

Tilea's Worries

- Tilea no Nayamigoto -

- Volume 3 -

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– SYNOPSIS –

With the progression of his Chuuni Disease, Shioda Tetsuya is shunned by his family, and dies in despair, a thirty three year old jobless virgin. He vowed that if he was born again, this time he would stay away from delusions and live life seriously. Fortunately, he reincarnated in another world as a girl named Tilea, and lived a happy life with her kind parents and adorable little sister, but...

Lately, she'd been troubled. Her beloved sister had begun talking about how she was actually one of the Six Demon Generals, serving directly under Demon King Zorg, a descendant of the Three Great Demons. The situation was looking bad. She had to do something before this Chuuni Disease got any worse!

This is a fantasy “misunderstanding story” about a protagonist who has not noticed in the slightest that she's a “cheat”-like existence, and how in her efforts to heal her sister's Chuuni Disease (except that she really is one of the Six Demon Generals), she somehow or other ended up setting out to defeat the Demon King.

CHAPTER 1

REUNION

Aahh, I want my own shop!

I had grumbled this to everybody earlier. And when I did, that Or suddenly said “Please leave it to me,” before disappearing somewhere. At the time, I thought it was just more chuunibyuu...

Today, Or told me something completely insane. Shockingly, he had prepared a shop for me! He did it so casually like he went to fetch me something from the convenience store, but when he came back it was a shop...

Or, could it be that you're actually from a wealthy family?

While I was in shock, Or told me, “This is the Evil God Army Base,” before leading me inside. Me, Timu, and the other EGA members entered the shop like he told us to.

When I headed inside...

Oohh! This is amazing!

First of all, the interiors...

The decor was clean and pleasant, and didn't seem gaudy. Having a look at the tables and chairs, they were simple but natural-looking. Or rather, really calming. Just like the types of furnishings we liked in Japan.

Then I looked at all the cooking utensils, and all of them were amazing! My expert eye told me that every one of them was top class.

Amazing. It's so amazing. The knives, the saucepans, all of them are like national treasures.

This one knife in particular. When I held it in my hand, it outshone my beloved knife so, so badly. Just this one knife alone is like a fortune. Haha, to a trained eye, the

furnishings in this place are all top class. It wouldn't lose at all to an established high-class shop. Or rather, isn't it possible that you could call it the best in the city?

"Or, t-, this is..."

"Ortissio! Why is this shop so plain! It is worse than a dog kennel!"

"It is exactly as Camilla-sama says. *This* is the Evil God Army Base? Do not test us with your jokes! Perhaps execution truly is the bes—"

"N-, nono, Camilla-sama, Commander Nielsen, you misunderstand. This is only a camouflage in order to fool the enemy. The true base is this way."

In a fluster, Or pointed further into the shop. Apparently there was a staircase that led underground.

W-, What the heck? There's even more of this shop?

Just this much is amazing already. To be hiding something even more amazing is...

Or can't just be from some wealthy family. Maybe he's like the third son of some really powerful noble clan?

I-, It's possible...

With his words and actions so far, according to my profiling he's definitely the rich boy of some powerful family.

Hahh~ This is shocking. But it makes sense. Without rich parents, there's no way you could live this way unemployed. Anyway, let's see how much this rich boy has prepared for us. I'm a little taken aback, but let's head in.

We did as Or asked and headed down the stairs.

And then...

UOHHHHHHH! S-, SO, SO HUUUUUUGEEEEEE!

What I found downstairs was a veritable labyrinth.

I-, Is this some dungeon?

It's huge, and not only that, it's filled with rooms. I-, It can't be that this is some hidden villa that his family owns? A hidden villa for the nobles to take shelter in during attacks on the Capital. If you consider that his family is one of the most powerful, then it's quite possible.

Aaahh, Or, you idiot! If you play around in a place like this, your dad is going to get angry at you, okay!?

"Or, t-, this is..."

"Hmph. I suppose the size gets a passing mark... But the furnishings are lower than low."

"It is exactly as Camilla-sama says. Ortissio, I question your loyalty. It does not even reach the foot of the palace in Demon Capital Benz."

"M-My deepest apologies. I had only awakened recently, and do not yet have the capital."

"Enough with your excuses. Truly, execution must be——"

"Aaahh, stop with the chuunibyou! Be quiet for a moment."

"Y-, Yes."

Honestly, Timu and Pervert(Nielsen) don't get it at all. They don't even get a little just how much this place is worth. Honestly, you chuunibyou are all so hard to deal with.

Anyway, let's sort things out in my mind.

Or came along with an insane present.

Can I accept this?

Since Or and his friends attacked me once, I thought to accept some capital from them as an apology fee. Of course, the plan was to pay the money back once the shop got moving, and they didn't get thrown into jail either, so I thought that it was all well and good but...

I-, Isn't this way too much? I can't pay this back, or rather, if I broke a single dish, I wouldn't be able to break even.

Hm~mm, what should I do?

While I was wracking my brains, I wandered about this massive underground empire. And then I noticed a dazzling shine from one of the rooms.

What's inside this room?

I walked in without a care to see.

And what I found...

UOOHHHHHHH! D-, DAZZLING! IT'S TOO DAZZLING!!

W-, What the heck. Gold nuggets, emeralds, rubies, all sorts of treasures strewn about the place. Did even the pirates of the Carribean have this much treasure?

Haha, so it existed. Wan Piece...

"Ah-, Tilea-sama, this is the Evil God Army's treasury. My sincere apologies. We have not yet gathered very much yet."

"We can see that! Ortissio, the state of this treasury is absolutely wretched! It cannot even compare to what we had in the Demon Capital! Neither its quality nor quantity!"

"Ortissio, this will damage the dignity of the Evil God Army. Throw out this junk and collect something good!"

"M-, My deepest apologies. On this occasion, there was the attack on the capital, and nothing truly good is being traded across the world. Please, please give me more time."

"Enough. If you are going to embarrass Oneesama by forcing to her to live in this shack... Ortissio, I trust you understand?"

"H-Hii, I-I understand. I will gather some treasure no matter what."

Ortissio desperately apologised as he bowed.

This merciless extortion...

Isn't this bullying?

But well, I can understand why they'd want to bully him. He's a sex offender, after all. In particular, since he tried to turn his fangs on Timu's sister as well, they'll probably be hating on him for a while. But you know, Or might be this type of guy, but his parents are probably amazing, you know? If you keep cornering Or like this...

『Wahhh, everybody is bullyingggg meeee! Papa, I beg you, please do something!』

『What? Which fiend dares to bully my cute son! Hang them all immediately.』

『Sniff, thank you, Papa. I'm so heartbroken. Could I have another villa?』

『There, there. I'll give you anything, so just tell me.』

It's obvious that something like this is going to happen. I can't let Or use his ultimate technique, "Papa, I beg you".

"Aah~ You guys, that's enough."

"H-, However, Ortissio has truly been doing too shoddy a job."

"It's fine, it's fine. Or, you've set up a pretty decent hideout, haven't you. I like it."

"T-, Tilea-sama, w-, what priceless words for the likes of me..."

Or started tearing up. Mn. Looks like I stopped him from flipping out.

Hahh~ My stomach is hurting. Looks like I'll have more troubles. But Or keeps urging me. Should I just use this place? But Or's parents might not know about this...

"Or, is it okay for us to use this place? Do you have permission from your parents?"

"Hah... I do not quite understand your words, Tilea-sama, but I prepared this place in secret. Leaving the camouflage shop aside, nobody except essential personnel are aware of this underground base. It should be fine to use this place. Also, as for my parents... I am Camilla-sama's kin, and thus have no parents. If I had to name one, I suppose it might be Mamira-sama, Camilla's esteemed mother who—"

“Y-, YOU’RE SAYING THIS STUFF TOOoooooooo!?”

“GUHAH-!”

Before I knew it, I had smacked the back of his head. Honestly, Or, Pervert(Nielsen), they all say the same stuff. Is it some requirement for you guys to try and become my siblings!?

Hahh, I’m exhausted. But well, if he’s going on about “essential personnel” or whatever, I guess he’s gotten permission.

Probably went something like...

『Papa, can I play in that big villa or ours?』

『Geez. You’re such a spoilt. Don’t mess it up, okay?』

『Yayy! I’m going to call all my friends! Can I fit five thousand friends in?』

『Now, now, there are other villas too. Keep it to three thousand, okay?』

What a useless son...

Anyway, I guess uh, it all worked out pretty good. I have the feeling that some annoying stuff is going to happen, but at least I’ve got a shop now. It’s a bit weird that Or is the investor and owner though.

CHAPTER 2

THE EVIL GOD ARMY STRATEGIST APPEARS. HERE COMES MY ZIFANG!

In the early afternoon, a biseinen (beautiful young man) appeared before me.

“Good afternoon to you. I am the Chief of General Staff at the Evil God Army, Dryas Bo Malferand. It is my humble pleasure and honour to finally come face to face with you, Tilea-sama.”

With that, the biseinen elf bowed low to me.

“Aahh, so you’re the strategist that Timu mentioned. I wondered what you might be like. I came up with a lot of ideas, but you actually *were* an elf, weren’t you.”

“Tilea-sama, I may look like an elf, but I am a proper demon.”

“Aahh, so that’s how it is.”

I’m shocked. To think that even the elven race had chuunibyuu patients. Aah, but could it be that he was ostracised because of it and they expelled him from the village, or could it be that he left on his own? Elves have this image of being exclusive isolationists who don’t get along well with humans. But to think that one would actually come here to play with humans...

He must have found it really hard to stay in his village. He can’t have fit in. I have to be kind to him instead.

“Well, everybody has their own circumstances. Let’s get along, okay?”

“Yes, Tilea-sama. I live for your sake, and I die for your sake.”

“Mn? Aren’t you part of Timu’s Praetorian Guard?”

“Camilla-sama gave birth to me, but in the end, the reason for my existence is to serve you, Tilea-sama.”

Oh ho? Is that the setting this time? For my sake, huh~

Well, it certainly doesn't feel bad, but...

I stared right at his hot guy face.

And guess what! He stared right back with a refreshing, hot guy smile!

Geh-, what's with this refreshing look! Honestly, this is why hot guys are... It can't be that he thinks he can capture me?

Just to let you know, I'm a guy so you're out of the question. Honestly, riajuu should just explo— whoawhoa, whoa, Tilea, why are you dragging out these grudges from your old life? Dryas-kun is a poor kid who was driven out of his village. Not only that, he's been good to Timu and the others. He's a friend. You have to treat him well.

