sight.

A fierce battle between demons and people is unfolding.

Grizbells, lesser demons and... oh, a huge eyeball monster, which was covered by black hair and which I had never seen before, are located at the right rear.

The huge black-haired eyeball shot green light spheres from its large pupils at

the adventurers fighting against it while floating in mid-air.

The adventurers are on the defence centred around big shield users. It looks like several of them were hit by the green spheres. Their feet have changed their colour to green and there are also some who became unable to move with their feet connected to the ground after they melted.

This place is the front line 【Fortress City Sole】.

It's quite the violent welcome.

Is it time for Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness Helme and, after a long time, the burning knight-kun's turn?

『Helme, leave my left eye and crush all of them.』 (Shuuya)

『Ha!—』 (Helme)

“Rollo, go on a rampage, But, don't cause troubles to those fighting humans, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Nyanya.” (Rollo)

The liquidised Helme follows my orders, jumps out of my eye, causes a sheet of spray and drops down as if flying.

“I will get down as well.” (Shuuya)

I jump off the thick branch as well and land on the ground.

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

Rollo gets off my shoulder and changes into the black panther.

She extends her tentacle bone swords into a herd of grizbells at once and gets rid off the fighting distance in an instant by contracting the tentacle. It's not like she's imitating Helme, but... she buried her fangs into a grizbell's black-haired butt.

Was she influenced after seeing the battle the other day?

Dark Hell Bone Knights

Well then, do I use the Prison of Darkness Bone Knights after a long time?

Touching the ring, I summon them.

“Red Burning Knight Adomos is now here, awaiting orders.”

“Black Burning Knight Zemetas, present.”

“Yo, it's been a while. Did you stay in good health?” (Shuuya)

“— Ha! We enjoyed hunting gordo in the spirit world.”

“I’m full of spirit.”

They have solemn voices as usual.

“So here’s the deal, I plan to exterminate the demons rampaging around over there. By the way, this place is next to the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】. I’ve been told that there’s a **tear** connecting to the spirit world, where you reside, in that large forest.” (Shuuya)

“W-What did you say!”

“A tear toward Sela in that forest ahead...”

The two burning knights lifted their faces while shouting out their surprise. It felt like their red eyes shone even brighter.

“Did that surprise you?” (Shuuya)

“Ha!”

“I was surprised.”

“I’m sorry for having surprised you, but I will have you exterminate those guys. Once they have been annihilated, I will have you return to the spirit world, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Certainly! Let this Black Burning Knight Zemetas show you how I annihilate all of them with this dark bone sword, Your Excellency!”

“Understood. Let this Red Burning Knight Adomos show you how I pulverize all of them with my shield.”

The black burning knight and the red burning knight roar vigorously. Getting their shields ready, they began to advance towards the spot where Helme and Rollo are fighting.

While watching that, I invoke <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain>. I made the Magic Halberd appear in my right hand while dashing as if jumping through the air by using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> as foothold. I lowered the red axe blade on the head of a lesser demon I picked as target and defeated it in the process.

Of course the lesser demon couldn’t react.

— It's split into two halves from its head to the crotch. The red axe blade even reached the ground.

The blood, which spew out from the corpse's cut sections, evaporates around the red axe blade.

I land and place one knee on the ground.

That also served a little bit as brake. There's no counter-attack from the demons in the surrounding.

It seems they are surprised by our sudden assault.

Thinking that, I look around right away.

... I see. They don't have any leeway to counter-attack, do they?

Helme, the combination of the burning knights and Rollo were going berserk.

Helme's ice spears pierced the feet of a grizbell and stopped its movements.

The black burning knight stabbed the torso of the grizbell that had its movements blocked with his longsword.

Moreover, the red burning knight, who moved from the back of the black burning knight as if suddenly gushing forth, delivers a finishing shield bash against the grizbell's head and destroys its skull.

His bone armour, which is releasing a black steam, was dyed in blood spurts.

Amazing. They are naturally cooperating.

What entered my view at that point were the tentacle bone swords extended

Black Panther Mode

by Rollodeen.

Fixing the tentacle bone swords to the lesser demons' feet by piercing them, she dragged along the lesser demons' bodies just like that and ran around the battlefield in order to get the surrounding demons dragged into it as well.

Haha, the surrounding demons fall over and collapse.

Due to the scenery of her one-sidedly tormenting, teasing and killing them with her tentacles, the adventurers, who were fighting against the other demons, were taken aback.

Well then, I can't get defeated by them either.

I set that huge black-haired eyeball in the rear as my target.

First I will get rid of the grizbells next to it.

Slanting the Magic Halberd while running, I mow them down in fan form and cut a grizbell from its torso to its feet.

Shining

Chain

Lance

Next I release the skill <Chain Spear of the Ray System> which I just picked up.

Since it's a skill, there's no chanting.

The magic light spear stabbed the head of a grizbell that was on my left side in an instant.

Without sparing a single glance at the monsters as they continue to fall down, I run towards the location of my target, the black-haired eyeball.

Did it notice my direct approach while mowing down one monster after the other? The black-haired eyeball turned its huge pupil, which was right in the middle of it, at me as if operating a mobile fortress.

Death

Star

That means it has noticed me, doesn't it?

The black-haired eyeball flashily shoots green light spheres.

Avoiding heading straight towards it, I dash diagonally and dodge the light spheres.

The green light spheres created holes in the ground where I passed through. They don't appear to pursue me.

However, by continuing to release a barrage, I can't stop running because it chases after me.

At that moment a lesser demon prepares its pike and attacks me who is running while avoiding the barrage.

Tsk, this lesser demon is a nuisance.

Ah, but, it fits just right—

While running I immediately implement the idea I came up with.

I shoot <Chain>.

I stab the lesser demon with the chain. After wrapping the chain around it, I jumped into the air while dragging it along and tried to clash the lesser demon's body into a green light sphere.

The lesser demon's body collided with it causing a thick sound and a hole appeared in its body after a part of it was melted away.

— I think I don't wanna get hit by those green light spheres.

But, if I run while making use of the demons as shields against the shooting trajectory...

Will the light spheres stop?

Pondering that, I move while using demon monsters such as lesser demons and grizbells as shields.

However, it doesn't seem like that black-haired eyeball considers the demons as

its comrades.

It appears to stay calm even if it kills the demons.

It ceaselessly shoots green light spheres without stopping.

Once the lesser demons and grizbells are hit by the green light spheres, they scream in death agony as holes are burned into their bodies and collapse.

Are these guys morons?

In that case, I will guide the demons in the surroundings into the shooting trajectory of the black-haired eyeball.

I repeatedly move around in order to change lesser demons and grizbells into shields. One after the other the demons are penetrated by the black-haired eyeball's light spheres and melt away.

Thanks to that, there was no one left in the vicinity of the black-haired eyeball.

Alright, ah, but that means that the obstacles ended up vanishing.

— Sure enough. The light spheres keep coming at me endlesslyyy.

— There's no place where I can hiiideeee.

— Running diagonally to the side, I evade the flying green light spheres with good timing.

I wanted to directly strike the red axe blade into that black-haired eyeball which looks "soft and flabby," but...

I give up.

I fire a chain at the black-haired eyeball while running and following that, I also
Shining Chain Lance
release a <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

It pursues behind the chain, which is advancing by drawing an arc in mid-air, as if tearing the space with a single ray line.

Immediately after the chain pierced the surface of the black-haired eyeball, the shining light spear also stabbed deeply into it's huge pupil.

The instant it pierced into it, the gathering of chains, located at the rear of the light spear, spreads, splits up and wriggles in a helical shape. Turning into a net of light similar to one used for catching fish, it creates many crack-like netted fissures on the surface of the black-haired eyeball.

Penetrating into its soft-looking interior, the wounds of the net cut deeply into it.

It's cut apart into pieces in a beautiful manner.

The flabby, black-haired eyeball turned into small chunks of meat and those

dropped down.

Even a single strike of the light spear is powerful, but the second attack with the light chain net is even more brutal.

A large amount of jelly-like meat pieces are scattered on the ground.

If I eat those, they might really taste like jelly-like sweets...

Once the black-haired eyeball was defeated, the demons, who were fighting at other places, apparently decided to retreat individually and withdraw in separate directions.

The demons, who attacked the 【Holy City】 of the 【Holy Kingdom】, operated systematically, but it seems those guys are different.

Once I return the burning knights to the spirit world by touching the ring, Helme and Rollo return while running.

“N, nyanya~” (Rollo)

Does Rollo want to boast once again? Lesser demons are hanging down from her tentacle bone swords.

“Rollo, you did well. I’m putting you through trouble each and every time.”
(Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo drops the corpses on the spot and makes the blood spurts on her fur fly away by shaking herself as usual. After being satisfied with that, she began to groom herself by licking her stomach.

“Your Excellency, the demons have retreated.” (Helme)

Next to Rollo who’s licking her stomach, Helme puts one knee on the ground.

“Seems so, doesn’t it?” (Shuuya)

“The one who was defeated by Your Excellency, that eyeball monster, might have been the one giving instructions.” (Helme)

“Well, going by the circumstance it’s correct to think so, but since it didn’t look like they were understanding each other, unexpectedly they might have simply retreated because their numbers decreased.” (Shuuya)

“Such possibility exists as well.” (Helme)

We talked while walking, but stopped once.
It's before heading to the fortress city.

"Helme, please take off the blood sticking to Rollo and me." (Shuuya)

"Ha!—" (Helme)

Turning into a watery state, Helme covers Rollo and me with a liquid.
It's a sensation of being wrapped up by that liquid. It might feel slightly nice.
Rollo and I became clean in an instant.
With this there should be plenty of blood stored inside Helme's body.
Helme changed from her liquid state into a human shape.

"Helme, please give me the blood." (Shuuya)

"Yes, with pleasure." (Helme)

Helme kisses me on the spot to deliver the blood to me.
It's a passionate version to the degree of causing a *chyupan* sound after the kiss ends.

"— The replenishment is complete. It's fine for you to return into my eye."
(Shuuya)

"Yes—" (Helme)

Helme turns into water and plunges into my left eye while rotating in a spiral.
Well then, let's go to the fortress? The gate is in its rear.
Placing Rollo on my shoulder, I walk towards the location of the fortress' gate.
The surviving adventurers had gathered in front of the gate.
At the time when we entered their field of vision, uproars and cheers start to happen.

"Oi, it's that guy. It's a face I haven't seen, but he finished off that black-haired eyeball, the B++ Arbiter, by himself, you know...?"

"Yeah, that startled me. That spear user, no, magic spear user since he used magic, huh? It's the same class as the stringed large sword Bertran which is led by War Princess Swane who is on an expedition right now."

"A class, eh? It's possible, I guess."

That flabby, black-haired eyeball was called Arbiter?

“The spear user over there~~, you saved us. Thanks.”

“The one who pulled off that massacre is a new face?”

“Where’s the **black panther** which seemed to be his familiar?”

“There’s a black cat on his shoulder. Isn’t that the one? The black panther ran around while dragging along demons. That was amazing.”

“In addition it looked as if there was also a **female magician**, but she’s not here...”

“I also saw knights who wore bone helmets and were releasing red and black smoke from their bodies, but it looks like they ended up dying.”

is what they seem to say. It looks like I ended up giving the adventurers, who have been active here from the very beginning while being attached to the fortress, a shocking image.

While revealing a non-committal, forced smile, I walk towards the closed fortress gate.

I arrive before the gate after crossing the abatis which is likely the final defence line.

The gate stayed closed.

“Oi, won’t you open it?”

“Please wait, we are opening it right now.”

The person on top of the fortress’ wall said.

After I take a little distance, the gate is opened.

Passing through the opened gate, I proceed into the fortress.

Most of the houses inside the fortress were made out of wood. The width of the roads isn’t wide and there are many crossroads.

It doesn’t look like there are that many buildings here.

But, among them I discover a signboard with Adventurer’s Guild written on it.

Shall I try having a look at some requests while I’m procuring information in the guild?

Chapter 95 – Great Forest of Demonic Haunts

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



Once I enter the adventurer's guild in the 【Sole Fortress】, the hustling and bustling dies down.
Naturally all eyes focussed on me.
After all I showily rampaged around in front of the fortress.
Unbeknownst of whether she hates the gazes gathering on her or whether she got tired of it, Rollo dives into my hood as if hiding.
While feeling the precious body weight of Rollo on my back, I proceed deeper into the guild.
The guild building's interior has the same size as the one in the city of 【Fortona】.
I continue on the grain-styled wooden floor to the inner part where I see the reception desk.
An unusual light source, namely a magic sword and a round shield on the ceiling, illuminated the central hall.
There's also a familiar scenery.
The adventurers displaying troubled expressions as they choose their requests is the same everywhere.

They are staring at the board with the pinned request papers while showing serious expressions just like usual.

Request, request...

Almost all requests are taking place in the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

There are many subjugation requests with ranks ranging from A to C.

Subjugation requests for grizbells, lesser demons and macquires are lined up.

There was even the name of the black-haired eyeball-monster Arbiter which I defeated.

The rank is B++.

It seems there are various others besides grizbells and lesser demons.

Subjugation requests for monsters with strange names such as Cardprepas,

Reqmogue and Hapiado are stuck on the C rank and B rank boards.

Request Content: B-Rank – Subjugate 10 “Grizbells”

Subjugation Target: Grizbells

Application Period: indefinite

Search Area: Great Forest of Demonic Haunts

Reward: 5 Gold coins

Subjugation Proof: Blue pelt, hooves, eyeballs, ears

Key Points: Possessing horse limbs, they are fast. However, they have a tendency of preferring close combat. They will likely attack while bearing bows and longswords. Be careful since the degree of difficulty will rise sharply if a Great Grizbell owning a horn is leading their side.

Note: Their number of appearances is high, but they are B ranked. We will buy their raw materials such as their pelt, eyeballs, hooves and testicles.

There are many saleable raw materials.

I don't want to loot their testicles though.

Next are lesser demons, I guess? Their numbers should be high as well.

Request Content: C-Rank – Subjugate 10 “Lesser Demons”

Subjugation Target: Lesser Demons

Application Period: indefinite

Search Area: Great Forest of Demonic Haunts

Reward: 5 Gold coins

Subjugation Proof: Horns, trident, ears

Key Points: They prefer close combat and act in groups

Note: We will buy their horns and tridents

The next is the last one with indefinite time, huh?

Request Content: B-Rank – Subjugate 5 “Reqmogues”

Subjugation Target: Reqmogue

Application Period: indefinite

Search Area: Great Forest of Demonic Haunts

Reward: 3 Gold coins

Subjugation Proof: Black claws, horns, noses, pelts, meat

Key Points: They prefer close combat with their sharp claws. They enslave rats and make them attack people. They act in groups. They like dark places. Going by their appearance, their trait apparently is to find humans by sniffing out the scent with their nose. Be careful of surprise attacks.

Note: They are B rank because of their big numbers and commonly appearing all together at once. Their appearance is that of an animal type. We will buy their black claws, horns, noses, pelts and meat.

I decide to accept a total of four requests.

Holding two wooden tags of the grizbell subjugation request, I head to the reception.

Oh, it's a map.

Something that might be considered a map of the demonic haunts was drawn on the ceiling diagonally atop the reception.

With the fortress location being drawn largely on the side, the majority is coloured with forest.

Red x's marked the place considered to be the points to where the subjugation unit advanced. There's only a few x-marked places at locations slightly away from the fortress.

It's not a detailed map?

I present my card and the wooden tags to a free receptionist while having my thoughts about the drawing that seems to show the local area.

“These requests please.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Umm, this number by yourself?”

“That’s right. Is there any problem with that?” (Shuuya)

I squinted my eyes and looked at the receptionist.

“No, then, please place your hand on this.”

The receptionist is indifferently processing the requests without being perturbed by my gaze.

The crystal shone and the requests were acknowledged right away. After that I was handed back my adventurer card.

I put the card away.

Should I ask her a bit about the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】?

Just when I tried to ask her— the guild’s entrance door was violently opened by being kicked.

“— Where is he!?”

What?

I unintentionally react with a loud voice.

Turning my back on the receptionist, I look behind.

“N, nya?” (Rollo)

Rollo shows her face from within the hood.

There was a cute female knight with conspicuously long and pink hair at the guild’s entrance.

On her right there was a macho-like man who possessed a large sword, had outstanding muscles and a tattoo on one of his dark-skinned shoulders.

On her left there was a lean man who had a scrawny face, wore a white robe and held a wand.

“Just a moment ago a spear user came here. Where’s the spear user who repelled the demon raid?”

The female knight’s powerful voice resounds.

As if it was natural, the inquisitive looks of the adventurers, who are inside the guild, gathered on me.

“Mu, over there huh—?”

The proud pink-haired woman looks at me after being guided by the line of

sights of everybody.

Her hair style is that of long rolls which makes one feel an Marie Antoinette like atmosphere.

Small red and white swords, which probably depict the country's coat of arms, were conspicuously drawn on the place where her chest bulged out and that was covered by a silver plate on top of a silver chain mail.

Her lower body is protected at her hips by a skirt-like tasset part which was made out of silver threads.

Two longswords for combat were dangling at her waist while being affixed with golden threads with a gap as if sticking to that skirt.

She's stylish and tall. Her height is surpassing 160 cm? *(T/N: That's considered to be tall? O.o)*

She walks while making her crease-less silver mantle flutter.

She advances with an elegant gait, similar to that of a model.

Silver greaves with various designs were equipped on her long legs.

She's silver all over. Possessing green eyes, one immediately knows that she's a higher-up female knight.



Her small peach-coloured lips move.

“You are the one who slaughtered many demons and defeated that Arbiter, right?”

I faintly smell perfume and a light make-up.
She possesses an charming beauty.

“Yeah, that’s correct. However, who are you?” (Shuuya)

“I’m the A rank adventurer Swane. I also serve as leader of the clan 【Demonic Haunt Extermination】.” (Swane)

“Princess, the way of introducing yourself properly is...”

Princess?

The spindly magician right behind her followed up on her.

I see, this beautiful female isn’t a knight but a princess?

Thinking of pink hair,

“Mu, is that so? I’m Swane Phi Arkamneris. I’m the first princess, an adventurer and the stationed officer of the 【Sole Fortress】 here.” (Swane)

She’s the royal princess after all.

Going by her name, she’s the person related to Princess Aurora as elder sister?

Her green pupils and pink-coloured hair is just like that of Aurora.

“... Princess Swane-sama, was it? What kind of business does such a noble lady have with me?” (Shuuya)

“Won’t you tell me your name before talking about business?” (Swane)

“Excuse me for this slip-up. My name is Shuuya. My family name is Kagari. I’m called Shuuya. My adventurer rank is C.”

“What? Shuuya-dono, you are “C” after such military achievements?” (Swane)

Well, that’s a common reaction.

“Yes. This is the proof of that.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanya.” (Rollo)

Saying that, I showed my card and at the same time Rollo returned on my

shoulder and purred.

“Certainly, it’s yours, Shuuya-dono. That black cat on your shoulder was also actively participating in defeating the demons, I have heard from adventurers. It seems there was another woman and bone-like knights, but...” (Swane)

“Are you not making some mistake? Because Rollo is my familiar and partner. So, what might your business be?” (Shuuya)

“Aah, umm, how to say it. For the sake of exterminating demons, become a member of my clan—” (Swane)

What? It’s an invitation?
I won’t let you finish phrasing your invitation. Let’s refuse here.

“I decline. Then—” (Shuuya)

“Wh-...” (Swane)

The princess flaps her mouth open and shut out of surprise.
She’s a beautiful person, but...
I’m already against getting involved with that kind of person, right?
Hurriedly putting away my guild card, I walk through the guild while forgoing the princess with her goldfish mouth.

“Wait—”

The large sword owner behind the princess spread his dark-skinned arms while shouting that and stood in my way.

“What’s the idea about you rejecting the princess’ invitation?”

The large sword owner says so while glaring at me with lifted-up eyes.
What? Are you saying that you will have me join forcefully?

“That’s my line. Certainly you won’t force me to join, will you?” (Shuuya)

“No, I won’t do that, but upon knowing the circumstances of the 【Sole Fortress】 here, do you intend to decline the invitation to the princess’ clan 【Demonic Haunt Extermination】?”

The circumstances of them being attacked by demons?
Such stuff has nothing to do with me though...

“That’s right.” (Shuuya)

“We are the top clan of 【Sole Fortress】. We have repeatedly succeeded in expeditions into the demonic haunts to a degree that exceeds even the crusades.”

Top clan, eh?

I wonder, do they also have a detailed map of the entire 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】?

Well, even if they had such map, it would become impossible to go to my target location if I entered their clan. That would be putting the cart before the horse. According to Elmes-san, the south-east forest close to the Mahaheim Mountain Range was called the **Forest of Sadeyula**.

In that case, it won’t suffice unless I head into the deepest inner part.

These people might be strong and reliable. However, in the end it’s only if measured in the category of humans.

It’s possible that they will become a burden.

Therefore.

“... I’m sorry. I refuse.” (Shuuya)

“Bertrand, Shuuya-dono has already said so. Step aside.” (Swane)

“Y-Yes. Understood.” (Bertrand)

The princess stopped Bertrand by talking to him with a regretful look. Just like that I leave the guild at a quick pace without looking at the princess’ party.

There isn’t anything like a shopping street in this fortress.

There were only a Jack of all trades like store and an inn close to the guild.

In the end I wasn’t able to hear the detailed information from the receptionist.

Well, it doesn’t matter. It will probably be alright if I head south-east.

There’s an inn on the left side, but...

I wonder whether I should immediately plunge into the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 without staying over at the inn?

I was able to leave the fortress easily since the gate, through which I entered, was left open.

Since the adventurers, who were collecting the raw materials from the

monsters' corpses in front of the fortress, are returning to the fortress one after the other, we pass each other.

Each time I passed one of them, they noticed me in an instant.

They were probably considering me as strange for not having collected the raw materials although I defeated them.

Though I will collect it from now on if it's added to the number of successful requests. As that's not the case here, I run towards the forest.

I rushed into the【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

Dark... there's no sunlight here.

Without using a magic light, I rely on <Night Vision>.

I'm greeted by a place with densely growing grass.

I advanced while cutting the grass with my Magic Halberd and the cursed sword.

However, the great forest swiftly shows various changes.

Turning into a place where short grass spreads on the surfaces just like moss and where the ground is covered with dark brown, huge roots, the environment doesn't seem to be fixed.

The many bushes make the footing unstable.

The ground where it's difficult to walk continues. There doesn't exist a path where people pass through.

There's only tall trees and shrubs.

However, I sense powerful magic sources from within the many trees in this mysterious place.

There were indications that different creatures were apparently lurking around here.

And there's once again a reaction.

What is it? I felt like Grasping Perception reacted to something, but...

I look around intently while paying attention to the trunks of the trees, but nothing happens.

It's strange, but this place is the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

Thinking that such things might happen as well, I advanced on my own feet, without using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> or <Chain>, even while tilting my head to the side.

... I walked for quite a long time.

I guess it's fine around here.

Thereupon I fire a <Chain> into a tall tree which is diagonally right next to me.

I cancel <Night Vision> since the sunlight is bright once I reel in the chain.

I start moving alongside the trees while being basked in sunlight.

This is much more comfortable after all. It's fun.

For a while I moved along the trees like Tarzan or a ninja.

I felt magic sources all over on the dark ground below the trees, but as it seems that there are no monsters who are active above the trees, I haven't encountered any until now.

Therefore I'm able to explore smoothly.

I don't get careless since I might just not have met monsters who move along the trees yet by chance, but... while being cautious just in case, I enjoy my travel along the trees.

Plenty of monkeys, flying squirrels, bats, owls, snakes and ants are living at the upper parts of the trees. Animals and insects using that fact lived in the global environment.

Just how many, yet unknown monsters, are waiting in the great forests of Sera (different world)...?

At that moment I discover a strangely thick branch growing from a large tree. It has a width allowing me to lay down on it.

I land on the thick branch while placing one knee on it.

As I stand up, I gaze at the giant tree with a sky covering size as it naturally continues upwards because of its thick trunk.

It has an overwhelming taller height and thicker trunk than the trees located in the neighbourhood of the fortress.

Though it's a great forest, I properly grasp that this was the elven empire **【Great Ancient Empire Befaritz】**.

It was probably a much greater elven territory than the one in **【Teramey Kingdom】** I reached after being guided by Raglen.

... The ground has become dim.

The sunlight still reaches this place, but the ground below is mostly deprived of light.

— Oh?

I was able to feel magic source responses from below the tree.

Once I look down, I can see black horse demons walking in a line.
A group of grizbells. Their numbers are high...
However they haven't noticed me who is atop a tree.
Although it's possible to surprise attack them, I ignore them.

"Nn, nya?" (Rollo)

Rollo, who is on my shoulder, looks at me who is gazing below and purrs in a questioning manner.

It felt as if she's saying: Will you finish off those demons nya?

"No, let's prioritize exploration for now. We can hunt for the sake of the requests at any time." (Shuuya)

"Nyaa." (Rollo)

Rollo purrs like that and returns into the hood while yawning.

"I will wake you up once an enemy comes, okay?" (Shuuya)

"Nnn." (Rollo)

She answers with just a throaty voice.

Good grief, she acts like a cat lord-sama with a good social position. Will she change into a stupid cat lord-sama who plasters her face with powder?

While I ponder about such stupid stuff, I resume moving along the trees.

I'm observing my surroundings with caution while recalling the gossip of Elmes and the book's content Chloe mentioned.

A hill, a big tree and a spring, was it?

There's probably terrain where hills rise in the forest. I think I will realize in one go once I get close.

I advanced through the forest in a straight line, with a momentum at the level of crashing into the Mahaheim Mountain Range, while investigating the environment for the sake of searching for those three landmarks.

Since it became late at night, I once again land on a thick branch that grows at the upper side part of a large tree.

I take a break on this branch.

For the first time I use the Magically-built Home I received from the princess. The instant I said 「Deploy」 after touching the crystal, it results in a sound of *bum* and a tent with a luxurious curtain appears in front of my eyes.

I immediately passed through the cloth door and tried peeking inside. Different from the Magically-built Home used by Princess Aurora, it's sufficiently wide though the number of beds is low with just one. It's satisfactory. Even except the bed, there's space where sleeping is possible. Well then, before lying down... I left the Magically-built Home. Let's have the burning knights stand watch.

Dark Hell Bone Knights

I activate my ring magic tool, Prison of Darkness Bone Riders. Something like black and red threads originate from the ring. The threads cling to the thick branch.

It's a branch, but the places, where the threads stuck to, created a smoke with a sound similar to boiling and the burning bone knights appeared.

"Your Excellency, it's the black burning knight Zemetas."

"Your Excellency, it's the red burning knight Adomos."

Two pairs of red pupils with a helmet on their bone heads. It was the entry of the burning knights who were kneeling down on one knee.

"Yo, thanks for earlier. The reason I summoned you is because I'd like you to stand watch here." (Shuuya)

"Yes!—"

"At your command!—"

They have deep, harmonizing voices.

Let's ask them about the tear as well?

I had previously heard that even the spirit world has turned into a place of strife, but I will ask them once more.

"... It's abrupt, but the tear is a place that connects the surface world Sera with the spirit world Sebdola, right? Although I heard about it before, please tell me once more." (Shuuya)

"Yes, there's always dispute over the tears. There are many cases where tears are occupied by groups who wield authority in the spirit world, but there are also cases where fixed agreements are made."

"Agreements?" (Shuuya)

“Yes. There are cases where several households or demons tie alliance agreements to not fight with each other in order to place priority on expanding Sera. Though there’s no coordination since there are also demons among them who aren’t as flexible.”

You might even say that it’s kind of demon-like for there to be no coordination.

“Hee, I wonder whether the demons, whom I happened to encounter, were allied? It’s the opponents you guys fought the other day. Though the black horse types called grizbells and the human types with two long, black horns on their heads who are called lesser demons are monsters.” (Shuuya)

“Your Excellency, grizbells are dependants connected to the Hunting Magic God Bofun.”

“Or it can be surmised that they are demons holding a position close to that.”

They knew them after all?

Hunting Magic God Bofun.

I saw that name in the picture scroll of gods.

It should have been a **picture** of a centaur holding a bow going by its appearance.

“Arbiter. There was also a huge, round, black-haired eyeball monster that released a green beam and which I defeated, but what about this fellow?” (Shuuya)

“It seems to be a dependent of the Evil God of Demon Eyes Desalobia. It’s a powerful demon with a nature of easily going into a frenzy, but many of them aren’t overly bright.”

I see, I can agree with that as the black-haired eyeball needlessly attacked the other demons without questions asked.

Well, let’s stop the questioning around here.

It’s not like I got particularly tired, but I want to lie down lightly inside the Magically-built Home.

I have to refresh myself mentally, don’t I?

“Well then, since I will go rest for a bit, I leave the lookout to you, although

this place is on top of a tree.” (Shuuya)

“Ha!—”

“Leave it to us!”

The burning knights reply with voices filled with fighting spirit.
I nod. At that moment the Crystal Spirit of Everlasting Darkness appeared in my field of vision once again.

『Your Excellency, won't you make use of me...?』 (Helme)

『You mean as lookout? No need.』 (Shuuya)

『Got it.』 (Helme)

Helme vanished from my field of vision.
I stepped into the Magically-built Home and took a rest.



After that, taking two days, I arrived at the foot of the Mahaheim Mountain Range.

They are huge mountains. They make the Baldok Mountain look cute.
Ahead, on the other side of this mountain range, should be the plateau area, the Goldeeba region, where my master and the others live.

It's quite strange that they had come on the other side at that time.

Should I look from above once more in a sightseeing mood?

Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain>, I run up into the sky as usual.

Exceeding the tall trees, I created a foothold at a height around the abdomen of the Mahaheim Mountain Range with its high altitude and looked down with a bird's-eye view.

The Mahaheim Mountain Range continues unbroken like a wall of the world.
Hey, this is amazing. Once I look at the upper regions of the mountains, there are huge dragon shaped monsters and human shaped monsters with flat faces like mirrors flying around in swarms... those are scary.

Or rather, don't come over here, okay...?

It might be best if I ceased staying at a high altitude near the mountains.

I stop observing the Mahaheim Mountain Range and stare at the 【Great Forest

of Demonic Haunts】 continuing endlessly on the left side.

My current location should be south of the 【Sole Fortress】.

If I head east along this mountain range, it will probably be a south-east direction more or less.

Even when I look east, the forest continues into the far distance like a carpet and seems to melt with the sky. I don't know where I can find the **Forest of Sadeyula**.

Should I head east while combing through the forest?

I descend from the sky.

Firing a <Chain> into a tall tree, I resumed travelling towards the east.

This time I consciously move in a zigzag while turning my view all over.

I considered getting the help from Helme, the burning knights and Rollo, however since it's not like we can communicate over a long distance, it's faster doing it by myself.

At that time I found yet another tall tree with a thick branch that looked as if it could be used for resting.

However, something's different?

Nuoh? What is it?

Just now the bark of the trunk wriggled for an instant?

It looked like the tree's bark moved for a moment there...

Landing on that thick branch, I approach the thick trunk to investigate it.

— Eh?

— Uwaah.

Scary! Eyes! There are several eyes.

In-between the bark several things similar to human eyes moved squirming around in **cracked, dark parts**, of which countless existed.

Moreover, those eyes all at once stare at me...

“Small one, noticed, by us, noticed...”

Once the monsters of the barks form such words, they start moving all of a sudden.

The barks with the eyeballs attached roll up with a splintering sound while being peeled off the tree.

The contents of the trunk, which were peeled off by the bark, completely fell off. A part of the tree's interior became hollow as if it was gouged out by

emptiness.

— Uwah.

The rolled up bark becomes one unified cluster and transforms into a giant. Eventually the thing which was a single cluster, changed into a wooden, human-shaped monster.

It's length is around 3 meters?

The thick branch creaks.

Four root-typed feet support the heavy-looking trunk.

The mouth-like parts, located at the trunk part, moved while causing a jerking sound.

“Small one, you, demon, different. What thing you are?”

A tree monster, huh?

The eyeballs in-between the barks are gross as they restlessly roll around. However, even if you are referring to me as a thing...

“You too are a thing”, I wanted to say assertively, but I held back.

“I'm from a race called Lucival which resembles humans.” (Shuuya)

“Jin race? Lucival? Unknown, unknown name... Small one, Lucival, delicious? Demons, delicious.”

I was astonished. It's preying upon demons?

“I'm not tasty. As for demons, do you eat black grizbell or such?” (Shuuya)

“Right. Red, eyes, delicious. Horse feet, by chance, tasty... other, demons, eat. Horn horn, over there, delicious.”

By chance...

It seems I made no mistake with the grizbells.

It's no wonder that there are no monsters on top of the trees.

These guys probably ate the demons which came close to the tree...

“What kind of race are you?” (Shuuya)

“We are... Torrent. Rather than that, hungry, stomach empty. You, might unappetizing, eat, fine if eat you?”

Torrent, huh?

Or rather, it still intends to eat me? Do I have to fight?

『Your Excellency, can I submerge it in water and freeze it with magic?』
(Helme)

Helme enters my visionary field.
She appears to be angry since her cheeks are slightly puffed up.

『No, not yet. It's fine to not fight. Currently I want to try negotiating with it.』
(Shuuya)

『Understood.』 (Helme)

The ones called Torrent; are they the same thing as demons?
Oh well, let's try talking to it?

"I taste badly. Besides, there's no way that I can let you simply eat me. ... I might end up eating you guys in reverse?" (Shuuya)

"Us, eat, you say, bubobobobo..."

Several branch-like thing spouted from its thick trunk in an instant. They repeatedly stretched horizontally and vertically, and then contracted.

"— What is it?" (Shuuya)

"Small one, amusing, interesting. Now, I will not eat."

It reacted with a laughter?
I ended up feeling slightly frightened.
Moreover, it won't eat me? Mmh, wait...
If demons are its food, would I possibly be able to obtain some information if I prepared food for it?

"You won't eat me? Then, will you eat a demon corpse if I bring it to you?"
(Shuuya)

"Ooooh, demon, demon, if bring, will become meal."

"Alright, please let me ask you about this area if I bring you a demon corpse."
(Shuuya)

"Bubobobobobo... understood, got it. Promise, promise. Demon, fast, fast."

"— Nn, nyanya." (Rollo)

Rollo woke up due to the strange laughter of the tree monster.
She moved from the hood on my shoulder.

“That, beast, demon?”

“No, this guy is my familiar. She’s no food.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

“Hmm... misleading. Hurry, demon, want.”

Well then, let’s kill a demon and bring it over?

“Got it. Rollo, get down, we are going to hunt.” (Shuuya)

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

Leaving such words behind, I jump off the thick branch.
I deploy <Magic Hand guided by Thought> in the air.
Creating several footholds while descending, I’m falling while dampening the impact.

At the end I pierce the ground diagonally ahead by expanding a <Chain>. I splendidly landed while reeling in the chain.

There are magic sources right close-by.

I approached the place, which triggered the magic source responses, in a quick walking pace while using <Hide>.

There, there they are. I can hear their footsteps.

Twigs and fallen leaves get broken by being stepped on with hooves similar to that of war horses.

It’s a group of grizbells.

A group of at least more than 20 grizbells is moving.

Let’s assault them by going ahead.

“Helme, come out.” (Shuuya)

『Yes, Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

Helme, who transformed into a liquid, is released from my left eye.
She appeared with one knee on the ground.

“Rollo and Helme, you will follow this noisy group from behind. I will go ahead and attack them. Rollo and Helme, attack the grizbells from behind.” (Shuuya)

“N, nyao.” (Rollo)

“Your Excellency, it’s a pincer attack, isn’t it? Wonderful. Rollo-sama, let’s go.”
(Helme)

Helme and Rollo move while taking a detour.

I begin to act as well.

I continue <Hide> while in a crouching stance.

I run under the cover of the night as I observe the demons.

In front I discover a large, thick branch, where I can hang from.

I can use that. Shooting a <Chain> from my left hand, I twine the chain around the branch. I head towards the thick branch while contracting the chain towards my left hand.

Hanging from the thick branch, I activate <Magic Hand guided by Thought> in mid air while having an upside down point of view.

The transparent magic hand of <Magic Hand guided by Thought> grabs the thick branch.

I hung down from that thick branch in an upside-down posture.

And then, making <Chain> disappear, I shoot it a second time.

Creating a loop by manipulating the chain, I suspended it towards below after turning around from the thick branch.

My current state is that of dangling while my body is covered by the overcoat as I take advantage of the darkness...

If I was seen by someone else, I would completely look like a large bat to them, I guess.

I’m Baoman. Do I have to protect Arkham City?

While revealing an evil smile, I lie in wait for the grizbells to pass right below me.

They came, they came.

I place my aim at the neck and head of the grizbell walking in front.

It went past directly below. Now—.

As planned I make the chain, which is twined around the branch, move towards below by having it take-off swiftly.

The chain plunges downward while grinding and shaving off the thick branch’s edge.

I also swooped down towards the ground while summoning the Magic Halberd

in my right hand.

Once I hook the boss of the grizbells walking in the vanguard after it entered the ring-shaped chain, I reel in the chain in one go. The grizbell gets pulled towards the top of the high branch.

The grizbell struggles in mid air while suffering because of its constricted neck, but it couldn't move while it hung from the chain.

Although it looks like batmao as well, you can call it a deadly Endgoe-like chain technique...

While feeling the chain extend from my left hand, I stretched out my right hand that held the Magic Halberd to the side and landed while holding the red axe blade horizontally.

It's a stance where I extend my knee to the side as if my right leg is following the magic spear.

— If it starts well, it will end well, too.

The demons seemed to be confused by my sudden attack. They are late in dealing with me.

Are the other grizbells trying to save the grizbell that stopped moving on top of the branch? They repeatedly jumped up using their pseudo-centaur-like horse legs as they screamed.

I close the distance to the grizbells with Magic Step.

I mowed down the Magic Halberd from right to left in a fan shape.

One grizbell transforms gets sliced up due to the red axe blade's flash.

Next I mow it down in the reverse direction, from left to right, while advancing.

Two grizbells, three grizbells, I chop up the leading group by mowing them down with lightning speed. I slaughter one grizbell after the other.

The grizbells get attacked from behind by Rollo and Helme.

The demons, who were caught in a pincer attack, are unable to put up a proper resistance.

Helme swings her left hand, releases dark mist at the grizbells and steals their sight by plunging them into deep darkness.

At that point Rollo extended her tentacle bone swords and stabbed the skulls of the grizbells who became confused after being hit at their head and hands.

While advancing, I erase the chain once, make it appear again and change its shape.

My image is that of a thick three-section staff.

Stretching out the three staffs like a nunchaku, a spear staff was completed.

I thrust the magic spear into the muscled chest of a grizbell. At the moment it faltered from having its black hair burned, I swung down the fake three-section staff, I grasped with my left hand, from directly in front while jumping. The twisted, curved iron chain made the skull of the grizbell cave in and its blood-stained four eyeballs popped out vigorously.

Another grizbell attacks me with its longsword, but the range of the three-section staff chain is wide.

The three-section staff chain, which extended loosely like a snake spear, blows into the bulky chest of the grizbell approaching from the front.

“Guoooh!”

Releasing a muffled voice, the grizbell holds down its chest and stops moving. Erasing the magic spear in my right hand at that timing, I reform the three-section staff chain on the spot. The three knuckles wriggle and the three-section staff chain twines itself around its neck with a movement similar to a snake twining around the grizbell’s neck. Tightening it in one go, the thick neck of the grizbell was torn to pieces.

Furthermore, transforming it into a chain spear and extending it right ahead in order to use the spearhead against a grizbell nearby, I stab towards the head of the grizbell with as if feinting and make the spear chain disappear.

At that timing the scenery of Helme shooting spells was reflected in my field of vision.

“Ahahahahaha! Butts, butts, buttttttsss.” (Helme)

While laughing, Helme defeats a grizbell by shooting ice pebbles into its black butt. Magnificently jumping towards a tree after creating a sheet of spray from her feet, she uses a trajectory similar to a triangular leap. While twisting her body in mid air, she released an ice sword from her right hand and reaped the head of a nearby grizbell.

Trampling down on the severed head with her blue feet, she unleashes yet another peculiar ^{gradually standing up} pose different from the other day as if showing off to me.

“Your movements are far too dull—”

Once Helme, who showed an expression of ecstasy, shouts that, she takes her ^{gradually standing up} unique trampling pose as if crushing the grizbell's head to death with the water she made appear from the tip of her toes. Producing an ice mist in her right hand after erasing the ice sword, she encloses her surroundings in ice. A shining, small rune with a gradation of the two colours blue and bluish black revolved inside the circle while moving.

“Fufufu.” (Helme)

While laughing, she creates sheets of spray from her entire body and approaches a frightened grizbell while maintaining the circle of ice. The instant the grizbell touched the circle of ice,

“Gyaaaaa.”

Being dyed in a blood-coloured thick pattern with broad horizontal stripes, half of its chest was severed.

Uwaah, that's the defence and offence of one ice circle?

I advance while hunting in order to not lose either.

Because of Helme's and Rollo's pincer attack, the grizbells are hunted down without any room to escape.

In this way the demons were annihilated in little time.

Did we easily finish off more than 20?

“Nyanya~o.” (Rollo)

Rollo comes back running while purring as if telling me that she finished her hard work.

“Your Excellency— I defeated plenty! Were you able to watch?” (Helme)

Helme also returns while swinging her arms in a peculiar manner.

The F-cupped pair of hills, which were wrapped up by beautiful blue leafs, shake with a springiness.

“... I saw. Helme you can even move at such a trajectory. Rollo was great as well.” (Shuuya)

“Your Excellency... I'm happy. Your feelings make my body tremble.” (Helme)

Her entire body with its bluish black and blue leafy skin was really trembling,

but I didn't point that out.

"Rollo, can you carry the corpses by stabbing them?" (Shuuya)

"Nn, nya." (Rollo)

As Rollo confirms, she pierces the scattered corpses on the ground with her tentacle swords.

"Helme, return into my eye." (Shuuya)

"Yes!" (Helme)

Helme returns into my left eye. Before transporting the corpses to the Torrent, I strip off the grizbells' ears as they are proof for the request. Cutting off the ears from the corpses hanging down from Rollo's tentacle swords, I complete the collection.

I also entwine the corpses by shooting <Chain> towards some of them and carry them.

I carried the corpses by making them float with <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and transported a large amount of demon corpses in front of the tree monster.

"Oooh, demons. It's demons. You, kept, promise. I eeaaaat, I, heads, bite whole."

Once the Torrent releases a delightful voice, it began to eat the black grizbell corpses.

It spreads a part similar to a stomach mouth and swallows the corpses. It's strange, but the bodies vanish without any chewing sounds.

"Occasional, smelly, delicacy, satisfied, satisfied. ... Me, keep, promise. What, want know?"

I stay utterly indifferent to the part about occasional.

"Do you know where I can find the **Forest of Sadeyula**? It seems to be a place that has a hill, a spring and a large tree." (Shuuya)

"Forest of Sadeyula? Name, don't know. But, hill, spring, large tree, know. Place, not able enter. From here, east, always east, is."

Hill, spring and large tree. Oooh, it knew. East, huh?

Elmes-san said that it was south-east according to the rumours, but that means I didn't make a mistake, doesn't it?

"The Torrent can't enter? Is some spell or barrier at work?" (Shuuya)

"Spell. Transparent, wall, there is. We, Torrent, and demons, can't enter, can't enter. Root also, couldn't enter, over there, something delicious, is?"

Hoo, doesn't that mean that there's a powerful magic barrier where demons can't enter and entering through the underground doesn't work either? It knew the place. Let's thank it for the time being.

"Well, I don't know. It's in the east. Torrent, thank you." (Shuuya)

"Bubobobobobobo! Small one, keep promise. Full stomach, full stomach. Got, sleepy, sleepy. We, sleep. Farewell—"

Once it says so, the eyeballs between the barks, start moving little by little. The monster which was human-shaped, returns to a single cluster and goes back as if being absorbed into the tree cavity.

Going by its appearance, it has returned to being an ordinary tree.

It's a common, thick tree with a large trunk...

There isn't much of a magic source response either.

The strange magic source, I felt from the tree in the beginning, might have been that Torrent which was inside this tree.

It doesn't really matter either way though.

Well then, shall I try heading east?

Kicking off the tree, I quickly use chain and magic hand guided by thought as I head directly towards the east.

Soon it will be around 10 days since I left 【Holkerbaum】, right?

There's around 20 days left until the promised date with the major company.

I'm also worried about the movements of the dark guild 【Owl's Fangs】.

The intelligence about me, who crushed their branch, should be quite extensive...

Well, that's after I finish my business here and return, I suppose?

Chapter 96 – Dark Guild 【Owl’s Fangs】 and the Leaf of Sadeyula

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



A/N: It starts with the viewpoint from the dark guild’s side.



An angry roar reverberated in a certain, extravagant mansion. The harsh words came from a well-built, handsome man sitting on an armchair. There was also a man missing one ear bowing his head at that well-built, handsome man from across the desk.

“... It’s a hard blow. This is a heavy loss. With the Holkerbaum branch annihilated... our plan’s have come to nothing. Bill, is that your responsibility?”

This well-built man, who boasts a corpulent double chin, shook his head which had blond hair with shades of grey mixed in. He glared at the face of the one-eared man called Bill with his piercing blue eyes.

“Eribol-sama, excuse me. All is my fault. I feel deeply ashamed that my subordinates are worthless. But even for me this was a bolt out of the blue.”
(Bill)

The one-eared man referred to the well-built, handsome man as Eribol.

“Who’s that **spear user** that was the reason for that? You have been able to

catch hold of his whereabouts, haven't you?" (Eribol)

Eribol tries to return to a calm tone, but the wrath leaking through his words was obvious to anyone.

"... That is, it's a young male spear wielder and a black beast. However... although it's certain that the information has been obtained by a thief guild, various false rumours and differing information keep appearing... we weren't able to pinpoint his whereabouts." (Bill)

"Those hyenas of the thief guilds haven't been useful despite charging an exorbitant price. However, if he's a user at the level of being able to kill those two, he's an assassin from another dark guild, huh?" (Eribol)

"Yes. The possibility of that is quite high." (Bill)

The one-eared Bill answers while nodding towards Eribol with a meek expression.

Once Eribol hears his words, he reveals an expression as if he swallowed a bitter pill, clenches his steamed bun-like fist and strikes his desk.

"— I don't like it. I truly don't like this. Find the spear user and kill him. Make him take responsibility for the losses he caused me." (Eribol)

Eribol addresses Bill with a commanding tone.

"Yes." (Bill)

"But, there are also other things you have to do. About the situation in Holkerbaum... you have to get rid of that obstinate woman to press forward the bridge's construction." (Eribol)

"It's that fussy merchant, right?" (Bill)

Bill nods without dropping his sullen expression.

"Right. Also, make that that stupid feudal lord who approved the construction understands his own position... But, well, now that it has come to this, we have to also consider leaving Holkerbaum alone for a while... I guess for now we got to put priority on the defence of Pelneet." (Eribol)

Eribol touches the flesh of his double chin while putting on a pondering expression and seems to be enjoying the sensation of his beard.

“Your Excellency, what will you do about the royal capital?” (Bill)

“We will cancel due to human resources. The other dark guilds probably won’t stay silent... Currently just Pelneet’s domain remains as our lifeline. Absolutely defend the sale route of the profitable loot from the **black market agreement Ga • Pe** to the last.” (Eribol)

The one-eared man Bill once again nods while bowing.

“Yes. We will make our arrangements as well. However, it won’t do if we don’t consider the worst possible development. If the preservation of our turf becomes difficult, it will naturally lead to the **black market agreement** being broken...?” (Bill)

“Yea... if the agreement falls through, it might result in us having to fight not only this country but also those foreign fishermen. We have taken hold of the fishermen’s weak point, but... rather than that, Bill, you already sent forth the red orders, right?” (Eribol)

Bill turns his sight towards the door next to him.

“Yes. All executives of **【Owl’s Fangs】** have already gathered in the conference room.” (Bill)

“In that case, accomplish your duty as owl’s fangs as usual. I will attend the navy transportation meeting. I have to lay the groundwork together with the nobles to secure our survival from now on. I will also make use of my daughter.” (Eribol)

“... I shall sympathise with you in my heart.” (Bill)

After Bill bows towards Eribol who sits straight, he immediately lifts his head, turns around, opens the door of the conference room that was next to him and enters the room leaving Eribol behind.

A strange line-up was assembled in the conference room.

After looking around slowly as if making sure of the strange members while raising his thin eyelids, he sits down on the chief seat.

He has the face of a warrior with fresh burn marks remaining on his right cheek as if matching his forehead with its deep sword scar.

From an overall perspective, it gave him a solemnity of being a **soldier with a**

long term of service.

That Bill starts to talk.

“As you already know **you guys** were summoned with a red order. Our master, Eribol Macabyn-sama is angry. This has led to to this emergency meeting of executives.” (Bill)

“President Bill? Is the story that Oze-ani and Jane were killed true? In addition to that, the 【Holkerbaum】branch has been almost completely destroyed?”

It's a young man with his hair knotted in the back who remarked while being flustered.

There were small wounds at the edges of his mouth.

Bill answers that question with silence.

After waiting a bit, President Bill turns his face towards the eyepatched, long-haired man next to him and raises his chin as if telling him “You explain.”