"Ehh~ Well, yeah, let's definitely get along. By the way, I heard from Timu that you're a wise general type, but is that true?"

"Indeed. As a Staff Officer, I have been provided with knowledge of all things in creation."

Dryas-kun spoke in his silky hot guy voice.

But really?

In the end, he's just a chuunibyou. Empirically speaking, there's a huge possibility that he's an idiot...

But well, it's pretty much a rule that elves are knowledgeable. Let's test him a little.

"You're quite confident. Then, let's have you answer a little quiz."

"As you wish, Tilea-sama."

"First question, dun dundun dun♪ The red and delicious fruit, the *bomigranide*. What period is it most ripe and delicious?"

Heh. This something you wouldn't know unless you're a cook. Impossible for laymen to answer. If you really know everything, then let's hear the answer.

“The First Month in Primebarela. If you go further down south, then perhaps the Third Month in Inverno would be fine too.”

“C-, Correct.”

Oi, oi, that’s a perfect answer. The crapper cooks might not even know! We might have picked up a real treasure...

“Second question then, dudun dun♪ The *barcret* that blooms in midsummer can be used as an ingredient. However, which parts of it?”

“The secondary leaves, I do believe. However, if you isolate it from the air, and then boil it together with *joyoh* fluid at 90 degrees or over, the poison is mostly removed from the leaves, and all of them can then be eaten. But well, poison doesn’t mean much to us demons...”

“C-, Correct. Or rather, you could remove the poison like that? I never knew.”

“Yes. Not only that, but you can also boil it together with *onicus* leaves. However, this method may affect the taste, and thus I do not recommend it.”

H-, He’s capable.

I’m not sure even if a first-rate chef could give such perfect answers...

Mumu, I can’t lose. Now that it’s come to this, let’s go with even harder questions.

“Then the third question...”

After that, I brought up any possible cooking questions I could think of. And Dryas promptly and accurately answered every one of them. Not only that, occasionally he even gave answers that covered a cook’s blind spots, so I really had to take my hat off to him.

Haha, what’s with this professor, this walking encyclopaedia? I’m starting to think of him as a cook already. Hmm~ I want to ask questions in other fields too, but I have no clue on anything outside of cooking.

“Huhu, how is Dryas, Oneesama? He is my greatest creation. I would be very happy if you found him suitable, but...”

Ooh, Timu came along with perfect timing. I'll have Timu ask him questions about magic.

"Timu, Dryas is great. He's just like a wise general."

"It brings me great joy to hear that you are pleased, Oneesama."

"Dryas-kun has been amazing. I've been asking him all these cooking questions, and he got every one of them right. Could it be that he's a cook?"

"Oneesama, Dryas is a perfect strategist, versed not only in cooking, but all things in creation."

"I-, I see. Then, Timu, you ask him something too. Like a hard question about magic, okay?"

"When I created Dryas as my kin, I included all of my knowledge. He can perfectly answer any question I could ask."

"Hmmm. If you're that confident, then just ask him something."

"I understand, Oneesama."

Timu turned to Dryas-kun.

"Dryas. The *aveross* uses the first key of darkness magic. Tell me how to construct it. However, you are not to use *dipuletion* or *anshuichon*."

"Milady. First, you invoke the darkness in the *favatar*. Thereafter, you offer the the *schutel-babineh* waves. When you do, the heat of the *jao'fvai* must be—"

Yep... I have noooo idea what you're talking about. But I get the feeling that what they're talking about is definitely difficult stuff. Timu really is a genius at magic. She sounded incredibly familiar with the content, like a lecturer at the Academy. And Dryas was answering each question smoothly.

As expected of an elf. He's showing me the knowledge that the guardians of the forest have. Yeah. Rather than a cook, he really is like a walking encyclopaedia. You could even call him the Prince of Miscellaneous Knowledge.

“You two, sorry for butting in while you seem to be hitting the climax, but stop!”

“”Yes.””

“Timu, Dryas-kun’s answers were correct, weren’t they.”

“Yes. One hundred, no, one hundred and twenty marks. He answered with regards to the next step I would take. I was truly satisfied by his responses.”

“I see. You’re good, Dryas-kun. I’ll acknowledge you. From now on, please take care of us as my Zifang.”

“Onesama, what is this ‘ji-fahng’?”

“Aah, well, in my old life there was this really amazing strategist by the name of Zifang.”

“So that is how it was. It is the acme of honour that you think me as such. I, Dryas, shall give my all to support you in your conquest.”

“I-, I see. Well, try your best.”

Aahh, just like I thought, he really *is* a chuunibyou. Even though he was born with such a good head...

Aahhh! It’s such a waste!

I was filled with prayers for him to be quickly cured of that disease.

After that, we got Dryas-kun settled in, like getting him to meet with the other members of the Evil God Army, or guiding him around the secret base.

Hm, it’s already this late. I sure am hungry. Should I make something? Yeah, I’ll make something, and we can have a welcoming party for Dryas-kun too.

“You guys must be hungry. I’ll go make some food.”

“W-, We could never have you do such a thing. I will order a subordinate,” said Or.

Oi, if it's not me, the cook, then who else can prepare food? Aren't you just a bunch of chuunibyou!

"Or, will that be alright? Can any of you cook? I'm a little anxious, but..."

"O-, Of course. Please leave it to us."

Or flew out of the room. Will this really be okay? I can't imagine that these guys could cook a decent meal.

But well~ Since they're so fired up, maybe I shouldn't pour cold water over them. They just gained a new friend. It's not strange to think that they want to do something for him.

Can't be helped. Guess I'll give them some face.

I waited for them to finish making dinner.

After a while...

"We have kept you waiting."

They brought in a feast.

Mn, smells good. Not bad!

They made sure to have an appetiser, some soup, and a main.

Now then, what's the meat dish for today?

Ohh~? It's roasted whole beacock! These are some good ingredients. From what I can see, they're all pretty good.

Yep, yep, every one of these dishes is first class.

Yep, yep, ye-!? H-, Hang on a minute. They're *too* first class!

The ingredients for the meat, the seafood, the soup; they're all super high class.

Or, just how much money did you spend—wha-, oi, oi, you're kidding, right! This is *balott*, you know. To so casually use something that you can only get every ten, no, a hundred years from each one is...

The dishes were made from such high class ingredients that it was almost a waste to eat it all. But they were already cooked, so there was nothing to do *except* eat. In a daze, I brought some food to my mouth.

“!?”

A shock ran through me. The more I chewed, the more the aromatic fragrances of the spices and ingredients mixed and spread through my mouth.

T-, This... With normal seasonings, you'd never get this flavour. This refined taste and richness that you'd never get even after ten, no, a hundred years of cooking.

O-, Oh my god. A-, Are these guys all idiots?

I put down what I was about to eat, and immediately put down my chopsticks.

“What's with this food!”

“T-, Tilea-sama...?”

“This is why I didn't want beginners making the food! You think I can eat this?”

“U-Umm, if you have some dissatisfaction with this, I can...”

“EEI! Bring me the manag-, I mean, the person who made this!”

“Y-, Yes.”

Or hurriedly called for the cook.

“I-, I have arrived at your summons. I am Jigma, the one in charge of the cooking.”

“Y-, You. You used gem salt in the broth for this, didn't you.”

“T-, That was called 'gem salt'? I simply used the salt that Ortissio-sama purchased, but...”

“O-, Oh hohh~? I-, I see. Ignorance really is terrifying. You know, gem salt is a naturally occurring salt that takes thousands of years to appear. And for you to have... From what I tasted, you must have used a lot, didn’t you.”

“Yes, I did but... Was there something wrong with that?”

“Something wrong...? You...”

“W-Was there some problem?”

It’s hopeless. I can tell that he really doesn’t have a clue. Just tonight’s meal would easily exceed the annual income of a normal family.

And also, as meals they were good, but the cooking was bad. Even though the ingredients were the absolute best, the cooking was nowhere close.

“Also, the way you used 『roasting』 , 『smoking』 , 『grilling』 and 『steaming』 was completely random. Do you have any experience cooking?”

“No, none at all. I am a soldier.”

O-, Oh my goodness...

These ultra-high class ingredients that any cook would die for was wasted unsparingly by a beginner...?

Or, your money sense is just horrific. As expected of a kid from a great noble’s family.

“Or, what were you thinking?”

“You mean to say...?”

“You know, since you refused me and said you were going to make the food, I thought that you would have somebody who could cook. I can’t say that he doesn’t know anything at all, but this was still sacrilege towards the ingredients, you know? It was unforgivable.”

“Tilea-sama’s anger is most justified. Why did you use such cheap ingredients!”

“You used scraps and waste to prepare a meal that Oneesama was going to eat. Ortissio, I trust you understand?”

“M-, My deepest apologies. I used the highest class ingredients I had on hand, but-”

“AND I AM TELLING YOU THAT THAT IS NEGLIGENCE! In the Demon Capital, even a dog would not eat this refuse!”

They misunderstood, and then began to happily bicker. Haha, honestly, there’s really no hope for these guys.

“DAHSHHHH! Enough! Enough, okay? I really *am going to have to do the cooking myself.”

“However... For somebody like you to do such a thing is—”

“However, *schmauever!* This is an order! *I* will be doing the cooking. I can’t leave things to beginners like you.”

I glared them into silence.

Mn, if I leave it to you lot, it’s going to turn into something insane. Speaking of which, I left the ingredient shopping for “Berum – Capital Branch” to Or as well, didn’t I.

T-, This is bad. Did that damned Or buy only crazy stuff? Huhu, for some reason I get the feeling that we’re about to go bankrupt...

Zhang Liang (c. 3rd century BC – 186 BC), courtesy name Zifang, was a strategist and statesman in the early Western Han dynasty. He is also known as one of the “Three Heroes of the early Han dynasty” (漢初三傑), along with Han Xin and Xiao He.

Xun Yu (163–212), courtesy name Wenruo, was a strategist and statesman who served as an advisor to the warlord Cao Cao in the late Eastern Han Dynasty. Xun Yu was a native of Yingchuan (潁川; present-day Xuchang, Henan), and was born in a family of government officials. Xun Yu proved to be a talented youth, and was evaluated by the scholar He Yong as “someone capable of assisting kings” (王佐之才).

In the subsequent years, warlords quickly rose in each region; Xun Yu first served Yuan Shao, whose power base was in Ji Province, but later left him and went to serve Cao Cao in 191.

*Cao Cao recognized Xun Yu's talent and he exclaimed, "**Here comes my Zifang!**" when Xun Yu arrived, and he appointed Xun as an army commandant.*

CHAPTER 3

THE EVIL GOD ARMY WAR COUNCIL

In the western streets of the Arcudas capital stood a certain restaurant.

Its name was “Berum Restaurant – Capital Branch”.

In that shop existed a certain staircase that led underground. Were one to descend that staircase, at the bottom would be so large a space that one would wonder if it didn't cover the entire city.

This space was divided into countless rooms, each filled with numerous furnishings of incredible luxury...

Truly, an underground empire. Even the Royal Palace could not compare.

And in one of the rooms in this underground empire, the leaders of the Evil God Army were currently gathered.

The Evil God Army Viceroy, the General Commander, the First to Fourth Division commanders, as well as the various captains, each one of them with mana easily surpassing 10,000. Each one possessing strength that exceeded this world's common sense. A gathering of elites.

And sitting in the first seat amongst them as she lorded over the room was Viceroy of the Evil God Army, Camilla, who possessed noticeably more power than even these elites. Behind her on each side were General Commander Nielsen, and Chief of General Staff Dryas.

The Second Evil God Army Strategy Meeting was about to begin...

Since ancient times, the war councils had always begun with Camilla's announcement.

“Everybody. The war council begins. First, take a seat.”

At her beckoning, all the gathered leaders sat down.

“Dryas, you begin.”

“Milady. Our first agenda is the intelligence gathering. The Magic Academy has been left to Camilla-sama, the Adventurer Guild to Mühen, and all the other areas to Belnandes. Everyone, please give a simple report on what you have discovered. Well then, could I trouble you, Camilla-sama?”

“M-, Me, huh? At Oneesama’s wish, I have been infiltrating the Magic Academy since the Month of the Fire Hammer. However, I have discovered nothing of use. Truly filled with nothing but riff-raff. I must apologise to Oneesama, but I believe that it would be best that I withdraw from there.”

“I see. I also believe that there is no need for Camilla-sama to personally gather intelligence,” agreed Nielsen.

“I-I also feel the same way. Even if Camilla-sama doesn’t trouble herself, I will continue gathering information at the Academy,” added Edim.

Many of the other leaders nodded in agreement as well. However, Chief of General Staff Dryas frowned at the sight.

“However, it was *Tilea-sama’s* strong wish that you do so. Camilla-sama, I must apologise, but please continue your mission.”

“Y-, You certainly have a point but, I-, I-...”

“Camilla-sama! Please endure it! We must not go against Tilea-sama’s desires. As Chief of General Staff, I strongly advise that you continue your mission.”

“Uuuu... For how long must longer must I listen to the ravings of primitives...?”

“You are my parent, and my heart aches at your plight. However, we must not allow personal feelings to become involved. In the end, I must take action to prioritise Tilea-sama’s will!”

“Mumu! You are right. It was my mistake. I will continue to endeavour at my mission.”

Hearing Camilla’s reply, Dryas smiled in satisfaction.

“Then next is Mühen. Report on the situation of the Guild.”

“Sir. This one registered at one of the major guilds. However, they had no personnel of note. Even their A-Ranked and B-Ranked high-level adventurers could be dealt with by a single soldier of our army. Far weaker than even our foot soldiers. To say nothing of C-rank and below. Good-for-nothings like those would be food for Gargan at best.”

“I see. There is no use in gathering information at a den of weaklings like that. Perhaps it would be better if Mühen withdrew as well.”

“However, this one is presently only a D-ranked adventurer. The fact is that the currently available information is limited. Perhaps the Guild is yet hiding some elite as their secret weapon.”

“I see. Then Mühen, you will continue your infiltration of the Guild.”

“Sir. This one will promptly raise his rank to S.”

After Mühen finished his report, Dryas turned to Belnandes.

“Then Belnandes, report on the general situation.”

“Sir. First I will report on the surrounding area. There are dozens of nations around the Kingdom of Arcudas, but they are nothing to be concerned with. Each one of them is a small nation, and one of our divisions would be enough to crush them. If I had to name a subject worthy of caution, it would be a bustling trade nation to the northwest; the Manafint Confederation.”

“Fumu. How powerful is their war potential?”

“At best, perhaps roughly the same level as the Kingdom of Arcudas. However, it is not the nation itself that is worthy of concern, but the Witch of the Forest that is said to reside there.”

“The Witch of the Forest, you say?”

“Yes. Apparently the Manafint Confederation treats a certain forest as a forbidden zone, and a witch is said to live there. Although the nation did send punitive armies on occasion, allegedly nobody ever returned. By now, the Manafint Confederation has given up on controlling the forest.”

“Hohh~” interrupted Camilla, “The Witch of the Forest? That might not be totally boring. I will go subdue her.”

“You have your mission at the Magic Academy, so please do not,” replied Dryas.

“Uu, b-but, *‘the Witch of the Forest’*. Doe she not sound quite strong? Is there anyone who could beat her except me? If you’re worried about the Academy, I am more than capable of handling both.”

“Camilla-sama, I will come up with a plan to invade the Manafint Confederation at a later date, so please do not do anything hasty.”

Dryas glared harshly at Camilla.

“G-, Got it. Don’t glare at me like that. I will endure, okay?”

“I greatly appreciate your understanding. Well then, onto our next agenda. As the base of our operations, there is a need to completely control the Kingdom of Arcudas. By Tilea-sama’s wishes, we cannot move too conspicuously. Accordingly, we have decided to control the nation from the background, and ordered Edim to turn the leaders of this nation into her kin. Edim, report on your progress.”

“Y-Yes. At present, approximately 67% of its leaders are in our hands, with the rest of them being taken over on a preferential basis. Over a thousand members of the military follow my orders.”

“A little less than 70%... Edim, are you not being a little too lax in your efforts?”

Dryas sent a sharp look at Edim.

“M-, My apologies. With Remilia in charge of the Public Safety Force, her surveillance makes it difficult for the vampirisation of her subordinates. Ah-, if we were allowed to vampirise Remilia herself then it would speed things along, but...”

“You cannot. Remilia has been left to move freely as part of some plan of Tilea-sama’s. We cannot interfere with her plans.”

“Understood. But with Remilia’s intense surveillance, I don’t think it would be possible to infiltrate any further...”

“Fumu... Edim. How goes the vampirisation of the king?”

“There is no problem on that front. I have already made him my kin, so he will move as I say. I had already vampirised the Captain of the Royal Guard earlier, so taking the King was a simple matter.”

“Then apply pressure from above, and temporarily separate Remilia from her Public Safety Force. You can simply use that chance to turn the leaders of the Public Safety Force into your kin.”

“Sir. I will immediately do so.”

After that, Dryas turned to Ortissio.

“Moving onto the next agenda, the expansion of the Evil God Army. At present, the Second Division has been attacking settlements in the vicinity of the Royal Capital and resupplying soldiers and money. Ortissio, report your results.”

“Sir. Over the last month, my unit has defeated over thirty beastman settlements.”

“How fierce was the resistance? Were there any promising talents?”

“Sir. We have captured all the ones of decent promise. Also, all settlements showed considerable resistance. The reason was that they were filled with many hot-blooded young beastmen who were eager to rebel. Because of that, there was a need for our side to make a show of force. Once we did, however, they became as meek as kittens.”

Ortissio happily listed off his achievements.

“Hmph, feeling pretty good about yourself just for defeating some petty beastmen, aren’t you,” interjected Camilla again.

“N-, Not at all, Milady.”

“Well then, Ortissio, how goes the procurement for the Evil God Army’s treasury?” continued Dryas.

“W-, Well, we have not yet done so. H-However, I was on an expedition and the time to do so was...”

“Enough excuses. Ortissio, do you even have any sense of loyalty!”

“M-, My deepest apologies.”

“And how long do you intend on forcing Oneesama to stay in this hovel?” interjected Camilla again.

“I *have* been increasing the quality of the furnishings here, but...”

“And *I* am telling you that it’s too slow! This is *Oneesama’s* home! How long are you going to keep it decorated with third-rate garbage!”

“Hii! M-, My deepest apologies.”

“I have grown tired of your apologies, Ortissio!”

“Show us some results, Ortissio!”

“H-, Hic, my most sincere apologies.”

Just as Ortissio hung his head under the harsh criticisms of his comrades, the door to the room suddenly opened.

“Wahh! There’s so many people here today, too. I’ve made food, so everyone hurry up and eat.”

“Why if it isn’t Oneesama. Everyone, the strategy meeting concludes here. Outrageously, Oneesama has gone out of her way to cook us food.”

“Tilea-sama, it brings us shame to make you call for us. We will immediately head over.”

“Tilea-sama, we very humbly accept your feast.”

“Yepyp, eat up before it’s colddeh?—Or!? Are you crying *again*?”

“H-Hic, w-, why if it isn’t Tilea-sama. I have shown you something unsightly.”

“Aahh, geez~ Everyone, didn’t I tell you to stop bullying Or! Aren’t we all friends!”

Tilea's rebuke caused everybody to shrink.

"Aah, T-, Tilea-sama, what kind words you speak for s-, someone like me..."

"Hahhh~ There there, come on, don't cry."

CHAPTER 4

WHAT A FRAIL BUNCH. LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO RETRAIN THEM FROM SCRATCH

Note that 'pettanko' really just means 'flat'.

Thanks to the vampire attack, the security in Arcudas has rapidly worsened. After all, the guards are the ones responsible for dealing with crime, and the majority of them were killed by demons. It can't be helped that crime is on the rise.

Today as well, I heard about some scary things like some wealthy merchant house being robbed by burglars, or how somebody was stabbed to death by a knife. It really makes a chill run down your spine. Not only that, but apparently pickpockets and purse snatchers have been on the rise too. The public safety is on par with the slums in my old life.

The state is desperately working out countermeasures, but there just hasn't been enough time or helpers. Thanks to that, the citizens can't help but rely on themselves instead.

Milay-san, from the textiles store on West Road, is one of them. Apparently she sent out an emergency request to the Adventurers Guild to guard her store. There's more than enough possibility of our restaurant being threatened too. After all, just looking at our furnishings is enough to tell you that they're high class, and more importantly there's treasure lying all about downstairs.

Hahhh~ Thinking about it, isn't Or being too careless! Is he an idiot or something! How can you just leave all that treasure lying about without even using a safe or a lock! What's wrong with that guy!

Or could it be that it only looks unguarded because it's a hidden holiday villa? Without guards or safes around, you wouldn't expect there to treasure after all...

Nono, even so, there's a limit to these things. The way it is now is like screaming 'please rob me'. I'll never get it. I'll never get how the rich think.