The eyepatched man starts to talk while leaning his head towards President Bill.

“Beck, it's just as you say. We got a notification from the spy we had infiltrate Holkerbaum's feudal lord's place. He heard stories about survivors and also confirmed the corpses on the battlefield.”

“W-What d-did you say...? Elder brother has...” (Beck)

The man, who was called Beck with small wounds at his mouth, sinks very deeply into his chair with his expression warped.

“— What the hell!”

This deep, loud voice is released from someone from a large built race which entire body is covered in hair.

“... Shut up, okay? However, something like those two and the soldiers getting killed? So, what's the name of the organization that's responsible for it?”

The black person sitting next to him asked the eyepatched man with a husky voice while making the motion of plugging up their ears.

Their real face is unknown. The person possessed narrow, sharp eyes that were hidden by an eerie black-coloured hood and the mouth was covered by a black veil.

With only two sword hilts visible from the back, the person's entire body is

wrapped up in black clothes completely like a ninja.

“... It’s still unknown whether it’s an organization. However, we can conclude that 【Scales of Gaia】 which genuinely fought against us was annihilated. Their leaders and soldiers are dead. Although it looks like their boss’, Mia’s, corpse wasn’t found, it can be considered that it was burnt by the fire. It was confirmed that the place which served as their office, became a ruin after burning down. In addition, the **remarkable spear user** apparently got in touch with the feudal lord. Also, at the site where the battle took place, that spear user and a black beast were present it seems, but... as the news is conflicting, this isn’t definite information.”

“A spear user and a black beast...” (Beck)

Beck muttered with a pondering expression while sitting down on his chair.

“... Serva! It’s too unnatural. If I remember correctly, that 【Scales of Gaia】 should have lost quite a few members because of the agreement-breaking 【Bloody Long Ears】. And you are telling us that Oze and his comrades were done in by such weakened 【Scales of Gaia】?”

A woman called the eyepatched man Serva.

Long, vertical rabbit ears are growing from her head.

And, stretching a long, slender leg on the desk as if bragging about it, she placed her heel on top of the table.

Serva looked at the rabbit woman without pointing out her bad behaviour either, and answered after silently nodding his head up and down.

“... Certainly, you are right. It’s unthinkable for our branch to have been crushed single-handedly by 【Scales of Gaia】. Since it’s a situation where information has been scattered by several thief guilds, there are many ambiguous parts, but according to my conjecture, 【Scales of Gaia】 had a pact with another dark guild or it turned into an all-out-war where those affiliated with them joined in... otherwise it’s the deed of the mysterious masterly **spear user and black beast** who are assassins from somewhere, I guess?” (Serva)

“I understand the part with the spear user, but as expected, the black beast doesn’t exist, does it? Are you telling me they were done in by something like a magic summoner, beast user, animal trainer or monster tamer?” (Lane)

Alongside her question, Lane hits the table with her heel.

“Lane, remove your foot. We are currently in an executive meeting. Behave properly.” (Beck)

Beck, who sat deeply in his chair, chided the rabbit woman called Lane. Though she glares at Beck, it causes her rabbit ears to react with a twitch.

“Yes, yes.” (Lane)

While putting on a sour look, she uses the longbow leaning against her foot as a crutch while holding it down with her arm that has white feathers growing out and straightens herself looking bothered.

When she did so, a beautiful copper pendant peeked out from within her chest. Serva squinted his one eye and addresses Lane.

“... Lane, there’s a report that a black beast was seen. Above all, **unnatural fang holes** and **scars of throats being bitten through** existed on the corpses. I think it’s some kind of animal.” (Serva)

Hearing that remark from Serva, not Lane but a largely-built giant that was covered with hair suddenly answered with a roar.

“Buhboraaaaaaaaaaaa! Whether it’s a beast or whatever else— I will get revenge for Oze and our comrades!”

Swinging down his heavy-looking arms, he strikes the table with a *bam*. The long table had a sturdy structure, but at the moment it was struck, two fist marks were imprinted onto it.

Since the face of the giant man, who raised his fists overhead, was covered by rampantly growing hair, his expression was completely unknown, but with just his violent behaviour and passionate words, he properly conveyed his feelings to his surroundings.

“... Pili, don’t break the table, okay? Besides, you’ve been annoying since a while ago. Sansibals are after all idiots and above all else simple-minded, I suppose...”

The man, who hid his mouth with a black veil and was sitting next to him, made fun of Pili with his eerie, husky voice.

“Hah!?! — Morabi! Shut the fuck up... you gloomy beansprout asshole.” (Pili)

The giant man called Pili sluggishly leant over and brought his face covered with light brown hair close to Morabi whose body is dressed in black. Pili’s rampantly growing long hair is lifted up by his smelly nasal breathing. It looked like he would any time now take hostile action as his agitated breathing got rough.

“— That’s how far it goes. Don’t fight over stupid shit. Got it?” (Bill)

Bill remonstrates the two by ordering them with a loud voice.

“Got it.”

“Yeah.”

Pili reseats himself while releasing a smelly breath.

Morabi also showed an unhappy expression, but he abided to his boss’ words without trouble as if it’s a pre-established harmony.

“By the way, president, I’ve expressively come here while leaving my younger sister, who’s my only remaining family, behind in that gun-fire-loving **【Senaapua】**? I’d like you to explain things a bit more properly.” *(T/N: Each time I read that city’s name it reminds me of the city in Black Lagoon, now that it’s even labelled as gun loving...)*

The rabbit woman Lane, who’s donning a dissatisfied expression, urges President Bill to explain while gesturing by stretching her arms. Bill speaks while staying calm.

“That’s true, I guess. I’d like you, Lane, Beck, Morabi and Pili to properly protect our turf in **【Pelneet】**. As you are well aware, plenty of other dark guilds exist in **【Pelneet】**. This time the information about us having lost two executives and our **【Holkerbaum】** branch being completely destroyed has probably spread to various places due to the thief guilds. Naturally, it should have also been spread to all the dark guilds residing in **【Pelneet】**... Without fail, there will be after-effects due to that. Therefore, you can imagine... what will start from now on, right?” (Bill)

Due to the tone used by Bill in his speech, Serva interrupts in an inquisitive manner.

“Then you are saying that the matter with 【Holkerbaum】 is void?” (Serva)

President Bill immediately answered Serva’s question,

“That’s how it is, but Serva, I’d like to request you to assassinate Phila Elizard as a solo mission. While at it, give a warning to the feudal lord Earl Makfol by telling him “Easily changing your opinion will anger Eribol-sama”, okay? It might become a dangerous mission since you can’t use the branch, but if it’s you Serva, it will probably be alright.” (Bill)

“Understood.” (Serva)

Saying that, Serva nods and bows his head.

He concisely demonstrated his will of acknowledgement.

“Umm, a solo mission with no support? Will that go well? Although she might be a merchant, she should have certainly employed guards after getting threatened by us many times, right?”

Lane widens her light brown pupils and shifted her frail-looking body. She asked while the feathers on her arm swayed.

Seeing Lane’s worried face, Bill laughs a bit and looks at Serva.

“... That’s right. Those are the circumstances, Vice-President Serva. You will pull it off successfully, right?” (Bill)

“Yes. Leave it to me. Even without worrying, I will handle her subordinates. You know my assassination skills as **thrifty person**, right?” (Serva)

Serva asked Lane after revealing a smile full of composure on his manly face.

“— Oh, yeah. If you say so, Serva, it’s fine.” (Lane)

Lane answers after swinging her arms to the left and right while revealing an expression of comprehension as she looks up at the face of the eyepatched man.

At that timing, Beck suddenly stood up.

“— Please wait a moment.” (Beck)

Creasing his brows, he had an enraged expression that made him glare with a piercing look.

With his expression like that, he moves his scarred mouth.

“I want to find out the truth about 【Holkerbaum】. I think you know already, but me and Oze were sworn brothers. Thus I ain’t able to let the guy, who killed Oze-aniki, go like this. Therefore, me chasing him is the natural course of events, I think?” (Beck)

Even when he received Beck’s sharp, piercing gaze, President Bill nodded quietly and faced Beck with his face that was riddled with scars all over. Matching his sight with Beck’s composedly, he replies solemnly,

“Yeah, that’s certainly true— But, this time it’s not allowed. You were working in 【Hekatrail】, right? Therefore you should be poorly informed about 【Holkerbaum】. Besides, currently it’s an important time where we have to put priority on our 【Pelneet】 turf. The sales network of the synthetic magic drug ^{Crystal} ^{Meth} absolutely requires our protection.” (Bill)

Even after hearing the majestic words of Bill, Beck runs his scarred mouth without getting agitated.

“— No, that’s a remark I can’t agree with! Umm, the mysterious spear user and black beast, maybe I might know them.” (Beck)

Becks talks with a rough voice in order to appeal to everybody.

“— What was that?”

“Nuh?”

“Hee.”

All the executives present focus on Beck.

“I think all of you know that there was an Evil Dragon King subjugation in 【Hekatrail】 the other day. It’s a story of the adventurers who annihilated the dragons, and the braves of the Gryphon corps. Among them there were adventurers led by a **spear user and a black cat**. I hear there was quite the competition between the adventurer clans. In addition, I remember it proceeded into various rumours in the underworld.” (Beck)

The one who reacted to Beck’s words the fastest was Lane, the sole female executive at this venue.

While swinging her arms with the soft, fur-looking feathers, she moves her red

lips.

“You are saying that the mysterious spear user who finished off our comrades is that adventurer? There’s no way...” (Lane)

President Bill shakes his head vertically as if agreeing with Lane.

“That’s impossible, isn’t it? Such a strong adventurer expressly intervenes in our conflict?” (Bill)

“However, Oze-aniki should have had strength contending for first or second rank among us. He originated from Pelneet, the city of martial arts, and also had competition experience. Aniki took lessons from the Guidance Sorcerer Galekozmar Miranda, the eighth rank of the Eight Sword Gods, at Tandart’s God of Military Arts Temple, and Reeve Kuzegayle the Four Blades, third rank of the Eight Sword Gods. Both of them were excommunicated, but he was that **Blue Silver** who possessed skills surpassing that of a King class with his Whirlwind Twin Blade Style, wasn’t he?” (Beck)

Beck talks to everyone as if fervently appealing to them, but... the president makes a calm objection.

“Hmm, anticipating his ability, we left that city to those two, but... well, for this reason it’s very likely for it to have been an assassin from another dark guild, I think. We have many enemies... **【Bloody Long Ears】** who went to war with us after violating the agreement. **【Shadow Wing Brigade】** that is causing skirmishes with **【Tandart】** that’s involved in the synthetic magic drug. **Shadow Bow, Death God of Fresh Blood** and **Flash Steps** of **【Remains of the Moon】**, the troublesome kind in **【Pelneet】**. The **Mad Knight** of **【Eyes of Twilight】**, a church wannabe organization. The **Massacre Sisters** of **【Dance of Supreme Vermilion】** who stole our turf’s **【Pleasure Quarter】**.” (Bill)

President Bill makes a break for a moment and then continues to talk.

“... And, although I don’t want to think about it too much since we have an agreement, the **【Sea King Hornet】** guys led by the fishmen of the Sea Light City; I think you understand without me telling you, but it’s the home territory of the synthetic magic drug that hired excellent magic mixing artisans. You can also suspect the possibility of the fishmen embarking in business themselves once

they try to secure the continent's marketplaces. Moreover, there are countless other small-sized to medium-sized dark guilds." (Bill)

"Other dark guilds, huh...? Certainly." (Beck)

Beck seemingly agreed with Bill's words. Nodding his head strongly up and down, he sits down deeply into his seat while muttering.

"It seems Beck understood. President, earlier you said it as well, but it will help if you can explain a bit more in what kind of situation this city is currently so that we can protect our turf."

Lane reveals a high-handed expression with a manner as if telling him "Explain right away."

After Bill calmly stared at Lane and Beck, he moved his mouth,

"That's true, I guess. Let me explain. The annoying dark guilds who are causing a feud over the 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 interests, are 【Remains of the Moon】, 【Eyes of Twilight】, 【Black Glove】 and 【Dance of Supreme Vermilion】. That's about it as for the famous ones, I guess? At the present time, all of the prominent territories existing in 【Pelneet】 are occupied by us, 【Owl's Fangs】. It's the four districts: 【Gambling Street】, 【Flavour Street】, 【Free Market Street】 and 【Port Warehouses Block】. We have to protect these at all costs." (Bill)

"So we will defend those four, right?" (Lane)

Bill nods upon Lane's words in order to consent.

"That's right. Especially the 【Port Warehouses Block】, where we are storing the stock of the synthetic magic drug, and the 【Gambling Street】, which serves as main sales route, should be given the highest priority, I think." (Bill)

When Bill talked in such grave tone, Morabi, who's body is wrapped up in dark garments, spoke up with his husky voice.

"Then I will watch the 【Gambling Street】. I will deploy a darkness barrier over a part of the gambling street. That will allow me to generally know the invasion means used by other dark guilds. However, **Mad Knight** is scary..." (Morabi)

Since Morabi is hiding his mouth, it's difficult to judge his expression.

However, even when talking like this, the colour of fear could be somewhat seen in Morabi's eyes.

"Got it. The light attribute is the natural enemy of your darkness attribute. Let's put Pili against the Mad Knight. I'd like Morabi and Pili to protect the 【Gambling Street】. Lane and Beck, you will give preference to the 【Port Warehouses Block】. It's fine to keep the 【Free Market Street】 and the 【Flavour Street】 on a back-burner." (Bill)

"Understood." (Lane)

"Roger."

"Aye."

"..."

Everyone expresses agreement by nodding with a look of comprehension on their faces.

Among them, only Morabi mumbles with his mouth covered by the black veil and asks in his husky voice,

"... We agreed with the protection of the turf. But, what will we do about the expansion towards 【Royal Capital Gromheim】?" (Morabi)

Bill reveals a stern expression looking as if he wants to kill with just his gaze.

"I was told to cease that by Eribol-sama. Originally we wanted to gain control of the royal capital Gromheim as well, but on top of the kingdom's side being troublesome as that place's the capital, it's controlled by 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】." (Bill)

Due to the mentioning of 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】, Lane starts to talk with a voice loaded with malice.

"Those guys... the survivors of Great Ancient Empire Befaritz who have set up their stronghold in 【Violent Tower City Senapuaa】, the former special forces, a gathering of former soldiers and fucking elves, Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale." (Lane)

"Right. If those guys didn't break the agreement, the story would be different, but..." (Beck)

While touching his scarred mouth with his fingers, Beck joined the conversation expressing his agreement with Lane and the President.

“【Bloody Long Ears】 is definitely strong... The ones who threw their weight around in the underworld of 【Hekatrail】 where I worked is 【Bloody Long Ears】. I hear they are excellent to an extent to be recruited for illegal disputes by all nations as underworld war contractors. It’s at the level of them being the rumoured to be the unit doing the actual work behind the scenes of the wars? There are other powers such as 【Remains of the Moon】 and 【Twilight Bell】 if it’s 【Hekatrail】, but the current state is them being overpowered by 【Bloody Long Ears】. And, despite being ^{White}elves, it’s a peculiarity of theirs to cling to the agency ^{Nine}【Nine White Great Knights】 located in the human’s 【Oseberia Kingdom】.” (Beck)

As it appears that Beck had directly fought against 【Bloody Long Ears】, he spoke with a serious expression.
The rabbit woman Lane speaks up while reacting by spreading both her arms left and right as well as squinting.

“I don’t have any intention of looking down on you, Beck, but we can’t be compared with Hekatrail? In 【Senapuaa】 they continued to make us suffer bitter experiences over and over. If not for my younger sister, I would have died... The leader of Bloody Long Ears, that female elf, is a **monster**... Compared to that, I never heard any talks about some dark guilds such as 【Remains of the Moon】 or 【Twilight Bell】? They are far too insignificant. Compared to 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 they are equal to babies.” (Lane)

Bill silently and deeply nodded once due to Lane’s remark while having a sharp gaze.

“... Well, fortunately those traitors from 【Bloody Long Ears】 haven’t expanded towards 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 which is our stronghold. That’s because Eribol-sama has connections with high-ranking nobles and officials of Oseberia Kingdom such as the Minister of the Navy, the Director of Pelneet’s Administration and White Nine. Just like I said earlier, there are rumours that 【Bloody Long Ears】 have connections with 【Oseberia Kingdom】, right? Well, let’s put the matter about Bloody Long Ears aside for now. I think we should get

ready for the attacks from other dark guilds.” (Bill)

Everyone shows expressions filled with determination at the words of their president who spoke with an increasingly threatening tone of voice in order to make all of them consent.

“Yeah, you’re right.”

“Got it.”

“Yea.”

“Roger.”

After President Bill nodded to the words of everyone, he turns his face in the direction of Serva.

“Also, as I said a few times before, I will have you head to 【Holkerbaum】 on a solo mission, Serva. Once you succeed in the assassination of Phila Elizard, find out the truth about Oze and Jane. I don’t mind even if you shake up the thief guilds on-site as long as you don’t overdo it. Oh well, it’s you, the vice-president, we are speaking about here. I will trust you. I will have you show us your skills as thrifty person after a long time.” (Bill)

“Yes, leave it to me.” (Serva)

Bill continued.

“Then, everyone understood, right? I don’t mind how much time it will take. We 【Owl’s Fangs】 are Eribol-sama’s fangs. We move for the sake of Eribol-sama. — There’s glory in each of us, **we are hungry owls, kill those we can kill.**” (Bill)

“”The owls fly if they are hungry.””

All executives say that code-like phrase matching with Bill’s words and leave the meeting room.



In order to search for the Forest of Sadeyula, I earnestly moved eastwards along the trees for ten days.
There are eleven days left until the day of the meeting with the large company.

It's a suitable number of days for returning.

At the moment I wondered whether I should return to 【Sole Fortress】 once, I finally caught sight of a scenery that seems to be the **Forest of Sadeyula**.

It really exists.

It's a totally different terrain compared to that of the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

It's probably all right to say that it's been detached from the forest. Only in the vicinity of this place, there's a field without any trees and shrubs. A transparent membrane, just like a barrier dome, covered the field from above.

I realize that it's a special place completely unrelated to the great forest.

A remarkably huge tree towered over the surroundings on top of a hill that rose up all alone in the centre of the field.

There's also a small spring at a depression located below the gently-sloping hill. Counter to the dust in the surroundings, silver dust-like glittering was divinely dancing in the air.

However, can I enter this transparent wall, I wonder...?

I timidly try to touch it.

I stretch a finger— towards the transparent membrane.

Oh? It smoothly passed through it.

From the finger, to the arm and then to the entire body without resistance; all of it penetrates through the transparent membrane.

In the end, even Rollo got through while sitting on my shoulder.

Yes, lucky. The transparent wall doesn't seem to show any effect towards me and Rollo.

“Nn, nyanya.” (Rollo)

Rollo jumps off my shoulder and runs up to the spring.

“Ah, Rollo, I'm going to the large tree located at the top of that hill. Don't go too far away~.” (Shuuya)

“Nyaa.” (Rollo)

While watching the retreating figure of the running Rollo, I trot towards the large tree on the hilltop.

Once I approach the large tree after climbing the hill's gentle slope, I got close enough... allowing me to judge that it was a huge tree.

Isn't this tree the biggest even among those in the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】?

It has big roots to the extent that one can't see the ground.

Its height and width are extensive and its spread to the side is amazing as well.

I think the large tree's main body easily exceeds monkey-bread trees by far and makes Yakushima cedars appear cute.

It certainly gives the impression of being the World Tree.

Each of its gigantic roots felt like a hill.

This roots are surpassing my height... I slip through the huge roots with their Japanese chestnut bark colour and walk towards the large tree's trunk.

Oh? Suddenly the number of magic sources increased?

“Who's there— Who is it?”

A mature voice reverberates.

As if suddenly floating up from below the large tree's trunk, an elderly person with a long goatee and a white skin colour appeared.

Since his ears are long, he's an elder elf?

He holds a long, wooden cane in his hand and is wearing white, simple clothes consisting of a large piece of cloth with a hole in the middle for the head.



In addition, as if the child spirits were dancing, they jumped around this elderly elf.

“A hermit elf?” (Shuuya)

While I mutter that, I approach the elderly elf.

“Did you enter this holy ground...?”

The old hermit says.

Holy ground? Is it called like that?

“Holy ground? This place is the **Forest of Sadeyula**, right? And, I was able to pass through what looks like a transparent wall.” (Shuuya)

“Ooooh, you passed through it after all, huh? It’s the **first time** since I started to protect this place, moreover it’s not an elf, but a human...”

The elderly elf opens his ashen eyes widely in astonishment.

“The first time?” (Shuuya)

“That’s right. After the great destruction, a barrier was deployed over this soil by the gods. As you say, this place is the holy ground **Forest of Sadeyula**. You have become the first visitor after the barrier was deployed.”

I’m the first... I feel honoured.

This transparent membrane is a barrier after all, eh?

“I see. So, who are you?” (Shuuya)

“I’m a survivor of the sinful ancient elves. Being punished by the Goddess of Plants Sadeyula and the God of Earth Gaia, I’m a sinner who became the guardian of this soil. Having been strictly ordered to protect this blessed soil for eternity, you know? Look at me!—”

Suddenly the elderly elf shows his nude body below his white cloth.

I don’t have such a hobbbyyy.

What are you doing, you perverted geezer—.

Nuoooh! Eh!? Uwaah, he has no heart.

A huge hole gapes in his chest.

On top of that, his lower body is pine tree wood and he’s missing one leg.

His genitals are a green leaf.

“T-That body is... moreover, you have no heart?” (Shuuya)

“Yea. It’s the **result of being punished** by having been given treatment to lengthen my life by the Goddess of Plants Sadeyula and the God of Earth Gaia.”

“The gods did something like that?” (Shuuya)

“That’s right. I’m a sinner. A survivor of 【Great Ancient Empire Befaritz】. Bringing about the calamity of great destruction in this great forest, I ended up creating a small tear in this world. I’m the ringleader of the sinful elves who ended up getting in contact with the world of spirits...”

The elderly elf fixed his simple clothes and talked about his past while squinting.

I see. Even gods do quite the nasty stuff, don’t they?

However, this story is unrelated to me.

I have to take this leaf in order to restore the withered large Holkerbaum tree.

“... Was that so? I came here looking for the leaves growing on this large tree. But is it fine for me to take one as well?” (Shuuya)

“You can freely take one.”

Ooh, how easy.

However, I wonder whether it will be good for the old hermit?

“Is it really all right?” (Shuuya)

There’s often something like a confrontation against a gatekeeper in such situations though.

“Yeah, in the first place, someone being able to enter this holy ground serves as proof of them being acknowledged by the gods. If you don’t have the approval by the Goddess of Plants Sadeyula and the God of Earth Gaia, you will be repelled by the **barrier**. Therefore, don’t mind it. Not even to mention one leaf, it’s fine for you to take several leaves from the large tree, too.”

Hee, then I will take him up on his words...

“Understood. Then—.” (Shuuya)

After bowing to the old hermit, I approach the large tree.
The large tree has many branches that are growing sideways with thick trunks.
Once I observe them with Magic Observation, the light of mana was overflowing from the thick trunk that is Sadeyula's Large Tree.
The number of child spirits is a lot, too.
The singing voices of the bonchichi is resounding and resounding.
Making way through the dancing child spirits with my hands, I choose a big leaf, that's growing from a long branch and is brimming with vitality and its green colour, and pluck it off.
Even from the plucked-off leaf, the light of mana is released while shining like the sun and overflowing like a geyser.
After picking around 10 leaves with dazzling mana light, I stored them in my item box.
With this I finally gathered all the materials to restore the Large Tree of Holker.
Lastly I will take my farewell from that old hermit and leave from here?

"... I acquired them safely. I will go back now." (Shuuya)

"I see. You are leaving."

A light tone with no intonation.
I lightly bowed my head to the elderly elf.
I turn around and descend the hill in a run.
Rollo drank the water as if clinging her muzzle to the spring from the shore.

"Rollo, we are going back—." (Shuuya)

"Nya." (Rollo)

Rollo, with her wet nose, comes running while her red pupils shine.
Running through the field while getting further away from the spring, we arrive at the spherical transparent membrane.
Stretching my hand into the membrane of the barrier, my whole body passes through.
Slipping through it, we were able to leave the holy ground **Forest of Sadeyula**.
Well then, I want to quickly use the gate spell to return to **【Holkerbaum】**, but...
I still can't go back since there's the requests I accepted in **【Sole Fortress】** remaining.

Since I have already defeated the grizbells and collected the subjugation proof, ten lesser demons and five reqmogues are left.

Let's return to 【Sole Fortress】 while suitably looking for the targets?

From the location of 【Sole Fortress】 to here, **Forest of Sadeyula**, it's all the way south-east.

The Mahaheim Mountain Range is extending in the east.

West, where 【Sole Fortress】 is located, is over there, eh?

... I will head northwest.

I fire a <Chain> into a tall tree.

And then I started to move along the trees once more.

... Before long I sense the response of magic sources. Descending to the ground, I confirm it from the shade of a tree.

A flock of lesser demons, who were shouldering tridents, was walking over there.

1, 2, 3... 10 lesser demons?

Let's assault these guys.

“Rollo, we will get them. You will attack from the back, I will go from the side.” (Shuuya)

“N, nya.” (Rollo)

All right.

『— Your Excellency!』 (Helme)

『Helme?』 (Shuuya)

Helme appears in my field of vision while producing a scattering sheet of spray as she rotates her body around.

『Yes! I want to contribute as well.』 (Helme)

『Nah, this time's fine. Next time again, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『I-I see...』 (Helme)

Helme vanished from my vision looking dispirited.

While thinking “Sorry,” I moved into action.

Shining

Chain

Lance

I will use <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

I create a light spear in front of me.

The light spear that became a ray line, flies towards the target point.

— Next.

I realize <Chain Spear of the Ray System> in my mind.

I'm testing whether a continuous barrage is possible.

I shoot one <Chain Spear of the Ray System> after the other.

The torsos and heads of one after the other lesser demon get pierced by light spears.

At the moment a light spear clashed into them, the light spear's rear part created a light net by splitting up in a spiral. The surroundings that were struck transformed into pieces of meat after suffering mesh wounds.

Oops, five more are left.

Only five times of rapid firing <Chain Spear of the Ray System>, huh?

Moreover, the light spear that I fired as the very last has slightly veered off its **target point**.

It seems that some misses will be created due to firing them in rapid succession. But, well, the one that missed was only slightly off.

It doesn't change the fact that light net wounds were created in the surroundings after the lesser demon's heads and torsos had holes drilled into them by the ray spears.

It feel like the penetration and acceleration power won't change much if I fire them one at a time either.

After my attacks, Rollo charged at the lesser demons from behind.

Rollo displays the hunter-like movements she's used to.

At first she safely uses her tentacle bone swords to restrain the lesser demons. As if measuring the timing in sequence, Rollo started to move. Dodging the tridents used by the lesser demons with repeatedly swift movements to the left and right by putting strength into her limbs, she cut them with the sharp claws located at both her front paws and furthermore tore up the throat of a lesser demon with her sharp fangs as she jumps at it while drawing an arc with her jumping trajectory after making use of a tree at the end.

Incredible.

She overwhelmed the lesser demons, who have quite the high close combat ability, with her movements.

She jumps at a lesser demon's neck and feints gnawing through it. She stabs and entangles its feet with her tentacle bone swords. She starts to drag the lesser demon, lifts it up in mid air and tosses its entire body at another lesser demon.

The collided two lesser demons topple on the ground.

Obviously having achieved her aim of destroying their postures, she finished each off by stabbing their heads with her tentacle bone swords.

In the end I only used the skill <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

All of the remaining lesser demons were annihilated by Rollo.

Let's collect their horns.

I cut off the horns growing at the heads of the lesser demons at the root with an Ancient Dragon Dagger.

While collecting the horns, I ponder about the skill <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

I only used the light spear skill five times in succession.

Only the last one of the consecutive shooting slightly lost its tracking ability.

There's a cooldown time until the firing in rapid succession is available again.

However, it's absurdly useful.

I can't expect massive military gains since it doesn't explode, but if it's one or a few opponents, it has overwhelming power and speed.

Although I felt a slight decrease in mana as well, it doesn't consume mana to the degree of magic since it's a skill.

Oh? At last, something that looks like it's usable.

The cooldown timer is around 20 ~ 30 seconds?

It would be great if it was the type where you could get rid of the cooldown time the more you use it, but...

It's more useful than spell types that require chanting?

No, in my case it's different, isn't it?

Thanks to the permanent skill <Instant Staff of Water> I learned the other day, I can use **water-attribute magic** with no chant. Language and crest magic will likely become a powerful weapon from now on.

The ancient magic is still quite at the beginning of the test phase, but I can expect activity at the level of a strategic weapon of it as well.

Either way, it's a good thing that the variety of projectile weapons increased.

<Throwing>, <Chain> and <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

If it's this much, I will be able to deal with various situation in a precise manner. If I use all three at the same time in a group battle, it will be a quite brutal method.

While pondering about such stuff, I finish the harvesting of the horns from the lesser demons' corpses and stuff them into the item box.

The last request is just the rat-type monsters with the name reqmogue.

“Rollo, let's go.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

After recovering Rollo into my hood, I shoot a <Chain> at a tall tree.

I began to move while searching for reqmogues.

For the time being I head in the northwest direction where 【Sole Fortress】 is located.

Chapter 97 – Rats and Monkey Extermination

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



I continued to travel through the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 for a while.

Mmh~, they are nowhere to be found.

It's nothing but lesser demons and grizbells.

Ignoring those guys, I repeatedly move like Tarzan.

After a few hours, I discovered the target monsters while at the same time sensing their magic sources.

Reqmogues are ratmen.

... I peek at their appearance from above a large tree's branch.

The number of reqmogues is five.

Below their feet, a crowd of young rats is squirming as if covering the moss all over.

They repeatedly move as if gliding on the wave of rats, while placing their thin legs on top of the young rats as if surfing.

Stopping their movement, moving their hairy heads that make it seem as if they are wearing a hat, they survey their surroundings restlessly.

On this occasion I stared at the reqmogues' faces.

They have eyes curving upwards and drooping at the red small outer corners of the eyes and red noses like proboscis monkeys.

Long and thin whiskers are growing on their upper lips. Sharp front teeth protruded out from their mouths telling everyone “I’m a ratman, best regards.”

“... We will hunt those rats. As I will start attacking from their back first, Rollo, assist me as the opportunity arises, okay?” (Shuuya) “Nyao, nya.”

Rollo purred as if saying 『Roger nya.』 and jumped off the branch. She swoops down in the rear of the rat army while rotating her small body after twining her tail around a long, young branch.

I placed my hands on the large tree, and peeked at the state of the reqmogues at the front.

The small young rats were squirming with a momentum that pulverizes the bushes, but it would be bad if they shared their senses with the scouts... Well, I’m overthinking it, am I not?

『Your Excellency?』 (Helme)

The deformed figure of Helme enters my sight.

『You want to have a go as well, Helme?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

『Understood, come out.』 (Shuuya)

Helme, who transformed into a woman’s body, appears on the branch while kneeling on one knee after being released from my left eye.

“Helme, you will freely assist me just like Rollo.” (Shuuya) “As you wish.” (Helme)

Helme immediately converts into a squiggled liquid and falls towards the ground while rotating in a spiral with enough force to hurl sheets of spray at her surroundings.

While feeling the pleasant spray on my face, I spread my overcoat, and make the Magic Halberd appear after stretching my right arm to the side.

The Magic Halberd’s tip, the red spear, burned a branch right next to the thick branch, but I use <Hide> without minding it.

Just like that, I take a step forward as if diving into a mysterious, rotten sea.

While creating footholds in midair by using <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, I got down on the ground that was filled with moist air.

I approach the reqmogues, who are leading the young rats, in a forward-bent posture from their back.

And then, in the instant when I set foot into the range of the small rats, the reqmogues at the front turned around to me at the same time, while causing a fuss in order to sound an alarm.

— Uwaah, they have noticed me after seeing through <Hide>.

Just as I feared, they apparently shared their senses with the young rats.

My bad premonition has come true, the young rats help in searching for enemies I guess.

The reqmogues shout “Gya gya” and point at me with their claws that are glittering with a black lustre as their red eyes shine.

Once they did so, the small rat army, crawling on the ground seemingly having received an order, approached my feet by creeping on the earth at an abnormal speed.

— These damn rats!

Driving them away by swinging the Magic Halberd down, the approaching rats get repelled by being burned by the red axe.

However, on top of them being small, their numbers are large.

At the moment I hesitated whether to try the chain or the light spears, “Your Excellency!” (Helme)

At the same time as Helme’s voice reached my ears, I took distance with a back step.

A black mist alongside a darkness magic circle emerges from the area of the ground where I stood, and countless black, sharp stakes sprout out from the ground as if bamboo’s growing once the magic circle vanishes with a *poof*.

The small rats of the rat army are stabbed by the dark, sharp stakes, get hoisted into mid air and turn into skewers.

Due to the screams of the army’s small rats being released close-by, the rest took a distance as if running away.

“Thank you, Helme.” (Shuuya)

“Yes! It was too impertinent in front of Your Excellency, but I ended up

moving on reflex.” (Helme) She says while crushing one remaining young rat underfoot.

“— No, don’t mind it. Slaughter the remaining rats.” (Shuuya) “Ha!—” (Helme)

Creating a sheet of spray from below her feet, Helme leaps up high making it seem as if she’s flying.

While twisting her body in mid air, she let’s loose mists of ice and darkness from both hands which she spread out to the left and right.

She smiles, even as her body becomes upside down, and shoots darkness and ice spells from her left and right palms.

Black mist covers the heads of several reqmogues. Their heads get pierced by ice pebbles.

Helme, who landed magnificently, speedily closes in on a confused reqmogue, wields an ice sword diagonally downwards and slays it by cleaving it from the collar to the chest with the ice sword.

The welling-up blood spurt out like a shower and clashed with a sheet of spray released by Helme’s body.

Having stolen their eyesight, the reqmogues are deeply cut apart by the sharp, glistening sword, as one after the other collapses after sustaining great, cruel injuries.

Black Panther Mode

Rollodeen swoops down on a reqmogue who was the last one remaining that hasn’t been attacked by magic.

Her movements are similar to the final steps of a hunt.

After stopping the reqmogue’s movement by stabbing its feet with her tentacle bone swords, she leaps upon it, pushes the reqmogue down, and gnaws through its neck with a 「Gaouuuul」. While releasing a beastly growl for the first time in a long time, she killed the reqmogue by devouring its throat.

It’s strange, since it looks slightly pitiful even though reqmogues are monsters. You might say that it was a far worse nightmare than being finished off by me... Amen.

Seemingly being sad after having lost their parents when all reqmogues were defeated, the young rats vanish alongside grieving sounds into the shadows, passing through the underground with squeaking sounds.

Well then, let's collect them?

If I remember correctly, their loot items are the claws.

... Once I draw near the corpses, a nasty stench hangs in the air.

I look at the fingers of the smelling ratman's arm.

Huge black claws grew at the tips of the three filthy fingers which might be regarded as having an unique shape.

Although they are dirty and crooked, the somewhat small three fingers are cute for some reason.

While harbouring such impression... I lob off the claws with an Ancient Dragon Dagger.

It was also mentioned that they would buy the meat, but I wonder what part of the body...

Is it the throat part which Rollo ate?

I give up since I didn't know. Will the request be finished with just the claws?

In addition to the share of three ratmen for the request, I collect the share of the other 2 as well.

"Helme, recover the blood from the dead reqmogues." (Shuuya) Despite its stench, blood is blood.

"Certainly!" (Helme)

After being instructed, Helme turns into liquid and covers a corpse of the reqmogues.

It was apparent from the corpse's surface that it lost its colour as well as its lustre after drying up due to having lost all its blood and moisture in one go.

The eyeballs remaining in the eye sockets shrivel away, cracks like those of the surface of bark forms on the thinly-remaining facial skin and the face turns into that of a dried-up, wrinkled corpse.

"— It's done. Do you want me to transfer it now?" (Helme) "No, we have to hurry for now. It will be fine if you can release a bit of blood after returning into my eye. Stock the rest." (Shuuya) 『Yes.』 (Helme)

Helme, who was in a liquid state, draws a parabola and gets absorbed into my eye.

I could sense blood slowly spreading within my eye.

Just like before, the bodily sensation is strange. There's no flavour either.

『As I have still blood saved up, please tell me anytime.』 (Helme) The deformed Helme had an appearance of holding a syringe in one hand for some reason.

『What's up with you appearance?』 (Shuuya)

『It's just a projection of the appearance desired by Your Excellency.』 (Helme) Mu, which reminds me, I have a fondness for nurses.

『So, just how much blood can you stockpile?』 (Shuuya) 『I don't know. Just, that it's a lot.』 (Helme)

Although it's ambiguous, it can't be helped, huh? She's a spirit after all. Helme swings around the syringe in a lovely manner while smiling. However, the close-up in my field of view blocks my sight.

『Got it. You can already disappear from my field of view.』 (Shuuya) 『Yes...』 (Helme)

Helme vanishes while looking disappointed.
Well then.

“Rollo, the requests for **【Sole Fortress】** have been completed. We will return.” (Shuuya) Rollo was licking up the blood from the reqmogue corpses scattered on the ground.

“Nn, nya.”

Rollo reacts to my voice.
While releasing a throaty voice after stopping to lick the blood up, she returns in a run.

Just like that, she jumped on my shoulder and dove into the hood.

Well, okay, let's depart.

As usual I drive a <Chain> into a tall tree, make the chain contract and move at high-speed alongside the trees while using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> as well.

I head in a straight line towards northwest.

I plan to advance without defeating any further monsters.

Therefore I should return faster than coming to the southeastern Forest of Sadeyula.

I travel smoothly through the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

At the time when three days passed while travelling, there's a reaction of a group of magic sources.

Since it piqued my curiosity, I land on the branch of a large tree after stopping moving.

I tried to peek down below from there.

It was a corps-scaled group of demons led by a reddish brown monkey demon. Amazing, those numbers... the demon soldiers continue in a long line like a string of ants.

Are the adventurers including the crusaders going to fight against these forces...?

Oh well, it's not related to me. I resumed my travel.

I'm moving at high speed on top of large trees for a while now, but as it doesn't seem like the demon forces on the ground can detect me, I wasn't exposed.

At such time, nuoh?

There was an especially large magic source among their forces.

I land on a branch once again. It's a location distant from the demon showing such a response.

Concentrating mana on my eyes, I look at the distant demon who's probably possessing an abundance of mana by focussing to the degree that I could shoot someone to death with just my eyes.

Large moose like horns are growing left and right on the head of the demon. Its face is flat? Mmh, no, it's slightly different? Although its mouth has a mysterious mark drawn on it, it's bursting upper half body has human shape with long, vertical and thick bones.

In addition, it has four extremely long arms and it also has six long legs that might be called similar to those of a horse-like deer at its lower body.

A subspecies close to grizbells?

It's reigning like a boss among the clamouring demons numbering in the thousands.

It seems to be strong. As far as such a boss-like existence is concerned, the cross punitive forces of the 【Holy Kingdom】 and the 【Religious State】 will be easily annihilated.

However it's strange. Although it such spectacular large army of demons, they

feel small inside this great forest.

Stopping being a spectator at this point, I resume my movement.

Since I don't want to fight against the boss class demon, I completely ignore the group of demons.

I earnestly headed towards the 【Sole Fortress】 by moving along the tall trees.

I travel in such manner for seven days.

While mixing in breaks, I advance northwest in the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】.

As I did so, there were responses in my Grasping Perception different from usual.

Going by its size and movement, humans? Moreover, they are jumbled together in a group.

Since they are blended by a gathering of a great number of demonic magic sources, I was able to guess that they are fighting.

Due to the fact that there are humans present, I'm gradually getting closer to the 【Sole Fortress】.

For the time being it's not a close fight for the adventurers, is it? Let's go check just for caution's sake.

I hurry to the place where I discovered the responses.

I could see the place after leaving the trees. They seem to be in the middle of a battle after all.

The light of offensive magic flies about in the air. Magic light sources are brightly illuminating the surroundings inside the dark woods.

Come to think of it, even at the time when I went to 【Sole Fortress】 for the first time, it was during a fierce battle.

The number of demons is high. The adventurers appear to be at a disadvantage. The demons are mostly monsters such as lesser demons, grizbells and reqmogues.

And, there was a rhesus monkey like macguire which is unleashing flame spells from its arms and which might be considered the commander.

It released a powerful magic source, but there's no flat faced boss demon that possesses moose-like horns.

Oh, there was a face I recognised among the adventurers.

It's the dark-skinned, macho-like man, who previously stood next to the

princess, possessing a large sword.

The macho man rushes out in front. He freely brandishes his broadsword.

His unrivaled physical strength lets him smoothly handle the large sword by moving his angular shoulders.

The techniques applying the magic combat style are smooth as well. I realize that he has terrific skills.

He alone stood out on the battlefield.

There was also a magician with a skinny physique behind the dark-skinned warrior.

I have no doubt that it's the guy who was on the princess' side just like the macho warrior.

Once the magician with his lean figure shouted spell words, wind magic was created right away.

He chops up the lesser demons and grizbells, who tried to counterattack the dark-skinned warrior, with that wind spell.

Is it cover fire for the warrior who has rushed forth?

That means...

I turn around my gaze restlessly.

— There she is.

It's the woman who was called war princess.

Her name is Swane and she has pink hair with ringlets.

She wears a silver mantle, a silver chain mail and a silver plate mail.

Her handling of the two longswords that she grasped in her left and right hand is skillful.

After mowing down, she butchers a lesser demon by slashing a sword diagonally from her shoulder. Next she makes a different lesser demon float by cutting it with an upward-swing, as if scooping it up from below to the top, and then slices her longsword in a sideways flash.

The lesser demon's body is split apart in a cross-shape while in the air.

It was brought down as if getting torn apart.

Scary! It's a way of killing similar to mincing meat...

Well, I can't talk about someone else's circumstances though.

Do I help out too, seeing that the fortress is very near?

Judging the surroundings of that princess' group to be all right, the area with

large losses is...

I survey the battlefield from a high branch growing on a tall tree with a bird eye's view.

I search for a location where the adventurers are getting pushed back.

Found it. It's the commanding red monkey after all, eh?

Yet another person was burned by the flame magic of the red monkey.

The adventurers have been forced into a hard fight by that guy alone.

Flame magic from its left arm that's similar to a snake is released and burns the adventurers to death.

Furthermore, with its swift movement which is close to Magic Steps, it moves so that the adventurers can't grasp the fighting distance.

Skilfully handling the longsword held in its right hand, it killed one adventurer after the other by slashing and stabbing them.

That red monkey demon. It's really similar to Sun Wukong.

It uses quite the swift movements.

At the time when I defeated the macguire during the fight near the【Holy City】, sealing its feet at the beginning with a chain was the right move.

“Rollo, we will go in. Helme, you have to endure.” (Shuuya) “Nya.” (Rollo)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

Since it's an assault this time, its feet aren't sealed.

Making the Magic Halberd appear in my right hand, I jump off the high branch.

Using <Magic Hand guided by Thought> and <Chain>, I fly through the air aiming for the rhesus monkey.

Once I reduce the distance, I cancel in the air and swoop down from overhead the macguire that's releasing flame magic from its left hand.

— I assault it.

“Kyaaa—”

“Burn! Buuuurn!! Hya—”

The red axe blade drove into the crown of the head of the rhesus monkey who's attacking an adventurer while shouting and laughing.

Unable to oppose gravity, the Magic Halberd splits the rhesus monkey lengthwise apart into two parts from its head.

At the same time as I land on the ground, blood gushes out of the bisected body.

Once the commander was defeated, the movements of the enemies and allies stopped on the spot.

It seems they were surprised by the sudden intruder.

Rollo rushes out in that slight gap.

Rollo, who jumped off my shoulder, leaps while changing her appearance into a small black panther with the sound of billowing.

From her posture in mid air, she extended her tentacles to the left and right simultaneously.

Her tentacle bone swords deeply pierce a grizbell on the left and a lesser demon on the right. Moreover, she contracted the tentacles which were stuck in the bodies.

The grizbell and lesser demon are drawn in one go towards Rollo who is in midair and then the grizbell and lesser demon collide in front of Rollo.

Each of them stabbed the other with the weapons they held and both of them died.

Even after slaughtering two demons at the same time, Rollo doesn't show any openings. Landing by bending her cat-mode-like limbs she rolls over and leaps at another prey.

The grizbells and lesser demons in the vicinity are one after the other thrown down, cut, bitten and pierced by her claws, fangs and tentacle bone swords.

I survey the surroundings as I don't want to lose out either.

I discover a grizbell who's nocking an arrow onto its bow.

Kicking the ground with Magic Steps, I head towards the target archer grizbell.

Stabbing the spear of the Magic Halberd into the ground, I jump by using it as a pole vault. Without releasing the hands which are grasping the Magic Halberd, I stretch both my legs towards the target and let it eat a dropkick.

I imprint the footprints of the Ancient Dragon Greaves into the chest of the archer grizbell with the dropkick and the grizbell's torso gets bent backwards.

With the spine getting crushed and torn apart, a lump of meat, that was its upper body, is blown away.

A part of the spine with blood and entrails sticking to it was left behind. The grizbell that had just its lower body part remaining, collapsed powerlessly.

There are already no enemies in the vicinity.

While standing up after landing by adopting an ukemi stance, I examine the surroundings and return the Magic Halberd into a seigan stance.

With the decrease of monsters, the flow of the battle had completely changed. The adventurers are doing their very best, too.

It changed into a battlefield with the adventurers roaring angrily back and forth as if each of them was called a mighty warrior.

Before long, as the flow of the battle was decided, it becomes quiet.

An one-horned grizbell, that fought persistently to the bitter end without running away, gets defeated by a brawny adventurer and victory shouts were raised by the adventurers who were in the vicinity.

All right. it seems like the adventurers won.

Countless demon corpses are scattered about.

“Rollo, let’s go.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo tried to brag with the prey she killed, but once she heard my words, she retracted her tentacles right away, abandoned her prey and returned on my shoulder.

Let’s return to the 【Fortress】.

I tried to leave while turning my back on the adventurers who are happy as they raise cries of triumph.

“Please wait!”

Mmh? I was called out at a place slightly away from the adventurers.

“What’s wrong?” (Shuuya)

Judging by her appearance, she’s a female adventurer?

She has the appearance of a warrior.

“Thank you very much for just now. You saved me when I was about to get burned by the macguire.”

Aah, which remind me, it looked like I helped her, didn’t it?

It was at the moment when she was about to directly receive the flame magic. However, since it was the moment when she was about to receive that spell, I

was able to kill the macguire easily.

“From that time, huh? You aren’t injured, are you?” (Shuuya) “No, I suffered slight burning injuries, but it’s all right.”

Once I properly looked at the female warrior, I could see wounds on her hands and feet.

Let’s pass her some medicine?

I take out a potion from my item box.

“You will be able to treat your injuries with this.” (Shuuya) After giving her the potion by throwing it, I leave right away.

“Ah— please wait.”

Receiving the potion, the female warrior called me to halt.

“That’s right. — The spear user over there!”

Mmh, before I became aware of her, the voice of that war princess could be heard.

I look behind.

“Where are you going to?” (Swane)

The pink-haired princess was there after all.

Pushing the injured female adventurer aside, she approaches.

“Well, I’m about to return to the 【Fortress】 to receive my reward though?” (Shuuya) “... I see. Shuuya-dono, I’d like you to wait for a bit. I saw what you did just now. You defeated the macguire.” (Swane) So she saw it, eh?

“Certainly, I finished it off.” (Shuuya)

“It was a meteor-like entry, wasn’t it...? But, putting that aside, you have my thanks as well. Thank you for killing the dangerous macguire. The injured Conee who’s behind me, is from a different clan, but she’s an acquaintance of mine.” (Swane) I see.

“It’s great that I could save her. So, that’s all, right?” (Shuuya) “Wait, wait. It will be fine even if you don’t hurry that much, won’t it?” (Swane) “I want to quickly go to the guild though...” (Shuuya) “Please wait a moment. I’d like to speak with you, Shuuya-dono...” (Swane) The princess looks at me as if

imploring.

Uuhh, if a beauty makes such an expression, that's a bit... guess I will listen to her for a bit?

“Got it. So?” (Shuuya)

I listen while having a lewd look on my face.

“Then, umm... I'm sorry for inviting you that often, but I'd like you to enter my clan. I will hire you at your asking price, Shuuya-dono. If there's something dissatisfying, I won't hesitate to obey either.” (Swane) Once again an invitation, huh?

Thereupon, I could see the dark-skinned macho warrior and the magician wearing a white robe approaching together towards this place from behind the war princess.

“Princess! Giving such a promise arbitrarily is troublesome.”

It seems that the white-robed magician heard her invitation.

“Talyad, shut up. If Shuuya-dono enters our clan, it will allow us to whittle down as many demonic haunts as we like.” (Swane) “But—” (Talyad)

“Princess, I'm sorry, but since I don't have any intention to join a clan, well then...” (Shuuya) The magician called Talyad and the princess begin to quarrel. Seeing it as my chance now, I turn on my heels after giving some parting words. I leave the spot at a quick pace.

The voice of the princess is audible from behind, but I ignore it.

A beauty's request is truly unfair.

Although I wanted to agree, I endure.

Someday I might come to cooperate in the whittling down of the demonic haunts, but...

No, that's impossible, isn't it? I want to go to Pelneet, too.

For now I will give priority to my objective.

What kind of fate awaits the Holy Kingdom? I have a gloomy feeling, but suddenly the image of that remarkable adventurer, who handled that great sword, pops up in my mind.

I'm certain, if it's that brilliant fighter, he will protect the princess. An image of him likely continuing to actively slaughter the demons in these demonic haunts

appears.

While having such wild delusions, I continue to run through the forest for a few hours.

Then I was able to escape the 【Great Forest of Demonic Haunts】 by exiting from the grove of the huge trees.

I can see the 【Sole Fortress】, which is illuminated by the lights of bonfires. I'm released from the gloomy atmosphere that's peculiar to forests. At last I have arrived.

I guess I will swiftly settle things in the adventurer's guild.

Holker— is calling for me.

Chapter 98 – (hidden)

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



I arrive at 【Sole Fortress】.

I headed to the adventurer's guild to get my reward.

Today is the first day of summer.

Tomorrow is the day I will be introduced to the leaders of a major company in the main office of 【Belgart】 in the 【Demonic Steel City Holkerbaum】.

It was great that I took requests from the guild for a number of days.

This place is north of Holkerbaum. There's no time difference either. Thus it's exactly tomorrow.

While pondering about that, I finish reporting the completion of the requests to the guild.

There are four requests. I toss the bags with the gold coins I received as reward into my item box.

And, after talking with the receptionist non-committally, I left the adventurer's guild.

While looking at my adventurer's card, I go outside the adventurer's guild.

Name: Shuuya Kagari

Age: 22

Title: Dragonslayer

Race: Human

Occupation: Rank C Adventurer

Affiliation: None

Combat Occupation: Spear Warrior – Chain User

Completed Requests: 16

The number of completed requests is 16.

Once it becomes 30, I will challenge Rank B.

Well then, I will return to 【Holkerbaum】...

The fact that I can use a gate is not something I want to show off. I think it's best to not let too many people see it.

As for a place with little pedestrian traffic, I might as well go outside the fortress I guess?

Leaving the fortress, I headed towards the forest.

Checking with Grasping Perception, there are no signs of magic sources behind and in the vicinity.

At that time I talked to Rollo sitting on my shoulder.

“All right. Around here's fine, I suppose. Let's go back, huh? Rollo, if we successfully restore the withered large tree, I might be able to fulfill the agreed promise.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanyaan.”

Rollo makes a spoilt voice. She seems to be happy.

“Haha, you are happy, aren't you?” (Shuuya)

While laughing, I take out the 24-faceted Trapezohedron on the spot.

The symbol of the third gate... ah, the third was the mirror located in the basement of the church.

The one located in the inn is the first.

After turning the 24-faceted orb to make the first symbol appear above, I trace the mysterious symbol of the first gate with my finger as the input.

The gate activates.

Mmh? Was that wrong after all? But, this is my room, isn't it?

Someone's in the room. A trespasser?

It's a red-haired, slender trespasser. They have their back turned on me.

I wonder who it is...

Oh well, fine, let's step through and take it out on them.

“Prepare for battle after passing through the gate. Helme, you are on standby in my eye. Be ready to come outside at any time.” (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Spreading out my overcoat, I pass through the gate and come out from the mirror.

I returned to the room I was staying in at Holkerbaum's high-class inn.

I immediately summon the Magic Halberd in my right hand.

Rollo moves from my shoulder and walks to the left.

The red-haired trespasser is on the other side of the bed.

They are still facing me with their back.

Oh? The red hair's body reacted with a twitch.



It seems they noticed the mirror's light.

While moving their arms, the red hair turns their face this way.

— Eh? Fran?

It's the freckled face of the B-ranked female adventurer Fran.

However, the **transparent falcon**, usually riding on her shoulder that can be called her trademark, isn't here.

Instead, she's holding out her palms towards me as if releasing magic with a **transparent left arm that gathered eyeballs**.

What's that? A hole in the transparent palm?

As a round hole with a vortex swirling within opens right in the middle of the transparent palm, the multiple things similar to living human eyeballs are squirming in the hole's surroundings.

It feels like a beam will be released from that gross hole?

Or will the transparent arm be sent flying to perform an iron man-like rocket punch?

Or will it be a mysterious light of the ray system by the eyeballs to put a curse on me with a skill?

Or mind interrogation by violating my brain through memory extraction or such?

... Even the point of the one-handed longsword, she's grasping in her right hand, has been turned towards me.

It's a peculiar stance that makes one feel as if it belongs to some kind of school. Contrary to her stance, I could feel impatience from Fran's expression.

『Your Excellency, that left arm needs special attention. Mana is strongly circulating within it.』 (Helme)

I received a warning from Helme.

『Yeah, you can tell from just looking at it.』 (Shuuya)

For the time being I will try to talk to her.

“... Fran, what were you searching for in my room?” (Shuuya)

“From where did you appear?” (Fran)

Without answering my question, that damn Fran asked one in reverse.

I can't feel any hostility from her, but her attitude is bad. In that case I have to spank her.

Let's get started.

"The one doing the asking here is me though? Why are you in my room? Being ready with that transparent arm and the sword, it's a situation where you couldn't complain even if you were killed by me, but—" (Shuuya)

While stating that, I swing the Magic Halberd at Fran's feet.

"Kuh, wait—" (Fran)

Fran reacts immediately.

She stabs the longsword in her right hand into the floor and nimbly lifts her body up into the air while using the longsword as support. She avoided my Magic Halberd by repelling it easily with the longsword.

Just like that, she lands on both feet on the ground with a *thump*, pulls out the longsword and sheaths it on her back.

At the same time she also hides the transparent arm of her left arm.

Bah, she easily evaded the sweeping stroke of my magic spear.

Her light movements had not a single wasteful motion. I understand from her technique just now. She has remarkable ability.

... At the time of the attack during the previous escort request, she must have observed me without showing her true abilities.

However, from the fact that no counter-attack followed, I judge that she has no intention to fight.

I will try to negotiate with her.

"... Then, can I have you answer my question?" (Shuuya)

"Got it. The reason for trespassing into this room is, of course, to look for your whereabouts Shuuya." (Fran)

Fran's expression remains still and stiff.

"Hoo... but, what for?" (Shuuya)

"I have business with you, Shuuya." (Fran)

Lifting the corners of her mouth, she reveals a smile.

She's trying to deceive me...

The slight movements of her pupils and cheeks are unnatural.

Should I try nudging her here by bringing up the topic about the transparent falcon who was on her left shoulder?

Before that, I will ask her normally first.

“Fran, can’t you honestly tell me the whole story?” (Shuuya)

“About what?” (Fran)

The one who tailed me for a long time is definitely her, I think.

Do I have to give it to her bluntly?

“Everything. You have tailed me since quite a long time ago, right? Besides, although it’s not currently there, there was a “transparent falcon” on your left shoulder, wasn’t there?” (Shuuya)

“Wh-, you noticed after all...?” (Fran)

Fran opens her reddish brown eyes wide and raises her eyebrows.

Even her mouth opened slightly.

The surprise shows on her face.

As expected, she has followed me since 【Hekatrail】.

“I did. I don’t have any intention of letting you get away if you don’t tell me everything, you know? Rollo!” (Shuuya)

“Nya,... Gaooh.” (Rollo)

Rollo changes her form into that of the black panther and climbs on the bed.

She threatened Fran by baring her fangs.

Black Panther

Rollodeen adopts a stance allowing her to attack Fran from the side at any time.

“Hii, g-got it. I will explain everything. I don’t have any intention to fight against you two.” (Fran)

Her lower eyelids stiffen and her mouth has a cramp.

One could call that an expression of dread.

“Well then, starting with your affiliations, ah, even if you are a double agent or such, everything, okay?” (Shuuya)

In addition I tried asking a leading question.

“Wh-!? E-Eh, even this far... Shuuya, just who are you...?” (Fran)

As her eyebrows are lifted once again, her reddish brown pupils sway while shrinking.

She got caught by my words. It seems to be a bingo. The bluff succeeded. Well, mostly it’s according to my predictions though.

“Don’t mind it and speak.” (Shuuya)

I said with a threatening tone.

“Y-Yes. I’m an adventurer, a member of the thief guild 【Gate of the Calm Demon】 and also a spy for 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 and 【
White Nine Nine White Great Knights】.” (Fran)

Uwaah, a triple-agent?

If you add adventurer to it, then quadruple?

She was no mere B-ranked adventurer after all.

Moreover, 【White Nine Nine White Great Knights】, isn’t that a state agency?

“... Such triple-spying Fran, no, I guess your name is doubtful as well, did you gather information about me?” (Shuuya)

“Right...” (Fran)

“Who requested it first?” (Shuuya)

“...” (Fran)

She stayed silent. Shall I threaten her a bit?

As it looks like she has expressly been giving my information away, I will show her, though it might be a bit nasty.

Just in case, I will deceive her by chanting...

“I see, then I have to punish you. Oh, Light God Lulodis, representing the beam of light which serves as light of my judgement, materialize the punishing spear of light— Shining Chain Lance!” (Shuuya)

— <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

Matching it with a false chant while remembering the face of Claude, I activate the skill.

A light spear was created. The lightning-like light spear clashes with the one-

handed sword Fran is grasping in her right hand.

“Kuh—” (Fran)

The one-handed sword is immediately driven backwards.

The light net, which was generated from the light spear, wrapped up the sword like a spider web and Fran had no other choice but to let it go.

The light spear carries the one-handed sword to the wall behind while surrounding it with the net. The one-handed sword, which was stitched to the wall by the net of the light spear, became a decoration.

Aah, damn it!

Won't the costs of the room's repairs go to me?

— I reflect a little.

Fran glares at me while her right hand trembles.

“Even light magic...” (Fran)

As expected, her mask apparently cracked after a sudden magic-like skill.

“... Are you in any position to show such a face? It doesn't change the fact that it was you who trespassed into this room, Fran. I think not getting killed is more preferable. Besides, I told you to tell me everything. I don't plan to allow you to stay silent.” (Shuuya)

I consciously show a sadistic, cold expression while making a smiling face in the shape of a crescent moon.

『Your Excellency, her butt...』 (Helme)

The dangerous, sadistic girl that dwells in my left eye ends up reacting, but I lock out the dangerous conversation from my mind.

“... Understood... At first it began with me receiving a direct request from Clydosuss who is a leader of the 【Hekatrail】 branch of 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】. The content was to probe for information by slipping into the adventurer Shuuya's proximity. And, if he's a bad influence towards 【Bloody Long Ears】, to kill him. Those were the orders I received.” (Fran)

Fran talks reluctantly as if she has given up.

Not Marquis Chardonay, but Clydosuss of 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】, huh?

I have met her once in 【Hekatrail】.

At the time when I was invited by a dark guild.

I refused by telling them that I have no interest, but...

Clydosuss.

That apparently wicked bitch even ordered to kill me if I'm a bad influence...

Don't give such orders. Good grief, what an annoyance.

"... I see. That fellow was the one who requested it, eh? How are the other two, 【Gate of the Calm Demon】 and 【White Nine】 related to me?" (Shuuya)

"Those two are nothing special. All that they wanted me to do was to simply report about the mysterious spear user. Using **Rino** several times, I contacted 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】. Do you need to know the details of those communications as well?" (Fran)

"Obviously!" (Shuuya)

I say while roughing up the end of the word a bit.

"Got it. Being attacked by bandits during an escort request, Shuuya repelled them. The true identity of the guys who attacked was 【Owl's Fangs】. Furthermore, the dispute between fellow dark guilds in 【Holkerbaum】 intensified. 【Owl's Fangs】 and 【Scales of Gaia】 clashed completely. Both sides' leaders were annihilated and a large amount of soldiers died. After I investigated the events related to that, it was connected to Shuuya. And, you disappeared from the inn here. That's what I told them." (Fran)

I see...

I guess she didn't obtain definite proof of me finishing off the leaders of 【Owl's Fangs】.

Fran's expression hasn't changed much.

There's no unnatural mannerism either. I judge it not to be a lie.

I think that she's predicting that I have been the one to defeat them to some extent, but she didn't point that out.

"... Okay. Understood. Is that everything?" (Shuuya)

"Yeah, that's all." (Fran)

"So, what's that left arm? Fran, you are no human?" (Shuuya)

“I’m half human and half ghost. A part of my left body half changes into ghost by birth. And, the name of the transparent falcon is Rino. He is my familiar from a skill. He is useful for reconnaissance and regular communications.” (Fran)

Hee, a half between human and ghost, huh?
Ghostifying a part of her left body, how interesting.
That transparent falcon Rino is a skill.

You might say it’s the perfect skill for scouting and transmitting information.

“... A half, huh? No wonder that you masked your left arm. Where have you sent Rino now?” (Shuuya)

“He’s been dispatched to the base of 【Gate of the Calm Demon】 for the regular report.” (Fran)

Hmm, I see.
I guess I have heard to some degree what I wanted to hear.

“So, will you kill me according to the order you received from Clydosuss of 【Bloody Long Ears】?” (Shuuya)

“No, far from it! If you can turn a blind eye on me, Shuuya, I will have them allow me to withdraw from this matter.” (Fran)

“I see. Rollo, you can release the mode already. I don’t mind if you relax some, too, Fran.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Rollo changes back into her original cat form and returns on my shoulder.

“Roger...” (Fran)

Fran collapses on the floor with her butt and thighs on the ground.
It was a slightly cute, girl-like behaviour.
She was apparently nervous and at her wits’ end.

“Even so, can you please not distribute my information readily? Ah, for you it’s your job, Fran. Well then, just as before, please only circulate that I’m a normal adventurer and a mysterious **spear user**. No blatant following me after this either. Can you give information to 【Bloody Long Ears of the White Whale】 with such an undertone as well?” (Shuuya)

“Understood.” (Fran)

“If you lied and distribute different information about me by using intermediaries, I will definitely search for you after spilling the information about you to all thief guilds and hunt you down, Fran.” (Shuuya)

“... I understand. I will keep my promises.” (Fran)

Although I said so, I don't have any particular intention to take Fran's life. I don't know whether she will really circulate the information as I told her to do it, but even if she lied, I will forgive her since she's a beauty. Besides, she's an excellent spy. She might be useful in the distant future.

“Then, since I got business, see you again?” (Shuuya)

I leave Fran behind in the inn room and go outside.
I have to hand in the requested items I collected to the priestess.
Should I go to the adventurer guild or the priestess' house?
Wait, before that I should take a quick look at Popobumu who stayed behind in the stable.

I call out to Popobumu.

Although it's been a long time, Popobumu was full of energy.

“Nnnn, nya.” (Rollo)

While giving off a throaty voice, Rollo climbs on Popobumu's head right away.

“Will you not mount Popobumu now?” (Shuuya)

I grab Rollo at the scruff of her neck and return her on my shoulder.
I left the stable after lightly stroking Popobumu's body.
The priestess' home is that way. I leave the inn's grounds and walk on the main street.

I head towards the temple that looks like a run-down house on the first glance and where the priestess lives by going across the plaza with the withered Large Tree of Holker.

When I entered the temple, the priestess was holding a broom and sweeping.
As usual, the bonsai altar, located in the middle, is beautiful as it was illuminated by the light from the ceiling.

“Yo, Priestess Marin.” (Shuuya)

I call out to her with a light tone from behind.

“Ah, Shuuya-san! You came back. That means...” (Marin)

The face of Marin, who turned around, immediately bloomed with a smile.

“Yes, that’s right. I gathered all the requested items.” (Shuuya)

“Oooooohhhh!! Really? In such short time... that’s far too amazing. As expected of you, Shuuya-san.” (Marin)

The priestess jumps up and down in excitement.

She runs up to me with her Buddha statue-like earlobes shaking.

Her swelling breasts shook as well.

Surprisingly she does have breasts.

I didn’t know since she was wearing a loose, tattered robe that was making sloshing sounds.

“So, won’t you come together with me to the adventurer’s guild? It’s because I accepted a request, you know. Please receive the raw materials there.” (Shuuya)

“Sure, I will go right away!” (Marin)

I headed towards the guild at a trot together with the priestess.

The guild’s formalities are finished smoothly.

The request that took a long time is complete with this.

The two items, which I handed in from my item box, were passed into the hands of the priestess.

“With this it will be finally possible to revive it. Let’s immediately go to the Large Tree of Holker!!!” (Marin)

“Yeah, let’s.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanya~n.” (Rollo)

Without even time to look at my guild card, I was led by the highly excited priestess and brought along to the plaza with the crossroads where the Large Tree of Holkerbaum stood.

Rollo moves by prancing as if skipping.

Her tail is pointing upwards, too.

It seems that she's full of tension.

She's probably thinking that it might be possible to obtain the Light Sake Drop of the Mysterious Trees.

The Water Goddess-sama said so as well. It will probably be alright.

I'm looking forward to it.

Somehow my tension was gradually rising as well.

I tremble with excitement.

Once the priestess stood in front of the large tree, she spread her arms left and right while gasping and breathing hard, and did warm-up exercises after taking a deep breath.

And then she holds up the magic jar with the spring water of Akreshys in it and the leaf of Sadeyula.

It's a pose towards the withered Large Tree of Holker as if she's offering something to god.

The area around the cheekbones of the priestess with their tightened blue skin, stick out a bit and become visible.

Mana was released from the hands of the priestess.

The priestess' unique skill? Oh?

I don't understand the skill's effect, but suddenly the magic jar with the spring water of Akreshys in it and the leaf of Sadeyula release light and start to float in midair after they leave the hands of the priestess.

Akreshys spring water leaked out from the magic jar. But, even while leaking out, the spring water that was clad in light doesn't fall to the ground.

The water floated lightly in a spherical shape as if there's no gravity.

Before long, as all of the spring water was seemingly released outside, only the magic jar drops to the ground.

As if using the sound of the fallen magic jar as signal, the two materials floating in midair released belts of dazzling light.

While the priestess takes a pose of praying next, she spins chant-like words.

“... Oh God of Earth, Gaia, and Goddess of Plants, Sadeyula, demonstrate your power by feeding on my mana. ... Now, in this place, the restoration of the Spirit of Trees, Holker, who is your family, will be accomplished by pouring the water and leaf of <Tidal Rain> onto it.” (Marin)

At that moment.

The floating spring water of Akreshys and the leaf of Sadeyula overlap and join together.

They change into something unknown as they wriggle.

The two ingredients formed a circle like positive and negative, and turned into a single, huge orb.

The globe shines in green colour.

At the instant when its brightness increased even further, the radiant green orb heads towards the large tree and scatters.

Turning into a dense, green-shining rain, it pours down on Holker's withered large tree. The green liquid vanishes by permeating into the wilted bark.

And then an intense white phosphorus light began to shine from the surface of the withered tree.

— Uhyaa, how dazzling.

Completely like an explosion?

It's a light that's similar to the scientific reaction of a thermite reaction.

As if spewing out steam from in-between the bark and roots of the withered large tree alongside that radiant light, a new magic source is born and the old bark squirms and rolls up.

What appeared in exchange for the rolled-up bark is bark that's similar to dragon scales.

As if the brand new bark is newly growing from the base of the roots by propagating in a wave motion, the created tree trunk changes and the arbour expands.

The Large Tree of Holker molded into a new thick trunk with thick branches growing from it.

Fresh, green leaves grow from the branches one after the other.

『Amazing...』 (Helme)

Helme muttered.

Certainly, incredible...

Rollo also separates from my shoulder and approaches the revived Large Tree of Holker. She stared at its restoring shape from close-by.

The scene of the Large Tree of Holker's restoration indicates its overwhelming existence.

I have my breath taken away. You could say that it was an overwhelming spectacle of nature.

The view of streaming the instant growth of vegetation that usually takes countless months in a real-time video.

... Far too amazing.

The people, who were passing through the crossroad as that outrageous spectacle, that proved gods actually existing in real life and made one feel nature, took place, stopped their feet and each of them gazed at the reviving Large Tree of Holker.

Before long, all the leaves have grown out and the restoration of the Large Tree of Holker finished. At the end, beautiful flowers bloomed from the buds located at countless branch tips.

Ooooh... I'm deeply moved. Those are lovely flowers.

White-glittering, faintly transparent flower petals.

Maybe that's what the priestess had talked about...

Are those the sacred flowers of Holker?

The magic source continued to overflow from the large tree. As if ringing a hollow sound, the bonchhichi, the child spirits, showed up as well.

It's a quiet sound similar to ripples spreading in the wind.

The bonchhichi's chorus starts to reverberate.

In addition, this sensation.

Previously I have experienced it once in a temple, too...

At the time when Water Goddess Akreshys-sama appeared.

Is it fine to call it a solemn atmosphere, divine and spiritual?

My body becomes tense. A noble pressure.

From the Large Tree of Holker that finished its restoration, a mysterious, pale and white phosphorus light was still spreading in all directions in rays.

Soon those rays gathered into two and became light spheres.

I wonder, what are those light spheres?

The two light spheres turned into a fog that was illuminated by a pale light and changed into vague human shapes, though only the upper body halves.

The upper body halves are wrapped up in a thin veil as if a mirage.

Those thin, misty upper body halves are male and female. Only that I could distinctly tell.

『— Oh fated one. I'm happy. For my family to have been revived...』

『— Oh fated one. I'm happy as well. You pleased me very much by reviving my family.』

The male and female voices resound in my head.
The movements of the lips of the man and woman in front of me are matching with a lip sync as well. Was I addressed by these people?
As expected, they are gods?

『— That's right. I'm the God of Earth, Gaia.』

『— So it is. I'm the Goddess of Plants, Sadeyula.』

Gods...

Mysteriously the descent of the gods apparently can't be seen by those in the surroundings.

Marin looks at the revived Large Tree of Holker and sheds tears of gratitude and seemingly trembles in religious ecstasy.

The passing, curious onlookers were just staring at the revived Large Tree of Holker.

『Your Excellency, I'm sorry, but this divinity is...』 (Helme)

『That's right. It's the gods.』 (Shuuya)

Helme apparently sees the gods. Rollo apparently senses them as well.
Rollo's look was affixed on the two gods who are clad in light.

『— Oh fated one. We have watched over your actions from a distance.
Heading to a very distant land, you worked for the sake of our family. We shall reward you for your meritorious deed.』(Sadeyula)

It's the pure voice of a woman.

『— Oh fated one. We will reward your devotion. What is your wish?』(Gaia)

Now it's the deep voice of a ferocious man.
It appears that Sadeyula-sama and Gaia-sama are asking about my wish.
Finally this time has come. The time to fulfill the promise.
My wish is either a single **Light Sake Drop of the Mysterious Trees** or an **Orb of Wisdom**.

『— What! How do you know of these?』

『— A Light Sake Drop of the Mysterious Trees, it is...?』

The face of the God of Earth, Gaia, is hidden by pale light, but I can slightly grasp the contours of the face.

I perceived that his face was gazing at Sadeyula-sama who's next to him.

Once the Goddess of Plants, Sadeyula-sama, locks eyes with Gaia-sama, she apparently becomes embarrassed and the light at the cheek part becomes stronger.

They have quite the human-like aspects, don't they?

『Answer my question.』

『Answer.』

Excuse me.

I heard it at the time of forming an agreement with a divine beast.

Please grant the Light Sake Drop of the Mysterious Trees not to me but to Rollodeen, the black cat over there.

『— Not you, but that black cat, you say?』

『— That black cat; the shape is different, but... I sense a somewhat dearly missed aura. Shall we confirm it by sight?』

The two gods were checking Rollo who is staring at them by lifting her face up.

『I see. Someone that received our divine protection in the distant past. There was a black beast that closely resembled that black cat.』

『— Yes. That's how it seems.』

The gods Sadeyula and Gaia nod to each other and speak such words.
In a distant past, huh?

Black Cat

Maybe, what Rollodeen made me understand by showing it to me at the time of forming the contract was the period of the battles against those black rings? It might be the story of the time when Rollodeen was still called Divine Beast Rozes.

Zalalarp

『— Hou, you are aware of fairly old events.』

Zalalarp

『— The Black Rings. About the Evil Army Yakou, huh? The black rings are **originally foreign elements** existing since before us gods had been acknowledged.』

Originally foreign elements?

Sera

『— Right. It's said that they have existed in this world since before the creation of the divine space where we exist.』

It's becoming more and more of an enigma.

mysterious objects

The black rings themselves may be such things.

Zalalarp

『— It's just as you say. What brought about the black rings is no more than a mystery.』

...I wonder why such objects that even the gods don't understand exist.

Zalalarp

『— Oh fated one, The black rings existed there from the beginning. That's all there's to it. Regarding this question, we aren't clear whether any of the gods living in our divine space know a precise answer to it either.』

Se-Uros

An enigma, huh?

Spitting out large amounts of monsters; aren't those the source of calamity? I wonder whether it's okay for the gods to leave them alone.

『— Fuhaha. Don't mind, don't mind. You are saying amusing things. Leaving them alone or whatever, even gods can't do anything about those. We aren't flawless. Even we have emotions and possess philosophy. Our true nature is no different from the fated ones. And, the scope where we can affect the surface is at most trivial. Besides, although the black rings brought about the Evil Army Yakou, they also brought about fortune at the same time.』

Zalalarp

Calamity

Calamity I understand, but fortune?

『— Indeed. There are also cases where changes were brought to this world by interacting with those living in dimensions unknown to us through the transfers. Moreover, although it was in a distant past, those who received our divine protection, used the black rings as devices to move to distant places that are

connected by the black rings.』

Aah, now that he mentions it, Rozes said something along those lines as well. I can agree with that.

The talks diverted quite a bit, but can you give us the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees?

『— Hmm. Okay. I guess it's fine. Sadeyula, you okay with it? It's the wish of the one who saved our family. Since it's been a very long time ago?』 (Gaia)

『— Please treat me kindly, okay...?』 (Sadeyula)

Mmh?

What is it? The two gods stare at each other... and began to kiss.

Eh? U-Umm... what, a tryst?

『— Aaaahn, Gaiaaan, fufu, how intense...』(Sadeyula)

『— Hahaha, Sadeyula, it's been a while after all, hasn't it? I'm burning with desire.』(Gaia)

Uhyaa, their heavy breathing is intense. They are really going at it. Since I luckily can't see their lower body halves, I don't know what they are doing though.

At that instant, the two lights turn into swirling vortexes that are overlapping each other as if making out, and plunge inside the Large Tree of Holker.

The Large Tree of Holker, which was invaded by the joined couple of lights, changes the base of its trunk into the shape of a woman.

And then, as if getting pregnant, the trunk's bark swelled up.

"T-This is... have we been blessed...?"

Priestess Marin, who was still shedding tears of gratitude, seems to be surprised about the Large Tree of Holker squirming all of a sudden.

Due to the large tree's realistic form, her cheeks have a bit of a cramp.

『Oh fated one, it's completed. After a little while the leaf, which is at the tip of the branch, will transform into a special flower. Inside is something that will become the **Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees**. Have the black cat swallow it.』

The God of Earth Gaia's words reverberate.
And then the two lights, which overlapped with each other, are released from the revived Large Tree of Holker while drawing a spiral in the air.

『— At any rate, it had been a while, Gaia, right?』 (Sadeyula)

『— Yea. Sadeyula, you were great.』 (Gaia)

Such conversation is playing in the back of my mind.
Just as God of Earth Gaia-sama said, the pregnant-like, round, swelling part squirms and moves slowly forward from the trunk along a new branch while causing an eerie creaking sound.
And, the bulge that arrived at the tip transforms by swallowing the leaf.
The tip turned into inflated flower bag just like a Chinese lantern plant.
Is this the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees?

“Rollo, wait.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

I pick up the ^{lantern} flower ^{plant} bag with the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees in it.

The flower bag with the liquid inside has a profound weight.
The liquid inside cast a divine, yellow light and the bag is filled to the brim with it.

A sake-like fragrance entered my nostrils and with just its smell I experienced a refreshing sensation.

Although I felt slightly nervous due to its weight, I carefully carry the flower bag. In order to let Rollo drink the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees, I lowered my knee on the ground and placed it next to Rollo's mouth.

Rollo silently thrusts her small face into the ^{lantern} flower ^{plant} bag and swallows the yellow light.

Using her tongue to lick, she drunk up everything while gulping repetitively.

The emptied flower bag vanishes like mist.

— In that moment.

Rollo makes a peculiar purr and accomplishes a transformation.

In an instant her figure becomes big with a billowing. Growing from the size of a

black cat, through the size of a panther, she exceeds the size of a lion. She rapidly grew to the length of 10 meters the size of a divine beast that exceeded magic beasts.

She has a great, imposing appearance with a figure that combined a panther-like flexibility and the powerful muscles of a lion.



「……俺は、お前との約束は守ったぞ!!」

——その刹那。黒猫^{クロネコ}が独特の鳴き声を上げて変化を遂げていった。

“T-This is...” (Marin)

Marin raises her voice in surprise.

Even among the people who were in the vicinity, one person after the other appeared who ran away while screaming due to the sudden appearance of a huge, black beast.

Rollo, you are amazing.

Did you really recover your true form?

Even her face is elegant with an appearance that was clearly catered towards an aerodynamic shape.

Long whiskers, red pupils and her nose has become slightly longer as well.

And, her tentacles increased.

I recall the sculpture I saw the first time deep underground.

Six tentacles are growing from below her nose to the back of her neck. Her lion torso was covered by black hair that looks bushy and smooth. And she has splendid limbs.

The long tail hasn't changed.

“Rollo, did you return to your original form?” (Shuuya)

“Nyao, nyanyaon.” (Rollo)

Her cat voice is the same as well. — Ooh.

A thick tentacle touched my cheek.

『Power』『Happy』『Let's play』『Love』『Power』『Increased』

She conveys various emotions to me.

“I see, I see. It seems like you voice and heart hasn't changed to before...”
(Shuuya)

Are you watching Rozes? With you...

“... I have kept my promise with you!!” (Shuuya)

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

Becoming deeply moved, I spoke up as if naturally yelling. Drops of tears streamed down my cheeks.

At that moment the voice of God Gaia resounds.

『— Oh fated one, are you satisfied?』 (Gaia)

Yes. Thank you very much.

『— That's, great. Unf—』

Suddenly the expression of God Gaia became grim.

『— It looks like you noticed as well, Gaia. There's an impurity underground of this place.』 (Sadeyula)

The Goddess of Plants Sadeyula looked at the ground below the Large Tree of Holker while saying that.

『— However, we have to return now.』

『— I guess so.』

The Goddess of Plants Sadeyula snuggles up to Gaia and stares at me.

『Oh fated one, I'm sorry as it seems that we have to request your help once again, but can you remove the **impurity** existing in this soil?』

Mmh? What's this about?

Even though it would be fine if you repelled it with a breeze since you are gods.

『— I will say so many times, I'm sorry, but we are not omnipotent. It's not like we can foresee everything.』

『— That's right. As you were told just now, even we, who call ourselves gods,
Sera
have too little time to allow us to influence the surface.』

I see, well, you gave us the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees.
That has been helpful. So, what's that **impurity**?

Sebdola
『— It might be related to something of the world of spirits. It seems that there are those who pray to the gods who exist in the world of spirits. It's an act of evil ones. It also appears to be the reason for this Large Tree of Holker to have died. As Sadeyula says... this, response comes from the underground. — We'd like you to destroy the impurities since you have been rewarded with this.』

『— We request it of you. Since our consecrated ground has been restored,

the defilement of the evil ones has weakened, but you have to be careful.』

Thereupon one sheet of bark flies over from the Large Tree of Holker.

『— This **wood splinter** is something filled with a part of our power. If you carry it with you, it will show you the path by reacting to the impurity.』

『— We shall rely on you. Since we used our power, we won't be able to descend on this land for a while.』

Se-Uros

『— Any time now, eh? The path towards the divine space is closing. We have to leave.』

『— Because we definitely won't forget... your achievements, we ask you to help.』

Alongside those words, the presences of the two gods vanished.
This wood splinter, huh?
After I pick up the fallen wood splinter, my eyes meet with that of the priestess.
The priestess donned a serious expression.

“— Shuuya-san. I was praised for my devotion to the gods. They were very pleased with me for saving this Large Tree of Holker from the evil ones. I have been asked to proceed from now on...” (Marin)

The gods apparently granted words to the priestess as well.

“I see. That's great, isn't it?” (Shuuya)

The priestess looks really happy.
Her eyes become teary again.

“... Yes. But, Shuuya-san, you are amazing as well. It seems that you received their blessing. Is the liquid your familiar drank the Light Sake Drops of the Mysterious Trees we talked about before?” (Marin)

“That's true. After all, just as you told me, Marin, I was able to get their blessing. That means completing your request was spot on. Thank you. For meeting me.” (Shuuya)

The priestess is all smiles due to my words.

“Yes, it's wonderful. The Large Tree of Holker has been revived as well. I'm

happy.” (Marin)

“True. It’s great that we could revive it. Rollo recovered her true form as well. However, at the end they entrusted me with a task.” (Shuuya)

“Task?” (Marin)

“They said that there’s **impurity** in this soil and that it’s underground. They told me to use this wood splinter and destroy the impurity.” (Shuuya)

“T-That is—” (Marin)

“— Nn, nya.” (Rollo)

Black Cat

Rollo returned on my shoulder.

Marin is surprised once again and withdraws the words she started to mention.

“Rollo.” (Shuuya)

“— She became small again.” (Marin)

Marin muttered while blinking incessantly.

That seems to be the case.

Before anyone realized, she returned into her small black cat appearance.

“You returned to your original form?” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya? — Nyaon.” (Rollo)

As if telling me 『Well, look nya.』, the black cat jumps off my shoulder, gets down on the ground and her figure becomes big with a billowing sound.

Just as before, she turned into a huge lion-typed magic beast.

Excited cheerings of “Oooh!” resounded all at once from the few people who didn’t run away.

“Ooh, Shuuya-san’s familiar is...” (Marin)

“Humph! Nyao—” (Rollo)

Lion Mode

The huge Rollodeen has a triumphant look.

Saying “Humph”; even her nasal breathing results in a slight wind...

It seems that she can freely alter the size of her appearance.

“Rollo, it’s fine to return to your small state.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Amazin’, she becomes small in an instant.

“She can change her appearance, huh? What a wonderful familiar.” (Marin)

“Yea, she’s my amazing partner.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

Black Cat

Rollo taps my shoulder with her paw as if saying 『That’s right nya』.

At that time,

“Where is heeeeeee?”

A voice I heard somewhere before could be heard from far away.

Title: Fulfilment of the Promise with the Black Cat

Chapter 99 – Impurity

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



The voice I heard is...

The voice of the feudal lord of this place, Earl Makfol.

To his left is his adjutant Bimiyal.

To his right is the middle-aged, hat-wearing bird knight who had a flashy showdown with me.

Behind the knight, his subordinate soldiers, who had a red feather emblem imprinted on their chests, tagged along as well.

“... Makfol-sama. What’s wrong?” (Shuuya)

“Ohh, isn’t that you, Shuuya!? Don’t “what’s wrong” me. After receiving an emergency report that the Large Tree of Holker revived and that a huge magic beast appeared all of a sudden, I rushed over here.” (Makfol)

I guess it was reported by the people who ran away after getting surprised by Rollo’s gigantification.

After sending a silent glance of “Do not transform” to the black cat on my shoulder, I say to deceive the feudal lord.

“... A huge magic beast? It disappeared as if the earth had swallowed it, but... more importantly, I completed the request of the priestess. As you can see, the Large Tree of Holker has revived.” (Shuuya)

The feudal lord stares at the revived Large Tree of Holker.

“I-It seems so... However, for it to really revive. It’s a vibrant and splendid large tree.” (Makfol)

“Yes, it is indeed.” (Bimiyal)

The female adjutant standing next to the feudal lord agrees as well.

“Shuuya, you are a man who keeps his promises. That’s cool. I’m currently very deeply moved. As expected of my friend.” (Makfol)

“No, not at all. I just did my job.” (Shuuya)

“How upright. Leaving that aside, I heard that a magic beast... a huge magic beast appeared, but where is it?” (Makfol)

“Who knows. Given that it vanished in an instant, I feel like I saw huge shadow over there...” (Shuuya)

I shamelessly point my look and index finger in the opposite direction. The priestess watches Rollo and me with a wavering gaze, but remained silent with her mouth in the shape of ^.

“What? East, you say? Got it. Bimiyal!” (Makfol)

“Yes, Makfol-sama.” (Bimiyal)

“You will head east. If it causes harm to this city, you will defeat it. And, if you capture it, I will be able to add it to the collection with the magic tool I possess. It might be possible to turn it into my family’s, no, my city’s guardian sacred beast!” (Makfol)

Makfol talks in an excited manner.

“””Ooohh!!”””

The female secretary Bimiyal and the soldiers cheer at the words of the feudal lord.

But, does such a magic tool exist?

Which reminds me, there were various collections in the feudal lord’s mansion. The feudal lord’s party dashes away with a force that lets a cloud of dust rise into the air.

“Phew, there they go, finally gone. Thanks for staying silent.” (Shuuya)

While smiling I turn towards Priestess Marin.

“No, rather than that, we were talking about defeating the **impurity**, but...”
(Marin)

“Yeah. It seems this wood splinter that was left behind by the gods will lead us to the **defiled** places.” (Shuuya)

Thereupon, Holker’s wood splinter gave a reaction by trembling.
The wood splinter rotates like a compass on my palm. It points at a direction similar to an arrow.
While the tip of the wood splinter blinks with a green light, it points towards the west.

“... The wood splinter moved. Well then, I will go defeat the **impurity** for a bit.” (Shuuya)

“Ah, please wait a moment. You are talking without care as if you are going on a stroll, but will you be really all right?” (Marin)

“It’s fine.” (Shuuya)

“Really? Then I want to come along as well.” (Marin)

Even if you say that.
The priestess is probably incapable of fighting. It would be the best if she waited here.
Besides, we have to talk about the reward as well.

“You must not, priestess. You have to protect the Large Tree of Holker. Besides, the request reward was the Sacred Flower of Holker, right? Won’t I get that?” (Shuuya)

“Uh, t-that’s right. Then I will wait while processing the Sacred Flower of Holker.” (Marin)

The priestess agreed reluctantly.

“Yea, well then.” (Shuuya)

I start running towards the spot indicated by the wood splinter.
As I’m running, Rollo, who was on my shoulder, jumps down.
At the moment she landed on the ground, she changes into the medium-sized

black panther mode with a billowing.

From that size, she grows even further.

It became a shape that was a combination of lion and thoroughbred horse.

Horse Lion Mode

She turns into Rollodeen.

Black Panther Mode

That's nice, isn't it? Her body is bigger than her usual combat mode.

Black Cat Mode

A few of Rollo's facial features remain on her aerodynamic face, but the black hair that's covering her entire body is glossier than before. The chest, which has a size that can be understood even through the fluffy black hair, has become thick and the lion muscles are imposing and ferocious... she looks like a particularly wild beast.

Her long tail, which is stretching out erectly, curves cutely like the handle of an umbrella.

Since its tip is trembling slightly, it can be considered as proof of trust.

Going by an overview, Xiang Yu's Zhui, Cao Cao's Shadow Runner, Lu Bu's Red Hare and Maeda Toshimasu's Matsukaze.

And the Black King edition which was mounted by Rao.

The favourite horses of those great commanders, brave generals and strong warriors...

It's not like I have actually seen them, but Rollo brings about an air that surpasses those famous horses.

The six tentacles growing from around Rollo's neck are also cool.

When I was staring at the gallant running figure of her horse lion mode, she smoothly extends two of the tentacles, which grew at the nape of her neck, towards me.

The tentacles twine around my torso by going around my waist and forcibly placed me on top of her back which turned into the size of her horse lion mode.

"Nyanya." (Rollo)

I see, ride on my back, huh?

In addition, a tentacle extends in front of my hands like reins.

Steer with this?

The instant I grabbed that tentacle, the tips of two tentacles tightly clung to the back of my neck.

Ooooooh, got it. This is amazing.

It's a sensation like sharing the consciousness with Rollodeen while running as one body.

※ Piiing ※ ※ Divine Beast Riding ※ Permanent Skill acquired.

※ Piiing ※ ※ Unity of Mount and Rider ※ Permanent Skill acquired.

※ Fusion of <Magic Beast Riding>, <Divine Beast Riding> and <Unity of Mount and Rider> ※

※ Piiing ※ Divine Beast Serene Mind ▪ Soaring ※ Permanent Skill acquired.

Wow, amazin'. I even acquired skills.

Something like that is possible as well, huh?

My head can't catch up with understanding the skills.

Anyway, rather than that— she's fast.

The black cat that transformed into a size equal to that of a horse, or rather, the horse-like black lion is fast.

A tentacle is closely sticking to my body so that I don't fall off due to the speed.

It's a strangely fitting feeling making me believe that a saddle and stirrup are unnecessary.

She runs as if weaving her way through the crowd.

Moreover, barely avoiding people, she skilfully dodges the crowd of people.

We passed through the congested west gate in the blink of an eye.

Horse Lion Mode

There Rollodeen eases up on the speed and starts to walk comfortably.

Rollo is definitely a sacred beast.

She possesses great speed with stability.

She easily exceeded the speed of Popobumu and the full gallop of a horse.

It feels as if she has the ability to accelerate like a large motorbike with rocket engines added to it while at the same time having an excellent braking function.

『It's a wonderful speed, Rollo-sama.』 (Helme)

『Yeah, it's really great.』 (Shuuya)

At the moment we leave the west gate and are praising Rollodeen, Holker's wood splinter changes direction from left, which is the western direction, to north.

— North, eh?

The moment I consciously thought of north, Rollodeen turned north and headed that way.

Even without me handling the tentacles that have become reins, my thoughts have gotten through to her.

She runs north following along the west gate's wall.

Before long, on the left side, an area with many dead trees and a graveyard became visible.

After we advance up to the graveyard, the blinking green light of the reacting wood splinter lights up once more and then turns dark.

The wood splinter radar repeatedly trembles with a *guiin guiin* sound.

It seems that around here we will find the place to allow us to go underground. Large crows are sitting on the withered trees. They glare at me as if monitoring me.

A graveyard that's disconnected off the city, huh...?

It really has an ambience of being **impure**.

I raised my legs and turned around as if dismounting a horse saddle, and jumped off Rollodeen.

I firmly land on the ground of the gravesite, which is showing signs of the surface depressing, with a perfect posture.

The crows, who sit on the branches of the dried trees, all at once take off, as if running away, as they are seemingly surprised by me who descended in a grandiose manner.

Black Cat Mode

Rollo chased after the fleeing crows, but giving up in the middle of it, she returned to my shoulder.

Even while such things are going on, I haven't forgotten to use my Magic Observation and Grasping Perception.

Omitting the dead trees, I search underground...

Oh? The wood splinter once again reacts by lighting up.

The trembling of the splinter becomes even stronger with a *bweeeh*.

— Found it.

Longboards have been laid out in order to cover the hole leading underground.

It's blocked by boards, but this is the hole continuing to the underground.

There's probably only one entrance.

I hit the cover of longboards with my Magic Halberd and destroy it.

A pit became visible below the destroyed boards. Since the hole's dark, I activate <Night Vision>.

The bottom seems to be a short distance away. It doesn't look like it's that deep.

“Let's go. Helme, just in case be ready to come out, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

I jump into the hole.

I landed at the bottom with both feet on the ground.

Due to the sensation of the soil, there isn't much of an impact towards my feet.

I confirm my surroundings. The pit has a height of around 5 m.

A slightly smelly and moist air is blowing through.

With wind passing through, it means that there's several other holes as well.

Although there's a mud wall to the left and right, the cave continues to the front and rear.

The reaction of the wood splinter still comes from the front.

I walk forward in the cave while staying careful.

It has a width to the extent that two people can walk side-by-side...

Oh? There's a mark.

Some kind of symbol is drawn on the mud wall with blood.

There are several earthen hallways besides this one, I guess?

However, this wall, feels like soil, or rather, hard rock.

It seems that it was created by digging through hard bedrock.

It's a cave that was likely made artificially and not naturally.

The remains of mines, I suppose.

We head towards the spot inside the cave indicated by the green light of Holker's wood splinter.

Mmh? There's a magic source response.

『Helme, lend me your sight.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes!』 (Helme)

Grabbing the deformed Helme that appeared, I activate Spirit Sight.

『A...』 (Helme)

The voice of Helme, who vanished from my view, became a lot quieter.

It seems she's doing her best in her own way.

I grasped something moving sluggishly from the area where I got the magic source reaction.

The shape shown by the temperature sensor is still unclear.

Then, as if reacting to the sight, countless squirming hands start to grow out of the hard walls and ground.

The manifested, filthy hands are deprived of nails, but without minding that, they start to dig up the surrounding soil.

Before long, a large amount of soil was gouged out and the faces of people that got crushed on one side became visible. Naked torsos with rotting intestines jumped out.

“Ugooooo.”

“Oveeeeeer.”

It's groaning and wriggling corpses. Living Dead. Zombies.

A large amount of zombies started to appear.

The zombies are rotting corpses with maggots squirming within them, but they are breaking through the tough ground...

They have blood-stained, smelly mouths.

Their groaning is annoying.

The movements of the zombies, who crawled out of the ground, are slowly approaching us.

It's scary as it seems I will be zombified or get infected with a disease if bitten by them.

Thus, it will be a ranged battle.

I want to put on a cowboy hat like a former police officer. *(T/N: Most likely reference to some zombie movie)*

Instead of a magnum, I will use <Chain Spear of the Ray System>. I swiftly use the skill.

— <Chain Spear of the Ray System>, <Chain Spear of the Ray System>, <Chain Spear of the Ray System>, <Chain Spear of the Ray System>.

Next I activate five instances of the skill in succession.

The heads of five zombies are pierced by light spears in one go.

After showing a reaction as if numb from getting stabbed by the light spears,

the zombies are destroyed by a fire with a bluish-white, phosphorus effect.
Turning into blue dust, their entire bodies vanished.
That's a cool way of disappearing.

Well, I guess that being weak to light is only natural, huh?

Rollo changed into the middle-sized panther mode and shot her six tentacle bone swords over and over again like a gatling gun.

The zombies get skewered by the bone swords.

Those bone swords are shining as if their colour has changed from white to silver?

Furthermore, it seems like their blades became sharper and longer.

However, the zombies don't die since she's stabbing the torsos and necks, not the heads.

"Rollo, the head's their weak point. Pierce their heads several times."
(Shuuya)

"Nn, nya." (Rollo)

Just as instructed, Rollo killed the zombies by aiming at their head.
A skill, which shoots light spears is still not usable.

Thus I will use <Chain>.

The chain released from my left hand pierces the head of a zombie and smashes it.

Sometimes I delay the zombies' advance by crushing their legs.

However, as of yet...

Zombies continue to be created from the walls and ground.

Just like in zombie movies, they are persistent.

I liked Romero's works, but I'd like you to excuse me from getting attacked in reality.

Though it's little by little, their numbers decrease and we advance while annihilating them.

Which reminds me, at the time when I just came to this world—

I fell into a deep underground hole—

And had to defeat zombies in such manner as well, didn't I?

"Nuooo—"

An eerie voice reverberates from behind me when I was reminiscing on the

past while shooting <Chain> like a gun.

Fuck! Enemies are also gushing out from behind.

Front and back. Tiger zombies at the front gate and dragon zombies at the rear gate, that's the feeling I get here, I guess?

“Nn, nya, nyaa.” (Rollo)

Black Panther Mode

As I'm pondering about such forceful pun, Rollodeen steps out in front of me as if telling me 『Leave them to me nya』 without retorting with “They are all normal zombies, aren't they?”

Oh? Will you do something about them?

“Gooowwwrr!” (Rollodeen)

At the instant she raised a throaty growling voice— a large and wide flame breath is released from her panther mode mouth.

— Uhyaa, the sound is amazing as well, but will that be alright in this cave? Something like carbon monoxide poisoning due to the sudden loss of oxygen... It has a power to the extent that gives me such anxiety.

『— T-This is... Rollo-sama, amazing. It's a grand flame spell that has the power of around Extreme Class, no, King Class top-ranking magic.』 (Helme)

It's as Helme says.

Black Panther Mode

Although I'm right behind Rollodeen, my entire body is wrapped up by a hot wind.

Oh, the ceiling ahead shakes loudly.

It looks like the fire blew away boards which were covering another hole above. Oxygen won't be a problem anymore, huh?

It seems like there are plenty of entrances like the hole I entered through in this cave.

However, as it seems that Rollodeen's flame breath reached all the way inside the cave, the zombies that were gushing out in front vanished after turning into dust once and for all.

The wall, which makes popping sounds as steam rises from it, has changed into a melted, sticky fluid due to the heat.

“... Amazing, Rollo-sensei! You are the Flame User Rollo, aren't you!?”

(Shuuya)

“Nyao.” (Rollo)

She wears a triumphant look.

However, let’s allow her that for this time.

“Rollo, you are remarkable. However, be careful with its use from now on, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya!” (Rollo)

Once Rollo gave me a reply that sounded like 『Roger nya』, zombie voices resounded from behind us.

I will ignore the zombies in the rear.

Black Panther Mode

Rollodeen and I advanced into the cave following the response of the wood splinter.

Once we leave the twisting and turning cave, we come out in a vast area.