Anyway, thankfully our shop is at least known as “the favourite shop of the Guild’s rising star, Mühlen”. I guess the effect is a bit like how in my old life you’d get those stickers that said “police may be patrolling in casual clothing”.

It does seem to be working because we haven’t had a burglar once yet. I guess they’re on guard because they know that an expert swordsman hangs around here.

But that doesn’t mean I can relax. It’s true that Myuu comes here a lot, but it’s not like he’s here every day. He’s got work at the Guild, after all. To put it frankly, when Myuu isn’t here, our shop is as good as defenceless. If it’s just numbers then we have a huge number of self-proclaimed “guards”, but apart from me they’re a bunch of quacks. If a burglar really invades, they’re all as good as dead.

I mean, we do still have our secret weapon, Edim, but Edim has school, and more importantly that anything, she can’t guard in the open. If people realised she was a vampire, she’d end up on a wanted list after all.

Fumu. This won’t do.

Thinking about it carefully, our security is on a tightrope. It would be great if we could hire some adventurers just like Milay-san, but...

We don’t have the money for that. I can’t borrow any more of Or’s money after all. I’ll think about that after I actually make some profit. Until then, I guess I have no choice except to rely on those weaklings[the “leaders” of the Evil God Army]...

Hmm, but it’s possible, or rather, extremely likely, that I’m actually stronger than all of them. Would they even be any use at all as guards? No, right? At best, they’d run off for help, or buy some time for us...

Huu~ Can’t be helped. Maybe they’d get a little stronger if I trained them.

The next day...

I’m in one of the rooms in the Evil God Army’s Underground Empire. Yesterday I went around looking for a room that was suitable for training. This one has enough room for dozens of people to move about, there’s no expensive furnishings, and nothing else to worry about. That’s why I called Timu and the others here.

“We have arrived at your summon, Tilea-sama!”

“You’re all here, guys?”

“No, Mühen is presently undercover in the Guild so he is absent. Shall I call him here?”

“No, there’s no need.”

Unlike you lot, Myuu is actually working, okay. You’d better not get in his way. Also, Myuu doesn’t need to be here this time.

“So, the reason I called you guys out here. It’s been pretty crazy lately, hasn’t it. That’s why I’m going to teach you have to defend yourselves.”

“G-, Goodness, Tilea-sama herself is going to instruct us!?”

“Onesama! How long I have waited for this moment! Please, please do guide me!”

Timu, Pervert(Nielsen), just everybody was brimming with excitement. You guys really do love this stuff, don’t you.

“Just so you know, we’re not playing around, okay? I’m serious here!”

“Of course! We will risk our lives to learn!”

“Mn, I guess your enthusiasm is good enough.”

“Then, what kind of technique will you be instructing us in?”

“Onesama, I hope it will be some kind of magic. Some ultimate magic of destruction and chaos.”

“I would very much like to learn a pugilistic skill.”

“I humbly ask you that you demonstrate your Seven Hundred and Seventy-Seven Techniques of the Evil God.”

You guys always get so excited for chuuni stuff.

“Ah~ Before all of that, I’d like to have a look at your physical abilities, so we’re going to do an endurance test.”

“An endurance test?”

“Mn, like pushups and stuff.”

“U-, Umm, Tilea-sama, by pushups, do you mean *those* pushups?”

“Or, what on earth are you saying? What other kinds of pushups *are* there?”

“No, um... Of course, you couldn't mean normal pushups, could you? That is, regarding the way we do them and...”

“Of course she doesn't, Ortissio! If we did normal pushups, we'd go on for hundreds of millions of them. It would never end.”

“M-, My sincere apologies. It is a test given by Tilea-sama. Magic will probably used to change things somehow.”

“Obviously. Considering it is Tilea-sama, there's no doubt that it must be some unfathomable training method that none of us have ever thought of.”

Even though I just had normal pushups in mind, everyone started arguing about how it wasn't this, or wasn't that.

I see. How on earth could this lot ever want to do normal pushups. Well, they're a bunch that hate actual work after all. Should I mix some chuuni into it? If I do, at least they'd be happy about it, and they'd probably try harder too.

“Huhu, well guessed. Normal pushups wouldn't be interesting at all.”

“Oohh, I knew it!”

Everyone started looking at me expectantly. What should I do now...

Mn! It has to be that! If you're a chuunibyouto, then it has to be training under heavy gravity.

Yup, the gravity manipulation magic, Pettanko[Gravity Spell]. If I apply extra gravity to them, I'll bet they'll love it.

But I've only used elementary magic. Can I do it? It sounds like something that would be pretty tough. I mean, it's gravity magic, right? Would something like that be more like advanced, or at least intermediate magic?

Hm~mm, thinking about it won't help. I'll just wing it!

I started to imagine the Pettanko[Gravity Spell].

And then...

“EEI! PETTANKO[Gravity Spell]!”

The moment I released my magic, the whole room seemed to thud with the weight.

Ooh, a success. I did it!

Well, as you'd expect, making it ten times gravity or something amazing was out of my league. All that happened was... Um, it feels like an extra kilo on me?

Haha, magic is really so fun.

Because I don't have much mana, my spells are never really great, but it's still really enjoyable seeing all the effects.

Now then, I wonder if everyone else is having fun too.

I looked at Timu and the others. From their expressions, they all seemed to be enduring something, just like they were in some 100x gravity room. As expected of chuunibyuu. Guess they're really loving it.

“How is it, everyone? I tried changing the gravity of the room, but...”

“I-, I am shocked. A magic to change gravity? I know the theory as well, but as expected of you, Oneesama. To think that you could really actualise it.”

“Magnificent, Tilea-sama. I can sense that the whole room has had its gravity magnified a hundredfold.”

Pervert(Nielsen) immediately got on board. I know how you feel. Isn't there just something exciting about 'a hundred times gravity'? Well, it barely feels like a kilo extra for me, but I'll play along with you.

"As expected of you, Niel. That's exactly right. Now then, we're going to do pushups under a hundred times gravity. Well? Aren't you all excited?"

"As expected of Tilea-sama! I never would have thought that there could be such a training method."

"Huhu, looks like you're plenty excited. That's a good thing. Well then, get ready."

"Milady."

All of them got down, ready to start.

"Well then. Begin!"

"Onee... Twoo..."

At my signal, everyone began doing pushups in sync.

With this, I can see how your endurance is.

I began looking around. The most excellent one was...

Timu! As expected of my little sister! Her arms were trembling a little, but she still managed proper pushups.

I think she'll reach the fifteen mark that I set for everyone.

Next is...

Dryas-kun I guess. A bit behind him was Pervert(Nielsen). I'd be happy if these two reach 7 or 8. After all, just a few pushups was enough to make their arms tremble, and their sweat was really wetting the floor.

I can't say I didn't expect it, but Dryas-kun was a real life example of "Beautiful guys have no money or strength."

Since Dryas is an elf, I think I should train him up a little more. As for Pervert(Nielsen), well, he was just as expected. All enthusiasm and no power. I think he'll be done after four or five, really.

The real problem was...

Or and Muram. They haven't done even one the whole time. But well, Muram is kind of fat, so I guess it can't really be helped. It's tough just supporting that body, isn't it.

But Or, you...

"Or, try your best to at least do one, okay?"

"Hahh, hahh... T-, Tile... hahh, hahh, sama, under... stoo... d..."

It's no good. Or was at his limit. I could even see his muscles creaking. Just as I was feeling shocked by him,

"...Fifteen, hahh, hahh, sixtee.... c-, can't."

At sixteen pushups, Timu fell to the ground. Incidentally, Dryas-kun made it to seven, and Pervert(Nielsen) made it to five before falling to the ground.

"You really gave it your all, Timu."

"Hahh, hahh, hahh, hahh, O-, Oneesama, tha—"

"Ahh, don't force yourself to talk, okay? Just lay there and catch your breath," I said, as I passed a towel to her.

Dryas-kun and Pervert(Nielsen) were wheezing as well. Should I give you guys some towels too? When I gave them their towels,

"GUAHHHHH!"

I suddenly heard a piercing scream. It was Or.

"Or, w-what's wrong?"

"M-, MY ARM BROKEEE!"

Yeah, you have to be careful—I mean!

How one earth can you break your arm just doing pushupssss!?! Is it even possible to be that weakkk!?

When I had a look, Or's arm was completely snapped.

Your typical rich kid. Lacking in training, and lacking in calcium. I bet he just eats whatever he likes, and never does any exercise either. Looks like I'll have to change his eating habits as well. What a long journey we have ahead of us.

But well, I'll think up a regime for him later. First, we need to treat him.

I asked Timu to come over and heal Or's arm. Thanks to that, his arm quickly recovered. Magic really is so convenient.

Huu, but even though we've only just done pushups, the only one who passed was Timu. Just how weak are these guys?

To think they'd even lose to a magician-type like Timu...

"You guys just listen to me as you rest."

""Milady.""

"You know, to be honest I wanted to teach you a little 'Judo' after our endurance test. It's a technique from my old life, you see."

"'Juudoh' is it! How very fascinating. Please do teach us."

"Don't be hasty. Before I can teach you anything, you need to train your bodies first. It's the fundamentals. All of you are too weak. Right now the only one who passed was Timu."

"Tilea-sama, does that mean that if we wish to learn the technique, we must reach Camilla-sama's record of fifteen pushups?"

"Yeah, if you can't even do that much, Judo is out of the question."

“F-, Fifteen under *this* gravity!?! I-, Impossible. Just standing here is taking everything I have,” muttered the pale Or.

Yeah. He couldn't even do one, so of course he'd think like that. But it's a matter of diet for him too.

“Or, the way you are now, I'm sure it would be. But leave it to me. I'll come up with a training regime just for you.”

“Tilea-sama, t-, to guide the likes of me, you would actually go so far...?”

Or was so moved he began to tear up. Yeah. First we'll get you some milk, huh.

“Also, Muram, you need to slim up. With your current weight, the rest of the training is impossible.”

“I understand.”

“Also, I was thinking this as I watched you, but you can't just focus on the number. Each one of your pushups has to be in correct form. Form is more important than the quantity.”

“Form?”

“Yeah, form. I'll show you what I mean.”

I got down and began doing perfect pushups.

“A-, As expected of Oneesama! To move so effortlessly under such gravity.”

“Huhu, that's natural. A mere hundred times gravity? I can't feel a thing.”

Huhu, to be honest with you, in my old life I used to do correspondence karate, and from manga and novels I've read all there is to know about pushups. Since my physical abilities were too low in my old life I couldn't do it, but right now I feel like I could go on forever.

Getting carried away, I started doing one-handed pushups too. After that, I switched to finger pushups.