Veil

『Your Excellency, the interstice is thin around here. It’s a **special place** where it’s easily influenced by the power of the gods living in Sebdola and Seuros. Please be careful.』 (Helme)

It’s that kind of area, eh?

The centre of the vast underground area is brightly illuminated by what seems to be a bonfire.

I cancel <Night Vision>.

I walk towards the light centre.

The **impurity**; is it this light?

There’s also a magic source response. The wood splinter’s reaction is already at MAX.

The colour of the wood splinter that’s trembling completely changed into green.

The response of the magic source is strong as well. A nasty stench hung in the air... the full details became visible once I approached.

Guehh... What’s dat...

Are those perhaps women who died?

A lump of corpses? A lump of piled-up female corpses like puppets...

The shape is that of a tree? An ominously swaying darkish aura and smoke rose up from the entire **distorted corpse tree**.

Guehh... how disgusting.

This has been made as a copy of the Large Tree of Holker?

Don't create some objet d'art by putting together corpses.

No matter which corpse, all of them have their hearts pierced with the left nipple missing. Although they still got their heads, they have been stabbed in the eyes and skulls.

For some reason there are many black, irregular lines sewn on the corpses' heads.

Reality is stranger than fiction.

Then, as if the spot with the accumulated corpses is moving, the sound of something crushing reverberates with a swoosh.

I felt a powerful magic source response.

"... Who are you?"

"The sanctuary has become remarkably weak. Is this the guy who violated our sanctuary?"

There are two voices.

The voices came from the sinister, tree-shaped objet d'art that's made out of corpses.

And then two people wearing simple black clothes appeared from within the ominous, swaying black smoke.

"Same to you, who are you guys? What kind of place is this?" (Shuuya)

I asked the two who appeared in front of me.

"Pfft, such a question especially after entering the sanctuary? Oh well, it's fine I guess. I will make an exception and tell you. This place is Holkerbaum's under-city which has existed for a long time now. Home-town and pleasure garden of criminals, people with incurable diseases and the dead. Being a place where corpses are abandoned by murderers and undertakers, it's our sanctuary."

"What the...? What are you?" (Shuuya)

I understood that there's an underground, but...

“... I’m someone called Southermens of 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 who are apostles of the **King of the Ten-Layered Hell Totogudius.**”

Going by their appearances, they are heretics who believe in the King of the Ten-Layered Hell.

“... The ones who gathered the female corpses are you?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, of course. These corpses are important sacrifices. Including myself, the members of 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 gathered them with strong desires. This is the sanctuary of Totogudius-sama and also the place where the Blood-Marked Intestines Tree absorbs the power of the holy precincts released by the Large Tree of Holker.” (Southermens)

He politely explained everything.
Sacrificing women, huh?

The ones who stole Melissa’s left breast were those guys, too, I suppose. She said that she was attacked by 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 of Totogudius. The man standing next to the man who explained fluently takes off the hood of his simple clothing.

A human male. His eyes are bloodshot like those of the zombies and clouded with a yellow colour.

On his face there are wound-like smile lines and his cheeks are fallen in.

“Southermens, you are always honest to a fault, aren’t you? I think it’s unnecessary to explain things to a guy that will die?”

“Egaras, although he might be a heretic, his deceased spirit will be added to the power of Totogudius-sama if he dies here, won’t it? In that case, I have the duty to earnestly explain things to him.” (Southermens)

“I see. It’s fine to be faithful to the doctrine, but let’s stop it at this point. With this guys timing of invading the sanctuary, I believe that he’s the main reason for the Blood-Marked Intestines Tree weakening. He has to die.” (Egaras)

Barrier of the blood mark?
I think it became fragile due to the revival of the Large Tree of Holker, but... Probably these guys still don’t know that the Large Tree of Holker above ground has been revived.

Besides, the **impurity** the gods talked about is the barrier of the blood mark those guys mentioned, I believe.

“I understand. Then let’s put an end to him. Let’s get it done in time for the sacrificing.” (Southermens)

The fluently-talking man also exposed his face by taking off the hood. His eyes are also bloodshot and clouded with a yellow colour. However, his face is that of a still young man. The two men slowly approach by walking.

“— Sacrifice, huh? Good grief, how disgusting. That’s a crazy new religion. And the sinister objet d’art...” (Shuuya)

I spread the overcloak left and right as if tearing it apart and speak while gesturing with both hands.

I made fun of them while preparing the Magic Halberd in my right hand.

“What did you say!? I won’t allow any mockery towards Totogudius-sama. An heretic is a heretic after all, huh...?”

“Yes, yes. Heretic, heretic.”

I look at those guys with a faint smile.

“Tsk, you and your damned composure. Seeing that axe spear, you are an adventurer, aren’t you?”

“... Who knows? Rather than that, I’m angry. Just how many lives of precious beauties did you guys steal?” (Shuuya)

I mutter while looking at the sinister objet d’art behind the men.

“How many? Don’t know. Not like we counted them. However, it’s a blessing for them since they became Totogudius-sama’s spirits of the deceased.”

“Haa? What kind of blessing is that? You psycho bastards who can’t be even called people, prepare for an end suiting heretics of an outdated religion like you fuckers.” (Shuuya)

“... The sacrifice has a cheeky mouth. We will chop up your entire body, including that mouth, toss the pieces of meat into a gold bag, put dung into it, let it pickle in that dung and then smear it with excrements. Hear, the bells of

hell have rung!!”

“ ... ”

The fluently-talking man and the taciturn man are floating eerie smiles and come attacking after taking out their arms from within the simple clothing. They hold strangely shaped swords in both arms. Are those sickles? However, those swords are irrelevant. They don't amount to being my opponents.

“Rollo, burn everything. — It's a sterilization of filth!!!” (Shuuya)

“Nyagooooaahh— gruuhh!” (Rollo)

A directional, violent flame breath sweeps the area once again. The running men were swallowed up by the flames as if receiving head wind.

“Gyaa, boooooooooooooooooo.”

“Aaaahhh.”

The evil apostles of Totogudius carbonize while raising screams in death agony.

The flames also spread to the large tree-like corpse objet d'art and it burns vigorously.

Amazing, as expected of a power that's classified as superior magic...

『... Scary. If I received that, I would end up getting evaporated...』 (Helme)

『As I also feel like it's not someone else's problem, as it could have been very well me, I will pay attention at the time when you appear and fight, Helme.』
(Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

At that moment the trembling of the wood splinter suddenly stops. As the corpse objet d'art burns, the blinking green light lessens and weakens. Eventually, the sinister objet d'art, which was formed out of countless corpses, is completely destroyed by fire and changes into burning residue. At the same time the green response of Holker's wood splinter vanished.

“With this the impurity of this city disappeared, huh? Rollo, we're going back.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo)

A black hole still continues towards the interior of the cave, but I decide to return since we finished our business here.

It will be instantly if I use the gate.

I take out the 24-faceted Trapezohedron.

Tracing the first symbol, the gate was activated.

Just as usual, a ring that was wrapped in grey light appears.

It reflects the room where I was staying at.

My body might be stinking, but, oh well, I will pass through the gate.

Phew... I was able to return to the high-class inn. Let's return to the priestess' place for now?

Exiting the room right away, I left the inn.

Without mounting Popobumu who's standing in front of the stable, I make the black cat change into the horse-like lion size.

Horse Lion Mode

I jumped on the back of Rollodeen and departed on the main street.

When I pass through the plaza located at the crossroads, there's a gathering of people.

The residents and travellers seem to look at the revived Large Tree of Holker. Among them there are also those who are shrewdly selling things on the road. This place might become a new sightseeing attraction.

The transparent flowers, which grew from the Large Tree of Holker, have already disappeared.

It seems that the priestess collected them properly.

Escaping the crowd of people on the plaza, I arrive in front of the run-down temple house.

I dismounted from Rollo's Horse Lion Mode.

Black Cat

Rollo immediately becomes small and follows me beneath my feet.

I enter the temple after opening the door of the run-down mansion.

Did the priestess wait for our arrival as she's standing in front of the altar? Once she saw me entering, she ran up to me.

“Ah, Shuuya-san! You were all right.” (Marin)

“Yea. Of course. I got rid of the impurity. Though I got attacked by guys calling themselves 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】. And, though I don't know whether it

was for the sake of a ritual, there was a sinister corpse objet d'art which imitated the Large Tree of Holker. I disposed of it by burning it together with the fellows who attacked me.” (Shuuya)

“Such a thing has...” (Marin)

Marin opens her eyes widely and mutters while covering her mouth with a hand.

“Yeah, it's been 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 who killed them, but... they said that they were sacrifices for Totogudius, the King of the Ten-layered Hell of the Spirit World.” (Shuuya)

The priestess shows an angry expression for a change.

“... Is that so? The lot of 【Apostles of the Blood Mark】 are the enemies of father and mother. It's the true identity of the evil ones.” (Marin)

“Probably. I think it's fine since the impurity's response vanished completely, but since it's not like I killed all of their members, it might be necessary to stay cautious.” (Shuuya)

“Got it. I will protect the Large Tree of Holker.” (Marin)

Marin's eyes have power dwelling within.
I guess it's all right to leave it to her.

“Yeah. It might be best if you hired some guards. Well, I will leave it to you.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Then I shall give you the promised reward.” (Marin)

The priestess handed me three earthenware jars with a small potion inside, and a high-class parchment with characters written on it.

“**Permeated Drops of the Sacred Flower**, which is a precious healing potion made out of **Holker's Sacred Flowers** is inside these three jars. And, this parchment is the title deed of this mansion. Lastly, I have also already prepared my body... ufufu.” (Marin)

Umm... I don't need your body.

Marin's face has become red and she's squirming with her inner thighs.

As I receive the healing potions, for an instant, I imagined a future with the 5th

Element-like priestess Marin where we encounter the unknown.

Let's stop with that since I felt the fear of the cosmos in my spine.

There might exist a world line with a future route where I would possess a space alien wife and family, but for now I will politely but firmly refuse it.

"... Sorry. As I don't want your body, priestess, I will simply take those three jars. Priestess Marin, it would also be best if you held on to the title deed as well." (Shuuya)

I return the title deed to her.

"But, the promise..." (Marin)

"Well, at very last the Large Tree of Holker revived. I think the believers will grow in numbers from now on. Besides, you will protect the Large Tree of Holker, right? You have to properly protect it after making this place your base." (Shuuya)

When the priestess heard my words, she nodded as if agreeing.

"Yes... that's right, isn't it? I will protect it." (Marin)

These three jars.

Is it a super-healing medicine that cures all kinds of sicknesses? I will confirm it since we talked about it before.

"Is the medicine in these three jars really effective against all kinds of sicknesses?" (Shuuya)

"Yes. Ah, no, it's not all. It's just a minority, but according to the scriptures it won't work against **sicknesses you possess since birth** and **divine punishment**." (Marin)

Hee, so it can heal everything besides those.

Still, if that's true, it's amazing. Let's keep them in reserve.

I will put them into my item box.

"Got it. I will gratefully accept these. Well then, I will go back. From now on various things will happen I think, but do your best. Cya." (Shuuya)

"N, nyanya."

Rollo purrs with a feeling of 『Bye bye nya』.

“Ah, yes. I pray that you, Shuuya-san and Rollo-chan, will be able to get the blessing from **Holker’s Spirit**. — Goodbye.” (Marin)

At that point I part from the priestess who looks at me disappointedly. Leaving behind the temple, we leisurely advance through the plaza, where the revived, lush and powerful Large Tree of Holker stands, while I’m riding on Rollodeen (Horse Lion Mode).

Somehow it’s deeply emotional.

It means that I have done something that will leave its record in history, doesn’t it?

After looking at the leaves growing from the large tree, I look up at the dark violet night sky.

It felt as even the two moons and the twinkling stars were blessing the Large Tree of Holker.

Well then, tomorrow I will go to 【Belgart】 in the early morning...

Do I call the lovely Melissa after a long time once I return to the inn?



Having returned to the high-class inn, I swiftly nominate Melissa.

I chatted with Melissa while having a delicious meal.

“Good grief, you surprised me. Just when I was nominated after a long time, I’m told about an impossible revival. Something like having revived the withered Large Tree of Holker.” (Melissa)

“... Haha, the word impossible doesn’t exist in my vocabulary.” (Shuuya)

“Fufu, geez, expressly making a weird expression... how very like you, Shuuya. Besides, is the rumour about the appearance of a huge magic beast true?” (Melissa)

I wonder whether she will believe me if I tell her that the huge magic beast is in reality the transformed Rollo?

Oh well, let’s stay silent about that.

“Huge magic beast? Don’t know. A black shadow appeared and left though.” (Shuuya)

Seemingly not agreeing with my deceiving words, Melissa stares at me fixedly.

“Suspicious...” (Melissa)

“Well, isn’t it fine? Rather than that, it’s tomorrow you know, tomorrow. The introduction to the leader of a major company promised by the boss of 【Belgart】, Dino-san.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. The preparations for that are in order. It seems that the party of the major company will arrive tomorrow morning.” (Melissa)

“Ooh, I look forward to it. I will head over in the morning as well.” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Ah, do you want me to guide you by going together to 【Belgart】 tomorrow morning?” (Melissa)

Melissa’s cheeks got a slightly red tint.

“Mmh, no, I know the place, but, ah, I will rely on you after all I guess.” (Shuuya)

“That’s great...” (Melissa)

She’s a cute woman who sends signs while blushing.

“Well then, let’s go to my room?” (Shuuya)

“Yes.” (Melissa)

“Nnn, nya.”

Did Rollo read the mood? She leaves by herself while seemingly complaining about something.

Somehow, I’m sorry, Rollo.

Let’s carefully groom her later.

『Your Excellency, I will go outside, too...』 (Helme)

Helme seems to be considerate as well.

『No, as long as you don’t appear in my field of vision, it will be fine for you to stay. But, don’t talk to me in the middle of it, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes... but, take care of me some day, too.』 (Helme)

『I know, next time, okay?』 (Shuuya)



We have passed the second round...

At the time when we are taking a break, I suddenly remember after seeing Melissa's naked body.

Permeated Drops of the Sacred Flower.

The super-healing potion I received from the priestess.

It's a precious medicine of which I only got three.

Maybe, if I let Melissa drink it...

The missing breast might return to its original form.

Accordingly, I operate the item box and take out one jar of Permeated Drops of the Sacred Flower.

"Shuuya-san? That is?" (Melissa)

"Yeah, sorry for being so abrupt. Can you try drinking this?" (Shuuya)

I give her the jar with the medicine inside.

"Is this some kind of medicine?" (Melissa)

"Yea. Well, try drinking it while thinking that you were tricked into it."
(Shuuya)

"Then—" (Melissa)

Melissa drained the jar with a *gulp*.

At that instant— Melissa's naked body shines in a golden colour.

The shining naked body collapsed being hit by a wave as if vibrated with a thumping.

"— O-Oy, Melissa?" (Shuuya)

I immediately hold Melissa in my arms.

"Y-Yes..." (Melissa)

Melissa opens her eyes and rises.

Oooh... hooray. Amazing, the scar vanished and the breast returned to its original state.

It was really effective as medicine. I once again feel that it's a really great medicine.

Though I lightly considered testing it, it's even effective against loss of body

parts...

“E-E-Eh?” (Melissa)

Even while feeling shaken, Melissa looks at her own chest and touches the new breast with her hands.

“It’s healed, it has returned to its original shape—” (Melissa)

Melissa ended up bursting into tears at that point.

“... It’s really great. It’s as beautiful as the other.” (Shuuya)

“T-This is... Shuuya-san, is this a miracle?” (Melissa)

“That’s right. It will be fine if you think of it as such. Anyway, there’s nothing wrong with your body, right?” (Shuuya)

“— Yes. Somehow my body feels wonderfully light. It feels as if my skin, the skin of my entire body has become young... amazing. This medicine is...”
(Melissa)

Melissa touched and examined her own naked body.
And then, seemingly swallowing her saliva, a *gulp* resounded from her throat.

“Was the medicine, I just now swallowed, maybe a medicine with an effect equal to God Class healing magic? Is it the legendary divine medicine Elixir?”
(Melissa)

There’s an item called elixir.

“No, I think it’s something else. It’s a medicine called Permeated Drops of the Sacred Flower.” (Shuuya)

“Really? It must certainly be tremendously expensive... Even though it’s close to impossible to recover the loss of a body part once a wound has been closed once. It’s an amazing medicine. There’s an old tale saying that even Extreme Class and King Class healing magic won’t recover lost body parts, but, is it really all right for me to drink such precious and expensive medicine?” (Melissa)

I gave it to Melissa because it’s her.
I wasn’t able to directly tell her that though.
Man, I have just done what has to be done.

“... That’s correct.” (Shuuya)

“... Thank you. However, with such covering up, I’m going to want stop working, even though I got finally promoted, and follow you wherever you go, Shuuya-san. Uuh, really thank you very much...” (Melissa)

Large drops of tears pill down Melissa’s cheeks.

“Don’t cry, it’s fine if you don’t quit your job. After finally getting promoted, you became busy. I might leave this place soon as well. ... Besides, you have been now taking care of me as my sex partner like this, right?” (Shuuya)

In order to make her tears stop, I transform into an oppai sage.

“How about it? This place here, it feels good, right? Look, how do you want it the next time?”

“Ahn, g-geez. You are lewd. However, tonight I will do my best. That’s why let me be on top next.” (Melissa)



Like this and that, we finished two more rounds in the end.
She was in high spirits to do her best, but she went down first after all.
Currently she's sleeping while apparently feeling good.
She has a happy expression.
Well then, should I sleep some in preparation for tomorrow as well?

Chapter 100 – Oath of the One Horn and Sightseeing Flight

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



The clucking of chickens resounds in the morning.
Accompanied by Melissa in the form of a date and with Rollo riding on my shoulder, we arrive at the headquarters of 【Belgart】.
A single **special carriage** was parked there.
I have seen this kind of rectangle, coffin-like special carriage once before.
It's the carriage that had been parked at the slave market in 【Hekatrail】.
Just like before a unicorn symbol is drawn on the carriage's side.
Maybe the leader of the large company is the slave trader who came to do business at that place?
There's no way for that to be true, is there...?
While harbouring that doubt, I enter the building of Belgart with a sidelong glance at the peculiar carriage.
Melissa came along until in front of the door of that luxurious room she had guided me to the other day.
“Shuuya-san, that's how far I go. Please do your best with the negotiations, okay?” (Melissa)
After giving me a formal work greeting, she winks at me by closing one eye,

turns around and leaves.

She had a lovely expression when she closed one eye, but it was her work mode face.

As expected, she won't take a conspicuously over-familiar attitude with me at her work place.

Well then, the interview will happen on the other side of this door.

“Rollo, get into the hood.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.” (Rollo) *(T/N: Do I really need to say every time that it's Rollo nya'ing? No, I guess not, let's abolish that practice, less typing for me!)*

Rollo gives me a light answer.

She dives from the shoulder into the back hood attached to my overcoat.

Are they already waiting inside?

Now then, let's confront them.

Opening the door by turning the door knob with a feeling similar to sitting in on a job interview, I entered the room.

Huh? They are still not here?

Only Dino Hildecore, the boss of 【Belgart】, was in the room.

The leader-san of the large company hasn't shown up yet.

“Shuuya-sama, since I will introduce you, please sit in the seat over there and wait a moment.” (Dino)

I was greeted with polite speech by Dino-san.

After doing a courteous and formal bow, she opens the light brown door located in the back of the room and goes outside.

After some time passed since she left, the light brown door was opened again.

A trader wearing gaudy clothes enters the room together with Dino-san.

And there was a female dark elf, who had one side of her face covered by a silver mask, behind him.

Ah, I saw him once already after all.

The slave trader possessing a piercing gaze and wearing a refined outfit.

Besides, that dark elf is here as well.

Does that mean that he is a slave dealer and also the leader of a large company?

The slave trader, who had the appearance of a noble, starts a cheerful

conversation with Dino-san at the entrance of the room.

When I looked towards them, the dark elf next to the slave trader returned the look.

Mutually exchanging looks, we begin to observe each other.

She has silver hair and silver pupils. There's a slight tinge of red around the silver colour.

She has beautiful eyes. Her ears are also elf-like, long ears growing to the side.

Her skin is pale, though it's a hue that gives an image of delicateness.

Besides the large black collar hanging from her neck, she's wearing risqué defensive garments that exposed her skin to a degree causing one to worry about its actual defence capability.

A bra-type, high-class leather armour with gold stripes protects her big breasts with their nice shape.

The so-called **Bikini Armour**. It's an item emphasizing my beloved boobies.

The part protecting her flanks is a tightly constricted vest with a thin leather belt that seems to make her waist stand out.

It's a vest that tightened her body strongly. Her butt has an average size.

The panties, or rather the swimsuit item she's wearing is plainly visible.

Although she's also wearing something like tassets that extend diagonally sideways at the lower part of the leather armour, one could appreciate her white high-leg pants because of her short buttocks...

I end up staring at them unintentionally.

No good, no good.

Pulling myself together, I examine her equipment. To the last it's her equipment...

A garter belt-like black leather obi sexily wrapped up her thighs from her waist.

Two longswords are dangling from her hips along her thighs.

She possesses long legs that are lean like the legs of track-and-field athletes allowing her to stand smoothly and continuously.

From her feet up until close to the thighs she wore red, long leather boots as if boasting about her stimulating great stride.

Her style is great. The high-leg leotard-like equipment suits her extremely well.

The beautiful dark elf-san seems to be capable of using Magic Observation after all.



『She's keeping mana in her eyes. I feel a **special** mana presence from that silver mask as well.』 (Helme)

Helme pointed out.

Certainly, there's a subtle amount of mana gathered at the silver mask. The silver mask has beautiful ornaments, too.

『There is a butterfly ornament coloured in gold and black applied on the mask?』

『Yes. It suits her.』

Surely it does.

While the female dark elf and me stare at each other, the conversation between the leader of the large company and Dino-san finishes and they come over to the place where I'm sitting.

In this case, I suppose it's better if I stand up and force a smile?

Oh well, let's get up.

“— Shuuya-sama, this here is Keragan Chianelas-sama of 【Oath of the One Horn】, the management organization of the 【Large Company Dual Bell】. Then, please sit down in your respective seats.” (Sino)

He has been introduced like that by Dino-san.

I also name myself before sitting down.

“I'm glad to meet you, Keragan Chianelas-sama. I'm a C-rank adventurer. I'm called Shuuya Kagari.”

“How very polite. Since I'm no more than a mere merchant, it's fine without attaching a -sama. This time I have been asked about this by Dino-san. I'm called Keragan. I'm told that you want to participate in the **Underground Auction** as a guest by all means.” (Keragan)

After speaking in a polite manner, Keragan-shi lightly bows his head and sits down in his seat.

The female dark elf next to him kept standing.

At the same time I also sit down in the opposite seat of him.

It's greatly different from his arrogant attitude of showing a piercing gaze the

other day.

Hasn't he also talked to a fellow slave trader at that time?

"... Yes. It is as you say." (Shuuya)

I stated concisely.

"I understand. Then, Shuuya-sama, excuse me, but can you please show me the **aforementioned gold coin** for the sake of confirming your participation? I believe you have been told by Dino-san, but after all, I have to see it with **these eyes** since I'm a merchant..." (Keragan)

The large platinum coin? Is it no good unless I show it no matter what? When I moved my sight towards Dino-san with a questioning look, she nodded silently.

Can't be helped then, let's show him, huh?

I touch the bracelet then and there and mutter 「Open」. I took out a large platinum coin from the item box after operating it with a peep-pop-pah. I take the gold coin between my index finger and middle finger as if holding a shogi piece and place it on the table.

"With this it's fine, isn't it?" (Shuuya)

Keragan checks the large platinum coin on the table by touching it. He deeply nodded obviously agreeing, and placed the large platinum coin back on the table after glancing at me.

I immediately put back the large platinum coin into the item box.

"Certainly... it's a genuine large platinum coin. This **settles** it. I will gladly guide you to the **Underground Auction**, Shuuya-sama. I also plan to exhibit this female dark elf next to me at the Underground Auction. Currently I have her learn **various** things by taking her around. Shuuya-sama, by all means I'd like you to bid with a high price for this special and unique female dark elf during the time of your participation." (Keragan)

Yes! It looks like I will be able to attend it.
Just as you wish, I will buy this beauty of a female dark elf.
Hehehe.

"That's right. She's lovely..." (Shuuya)

As if seeing through my perverted mind, the female dark elf throws a glaring and stabbing glance at me with her silver-coloured eyes.

“Hahaha, I see, I see. ... I’m looking forward to it, I guess. From now on I’d like to get along with a first-class adventurer like Shuuya-sama. If you are a possessor of such a rare item box, your budget has likely still much more leeway...” (Keragan)

Even though I’m still C rank, his flattery is skilful, ain’t it?
Well, I will humour him a bit.

“Though it’s only a bit. Ah, there’s no need for **sama** in my case either.”
(Shuuya)

The instant I said it with a nuisance of “if it’s money, I do have it?”, the eyes of Keragan that had been gentle grasped my entire body after shifting into a piercing look.

His smile immediately changed into that suiting a merchant.

How nice. He’s a merchant that dives into a scene of carnage after sniffing the smell of money.

I feel a unique aura.

“... Got it. ... There are the first department of slave auctions and the second department of high-class items auctions at the Underground Auction, but is there something you are aiming for?” (Keragan)

Something I’m aiming for, huh? You might say that my goal is a high-class combat slave.

I want to look at unknown items as well.

“No, something particular is... if I must say, I’ve been only considering to buy a special combat slave. I don’t know what kind of high-class items will appear on the auctions. I plan to decide whether to buy them on the spot.” (Shuuya)

“I see, I see. Then I’d like to tell you a bit about the second department. Going by the usual years, it starts with things like **refrigerators** and **magic communication shells** and then continues with magic tools possessing an interesting story like the **Upper Score 21 of the Demon King**, cursed spirit clothing, gold rings of the gods, unknown items of the ancient Arsen Dynasty, armours, arms connected to the world of spirits and special steel sheets that

you have never seen before and which only react to space-time magic.”
(Keragan)

Refrigerators come up just like that...

Magic communication shell, what’s that? Going by what I imagine from it’s name, it looks like something similar to a wireless radio or telephone.

If it’s something that handily usable, I might end up buying it depending on the price.

Since it seems that the Upper Score 21 of the Demon King is cursed, it’s a no-go.

“... Hee, such kind of items will be exhibited, eh?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, various really mysterious items appear in the labyrinth cities. Rare materials from monsters and treasure chests, items produced by the labyrinths themselves, etc.” (Keragan)

“I see. I was able to hear a bit about it, but I will look forward to it.” (Shuuya)

While nodding to my words, Keragan took out a cloth from his pocket.

“Yes, indeed... well then, there’s something I have to give to you, Shuuya-san, for participating in the **Underground Auction**. Please accept this **Viewing Badge**.” (Keragan)

What I was given is a round cloth with a unicorn design embroidered onto it.

“If you have this viewing badge, you will be able to enter the plot of the Chianelas Family which is also my family. The **Underground Auction** takes place on the last day of winter. Please make sure to not forget. Since I’m often at my residence or in the trading company in Pelneet after summer, please make sure to visit my mansion in **【Labyrinth City Pelneet】** before the appointed day.”
(Keragan)

He’s telling me to find his mansion in **【Pelneet】** by myself?

I wonder where’s the place where the actual auction will be held.

“... Will I find your mansion right away? And, where’s the location of the underground auction?” (Shuuya)

“My house is located in the west of the **noble block** that’s on the northern side along the labyrinth city’s third ring road. The front of my house is

decorated with a large crest that has the same mark as that viewing badge. I think you will be immediately able to tell since it stands out quite a lot with the big unicorn bronze statue in the garden. And, given that the **yearly** auction venue where the underground auction is held, changes, even I don't know of it at the moment." (Keragan)

The location changes every time?

"I see, got it." (Shuuya)

"Well then, allow me to return since I have to proceed the trade." (Keragan)

After Keragan, the large company leader, stood up hurriedly and discussed something minor with Dino-san, he leaves the room while talking the dark elf along.

I chuckle.

With this I will be able to take part in the **Underground Auction**.

This cloth is a sign?

Let's put it into the item box so that I don't lose it.

After putting away the cloth and having a light chat with Dino-san who's still in the same room, I left the room.

Shall I talk to Melissa before leaving this place?

While searching for her, I peek into the other rooms and passages that were nearby.

Oh, there she is. There are also coworker-like people around her.

She's in a room filled with the scent of ink and a pile of parchment documents and books.

It's pretty obviously a workroom.

Melissa and the others are deeply focussed on complicated talks across the table while showing serious expressions. I wonder whether it's all right to call her...?

No, I will call out to her.

"Melissa?" (Shuuya)

"Ah, Shuuya-san!" (Melissa)

After talking a word or two with a coworker while having a red face, she came running to me.

Some of her coworkers ask “Her boyfriend?” They stare this way while saying stuff like “Hee, he’s a tall man.”

“— Did it finish safely? Ah, let’s go this way?” (Melissa)

“Yea. Ah, got it.” (Shuuya)

While being led away by Melissa in order to avoid her colleagues’ looks, we leave the room’s entrance and go into the hallway.

“The discussion with the leader was successful. Therefore it seems that I will leave this city in a while.” (Shuuya)

“T-That’s right, isn’t it...? You won’t be here anymore...” (Melissa)

Melissa ended up spilling tears while revealing a distressed expression.

“I’m sorry, okay?” (Shuuya)

“No, something like that... you are an adventurer after all, Shuuya-san. I’m not your **wife** or **girlfriend** either... That’s because I won’t become such an annoying woman, right? Besides, although there’s a bit of a distance to 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】, it’s an adjoining city. It’s almost inactive, but we should have a branch over there as well.” (Melissa)

Not my wife or girlfriend, huh?

Is she using being a convenient woman as sales point?

We have a physical relationship, but won’t it cause troubles to her to chase me that far?

That’s the feeling here? If that’s not so, I might simply dance on her palm though.

However, that doesn’t matter either.

I had my fun, too. And she’s an adult.

You might say it’s a behaviour befitting a member of a thief guild doing it for the sake of obtaining information.

However, she has a pained and sad expression due to being divided from me. I feel her affection. She’s honestly adorable.

“... In that case, it doesn’t seem like this will be the last time.” (Shuuya)

“Yes!” (Melissa)

The lovable Melissa who pretends to be tough.
She has a cute look. I lightly hug her as if being lured by that look.
And then, close to her ear.

“Melissa, from now on you will be able to do your best at work. And, thank you for the information, okay?” (Shuuya)

“Yes! Shuuya-san as well, please take care of your body.” (Melissa)

After hugging each other tightly, we separated while floating refreshing smiles.

Bidding farewell from Melissa at that point, I go outside the headquarters of 【Belgart】.

The contract with Dino-san will continue until I actually attend the **Underground Auction**.

The date of the crucial **Underground Auction** is winter.

Currently the season has just become summer. It’s still quite a bit into the future.

What should I do until then?

First... as I will be leaving Holkerbaum before long, let’s head to the Labyrinth City Pelneet after doing one or two final requests in this place?

I will go look at the requests in the adventurer’s guild.

While thinking about that, I continue walking through an alley.

Once I did, Rollo, who slept inside my hood, woke up and got down on the ground from my shoulder.

While Rollo trembled on the ground, she changes into her Horse Lion Mode size from her usual Kitten Mode size.

“Nn.”

Horse Lion Mode

Rollodeen released a throaty voice.

She makes her tentacle that was stretching out from around her neck coil around my waist.

Once again she put me on her back.

Get on here, huh? Just as she wishes, I spread my legs and saddled on top of the Horse Lion Mode black-haired Rollodeen.

I feel her strong muscles through my long legs.

She wants to run with me riding her.

“It’s fine. Run as you like.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanyao.”

Horse Lion Mode

Rollodeen purrs with a feeling of 『Hold onto me nya』.

When I wondered whether she would head to the main street, it was somewhere else.

Four tentacles in pairs of two extend to the left and right from both sides of her neck.

— Huh? What’s she doing?

Two tentacles overlapped and turned into one thick tentacle. She stabbed the resulting two tentacles into the ground on the left and right side.

Moreover, making the two tentacles rotate time and time again in a spiral form,

Horse Lion Mode

Rollodeen moves her torso to the back while stretching the tentacles like rubber. *(T/N: Gomu gomu no roketto!)*

The tentacles caused a **warping sound** similar to twisted elastic bands.

... N-No way.

And then, in the instant she released the tentacles— Uhyaaaaa, it was just thaaaat. Wind blows suddenly against her body.

Horse Lion Mode

Rollodeen with me mounting her vigorously flew up into the sky.

— We are flying in the air. Oy.

The tentacles that extended from the bottom of her neck to the left and right are contracted into her torso.

From among the four tentacles that had acted as two elastic bands two tentacles are reduced by being reeled in and vanished as if being absorbed into the bottom of her neck.

Huh? No sooner than that, she produces tentacles at the left and right of her torso next.

She began to deploy them to the side and accomplished a transformation similar to gliding wings.

The black wings seize the wind, produce lifting power and glide through the sky

—

We soar while diagonally breaking through a cloud.

The wings growing on her left and right are large, black wings with a feeling that matches the feathers of hawks and bats.

She might be flying by gaining lifting power, but I could also sense that she was releasing miniscule amounts of mana through her wings. Is she naturally manipulating magic?

“You were able to do such stuff as well...” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nyanyaa.”

She is purring in a great mood while flying.

Helme appears while jumping up and down in a section of my visionary field.

『— Rollo-sama, how amazing. You are flying through the air. It feels faster than the time when we moved with Your Excellency. It’s a great view. The wind spirits are always enjoying this scenery, I guess?』 (Helme)

Who knows.

Though I don’t think that there are any spirits that have retained their consciousness like Helme either.

『I’d like to actually experience it once by going outside.』 (Helme)

『Got it. Hold onto my waist. Be careful.』 (Shuuya)

『— Yes!』 (Helme)

Helme flies out from my left eye while in her liquid state.

Without getting scattered by the wind, a human-shaped Helme appeared right behind me in an instant.

She circles both her bluish black arms around my waist and presses her soft tits against my back.

She showed up while being earnestly glued to me.

She seems to be capable of solidifying her body swiftly without succumbing to the wind force.

“Helme, are you all right?” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yes. The wind feels nice.” (Helme)

槍使いと、黒猫。

S T R A N G E R & B L A C K C A T

6

author
健康
illustration
市丸きすけ



Like that, all of us enjoy the sightseeing flight.
We circled around above 【Demoniac Steel-City Holkerbaum】.
My beloved piece of music resounds within my mind while we are enjoying the sky.
I wish I had my iPhone.
I want to fly through the air while listening to various songs and recording the scenery.
I wonder whether there isn't any recording-device type magic item?
Horse Lion Mode
Seemingly getting bored of the sightseeing flight before long, Rollodeen descends towards the port of 【Holkerbaum】 right below us.
She gently lands with her limbs while using her tentacle wings and tentacles like cushions.
The ship workers, who were labouring in the port, are surprised by us who suddenly intruded upon them from the sky.
Them being surprised is understandable, too.
Horse Lion Mode
I'm bothered by their gazes, but I jumped off Rollodeen.

The adventurer's guild should be in this neighbourhood.
At this opportunity I will look for a request there.

"We will go to the adventurer's guild." (Shuuya)

"Yes!" (Helme)

Helme, who is walking next to me, made her leafy skin flutter in a wavy motion and changed her tint into something similar to western clothes worn by humans.

"Nya."

Black Cat

Rollo, who gives a reply with a quiet voice, returned to her small cat mode from her horse mode size, and settled down on her usual spot.
We step into the adventurer's guild and advance to in front of the board with the posted requests.
Let's do a harpy hunt as a last request here?
Is what I pondered, but I found a request that caught my eyes.

Client: Shopping Street Association Director Phila Elizard
Request Content: Request for C Rank and above. Bodyguarding.
Subjugation Target: Thieves, Assassins
Application Period: 30 days after accepting the request
Search Area: none
Reward: 2 Silver Coins per day. 6 Gold Coins if you defeat the assassins
Subjugation Proof: none
Key Points: I will be targeted by assassins. Please protect me.
Note: I will wait for you at 【Smithy and Miscellaneous Goods Elizard】 in the shopping street along the main street. If you manage to defeat the assassin, this request will finish at once. The reward of six Gold Coins is limited to the fact that you defeated the assassin.

“I wonder, how about this one?” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya.”

“You will act as a bodyguard?” (Helme)

Helme asked as she was looking at the request board next to me.

“That’s right. It has written ‘Please protect me.’ Let’s protect her, okay?
Helme, please cooperate by becoming my eyes.” (Shuuya)

“Yes! I will turn into water and become your eyes, Your Excellency.” (Helme)

Mmh, well, then I will accept this request.

Below the board with the posted requests, there’s a edge with plenty of wood tags.

Borrowing one wood tag from there, I take it to the receptionist.

I presented my adventurer’s card and the wood tag to the receptionist.

After placing a hand on the crystal ball, the request is immediately accepted.

“Here’s your card.”

Given that I was handed back my adventurer’s card by the dark-skinned receptionist, I went outside the guild while looking at it.

Name: Shuuya Kagari

Age: 22

Title: Dragon Slayer

Race: Human

Occupation: C Rank Adventurer

Affiliation: none

Combat Occupation: Spear Warrior – Chain User

Completed Requests: 17

Let's go to the target location, the shopping street?
It's the main street with the hotel where I'm staying.

"Rollo, let's go." (Shuuya)

"Nyao."

Rollo changed into the Horse Lion Mode size.

Horse Lion Mode

I jump and get on top of Rollodeen.

"Helme, return into my eye." (Shuuya)

"Yes." (Helme)

She liquefied in an instant and leaps into my left eye just as usual.

Horse Lion Mode

And, without time to give instructions to Rollodeen, she starts running.

She runs and runs. She runs while her limbs move flexibly.

She dashed swiftly through the main street after cutting across the port in an instant.

Passing in front of the revived Large Tree of Holker, we arrive at the shopping street in the blink of an eye.

Although she's fast in the sky, she's also fast on the ground.

Once we arrive at the shopping street, Rollodeen seems to **know** where we are heading and progresses on the shopping street at a calm pace.

Oh, found it.

【Smithy and Miscellaneous Goods Elizard】.

Something like a steel cudgel serves as signboard.

Rollodeen stopped moving in front of the store.

After immediately dismounting easily, I enter the shop.

The interior gives an impression that befits its name.

Many finished smithing products such as longswords, spears, shields, armours, etc., and metal utensils such as frying pans, pots, ladles, etc. are lined up.

I headed deeper inside while looking at the shelves displaying such items. Since there was a clerk at the reception located inside, I address them.

“I accepted the bodyguard request.” (Shuuya)

“Welcome. Then, please this way.”

The clerk greeted me with a bob of their head and guided me through a door located next to the reception desk.

“Everyone that accepted this request has assembled in this room. Here you go.”

The place I was guided to is a room similar to an ooblong parlour. Just as the clerk said, several adventurers waited there. Magic lamps set up at the ceiling and the left and right walls are brightly illuminating the room. There was a clean desk inside the room and a door at the left inner part.

The adventurers have nice expressions and look strong.

When I enter the room, the adventurers turn stern gazes at me.

I gaze at the adventurers with Magic Observation.

I check one, two, several.

They are ordinary, I guess... uh-oh... I found a quite strong-looking adventurer.

The strongest is this guy? An Asian eyepatched man with long black hair.

The eyepatched man stared at the place with the desk and door located inside the room.

He is gathering mana in his legs and hands like a Chinese martial arts user. I was able to guess his developed muscles because of his large shoulder width.

As a longsword is visible at his waist, it seems that it's his main weapon.

I shift my gaze to another adventurer.

There were two more excellent people who are clad in Magic Combat Style.

One of them has an acorn head with unkempt hair.

A thin silken bandana is wrapped around his head in order to restrain his naturally curly hair.

The nose of his perfectly round face has a big width, a scar and nose hair growing out from it.

A steel mace with a square ruggedness is visible at his waist.

He really looks like a low bred, savage man.

The other one wears a cloth hat and he possesses a distinct face albeit uneven. He is lightly dressed exposing their upper body half. I get that he has the physique of a black man's torso. Two cutlass-typed weapons that had long cloths coiled around them hung at his waist.

There were also other adventurers who clad themselves with Magic Combat Style, but you might say that they didn't reach the level of the three people I was looking at currently.

Since C Rank adventurers and above were mentioned on the request paper, I have the impression that quite the experienced ones have gathered here. When I'm thinking about that, the door on the left inner side is opened. The one who appeared from the door was a beautiful human woman. Strong-looking, armed men appear together with her in order to protect that beautiful woman.

The armed men line up behind the woman.

The beautiful woman has walnut-coloured hair.

Her skin is darkish as if it had been sunburnt slightly.

Above her blue eyes there are template-like slender eyebrows. The shape of her nose is nice, too.

She wore superior silk clothes similar to a stretch blouse with a slit at her collar. That beauty moves her small mouth.

"... Everybody, I deeply thank you for having accepted the request of being my bodyguards on this occasion. My name is Phila Elizard, your client. I'm the owner of this store. Before all of you will truly start on this time's task, I will explain the details regarding this request." (Phila)

Her name's Phila Elizard, huh?

She bowed while placing her hands on her chest.

"To start off, I will begin from the matter of me having persuaded the feudal lord in order to press forward the bridge construction in the south of 【Holkerbaum】..." (Phila)

At that point she makes a little break by coughing once.

"The persuasion of the feudal lord was successful and the dwarven stone union and the merchant guild, who obtained the official permission, formed an

alliance and started with the construction of the bridge. At first the construction proceeded favourably, but... in the middle of it, mysterious accidents kept occurring, and in the end a worker got involved in a murder case after being killed by someone. Because of this incident, the construction had to be halted.” (Phila)

Phila-san shook her head left and right while revealing a mortified expression.

“Furthermore, my colleagues of the merchant guild received threats from shady organizations and my store was harrassed by an increasing number of violent ruffians as well. However, I didn’t want to yield to such harassments. Therefore I got in contact with the city guards and the feudal lord to increase the number of patrols. However the answer to that was negative. Since they were unreliable... I asked an organization called 【Scales of Gaia】, a dark guild that controlled this area, to protect me, but there has been absolutely no message from that dark guild. ... Thus I desperately protected this store together with my younger brother, but...” (Phila)

At that point Phila talks as if enduring the anger that has accumulated at the temples next to her thin eyebrows.

“My younger brother **was killed**. He went out in a carriage for the sake of a business deal, but after getting attacked by someone on his way back home, my younger brother died... it was a carriage I should have originally boarded... If there’s a next time, they will likely target me. That’s why I hurriedly put up this kind of guard request for you adventurers.” (Phila)

So that’s the reason.

That means she got dragged into a conspiracy regarding the bridge’s construction.

Then one adventurer spoke up.

“Do you know to what organization these assassins belong?”

“No, absolutely not... until a bit ago I paid protection money to the dark guild called 【Scales of Gaia】, but there had been no news from them. Since it’s such an estranged relationship, I don’t know anything.” (Phila)

Due to those words, the adventurers got noisy.

“Is it related to the case of the 【Owl’s Fangs】 branch’s destruction?”

“No, I wonder about that. I don’t believe that they would come to this town now of all times.”

“Because it’s the merchant guild, aren’t they involved with a famous company around Lalarbin with its iron productions?”

“If it’s Lalarbin, they can also get iron from the Lake City Luluzark, right?”

“On top of the land route to Luluzark being long, it seems that the traces of the war are terrible, doesn’t it?”

Was the turf of 【Scales of Gaia】 in this area?
Then it’s only natural that there are no news.
After all that dark guild doesn’t exist anymore.
That means...

The assassins or whatever are remnants of 【Owl’s Fangs】 or a fresh supply of troops from a different city?

Or, is it a completely different dark guild, working for another company, as the adventurers say?

Chapter 101 – Owl’s Fangs, Internal Information of Holker

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



I caught sight of dwarves and humans, who wore craftsman-like cool work clothes, creating smithing products at a large blacksmith’s workshop. The sound of clink-clank-clonk* resounds as they process the metal. *(There’s an OST song from DragonQuestX with the title of the sfx, I kinda liked it, so here you go: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmQ1xAPO-os>)*

There are many craftsmen working on and adjusting the shape of crimson iron, that was tinged with heat and was placed on anvils, by hitting it with hammers. There are also labourers who are mixing some chemicals in iron pots. Their faces were shining due to being drenched in sweat. Their hands and faces are dirty with oil, but they also made people feel the awesomeness of men. While admiring their work, I head toward the back of the mansion Phila entered.

The mansion seemed to be the home of a merchant who attended to a store. As items that are likely stock of the merchandise were scattered around starting from the entranceway, you couldn’t call it an overly clean house. Even the reception hall ahead of the hallway was messy, but since many round tables had been set up, it’s a room giving off the sensation that you could even use it as party venue as long as you tidied up the luggages. Once the client Phila-san realises that the adventurers have gathered in this

room, she turns her face towards us.

“I will return to my workroom, which also serves as bedroom, located in the inner part. Although this place is messy, please feel free to use it as you like, okay? For today it’s only dinner afterwards, but since I had the store prepare a high-class dinner for everyone, enjoy it to the fullest.” (Phila)

“Ooh!”

“A beautiful merchant is something else, right?”

“I’m grateful as I won’t have to go without a meal today...”

The adventurers erupted into cheers of relief and delight. Due to the reactions of the adventurers, Phila smiles satisfied and after nodding slightly, she walks towards the inner room while accompanied by two guards. The inner room seems to be her bedroom and workroom in one. There are pantry-like small rooms on the left and right of the passage where Phila is walking, but she advances through the short hallway without looking at those.

Then she steps into the room that should be her aforementioned personal room at the end of the hallway.

In the end she only took the guards whom she trusts along, huh...?

I look at the people in the same trade that were left behind in the open space. The people with their specialized spears, shields and swords sit down on chairs or lean against the walls. Everyone gathers in small groups.

A part of the groups cast piercing gazes, seemingly observing the state of the surroundings.

Did Rollo sense that we had free time now? She crawls into the hood.

From her lovely touch on my back I grasp that she has curled up. She appears to have gone to sleep.

Since it’s free time, I will try peeking at the inner room where Phila is.

Opening the door of the room at the end of the hallway, I entered Phila’s room. In the middle of the room there’s a large bed. Next to it there’s a desk with documents on it. Expensive-looking parchments were piled up all over the floor. The back of Phila searching for something is visible in a corner.

Once I sneaked a look from her side wondering what she’s doing, she was tending to her nicely long fingernails with a small brush.

Styling herself up, isn't she?

When I tried to approach her, a macho-like guard that was standing close to the bed stops me.

"No further than that. Phila-sama is working."

"We will guard this place. I'd like you to leave."

There's something black, round birthmark-like on the chests of the lightly dressed, macho guards.

They might be slaves.

Their black eyes are sharp as if they are malicious towards me.

I was able to check the room. Let's withdraw here.

Facing the glaring guards, I open my mouth while waving my hands.

"... I see. Understood." (Shuuya)

After speaking in a light tone, I turned around and left the private room of my client.

I return to the large room, where the employed adventurers are hanging out, and wait while leaning against a wooden desk that has a bar counter.

Since there's no attack, the leisure time continues for a while.

Once evening passed and night got close, the store's staff and maid-like people began to clean the room where the adventurers have assembled.

And then, after the tables are lined up in the centre of the room, dishes are set on top of those tables.

It seems they plan to hold a buffet party.

When the smell of food starts to hang in the air, there's squirming in my back.

Rollo woke up from her sleep and returned on my shoulder.

"Nnn, nyaa~, nyao?"

She stretches her forepaws while yawning.

It feels like she's saying something like 『Time for food nya?』

Her nostrils sniff the air as well.

"Seems so. If there's something delicious-looking like fish or meat, I will let you eat it." (Shuuya)

"Nyao, nya."

After she purred delightfully, Rollo nuzzled her small head against my cheek. Large platters filled up with meat and fresh vegetables are carried in and placed on top of the tables.

fresh cheese

There's some large bird roast, something like piroshki, quark and wine. I had seen high-class bird dishes once before.

Are they treating us, the adventurers, to such high-class dishes?

Phila Elzard-san is a big-hearted merchant.

Once the setting of the food on the tables finishes, Phila-san seems to have a speech for everyone and thus begins to speak after bowing her head.

“To all of you adventurers, this dinner is intended as meagre thanks. I will fully rely on you from today onwards.” (Phila)

She talks and then moves to the inner room while taking her guards along. While raising shouts of joy, the adventurers start to eat the luxurious dishes. I pour wine into a cup to the brim, bring it to my mouth and drink it.

Next I placed roast chicken, lettuce, fresh leaves of vegetables and a vegetable tasting like mashed potatoes on my plate and ate the assorted food with my knife.

Of course I also let Rollo eat plenty of grilled meat similar to cow fillet and roast chicken just like me.

“Nyanyao!”

“Don't eat too much, okay?” (Shuuya)

Rollo urges me on as she seems to not have eaten enough yet. Did the necessary amount of food increase because she grew up? Although I brought her a large amount, she already ate up all of it. ... Let's give her my share as well.

The dinner time continued noisily in such manner.

Something like just eating; that doesn't feel like being a bodyguard at all.

The adventurers, who finished their meal, create separate groups split into those who are solo, and those who belong to a clan, and start to sleep in the same room.