They kept getting more and more shocked.

Yupyup, this is going surprisingly well. I've been training with my wok since I was a kid, after all. I've got quite a bit of strength. Actually, would I actually be like a 3rd Dan in karate or something? At the very least, I'm sure I could win at the Greater Tokyo Karate Tournament.

CHAPTER 5

FORGETTING YOUR ORIGINAL GOAL IS A BIG NONO

“Thirteen... Fourteen... Fifteen...”

I stopped counting and came down from my handstand.

In the end I got carried away by everyone, and did all sorts of things, ending with single-finger handstand pushups. Honestly, I’m too susceptible to the flow. No matter how carried away I get, as a chef I’m supposed to treasure my fingers. What am I doing by endangering them like this!

Yeah. I’ll stop here. It went well this time, but I might break a finger the next. I’m planning on creating God-tier cuisine one day, so there wouldn’t be anything stupider if I hurt myself over something idiotic like this. I’d be disqualified as a chef.

Well, I guess there’s no use crying over spilt milk. Since I already went and performed, let’s see how my audience liked it.

“Well? How was it?”

“A-, Amazing, Oneesama!”

“Truly... That amazing power, and what’s more the finesse and fluidity of movement beneath, and more than anything, that exquisite sense of balance where you didn’t move a hair... I, Nielsen, feel even greater worship towards you, Tilea-sama.”

“I, Dryas, am shaking from the emotion! Even if you scoured the entire world, there would be no greater beauty than yours, Tilea-sama.”

When I asked them, I was met with a storm of praise. Everyone transitioned into a standing ovation with glittering eyes.

Geez, it’s because you guys act like this that I got carried away as well.

Anyway, that’s the end of my performance. Let’s go back to endurance testing.

“Well then, next is situps.”

“Understood!”

Their voices filled with enthusiasm filled the room. The earlier pushups probably exhausted them. I could see that their legs were shaking. But despite that, they were oddly fired up.

Geez, it's only your enthusiasm that's worthy of praise. Your body isn't keeping up at all. You're not going to suddenly collapse, right?

I'm still nervous, but I'll continue the test.

Situps, jumping from side to side, vertical jumps, fifty metre dashes, grip strength... I tested everything. Along the way, Or broke his bones again, but we somehow managed to finish the exam.

The result...?

Timu got a passing grade. She reached the goal I set in every exam. As for her strength, I estimated her to be a little better than your average middle or high schooler. Even though she's small, she's so great.

Next, Dryas-kun, Pervert(Nielsen), please try a little harder. Both Dryas-kun and Pervert(Nielsen) were elementary to middle school at best. I'll have to remodel their bodies on a fundamental level.

Last, Or and Muram were no good on all fronts. To speak frankly, they were out of the question. I'll have to really take care of their diets. I won't let you two be picky eaters.

Phew~ I expected this, but to think these guys were such beansprouts... Well, no use complaining about it. All I can do is improve them one step at a time. Anyway, time to announce the results.

I moved over to Timu, who was resting after the test.

“Timu, you must be tired.”

“Y-, Yes. I never thought that it would be such harsh training.”

“Yeah. But you’ve got real promise, Timu. You had the best score of all the members here. I’ll teach you self defence the next time we have time, okay?”

“Thank you very much, Oneesama. I look forward to it!” she replied, beaming as she wiped her sweat.

If she’s going to be so happy about it, I’ll really need to teach her properly. Time to show off the results of my correspondence Judo lessons.

Next, I called out to Pervert(Nielsen) and the others, who were sitting around exhausted.

“You guys need to build up your strength first, okay?”

“Milady. We understand. We will show you that we have what it takes to conquer this harsh gravity.”

“Y-, Yeah. Anyway, just make sure to moderate yourselves with the pushups and situps. Ah, and it’d be great if we had some dumbbells, but...”

“Oneesama, whatever are these ‘dumm belz’?”

Timu grew interested in my conversation with Pervert(Nielsen). She’s always incredibly curious whenever I talk about my old life. She always listens so intently to me. Well, each time I get embarrassed about my dark history I speak vaguely, but since it’s just dumbbells this time there’s no problem.

“Dumbbells are a tool used for strength training. They’re weights that you hold in your hand and lift up and down like this. It helps you build muscle.”

“Oneesama, if it pleases you, shall I create these ‘dumm belz’ or whatever?”

“Eh-!?! You can do something like that?”

“Yes. It should be possible with creation magic.”

Ooh, as expected of the Magic Academy’s genius student. To think she could even create matter... Maybe Timu could have a future in blacksmithing too.

I told her the properties and dimensions to Timu the Dwarf. After I finished talking, she started chanting some kind of spell.

A few minutes after...

“Onesama, I have created the ‘dumm belz’. How are they?”

I looked at Timu’s creations. Two metallic lumps on either side, and a handle in the middle.

Mn. Just like what I imagined. As expected of Timu.

Timu wrote down its weight on the side. But instead of kilos she wrote tons.

Quite a chuunibyouto thing to do. With a knowing smile, I tried picking it up.

“Mn!? Isn’t this pretty light?”

“As expected of Onesana. To treat a 5 ton weight so lightly.”

“5 tons? —Well, whatever. Timu, if we’re doing this anyway, could you try making a bunch from light to heavy?”

“I understand.”

Timu continued to chant.

And then...

1 ton, 3 ton, 5 ton, 10 ton, and 20 ton dumbbells appeared. Well, they’re actually kilos though.

I gave the ‘20 ton’ dumbbell a lift.

Fumu. This is pretty heavy. I can really feel it pull down on my arm. Well, it is a whole 20 kilos after all. But I found that my arm could still move without a problem. You really can’t look down on the strength you gain from tossing a wok. This weight would be impossible for those weaklings. Or rather, if they force themselves they might even get injured.

“Everyone, you’ll get injured if you try, so don’t touch the twenty ki-, I mean, twenty ton dumbbells, okay!”

“”Understood. It would be impossible for us!””

A bunch of grown men valiantly declaring something so pathetic. Well, I guess it’s fine if they get it...

“You guys should with the 1 ton first.”

“”Understood.””

“Timu, do you want to try the 5 ton one?”

“Hmmm. I also think that much would be appropriate.”

“Mn, then that’s all for today. Timu, you’ve really worked up a sweat, huh. Shall we go find somewhere to have a bath?”

When I invited Timu, suddenly,

“Ah-, Tilea-sama. Please wait a moment.”

Or called out to me from the side.

“What’s wrong, Or?”

“Milady. The room at the end of this hallway has a bath installed. If you wish to bathe, please feel free to use that one!”

“My! Seriously!?! There’s really a bath in this place!?”

“Yes. It is only a small one, but please use it to refresh yourselves.”

Oi oi oi, as expected of Or’s family, you even have a bath in your villa!?! In this land, it’s impossible to own a private bath unless you’re a noble. Commoners have no choice but to use the river you know.

“Timu, since he insisted, shall we take him up on his offer?”

“Yes. I am somewhat anxious because it was something prepared by *damned Ortissio*, but let us go.”

“Haha... You have a point.”

The two of us headed to the bathroom that Or told us about.

“Let’s go in together, Timu ♪”

“Onesama!”

Yuppyup, time to enjoy our first skinship in a whil—wha-, why the hell is Pervert(Nielsen) coming too!

“Niel, what the heck are you doing?”

“Milady. I am here to assist you and Camilla-sama in your—”

“A-, ARE YOU RETARDED, YOU DUMBASSSSSSS!”

The retort just flew out of my mouth. You really can’t let your guard down around this guy. God, even casually carrying in some bath towels? Why is this guy so cunning!

“Onesama, I have stated before, but Nielsen serves as my butler as well. I believe that there should be no problem in allowing him to assist us.”

“HAH!? HAH!? HAH!? Timu, is there something wrong with your head? There’s a huge problem. Are you going to let Niel see your maidenly skin? What are you going to do if he gets improper desires by seeing you!”

“T-, Tilea-sama, I have no ulterior motives. I only earnestly wish to—HEBURAH!”

I ended the Pervert(Nielsen) with a straight punch.

That’s right. I’d forgotten, but this guy was a pervert, wasn’t he. A super pervert who tried to use the confusion to enter the bath with us. As they say, you mustn’t forget the lessons you’ve learnt.

“O-, Onesama...”

“Now then, let’s forget about the pervert and go inside.”

CHAPTER 6

PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEW?

The Royal Capital's Magic Academy reopened, and so young talents with bright futures resumed their academic endeavours. Of course, my prided little sister was trying just as hard.

At first I was worried that she wouldn't be used to the lifestyle, but the girl herself has been completely nonchalant. I'm sure it's because of the support her friends Edim and Jessica are giving her.

For some reason I was called to the Academy today. Something like a parent-teacher interview? The school asked for Timu's parents or guardian, but Mum and Dad are still in Beruga and can't come here so easily.

Because of that, it fell to me as her older sister.

Hmmm, a parent-teacher interview...

It's probably some talk about her grades or her future huh. As her older sister, I'll need to have a good discussion.

And so, I happily headed to the Academy. When I arrived, the students were studying in class, or doing things like sports.

Ahh, even though it's in a different world, it's really still a school, huhh~

I looked here and there curiously, as I took in my surroundings.

Mn. There's so much youth. It reminds me of my old life. Although I was bullied, I still had a few friends. After school I would chat with friends with the same hobbies as me, and even though I didn't have a girlfriend, we came up with "100 ways of getting an elf girlfriend in a fantasy world" together. It's become a fond memory to me now. I hope Timu will have a nice youth like that too.

I know! When I meet the teacher, should I ask if there are any good clubs for her to join? School life would be even better if she had things to do with friends.

As I headed for the reception, I started simulating the interview in my mind.

When I arrived, a clerk came out and asked me to follow. So I did as I was told and followed behind them.

After walking for a while, I was eventually guided to a door with elegant decoration.

This room...?

It was a terribly important-looking door. I'll bet it cost quite a bit. Even though it was just a door, it was like a small work of art. I-, Is it okay to leave my fingerprints on this? Am I overthinking things?

Well, here we go.

I knocked on the door.

"Come in."

"Excuse me."

Since somebody answered, I headed inside with a greeting. What greeted me was a strict-looking man who seemed rather high-strung. Probably Timu's homeroom teacher. I'd better greet him quickly.

"It's nice to meet you. I'm Tilea, Timu's older sister. I've come in place of our parents."

"I'm Timu-kun's homeroom teacher, Jayjay J. Amacheur. Well, please take a seat."

Jayjay-sensei offered me a seat, so I sat down in the one opposite him.

"Now then, the reason I have asked you to come is in regard to Timu-kun's future."

"Ah, I thought so. Is Timu doing well?"

"Her *grades* at least, are completely without objection. She is one of the most talented students in the history of our school."

"Ooh, is that so!"

“Her entrance exam was exceptional as well. Usually a mid-semester transfer would be out of the question unless the student was fairly gifted, but Timu-kun was extraordinary. Her answers often leave her teachers speechless, and it would even be possible for her to one day become the best wizard in the Capital.”

Ooh, that’s amazing! Since Timu learnt magic by herself, and even played magic with a bunch of adults, I knew that she was talented.

But I never could have dreamed that her teacher would praise her this much...

Huhu, I’m so proud of her.

“Sensei, please continue to guide her.”

“I intend to. However, as her older sister, please give a word of warning as well!”

“Eh!? What do you...”

“Timu-kun’s grades are certainly marvellous. How-e-ver, in contrast her attitude towards teachers is incredibly bad. She is rebellious, and doesn’t see her teachers as teachers! No matter how good her grades are, it is a huge problem for her to be this arrogant at her ageee!!”

Jayjay-sensei got too excited and his face turned bright red. I guess he’s really angry about her attitude.

Haha, I thought this might happen. I knew her chuunibyuu would be a problem.

But to think she would suddenly pick a fight with her home room teacher...

Hahh, but I don’t think he would understand even if I explained her chuunibyuu to him. This is bad. If I do nothing, this is going to go on her report one day. I’ve already sworn to clean up after her chuunibyuu. I’ll have to do with this now.

“I’m terribly sorry, Sensei. I will scold her seriously when she comes home. So please, please calm your anger.”

“Huu~ Huu~ Huu~ That girl’s impertinence, her conceit is just... Argh! She’s so infuriating! No matter how bad I might be, I’m still a teacher at this prided school, you know! But that girl...! Hahh, hahh...”

Perhaps he was recalling Timu's attitude or something because Jayjay-sensei showed no signs of calming down. Timu must have really done a number on him.

Can't be helped. I'll just wait quietly until he calms down. It's impossible to talk to angry people.

And so, I decided to wait until Jayjay-sensei was done venting.

A few dozen minutes later...

"Hahh, hahh... I-, I have shown you something terribly unsightly."

He began speaking politely again. I guess he's calm now.

"I really am sorry. Sometimes my sister acts like a little child."

"No, it is the responsibility of a teacher to guide children."

"I will make sure to warn her about her attitude as well. So please keep taking care of my sister."

It's for Timu's upbringing. I gave a 90 degree bow, and deeply lowered my head.

"I know. Timu-kun has incredible talent. To be honest, I even feel envious. But I am a teacher of this school, and have sworn allegiance to the Kingdom of Arcudas. I intend on giving my full support to talents who can one day become the treasures of our nation."

"I see. I'm sure Timu will try her best too."

"You think that?"

"Mn!? Am I wrong?"

"I also thought I could inspire her and told her 'If you continue studying hard, you can become a brilliant court wizard'."

"What did Timu say?"

"Even though she has so much talent, she showed no interest at all in becoming one!"

“Haha, that sounds like her.”

“Is that something to be laughing about! A court wizard! Even after all the studies upon studies that magicians do, only very few can ever become one. The proud magical elites of the Capital. And Timu-kun, Timu-kun... She treats them as though the position is rotten dog feed. You think that’s acceptable! How could that attitude be possible for somebody who has pledged allegiance to our nation!”

“W-, Well, I can certainly understand how you feel, but in the end it depends on what the person herself wants to do. And isn’t pledging allegiance or whatever a little heavy...?”

“What on earth are you saying! The moment she entered this academy, it became natural for her to offer her life to the country! Or rather, it should be how anybody living in the Capital feels!”

What an ultranationalist... No wonder Timu clashed with him.

“U-, Umm, did you tell Timu how you felt?”

“Of course. I told her how a loyal citizen should be. And in particular, I emphasised the model attitude for a court wizard.”

“And, could I ask what that involved exactly?”

After that, Jayjay-sensei went on and on about how great a court wizard was.

He went on about the history of the court wizards, about the way they served the nation, about the ultimate form of self-improvement etc. etc.

Ahh, I can kind of understand Timu’s feelings now. This is the kind of guy you’d want to rebel against. I’m starting to not give a crap about court wizards. And all this stuff about how they live is stuffy too.

My conclusion? It’s basically slave labour. Court wizards don’t even get a holiday! Each day from early in the morning until late at night, they work, work, work, and the free time they have is all devoted to research or special training.

And just the journey to becoming one is scary too. It’s nothing but studying, training, studying, training until you become a cadet.

It's like they don't even know what 'taking a break' means.

I see. No wonder Timu didn't want to become one. No matter how respected a profession it is, Timu would break under that.

"I understand now. Of course something like that is impossible! I can totally understand why Timu doesn't like it."

"What a weak attitude! It becomes truly impossible when you think it impossible! Once you consider the country, even the impossible should become possible. As long as she stakes her life and endeavours, the door will open for her!"

W-, What an idealist...

It's out of the question for Timu to walk the road of a corporate slave. I understand now. I can't leave Timu to a guy like this.

You think I'll give my sister to a black company like you!

"Sensei, don't you think it would be pitiful for Timu to have no time for play or sleep!"

"You've babbled nothing but timidity... Listen up! There are mountains of people who can't become court wizard even if they wanted to! Timu has the talent. Babbling about how it's impossible, or how there's no play time, is the same as blasphemy to them."

He's finally said it. That argument about how there are people in the world who want to work but can't. It was this kind of reasoning that made me become a shut-in.

"Sensei, that's a very old way of thinking. People will only collapse if they don't enjoy their lives."

I began explaining to this idealist about how ridiculous and unreasonable his argument was. But far from listening, he just grew more and more stubborn.

And then...

"Enough! I understand very well how you think now. I'm sure that's also why Timukun has no motivation."

"Yes. I think so too."

“Very well. Timu-kun is expelled. No matter how good her grades are, that spoilt attitude will only be a bad influence on the others.”

“P-, Please wait a moment. Sensei, you don’t have to be so hasty about...”

“No, expulsion is still too lenient, isn’t it. You two have no loyalty to the nation at all. And there’s the issue of Timu-kun’s arrogance. You two are unfit to live in the Capital. I will immediately have you deported from our country.”

“Hah!? No matter what, that’s way too high-handed! Are you crazy?”

“Hmm. Disparaging a teacher of the Academy. Casually disparaging a teacher at the Academy that has the backing of the royal family... Let me ask you one thing; would you be prepared to give your life for the country?”

“O-, Out of the blue you...”

“Just answer the question! Can you? Can’t you?”

“H-, How on earth could I! If it isn’t for my family, if it isn’t for Timu, how on earth could I be prepared to die.”

“That settles it. Nobody living in our nation could possibly think that way. In that case, could you two be linked to the demons? You damned traitors! I’ll immediately imprison you!”

“A-, Are you serious? Y-, You’re being entirely ridiculous. Are you an idiot! Or is this revenge because Timu beat you in an argument.”

“EEI! Both you sisters repulse me. Somebody! Call the guards!”

Oi, what the fuck! Of all things, this maniac started accusing Timu and I of being spies for the demons. We’re not seriously going to be imprisoned, right?

IT’S A FALSE CHARGE! SOMEBODY SAVE US!

CHAPTER 7

I GOTTA PROTECT EDIM'S SECRET

“U-, Umm...?”

“DON'T MOVE! If you move a hair I'll use my magical bullets.”

I looked at the maniac's eyes. This is bad. He'll seriously shoot.

“P-Please calm down. Let's think things through calmly. Timu and I are just the daughters of a chef; we're commoners. Why on earth would we need to get involved with demons?”

“That's suspicious in and of itself! How on earth could the daughter of a mere cook outdo the sons and daughters of nobles. That Timu girl has probably been bewitched by a demon. After all, it's impossible that a noble would lose to a commoner.”

Ah!

So the truth is finally revealed...! In other words, this aristocratic elitist looks down on commoners. That's why he's so suspicious of Timu's talent. There's no way a *commoner* could be the Dux Litterarum, huh!

God, what a stereotypical medieval noble. Thinking that their nobility makes them absolute, and anybody who threatens their position should be hanged as a witch.

“Just listening to you disgusts me. Is this how a teacher should be thinking? Who decided that a commoner can't be as good as a noble? Timu's ability is because of the demons? Stop talking rubbish! Timu's ability is because of her own hard work!”

“Hmph! You don't understand a thing. One's ability in magic is almost always determined by their heritage. There are certainly commoners who have some skill with magic. But they never amount to much.”

“And I'm telling you that's a bias! Don't get Timu mixed up in your elitism. To begin with, aren't you the one who praised Timu in the beginning!”

“Indeed. There may certainly be exceptions within the commoners. It is exactly that thought that led me, for the sake of this nation, for the sake of the royal family, to put aside my personal feelings and suggest that *the likes of a peasant* should become a court wizard. And far from feeling grateful, that girl... to a noble like me... looked at me like I was nothing more than a bug! Absolutely unforgivable!”

The ultranationalist elitist sprayed spittle everywhere.

So unsightly. Doesn't he realise just how much harm that classist way of thinking is doing to the country? Timu understood just how foolish and disgusting this man was.

“It's because you act like this that Timu looked down on you, you know.”

“Hmph. Thinking about it carefully, there was always something inhuman about that girl. I'll bet she's the underling of a demon or something.”

“Hahh~ Don't you understand how absurd you're being? You're being looked down upon because of your own conduct. And of all things, you'd even slander us with a false charge because you couldn't stand losing to a commoner...”

“Shut up! You damned traitor! You've sold us to the demons. You two sisters are going to the gallows. All enemies of the royal family shall die.”

“...Y-, You're insane.”

The nails that stick out are hammered down. Timu is a commoner with more talent than the nobles. I'll bet this elitist bigot didn't look kindly on that. A man mad with jealousy.

But even if he's a madman, he's still a teacher at the Magic Academy. Just his word against ours is enough to doom us.

W-, What should I do.

Before I could think of a plan, reality struck hard when the doors suddenly opened. Guards came walking in. A pair of buff men.

Kuh-, is there nothing else I can do...?

“You’re here. This girl is a traitor who has connections to the demons. Capture her immediately! Her sister as well. I’ll leave it to you.”

“ ... ”

“What’s the matter? Hurry up and restrain her. She’s a traitor to the nation, you know!”

I thought I would be arrested immediately, but for some reason the guards weren’t apprehending me. Far from it, they were just standing around.