Since there's a bar counter where they serve alcohol, I wasted my time there.

The provided alcohol is different from the previous wine. With it being a strong

wine due to its sourness, the flavour could be called so-so.

However, compared to that high-class inn, the wine's taste is inferior.

Damn it...

My tongue apparently ended up remembering the taste of the wine provided by that high-class inn.

Let's abstain from eating over there.

When I gulped down the alcohol in the wooden goblet while thinking that, I was addressed by a chubby adventurer with conspicuous, unkempt hair on his head.

"Yo? You've been drinking alcohol with a nice mood going there for a while now, but haven't you forgotten the request here?"

A steel mace is hanging at the waist of the fat adventurer.
It looks like it would hurt if I were hit with that...

"... Hah? I'm all right. I have a constitution where I won't get drunk at all."
(Shuuya)

It's only to the degree of feeling slightly good.
At any rate, this guy...

He should be one of the adventurers I had an eye on at the beginning due to his quite good handling of the magic combat style.

His head is wrapped up by something like a bandana, but it's useless as his frizzly, long, dishevelled hair is popping out.

"I see, I see, you are resistant against alcohol, I suppose? Oh well, as long as you stay composed, all's fine. I was wondering whether I should have a drink as well, you know?"

Will you drink, too?
Well, I will restrain myself with this being the last.

"Don't drink too much, okay? This will be the last for me." (Shuuya)

"Aye."

The corpulent, nice man showed his dirty teeth while smiling broadly and started to drink alcohol.

I step away from him after downing the remaining wine in one go.

I withdrew into a corner of the vast room where the adventurers are resting.

For some reason or another I like corners.

However, although the client prepared meals, it's not like she has prepared something like beddings.

Since the number of adventurers is large, that can't be helped though.

I will probably stand out if I took out the tent by using the magic tool of magically-built house here...

I will have to put up with the floor and wall today, won't I?

And then time flows on. Late at night of that day—

Nuoh? Something smells.

This room is teeming with a smoke different from incense.

Even so, there's no uproar... how weird. Ah, the nearby adventurer is sleeping. I don't know this smoke's effect, but it seems to have enticed most of the adventurers into sleep.

Not only the wide room but even the mansion's interior has fallen silent. The silence of just the faint lights of the lamps burning here and there on top of the tables dominated the space.

Talking about this smell, I say, there's something in it?

I activate <Night Vision>.

『Your Excellency, will you use Spirit Sight?』(Helme)

『Yeah, I will.』 (Shuuya)

I catch Helme who appeared in my visionary field.

As usual I disregard the heavy panting of the captured Helme.

thermography

I check the vicinity with the night vision and infrared view active.

Furthermore I pay attention to my surroundings with Grasping Perception and Magic Observation.

Once I do, there's a reaction from my Grasping Perception.

One, no, two are moving... mmh?

The magic sources of the sleeping adventurers in their vicinity are vanishing.

They are killing the adventurers? Assassins, eh?

“Rollo.” (Shuuya)

I notify Rollo with a whisper.

Rollo has already switched over to a combat stance at my feet.

The medium-sized black panther. You might call it a body befitting for battle indoor.

Her red eyes shone, her fangs were visible from her mouth and six tentacles hung in the air.

Fully ready, huh?

All right, the moving responses that might be considered enemies are three. Among them, two magic source responses are moving towards the inner room where Phila is.

The remaining response seems to go around and kill the sleeping adventurers in this wide room one after the other.

... Their skill is decent.

To assassinate the adventurers, albeit them being asleep, successively without causing a sound while taking advantage of the darkness...

I might have not realized it either if I hadn't Grasping Perception and Spirit Sight.

No, no, this ain't the time for admiring them.

The request takes priority.

Though I feel sorry for the sleeping adventurers, let's ignore them.

I head towards the room of the client.

"Rollo, follow me." (Shuuya)

I hurry towards the inner room from the saloon with its slight lamp light.

Rollo follows behind me.

The inner door was closed.

Quietly pushing open that door, I enter inside.

The moment I opened it, the door hit something. Right below me there are two corpses.

It's the two macho-like guard slaves that should have protected Phila.

One was killed from behind, the other died by having his head crushed.

I guess I was too late?

Then,

"Kyaaaa—" (Phila)

Because I heard Phila's scream, I stormed in.

It looks like my client didn't sleep.

While wearing a negligee, she stands between the bed and the wall as she trembles and holds a pillow at her chest.

Something like a cloth mask was equipped on the quivering Phila's mouth. Did that cause her not breathing in the incense with the sleeping effect? There was a duo trying to corner Phila.

The fat man shakes off the blood clinging to his steel mace.

Next to him, a man, who possesses a firm torso with dark skin and wearing a hat, swung a cutlass-type weapon that is dripping with blood while looking happy.

The cheerful guy who came greeting me while I was drinking the wine, and a swarthy man.

Is it for the sake of not inhaling the sleep gas? Both have their mouths covered by cloths.

“You guys are assassins, huh?” (Shuuya)

I glare at the two assassins while confirming Phila's safety.

“Guess so. Tsk. You have woken up, eh?”

The fat man with the frizzly hair glances at me looking bored while making spit fly around.

“That's odd, you know? You should be asleep? Besides, what's that black beast?”

Black Panther

The dark skinned, toned man looks at Rollo and asks doubtfully. Ignoring those words, I check the vicinity with Grasping Perception. Phila-san is in the right corner of the bed.

Apart from these two as enemies... there's one more.

It's the enemy who can be considered to have come from behind after previously killing the adventurers sleeping in the saloon.

I realize that the response of that enemy is approaching this room.

Did he stop killing the sleeping adventurers and place priority on this place?

At this rate, I will get attacked from two sides.

Huh? ... He stopped in front of the door?

He still won't enter this room? Is he hiding? I wonder why.

As I'm analysing the state of affairs, the fat man threw a glance at Phila and

showed a smiling expression on his greasy face.

“... Phila-san, the food was delicious. I will humbly eat you next, Phila-san, okay? This Balban-sama will love you plentyyyy, peck youuuu, hehehe, until those soft-looking legs won't be able to stand anymore, you knooooow—”

Gross, he places the mace on his shoulder and swings his waist. However, I feel like he's slightly stupid for an assassin. I'm sure that the guy hiding at the room's entrance is the real deal. Oh well, for now let's get rid of that perverted fool in front of me?

“—Nyanya! Shaaaa.”

Black Panther

Rollo reacts first.

Leaping towards the wall, she performs a triangular flight and stands in front of Phila.

She stood in the way of the two men holding weapons.

I don't want to lose either, I move—

I restrain the two men by throwing daggers with <Throw>.

But, the fat man displayed a reaction that doesn't match his figure.

Using the mace, he blocks the dagger tossed with <Throw>.

In the same way the dark-skinned man repelled a dagger thrown by me with his cutlass.

Without minding that, I make the Magic Halberd appear in my right hand, hold it shortly and jump lightly.

My aim is the head of the swarthy man wearing a hat.

While rotating to the left, I bring down the Magic Halberd from the upper left to the lower right.

— A dull metallic sound reverberates.

The swarthy man crossed the cutlasses he held in both hands and protected his head from the red axe blade with them.

Hey, that's quite decent. Though, the strike does its work.

The swarthy man apparently saw through my attack with the Magic Halberd that the blow of the red axe blade would be heavy.

Lowering the both hands with the cutlasses, his hands were seemingly numb and his face warps. The two cutlasses fall on the ground.

Using that as chance, I shortened the fighting distance.

I unleash **Left Back Blade** which is one of the techniques in the spear sparring of close combat battle.

It's a blow technique using the left shoulder and the shoulder blade on the back.

I impact on the dark-skinned head with my shoulder and hit his chest with my back.

Blown off by the double strike, the swarthy man fainted after strongly clashing against the wall.

He was a man possessing a firm and nice body build, but he was weak against impacts on the head.

That's the first one down.

The other one, the perverted idiot, or rather the fat man, who introduced himself as Balban was apparently scared of Rollo's figure? He retreated close to the door where the corpses are lying around.

"Phila-san, are you all right?" (Shuuya)

Since the enemy took a bit of a distance, I made sure that she's safe.

"Y-Yes, I-I'm fine." (Phila)

Phila answers with quivering lips while hugging the pillow strongly.

"W-What are you! It's different from that guy's storyyyy!? Something like there being a master spear user and such beast around! O— wh-!" (Balban)

In the middle of his flustered speech, a sharp blade shows up protruding out from Balban's chest.

The blade pierces Balban's chest twice. Blood overflows from his chest alongside a wet sound.

"Wh-, ha-? Gueehh!" (Balban)

Balban lets his steel mace fall to the ground— looking at the sword sticking out of his own chest, he spoke while appearing surprised and collapsed to the ground.

The one who emerged on the other side of Balban's corpse is the one-eyed man with blackish long hair, a deep blue outfit, long sleeves and a longsword in his hand.

Isn't that the man who caused a response in the back.

Although I thought that he's an enemy, he was an allied adventurer?

No, in this situation I can't differentiate who's an ally or not.

This guy probably requires special attention.

The one-eyed man held one longsword in his hand and persistently stabbed the back of the fat Balban's corpse many times.

The back of Balban turns into a tragedy.

Was the Asian-styled, one-eyed man satisfied with stabbing him? He shifts his glaring one eye— he sends a piercing gaze at Rollo and me that seemed to be filled with mana and bloodlust.

What? Though it was for an instant, it was filled with bloodlust.

『Your Excellency, this man is amassing mana in his eye. Please take extra care.』 (Helme)

The spirit Helme, who dwells in my left eye, warned me.

Yeah, I realize.

However, the one-eyed man stored away the longsword and started to talk as if nothing had happened.

“Phila-san, you were safe? It seems that those guys are the ringleaders.”

“Yes, that's what it looks like. It was dangerous.” (Phila)

He's suspicious...

The one-eyed man continues to speak.

“No way, for them to have blended in among the adventurers! Can you stand up?”

At the time when the one-eyed man tried to make his way through my side quickly in a casual manner, an unnatural plock sound could be heard from the wrist parts that were hidden by the long sleeves.

Thereupon mana concentrates in the palms of the one-eyed man and hidden chakram appear while moving from the wrists to the palms.

Did he move and guide them with an elastic band towards his palms? He grasps the chakram. With slight snaps of his wrists he threw the chakram towards Phila.

The instant he thought that the rotating chakram would hit her forehead—

Trump

Card

I activate <Demonic Brain Speed> after a long time.

I, who had his speed doubled, repel the chakram that were thrown towards Phila with my Magic Halberd.

The repelled chakram got stuck in the ground and pierced the wall.

The next chakram are grasped in the one-eyed man's right hand and he shifts into the motion of throwing them once again.

— 3 seconds pass.

I have have some business with this guy.

I will bring him down without killing him.

Hitting his stomach with a mana-charged first of the Magic Combat Style, I seize his right arm, bend it upside down and make him eat the mana-charged outer edge of my foot with his right foot.

I broke the bones of the one-eyed man's foot as if breaking a bat.

Trump

Card

Thereupon <Demonic Brain Speed> stops once 20 seconds have passed.

“Guohh!?”

The one-eyed man collapses to the ground.

A normal human shouldn't be able to catch up with the speed of <Demonic Brain Speed>.

He probably couldn't comprehend what happened.

Most likely he should have realized that his stomach was hit and that his hand and foot were broken.

“Gu... I'm sure I threw chakram just now...”

The one-eyed man whinged with a mumbling voice that couldn't be understood while wriggling and crouching on the ground.

Him not raising his voice into a scream due to the pain makes me think that he's a trained member of an organization.

However, this guy won't be able to resist anymore.

Accordingly I turn my face to Phila.

Due to the excessive events, she has leaned her back against the wall and fell on her backside.

An ammoniac stench hung in the air.

“Phila-san, are you all right? You have no injury, right?” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yes. I was afraid—” (Phila)

I held Phila-san and raised her up.



“Gu, what! Get off me!”

Oh? The voice of the flustered one-eyed man resounds.

What, it’s Rollo, isn’t it?

Rollo climbed on the face of the one-eyed man and pushed the paws at the sole of her feet into his face.

“Rollo, restrain him like that.” (Shuuya)

Separating from Phila, I approach the one-eyed man, who’s grovelling on the ground, from the side.

“For starters, let’s hear your name?” (Shuuya)

“Don’t fuck with me! There’s no way that I will talk, right...? Hurry up and kill me.”

“Phila-san, you want to know the opponent who’s aiming for your life, right?” (Shuuya)

“Yes, I do...” (Phila)

“Well then, it would be best if you don’t watch from here on out. Besides—” (Shuuya)

Phila’s skin line is visible through her thin negligee.

I implicitly indicated that her nether region that was drenched with urine had become exposed by pointing my sight at it deliberately.

“Kyaa... g-got it. I leave it to you...” (Phila)

Phila left the room while hiding her nether region with her hands having a red face.

“Okay, let’s have you teach us your name, one-eyed-kun, okay?” (Shuuya)

“As if.”

I don’t think that this one-eyed-kun, who doesn’t show his pain on his face, will easily confess.

Therefore I will have him forcefully taste just a little of fear that can’t be relished by humans.

Let's enjoy his blood.

After displaying my fangs on purpose by spreading my mouth, I bit into the nape of the man's neck with a crunch.

The one-eyed man showed a frightened expression due to suddenly having his blood sucked.

"Hihiii."

He releases a scream with his pupils repeatedly dilating and constricting. As if participating as well, Rollo transforms into a slightly bigger shape.

"Goawlll!" (Rollo)

While roaring, she makes her six tentacles suspend in the air. The tentacles approach the man's face.

Producing silver-coloured, protruding bone swords from the tentacles, she pokes the cheeks of the man with their sharp ends.

Blood ran down from the one-eyed man's cheeks.

The tentacles repeat an eerie, swaying movement.

"Do you feel like talking? As you can see, the black cat and me aren't normal. Even as for torment methods, there are plenty of ways you don't know about, aren't there?" (Shuuya)

I match my gaze with his one eye.

While showing a scared expression, the man retreats as if escaping by using the arm and leg that aren't injured.

"W-What are you...? Aren't you a human?"

"Rather than that, I will allow you to die easily if you talk **now** about everything. Or, do you want to die after suffering even more due to a special torture?" (Shuuya)

I smile broadly while showing my sharp teeth. It's a smile with the shape of an arc.

Blood trickled down from my fangs.

"G-Got it. I will talk, please, since I will talk, finish me off normally. Please, finish me off without suffering... my name is Serva Gairal." (Serva)

Did he resign himself? He introduces himself while casting his face down.
Haha, he caved in easily.
As expected, even a trained assassin apparently doesn't want to be tortured by an inhuman, monstrous guy like me.
Well, it's a fact that I activated the skill <Drain Soul>, I guess.

"... Who has ordered the assassination this time? And, to which dark guild do you belong?" (Shuuya)

"The one who ordered it is President Bill. He's a subordinate of Eribol Macabayne-sama. I'm the vice-president of the dark guild 【Owl's Fangs】." (Serva)

This guy is a leader of that 【Owl's Fangs】? And moreover, the vice-president?

"That Eribol Macabayne or whatever, where is he?" (Shuuya)

"Though he doesn't show up in front of us usually, Eribol-sama lives in a palatial residence located in 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】." (Serva)

"And President Bill?" (Shuuya)

"He's the boss of the dark guild. President Bill is Eribol-sama's loyal follower." (Serva)

I see. Not Bill but that Eribol is the wire puller?

"What's the official occupation of that Eribol?" (Shuuya)

"You don't know Eribol-sama? He is the president of 【Macabayne Company】, the biggest ruling maritime guild of Mahaheim. He has the nickname **white tanuki**. He's one of the Eight Lights" (Serval)

White tanuki and Eight Lights?

Ah~ it's about the community of dark guilds, eh?

I remember. Melissa and Marquess Chardonnay mentioned them.

In addition a maritime trader?

"... Why have you been told to assassinate Phila Elizard?" (Shuuya)

"It began with the feudal lord of 【Holkerbaum】 Earl Makfol ignoring our orders and giving permission for the construction of the bridge after having seemingly yielded to Phila's persuasion. Being angered by this, Eribol-sama

made the necessary arrangements with high-ranking noble bureaucrats in the 【Royal Capital Gromheim】 and the Minister of the Navy, Marquis Langlid, to apply pressure on the feudal lord of 【Holkerbaum】. Using our protege dark guild, we cornered him into stopping the construction of the bridge.” (Serva)

They did something that pigheaded?

“That’s why the bridge construction was finished in such a half-assed manner...” (Shuuya)

“Correct. If they are able to complete the bridge, a land route will be established between 【Pelneet】, 【Benraque】 and 【Holkerbaum】, and the business of Phila’s group will prosper even further, but the one who will receive a blow will be Eribol Macabayne-sama who’s main activity is marine transport... and thus he gave the leaders Oze and Jane the order to kill Phila, but... there was a report stating that Oze and Jane alongside the 【Holkerbaum】 branch had been annihilated, there was an emergency meeting about that.” (Serva)

I see.

Did I prevent that since I killed Oze and Jane?

“... Being given new orders by the board of directors, it was decided for me to come to 【Holkerbaum】. I employed two ruined adventurers and attacked the carriage where Phila should be on board, but... the one who was there wasn’t the target Phila, but her younger brother.” (Serva)

“It was a failure.” (Shuuya)

“Indeed. We killed her younger brother Ben Elizard, but the assassination of Phila Elizard ended in failure. But, without giving up, we planned to assassinate her after learning about Phila commissioning guards at the adventurer’s guild, by making use of that fact instead. And then, since we were able to safely infiltrate Phila’s mansion as adventurers, we went ahead with our assassination at first as planned, but it’s a failure. ... I have told you everything at this point. That’s all there is to it.” (Serva)

Serva sighs at that point.

“Serva, once it becomes known that you failed the assassination, how will 【Owl’s Fangs】 move next?” (Shuuya)

“Independent of whether I fail or succeed, they will have to withdraw themselves from 【Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum】 temporarily. Next they have to oppose the **other dark guilds** who will very likely start a genuine offence soon. 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 is 【Owl’s Fangs】 headquarters after all.”
(Serva)

Other dark guilds, eh? I remember Melissa talking about it.

“Pelneet is your stronghold. Is the turf war between fellow dark guilds extreme?” (Shuuya)

“Extreme doesn’t even describe it. It’s war every day. Especially the gambling street and the harbour’s warehouses are crucial sources of income as important sales locations. I’m certain that boss has tightened the protection of our turf.”
(Serva)

If this guy’s story is true, they won’t get involved with 【Holkerbaum】 for the time being.

However, their boss Eribol Macabayne feels as if he matches a godfather in the mafia.

The part of possessing an official and unofficial face being something quite simple for any business is the same in any world.

“... Is Eribol Macabayne a considerable bigwig?” (Shuuya)

“Of course. Just as I told you before, he lives in a palatial residence as major merchant.” (Serva)

However, this guy is spilling the beans fluently because he became obedient after having his blood sucked.

The hypnotic effect of <Drain Soul> is outstanding.

“... Palatial residence, eh? Does he live like a noble?” (Shuuya)

“He does. He’s probably equal to a high-ranking noble. Controlling the marine transport from 【Gromheim】 until 【Senapua】, he also employs several slave traders and is in charge of a part of the sales network of the

Chrystal

Meth

synthetic magic drug according to the **black market agreement Ga・Pe**.

Moreover, he has been spreading his influence to various places owned by the dark guild and his subordinates.” (Serva)

Black market agreement Ga•Pe? Synthetic magic drug?

“You are making something like a magic drug?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It gives birth to tremendous profits. As long as we use our ships, the sales network grows large.” (Serva)

“And black market agreement Ga•Pe is?” (Shuuya)

“It’s the name of an agreement between 【Ocean Light City Gazellejan】 and 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 that uses the first initial letters of both.” (Serva)

I hear the name of Ocean Light City Gazellejan for the first time.
Going by my guess... I believe it’s a coast-lands or island city located at the point where the Heim River flows into the open sea.

“... What are the details of that agreement?” (Shuuya)

“First, it’s a comprehensive non-aggression treaty including the merchant ships of Oseberia Kingdom and the fishmen pirates 【Sea King Hornets】 who rule the Ocean Light City as dark guild. Second, on top of selling the synthetic magic drug, which is produced in Gazellejan, on the markets of south Mahaheim that are under our control, they share a part of the profits with us. Third, we sell the illegal slaves caught in the Ocean Light City to all cities in south Mahaheim. Those are the details.” (Serva)

Hee, it’s a far more important agreement than I expected, isn’t it?

“What’s the scale of the organization of 【Owl’s Fangs】 if compared to your rivals?” (Shuuya)

“If we restrict it to 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】, we have secured a much larger turf than the other dark guilds. Moreover, our influence extended even to the areas of other cities... That’s about it.” (Serva)

It matches with what Melissa said.

【Owl’s Fangs】 is a dark guild on the bigger side among the many dark guilds. For them to be connected up to the city where the Heim River flowed into the sea...

I wonder how many ships they possess.

Ships... ah, I see.

That's why they attacked us at that place.

"... Eribol laid waste to the roads of 【Holkerbaum】 and 【Hekatrail】 for the sake of his own marine transportation, didn't he?" (Shuuya)

"Yeah, that's true. If they are attacked by bandits on the land routes, the utilization of merchant ships and ocean liners will increase." (Serva)

Now I understand the reason why they assaulted us.
The large company, where the boss of these guys' 【Owl's Fangs】 exists, likely focusses on smuggling through the transport business that used the Heim River, but that means their major reason is profit.
If they are attacked on the land routes, scared rich people and companies, who lost their cargo, will choose the sea route next.
I listen to the matters of the dark guild while grasping the relations.

"... Who are the other leaders?" (Shuuya)

"President Bill Sokurdo, Dark Archer Lane, Beck of the Scattering Sword, Morabi of the Darkness Sword and Pili of the Ox Sword. And the dead Blue Silver Oze and Jane of the Dual Whips. These two were finished off by you the spear user?" (Serva)

That means there were 8 leaders in total, I guess.
Serva stares at me with frightened eyes.

"That's right, but rather than that, the feudal lord of this place, Earl Makfol, is connected to you guys as well?" (Shuuya)

The one-eyed Serva lowers his eyebrows and talks as if it's only natural.
"The feudal lord Makfol, huh? Nevermind being connected, Eribol-sama recommended him in the first place. Currently even the feudal lord's subordinates, the **Red Feather Mercenary Band** had been introduced by Eribol-sama." (Serva)

Is that why the feudal lord's protection was a sieve?

"To begin with, even at the incident where the previous feudal lord of Holkerbaum opposed the kingdom three years ago, it was a plot set up by Eribol-sama. Publicly it was a power struggle, but... it was very carefully and

calculatively carried out behind the scenes. The one who performed that job was me. However, the present feudal lord Earl Makfol seems to be ungrateful towards Eribol-sama and the occasions where he ignores orders are recently increasing.” (Serva)

That feudal lord-kun who became my friend. Just as rumoured, he possessed a light connection to a dark guild. Since it’s Makfol, he probably joined up with them on the spur of the moment after being given a good excuse.

“... I got it. Are you an acquaintance of the feudal lord Makfol?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah, I’ve met him only once on a party hosted by Eribol-sama. It was scheduled to hold an meeting with him for educating him again once I succeeded in this assassination.” (Serva)

They are going to threaten Makfol once more or would try to guide him, huh?

“Well then, can you tell me the territory, or rather, the base of the dark guild 【Owl’s Fangs】 and the details about the mansion in 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 where your big boss, Eribol, lives?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah.” (Serva)

Has Serva Gairal given up on everything? He talks indifferently. Eribol’s mansion seems to be at the eastern end of the noble block located on the northern side of 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】. There’s a conspicuous gate that had the crest of the Macabayne Company applied to it at the entrance door. I was told that I would immediately recognise it once I saw it as the design is an **owl and tree**.

Additionally, there’s an unprecedented number of barrier stones set up on the grounds. The number of hired adventurer wannabe’s is at the very least 50 and they stay there permanently. Otherwise there are also cases where their numbers exceed 100.

Having also secured several excellent wizards, the defence is flawless. Although the quality of the soldiers has fallen, his are equal to royal guards, he says.

Moreover he told me the **password** used at the base of 【Owl’s Fangs】, and the

locations of their major positions such as the harbour's warehouses, the pleasure quarter, the gambling street, the market and the flavour street which are all part of the turf of 【Owl's Fangs】.

“Wait. I forgot that the 【Pleasure Quarter】 was stolen by 【Dance of Supreme Vermilion】.” (Serva)

“【Dance of Supreme Vermilion】?” (Shuuya)

“That's right. It was stolen by those guys who are similar to a mercenary band that's led by the duo of the **Massacre Sisters**.” (Serva)

That sounds like a terrifying name.
But whatever, since I don't have a map, I grasp it only roughly.

“With this it's everything...” (Serva)

After hearing his last words, I shift my gaze around and check the room's vicinity.

There are no other onlookers.

Did Serva sense death approaching him? He shuts his eyes and stays silent.
How brave. After he yapped this much.

I don't understand the mental attitude of dark guild members though.

I bite the nape of Serva's neck once more.

I sucked his blood and then his soul. Serva's body dries up in an instant.

The clothes he wore and his hidden chakram fell to the ground.

After recovering the dagger lying around after having it used with <Throwing>, I call Phila.

I told her the information I obtained just now.

Chapter 102 – Idle Talk: The small adventure of the Black Cat

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



Stray cats were gathered behind the stables of Hotel Alando.

“Pubopubo (Be quiet, you cats!)”

The magic beast Popobumu barked in irritation.

“Nya nyan, nyaon (You as well, shut up with your pubopubo).”

“Nyaooon (That’s right! This is Thundertail-san’s turf. Spend your time here in a more quiet manner).”

The stray cats deliver a series of cat punches to Popobumu’s thick legs while purring as if they are complaining to Popobumu.

“Pubopuboo (I don’t know anything about that).”

Popobumu neighs loudly as it shakes off the stray cats by moving its legs.

“Nyanya (You are a cheeky cow, aren’t cha? Even though the other cows are staying silent!)”

“Nyanya nyaon! (He’s different from the other cows. Let’s drive him away!)”

At that moment the figure of a black cat quickly closing in on Popobumu

became visible.

“— Nn, nya? (Popo-chan, what’s wrong nya?)”

The beautiful female black cat that possesses a dark velvet fur climbs on the back of Popobumu’s head and purrs towards Popobumu.

“Pubopuboooooooo (Rollo-sama, please help me. These stray cats are teasing me).”

“N, nyaa, nyao (Popo-chan is my subordinate. Do you understand? As I’m irritated right now anyway, this works out. I will punish you).”

The black cat purrs as if roaring from behind Popobumu’s head at the stray cats below.

“Nyaooooo (You, who are you?)”

“Nyaaa, nyaoon (I have seen you before. She’s a pet! She’s stinking with the smell of humans!)”

“Nyanyaon (If she’s a pet cat, then she’s our enemy isn’t she?)”

“Nyanya, nyauan (Let’s get rid of her before Thundertail-san arrives).”

The stray cats were disturbed at first, but once they understand that the black cat is a pet, they adopt warrior stances by assertively making use of the claws on their front paws. They growl while sliding forwards.

“Nyaoon, nyaan! (Be quiet! What impertinent strays you are, humph!)”

The black cat purrs while pointing her face upwards like a king of lions. Heading to the ground by jumping off from behind Popobumu’s head, she lands with her black hair fluttering.

As she lands splendidly, she hit the stray cats with the tentacles growing from her neck.

“Nyaa? Nyaaa (Her paws increased? Even though she’s a female, she’s strong).”

“Kyan... nyaan (I give up... let’s have Thundertail-san teach you a good lesson).”

The black cat bravely stands up in order to protect Popobumu.

The stray cats run away while watching her daunting posture with frustrated looks.

“Pubopuboon (Rollo-sama, thank you as always).”

“Nnn, nya (Don’t mind it. I was just relieving some of my stress).”

However, at that moment the stray cats came gathering alongside a huge shadow.

“Nyaon (It’s her, Thundertail-san!)”

“Nyaa (I was hit by her!)”

The huge shadow was a fat male cat.

The tail of that fat cat is in the shape of a lightning bolt.

“.... Nyagooon! Nyao, nyaoon! (Oy, it looks like you teased my subordinates. To fuck around in my turf! This place here, behind the stables of Alando, is my, Thundertail-sama’s, turf).”

All the hair of the fat cat stands on end and it adopts a combat stance.

“Pubopubo, pubobon! (The noisy ones appeared once again, Rollo-sama).”

“N, nyaa... (It can’t be helped...)”

The black cat throws a glance at the figure of the male cat with its lightning-shaped tail and sighs.

“Nyagogogona! Nyanyanyaoon! (Strange who has invaded my turf, leave this place together with that annoying cow!)”

Thundertail shows his fangs and hisses as if telling her that he will bite her after using an authoritative tone.

Even the stray cats behind Thundertail followed his lead and made growling sounds.

“Nya! Nyagoaa (Humph, we have frightened her).”

At the instant the black cat became huge by transforming into the black panther, the stray cats run away at full speed while denting their ears in surprise and shifting their paws.

“Nya, nya, nyaa... (Hiiii, helppp).”

Thundertail yielded completely without running away.
He dents his ears and makes his body shrink.

“Nn, nyaon (If you promise me to not tease Popo-chan, I will forgive you).”

“Nya nyan (Yes. I promise).”

The black panther made Thundertail stand up by using her tentacles and gently addressed him.

“Nya, nyaa (In that case, I will forgive you).”

Thundertail stares at the slender figure of the black cat that had become small while denting his scarred ears... and then bows deeply.

“Nyaa... nyaan nyaa (How very kind... I have fallen in love. Please tell me your name, queen-sama).”

“Nn, nya, nyaon (It’s Rollo. Well then, I will return to the location of my beloved person. Bye bye, Thundertail).”

The black cat purrs towards Thundertail and turns away her small face quickly. Using her limbs gallantly, she runs through the back garden of Hotel Alando.

The stray cats have their breath taken away by her beautiful running figure. Now, at this place, in that instant, it was the sudden emergence of a black cat that became the queen of the place behind the stables.

The legend of the black queen with the name Rollo became famous in the stray cat society of Holkerbaum... but... they are just cats after all.

It goes without saying that they forgot about her in a matter of merely three days.

Chapter 103 – Flight through the sea of clouds

Join the  **Game**
Rise of Asuria Oukoku



At first Phyla was perplexed that Serva's corpse had unnaturally vanished. However, once I politely told her the obtained information while looking into her eyes, she recovered her composure.

At that moment the swarthy man who had lost consciousness woke up.

When I was pondering whether I should interrogate him just like Serva, the swarthy man starts to talk without me even needing to do so.

He spoke with a frightened and uneasy expression that didn't suit his tree-trunk-like, burly body.

"I had been simply employed by the one-eyed Serva with a large amount of money."

"I'm no member of a dark guild."

Since I have no further business with him, I entrusted his disposal to Phila.

Without saying anything in particular, Phila took the dark-skinned man that insisted on only having been employed to the big room... there he was tortured to death by the surviving adventurers who woke up from their sleep.

Well, you might say that it's only a reasonable outcome. He was a traitor after all.

There's no way for the adventurers to forgive a guy that killed their friends. Phila remained dumbfounded with a pale and dampened expression due to the gruesome sight.

Even though the big room was already bloodstained as is, it became the actual site of a deadly torture.

When I thought that it can't be helped in this situation..., strength had unexpectedly returned into Phila's eyes as if she pulled herself together right away.

"... The request has been completed with this. Given that I will properly provide the reward for one day, let's head to the guild after cleaning up the corpses." (Phila)

The client Phila nonchalantly talked about "cleaning up the corpses." The request is over with this.

A simple funeral was carried out for the corpses of the murdered adventurers while treating them courteously.

Once we finished the cleaning of the saloon which took until morning, Phila, who had shadows below her eyes, heads to the guild together with the adventurers for the sake of the rewards.

Phila submits the wooden tag of a completed request to the receptionist. As the guild wasn't that crowded, the formalities advance smoothly.

Receiving their rewards, all the adventurers, who came along, show consenting expressions and leave the guild.

Once I got my reward and left the guild, I was once more addressed by the client Phila.

"Shuuya-san, your work on this occasion was praiseworthy. You saved my life. I really thank you very much—." (Phila)

Seemingly having actually felt that I saved her life, Phila bows her head politely.

I respond in kind as well.

"Please don't mind it as I simply did my job." (Shuuya)

"... Yes." (Phila)

Phila looks directly into my eyes.

Although she tried to speak about her younger brother, she stops on the verge of it and talks about something safe.

“... As it seems that you will be busy for a while from now on, please do your best.” (Shuuya)

“That’s right, isn’t it? I will strive at work and with the store. However, as the threat of 【Owl’s Fangs】 still remains I will circulate the iron and demonic steel to other companies. I plan to spend my time hiding by closing my store. However, I will appeal for the resumption of the bridge construction with the feudal lord. After all it’s for the sake of this city...” (Phila)

Phila Elizard shows a determined expression befitting a female merchant. The construction of the bridge and feudal lord Makfol who’s my friend, huh? I might be able to mediate with just the bridge by using that connection, but I have no intention to help in its construction. Since it’s related to a dark guild, it’s obvious that it will become troublesome. It’s probably not necessary for me to get involved with the Earl anymore either.

“... Yes, that seems to be the case. Well then, I will excuse myself at this point...” (Shuuya)

“Ah, please wait. I want to give you another *proper* thanks.” (Phila)

Phila moves her red lips seductively.
It made me feel some instinctual stir.
She stares at me with eyes filled with passionate emotions while wearing a smile.

My expression becomes reflexively lewd.

“... Thanks it is, eh?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. Come to my room in my mansion...” (Phila)

Phila-san clung to me.
Even though I hadn’t slept, I was full of vigour.
No, it’s because I didn’t sleep that I act this obediently, I guess?
She’s a beautiful woman and she has boobs as well.
However I will refuse. I just had sex with Melissa.

“Sorry...” (Shuuya)

Rejecting her like that, I pushed her slender shoulder away.

“Well then, Phila, stay well.” (Shuuya)

“... Yes, farewell... until we meet somewhere again.” (Phila)

Phila reveals a sad expression pursing her lips, but she holds back.

I separated from the beautiful Phila.

Once we leave the mansion, Rollo immediately changes into her horse lion mode.

Will I once again experience the strange feeling of fitting? — I quickly jumped on the back of her horse lion mode in a light manner and mounted her while straddling on top of her soft black fur.

We take a little stroll.

We leave the street in the pace of a horse's trot.

We came out at the plaza with the Large Tree of Holker and its lush greenery.

We go along the street towards the port in the south. During that time a magic tool shop enters my field of vision.

I wanted magic scrolls of the water attribute.

I look while we drop down to the pace of average walking.

... However, they aren't sold.

I tried to peek inside the magic tool shop a bit, but with the shop's scale seemingly being small, they aren't selling anything but magic scrolls of fire and wind, and wands that had magic gems embedded.

As there's only hardware dealers and smiths in this city, I believe that there's quite a bit of demand for a magic tool shop, but yeah, I guess the number of items sold is low because of its lacking choice?

Ah well, it's alright. I expect 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 will have those books.

There will also be the underground auction in winter.

Will I splurge at that time? ... I want a base or house as well.

Though I don't know how far I can get with buying while using large platinum coins.

While pondering about that, we arrive at the port with its seashore scent characteristic to places near the sea.

There are also birds similar to sea birds flying around.

As this Heim River is connected to the ocean, its scent is similar to that of the

ocean, too.

Horse Lion

Leaving the route completely to Rollodeen, we advance at a pace that makes me instinctively want to hum a song.

Once again we ended up coming up to the street where the adventurer's guild is located.

The stroll comes to an end here.

... Let's head back. Moving the tentacle reins, we turn at a corner with a lot of gravel and head back to the main street.

"Rollo, the stroll's over. We will go back to the high-class inn." (Shuuya)

"Nya."

Horse Lion

Rollodeen started to dash while stretching her limbs.

It's a comfortable pace with a breeze blowing.

In the twinkling of an eye we go past the Large Tree of Holker and arrive in front of the hotel.

Horse Lion

I descended off Rollodeen that suddenly stopped by rotating.

Once I got off, Rollo, who changed from the horse lion mode into the small black cat mode, came next to me.

We walk inside the grounds of Hotel Alando together and head to my own room at the hotel.

Once I return to the room, I swiftly retrieve Paredes' mirror that was placed in the corner.

『Are we leaving this place?』 (Helme)

Helme in her deformed shape appeared in my field of vision while asking that, when I was cleaning up the room after putting the mirror inside my item box.

『That's right. We are heading to 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay. I got it.』 (Helme)

Helme consents and swirls around.

After bowing, she completely vanishes from my sight.

Leaving the luxurious room we stayed at, I walk to the receptionist.

There are still a few days left where we could have stayed there, but after finishing the checkout, I go outside.

I snicker since there's no claim of repair costs.

Well then, what shall I do about Popobumu?

Heading to the stables, I mount Popobumu that had been left in the care over there after a long time.

Popobumu cheerfully breathes out through its nose with a "Puboppubo."

Once Rollo saw Popobumu, she leapt at her usual spot behind its head and while staying there, she gently stroke Popobumu's nape with several tentacles in order to soothe it.

At that moment a group of stray cats that apparently made the stables their turf appeared.

All the stray cats meowed at the same time as if giving their farewells to Rollo. A male cat with its tail characteristically shaped like a lightning bolt purred at Rollo with a noticeably loud low voice, but Rollo ignored him.

I guess cats also have strange relationships between each other.

Advancing on Popobumu as is, we leave the hotel.

"Riding him after a long while is nice, but... travelling on Rollo is faster. What should I do?" (Shuuya)

"Nn, nya?"

It feels like she's saying 『Really nya?』.

Though it might be something else since she doesn't convey her feelings to me through her tentacles.

"Do I have to sell him? I will try to go to a horse dealer." (Shuuya)

"Nya."

Although I think that it still hasn't been half a year, I'm quite indebted to this guy.

It will be lonely to part from Popobumu with its lovable nature, but... rather than always leaving him in a stable, it's probably better for Popobumu to be used by someone else.

My master's words cross my mind.

We proceeded on the main street while I enjoy riding Popobumu for the last time. Our destination was the horse vendor located close to the western gate.

Passing through the crossroads plaza with the Large Tree of Holker, we arrive at

the shop with a horse sign.

I address the horse and cattle merchant.

“Sorry, can I sell this magic beast?” (Shuuya)

“Ayes. Sure. ... Let me see. I suppose it’s a Murto species of the magic beast Popobumu. Its gloss is nice and it seems to be in good health. I will buy it for three gold coins.”

I didn’t know.

There’s something called a Murto species?

The price is three gold coins.

Although I don’t know the market price, let’s sell it without regard towards the amount of money.

“Got it. You’ve got a deal.” (Shuuya)

Saying that, I got off Popobumu and received the gold coins from the merchant.

“Thank you. With this he’s mine.”

The horse merchant says so and leads Popobumu inside the stable while holding its reins.

I heard its “Puboppubo” from a distance.

“Nyaa, nya.”

It looks like Rollo is giving it her farewell.

However, somehow it feels like I’m being called by Popobumu... it’s slightly heartrending.

“... Rollo, I will mount you.” (Shuuya)

Once Rollo heard my quietly mumbled voice, she immediately transformed into her black horse lion mode with a billowing sound.

One can also call it a big black panther, black lion, black horse mode.

While looking at me with her red eyes as I was admiring her gallant figure, she entwined a tentacle around my waist and forcibly put me on her back.

“Whoa— that’s sudden.” (Shuuya)

“Nyanyao.”

Once she places me on her back, Rollodeen starts to run alongside such lively meowing and jumps out of the western gate.

Horse Lion

Rollodeen dashed along the highway by making full use of her limbs.

She's running as if trying to forget her parting with Popobumu.

We very easily overtook carriages that advanced ahead of us and walking travellers.

Once I turn around, 【Demonic Steel City Holkerbaum】 becomes gradually smaller.

Before long... it wasn't visible anymore.

I have left Melissa.

Turning around to the front again, we plunge forward on the earthen highway.

Fast, how very fast.

... Since we are travelling at a speed that's faster than a sport bike, the head wind is slightly intense even when I bend forward.

A cloth covering my mouth or a helmet might be necessary.

Should I next time buy a pleasant hemp cloth for travelling long distances?

At the instant I pondered whether to ask her to ease up on the speed, the velocity slows down.

『Play』『Slow』『Lax』『Play』.

Horse Lion

The feelings of Rollodeen are transmitted through a tentacle connected to the nape of her neck.

I want to run, I want to play, but should I do it gently nya? I guess that what it means?

A shared sensation of motion.

Without mentioning it, my slight feelings have been transmitted to Rollo.

“As expected of telepathy. It's thanks to the skill Divine Beast Serene Mind ▪ Soaring that surpasses Unity of Rider and Mount.” (Shuuya)

I gently stroke behind the back of her head as if caressing a horse.

“Nn, nya.”

Haha, I can't get used to her voice still being that of a cat with her appearance having become big.

Well then...

“Let’s soon fly in the air?” (Shuuya)

“Nyao.”

Horse Lion

Once she hears my words, Rollodeen immediately moves into action.

Although she ran on the highway, she gets off the earthen road and starts to get a head start by running through the thickly-growing grasslands.

On the way she further changed her figure to be one level bigger.

It’s the size of a gryphon.

While transforming into a huge lion mode, she swiftly runs through the pathless plains with her powerful limbs.

And then, releasing tentacles left and right, she affixed the bone swords into the ground.

Huge Lion

Rollodeen keeps running while ignoring that and twisting four tentacles right away, she stretches them while they were intertwined like rubber.

The tentacles stretch, eh?

Since she’s a large lion-shaped beast, her running figure is cool.

She increases the power of pulling the tentacles that are loaded with the power of the limbs of a black beast’s physique.

Huge Lion

Seemingly having pulled the tentacles to the limit, Rollodeen stopped her movement once.

And then, once she turns around to the back while slowly rotating sideways, she separates her tentacles just like making a pachinko ball fly.

Huge Lion

— The body of Rollodeen gets flung into the air.

Huge Lion

Due to the recoil Rollodeen, with me holding onto her vigorously, flew into the air with a *gyuun* like a pachinko ball, or rather like a rocket.

— The acceleration is amazing.

Although it looks like my body would be pushed back by the force of the wind, I get supported by a tentacle pressing against my back.

I use the tentacle reins that were in front of my chest as a joystick of a fighter aircraft and we flew through the sky while I grasped it strongly.

Huge Lion

At that moment the tentacles that were growing at the side of Rollodeen’s body transform into wings, black wings that have primary feathers similar to those of falcons.

Riding upon the winds, she gracefully exposes her feathers.

Below one could see a tiny town that seems to be 【Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum】.

“— Let’s head south-west along the Heim River like this.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.”



The flight had slowed down into a comfortable pace.
Since I never had seen her flying appearance from a distance, I could only imagine it, but... I'm certain that the flying Rollodeen looks just like a gryphon.
Her foundation is that of a black-haired beast with limbs after all.
Well then should I check it after a long time?

[Status]

Name: Shuuya Kagari
Age: 22
Title: Super-Warrior of the Water Goddess
Race: Light Demon Lucival
Combat Occupation: Magic Spear Darkness Warrior – Chain User

Strength: 20.8
Agility: 21.9
Stamina: 19.9
Mana: 25.4
Dexterity: 19.9
Spirit: 26.2
Luck: 11.2

Current Status: Exalted

Skill Status

Obtained Skills: <Throwing>, <Demonic Brain Speed>, <Hide>, <Night Vision>, <Inhalation of Odour Technique>, <Blood Chains Banquet>, <Thrust>, <Meditation>, <Life Magic>, <Guidance Sorcery>, <Magic Combat Style>, <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, <Sage Art>, <Summoning>, <Ancient Magic>, <Crest Magic>, <Darkness Drill>, <Darkness Drill – Magic Spear Break>, <Language Magic>, <Chain Spear of the Ray System>
Permanent Skills: <Power of True Ancestor>, <Natural Gift of Magic>, <Torrent of Light Darkness>, <Drain Soul>, <Immortality>, <Darkness Adaptation>, <Blood Mana>, <Suzerain of Household>, <Super Demonic Brain Nimble Sensation>, <Magic Combat Style Knowledge>, <Guidance Magic Knowledge>, <Spear Sparring>, <Chain Sense Guidance>, <Magic Crest Construction>,

<Instant Staff of Water>, <Spirit Employment>, <Divine Beast Serene Mind ▪ Soaring>

Extra Skills: <Language Comprehension>, <Granted Seal of Light>, <Chain Factor>, <Demonic Cerebral Spine Revolution>

My status has grown in average.

I touched <Divine Beast Serene Mind ▪ Soaring> that I had acquired.

※<Divine Beast Serene Mind ▪ Soaring>※

You share senses with your contracted divine beast to some extent. The movement performance rises sharply.

The more you mount it, the faster the experience of the divine beast will accumulate and grow.

The more I ride her, eh? That's good.

I erase the status screen.

I gaze at the sky where the clouds are drifting about.

The calm wind feels great.

It's my second time in the air, but I like this feeling. I want to fly as much as possible.

It's a refreshing sensation. There's the Heim River flowing far below us.

The stream of water that twisted and turned into a large river appeared to be similar to a dragon or snake.

It's not as narrow as the one on the journey together with Raglen. The flat ridges of potato fields are visible. Houses similar to little specks and forests that look like the hair and beards of dwarves can be seen.

The speed accelerates even further with the flapping of the black wings.

Reflexively I put strength in my hands holding the tentacle reins.

"Nn, nya? Nya~"

『Worry?』『Alright』『Acceleration』『Fun』『Play』

Rollo's feelings are transmitted to me.

"It's fine. I don't mind if you enjoy yourself a bit either." (Shuuya)

"Nya—."

Huge Lion

Her lively meowing resounded in the sky. Rollodeen does flight acrobatics by

performing somersaults by drawing circles in mid air.

— Hahaha, you're having fun, aren't you, Rollo?

However, in this height the headwind should be far more terrifying, but...

I feel less wind resistance than at the time when I moved through the sky with <Chain> and <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, and when we ran on the surface just now.

Is that the result of her releasing mana from her wings?

Once I confirm with Magic Observation, I see that mana is definitely being emitted.

Is the mana giving birth to some kind of repulsive force, I wonder?

I will enjoy myself while obediently accepting the current situation.

I bend down into a posture similar of sitting while hugging Rollodeen's fluffy back.

Like that I said in my mind "up the speed."

"Nyaa."

Alongside a consenting voice, the wings' angle shifts and she suddenly speeds up towards above.

We dashed through the sky similar to a fighter launching its afterburner.

Shooting through the clouds, we plunge into the azure sky with its dazzling sun light.

"— Woohooo." (Shuuya)

As my tension rises, I scream naturally.

In the middle of it I spread both my arms while overflowing with feelings.

It feels great... I want to fly to unknown places in far, far away lands that are not noted down on any maps. It's a feeling as if I had become the ruler of the sky.

Once we exit the sea of clouds, she slowed down to a gentle pace again.

Thereupon I looked at the rear of Rollodeen. I see. It seems she's setting the direction by swinging her black long tail left and right just like the rudder of a ship.

I survey my surroundings.

We freely flew through the sea of clouds... the blue sky.

The wonderful scenery of this boundlessly continuing sea of clouds surely

extending into the far distance is...

At that moment a black shadow is— nuoh? A whale?

Eh? A whale!? Looking back a second time, I stare at the spectacle.

A huge whale is devouring a huge jellyfish.

Even the sky being what it is has struggles for life and death, I suppose... yeah.

There are other strange monsters around as well. Let's head down since it's scary.

“... Let's lower the altitude a bit?” (Shuuya)

I give the instruction while gently caressing the side of her black lion-like head.

“Nya.”

According to my instruction, she glides slightly downwards.

Flying high above the Heim River's outskirts, she sets the direction towards south.

In this way, while riding upon the winds, we pass many small villages, plains and forests.



I can't see people attacking other people on the ground.

I didn't catch sight of robbers, but I did see the figures of countless monsters and animals.

A big group of bisons similar to water buffalos and horses running across the plains, animals like giraffes and horses, hyenas, lions, huge animals that appear to be elephant-like, gigantic wild boars, huge ants, komodo dragons, big herbivorous dinosaurs, carnivorous dinosaurs similar to Tyrannosaurus rex'.

That over there might be called a dragon. In addition there are goblins, horse-shaped creatures, jellyfish flying in the air, and figures of wild gryphons.

Although there are thickly growing forests with huge trees, there are also grasslands.

The plains give one an impression similar to that of the African savannah.

I was also able to confirm the figures of many adventurers fighting against those monsters and animals on the ground.

There are small villages and the area is dotted with spots of settlements made

up of tents.

Before long something similar to a huge, round city became visible.

【Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum】 had a quadrangle shape, and 【Fortress City Hekatrail】 has a set of high walls.

This city is surrounded by an ochre wall in a circular shape.

Even from a distance one realizes that it's a huge city... the city's interior was crowded by countless buildings.

It's as if I'm looking down on a miniature model.

To be precise, it's not circular but oval-shaped?

Since there are no walls where the city meets the Heim River, its shape is slightly lost.

When I looked briefly at it, there are three huge ring streets, inner, middle and outer. Small lanes are radiating out from the centre of the inner circle. They are extending straightforward in a mesh pattern. The long and narrow lanes are connecting to the three, main ring streets.

They are distorted circles since the terrain rises and falls, too.

A huge arena like the Colosseum of Ancient Rome stood out with its presence of impressive quality in the south of the city.

Eh? Dragons? Oooh...

Dragons were flying through the air. Moreover people were riding them.

Those are dragon knights, aren't they?

Three of them are patrolling above the circular city in a formation.

Is that possibly the defence unit of 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】?

I'm also interested in the southern venue that seems to be an arena, but we should stop heading straight forward now, shouldn't we?

If we directly trespassed into the city from the sky like this, we would likely be noticed by those dragon knights. And even if they didn't notice us, it seems that we would be arrested by the knight orders and guard units apparently stationed on the ground due to standing out.

Therefore I gave up on trespassing from the sky.

Well, that's only my public stance though.

For some reason or another I want to normally pass through the gate at the first time.

There's pedestrian traffic on the highway. I will check it out.

Because there are only sporadically private houses, we fly while lowering the altitude a bit off the highway in order to not stand out.

Given that the dragon knight unit is flying towards the opposite direction, they didn't notice me.

Just like that we descended at a place that was divided into tatami-like terraces located on the opposite side of the Heim River.

“— Rollo, thanks for your hard work.” (Shuuya)

Descending to the ground as if jumping, I immediately gently stroke the root where her tentacles are growing out from.

“Nn, nyao.”

Rollodeen instantaneously shrinks down to the size of her Horse Lion Mode while releasing a single purr with a throaty voice.

Once again coiling a tentacle around my waist, she carried and put me on top of her abundantly black-haired back.

In front of me the tentacle reins have been prepared.

Rollo is a thoughtful one.

Grabbing the tentacle reins with my hands, we run up a hill while I steer

Horse Lion
Rollodeen.

At the moment we arrived at the summit of that small hill, I observe the surroundings.

Below the broad mound there are huge flower beds and common vegetable gardens.

Private houses exist here and there, too. They continue as the highway weaves its way between them.

In the neighbourhood the large Heim River is visible as well. Merchant ships with bulging sails can be seen advancing on it.

Let's head to the labyrinth city along the highway that's next to the river?

There's a gentle slope facing towards the highway.

I descend it while imagining the cliff where Yoshitsune plunged down children headfirst. *(T/N: A legend about Minamoto no Yoshitsune choosing his successor)*

I immediately finish descending the elated slope.

I got on the highway from the side of a beekeeping farmer.

We proceed by blending in among the coming and going people.

Rollodeen sets her pace with a nice rhythm while looking happy.

Soon the colour of the wall surrounding 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 became clearly visible.

The city's exterior is a stone wall with a trace of roundness.

The highway separated from being close to the Heim River and continued towards the right side in a manner of following along the wall surrounding the city.

The line of people is also turning right just like the path.

Following it obediently like that is boring.

... I will take a little side trip slightly away from the highway.

I go next to where private houses are lining up.

Since they are drying daikon and chopped wood at the eaves, it's difficult to pass through.

Exiting in-between those buildings, Rollodeen's feet turn towards the vicinity of the Heim River's shore.

I gazed at the swelling, blue Heim River from atop a grassy spot.

Once I look from nearby the Heim River like that, I fully grasp that it's adjoining to the 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.

It can't be seen since there's the wall, but I was able to confirm that ships are apparently entering the port on the other side of the wall.

Liners and trading vessels.

There were plenty of wealthy clients who are using ships in Holkerbaum, too.

That means that the ship transportation business yields quite a profit.

I feel like I can understand the major dealer Eribol Macabyn, who is the foundation of the dark guild 【Owl's Fangs】 that Serva mentioned, hindering the land routes in his deep desire to make excessive profit by using his maritime rights.

Well then, let's return to the highway?

I go back to the highway in-between the private houses with a sidelong glance at the ocher wall that is preventing further view of the Heim River that is flowing into the city.

The wall's height is average.

Though it hasn't the height of the walls of 【Hekatrail】.

When I'm advancing on the highway, I not only catch sight of private houses but

also work sheds and people performing various work tasks.

Dozens of people washing clothes at a laundry and a workshop for brick production where people place stones inside many stoves to bake them. There are barrels in many colours placed in a place for producing dyes.

Even outside the wall there's an imposing townscape.

Around this part there aren't only peasants but also many merchants, I guess? Races like humans, elves, dwarves and midgets, all of them are apparently carrying out various jobs.

That race, are they Hobbits since they are midgets?

There was an even smaller race possessing dog ears.

There are really many various races here, I suppose.

I could also see cattle-like domestic ducks.

The domestic ducks with their few feathers are crossing the highway while quacking.

Children happily chased those ducks while squealing.

It's heart-warming. It looks like the public order around here is good.

Now that I think of it... the public order was the worst between 【Leften Kingdom】 and 【Oseberia Kingdom】.

Outside the wall of Hekatrail it was really bad as well though.

As I was advancing on the peaceful highway, I could see the city's entrance before long.

If I pass through this place, it'll be 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.

I'm greeted by a stone gate matching the huge city.

Slightly different from the ochre wall, the building material used here are white building stones.

The broad pillars on both sides of the gate were splendidly designed with masonry that depicted people and animals seemingly carved by skilled artisans. A great variety of people get swallowed into the city through that stone gate's entrance.

When I'm looking at the coming and going with its loud hustle and bustle... I'm reminded of the time when I entered 【Fortress City Hekatrail】 for the first time. I also pass through this huge stone gate...

— Mmh? A black spiral pattern is reflected in my field of vision.

I feel uneasy.

Stopping Rollodeen, I pay attention to below my feet.

Black steel? It continued below the wall, buried underground, as if those are railways of a broad, black-steeled tram.

Does this continue to the degree of encircling the outer part of the city?

The width of the black steel has almost the same size as the city's wall.

Is it the foundation of the wall? Parts of text-like geographical patterns were drawn on the surface of the broad black steel.

Huh? I feel like I have seen those characters somewhere...

I turn my look towards a thick stone pillars located at the side.

There are plenty of animal decorations, but because of its peculiar round shape, it also resembled the pillar of a Shinto shrine archway.

Chapter 104 – Labyrinth City Pelneet

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“Rollo, let’s enter the city.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.”

Passing through the stone gate, she walks with her black-haired paws on the soil of 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.

We finally arrived, on the land where a labyrinth exists.

I wonder whether the dwarves Zaga and Bon are doing fine?

Rubia, whom I left in their care, is probably working hard after becoming an adventurer.

They are living somewhere in this 【Pelneet】.

Mia is probably doing her best as an adventurer after changing her name.

And, it’s also the stronghold of the dark guild 【Owl’s Fangs】.

If the information I heard from Serva is correct, Eribol’s mansion, which serves as the headquarters of 【Owl’s Fangs】, should be located in the eastern part of the noble’s block that lies in the northern part of the city.

However, there’s no need to hurry.

Even if I’m going to finish off Eribol, I have just arrived in a city I don’t know.

Even without me expressly scattering oil to start a fire, the other side will likely start acting. Currently I will keep the stance of crushing them when they get

involved with me, I suppose.

Alright, 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.

Now, I will face you.

Assertively throwing out my chest, I operate the tentacle reins.

I advance along the street in front of the gate with its intense pedestrian traffic.

I immediately came out at a crossroads of big roads.

I continue straight forward along the main street.

Right behind me is the road continuing towards outside the city with the stone gate which I just entered.

The roads to either side, left and right, looked as if they are continuing endlessly as main streets that trace the curves of the inner walls of the city.

If I go along these main streets, I will see the wall, but I would also accomplish a race-like marathon once around this city.

However, I won't choose the roads to the left or right. I pick the main street straight ahead.

Horse Lion

Rollodeen proceeds onwards.

On both sides of the street one could see vast plots that were surrounded by walls.

Ahead of the rising grounds, which had lawn spread out to the degree that one would be able to play golf on it, there are houses built with high-class marble stones where the nobles live.

It looks like there are huge mansions that were built with three floors.

Does even royalty live here?

It seems this area is the noble block on the northern side of the city.

Since a while there are only big mansions on large plots.

As there are many luxurious carriages among those coming and going, that must be the case.

Going by the atmosphere here, one won't be able to think of attaching the name of labyrinth city to this place.

If I investigate the eastern area from here on, I may unexpectedly discover Eribol's mansion quite easily.

Which reminds me... even in 【Hekatrail】 there were such high-class block-like streets.

Huge palatial residences with vast grounds attached to them.

If I take out the entire amount of cash that's in my item box now, I might be able to buy one.

While thinking about such stuff, we raise the speed and go straight ahead. Once again I arrived at a crossroads.

In the front and back main streets, and broad streets on the left and right. Once more I choose the road going straight ahead.

When I do... the scenery of vast grounds on the left and right stops.

It changes into many huts made out of mortar and small buildings that are similar to Semmering style.

The noble's block seems to be up to here. The pedestrian traffic is high, too. I was able to see various races besides humans as well.

Seeing the figures of a black giant and a small penguin wearing clothes among those, I unintentionally end up doing a double take.

Around here must be the city's centre of 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】.

At any rate, I don't have a map.

We advanced at a suitably comfortable pace, but should I try asking someone around here?

Let's ask that beastman-san. The catman-san seems to have some free time.

He stared at the main street while leaning his back against the wall located in front of a general store.

He possesses a beast's face which is covered by grey hair that looks fluffy.

He has three eyes with the third being on its forehead, and possesses four arms. Four longswords hung at his waist and he wore a high-class armour made out of thick monster leather.

Round shields with small crests on them were attached to the tips of each of his four arms. I'm sure he's a remarkable adventurer.

... I wonder whether something like a four sword style exists?

With his figure that emits the aura of a master warrior, it reminds me of the catman warrior Deyma, a member of 【Scales of Gaia】.

Horse Lion

Rollodeen approaches the location of that beastman-san.

Although it might be rude to address the beastman from atop the black cat's body without them being mounted, I spoke up.

“— Excuse me. Do you know the location of the labyrinth or the adventurer's guild?” (Shuuya) Reacting to my voice, the beastman-san responded by raising

his line of sight.

“Oh? An adventurer that came from the countryside?”

“Yes, that’s correct.” (Shuuya)

“I see. If it’s the labyrinth, it towers over the surroundings in the middle of the **First Ring Road** with its characteristically short tower. You will be immediately able to tell once you get close. The first floor is the labyrinth’s entrance hall. The adventurer’s guild and the Magic Treasure Maps Society are in the vicinity as well. There are countless inns, too. By the way, currently you are between the **First Ring Road** and the north of the **Second Ring Road**. If you go straight south from here, you will come out at the First Ring Road. As you see, the number of adventurers is growing, right?”

The beastman-san prompts with his gaze while smiling.
Among his three eyes, two eyes were pointing at the people coming and going on the street.
— Certainly, various races that seem like armed adventurers are going back and forth.

“I understood. Thank you for your kind advice.” (Shuuya)

“Aye.”

I start to go forwards after bowing and expressing a simple thanks.
First Ring Road.

Surely, 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】 has a shape close to a circle.
The large outer ring located close to the wall is the **Third Ring Road**.
The middle ring that I passed just a while ago is the **Second Ring Road**.
The **First Ring Road** is a road located in the vicinity of the labyrinth’s entrance.
It looks like that’s how it is.

As I was told by the kind beastman-san, I advanced on the street by joining the line of merchants and adventurers coming and going.

Horse Lion

Rollodeen picks up the speed and proceeds swiftly by weaving her way through the crowd.

I see, it’s over there, huh?

Being crowded by various races, I discover it right away.

A vast, round space.

The labyrinth's entrance seems to be in the centre of the circle. There I could see the characteristically short **cylindrical building** in the shape of a tower.

This is the First Ring Road.

A market has been set up in the vicinity of the cylindrical architectural structure. It looks like all of the shops are flourishing.

Not only adventurers, I was also able to spot commoners and merchants.

At any rate, that cylindrical building in the centre...

Is it fine to call it a building similar to a cigarette? It's stabbed into the ground with a slanting part protruding towards the sky and demarcated by holes at acute angles.

It looks like the historic towers remaining in the Middle East or Kazakhstan.

I guess it was some kind of minaret like Minar or such.

Geometrical patterns and lightning designs have been embedded with bluish stones on the surface.

While watching the beautiful, cylindrical building, I advanced towards the central plaza.

I have seen a similar sight in 【Hekatrail】.

There are a large signboard and several announcement stands on the plaza.

Several people that blew into horns raised loud voices reading out information to people one by one.

— *A large-scale recruitment has started in 【Deep Lake City Luluzark】 of 【Oseberia Kingdom】. Adventurers, who have confidence in their skills, gather! Adventurers that got space in their item box can be incorporated into a special supply unit. Adventurers that don't have an item box will join the mercenary unit, but it's also possible to be employed as member of the knight order. If you produce results, rewards and a career is certain!*

A recruitment for soldiers, eh?

There's a career path in war?

Next, people from other announcement stands shout out.

— *The Evil Dragon King that devastated the outskirts of 【Fortress City Hekatrail】 was killed by the Gryphon Unit affiliated to the kingdom's Magic Dragon Rider Corps.*

I guess these news have reached this place already.

Given that they are not including the adventurers that played an active role in

that, this probably also serves as propaganda.

— A large amount of war slaves has arrived at the Korendon Slave Store. Please visit the **Korendon Company** that is located at the western part of the second ring road if you are interested.

— An enlightenment festival of love by Archbishop-sama, which will be managed by the shrine maidens of the Aria Faith, will be held from today onwards over a period of several days on the Aria Square. An exchange with the priests, who believe in the God of Justice Sharfa, is scheduled to be carried out. Those who have faith in the goddess of unrestrained love, head over there.

A goddess of love, huh? I remember Nicola with whom I formed a party.

It's also a different religion from the Holy Church.

If it's a religion that raises love and beauty by being unrestrained, I do have interest.

— Attention, because of a large outbreak of Big Stone-Kick Birds in the Great Prairie of Oseberia, the highway towards Luluzark has been infested by them.

— Be careful! There have been repeated theft cases in the southern free market.

— It has been confirmed that the Masked Villain Zarlp has appeared at the cemetery in the outskirts of the city's southern part, west of the magic block. Pay attention, if you see a bloody katana and fingers.

— It's a follow-up report on the murder case at the home of Baronet Langhard.

Once again the great female knight of ^{White} **【Nine Great Knights】**, ^{Nine} the pride of Oseberia Kingdom, arrested the criminal. With this it's her third solution of a murder case. It's a situation where the royal guards are completely losing their face. However, the serial murder case of the three jewels in the residential area of the southern part of the second ring road remains unsolved. Will this case also get successfully solved in the name of the female great knight? Let's look forward to it.

A murder case, eh? It's a big city after all.

That might happen everywhere. That's what I guess at least.

— A magic tool shop called **Awakening of the Truth** has newly opened in the Magic Street in the north-west part of the Third Ring Road.

— There's a notification from the Magic Beast Company Psion. New stock of the Magic Beast **Beiva** has arrived. To those who have confidence in their taming skill: Please come to the **Psion Shop** located in front of the **Grand Arena** that can

be found in the south of the second ring road.

It's possible to buy a magic beast, if one has the taming skill.

— *Notification from the Labyrinth Administration Bureau. A reward for a 3rd class Merit has been granted to* ^{Blue} ^{Arm} ^{Jewelers} **【Blue-Armed Treasure Hunters】** *by the Labyrinth Administration Bureau for having fully cleared the 10th floor after a period of hundred years.*

Labyrinth Administration Bureau, clearance of the 10th floor after 100 years?

A reward for a 3rd class Merit, what's that about?

Even so, those announcement booth people are amazing.

Since a while they are continuously shouting loudly. It looks like they will hurt their throats.

In addition to the announcers, there were dancers and musicians who played sweet melodies with flutes.

Gypsies and circus performers, huh?

Girls, who wore beautiful dresses that revealed their belly buttons, match the musical rhythm well, land by using a backflip after a scissor, and dance nimbly.

You can truly say that professionals are quite experienced in their craft.

Additionally some stand atop pedestals.

“Look at the dancers over there! How degenerated! What depravity! It's a collapse of morals! It's corruption! You must not produce any kind of statue for yourself. Male, female figures and also figures of beasts...”

Is it a warning against idolatry?

I guess it's a denomination of the Holy Church? It seems that they have various different factions within their faith.

A priest who repeatedly preaches that in an eloquent manner, and the audience who listens to the sermon; there are much more believers who listen to the priest's words than in Hekatrail.

But, there doesn't seem to exist an execution site.

Leaving the plaza with their tiresome voices, I survey the round plaza, the **First Ring Road**, by turning around 360°.

Complying with the name of ring, various stores and houses are lining up as if surrounding its round edge.

Horse Lion

I observed them while riding on Rollodeen.

... There's few vertically-high buildings.

Is that because it would disturb the scenery of the city like in Paris?

I guess the reason is something else, but instead there's a continuous wide row of shops that put out sign boards such as inns, general stores, weapon and armour dealers, magic tool shops, magic crafting workshops and restaurants.

There's also a large, wooden store with a signboard stating **Treasures and Maps**.

The huge, red-bricked building next to it was the adventurer's guild.

Since there are many buildings made out of wood and white stone, it stands out quite a bit.

It has been built with three floors, has a stable and uses a vast plot.

The signboard with its white and black border had **Adventurer's Guild** written on it and is huge as well.

Only this adventurer's guild building and the labyrinth's cylindrical build were protruding out in height on this ring road.

They are easy to find, aren't they?

First of all, it's a good sign that I found the guild.

Let's look for an inn next?

There are several inns and bars around this plaza.

... However, I will look in a different place.

Since I just finished going around the First Ring Road, I will have a look at other alleys, I suppose?

I choose an alley on the left side.

It's on the left-upper side of the ring road, on the northern side.

Once I follow the gloomy alley for around one kilometer... I discover an inn with a questionable mood in front.

Many lights are leaking out from the entrance door that is located at the left front of the inn.

The lights' origin is a small tower.

It's an art-like, three-dimensional object which was decorated with many big lanterns on its metal-pole-frame.

I can feel mana from the lights.

The building behind that objet d'art is entirely round like an egg.

Matching with the brightness of the lanterns, an unbalance of light and

shadows was created.

The left wall makes one feel an atmosphere as if it's a **full moon**.

This place has a faintly nice ambience. It's plot is wide as well.

Horse Lion

I descended from Rollodeen.

I walk towards the brightly illuminated entrance.

Seemingly having returned to her small body, Rollo returned to her usual place on my shoulder.

At that moment, a sound, a cicada sound is audible from the inn's entrance door.

It originates from under the overhang of the roof.

Once I looked at the top of the wall where the sound came from, I saw a large cicada staying there.

A different world cicada, huh? How big...

Will there be an outburst of cicada chirring? It's already summer after all.

I have to get used to this sound and this heat for a while.

While feeling the summer's heat, I arrive in front of the entrance door with its black lustre.

There's a door plate that had peculiar vermillion characters carved into its wood.

Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth was written there.

Just as its exterior, even the name seems to reflect that.

"Let's stay here." (Shuuya)

"Nyao."

『Okay.』 (Helme)

Rollo and Helme answer casually.

I push the stylish, wooden door with its black lustre open.

Once I do, the smell of alcohol assails my nostrils and the clattering of the guests reaches my ears.

The inn's interior is big. The right half seems to be the inn's rooms.

There's a stairway leading upwards at the side adjoining to the counter. The huge dining room on the left side gave one the impression of a lively atmosphere.

A stage is located in the left inner part of the dining room. The male troubadour

who plucked the strings of an instrument similar to a guitar, played quite the nice tune.

As if surrounding the stage, there are ten-odd square tables for eating. Some guests are drinking booze and eating food there.

There was also a round, luxurious table for playing card games.

At that table, a grim-lookin dwarf, a middle-aged human in military uniform, a noble-styled woman, a human with a moustache and a hat, and a woman with blue hair are merrily playing a card game while huddling together.

It stirred my interest as it's a poker-like game they are playing.

But, my line of sight shifts to the right side.

There's a pillar wall and a door on the right inner side. A large bar counter is located in front of it on the right.

Twelve tall chairs are lined up there.

It's a stylish bar.

As if making use of the space below the stairs that is right behind the counter, a cupboard has been built there. Oakwood-like barrels and porcelain-made alcohol bottles were placed on the many shelves.

It looks like there are many types of alcohol.

It feels like one can enjoy drinking alcohol here.

When I was observing the inn's appearance with that kind of arrangement from the entranceway, a beautiful woman approached me from the counter.

The pretty woman has honey-coloured hair.

Her hair flows to the sides and is contained by red hair clips.

She has a small, slender chin and the bewitching gaze of a woman at her peak.

Her light brown eyes and nose bridge are high. Her chest is big and long, smooth legs, grew out from her slender waist.

Due to her red shirt sticking to her plump chest, my gaze ends up focussing on that part.

An inner shirt? She's a Big Breast-san.

Below she wears a short skirt that had navy blue edges and a white apron.

With her wearing an apron, she's one of the inn's staff, I guess? She's lovely.

— Oh, she's beautiful, but it's a surprise that her body is clad with magic source. Moreover, it possesses a quality that overshadows any run-of-the-mill adventurer.

『This woman is smoothly manipulating the mana in her body.』 (Helme) Just as Helme says, she's no ordinary woman.

“Welcome dear guest! I'm glad to see you visiting 『Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth』. I'm Mel. I work as landlady here.” (Mel) Huh? She's the landlady? She has a mannish type of voice, but she's a young, beautiful landlady. My tension goes up.

... A beautiful landlady that got NTR'ed. The lewd sex life of a pretty landlady. Dangerous, yabai. (T/N: MC uses katakana for yabai (dangerous) here)

In an instant, several obscene words popped up in my mind...

Let's gloss it over. After adjusting my line of sight, I address her with a serious expression, “... I'm an adventurer. The name's Shuuya. Do you have a free room?” (Shuuya) The landlady also stared at me as if assessing me.

— For an instant her look turns sharp, but then she immediately faces me with a smile.

“... I do. If you stay on the first floor, it will be five large copper coins per night, dinner included. If it's a large room on the second floor, it will be eight large copper coins.” (Mel) Five large copper coins, eh? As expected, the price is reasonable and cheaper than that of a high-class inn.

Checking my item box, I confirm several gold coins.

What day of the summer season was it again...? The third? Then, until the end of the year would be...

— Ah, right.

I have to also ask about Rollo staying with me.

“Ah, one more question, This black cat, Rollo, is with me, but will that be alright?” (Shuuya) Rollo voiced a gentle 「Nya」 without moving from my shoulder.

“Oh my, what a cute cat-chan. She's a familiar, right? By all means, it's fine.” (Mel) The landlady said.

Great. For the time being, let's pay the money for staying until the end of the year.

“Well then, please give me a corner room on the second floor **with this**. It's the share allowing me to stay until the end of the year.” (Shuuya) I took out gold and silver coins from my item box and handed them to the landlady.

“Got it. ... I will receive it on deposit.” (Mel)

The landlady received the money in a hurry. After the beauty-san bewitched me with her characteristic smile, she filled in the registry placed on the reception desk.

Thereupon, counter to the alcohol smell, the delicious fragrance of food wafts over from the dining room.

Rollo immediately reacts by sniffing with her nose.

Which reminds me, we still haven't had any proper breakfast.

Can I eat a meal now? Let's try asking.

“... Mel-san, do you have anything we could eat?” (Shuuya)

Once I ask that without any sense of hesitation, the landlady said that there should be something and told me to sit down on a seat over there while waiting.

“Kazun, can you cook up some food?” (Mel)

The landlady speaks towards the kitchen.

“Yeah~, I can.” (Kazun)

A stern, sombre voice replied from inside the kitchen.

“That's how it is. Please wait a moment.” (Mel)

I obediently follow the landlady's words.

Sitting down on a chair at a table, I wait several minutes for the dishes.

Then the food was carried in.

“Thank you for waiting. It's meat congee with mushrooms.”

The dish that was placed in front of me is a stew that plentifully filled a wooden bowl.

A spoon has been prepared as well.

They even prepared Rollo's share.

I immediately scoop up the stew with the spoon and put it into my mouth.

Yummy. When I try to scoop up another spoonful, I discover a big, soft vegetable that's similar to a potato.

Squashing the potato with the spoon, I scoop up the mashed potato and bring it

to my mouth.

It's soft and flaky. There's also mushrooms mixed in. The meat-on-bone is tasty, too.

As I'm eating the delicious stew...

I suddenly remember the time when I got to eat the first decent meal in this different world.

The sight of the Goldeeba Village crosses my mind.

I wonder whether Rabi-san, who always made delicious food, is doing well?

I will be happy if master, who taught me various things, the cute Leifa, who was similar to a younger sister, and the brawny Raglen are in good health as well.

Recalling my dearly missed days of training, I eat the stew while floating a smile. Once I finish eating, Mel tells me 「This way」. Seemingly having waited for me to finish my meal, I was guided to my room by Mel who took a young girl as helper along.

Climbing the stairs that are located close to the entrance on the first floor, we head towards the second floor.

Reaching the end of the stairs, I'm led to a corner room inside a passage.

A decoration of **two moons** was carved onto the room's door.

A large basket, where laundry can be put in, had been placed on the ground at the side of the door.

“Please put your laundry in this basket. This child, Iriel, will take it away.”

(Mel) “Yeah. I'm Iriel. Please put your clothes inside this.” (Iriel) Iriel is a girl. She's a waitress-san with an apron.

She has deep brown hair and eyes. Her smile is cute.

There's power in her eyes. She's a girl that looks dependable.

“Best regards, Iriel. I will leave it to you at that time.” (Shuuya) “This is the room's key. And, if you tell Iriel when you want to take a bath, she will be able to fill the large bucket inside the room with hot water.” (Mel) I'm given the key after the landlady explains lightheartedly.

“That's not necessary. I can fill it myself.” (Shuuya)

“Oh, dear guest, you possess the water attribute, right? That's great as it will save us some time. Well then, as I still have some things to do, please excuse me. If something happens, call me with a **loud voice**.” (Mel) Loud voice... eh?

“Got it.” (Shuuya)

Once she hears my approval, the beautiful landlady produces a smile.
Mel returns to the first floor while leaving Iriel behind.

But a loud voice? Will it be that noisy around here?

While thinking about that question, I tried to enter the rented room. At that moment—.

“Guest~? Do you have a moment?” (Iriel)

The door is stopped by her placing her small foot against it.
The one who called out to me like that while moving her thin arms that are not very womanly seductively was the servant Iriel.

“Mmh? What is it?” (Shuuya)

“Are you really an adventurer?” (Iriel)

What’s up? This child is...
Once I look properly, her face is that of a grown-up?
A red ring was put on her finger.
I can feel that the ring is filled with thick mana.
For such child to possess such high-quality ring that is a magic tool or sorcery tool...

『Your Excellency, this girl has clad her entire body with mana. I don’t think that she’s a young human.』 (Helme) I was warned by Helme.
This child isn’t normal, I suppose.

“As you are staying silent, is it something else?” (Iriel)

Such shamelessness on a first meeting.

“No, I’m an adventurer. To begin with, why would you be the one to ask such a thing?” (Shuuya) “— Humph, so you realized. Currently I’m working as normal **servant**.” (Iriel) After bending her beautiful face slightly forwards and moving her nostrils with a sniff-sniff as if smelling my scent, Iriel states such deeply meaningful remark.
She faces me with a slightly unwomanly smile, leaves the door by skipping and returns to the first floor.
What is this place?

It's fine since the landlady is a beauty, but I don't want any shady whacko girls around me...

I might have made a mistake in my choice of inns. Well, but I already paid the money.

For starters I will check the inside of the room.

While feeling dissatisfied, I enter the room.

There are four beds with small side tables on the left inner side.

Inside there is a bay window with curtains attached. There's a small veranda and a big bucket has been left on the floor.

Since the bay window has been connected to the adjoining, slanting shingle, it's possible to directly leave towards the top of the roof.

It's a nice view as it's the second floor, but I'm slightly worried about crime prevention.

However, I will be able to enjoy a cool breeze by opening the window at the time of bathing. I also can observe the outside from atop the roof.

This is quite the nice view. Even on the surface of the smooth floorboards of the veranda there is a properly depressed hole. Since it's a slope where the water can flow down due to the angle, I'm pleased with it.

It's smaller than the single room at the high-class inn in Holker, but the walls' design is refined and tidy. The size is satisfactory, too.

As I'm checking the room, Rollo happily played by repeatedly jumping up and down on top of the bed with its tough elasticity while purring with a 「Nyaa」 as if encouraging herself, just like usual.

Since it's a hard bed, there's no flexibility, but it seems to be easier to jump on it than on a soft bed.

And then, seemingly having got bored of jumping up and down, Rollo spun around on the spot as if chasing her own tail, curled up and tried to sleep after settling down on the bed's pillow.

... Cute.

I gaze at the cute cat that shut her eyes.

Let's set this inn as base, I guess?

There's a weird servant here, but it will be fine if I ignore that.

Alright, I secured an inn. Should I head to the guild now?

After carefully checking what kind of requests are posted on the board, it might

be nice to search for a special magic tool shop that sells magic scrolls and take a walk through the back alleys.

Well, with a spirit of **what will be, will be**, that is.

Chapter 105 – Test Party

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“Rollo, will you sleep here? Or will you go to the guild with me?” (Shuuya)

“— Nn.”

Rollo lifts her head slowly and purrs with a throaty voice as if saying 『I will go as well nya』.

“Nya, nyaoon.”

She opened her mouth to show her fangs, purred lengthily, quickly got up from atop the bed and came down from it.

Since she brought her paw close and rubbed her head with it, I extend my hand towards her while grinning and wondering whether her face that’s covered thickly with hair feels also as soft to stroke as her inner belly, but Rollo smoothly dodges my hand while purring throatily as if making fun of me, and runs outside.

This whimsical cat.

Once I left towards the hallway on the second floor in order to chase after the back of Rollo’s swaying body, she got on a thin handrail.

“How skilful...” (Shuuya)

“Nn.” (Rollo)

Rollo nimbly walked on top of the handrail while purring deeply as if humming a song, and then slid down towards the first floor using her butt. Then, looking up at the closed door in front of the inn's foyer, Rollo-san waits looking small and quiet.

When I get close to the waiting Rollo after having descended the inn's stairway, she skilfully stands up on two paws and presses her two front paws against the entrance door. She moved her front paws up and down as if using the door as scratching post and signalling "open, open."

"Haha, cute. But, Rollo, you mustn't damage the door with your scratching—" (Shuuya)

While warning Rollo about that, I open the entrance door and go outside.

"N, nya."

Walking to the grounds which stand out due to the illuminations of the lamps, I exited towards an alley.

Once we went into the alley, Rollo, who had run ahead, transformed into the mode that possessed the mane of a lion and resembled a horse.

"Nn, nya."

I follow her meowing which feels like she has said 『Get on me here nya』. I straddled atop the black horse Rollodeen.

After I grabbed the tentacle reins with one hand, we leave the alley and advance towards the First Ring Road.

We immediately arrived in front of the adventurer's guild.

"Thank you, Rollo." (Shuuya)

I descended to the ground while giving my thanks to Rollodeen. I gently caressed the black hair below her neck with practised hand movements. Once I do, Rollo's bottom of the neck trembles apparently feeling good and then she returns from her horse-like mode back to her black cat mode. Seemingly wanting to return the favour, Rollo nuzzles her head against my feet. Thereupon I turn my line of sight towards the guild. The large, wooden double door, which serves as the entrance door of the guild, was open.

Which reminds me, I got filled with such a feeling at the time when I stepped

into the adventurer's guild in Hekatrail, too.

Countless adventurers are coming and going through the entrance.

If it's like that, the interior will be packed as well.

While thinking that I really hate crowding, I passed through the guild's door and entered inside with Rollo following me.

A large hall with plenty of space extends from this side deeply into the inner part.

Boards where the requests had been posted are lining up in a row.

It's spacious, but as expected, it's crowded.

It's the usual, well-known spectacle.

The adventurers are choosing their requests in front of the boards while worrying over it.

Picking up a wooden token and walking to a receptionist; that sequence of events hasn't changed.

It's a really noisy and clamorous hustle and bustle.

I wonder what kind of requests they have...

I look at a board in front of me.

Unexpectedly there were many requests in regards to **Party Application** and **Member Recruitment**. Their number was around the same as the number of monster subjugation requests.

Recruitments for largely-built races to be used as shields, rear guards, wizards, healers, lock-pickers and those possessing skills that enable them to remove traps.

Our group has three vanguard warriors. That means we can't join a party?

Magician recruitment and so on. There's only such requests.

A great number of adventurers are intently checking the papers with those requests.

Even right next to me there was a woman holding a long wand that seems to be a magician.

Ooh, she's a beautiful child.

Because I'm looking at her from close-by, her eyes seem to be big.

Her big eyes have pretty pupils that were dyed in a light blue colour, how lovely...

Her ears are shorter than those of elves, but the ears' shape is long and narrow

just like those of elves.

She looks cute.

While letting her blonde hair freely flow down towards the back on her left side, she detained the hair on the right side that flowed down towards the opposing side with an Alice band.

When I'm fixedly staring at that beautiful woman, our eyes meet.

"Umm, is there something wrong?"

The blue-eyed woman is suspicious of me.

Uhyaaa... I got charmed.

Since I surely can't say that, I will deceive her suitably.

"Ah, no, there's a lot of such requests, isn't there? After all it's my first time to come to the labyrinth city..." (Shuuya)

When I do, the woman's blue eyes shine for an instant.

With a smile she moves her small lips.

"Really? It's your first time, huh? Do you also intend to challenge the labyrinth?"

Of course, since it's my intention to do so, I return in polite language,

"Yes, that is correct. That's what I have planned to do." (Shuuya)

"Is that so...? Did you already find a party or a clan in the **Bar of Initial Resolution**?"

The **Bar of Initial Resolution**, eh? Is that a bar where beginners gather? Going by its name, it feels like a bar that appears in a certain national RPG. Let's give her a common reply.

"... No, I wondered whether I would give it a shot solo with my familiar..." (Shuuya)

Once she hears my words, the blue pupils of both her eyes that looked as if she was squinting them brighten up.

Gazing at my entire body with her characteristic blue eyes as if she's licking me all over, she consented with a single nod.

And then, fixing her line of sight, she once again stares at me and Rollo, who

was on my shoulder, with a serious look.

She changes her expression to one similar to squeezing out her courage.

As if a flame has lit inside her blue eyes... or rather, I felt like it really got lit.

Once she opens her small lips, a lovely voice comes out.

“... Really? In that case, won’t you form a party with me as a **test**, only once and just for the first floor?”

Party. She stressed the test part, but it’s an invitation by a beautiful woman with blonde hair and blue eyes.

However, for an instant, I remember the time with Kuna who deceived me.

But, it will be fine. I will go at it with a spirit of deceiving her rather than getting deceived by her.

On top of there being many things I don’t know about the labyrinth, she’s a beautiful woman.

It will be fine to judge the merits and demerits after forming a temporary party.

“... Very well. Only the first floor, as a test. However, there are many things I don’t know about the labyrinth. Will that be alright?” (Shuuya)

“Of course. Yaa— hooray. Will you really join a party with me?”

The blue-eyed woman looks really happy with her cheeks becoming slack. She switched to a showy behaviour.

Umm, is that something to be that happy about?

Even though the looks of the surrounding adventurers are pitying for some reason...

Without minding that, I revert to a casual tone after seeing her behaviour. Let’s introduce myself?

“... Right, my name is Shuuya Kagari. Please call me Shuuya. My adventurer rank is C-Rank. And, this fellow here is my partner and familiar Rollodeen, or rather, Rollo.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.”

Rollo, who is resting on my shoulder, greets her as well.

“Ah, I will introduce myself as well. My name is Rebecca. The adventurer rank is C. Shuuya and Rollo-chan, best regards.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca, huh? Her smile is cute.

“Please take care of us, Rebecca.” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nyao.”

“Yea? Fufu, that’s a cute neko-chan. Also, my strength lies largely in fire. The attributes I possess are fire and wind. As you can see, my combat occupation is magician. How about yours, Shuuya?” (Rebecca)

“Please think of me as magic warrior.” (Shuuya)

Rebecca nods in approval.

“Hee, I thought that you are a warrior because of your large build, but you have a familiar. After all you are capable of using magic as well, aren’t you?” (Rebecca)

“... I think that I can work quite reasonably as vanguard or middle guard.” (Shuuya)

“Okay, I will leave the vanguard to you. Well, if it’s the first floor of the labyrinth, the **Envoy of Barbaroy** won’t appear either. Since we will be fine with the two of us, let’s have a try right away?” (Rebecca)

I don’t understand what that **Envoy of Barbaroy** or whatever is.
But, the conversation proceeds smoothly.
From polite language, it suddenly turned into a casual manner of speech.
But, before going to the labyrinth, I wanted to look around magic tool shops and such.
Going by the flow of the chat, that seems to be okay as well...
Should I ask her about that next?

“Wait a moment. There’s a place I’d like to visit before going to the labyrinth. Is that fine with you?” (Shuuya)

Due to my words,

“... W-What?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca shows a slightly shaken behaviour.
Huh? Did I make a mistake?
I don’t know why she feels shaken, but I will tell her about wanting to go

shopping.

“Just as I told you before, I only arrived in the labyrinth city, right? Thus, I decided on an inn, but somehow I want to look at a magic tools shop in preparation~...” (Shuuya)

Hearing that, Rebecca’s expression changes back to one of relief.

“... Okay, then we will first choose only a simple request as test and I will lead you to a magic tools shop.” (Rebecca)

“Ooh, is that okay for you?” (Shuuya)

“Of course. For me it’s been a really long time since I had a party member. I will help you.” (Rebecca)

“Thanks. Then let’s first look at the requests.” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. Let’s choose C or D rank requests.” (Rebecca)

Once again the two of us look at the request boards.

Monster subjugation isn’t only requested for the labyrinth but there are also many requests for monster types that appear in the **【Great Plains of Pelneet】**. Rebecca and me narrow it down to monsters inhabiting the labyrinth and search for subjugation requests.

There’s only subjugation requests above C rank for the labyrinth.

The silver-fanged ogre, commonly called Volck, has been confirmed to appear starting from the second floor. The whole body of the silver Volck as raw material.

Golden

Tyrant

The whole body of the Gold-threaded Dinosaur that appears on the third floor and below as raw material.

This is on the third floor, too?

Titan

Spider

The whole body of the Ferocious Bull Spider as raw material.

In addition there are various other requests with the names of monsters written on them, but there are no requests with the familiar names of goblins and orcs...

Such requests exist for the **【Great Plains of Pelneet】**.

The most numerous among the labyrinth requests are those for gathering magic stones. A list with the prices for magic stones was written on a big paper.

Depending on the size such as small, medium, big, very big, the prices for buying magic stones rise sharply.

In addition it seems like the types are finely split by colour and shape, but... Something like gathering five small magic stones exists as a D rank request. As B and C rank adventurers are expensive, they apparently demand bigger numbers of collected magic stones than larger magic stones.

There are relatively many requests besides those, such as bodyguard or escort requests.

I will try asking Rebecca.

“... Rebecca, do you have a moment?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah?” (Rebecca)

“There are no requests to defeat several goblins among the ones in the labyrinth, but for the plains outside they exists. Why is that so?” (Shuuya)

Hearing my question, Rebecca snickers softly.

“That’s because the **magic stones** are essential. You wondered why there are no goblin or orc requests among the labyrinth requests, right?” (Rebecca)

Bingo. Going by Rebecca’s explanation the reason for that seems to be quite reasonable.

I feel slightly ashamed.

Well, there’s a saying that being ashamed for asking once is the shame for one’s whole life for not asking. *(T/N: Meaning: One should actively question the things one doesn’t understand)*

“Just as you say.” (Shuuya)

“Of course a great number, or rather, an infinite number of goblins and orcs appear in the labyrinth. And, if you defeat a monster in there, they will always drop a **magic stone** that corresponds to the strength of that monster. But you know, if it’s outside the labyrinth, only few monsters possess a magic stone. Therefore, there are many requests to directly subjugate goblins outside the labyrinth.” (Rebecca)

If it’s inside the labyrinth, they will always drop magic stones?

“I see, so that’s the reason.” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. Magic stones are necessities that become material for various things. By the way, big magic stones are called magic crystals, but most of the times they are called big magic stones or very big magic stones.” (Rebecca)

Magic crystal? That possibly sounds like fossil fuel.
I feel like Master Achilles talked about that.

“Well, sorry. I ended up asking you something obvious.” (Shuuya)

I scratch my head.

“No, I don’t really mind. It’s your first time. Shuuya, you are C-Rank, but let’s get a request we can handle even as beginners on a safe floor where Barbaroy doesn’t appear, since it’s your first visit to the labyrinth.” (Rebecca)

She places one of her beautiful, slender fingers on a request paper and taps on the board.

Just like that, she took a wooden token from the edge located below that board.

It’s a C-Rank request.

Client: Labyrinth Administration Bureau

Request Content: C-Rank small magic stones. “20 stones” regardless of quality.

Subjugation Target: none

Application Period: indefinite

Search Area: The labyrinth’s first floor ~

Reward: 10 Silver Coins

Subjugation Proof: Magic Stones

Hints: All kinds of monsters

Note: none

The client is the Labyrinth Administration Bureau, eh?

As client related to magic stones, the Labyrinth Administration Bureau comes up more often than companies.

It’s a request from the country, isn’t it?

“Very well. Let’s take that one.” (Shuuya)

“By the way, you can’t accept several of the magic stone requests, okay? As it’s a request for the first floor, it only applies to that floor. Though you can

accept several monster subjugation requests.” (Rebecca)

“Hee, I will remember that.” (Shuuya)

Rebecca and me take that wooden token to the receptionist from a little while ago.

We present the wooden token and our cards to the receptionist.

Rebecca finished her procedures smoothly.

Is the receptionist whittling my card with a silver plane-like carpenter tool?

No, she scanned it. It’s probably a magic tool.

It’s reading the information.

It’s the first time for me to see that. Is that a unique item of the labyrinth city?

“... Shuuya Kagari-sama, it will be your first time in the labyrinth, right?”

“Yes, that’s correct.” (Shuuya)

It looks like she knows whether I’ve been to the labyrinth before or not.

“One silver coin will be levied by the country. Is that fine with you?”

Is the adventurer’s guild here directly managed by the country?

I guess it’s a tax?

“Understood.” (Shuuya)

I reply with a concise affirmation.

I take out a silver coin from my item box and pay with that.

“Well then, is it alright for me to explain the rules of the adventurer’s guild in 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】?”

Once I look in Rebecca’s direction, she nods silently.

I think she’s telling me “listen to it as I will wait.”

“— Yes.” (Shuuya)

There’s a system similar to a bank and safe-deposit boxes at work in the guild here. For a party a **message box** is available. If it’s a clan, they can use one safe-deposit box for free.

I feel like Hekatrail had something similar as well.

But, creating a clan costs 100 gold coins.

The guild basically keeps a “no-touch” policy in regards to quarrels over

requests and what happens inside the labyrinth.

The receptionist's explanation continues.

“We won't get involved with disputes with nobles, dark guilds, murder, being killed by monsters.”

In case of unreasonable conduct; I receive the explanation “Please get in touch with the soldiers of the Labyrinth Administration Bureau” with a smile. I listened silently.

Is that what you call an unspoken agreement? Pure strength and the words of those possessing authority, it's the same everywhere.

The formalities after that concluded without delay.

Touching a crystal that is the same as in the other cities, the request got accepted right away.

Rebecca and me left the guild.

I guess I will ask her about the shop?

“Rebecca, it will be fine with a magic tools shop that sells magic books, but do you have any place you can recommend?” (Shuuya)

“Of course I do. — My combat occupation is magician, you know? Leave it to me. Since there's a place which I visit quite frequently, we will head over there.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca says while skipping lightly.

The long wand that she held with her white-fish-like hand had a small red jewel attached at its tip.

Turning the long wand around like a baton, she faces me with a lovely smile.

Did her skirt roll up a bit just now?

『Your Excellency, you have formed a party with this woman, haven't you?』 (Helme)

Helme appeared in my sight while spinning around.

『Yeah, as a test.』 (Shuuya)

『Is that so? I believe that you have already noticed, but since she's great at mana control, you might say that she's an excellent magician. However, the wand she possesses is trash...』 (Helme)

『If she's excellent even seen through the eyes of a spirit, Rebecca must be really very good, I suppose.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes. I think that she will be a good member. I recommend her not as party member but as your subordinate, Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

『Subordinate, huh? That's hasty. Please disappear for now.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay!』 (Helme)

Even while talking with Helme for a short time in my mind, I kept looking at Rebecca's body.

I judge that Rebecca's height is between 150 and 160 centimetres.

Her attire is a blue shirt on top and a blackish cape similar to a poncho on her shoulders.

As if hiding her small chest, a flower brooch with a silver chain was fastened at her chest on top of the black cape.

A black belt with a broad chain was tied around her slender waist. Potions and an accessory case were affixed to that black belt.

Her lower body had a miniskirt with a slit in the red cloth tightly covering her hips.

As it was a mini type, her thighs were visible.

However, her underwear are drawers similar to spats.

Unfortunately I can't see her panties.

On her feet she's wearing black, long socks and platform shoes that taper towards a pointed end and that seem to be the typical footwear of magicians. Is she really a magician?

According to what Helme pointed out, the magic source inside her body moves smoothly.

Once again turning around the long wand she holds in her slender hand, she holds it up.

I could feel a bit mana from the red jewel that has been embedded at the tip of that long wand.

"... What is it? Your look is strange, so what's up?" (Rebecca)

"Sorry. Judging from that long wand, I was wondering whether you are a magician." (Shuuya)

“Because I’m a strange magician, me holding a **wand** isn’t normal. So, we will head to the left-upper part of the city from here on. We will go to a place commonly called **Magic Street** although it’s a place ranging from the Third Ring Road to the Second Ring Road.” (Rebecca)

Hoo, let’s go with that.

“Got it. Let’s go?” (Shuuya)

We walk in the manner of me being guided by Rebecca.
Though I thought that it would be faster to ride Rollo, Rollo doesn’t move.
She’s resting on my shoulder. Oh well, it’s fine.
Occasionally it’s also great to have a date with a beautiful woman while walking.

“What? Your grinning, plain expression is slightly disgusting?” (Rebecca)

Ugh, she doesn’t mince her words, does she?
Disgusting, to be told that...

“It doesn’t particularly matter even if I grin, does it?” (Shuuya)

The slightly discomposed me talks to Rebecca while laughing lightly.

“Fufu, that’s true as well. By the way, Shuuya, you told me that you are a C-Rank adventurer, but where have you been active before coming to this 『Labyrinth City』?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca asks while inclining her head slightly.

“I’ve been travelling. Until recently I was active in Demonic Steel-City Holkerbaum. Before that I was in Fortress City Hekatrail.” (Shuuya)

“Holkerbaum and Hekatrail, huh? You were active in such eastern regions, eh? Since I was born **here**, I don’t know any other place than this. I always made a living here in Pelneet.” (Rebecca)

“Then you have experienced and earned quite a bit in the labyrinth, haven’t you?” (Shuuya)

“That is...” (Rebecca)

Rebecca somewhat bends down and frowns as if it’s difficult to talk about it.

Mmh? Did I say something weird?

She walks slightly ahead.

“What’s wrong?” (Shuuya)

“Er, well... I dove many times into the labyrinth, but because I haven’t earned overly much...” (Rebecca)

“Why didn’t you earn much?” (Shuuya)

Rebecca, who had gone slightly ahead, reacts with a twitch of her shoulders due to my question and halts.

She turned around to me while donning a slightly meek expression.

— She’s peeking at me.

“What’s up? Showing such face. If you don’t want to talk about it, that’s fine with me.” (Shuuya)

“I have confidence in my magic skills. Even more so than the talented students that graduated from the magic academy...” (Rebecca)

“Mmh? I don’t see where the story’s heading, but...” (Shuuya)

“Well, aah, geez, do I have to spell it out? Okay, I will. You know, I’m a half elf...” (Rebecca)

A half, huh? I thought that to be the case from the shape of her ears.

“What’s wrong with that?” (Shuuya)

“Huh? Umm, that is, even when I joined parties, there were many cases where I ended up getting expelled right away. It’s said that the child between an elf and a human brings bad luck. At first I didn’t care about that and freely joined several parties, but... actually, each time I dove into the labyrinth, the members of the party I entered died after falling into a trap or getting killed by monsters... at all such times the party ended up partially destroyed...” (Rebecca)

Whoa, she has no luck, does she? Even though she’s a beauty, she’s a woman with little luck.

“While such things repeated themselves, I got the nickname **Angel of Death**. With me just being a half elf, and because I had this rumour that doesn’t give me any decent reputation following me around, I didn’t have many chances to

join a party. Even when I formed parties with people that didn't know anything like you, Shuuya, there were many situations where I was openly hated by the members who heard the rumours about me. Just after forming a party at great pains, the party broke up the next day or the day after that. Such stuff was an everyday occurrence to me. *Please don't come here anymore since we don't want to form a party with you*, is what I was told many times..." (Rebecca)

Something like that...

Hearing angel of death, I remember Rubia who was called a taboo child.

I wonder whether that girl's doing fine?

However, I guess discrimination exists in any world or city...