Mn!? Somebody else is coming in. Some girl walked briskly and coolly into the room—wai-, Edim? What’s going on?

The guards parted to either side, and Edim strode gallantly down the middle.

“Mu!? Aren’t you Edim? Where have you been all this time? Casually playing truant? How shameless.”

“Eh!? Edim, you haven’t been to school?”

“My sincere apologies. I have been busy with more important places, so I haven’t been to the academy yet,” she explained apologetically.

“Huh? More important places, you say? Depending on your answer, I may need to suspend you, no, expel you.”

“Edim, what was more important than school? Skipping school isn’t good, okay? Please stay with Timu.”

“M-, My most sincere apologies. Because of the decisions we made at the war council, I simply could not find even a little time, and have shamefully not come here yet.”

Edim was even more apologetic now.

“War council? Edim, could it be that the royal family secretly called for you? In that case, there’s no helping it. The royal family comes before all. I understand the circumstances now, so return to class.”

“War council? That wasn’t just an E.G.A. meeting? If you had some job to do, then I guess it can’t be helped. Mn, mn. Once you’re done, go back to class with Timu, okay?”

“Understood. I will return with pleasure,” she replied with an ecstatic expression...

Wai-, who has she been answering all this time? This ultranationalist’s questions have been kind of aligning with mine.

Well whatever. Anyway, what to do about this situation? At this rate, I’ll be imprisoned under false charges. In this world without lawyers, it’s common for people to ignore anything the commoners say. If I just go along with it, I’m done for.

There’s no other choice. Should I make a run for it? But I can’t imagine being able to escape these macho men.

Mm~mm, should I ask Edim to help then? I don’t know why she came in with these guards, but I’m sure Edim can help.

But if she does, then there’s the chance of her real self being exposed. Still, Timu is in danger right now. I have to make a decision.

“Ah~ Edim, the truth is that at this very second, I’m in a rather tight spot.”

“A tight spot, you say?”

“This ultranationalist elitist has been going on about how Timu and I are the underlings of demons, and about he’s going to throw us in jail. Isn’t he a massive idiot?”

“Hmph! I’m a massive idiot? You two sisters are done for!”

“What an annoying guy! Edim, that’s how things are, so could you help?”

“Edim, pay no heed to the babblings of this traitor. Now then, return to class.”

After listening to the maniac and I, Edim gave a clean nod.

“What are you doing, Edim? Return to class at once! Mn!? Speaking of which, why are the guards with you...”

“Tilea-sama, I understand the situation now. I will grasp hold of the academy next. Get him, Dalf!”

“Understood.”

At Edim’s command, the young man named Dalf attacked the ultranationalist elitist. Because he was stunned, he showed no resistance as Dalf sank his fangs into him.

Dalf audibly gulped down blood.

And then...

Pitifully, Ultranationalist Elitist fell to the ground, drained of his blood. It had only been a few dozen seconds.

Then, a few minutes later, the ultranationalist elitist got up, and knelt before Dalf like a retainer.

He was like a totally different person.

The ultranationalist elitist was looking at Dalf like he was a god. The characteristic fangs of a vampire were sticking out of his mouth.

“E-, Edim-san, could I ask one question...?”

“What is it, Tilea-sama?”

“Could it be that the macho men standing over there are both vampires?”

“Yes. They are my kin, Dalf and Milio.”

“...I see.”

“Tilea-sama...?”

Edim tilted her head and looked at me a little confused.

The whole place was quiet, like the earlier chaos was a lie.

Edim and I looked at each other for a while, and then...”

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“W-W-W-What a-are y-y-you doing! Sucking blood... D-, Doesn’t that make you no different to a monster!”

In my panic I criticised Edim.

Oi, oi, oi, what the hell is going on? Didn’t Edim get her human heart back? Why is she attacking people for their blood!

“INSOLENCE! HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO EDIM-SAMA IN SUCH A MANNERR!”

Apparently one of Edim’s kin was enraged at me. In his anger, he raised his fist to hit me.

H-, HYOEH~!? SERIOUSLY!?

O-, Of course. I scolded the master, so of course her kin would be mad.

“U-, Umm, w-, wait a—”

“BASTARDD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO TILEA-SAMA!”

Edim began to violently beat her kin.

“GUHAH!”

“YOU USELESS SCUM! DO YOU INTEND TO SHAME ME IN FRONT OF TILEA-SAMAA!”

Still enraged, Edim continued to beat her kin relentlessly.

Uwahn, that looks painful...

As expected of a vampire. Her strength is really no joke. The buff men were spewing blood in no time.

“P-, Please stop. Please forgive Dalf-sama.”

Ah, the new vampire Jayjay started trying to cover for Dalf.

“Hahh, hahh, bastard. Don’t speak out of turn. You are in the presence of Edim-sama.”

“H-, However...”

W-, What the heck is with this drama.

The former monarch-supremacist Jayjay was now desperately covering for Dalf. Does that mean Jayjay worships Dalf, and in turn Dalf worships Edim?

“Oi! Stop Edim-sama as well, you idiot!”

Jayjay suddenly screamed at me. But, can I even stop Edim? It’s true that she’s Timu’s friend, and I think of Edim as my friend too, but...

At any rate, Edim attacks people. Even ignoring Jayjay, she attacked Dalf and Milio, so that’s already two victims.

Could it be that she’s actually still a vampire inside?

No, but she saved me just now. It was because Jayjay was going to imprison me that she turned him.

And when they tried to attack me, she got angry for my sake and was the Edim that I remember.

Mn, I’ll believe in her. There has to be some reason that she did this. How could I suspect Timu’s precious friend!

“Edim, please stop.”

“Understood.”

Edim obediently agreed. She really is the Edim I know.

“Edim, could I speak to you alone...?”

“Yes. Dalf, Milio, take the new guy and wait outside.”

“H-, However, defending you is—”

“I won’t say it again. Leave!”

“As you wish.”

The two kin left as ordered. Their movements were those of veteran soldiers.

Is this because of vampiric bewitchment or something?

Anyway, I’ll ask why she attacked people. Maybe it has something to do with why she hasn’t been going to school.

“Edim, this is an important question. Could you answer it?”

“Yes, anything.”

“Um, Dalf and Milio, was it? Why did you turn them into kin?”

“Milady, Milio is a member of the Guards. He discovered that I was a vampire, so I had no choice but to turn him. As for Dalf, it was because he was a captain of the Guards.”

Aaah~ So that’s how it is.

S-She had no choice, she had no choice. There were extenuating circumstances, okay? I mean, she’d be executed if people found out that she was a vampire. There wasn’t any choice with Milio, right?

Then what about Dalf? Why did she go out of her way to change him if he hadn’t even found out?

“I understand Milio’s case, but why Dalf?”

“If I turn Dalf, then I can control the entire five hundred guards. Or would it have been better to turn all five hundred of them as well?”

“N-, No, definitely not, but...”

“I-, Is there something else you are dissatisfied with? What on earth should I...?”

Edim looked at me uneasily. It was the expression of a small child who didn't know why she was scolded.

T-, This is...

I see! Oh my god! How could I have said something so cruel!

This is what actually happened!

Even though Edim is a vampire with the heart of a human, her body is a real vampire's. It wouldn't be strange at all if the Guards, Safety Force, and the other government agencies came after her.

One day, Edim was spotted by a guard...

『Oi, I've found you! A remnant of the vampires! PREPARE YOURSELF, YOU ENEMY OF THE KINGG!』

『Stop it! Please stop it! I'm a human!』

『SHUT UPP, MONSTERR! I'LL TAKE REVENGE FOR ALL OF YOUR VICTIMS!』

『Stop! Stop! I'm a victim too! Help!』

Guards tenaciously pursuing her... And naturally so, because of the vampire attack that just happened... Nobody would listen just because she claimed to be a former-human...

And then...

『KYAAAHH!』

『Heh. You've nowhere left to run. Just see how I torture you to death!』

『No! No! Please stop it! GABUH-!』

They drove her into a corner, and she did it out of desperation and fear. That's legitimate self-defence. To think that Edim has been fighting such a struggle all this time. No wonder she couldn't come to school.

And then, a few days ago, Edim realised. That if she continued this way, one day she would be caught and tormented to death. In that case, it would be better to go for the Guard Captain to begin with. If she stopped the leader of the hunting force, then they wouldn't be able to continue. In fact, doing so would reduce the number of victims. That's why she had no choice but to attack him.

What a pitiful girl. Who on earth could blame her. Nobody could. She's a victim. She did what she had to to live. True, what she did might have been a crime. But as her friend, I at least need to stand by her side.

"Edim... It must have been hard."

I gently wrapped my arms around her.

"U-, Umm, Tilea-sama, what do you mean by that? D-Did I make some mistake?"

"No, you did the right thing. No matter what anyone says, I'll support you."

"Tilea-sama!"

For a while, Edim and I hugged each other.

Now then, what do I do?

Edim vampirised the Captain of the Guards, so there shouldn't be any vampire hunts for now. In that case, Edim shouldn't attack any more people. It saddens me too that people had to be attacked.

Ah!? Speaking of which, these new vampires aren't going to run wild, are they? After all, during the attack on the capital it was like a zombie game...

"Hey, Edim, your kin aren't going to run wild, right? It would be bad if they ran out randomly attacking people like the time with the vampires."

“Please be at ease. The reason that happened during the invasion was because the parent vampires lacked both ability and character. I am a first-rate vampire, so there isn’t a problem.”

“I-, I see. I’ll believe in you. Also, what happens to the people who are turned? Like, their character, or rather their personalities and the like?”

Even if it was to save Edim, these people have families too. I wouldn’t be able to bear it if their lives were ruined because of this.

“Their character and personality will stay the same as before. If that weren’t the case, people would notice abnormalities, after all. The effect of turning them into kin are that the abilities of their body are boosted, and that they prioritise their parent vampire.”

I see. In other words, boneheads remain boneheads, and cowards remain cowards. But a person who values the country the most will instead value the person who turned them the most.

Mn!? Then won’t people notice a change?

But well, I guess people do change beliefs. And they’re not dying or anything, so I guess I don’t need to worry about it too much.

“I see. Also, does Timu know about the blood sucking?”

“Yes. The decision to turn the Captain of the Guards was decided during the Evil God Army’s war council.”

W-, WHAT DID YOU SAYYY!?! Was I the only one who didn’t know!?

Haha, what is this feeling of alienation...

It’s true that it’s best to keep this stuff a secret. But I’m her friend too. If Edim is in trouble, then I want to her help too.