At that moment I saw that Rebecca filled her slender hand that was holding her wand with strength.

The inner sides of her lovely, golden eyebrows rise and gather in the middle.

She probably summoned her courage and told me all that while suppressing her sorrow.

It felt slightly painful... I will give her a peace of mind, I guess?

"... Rebecca, why did you tell me that?" (Shuuya)

"Currently you have joined up with me as a test, but since I thought you would hear about me from someone sooner or later, I wanted to tell you by myself before that happens. Because you can challenge the labyrinth with ten people at once, I would hate it if you had a bad reputation at the time when you recruit or gather other members, Shuuya." (Rebecca)

"I see." (Shuuya)

"Therefore, if you want to refuse partying with me, I won't mind even if you do it right away. Then we will stop the test, too. Ah, don't worry about it since there's plenty other adventurers who have such bad-feeling nicknames attached to them? For now I will just properly guide you to the magic tools shop..." (Rebecca)

What a fairly pessimistic thinking.

However, my side might cause Rebecca trouble.

After all I'm currently in a fight with a dark guild.

My acquaintances might get marked.

Since I can't sense any presences inside the range of my Grasping Perception, I might be over-thinking it though.

But, if I think about those things, I will end up unable to mingle with others... Well, if push comes to shove, I can always look for Eribol's mansion and crush their leaders, I guess.

"... I don't mind at all. Even I in fact, have reasons making it hard for me to form a party. Thus, I don't care. Well then, please guide me to the shop."
(Shuuya)

Once Rebecca hears my words, she enthusiastically reveals a bright, girlish expression, but at the same time she is taken aback and pouts.

"... Really?" (Rebecca)

She asked in the shape of a question.

"Yes. Do you want me to speak openly?" (Shuuya)

"Yeah." (Rebecca)

She probably told me after pondering about various things due to having formed a party with me.

I guess I will tell her my true lecherous motives as well?

"Alright, in that case let me lay everything on the table. Currently I haven't thought about other members at all. I said it several times, but I'm a newbie in regards to the labyrinth here. Moreover, there's no way for me to hate a person who has offered to guide me to a shop like this. To begin with, for me it really doesn't matter to what race you belong. The problem is that you are a **woman**, Rebecca. If it's a man, I think that even the story of the very first invitation would finish on the spot without it becoming inflated... Although it's something I say myself, I like women. That being the case, I simply formed a party with you, Rebecca, because you are cute. That's all there is to it." (Shuuya)

"... E-Eh!? Oh god, what are you saying—" (Rebecca)

Rebecca's face on the spot ends up boiling brightly red just like an octopus. Dropping her long wand that is her important tool for her occupation on the ground, she repeats the action of hiding her face with both hands.

“There’s no deeper meaning, you know? Those are my true thoughts. Rebecca, you have dropped your wand...” (Shuuya)

“Ah, yeah. You delivered that in a far too straight manner. Geez, well then, since it’s over there, let’s go.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca picks up the wand as if trying to gloss over that her face has become red, and then suddenly turns to the front again and starts walking ahead.

Chapter 106 – Magic Street

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“Very soon. Leaving this alley towards the north, the road on the other side from the First Ring Road is called Magic Street.” (Rebecca)

After being guided by Rebecca, we arrive at the Magic Street.

“Ooh, so this is the Magic Street.” (Shuuya)

Advertisement boards emitting bluish-white lights are set up all over. Calling it a futuristic neon city goes too far, but the contrast of blue and white made me feel the cold future of the townscape.

A two-storied building adorned with the signboard 【Magic Guild】 with a mark forming a wand that sheds bluish-white light.

Characteristic stores and signboards are standing in a row.

I suppose it’s a view one won’t see in other streets.

Or rather, I’ve never seen this view in other cities.

Oh, this light is...

There were electric lamp-like small posts which I had already seen once before.

“This is...” (Shuuya)

Bluish-white lights that apparently attract swarms of moths and small winged insects.

The electric lamp-like posts are continuing further inside with several of them lining up along the street as if securing a path for the pedestrians.

『If you look from close-by, it's a mysterious light, isn't it?』 (Helme)

Certainly...

Even Helme apparently hadn't seen this light from so close.

Seemingly getting quite curious about the lights she sees after a long time, Rollo purrs with a 「Nn, nyao」, gets off my shoulder and approaches a post emitting a pale light.

“What's wrong?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca asked while showing a perplexed expression.

She appears to be curious about me paying attention to the light posts.

“Don't you think the posts releasing lights are strange?” (Shuuya)

“Those are a kind of magic posts. They have a monster-repelling effect. By the way, these being here is proof that officials of the 【Magic Guild】 are in the vicinity.” (Rebecca)

Rollo circles around the post with her tail standing up apparently having fun while purring with a 「Nyanya nya~」 without listening to Rebecca's explanation. I see, those are the same magic posts like those in the **Whirlpool Forest of Demon Fog**, aren't they?

The ones set up in front of Sol Gustav's home were a barrier after all, huh?

“So you're saying there's the guild's characteristic **something** in those posts?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. It seems to be barrier magic by means of magic crests and magic stones which appear in the labyrinth, but that **something** has been hidden.” (Rebecca)

“Rebecca, do you belong to the 【Magic Guild】?” (Shuuya)

“No, well, I can't join. I don't want to either. The people belonging to it have been recruited by those possessing top-ranking Spirit, Mana and Combat Occupations like the ones who graduate as top students from the magic academy. I feel that I want to do various types of magical research, but because

their various terms and rules are harsh, I don't want to join them.” (Rebecca)

Meaning the magic guild is overly strict.

“Are there any requirements necessary for becoming a member that differ from the adventurer's guild...?” (Shuuya)

“— Even though you can use magic, you didn't know Shuuya?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca asks while trying to stroke Rollo's head after bending both her knees and then her back.

“That's right. There is no 【Magic Guild】 in 【Hekatrail】. And if it's 【Holkerbaum】, I didn't even search for it much, with the magic tool shops being rare.” (Shuuya)

“Hmm. Well, I guess it's reasonable since you travelled? After all there are also cases where it's prohibited by the country to leave its territory due to belonging to the 【Magic Guild】. I think it's probably because the guild's possessing secret sophisticated magic or because it's used in war.” (Rebecca)

Whoa, prohibition to leave the country?

“That's something I really don't want. For argument's sake, if I belonged to the 【Magic Guild】, would I be currently forbidden to leave 【Oseberia Kingdom】?” (Shuuya)

“At the present time that's not the case. It appears leaving the country at the time when the war with the empire was extreme was prohibited. Even so, the war is still continuing... Should it intensify once again, leaving will be prohibited once more as well.” (Rebecca)

“I see. In that case I'd like to refrain from joining the magic guild, too.” (Shuuya)

At that point, Rebecca stands up and laughs while looking at me.

“Fufu, Shuuya, you are an adventurer right? It's alright if you don't enter the magic guild. Well then, since the store we are headed for is over there, let's go inside soon?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca asked while tilting her head sideways.
Each and every of her gestures are cute.

“Yeah, let’s go.” (Shuuya)

“Rollo-chan will go as well~” (Rebecca)

“Nyaa.”

Rollo stretches both her legs out in front as if straightening her back and follows behind Rebecca.

Rebecca stopped walking before long.

This is the shop...?

The shop’s exterior can be summarized into the single word **unique**.

Rebecca stretches out her hands in order to introduce the shop with its peculiar exterior.

“It’s this place. This is the store I recommend. Krishna Sorcery Tools Shop. It has various nicknames such as Unknown Magic Sorcery Tools Shop or Little-known good Magic Tools Shop.” (Rebecca)

While listening to Rebecca’s explanation, I look at its white, thick bone pillars that are stretching upwards in a spiral-shaped manner and the red umbrella roof covering it.

The framework of the front double-door had been decorated with white, helical, mysterious figures.

Even Rollo separates from below Rebecca’s feet while looking at the strange white bone material and approaches a white, big bone pillar.

She places her right leg against the pillar with a tap, pushes her paw against it without extending her claws, entangles it with her tail, sniffs its odour and, different from the act of scattering her cat scent on it, she takes a weird action similar to sniffing its unique magic scent.

“... It’s really interesting.”

I mutter quietly while looking up at the store.

“Huh?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca faces me with a questioning look due to my murmuring.

“No, it’s nothing. ... I want to look at sorcery tools and magic scrolls. Rollo, stop smelling its scent. We are going inside.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.”

“Weird Shuuya and weird Rollo-chan. This way.” (Rebecca)

Once she opens the door, we step inside the shop together with Rebecca. We were suddenly greeted by a mysterious atmosphere. The floor, the ceiling, the inner walls, the pillars and the decorative beams; all of them are composed of aged wood and building stones with geometrical patterns inscribed. With things like trompe l’oeil that might as well belong into the modern era, despite stemming from the Middle Ages, a culture that’s outdated in modern times, I can’t say anything at all. Also, it’s only merchandise that I have never seen before. What caught my eyes first are hats that were decorating mannequins. A great number of midgets that have horns growing out and look like wax models which have assimilated with the hats’ brims are squirming around and working? They were hats. The black cat on my shoulder chases those moving horned midgets with her red eyes. Them being hats I understand, but... Among the small horned midgets there were also midgets with the style of bald old men. And, they are moving while doing pantomime...

『Those are strange hats. They are small midgets, but each of them possesses rich mana. I sense the presence of spirits.』 (Helme)

Helme appeared in my field of vision and explained.

“Rollo, you are not allowed to meddle with them.” (Shuuya)

“Nya.”

Looking at mine and Rollo’s reaction, Rebecca laughed a bit, but she only silently watched us. When we advance inside the store, strange things enter our sight once again. A magical inverness coat. Although it was put in order and chic with an indigo blue colour, it was disgusting due to the white claws spreading like the feathers of a peacock from the neck to the back.

The white claws that possess saw blades are moving eerily one by one.

“Is it alright to even touch this?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. But be careful since it’s an article for sale.” (Rebecca)

“Okay.” (Shuuya)

Since I was curious, I tried to turn over the inner side of that indigo-blue coat. Silver, magic letters have been woven densely into the inner lining. Quite a bit of mana has been contained in it, thus it might be an amazing armour.

“That coat will apparently mend itself automatically even if it receives a cut. It’s also equipped with the secret art of counter magic 《
Schaffer Anti-Justice Silver Sword》 and comes from the labyrinth just like the hats.”
(Rebecca)

Rebecca explained to me when I was checking it out with Magic Observation.

“You are well-informed, aren’t you?” (Shuuya)

“I have visited this shop several times in the past.” (Rebecca)

“I see. So, the coat not getting sold is because of its look, correct?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah, probably. As written on the wooden tag, its price is high, too. On top of its ominous look, it also has bony claws to the degree that it will become dangerous for the neck instead. ... I guess they can’t sell it because that’s fatal for an armour.” (Rebecca)

“Indeed.” (Shuuya)

It’s certainly eerie.

Accordingly, I swapped my look to the merchandise next to it.

This is also an eccentric item.

It’s a coat made out of the bristle of a black wolf or bear that looks warm if worn.

On the arm parts extending from the shoulder, there are the heads of a wolf and a bear. Those heads are moving the mouths as if they are the real, live deal. The movements of their eyes and mouths are especially realistic.
No way, are those actually alive?

Once I approach to touch the head parts while thinking that, the mouths of the wolf and bear move all of a sudden.

— Uhyaa.

The sharp fangs growing out of their lower and upper jaws violently move up and down with a clacking sound completely as if they are alive.

Even Rollo has been surprised by those ghastly sounds.

“Are these alive?” (Shuuya)

“Kh-, shaa.”

Rollo threatens them as warning with her hair standing on end.

The claws at her front and rear paws extended and even her tentacles grew a bit. It's with an intensity that she might leap at the clacking fangs any time soon. I can acutely sense the claws at her paws getting filled with strength through my overcoat.

“Rollo, it's okay. Calm down. This is merchandise.” (Shuuya)

Once I soothed Rollo so that she quiets down, she leaned herself against my back in a relaxed manner.

“Hahaha, were you surprised? Everyone gets startled if they approach that equipment item without knowing about it, you know.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca laughed.

Did she watch our reactions while knowing about that coat?

Her cute gesture of sticking out her tongue a bit is lovely as well.

『Your Excellency, I withdraw my recommendation to turn her into a comrade. Making fun of the great you to whom she should be indebted, she's currently revealing a mischievous expression. That's cheeky. An ice spear for her butt —』 (Helme)

『No, that's not allowed.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay.』 (Helme)

After cautioning the angry Helme through telepathic communication, I advance further into the shop without minding Rebecca's behaviour and stumbled once again across something weird.

That's a light-blue, transparent fluid in a beaker?

The blue, transparent something is wriggling.

For what the hell is this thing being used?

I approach and observe it.

“It looks like a real slime.” (Shuuya)

The slime reacts towards my impressions.

The shape of the blue, transparent fluid, that accumulated inside the beaker, twists and squirms.

Whoa— suddenly it transformed into my face.

“!? It's my face.” (Shuuya)

As if impersonating me, the fluid transforms into a surprised face, an angry face, a laughing face, a sad face and various other expressions.

The bluish-white fluid causes even further changes.

Two objects resembling eyeballs appear with a slithering.

A mouth became visible as well and it moved.

“... You, strange, mana, I feel.”

Even Rollo is shocked. Opening her red eyes widely, she sends her forepaw towards the beaker trying to perform a cat punch.

“Rollo, don't, okay?” (Shuuya)

Once I warn her lightly, Rollo makes her ears dent and fixes her gaze on the bluish-white fluid.

“Eh!? It uses words? It's the first time for me to see that blue one reacting.”
(Rebecca)

Rebecca was astonished, too.

The beaker and me look at each other.

『Your Excellency, this one belongs to an unknown water family. You can consider it to be a part of a deeply-concentrated crystal spirit.』 (Helme)

Hoo.

『This is a part of a crystal spirit? Are you saying that it's a race resembling you, Helme?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes. There are countless variations of spirits. Since this small spirit is no more than a part and as it has been transformed into a fixed state by mixing with a demon, I want to help it, but... it looks like it's impossible.』 (Helme)

... Is it a spirit or a monster? Currently I don't quite understand which of either it is.

As I look in the direction of Rebecca,

“Usually it doesn't show such a reaction?” (Shuuya)

“It's the first time for me to see it.” (Rebecca)

“In that case it reacted to me, I guess?” (Shuuya)

Saying that, I turn my face to the beaker with the strange, bluish-white fluid in it.

“What are you?” (Shuuya)

“... Spirit, demon, being, water also, something that has.”

It states as such.

『It is as you've said, Helme.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes. It has probably transformed into this fixed state due to being in this container for a long time...』 (Helme)

It looks like a normal beaker, but it seems to be a magic tool?

『Helme, I'm sorry, but I have no intention to buy it. Let's leave it alone, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『Yes.』 (Helme)

I finish my conversation with Helme.

“A mysterious spirit, huh? Has this strange slime talked about something?” (Shuuya)

Tilting my head, I face Rebecca with a questioning expression.

“Even if you are looking for an answer from me...” (Rebecca)

She reveals a complicated expression.

“... I guess so. Let's go further inside?” (Shuuya)

“... Yea, let’s.” (Rebecca)

Once we separated from the beaker, the bluish-white thing lost its shape and returned to its original fluid state.

It’s a really mysterious shop.

While checking the strange merchandise inside the shop with Rebecca, we proceed to the front of the reception.

Huh? There’s no clerk?

There are also other customers around the rectangle table that serves as reception.

Going by their atmosphere, this might be a well-known store among fanciers.

Paintings are lined up in a row side-by-side at the upper section of the reception similar to menus in a hamburger shop.

The pictures in the paintings are only drawings of monsters, but they were paintings that splendidly captured the details just like photographs.

The figure of a skeleton that has gained a bit of weight and is holding a longsword and a shield.

A figure wearing a grey robe with a hood that has no feet and is floating in the air. It is grasping a longsword with a jagged blade edge in its pale right hand and a lantern in its left hand which grew out of its torso.

A figure with an ogre face that has a longsword stabbed into its thick chest. The traces of its severed arms are vivid, but for some reason, at the blood-smeared cut ends of those arms the severed arms are floating and holding a longsword with a black lustre.

The figure of a wolf that has a black ring around its neck.

Various monsters have been drawn as paintings.

However, there were also frames with no pictures drawn in them placed on the table.

Frames in various small and large sizes that seem sturdy and that are stained with gothic-styled, pure, black and light-brown spots.

There are also frames that seem to be made out of steel.

Mmh? Looking properly at them, aren’t those spots decorations?

Do they serve as depressions for the fingers to allow one to hold the frames in their hands?

Hee, I see.

It seems to be a set up to allow carrying these paintings.

Once I check, there are parts similar to handles on all four sides of the frames. Leather straps enabling one to hang the frame on the shoulders were provided as well.

But, why are they selling something like **pictures** here?

I will try asking Rebecca.

“... Those are?” (Shuuya)

“It’s equipment dedicated to magic artists.” (Rebecca)

“Magic artists?” (Shuuya)

“Yes. It’s an occupation that’s called a rare combat occupation even among magician types. Using their skills, they can entrap monsters inside those special magic tool frames. Afterwards it becomes possible to form an enslavement contract with those confined monsters. It’s a special combat occupation. Demonic spirit artists, who are called blue flame artists, belong to the magic artists category as well, but they don’t use the frames, or rather they can’t use them. There are also weird, peculiar items, whose meaning I don’t have a grasp of, and which don’t entrap monsters.” (Rebecca)

She explained while looking regretfully towards the end of her speech. It’s possible that there are also things related to me here.

“Hee... there are even such things here?”

“I don’t know which of them, but that **such things** is upsetting.”

A customer reacted to the words I said.

There’s a single customer who looked at the paintings in the same manner as me next to reception.

The appearance of the man who addressed me seems to be that of a magician, but he has a physique like a largely-built warrior.

He is wearing a black, pointy hat that has an embroidery of a large, golden eyeball added to it on his head.

His coat is a twin tunic with erratic red and golden patterns.

There were magic letters sewn with golden embroidery into the black mantle he has put on his shoulders.

His lower body is covered by lamé-styled, black-dyed long leather pants.

He wore lamé leather boots that stood out with their black and golden colours. Since the lamé leather is tightly covering his thick legs, one will know that he's muscular.

With his entire body clad in high-class equipment, he's outfitted like a high-ranking noble.

As I'm reluctant to pick a fight with him, let's simply apologize.

"... Ah, I apologize if I offended you in any way. It's my bad to call it **such things**." (Shuuya)

I apologize.

"My, seeing that you apologized politely, it's my turn to answer to that— Oops, excuse me, I will take off my hat."

He bowed politely after taking off the long hat conspicuous for its golden eyeball embroidery.

He has a hair style of dividing his long blond hair.

The colour of his pupils is a clear blue. His round face was a combination of Humpty Dumpty and a cow and had a relatively conceited look. His nose grew out horizontally.

His sideburns are coiled up.

It's rude, but you could say his hair style matches with his characteristic face.

"After all, if you are calling yourself a **magic artist** like us, there's a tendency to be regarded with prejudice. It results in us being called cowards that don't fight themselves as magic artists enslave **monsters**. Well, that's mostly true though.— Fufufu."

The cow-faced man brushes up his long hair with a hand.

It's an act of fixing his hair. This man is flashy with his cow face.

Although he acts snobbily, it doesn't suit him with his face being what it is.

The cow-faced man smiles broadly in satisfaction.

"Haa... is that so?" (Shuuya)

Looking in Rebecca's direction, I desperately plead 'What's up with this person?' with my eyes, but she pretends to not notice that.

As she ignores it, she winks while smiling kindly.

I returned a smile.

If I translate that freely,
“Since he’s shady, I leave him to you.~”
“I’m sorry, okay?”

That’s the feeling I get.

That damn Rebecca... Then,

“... It seems that you haven actually experienced a magic artist yourself. Then
—”

Seemingly unable to stomach that I answered half-heartedly and averted my sight, the cow-faced man opened the inner part of his mantle while showing a prideful expression.

The proof of a **magic artist**, a painting, appears from inside the mantle.

— Ooh, I’m surprised.

Does this mantle have an item box installed?

Such magic mantles exist as well?

An item box in the inner part seems convenient.

While lightly holding the steel frame with one hand, the man shows it to me.

It’s a heavy-looking frame, but it seems that he’s fine.

He moves his cod roe-like lips with an eerie smile.

“How about that? It’s a transcendent masterpiece, right?”

It’s an exaggerated manner of speech, but the painting is amazingly realistic.

Has he really formed a contract with the monster in the painting?

It’s a drawing of a monster belonging to the dog race. It possesses three heads and wears a shell-like armour with an imposing air.

It gives off the image of being the watchdog of hell.

“N, nya?”

Rollo, who patiently kept her silence on my shoulder, appears to be interested in the painting and the cow face... She purrs with a type of voice meaning 『What’s that nya?』.

Making her red pupils shine, she stared at the drawing while being very interested.

“Uh oh, mmh...?”

Having seen Rollo, the cow-faced man has his expression disturbed unsightly

in an instant.

Nuo? What's that about?

His expression changed all of a sudden.

The two eyes of the man suddenly become perceptive as if chasing prey...

It's a look similar to a penetrating cold that makes a chill run down your spine.

Reflexively I check the cow face with Magic Observation.

Accumulating mana in the painting and his eyes, he stares at Rollo.

Is the cow-faced man probing for something?

Rollo gazed intently at the hook nose of the blonde-haired cow face.

Who's this cow face?

At that moment Helme appeared in my visionary field.

『It doesn't look like he noticed me, but... the motion of accumulating mana in his eyes, the magic tool surrounding the painting and his mana control are quite decent. He's probably an excellent magician.』 (Helme)

Seems so.

"... The painting is magnificent, isn't it?" (Shuuya)

I speak to him in order to pull his look from Rollo over to me.

"... Yes. Thank you. It's my prided slave monster."

The cow-faced man returned an acceptable remark, but his gaze was suspicious.

Seemingly being interested in me, Rollo and Rebecca, he continues to scrutinize us.

"It's a monster that looks strong." (Shuuya)

"Yes, it's powerful. And— judging by your appearance, you are a magic warrior or **something**, I guess?"

He asked hoping I would give him detailed information about that **something**.

Is he implicitly indicating that he's keeping mana in his eyes?

Well, I guess I will talk to him as I see fit?

"It's a **something** similar to that, but what about it?" (Shuuya)

My and cow's looks matching each other somehow created a dangerous

atmosphere.

... After a while, the cow-faced man was the first to switch over to talking as if giving in, although it took some time.

“... So you are the guard of the ojou-san over there?”

“— No, I’m not an **ojou-san** that owns a guard. I have only guided him to this shop.” (Rebecca)

At last Rebecca reacted.

“Ooh, really? — Excuse me then.”

After lightly bowing his head, the cow man adds even more words as snobby magic artist.

“I have... It seems that I completely misunderstood you as her guard.”

“Well, I don’t really mind. If push comes to shove, it’s likely that I will act like a guard.” (Shuuya)

When I said that, Rebecca’s cheeks became slightly red.

“My... my, you are a gentleman, aren’t you? Oops, I still haven’t introduced myself. My name is Banabi Ze Kreuz. Even though I look like this, I also work as adventurer. By all means, I’m pleased to make your acquaintance on this occasion...”

A noble who is an adventurer?

“Okay, Banabi-sama, it is. My name is Shuuya Kagari.”

“Is that so? Shuuya-san, eh? *I shall remember it.*” (Banabi)

Mmh, he stares at Rollo rather than me.

“I will excuse myself at this point then. I only visited this place for the sale of the sorcery frames.” (Banabi)

While rubbing his big nose, he states that and after giving a splendid bow with his hat in one hand, he turned over his mantle and walked towards the exit.

“Haa, we got involved with a weirdo.” (Shuuya)

Banabi Ze Kreuz, the cow-faced magic artist.

Let's remember him. I guess even if I want to forget his face, I won't be able to.

"Rather than that, look, there are various items on the shelf over there as well." (Rebecca)

"I suppose you're right." (Shuuya)

Rebecca points at a shelf that has a pile of magic jars placed on it. Rolento tubes were displayed on the shelf. Magic jars and magic bins made out of stone that had rugged surfaces. I already possess those. Thus they are unnecessary to me.

"There are also rune crystals and fine powder of demonic spirit ore. Look there, although they are expensive, there are even magic stones that can produce a barrier. This way parchments that are used for scrolls have been collected." (Rebecca)

There are various things, but I wonder where I can find the crucial magic scrolls.

"Where are the magic scrolls?" (Shuuya)

"Ah, you wanted magic scrolls, didn't you? Then, if you call the shop manager at the reception, they will take out their stock, I think." (Rebecca)

"Got it. I will call him as I'm looking for magic scrolls." (Shuuya)

Although there's no one in front at the reception, I could see a cloth curtain in the back.

Facing towards the back, I try calling the shop manager with a slightly strengthened voice.

"Excuse me~. I'd like to see your magic scrolls." (Shuuya)

I said in a loud voice to call the shop manager.

"Nya~."

Rollo dents her ears and shows a reaction with a feeling of saying 『You startled me nya』.

Thereupon, the navy blue cloth in the back swayed and spread open. An elderly person, likely the shop manager, showed up.

The old human male walks up to me with calm steps.

Chapter 107 – Buying Magic Scrolls

Join the  Game

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



The elderly shop manager,

“Magic scrolls aye, ayaye aye, funpi~”

He walked over while humming some incomprehensible words.

A white beard similar to the tail of a long-tailed fowl is growing on his chin. His wrinkled skin stands out as well. Differently from a good-natured old man, he’s a sage geezer that exudes a cunning atmosphere that he definitely accumulated over the years.

He’s probably a magician, but he also looks like he practices some kenpou style.

“... I heard you, aye. Magic scrolls? Language or crests? For starters I have elementary, intermediate, advanced and extreme class, but oh well, I will bring out all the attributes that I have, aye, funpi~”

Talking in a strange and hoarse voice like a Japan snipe, the old shop manager returns inside to fetch the goods.

After a short while the cloth curtain of the partition shifts and the old man returns to the counter while bringing a package from his back room.

“Look, these are the common magic scrolls, aye.”

He stretches his branch-like, thin arms from within the hems of his robe and lines up the magic scrolls on top of the table.

“Nn, nyanya.”

Rollo jumped on the table.

Seemingly having become interested in the magic scrolls placed on the table, she eagerly sniffs the scent of the scrolls by spreading and contracting her small nostrils.

Is she checking her turf?

“Uh-oh, little one, these books are goods for sale, aye? Make sure to be careful, okay?”

Even after seeing the black cat, the sage-like shop manager spoke while looking motionlessly at Rollo with a kind gaze.

“Nyao.”

After purring once, Rollo puts her paws together and becomes a doll. She obediently stared at the merchandise lined up on the table. The elderly shop owner smiled while watching the cute figure of the black cat. Just like that he extended his thin hand towards the head of Rollo who became docile and gently stroked it several times with his conspicuously wrinkled palm. In return, Rollo purrs throatily and licks the palm of the old shop manager.

“Hya, hya... funpiipi~, how cute, aye.”

While laughing with a strange bird-like voice, the shop manager moves his gaze from Rollo to me. While naming the magic scrolls on the table, he rearranges them in order.

- Elementary class: Void attribute, Light Ball.
- Elementary class: Fire attribute, Fire Ball.
- Elementary class: Fire attribute, Flare Needle.
- Advanced class: Fire attribute, Infernal Heat.
- Extreme class: Fire attribute, Flame Gatling.
- Extreme class: Fire attribute, Continuous Flare Lances.
- King class: Fire attribute, Explosive Fire Dragon Vein.
- Elementary class: Water attribute, Frozen Bullet.
- Elementary class: Water attribute, Frozen Sword.
- Intermediate class: Water attribute, Frozen Arrow.

Intermediate class: Water attribute, Purifying Water.

Advanced class: Water attribute, Water Cure.

Advanced class: Water attribute, Frozen Snake Arrow.

Extreme class: Water attribute, Frozen Dragoness.

Elementary class: Wind attribute, Air Cutter.

Elementary class: Wind attribute, Air Hammer.

Elementary class: Earth attribute, Ground Bang.

Intermediate class: Earth attribute, Hard Skin.

The ones lined up were scrolls of Language Magic.

“These are the magic scrolls of language, aye. Next are those of crest magic, aye.”

Following that, he lines up crest magic scrolls.

Fire attribute, Fire resistance.

Fine Blade

Fire attribute, Fire Sword.

Fire attribute, Blazing Bomb.

Infernal Noah

Fire attribute, Round Pillar of Fire.

Water Hearts

Water attribute, Water Wall Array.

Water attribute, Water Resistance.

Water attribute, Freezing Splash.

Wind attribute, Airplane.

Wind attribute, Air Stampede.

Lightning attribute, Lightning Bolt.

Earth attribute, Grid Launcher.

“Well, that’s all of them, aye. Which would you like to have, aye?”

There’s a lot, isn’t there?

I wonder how much it would cost to buy all language and crest spells of the water attribute.

“... How much do you want for Elementary class: Water attribute, Frozen Bullet?” (Shuuya) “28 gold coins, funpi.”

What’s with that funpi....

However, that price at the elementary level? It will get quite expensive.

“Then, how much would Intermediate class: Water attribute, Frozen Arrow, Advanced class: Water attribute, Water Cure, Advanced class: Water attribute, Frozen Snake Arrow and Extreme class: Water attribute, Frozen Dragoness cost?” (Shuuya) The shop owner points at the magic scrolls while touching his white beard.

“Intermediate class: Water attribute, Frozen Arrow costs 75 gold coins, aye. Advanced class: Water attribute, Water Cure costs 180 gold coins. Advanced class: Water attribute, Frozen Snake Arrow costs 150 gold coins. And Extreme class: Water attribute, Frozen Dragoness costs 50 platinum coins.”

Whoa, they are expensive after all.

“I see. Let me calculate for a bit.” (Shuuya)

If I buy all of them...

Will I be able to buy all the water spells with one large platinum coin?

“I think I will buy **all** magic scrolls of the water attribute you are selling. How much would that be?” (Shuuya) “Wai-!” (Rebecca)

“Funpi, what was that!?”

Both, Rebecca and the shop manager, open their eyes widely in astonishment.

“It’s common for crest spells of any kind to cost more than 10 silver coins, but... Shuuya, do you possess such a large amount of money?” (Rebecca) “I do —.” (Shuuya)

I took out one large platinum coin from my item box.

“It’s a large platinum coin. With this I can buy most of it, right?” (Shuuya) I place the large platinum coin on the reception table.

“... Wow! It’s the first time for me to see one. That platinum coin... it’s really being circulated... however, though the platinum coin is surprising, but you having the intention of learning all the spells is surprising as well. Shuuya, you told me that you have magic warrior as combat occupation, but is it perhaps a high-ranking magician class?” (Rebecca) My combat occupation is ***Magic Spear Darkness Warrior***.

I learned Ancient Magic, too. You can say that I'm above a regular magician. I can't judge whether that's high-ranking though.

"You could say that. That's why I can learn magic, I think." (Shuuya) "I-Is that so...? But even if that's the case, it's unnatural..." (Rebecca) Rebecca drew back. Her face has a cramp.

"Can you really learn them, aye?"

Even the shop manager said that in a doubting manner. Moreover, with the shining blue pupils that are inside his narrow eyes, which are surrounded by wrinkles, he studies my entire body. Mana gathers in his blue eyes.

"... That's right." (Shuuya)

This sage-like shop manager appears to be able to examine things with a type of Magic Observation.

Then, it's probably fine with this.

I clad my entire body in mana to declare my will.

"— Fuo fuo fuo, really funpiipi, aye! I thought you were a simple youngster, but how outrageous. ... Alright, aye. I will sell all magic scrolls of the water attribute for that **one coin** to you, aye."

Seemingly having confirmed my mana, the shop manager was apparently able to consent.

"Ooh, lucky~." (Shuuya)

I look at Rebecca while being delighted, but she revealed an expression with mixed feelings.

"Shop manager, is it really alright?" (Rebecca)

She leaps at the shop manager's generous statement to complain.

"It's fine, aye. Or rather, it's more than enough. That large platinum coin will become a kind of status symbol. Besides, crest spells haven't sold here at all recently. What seems to sell well are language spells after all."

Even if crest spells don't sell, they should have a **reasonable** price. He might have made it cheaper by more than 50 platinum coins.

“Such a thing...” (Rebecca)

Rebecca murmurs softly.

However, she stared at the lined-up magic scrolls while looking frustrated. Magician is Rebecca’s main job. It’s a reasonable combat job, I suppose. Suddenly buying a large amount of magic scrolls in front of her was awkward, I guess...?

“Hey, I’m leaving behind the magic scrolls of the water attribute you bought here, aye. Read them if you are going to learn them here.”

The old shop manager with his white beard gathers the other magic scrolls and the large platinum coin, and carries them into the back of the shop while muttering a chain of “Funpi.”

“Rebecca, wait a bit for me as I will learn **these** now.” (Shuuya) “Yeah, yeah. You really plan to learn them, don’t you? I will wait...” (Rebecca) Rebecca talks while averting her face slightly as if she got fed up. It’s awkward, but I got to learn them. I picked up a magic scroll of language magic.

『I sense mana from all the magic scrolls.』 (Helme)

As Helme says, one can reliably sense mana from the magic scrolls. I read the magic scroll of Elementary class: Water attribute, Frozen Bullet. I finish reading it and once I understand... The parchment of the magic scroll I held in my hand crumbles and turns into dust. I was easily able to learn Frozen Bullet. It’s the same as with the magic scroll of darkness I learned a long time ago. The chant comes naturally to me as well. Although it’s not necessary since I have skills. If I cast it consciously in my mind, it’s possible to use it chantlessly. Since I also possess the Blue Eyes of the Evil Dragon King, I can expect the power to be twice as high. Hehe, I will learn them steadily. I pick up the other magic scrolls one after another and read them. I was able to learn all the language and crest spells I bought without any

troubles.

『Your Excellency, congratulations. With this your options for attacking from a distance have increased manifold, too.』 (Helme) 『Yeah. I will get a feeling of the spells by testing them in the labyrinth.』 (Shuuya) 『Yes.』 (Helme)

While nodding, I turned my face towards Rebecca.

“Sorry to keep you waiting.” (Shuuya)

“Humph, I’m amazed. The learning capacity of your mental ability is high, isn’t it? Even though it’s been only water magic, you really ended up learning all the spells you bought. ... You even read, understood and learned the extreme class spells without any difficulties. Anyway, I have no doubt that your innate mana quantity is at the level of a sorcerer, or even above that.” (Rebecca) Rebecca somewhat glares at me.

She’s in a bad mood...

“I’m not sure. You might be right, I guess.” (Shuuya)

“...” (Rebecca)

Shit, that was a slip of tongue. Modesty is a poison.
It’s become a bad habit. Rebecca is... still staying silent.

“Nya.”

Once Rollo realizes that the shopping finished, she jumped on my shoulder.

“Let’s leave?”

“I guess.”

I pull the door of the mysterious Krishna Sorcery Tools Shop and go outside together with the grouchy Rebecca and Rollo riding on my shoulder.
I peeked at Rebecca’s expression while walking on the Magic Street.
Her golden eyebrows are wrinkled up in a faintly gloomy manner.
Uh, I have to follow up here...

“Rebecca, I apologize if you took offense.” (Shuuya)

“... That just worsens my mood. Though you told me that you are a vanguard, I feel like I received a surprise attack! Buying extreme class magic scrolls... which

was my objective... like candy and on top of that learning the spells **without trouble**, and yet you look unconcerned? That item box is nice. That large platinum coin is nice. Shuuya, I wonder whether you are a second or third son of a wealthy, high-ranking noble who received a higher magic education?" (Rebecca) Me a high-ranking noble? Don't make me laugh.

"No, I don't have noble origin." (Shuuya)

"Humph." (Rebecca)

Well, I guess it's only natural that she doesn't believe me? But, let's explain it properly to her with a proper stern expression before she misunderstands something.

"I'm an adventurer originating from a far away rural mountain area. Also, that platinum coin is money I earned through **legitimate requests** as an adventurer. Can you please not say anything too rude?" (Shuuya) "Is that... so? Sorry." (Rebecca)

Seeing my stern expression, Rebecca's expression turns into a startled one. After a short break in her speech, she apologized while looking uncomfortable.

"It's fine if I got you to understand. I acted boorishly as well." (Shuuya) I can understand her being angry, too. I showed a smile in order to apologize.

"Yea, but, for Shuuya to be a water attribute user, eh." (Rebecca) "That's right. Rebecca, your forte was fire, wasn't it?" (Shuuya) "Yes. In addition I can also use wind. I also have several tens of **talismans**. Though, since I'm poor, I don't want to use these overly much." (Rebecca) Talismans? Rebecca shows me parchments that were put together with a string that attached them to her waist belt.

Magic crests were drawn on those parchments with magic letters. Ah, that's how it is. It seems she calls scrolls as talismans.

"... I see. I can use magic as well, but basically this is my main weapon." (Shuuya) Thereupon I summon the Magic Halberd in my right hand.

"Hyaa... it's a type of halberd, right?" (Rebecca)

Rebecca gets startled by the Magic Halberd that suddenly appeared in my

right hand and releases a cute voice.

“Yeah. I have also have **various** others in addition, but being a spear user is my main job.” (Shuuya) “Nnn, nya.”

“Various, eh...” (Rebecca)

In the middle of Rebecca looking at me doubtfully, Rollo descends to the ground in order to show her own power and changes into a bigger mode with a billowing sound.

She transformed into the medium-sized black panther.

While extending the six tentacles from the nape of her neck and having them float in mid air, she appeals by making bone swords appear and disappear at the tips of the tentacles.

“— Rollo-chan!? What’s this! How amazing...” (Rebecca)

“Nyaaan.”

Black Panther

Rollodeen points her face upwards and displays the triumphant look of a lion king.

“Did she surprise you? Well, since that’s how it is, you don’t have to worry about the vanguard.” (Shuuya) “Ah, yeah. I-I will do my best as well...” (Rebecca)

Rollo shrinks in an instant.

Once she had returned to her small shape, she nuzzled her head against Rebecca’s feet who was talking as if she had slightly lost her confidence. It looks like Rollo plans to comfort her.

“Geez, Rollo-chan, you cutie. You are too lovely~.” (Rebecca)

Unable to bear it, Rebecca caught Rollo and hugged her.

She buries her face in the inner side of Rollo’s belly and enjoys the fluffiness.

Ah~... she ended up experiencing it at last, huh...? If you experience that softness of the inner belly even once, you won’t be able to go back anymore... Even though she received a cheek-rubbing attack at her belly, Rollo endured it patiently.

Given that Rebecca has a small build, the appearance of her hugging Rollo’s

small body looks as if she's hugging a big plush toy.

After a short time Rollo got apparently tired of the cheek-rubbing attack and returned to my shoulder after getting away from Rebecca by twisting her body.

"Ah, noo~ She left..." (Rebecca)

"Haha, in due time she will allow you to hug her again." (Shuuya) "Really? In that case I'm looking forward to it. But, Rollo-chan is far too cute~. How nice, to have a lovely familiar." (Rebecca) Rebecca-san looks at me and Rollo with scornful eyes.

That look is slightly scary. I can't tell her that though.

"... She's my prided partner after all." (Shuuya)

"So nice, that's really great." (Rebecca)

She shakes her head left and right, and talks while looking at Rollo.

"Rather than that, don't stop. We are going to the labyrinth, right?" (Shuuya)

"Ah, yeah. You're right. Let's go." (Rebecca)

Rebecca's mood completely recovered due to the special Rollo effect. We returned to the First Ring Road that's close to the centre of this city. We walk towards the cylinder-shaped building where the entrance to the labyrinth is located.

— *It's a follow-up report on the mass disappearance of the 【Red Bee】 clan and the 【Silver Pearl】 clan. What to say, it seems both clans were involved in a dispute deep inside the labyrinth. The female elf, which is the sole survivor of that dispute, seems to actually be the originator of it. I'm told that this woman will soon be executed publicly.*

They are talking about such stuff at the announcement stands.

"... It's hot and there's a lot of people."

"It's already summer. The heat will take centre stage from now on. Besides, this is the best place in front of the labyrinth. There are plenty of street stalls and thus people gather. It can't be helped." (Rebecca) Certainly, just as she said, there's many stalls.

Various of them are selling items that will probably be useful in the labyrinth.

— The sun light is shining there to the degree of naturally toasting sunny-side-

up fried eggs.

Even at this hot hour... voices appealing to adventurers and voices of vendors could be heard in the surroundings.

— *I'm a convenient warrior possessing an item box and being experienced at the second floor. It's even fine for me to work as a porter. Won't anyone hire me?*

— *If you hire me, you will be able to go to the water crystal on the third floor. It will be possible to head directly to the spring area.*

— *I'm a shield user possessing the war cry skill. Can someone please hire me?*

— *Finally it's the sale of the illusionary medicine Black Lily. It's a medicine developed by Anzu Carolina-sama, master of spirit light. It's said that incurable illnesses will vanish, if you continue to drink this illusionary medicine that surpasses any secret medicine.*

... A shady merchant is selling a weird medicine.

It looks like a pill, but I guess in reality it's a mankintan*-like medicine? (T/N: Name of a medicine **supposedly** having a stimulating and detoxifying effect, made at Mt. Asamagatake)

You can expect those facts to be nothing but made up in order to sell that bogus medicine.

— *Selling maps of the first and second floor~.*

— *I'm selling maps specifying several traps on the map of the labyrinth's first floor.*

— *The complete version of the labyrinth's second floor map is being sold here~.*

— *Maps are maps, but I'm selling maps about of the level four magic treasures. Given that it's a completed and appraised map where you will discover their locations in the Death Bog of the labyrinth's second floor, you will only have to dig up the treasures~.*

Maps, huh?

Rebecca hasn't said anything, but since I think they are important to not get lost, I will try asking her.

“Don't we have to buy a map?” (Shuuya)

“No. Currently it's not necessary. Although it's important, I also possess a map as long as it's the first floor. Since I have memorized it to a **certain extent**, it will be okay for now. There's no necessity to buy one. But, Shuuya, if you plan to dive into the labyrinth after that, I believe it will be good for you to buy one.

However, if there's a party member like me, you won't require a map."

(Rebecca) Rebecca keeps walking while appealing in a *senpai manner*.

"That sounds about right, too. I might buy one sooner or later." (Shuuya) If there's something like graph paper, I will move right ahead with the creation of a map.

But there's no way for such paper to exist here.

How nice would it be if there was an automatic mapping function...

Since a leather strap that can be turned into an impromptu rope is inside my chest belt, I believe it will be fine if we use that once it looks like we got lost.

You over there— how about Fang Boa grilled on a skewer~?

The vendor's voice resounds alongside a smell that stimulates one's appetite.

Meat, huh? I would like to eat that if my stomach was empty, but as it's hot currently, I want something like ice or cold juice.

Even though it would be profitable to sell such things in the current season...

— Come and look, we have armours and weapons made in Hardland~.

Even when I look around me, it doesn't seem like there are people selling cold juice.

One might say that there's a business opportunity presenting itself here.

— Selling honey water! It loses out to the black nectar of the labyrinth, but I can guarantee its taste. How about 20 large copper coins?

collapses My dream of selling cold juice fell apart in an instant.

It often doesn't go as conveniently as expected, I guess?

— Don't you need medicine plants~?

Oh? It's a frail voice.

The last voice is, different from the voices of the other old men, the voice of a girl?

I found the owner of that voice.

Mmh? Her eyes are white? Is this girl blind?

The girl has pure white eyes with two layers of eyelids.

She's still young, but her looks are cute and well-featured.

She holds a large basket praiseworthily with nothing but her small hands. That basket is filled with several bundles of medicinal plants.

I wonder whether she's unable to see?

Everyone is ignoring her.

Should I buy some medicinal plants since she seems pitiful?

I end up getting reminded of the match selling girl appearing in a fairy tale.

“Rebecca, wait a moment.” (Shuuya)

“What’s up?” (Rebecca)

Stopping Rebecca who walks in front, I ran to the girl and called out to her.

“Yo, I will take one bundle of medicine plants.” (Shuuya)

“Yes! One costs five small copper coins.”

Oh, it’s not such a bad blindness.

She chases my movements with her white eyes while speaking with a lively voice.

“No need for the change.” (Shuuya)

I take out one large copper coin from my item box and exchange it for the plants.

“Ah, this much... customer-san— thank you.”

The girl grasped the large copper coin and confirmed it.

Once I receive the medicinal plants, I start walking towards Rebecca without replying to the girl.

We headed to the cylinder-shaped building with the labyrinth entrance.

“Did you buy medicinal plants?” (Rebecca)

“Well, yeah.” (Shuuya)

“I see. One has to prepare some means of recovery.” (Rebecca)

There were other stalls as well, but Rebecca and I walk past them without stopping by.

When I get close to the cylinder-shaped building, I see that it’s unexpectedly big.

At the front of that cylinder-shaped building two sentries stood on both sides of the entrance.

“Who are the soldiers over there?” (Shuuya)

“They are soldiers of the Labyrinth Administration Bureau. There’s also a

sentry unit of 【Oseberia’s Royal Army】 permanently stationed at 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】. So far as it goes, their nominal task is to crack down on criminal acts inside and outside the labyrinth.” (Rebecca) I say while looking at the sentries,

“Then it’s safe, I guess.” (Shuuya)

“I suppose. At least around here on the surface...” (Rebecca)

“Why?” (Shuuya)

“It’s not very often that the sentries enter the labyrinth. That’s because of the traps and the many wandering monsters inside. Basically, it’s an unspoken rule to resolve matters inside among adventurers. Thus it’s better to be cautious of adventurers while passing them inside the labyrinth. Although there are also cases where there will be a trial over disputes, it might be best to remember that the most useful thing to have once it turns out like that is connections with nobles.” (Rebecca) An unspoken rule, eh...

Protect yourself by yourself, huh?

While having such a conversation with Rebecca, groups of adventurers that are a collection of capable people appeared from the entrance.

All of them are wearing something that shines in a blue colour on a part of their clothes or equipments.

“— Ah, that’s the the sixth top clan...” (Rebecca)

“Oh? Sixth?” (Shuuya)

“Correct. The group that came out just now is one of the six top clans in Blue Arm Jewelers 【Labyrinth City Pelneet】. They are members of 【Blue-armed Treasure Party】. It seems that they returned from the labyrinth moments ago.” (Rebecca) “A top clan with around 12 people?” (Shuuya)

Blue-armed Treasure Party

The Blue Arm Jewelers, eh.

Judging by their equipment and attires, they seem to have a relatively well-balanced line-up.

A warrior that has a longsword, a shield and a massive armour.

A magician in an orthodox robe with a wand.

A female thief in light leather armour with daggers visible at her waist.

A priest wearing priest's garb and holding a wand.

A largely-built magician that carries something appearing to be a large rectangular frame wrapped up in a cloth on his back.

In addition, there's a light female warrior holding a spear, and also a warrior owning a bow.

That spear-holding woman is beautiful. The female thief is a beauty as well. My gaze focuses on the pretty ladies.

"... The number of people that can dive into the labyrinth at once is ten. Something like the members of 【Blue-armed Treasure Party】 being active after splitting their group into three... that's because it's possible to link up in the labyrinth at any time. Having big numbers is advantageous. They broke through the tenth floor of the labyrinth after a century. The news that they stepped onto the eleventh floor spread like a wildfire in this labyrinth capital city." (Rebecca) If it's that, I heard about it.

It's probably big news since they expressly let the citizens know about it.

"I heard of it. There were people on the plaza behind us who spread that kind of information by shouting." (Shuuya) "The announcement stand people, eh? Going by those news, it's the remarkable accomplishment of breaking through the tenth labyrinth floor for the first time since the clan 【Azure Dragon Party】 led by the hero Mubran. They might be the number one clan in the labyrinth after overtaking 【White-bearded Comrades】 in name and reality." (Rebecca) The members of 【Blue-armed Treasure Party】 are reflected in Rebecca's eyes. A feeling of yearning was clearly visible on her face.

Several of the adventurers present in the vicinity are shouting words of praise and aspiration.

However, there were also words of jealousy.

It seems that the female spear warrior and the female thief are popular among them.

There are many fellows who yell obscenities.

It's praise and slander.

Apparently the word *sexual harassment* doesn't exist in this world.

Once I looked at Rebecca, she gazed back with a quite indifferent expression, apparently not paying any attention to it.

We leave while the blue-armed group gets crowded by people.

“We should go as well?” (Rebecca)

“Roger.” (Shuuya)

She proceeds to the entrance, shows her adventurer card to one of the sentries and enters.

Learning from that, I also showed my card and went inside the building.

Inside the building there's a lengthy atrium.

It has a round octagon shape.

A wide space surrounded by walls with ashen tiles.

Four thick pillars are standing, as if supporting the ceiling, at the four cardinal directions close to the centre.

Those four pillars are connected by a line that forms a tetragon. A huge water crystal was in the middle of it.

The big rock holding up the ancient crystal is big as well.

It's a big rock completely similar to a sumo wrestler.

However I wonder just how many facets that water crystal possesses... it's a really big, ancient water crystal.

Adventurers surrounded that crystal and everyone touched the crystal by placing their hands on it.

“Second floor.”

The instant one of the adventurers surrounding it said those words, the adventurers around the crystal disappeared without even leaving an afterimage behind.

“They vanished. Did they warp?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. If you say the floor while touching that water crystal, you will be randomly sent to a room with a water crystal in it beyond the second floor. Also, the people touching the crystal together will be sent at the same time.”

(Rebecca) “Something like *second tier* will work too?” (Shuuya)

I ask something simple.

“Yeah. It will be okay even if you change the wording to some degree.”
(Rebecca) I see.

I wonder whether one will get warped to a floor, which they never visited, by designating it?

“Can you go to a floor you haven’t visited before?” (Shuuya)

“By yourself it’s impossible. If it’s a floor that a member of your party, who is touching the crystal together with you, has already visited, you can go anywhere. And if it’s just the first floor, it will react to words such as *Leap* or *Warp* and send you to a random room with a water crystal in it on the labyrinth’s first floor.” (Rebecca) Hee, it’s quite simple to leap.

“If there’s a comrade who knows the destination, can you go there even if you haven’t gone there by yourself before?” (Shuuya) “Yeah. You can. The warp and leap destinations on the same floor are random, but even if the first time is a miss, you can warp to the targeted crystal as long as you repeatedly leap around. There were some among the adventurers inviting others who said something like that some time ago, right?” (Rebecca) Rebecca asked me while seizing my eyes with her beautiful, blue eyes.
Bah, there were many adventurers on the plaza.

Chapter 108 – Rebecca’s Ability

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“... Which reminds me, I feel like they said something similar to that.”
(Shuuya)

“Yeah, well, now we will swiftly dive into the labyrinth by touching this.”
(Rebecca)

“Aye.” (Shuuya)

Rebecca and I touch the water crystal.

The instant she mentioned “Leap” — we warped.

The place, where we leapt to, is an eight-sided-shaped room just like the one before the leap.

It’s unexpectedly bright. The height is around 20 meters?

There are arched entranceways with no doors at the four cardinal directions of the room. Passages continue ahead within each.

A dazzling light is created by light sources in the shape of geometrical patterns, similar to those of magic crests, at the walls and ceiling.

The crystal we are touching stands towering in the middle of the octagon-shaped room.

“Today it’s this place, huh...?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca murmurs a brief comment.
She surveyed the surroundings of the room we were transferred to.
She has dived many times after all, hasn't she? She wore the expression of a veteran.
She removes her hands from the crystal she had touched with a calm expression and starts to walk while holding her long wand in front of her chest.

"Are there cases where you are attacked by monsters right after the transfer?" (Shuuya)

I try asking while fixing my sight on her blonde hair.

"There are. But I never heard of even one occasion where monsters appear in the rooms with these crystals. But, monster killers are different." (Rebecca)

Monster killers?

"Monster killers?" (Shuuya)

"People with evil intentions who run away while dragging along a large amount of monsters to dump them on other adventurers." (Rebecca)

"That's nasty." (Shuuya)

"Yes, I don't know about parties, but adventurers that hunt by themselves fear those people..." (Rebecca)

Rebecca's face became pale.
It appears that she has experienced that.

"But, adventurers doing something like that will sooner or later be denounced and defeated by honest adventurers, right?" (Shuuya)

"It would be great if that was true, but I didn't hear about it happening all that much. There are situations where monster killer'ing is caused even by adventurers who can dive into deep floors." (Rebecca)

It's not like there are video cameras installed. I suppose it's a difficult issue?

"Victims are unavoidable then, right? It's even nastier if it happens right after the transfer." (Shuuya)

"Yeah, it's dangerous, but in that case you can escape by transferring right

away if you touch the crystal. There are almost no victims due to a monster killer right after a transfer. The problem is if it happens in a monster room connected through passages once you leave the crystal and advance further in. Since **scum adventurers**, who possess hiding skills beyond <Hide>, and who act while filled with ill will, exist anywhere... you have to be careful. You never know what might happen inside the labyrinth.” (Rebecca)

She explained with a serious look and a sharp glint in her blue eyes. Though the warning is accompanied by an unpleasant conversation, it still makes my heart feel slightly warm and fluffy. Rebecca is a really nice person. This meeting with her might be a good omen for me who challenges the labyrinth for the first time.

“... If that’s the case, you mentioned it before as well, Rebecca, but the probability is high that one becomes a monster killer by just running away from monsters, even without any evil intentions.” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. I hear those incidents often occur at the warp points of the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth floor. There are also many clans that end up eventually creating large armies of monsters by continuing to run away from monster groups without actually having any evil intentions.” (Rebecca)

“... I will remember it.” (Shuuya)

While saying that, I check out the vicinity. The building materials of the floor and walls are big stones, huh? They seem to form a space that covers the surface without leaving any gaps. They look like concrete and block material. It gave the spacious room an air of being artificial. It really gives the impression of a labyrinth. Passing through the arched entrance way located in the direction ahead, Rebecca walks into the passage there. The passage’s width seems to be more than ten meters. It’s sufficiently wide.

Stampede

“... I will also teach you about the Rampage Surge. It refers to the situation where large amounts of monsters spawn from passages, rooms and spaces which occurs sometimes.” (Rebecca)

“Ho, such a phenomenon exists, too?” (Shuuya)

Stampede

“Well, it’s alright since a Rampage Surge doesn’t happen often.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca talks while smiling.

“Let’s advance through the passage this way then. Since there are stairs, I think we will run into adventurers fighting monsters after going down.”
(Rebecca)

“Roger.” (Shuuya)

As she said, there were stairs leading downwards.
The stairs’ width is the same as that of the passage.
As we descended the stairs at a light pace, it became gloomy and cold.

“The temperature fell, but the labyrinth sustains this brightness?” (Shuuya)

“Correct. There’s a difference in temperature. Such short stairways are all over the place, but lighting isn’t necessary because the walls and ceiling are basically bright. However, there are special rooms, spaces, traps and passages. Since there are also cases where it becomes pitch black making one feeling chills, it’s essential to prepare light sources and heat tools that can warm your body.” (Rebecca)

The low temperature pricks my skin while I listen to her explanation.
But, this cold lets me actually feel that I’m diving into an unknown dungeon.
I even have goosebumps as I tremble in excitement.
Once we descended the stairs while I’m harbouring those feelings in my chest,
we came out in yet another room.
Huh? It’s strange, but feeling the wind, it has suddenly become mild.
Besides, there is the presence of magic sources.
— I discover beasts. It is a flock of three big rats with fangs growing out.
They still haven’t noticed us.
The room with these monsters in it is quadrangle.
There are passages continuing deeper inside ahead of us and on the right side.
The room’s impression is dreary due to the grey stone paving.

Zanbiss

“— There they are. The small fry monsters of the first floor. Big Rat.”

(Rebecca)

Having noticed the monster presences, Rebecca explains.
She moved her white hands while making her beautiful blonde hair sway.
She holds out the long wand with the small red gem attached at its tip in front of her chest.
Preparing her wand, she moves her lips as she reveals a smile while seizing her targets with a sidelong glance.

“— I will swiftly get rid of them, okay?” (Rebecca)

Her bells-like voice resounds.

“Oh Fire Spirit Illness, feed on my mana and display a fraction of a fire spirit’s power. Please manifest a fireball—” (Rebecca)

She started the chant of a language spell.
She spins mana and words together.
Together with Rollo I observe Rebecca’s language magic.
I follow the movement of her mana with my Magic Observation.
Rebecca’s mana manipulation is quick.
It’s just as she said; that she has confidence in her magic.
I had understood that her mana manipulation is smooth, but...
Her actually invoking the magic is something different altogether.

『Your Excellency, she’s a mana user worthy of special mention. The fire spirits are happily gathering around her. Although chanting is considered as being of lower rank, it’s **obviously** different from normal. She will create a beautiful fireball.』 (Helme)

Is that so? I can’t see those fire spirits at all, but it seems like Helme, who is a spirit of water and everlasting darkness, can see them.
Rebecca is poor, but her real rank as a magician seems to be that of someone possessing the skills of a master in manipulating mana.
As the rhythm of the chant and the mana overlap, they vanish and sublimate into a flame.
A large fireball got completed after the flame was moulded into a sphere.

“《Fireball》.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca dons a stern expression.
Reciting the name of the spell, she released it.
Heading towards the flock of big rats, the well-kneaded fireball soars while buzzing.
The fireball crashes into the flock of big rats.
The big rat that was in the middle was completely devoured by the fireball.
While turning into something black in an instant, its body scattered and vanished.
The momentum of the fireball doesn't lessen and it clashes against the labyrinth's floor. The flame spreads in a fan form with its strength reduced.
The flames also extend to the big rats in the vicinity. Their bodies got wrapped up by the fire and stopped moving.
It's slightly overkill.
What about the magic stones? But then again, I can see small magic stones sticking to the scattered corpses.
Rebecca swiftly retrieved the magic stones from the charred corpses.
So the magic stone is left behind even if the monster burns down?
Well it's unexpected, but it doesn't look like it will explode after getting in touch with fire.

"It's a good sign. We got three small magic stones." (Rebecca)

"One shot with a fireball, huh? Way to go!" (Shuuya)

Rebecca puts the magic stones into her bag while in a good mood.

Zanbiss

"Yeah. If it's big rats who appear on the first floors, I can defeat them with my magic without them counter-attacking as long as I manage to get in a **preemptive strike**. However, once we advance a bit further in, it becomes hard without a vanguard as the types of monsters increase and the numbers appearing at once grow. Since you possess magic as well, Shuuya, I think that we can defeat them without getting attacked back as long as we attack together first." (Rebecca)

"I guess so. I plan to test out magic as well, but me and Rollo are basically **vanguards**. Next we will take the initiative by **going to the front**. Please also leave the search for monsters to me." (Shuuya)

“Got it. I’m looking forward to what you will show me.” (Rebecca)

Seemingly having the feeling of a senpai, Rebecca hums a song apparently looking forward to judge our performance.

Inside the passage splitting to the left and right, she advances after choosing the right pathway.

When we are walking down the square passage, I once again sense magic sources.

There are several small magic sources. I guess it’s those rats again.

『Your Excellency, I won’t lose to Rebecca! I will show her how I eradicate them with my magic!』 (Helme)

The small Helme stretched out her small hands towards the rats while assuming a characteristic pose*. (T/N: A reference to “The bizarre adventures of Jojo” who apparently assumes weird ass poses, check out this: <http://kajipon.sakura.ne.jp/jojo.htm>)

『No, I will do it. Helme, you will just watch, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『Okay...』 (Helme)

Helme vanishes from my sight while looking disappointed.
At the same time I summoned the Magic Halberd into my right hand.

“Rebecca, there are enemies ahead. I believe them to be big rats. Me and Rollo will plunge into them.” (Shuuya)

“Okay. I will watch from behind.” (Rebecca)

Let’s show Rebecca a bit of our skills as vanguards.
And thus I start running—
Rollo also got off my shoulder and ran ahead of me.
She transforms into the middle-sized black panther with a billowing sound while running.

Her figure of dashing with large strides is as beautiful as ever.

I confirm the big rats at the location where I sensed the magic sources.
A flock of five rats.

I don’t mind the big rats in front of me noticing my approach.

Swinging my Magic Halberd diagonally from the right top to the left bottom at the big rat I targeted, I bisect it.

The diagonally-cut cross-section turns pitch black as it carbonizes.

When the corpse that got split into two parts tumbled to the ground, a small magic stone rolled onto the floor from within the corpse.

Rollo, who was at the right side, stabs a big rat with her tentacle bone swords and easily kills it. She starts to play around by using the corpse to roll it around similar to ice hockey.

Even as I wryly smiled at her playing, I targeted the big rat remaining on the left side.

Switching my hold on the Magic Halberd, which I lowered after defeating the previous rat, into a backhand grip, I perform an irregular golf swing.

If you put it into tennis terms, the Magic Halberd drew an arc as if adding a drive spin with a backhand and crashed into the head of the big rat.

A large quantity of the big rat's spinal fluid clung to the Magic Dragon Gem that collided with the rat's head as if grazing it.

— There are still two rats left in the back.

Being unconcerned with such gore, I rotate the Magic Halberd.

While advancing with my body in a forward-bent posture, I perform a

Marseille

Roulette

side step rotation like the famous soccer player Zione from a while ago. *(T/N: No idea why author censored the name, but try guessing. Hint: a famous French matchmaker)*

I swing down the Magic Halberd with the force of the rotation added to it onto a big rat and crushed its skull.

The red axe blade clashes with the surface of the labyrinth's floor, sinks in and a shock wave clad in flames spreads from the point of impact.

It's only for an instant, but the red crest of the Evil Dragon King I obtained after easily bisecting it with my ancient magic surfaced in my mind.

At this point I make the Magic Halberd disappear for the moment.

— Last one.

I run up to the last remaining big rat, and kicked the bottom of its stomach with all my power as if scooping the rat up with an instep kick of my Magic Step.

The big rat that was squashed with a thick sound reverberating is whirled up into the air as it had its inner stomach caved in greatly.

The first-rank mark created by the Evil Dragon King has been properly

imprinted. The big rat was crushed to death making a sound of being even further smashed in the air similar to dull sword-slashing sounds. The crushed corpse falls to the ground.

“W-Wow.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca, who had seen the chain of actions, revealed an expression filled with astonishment.

Her blue pupils have dilated.

Without paying attention to that, I recover the magic stones. But apparently the magic stones in the crushed parts of the corpses were broken. They turned into charcoal as if they burned up...

Oops, I ended up smashing them into pieces.

I will apologize about that to the spaced-out Rebecca.

“Rebecca, sorry, I crushed the magic stones into pieces.” (Shuuya)

“Eh? Ah, well, I’m pretty sure it will turn out like that, or will it? However, that doesn’t matter. Such things also happen to first-class adventurers, is something I heard.” (Rebecca)

“I see. Then it’s okay. It looks like we will easily gather the share of magic stones for the request if we defeat monsters at this pace, right?” (Shuuya)

Rebecca answered my question while blinking in surprise,

“T-That’s true as well. To be honest, I didn’t expect you to be a warrior of this calibre, Shuuya. If you like, it would be okay to choose a more difficult request...” (Rebecca)

“Oh well, isn’t it fine? Even without taking a request, we can sell the magic stones, can’t we?” (Shuuya)

“That’s certainly so, but if you accept a lot of requests, the number of completed requests will increase as well, won’t it? However, since it’s like this now, should we try to challenge a **rare monster room** where C-class monsters appear?” (Rebecca)

Ooh, it’s a room name that really befits a labyrinth.

“Rare monster room?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. Before reaching a rare monster room, one has to pass through several rooms where monsters spawn, but on each floor there’s a special room where several inherently strong monsters spawn. There are times when a **treasure chest** spawns if you defeat those strong monsters, and there’s the chance of a rare item being inside those treasure chests.” (Rebecca)

It appeared! The standard of a labyrinth, a treasure chest!
I wonder what kind of items those rare things are.

“Ooh~, that sounds nice. What kind of rare items appear?” (Shuuya)

“For example accessory types. On a glance they are common items, but it often happens that they are surprising items once you check them with appraisal.” (Rebecca)

Appraisal, huh? I wish I had that skill.

“Hee, so you say that there’s also cases where high-class items appear?”
(Shuuya)

“Yeah. But it’s the first floor after all, so there won’t be anything that doesn’t correspond to that fact. But, you know, there are fights over that room among fellow adventurers, too. Thus we have to be careful if we head towards that room, alright? Mostly one can hunt safely by keeping the sequential order with all the other parties though.” (Rebecca)

Dispute, eh? Such developments are my speciality.

“I see. It’s fine with me. If it’s fine with you as well, Rebecca, I’d like to challenge it.” (Shuuya)

“... Understood. Let’s go then. Once we pass through three open spaces which are ahead of here if we continue to advance in the right passage, the room after those will be the rare monster room.” (Rebecca)

Hee, she apparently remembers the route perfectly.
Rebecca has really gone many times into this labyrinth.

“I guess you have memorized the map around this area?” (Shuuya)

“Yeah. It’s nothing to boast of, but to a certain degree it’s all inside **here**.”
(Rebecca)

She raises a slender, white finger while smiling and lightly taps her own head.

“As expected of Rebecca-senpai.” (Shuuya)

Rebecca becomes bashful due to my light joke.

“Fufu, thanks. This is the third area of the first floor. More than ten crystal rooms to where you can be teleported have been confirmed on the first floor, but one is often sent between the first to third area. What I have memorized are those three areas. For the fourth area and above even I need a tool to not get lost or a map. Though it would be easier if I possessed a skill such as <

Labyrinth Mapper

Map Creator>.” (Rebecca)

She has diligently crammed a map that seems to span from the first to the third maze into her head?

I think that’s quite amazing.

Even so, there are people possessing skills to create maps? Normally it’s a safe bet to say that those are the people you’d definitely want in your party.

However, in my case I have the mirror. Since I can dive into the labyrinth for as long as I have blood, I can progress through the labyrinth perfectly fine with just Rollo, Helme and the burning knights although it will take time without a map.

“... There aren’t all that many people possessing such a skill, are there?”
(Shuuya)

“Yeah. Most of them belong to major clans.” (Rebecca)

“Figures.” (Shuuya)

Since the same big rats appear inside the passage as we continue our conversation, we advance while defeating the small fries and collecting their magic stones.

An open space that seems similar to the first room comes into sight.

We check that room from the entrance that has an arched shape.

Different from the big rats, a great number of small human-shaped monsters had spawned in that room.

In total there are 8 monsters.

“Those are *Buundel*, a small goblin type living underground. They appear in groups.” (Rebecca)

“Goblins, eh... I guess their perception range is low?” (Shuuya)

Rebecca answered my question after lightly chuckling with a “Pfft.”

“The opponents are small goblins, no? They aren’t all that formidable monsters. Their movements are nimble, but normally you won’t be noticed unless you enter the room. As they are small, their field of view is narrow. Even their thinking is just foolish. Still, they are dangerous since they are faster than

Zanbiss

big rats, I suppose.” (Rebecca)

“Roger. Then they are the perfect experimental subjects. Please let me handle the preemptive attack. I will test the spells I learned.” (Shuuya)

“Yeah, yeah. I will just watch.” (Rebecca)

I don’t pay attention to her becoming slightly disgruntled.

The spells I learned are as follows,

Language magic:

Elementary level: Water attribute, Frozen Bullet

Elementary level: Water attribute, Frozen Sword

Intermediate class: Water attribute, Frozen Arrow

Intermediate class: Water attribute, Purifying Water

Advanced class: Water attribute, Water Cure

Advanced class: Water attribute, Frozen Snake Arrow

Extreme class: Water attribute, Frozen Dragoness

Crest magic:

Water attribute, Water Wall Array.

Water attribute, Water Resistance.

Water attribute, Freezing Splash.

The strongest spells among those are...

The language spell, Frozen Dragoness.

The crest spell, Freezing Splash.

These two.

I decide to first test Frozen Dragoness.

『I’m happy. I will be able to see your magic, Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

Helme appeared while swimming in the right upper part of my sight.

Why is she swimming with a breaststroke while showing off something similar to panties? Without mentioning my concern regarding that, I explain the magic skill.

『... That's right. I own the high-level skill <Instant Staff of Water>. For only water-attribute spells it becomes possible to use no chant and crest simplification. Therefore it should activate in an instant if I think of it.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes. The mana is thick here, too. You can expect your magic output to be increased, Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

I'm looking forward to that.

『Alright, I will step inside to test the magic.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay.』 (Helme)

Helme vanished from my sight.

Then I look at Rebecca.

“What! Won't it be fine if you shoot the spell!?” (Rebecca)

I nod at Rebecca, who is pouting her lips cutely, with a smile. Leaving Rollo behind, I walk towards the centre of the room where the buundel have gathered.

Once the small buundel goblins noticed me approaching, they began to shout with strange voices.

— Now.

I cast the spell after assuming a pose of raising my right arm overhead.

— ^{Frozen}《Ice ^{Dragoness}Dragon Column》.

At that moment, alongside a sudden drop in the temperature of the room, a column of ice shaped like a “dragon head” is created and pours towards the centre of the room from my hand.

Countless ice fangs have grown out from the lower and upper jaw of the ice dragon. Fins are created at the rear of its head.

Showing that mouth with its sharp-looking fangs, the ice dragon head plunged forward towards the centre of the open space as if devouring anything in its path.

Due to the change in temperature, the air felt really clear.

And, while swallowing the buundel as if devouring them between its upper and lower jaws, the ice dragon crashes into the floor.

A diamond dust-like storm is created around the centre of the place where the ice dragon struck. The buundel, who were swallowed up and devoured by the magic, have their bodies turned into ice, crumbled and got destroyed without any traces left.

I was the one who destroyed them, but it was amazing, right?

... A hill of ice columns that tells the story of its power was created in the centre of the room.

『How terrific. I don't even have any words for it. As expected of your magic, Your Excellency.』 (Helme)

『You are flattering me Helme, you know? It's better if you don't praise me too much or I will end up getting carried away.』 (Shuuya)

Helme quickly bowed her head in her deformed appearance.

『Ha! I'm sorry.』 (Helme)

『No, don't mind it since it's not like I'm telling you that strongly off.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay.』 (Helme)

The deformed Helme disappears from my sight.

However, this spell, as expected, it was just right to name it Extreme class.

There's nothing to criticize about its looks and power. The range of the effect is wide, too.

Mana has been consumed within limitations as well.

However, if it's only this much, it's possible to chain dozens of shots.

“— Shuuya! You, just now, did you chant?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca runs up next to me while revealing an amazed look.

Rollo came running as well.

“No. It was without chanting.” (Shuuya)

I calmly responded.

“Eeeh!? Really, just who the hell are you!? The magic just now looked like it had the scale of king class I think. I was wondering whether you would use that

unique-looking halberd as intermediary, but you fired off magic at the scale of king class without holding anything. ... And in addition, without chanting? A special skill possessor on the rank of having been chosen by a god or such... geez, I've gotten really tired of getting stunned... Shuuya, you might be able to normally finish off unknown monsters that are said to appear in the vicinity of the Ten Heavens Evil Statues, right... you could possibly even defeat Barbaroy's Envoy." (Rebecca)

I wonder, what's that Barbaroy?
Though I'm also curious about the Ten Heavens Evil Statues.
Going by her reaction... I will only use safe spells at the start since I will otherwise oddly stand out.
As Rebecca says, it might be the best to pretend using the Magic Dragon Gem of the Magic Halberd as intermediary.

Actually it's possible to manifest the hidden sword from the Magic Dragon Gem at the lower part of the Magic Halberd.
That or holding up the Blue Eyes of the Evil Dragon King or something like that.
Let's stop at the range of little elementary spells if I decide to use no chant.

"... Sorry. I will be careful from now on." (Shuuya)
"No, it's fine... it's your true ability after all. But, I have lost a bit of confidence." (Rebecca)

Damn it!
I ended up hurting her pride.
I have to follow up here...

"But, since I can't use high-ranking fire magic like you, Rebecca, I will leave it to you when fire magic is needed." (Shuuya)

I kept silent about Rollo being able to use a high-level fire breath.
"Y-Yeah. There's that too. Leave it to me..." (Rebecca)
"Fire and wind are important, right?" (Shuuya)
"G-Guess so. You realized, didn't you?" (Rebecca)

I humour Rebecca in a casual manner.
While replying back to her suitably, I broke the ice by melting it with the red axe

blade off the corpses that have been buried in ice, and hurried to retrieve the magic stones.

Rebecca whittles down the ice with a small hammer that hung at her waist belt. Rollo helped with the retrieval by shaving off the ice with her tentacle bone swords without using her breath attack.

Well, I guess at that scale its use is limited?

However, the room is still a bit cold.

Frozen Dragoness

Ice Dragon Column was too powerful.

We retrieve all the magic stones inside the unpleasant cold.

The magic stones' shape has changed from being diamond shaped in various ways.

They also had an extreme unevenness.

“We finished retrieving them. Let's head further inside.” (Rebecca)

“Aye.” (Shuuya)

Taking Rollo along, I pass through several rooms and passages together with Rebecca.

Defeating all the small fries spawning in the rooms and passages, we collect their magic stones.

We easily finished gathering the amount of magic stones necessary for the request.

Moreover, we were able to procure extra magic stones exceeding thirty stones.

“We have enough magic stones.” (Rebecca)

“Yeah, I will use them as reference for my next dive.” (Shuuya)

“Yes, that's a good idea. However, in your case I believe that you will be able to hunt on the third floor with leeway rather than the first or second floor, Shuuya. You will be able to earn a lot. It's likely that you will be in great demand for parties once other people see your strength.” (Rebecca)

“Great demand... I might be happy about that, but it looks like it will get difficult then. As for the third floor you mentioned, Rebecca, the monsters get stronger the deeper the floors one goes to, right?” (Shuuya)

“Correct. They will get stronger after the inner part of the first floor.”

(Rebecca)

“I see.” (Shuuya)

Should I try soloing until at least the third floor next time?

“So, don’t stop. Our targeted monster room is inside this. We have to go down this passage.” (Rebecca)

“Okay.” (Shuuya)

We advance without getting lost as Rebecca is guiding us.
We proceeded to the inner area at a good pace.

“There’s a hall ahead of here and beyond that is the **rare monster room.**”
(Rebecca)

We will arrive very soon, huh?

Chapter 109 – Suloza’s Old Sorcery Shop

Join the  **Game**

Rise of Asuria Oukoku



“If you enter here, it will be the waiting room.” (Rebecca)

“Alright, let’s go?” (Shuuya)

When we entered, there was an adventurer party apparently taking a break.

“... Oi? Ain’t that Rebecca, the Angel of Death?”

“How rare. Tsk, the lousy soloer has formed a party with someone new.”

What’s wrong with these guys...

“Oi, oi, did she come here to hunt the rare monster? That fellow, she has a nice face I suppose, but I’ve been told that she’s a harbinger of death if you meet her inside the labyrinth... that Wood Kulma Death God is of the same race as Eva the Death Kulma, isn’t she? With her lowering our luck, it will get difficult for a treasure chest to appear.”

Those assholes are slandering Rebecca with scornful looks.
I don’t know about **Wood Kulma Death God**, but if they insult a beauty, I will gladly retaliate since it offends me.

“— Shuuya, it’s okay.” (Rebecca)

Oh ah?

Grabbing my arm as I had taken a step forward, Rebecca prevented me to act.

“Are you fine with being told such things?” (Shuuya)

“I don’t mind letting them say whatever they want.” (Rebecca)

Guess it can’t be helped if the person concerned says so?

“I see. In that case we ignore them and go inside the monster room?”
(Shuuya)

“Yeah.” (Rebecca)

Disregarding the foolish adventurer party, we tried to enter the room.

“— Just wait a moment there. To not even greet us. What, are you trying to cut the line here?”

One of the ignored adventurers ran up to us.
He seems intent on standing in our way.
The largely-build, burly-looking warrior wears a cross armour type chest armour on a leather jouge. A hand axe is visible at his waist.

“... We merely tried to enter since you guys seem to be taking a break...”
(Shuuya)

I say while squinting.

“Keh! We only took a little break. That’s obvious to anyone, isn’t it?”

The large man loosens his arms while glaring at me after spitting at my feet.
Without paying any attention to it,

“Then, I will have you wait for one round.” (Shuuya)

Once he hears my words, the large man twists his face into a smirk. He moved his fat lips while revealing a contemptful expression.

“Hehehe~. That’s not allowed, you know? It’s our turn next and the turn after that as well.”

He spouted such words with a thick voice.
The fucker has an expression of purposely messing around with us...

“What’s that? You are a Jaian?” (Shuuya) *(T/N: Reference to Doraemon)*

“Giant? What’s this guy yapping about?”

I guess he doesn’t get it even if I talk about a cat robot. (T/N: Doraemon)
Since it fit the greedy attitude, I let it slip unintentionally.

“You guys don’t have the right to hog it to yourself, now do you?” (Rebecca)

Rebecca objects as well.

“Fuhahaha. Speaking about rights in the labyrinth? Are you an idiot? Look at our numbers. You plan to defy us? This place has been occupied by our party, the ^{Blue} ^{Kite} Blue Kite Shield Party. If you plan to enter this room, you have to force your way through us, no, you have to remove us by **killing** us.”

Kill them to force our way?

The two of us plus one animal against eight people.

They are cocky because of their bigger numbers.

But, to threaten me is the height of sheer stupidity.

Let’s make them regret to have talked about Rebecca’s situation.

“Rebecca, there’s no problem even if I finish off these guys then?” (Shuuya)

“What scary stuff are you talking about! It is a problem. In case you killed them and someone informed the guards after having observed it, it would turn into a trial after you get caught. It will stand out as this is the first floor. The other side has many people. The other side will have an advantage in a trial if they have connections to a government official... let’s withdraw here.”
(Rebecca)

It seems that she’s enduring it, but there is no way for me to agree after getting slandered.

Nevertheless, if I kill one, I guess it won’t be any good if I don’t get rid of all of them?

I check with Grasping Perception, but except this arrogant man in the middle, there’s no one with a significant Magic Combat Style either.

It will probably be possible to dispose of all of them in ten seconds.

However, since it’s not like I particularly enjoy being a murderer, I will head into the direction of punishing them without killing them.

If I end up killing them by mistake, I will deal with it at that time.

I'm sorry for Rebecca who's trying to keep things down, but a bit of bullying is...

"... If I do everyone in, there won't be any witnesses, right?" (Shuuya)

"What was that!?"

The large man is surprised due to my words.

"Just a moment, Shuuya." (Rebecca)

Rebecca pulls my arm while looking worried.

"Oi, oi, do you plan to have a go with us?"

Having heard the talk, the members of the adventurer party to which the large man belongs gathered around him successively.

I look at the face of Rebecca who's grabbing my arm.

"Well, leave this to me. Rebecca, fall back to the rear, okay? Rollo, we will do it without killing them." (Shuuya)

"Y-Yeah." (Rebecca)

"Nya."

Once I confirm her stepping back, I move right away.

Without giving my opponents the time to prepare their weapons, I shorten the distance with Magic Step and lightly mow down the large man's legs with the edge of the spear butt.

"— Nuah."

Receiving one blow to his legs with the Magic Dragon Gem, the feet of the man are crushed sideways.

He tumbled down while releasing a pained voice.

Furthermore, without stopping the rotation originating from the mowing-down motion, I turn around to a female warrior while moving to the front and make her trip up.

"Kyaa—"

The woman vigorously falls down on the ground.

Once she hits her head as if crashing against the ground, she fainted.

Rollo also grows into the size of her black panther mode.

She makes the six tentacles that grew out from around her neck entangle the feet of the adventurers.

Lifting them up high into the air just like that, she played by swinging them around.

“What on earth is this!?”

“Let me gooo!”

“Hiiii.”

Although they are being played around with while dangling in the air because of the tentacles, they still have confident attitudes.

Besides, there’s those annoying screams.

Let’s threaten them here a bit.

“— You guys are way too lively and loud! Should I make your heads fly, if you don’t quiet down?” (Shuuya)

I intimidate the adventurers that are hanging in the air with a loud voice to increase the fear.

It seems to be slightly effective...

The adventurers shut up with their mouths in the shape of — and stay silent.

I talked to one of them.

“I can **finish off** all of you guys like this, but... do you have something to tell me?” (Shuuya)

“P-Please wait. Pweash don’t kill me...”

The hanging man was apparently scared. Leaking urine, he soaked his own chest and face.

“... I don’t mind overlooking you if you withdraw from here obediently.” (Shuuya)

“R-Really?”

“Sure.” (Shuuya)

“I-I will fall back. Please let me off since I will obey.”

“— You guys, that’s fine with you as well, right?” (Shuuya)

""Yesss.""

Hanging upside-down, the adventurers answer in agreement.

"Alright, Rollo, release them." (Shuuya)

Being liberated from the tentacles, the adventurers dropped to the ground head first.

"You lot, take the woman that fainted over there and the guy, who injured his legs, with you." (Shuuya)

"Y-Yes."

The adventurers who had stood up from the ground, look after the woman, who lost consciousness after hitting her head, and the injured large man, while hurriedly lowering their heads towards me.

"Ah, and on top of that, if I catch sight of a guy slandering Rebecca after this, I will have them taste appropriate pain, got it? Make sure to lead your life while paying attention to that." (Shuuya)

"..."

"— What about your reply?" (Shuuya)

""Y-Ye-Yesss—""

While looking at Rebecca...

The adventurers escaped as they raise their voices pathetically as if screaming. The ones remaining in front of the room were only me, Rollo and Rebecca.

"As expected of you. You are strong to an amazing degree even without magic. You have strength I can't believe to belong to a C rank. But, I was really happy. Thanks for getting angry for my sake." (Rebecca)

Rebecca thanked me while showing a smile.

Her cheeks have a slightly red colour, too.

However, rather than that being for Rebecca's sake, it was just me being unable to endure.

Let's apologize.

"Haha, that's only natural, is what I want to say for appearance's sake, but

please don't misunderstand. Those guys included me in their threats as well, didn't they? I taught them what will happen if they threaten someone without possessing the ability to back it by letting them experience it first-hand. Rather than that, even though you restrained your feelings, Rebecca, I couldn't hold back. I'm sorry." (Shuuya)

She answers while shaking her head.

"T-There's no such thing. You don't have to apologize. I was happy. I feel refreshed for the first time in a long while." (Rebecca)

"Then it's good. ... But that doesn't change the fact that I ended up causing trouble for you, Rebecca, by acting selfishly even though it's just a temporary party..." (Shuuya)

I honestly express my feelings.

Rebecca reacts with her eyebrows twitching.

"Don't say something like that. I have told you that I was **happy**, didn't I...?" (Rebecca)

As she reaches the end of her sentence, her voice becomes smaller. Her face becomes entirely red and she looks downwards.

"Yeah, I suppose you're right. But did you see their faces?" (Shuuya)

Since I don't like it if things get awkward either, I talk to her while having a little smile.

"— Yea! That was ridiculous. Unbecoming of their frame, they wetted their pants with pee. Fufufu." (Rebecca)

Rebecca lifts her face abruptly and speaks with a smile while shaking her blonde hair.

Although her face had become red, her blue eyes fully seized me.
A blue gaze that was overflowing with her genuine wishes.

"... Or rather, isn't your face slightly red?" (Shuuya)

"— Eeh? Rather than such a t-trivial thing, we should enter the rare monster room right here." (Rebecca)

Rebecca dodged my question by averting her red face to the side in a huff.

Haha she ended up acting charmingly.

I ask her about the monster room without mentioning that thought.

“... So, what kind of monster comes out in that room?” (Shuuya)

“Err, a medium-sized goblin. It’s called Goblin Soldier. A goblin that possesses a longsword-like cudgel and wears a big copper armour. If you defeat it, you will obtain a medium-sized magic stone from around its heart. Also, I mentioned it before already, but there are also cases where a treasure chest appears in this room after defeating it.” (Rebecca)

A goblin soldier, so a warrior type, huh?

“Hee, then me and Rollo step back after delivering one or two blows to it as vanguards and Rebecca’s magic will finish it off. Let’s go with that plan?” (Shuuya)

“Y-Yeah. Got it.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca replies somewhat shyly.

“What’s wrong?” (Shuuya)

“Well, I thought that you and Rollo-chan are composed...” (Rebecca)

“I’m certain that we will be able to defeat it. However, the state of a battle changes constantly, too. Currently we are a party. We will fight by adapting ourselves to the situation. Since we will be relying on your magic as well, Rebecca, we will go with that formation at first.” (Shuuya)

“Nn, nya.”

Rollo also purrs as if saying 『Roger nya.』.

“Okay. I leave the timing for the chanting to you.” (Rebecca)

Thereupon Helme appears in my field of vision.

『Your Excellency, I...』 (Helme)

『Helme, you will watch, alright? Study by observation.』 (Shuuya)

『Yes...』 (Helme)

Helme obviously feels disappointed and drops her shoulders.

『I'm sorry, okay?』 (Shuuya)

『No, looking at Your Excellency's gallant figure, my mana manipulation progresses daily and I develop new poses.』 (Helme)

While spinning around, she creates a new, unique pose I haven't seen yet... She's shaking her butt splendidly like a jelly.

I wonder whether I should have rather called her Helme Touch.

『I-I see. I might borrow your Spirit Sight.』 (Shuuya)

『Okay.』 (Helme)

Then I finish the telepathic communication with Helme.

“... Well, let's go then.” (Shuuya)

Should I go with acting as a pure assault vanguard without using any chains? I will polish my spearmanship for the sake of taking the spear techniques that I inherited from master to their peak.

I rushed into the rare monster room while holding the Magic Halberd.

It's a room surrounded by walls in all four directions.

A medium-sized goblin was standing in a depression in the centre.

It has a goblin-like, irregular form with chiselled features.

Countless blue veins stand out on its pure green skin.

It wears a big armour that seems to be affixed by copper threads to a copper aventail equipped on its head.

It held a bumpy, thick metal cudgel in its right hand.

More or less it owns an aura worthy of its name as rare.

It looked powerful considering it's a goblin.

Once we intrude, the goblin comes attacking while raising a yell after noticing us.

The medium-sized goblin's height is around the same as mine.

Its movements are slow. It came charging while raising the cudgel overhead.

Given its recklessness, it doesn't seem to be bright.

“Rebecca, Rollo, let's go.” (Shuuya)

“I know!” (Rebecca)

“Nya.”

Rebecca begins to chant.

Rollo stabbed her tentacle bone swords in a counter style at the thick legs of the goblin heading directly towards us and arrested them.

The goblin has its movement stopped and pitches forward as if to fall.

With that as timing I start my attack.

Using Magic Step, I rush at the enemy in a forward-bent posture.

Rollo passed me and shortened the fighting distance to the goblin.

I aim at the right arm holding the cudgel.

I transmit power to my right arm holding the magic spear while twisting my waist. I thrust out the Magic Halberd to the front.

The spiralling red spear's <Thrusting> pierces the thick right arm of the goblin and tears off that arm in one go.

Moreover, the spiralling red axe blade majorly tears up the metal armour at the goblin's flank.

In an instant it creates incisions in the metal similar to several works of art.

Fresh blood vigorously gushed out of those torn-up armour incisions.

“Gugyaaaaa.”

The goblin that had lost an arm and had its flank cut up released a scream while scattering blood.

Being in a state of *misfortunes never come singly*, further disaster strikes the medium-sized goblin.

With its thick legs being completely entangled by Rollo's black tentacles, it fell down towards the floor as if being toppled over.

While rolling on the ground, the goblin pins down its torn-off arm stump and groans in agony.

At that timing Rollo and me would normally pursue it.

But, we deliberately leave the place and fall back to the side.

“Rebecca, use your magic now!” (Shuuya)

However, as if drowning out my words, a fireball had been already fired from behind.

While making a *gooohn* sound, the fireball heads towards the head of the goblin that's lying on the ground.

The fireball directly hits its skull—.

Its head burns as if melting candy in an instant.

The flames spread to its entire body.

“Ubooaaaaa.”

Once the agonized death scream vanishes in vain, it stops moving.

Only the metal armour that became black and a part of its trunks’ organs remained without burning.

One big magic stone rolls onto the ground from the burned corpse.

— Then, a sudden magic source response.

A new enemy? No sooner than thinking that, a treasure chest suddenly appeared with a *poof*.

“— We did it! To defeat it this quickly, and a treasure chest on top of it. Amazing, how wonderful!” (Rebecca)

Looking at the magic stone and the treasure chest, Rebecca is delighted and flips up both her legs.

“A treasure chest appeared...” (Shuuya)

It’s completely like a game.

There’s a real, wooden box over there.

“I guess it’s a **wooden** treasure chest because it’s the rare monster room of the first floor. But, I’m happy since it’s a winner after a long time, you know? Since it’s the first floor, it has no trap. I will try opening it.” (Rebecca)

A **wooden** treasure chest.

Going by her way of talking, there seem to be other kinds of treasure chests as well.

Rebecca opens the lid of the wooden treasure chest.

There’s only a small bracelet inside...

“Wow, a steel bracelet.” (Rebecca)

Going by the size of this treasure chest, I expected the appearance of gold coins piled up into a heap though.

I didn’t tell her that I was slightly dejected.

“... A bracelet, eh? I wonder what ability it has.” (Shuuya)

Rebecca drew the bracelet she picked up below her blue eyes and stared at it while looking into the circle.

Her excitement is lovely.

I also check the bracelet she's looking at with with Magic Observation.

I can feel mana from the bracelet.

『I sense mana, though it's a very little amount.』 (Helme)

It's the same for Helme as well.

"... I don't know. That's why we will bring it to the antique shop called **【Suloza's Old Sorcery Shop】** that also serves as an appraisal store and which is located at the First Ring Road. The appraisal skill of the shop manager there is amazing. He's one of the few people in the labyrinth city that has been given the appraisal license for magic items! He's a shop manager with various rumours swirling around about him such as him possessing connections to a major company behind the scenes or him being a shadow ruler." (Rebecca)

"Hee..." (Shuuya)

Appraisal skill.

That means he's probably capable of appraising people as well.

"Well then, let's collect the magic stone and leave the room. As long as we don't leave this room after defeating it once, the next monster won't appear." (Rebecca)

"Once we leave the room, it will revive, or rather, appear again right away?" (Shuuya)

"There are cases where it's right away too. It's random..." (Rebecca)

Random, meaning there are times when it appears immediately as well?

"I see." (Shuuya)

I pick up the magic stone.

When we left the room, a different party had gathered in the waiting room. Rebecca, who has an expression of somewhat looking in the far distance, starts to talk.

"Shuuya, we have finished the request. Should we go back already? If there

was no one here, I thought that it would be nice to hunt the rare monster in succession, but since this is the first floor, it's crowded." (Rebecca)

"Roger, let's go back." (Shuuya)

We nod at each other while smiling.

We left the waiting room in front of the rare monster room.

Passing through passages and rooms by walking, we run into several parties and solo adventurers hunting.

There were many grave looks from a part of the adventurers, but without minding that, Rebecca walked happily while cheerfully showing a smile.

She seems to be really glad about the appearance of the treasure chest.

Given that monsters, in addition to other adventurers, still appeared in the passages back out, we defeated all of them and collected around 40 magic stones.

And then we arrived at the eight-sided room with the crystal.

"It's no different when returning. While touching this crystal or the body of a party member touching the crystal, you will be teleported to the surface once you say "Return" or "Go back". Then, touch it." (Rebecca)

"Aye." (Shuuya)

"Nn, nya."

Rollo is on her usual place.

I stood next to Rebecca, stretched my arm towards the crystal as recommended and pressed my palm against the surface of the water crystal that's like a cold gem.

"— Return." (Rebecca)

The instant Rebecca said that, we returned to the surface.

It's the octagonal, drafty cylinder building.

We were teleported to a place close to the big crystal.

"I said so before, but we will head to 【Suloza's Old Sorcery Shop】 to get an appraisal before going to the guild, okay?" (Rebecca)

"Alright, but, can't you get it appraised at the guild or such?" (Shuuya)

“You can, but a specialist is better. There are differences in the level of the appraisal skill as well, no? It’s not like I’m finding fault with the guild, but there’s a reason why he owns an **individual store** after all.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca, who faces me with a look as if asking “You don’t know something like that?”, quickly leaves outside through the entrance guarded by the sentries.

“Shuuya~, come quickly. The shop’s close-by.” (Rebecca)

“Okay, on my way.” (Shuuya)

I heard Rebecca’s voice from the other side of the wall.

I also leave through the labyrinth’s entrance.

Right next to it, Rebecca waited for me with a cute posture appropriate for a magician having put her wand on her back.

I walk alongside the ring road together with her in a mood of this being something like a date.

The shop we aimed for was really close.

From the short tower-like, cylindrical building that serves as the labyrinth’s entrance, it’s nearby on the right side of the ring road, I guess?

It was a one-storey building between a blacksmith and a general store with a small site.

Although it seems to be small, there’s nothing but the name of Antique written on the shop’s exterior.

The wall created out of steel and bricks was decorated with a relief in the shape of a crown with three small stars attached to it.

Without touching the door knocker, Rebecca pushes the reddish-brown, wooden door open.

The doorbell resounds with a *ring ring*.

A brass bell with a bracket was set up at the inner part of the door.

Antique

“Welcome. Nice to have you over at Suloza’s Old Sorcery Shop.”

The shop manager’s sombre voice reverberates.

A small stairway descends from the door. The shop’s inside has a long, vertical shape.

On the right side there’s a counter bar similar to a coffeehouse. The shop manager, who had a monocle affixed to his head with a band, showed up

behind that counter.

“— Shop manager, I’d like to appraise this.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca swiftly runs down the stairway while talking quickly.
She hands the steel bracelet to the shop manager with fast movements.

“Hoo, a bracelet, huh? Please wait a moment...”

The shop manager’s head has a slightly bald appearance.
It’s a close haircut with grey hair growing out bit by bit.
He’s bald, but refined and stylish.

He resembles that famous Hollywood actor who fought against terrorists in a multi-storey building and an airport. *(T/N: Bruce Willis probably)*

Lowering the monocle attached to his head down to his eyes, the refined shop manager put it on one eye.

Bringing the steel bracelet close to the monocle, he started to peek at it.
In that instant I realized that he was manipulating his mana.

It’s a smooth mana handling.

To the degree of making me immediately sense a master’s skill from it.

The mana gathered from his entire body moves from his eye to the monocle.
Bluish-white traces travel across the glasses’ surface as if it’s cracking. Suddenly the pointed end of the monocle expands.

Its appearance transforms into a monocle similar to a crooked night vision scope.

Seemingly zooming up, the pointed end of the glasses became even smaller and a small green mana light was created from there.

The small green light, similar to a laser pointer, moves while jolting little by little as if scanning the bracelet.

... This shop manager possesses the appraisal skill, Rebecca said.

It’s an appraisal similar to that of a clock artisan, but I have no doubt that he’s performing an extensive processing of the facts in his brain by freely using his skill.

Well then, while the shop manager is carrying out his appraisal...

I will look around inside this shop.

Caterpillar fungus and dried vegetables that look like Chinese herbal medicine are hanging down next to each other from the ceiling above the counter which

serves as long reception desk.

Wooden devices, seemingly for grinding the coffee beans that had marks indicating that their inspection had finished affixed to them, or things that might be magic tools were placed behind the shop manager.

I wonder whether I can drink coffee here...

On the other shelves there are a necklace shining with white jewels, a bracelet releasing a dazzling blue light, a solemn flag, books that seem to be magic books, bundles of scrolls, a Japanese bow, a bundle of arrows with yellow arrowheads, a red knife with an irregular shape that has a red gem embedded into its haft, a huge mace that has a carving of a skeleton at its tip, a fist weapon of the pile bunker category, round shuriken, a green shining katana, a strange shield that has a living eyeball, which feels like a guard, attached to it, magic charms with lightning-styled patterns, azure crystals, minerals, gold nuggets, silver nuggets, ingots, powdered glistening things, a deep black branch, an oil that lits a green flame, many rare tools I had never seen and expensive-looking magic tool-like items exhibited. There are also many that have a checked mark on a wooden tag sticking to them.

Once I concentrate my eyes on the various magic items, the shop manager reacts.

While gazing at the steel bracelet he appraised, he makes a stern expression and says,

“This item has... magic that can display the effects

Brace

Up

Mage

Up

Weak Rise of Physical Defense and Weak Rise of Magic Power. It’s a normal magic item, but it has the name **Steel Magic Bracelet** attached to it.”

“Wow. It’s not unique class, but to obtain a magic item that has two magic effects from a **wooden box** on the first floor.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca bends forward as if peeking at the bracelet that has been appraised by the shop manager.

“Hoo, this item from a wooden box on the first floor? You were blessed with luck.”

“Yeah! It looks so. Such item usually... is an item of **iron box** class that appears starting from the second underground floor, I think.” (Rebecca)

Iron box? There are various kinds of treasure chests after all.

“That’s certainly true. Then, with this, here.”

While agreeing calmly, the shop manager returned the appraised magical bracelet.

In contrast, Rebecca accepts it with her blue eyes sparkling.

“Yeah, thank you. Fufu, finally... it seems like lady luck visited me as well—.”
(Rebecca)

Holding up the bracelet, Rebecca-san talks as if bragging to the shop manager. She’s showing a delightful, engrossed expression.

She started talking while sharply glancing at the shop manager with her blue eyes squinting.

“Shop manager! Next time I will exceed the iron box and silver box, surpass the unique magic items from the admired **gold box** and get a magic item of legendary, no, mythological class.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca starts to talk with a high-tension tone.
However, the shop manager only looks at her very calmly.

“But, when will that be...? Well then, you owe me five large copper coins for the appraisal.”

The shop manager’s ignoring skill is high.
As it feels like he doesn’t talk much, he has a composed manner.
Emitting a stylish old-man-like aura, he gently demanded the money.
Moreover, his expert’s fee was cheap.
Does the price change depending on the item?

“Okay. Here’s five large copper coins.” (Rebecca)

Rebecca paid the money after revealing an expression that indicates that her interest has cooled down due to the shop manager’s calm attitude.

“Certainly, I received it.”

“It’s convenient that your **appraisal** is always quick, shop manager.” (Rebecca)

The shop manager reacts with his eyebrow twitching due to Rebecca’s praise.
The expression of the refined shop manager completely changes.

It's a happy-looking, wrinkled-up old man face, but it changed into an expression that still has some amiability.

While touching the monocle he used for the appraisal, he talks with a light smile.