Hmmmm... I don’t really like it, but I bet Timu said something like “Please don’t get Onesama involved.”

I’d say that too if I were in her position.

But wow, I've got a better opinion of those guys now. I thought the 'leaders' of the Evil God Army were just playing around, but they were actually brainstorming ideas to help their friend.

I see! I'll bet it was Dryas' idea to convert the Captain. Dryas would definitely have come up with the best solution to her crisis.

"Edim, was it Dryas that suggested vampirising the Captain?"

"Yes, exactly as you say. I did as Dryas-sama instructed."

I knew it! As expected of my Zifang. He came up with the solution with the least sacrifices.

"Hey, is this what you guys have been discussing in your meetings lately?"

"Yes. Not only this, but..."

I see, I see. Everyone cooperated even though it was a crime because their friend needed help. They're actually pretty good guys.

"Edim, it's been rough for you as a vampire. But don't worry. Everyone is on your side. Of course that includes me too."

"Tilea-sama, it isn't rough at all. The joy of being able to serve you and Camilla-sama is incomparable to anything I experienced as a human."

She spoke in chuunibyuu, but I understood. In other words, she's glad that she became friends with Timu and I. She appreciates people who still accept her. Even if she used to be a human, she's a vampire now. Normally people would be frightened or repulsed.

But Timu and the others all treat Edim like normal, without any fear or hatred.

I always thought of those guys as nothing but idiots, but I like this part of them. Well, I feel the same way though.

It's okay. I won't let the country have you. I'll definitely protect you, Edim.

CHAPTER 8

I SERIOUSLY GOTTA PROTECT EDIM'S SECRET

My friend and future lover Remilia-san called me out. Apparently she had something important to talk about.

Huhu, something important, huh~ I wonder what? A confession of her love, maybe~?

At least I was hoping it was something like that.

When I arrived at the meeting place, I was in for a real shock! It wasn't just Remilia-san; a bunch of other people were there too, from adventurer-looking dudes to guard-looking dudes. Either way, a bunch of skilled fighters. This definitely wasn't some love confession.

When I entered the room, all eyes glared at me. I felt completely out of place.

Remilia-san, why on earth did you call me into a place like this~

Aahh, I kinda wanna run away. Anyway, should I just sit in some empty seat first? After giving Remilia-san a short greeting, I did just that and made myself as small as possible.

Uuu, for some reason I'm feeling all nervous now. What the heck is going to happen.

I looked around. There were four tables that sat four people each, and at each table there were three people already sitting there. Altogether ten people, and all of them seemed to be really intense in one way or another. Well, except me of course.

Anyway, everyone was on edge and waiting for Remilia-san to begin talking.

Not long after I had sat down, Remilia-san cleared her throat. Ah, she's about to start talking.

"Thank you for coming, everyone. The people gathered here this evening are limited to only those I can absolutely trust."

Remilia-san's voice was so dignified...

Aah, Remilia-san, I'm happy that you trust me like that. Well, let's leave aside that there are all these other people you trust as well...

"Mind if I ask somethin' first? If we're all 'people you can trust', what the hell is this girl doing here?"

pointed a bearded meatball.

Damn it! What the hell is *his* problem! It's true, but do you have to say it like *that*! You damned bearded—wait, hey... I think I've seen him somewhere before...

"Watch your tone! Tilea is my good friend."

"Just because she's your good friend, you think it makes it fine to bring a total amateur here?"

"Tilea might not be able to fight, but she has been helpful in gathering information. Compared to her, what have *you* done? I have seen the reports. Care to explain your disgrace during the magic dog incident!"

"Uu, t-that's... It's fine."

"I see. Then stop complaining, and shut up!"

Kyaa! So dreamy! Take me!

Thanks to Remilia-san, Beard Meat didn't say anything further and reluctantly withdrew.

"I suspect that many of you do not know each other. Before I move onto the main topic, please introduce yourselves."

In response, a muscular man stood up energetically.

"I'm Raiden Jaft, the Vice Chief of the 2nd Regiment of the National Army. During the demon attack I was going around pacifying the neighbouring umbrella states."

Ooh, some amazing veteran just appeared. I wonder if he'd be interested in trying our restaurant. Along with Myuu, they'd make great publicity. The frequent haunt of an expert adventurer and an expert soldier.

After Raiden-san finished his introduction, next to stand was a slender young man who seemed like a magician.

“I’m Mose Denper, a member of the Sorcerers Regiment of the National Army. I suppose you could say that I’m aiming for Court Wizard.”

Another amazing elite. The Sorcerers Regiment huh. After Timu graduates from the Magic Academy, he’ll be like her senpai. It’d be great if he could lecture Timu on the conduct of a proper magician.

After Mose-san finished his introduction, we went around clockwise. Everyone was a member of the Guards, or the Guild, or some other important institution.

What an amazing group. Even that petty-looking Beard Meat was an amazing B-ranked adventurer.

The more I hear, the more I wonder what the heck I’m doing here. Aren’t I completely out of place?

Why is there a chef amidst all these battle veterans...

Even while I was puzzled, the introductions continued.

Next was—oh! A girl.

Besides Remilia and I, the only girl in this group of men. She had blonde rolls like an ojousama. Great proportions too. What a cutie.

“My name is Rozetta Pratoline. I am an adventurer, and a gourmet hunter. I am presented D-ranked, but one day I shall be S-ranked.”

“Oi, don’t tell me you’re from *that* Rozetta, that major noble family?”

“Yes. Rozetta Stole is my father.”

“Oi, oi, you’re kidding! The hell is a rich girl like you doing adventuring?”

People began to kick up a fuss.

Wow, so she really is a rich ojousama~

She certainly does exude elegance. She kind of reminds me of this rival anime character that was a rich ojou-sama too.

“Huhu, because of my upbringing I have a greater love of gourmet food than the average person. I can’t be satisfied with the average food that other people make. Thus, I had no choice but to become an adventurer, a gourmet hunter to provide good food myself. It simply couldn’t be helped.”

What a daring attitude. But I’m envious. If only I was powerful too, I’d go on adventures and look for my own ingredients.

“Hmph, making a mountain out of something like cooking. People like me are risking our lives just to make a living. Must be nice being a rich girl.”

It was Beard Meat again. Honestly, what an irritating guy. It’s especially unforgivable that he made fun of cooking.

“Huu, I’m tired of listening to that kind of slander. Why do so-called real adventurers like you always make light of cooking. I’m speechless.”

“Why wouldn’t we. Just having food to eat is enough, who cares what it is! Only the rich can fuss about what tastes good and what tastes crap. Gourmet hunter? Hah! You think something like that is an adventurer? Don’t make me laugh!”

“Tell me. Have you ever adventured in the Cold Regions?”

“Course. Far from just the Cold Regions, I’ve been in wyvern nests right by rivers of boiling magma, all sorts of fucking dangerous places. That’s what a real adventurer does.”

“Of course. Then during your adventures, I suppose you prepared *gachalé*?”

“Yeah. If you don’t have that, the Cold Region will freeze your food into blocks of ice. It’s common sense for any adventurer.”

“Huhu, so you managed to adventure there. Good for you. Incidentally, the one who discovered and improved *gachalé* was me.”

“Wha-!?”

“If you look down on food, food will look down on you. Do you still want to say that you can adventure while looking down on food?”

“Kuh-!”

Beard Meat was silenced again. He just exposes more of his pettiness each time he opens his mouth. Honestly, it would be better if he just stopped...

But still, to think that that girl was the one who discovered *gachalé*. That’s seriously amazing. You can use it to keep your food cool, and you can use it as flavouring too. And the ways you can flavour things with it are countless. The discovery of *gachalé* was a revolution to chefs. I can’t even say just how much it’s helped to bring more tastes to the world of cooking.

As I admired Miss Pratoline’s words, it became my turn before I knew it.

I’m feeling kind of nervous~

They’re definitely giving me weird looks. But I guess the die is already cast. It’s too late to back out now.

“Umm~ I’m Tilea. I run a restaurant on West Road. If it pleases you, please give us a visit.”

Uh, for some reason it turned into an advertisement.

Their reactions...

Aah, I knew it. They’re looking confused like, ‘Why the heck is this girl here?’.

“My, was there a restaurant on West Road?”

Oh! Miss Pratoline reacted. As expected of the Gourmet Hunter.

“We just opened last month. I can guarantee the taste.”

“Hmm~ So what’s your restaurant recommended(signature) dish?”

“All of it. We handle everything from the Occident to the Orient.”

“...Well, perhaps I’ll go if I feel like it.”

What the! She isn’t expecting anything at all! What the heck! Just you wait! I’ll make you react like Ajioh.

Once everyone was done introducing themselves, Remilia-san began to explain why she gathered us here today.

“The reason I gathered you this time was none other than the search for the demon who attacked me and annihilated the Public Safety Force: Ortissio.”

GUHOH-! It’s here. It’s here, damnit. I knew it. I knew it would be this. I’ve been getting nothing but bad feelings about this the whole time. Well, considering all the stern people gathered here, I knew it had to be something scary...

Hahh~ To put it simply, the whole thing is just a massive misunderstanding. It would have been fine if she had just left him...

But it’s not like I can say that. If I did, Or would be jailed for interference with a public servant’s duties. And then I would be jailed too for sheltering him.

“Remilia-sama tasked me with the search for the demon Ortissio beforehand,” said Raiden as he stood.

“Then, Raiden, please report.”

“Understood. As of searching the Royal Capital as well as the surrounding states, we have found six individuals with the name Ortissio. Every one of them was human. Remilia-sama, the only one who knows the demon’s face, confirmed that they were simply people with the same name.”

“I see. It was different when I checked too. I suppose there hasn’t been any new information?”

“No, my apologies.”

“No, that’s fine. You did well.”

Yeah, well of course. After all, there’s no such demon as Ortissio. All you have is some wastrel rich boy.

Ah! That's not right. He said there was someone named Ortissio in the Capital too, right? But anyways, I hope they just consider Or as somebody with the same name by coincidence. Still, apparently Remilia-san remembers his face.

"Tilea, do you know anything?"

"Eh-!? W-, Well..."

"Anything is fine. Even something you think is trivial is fine, so please tell us."

What do I do? What should I say? ...C-, Can't be helped. It might be a little pushy, but I guess I'll force her to believe some lies.

"A-A-Ah~ That's right. Speaking of which~ I remember~ The demon that attacked you, Remilia-san, I don't think his name is Ortissio."

"No, I certainly heard his name."

"But at the time you were heavily injured, weren't you? I think you heard the name wrong."

"T-, That shouldn't be the case... probably..."

"See? You're memories are in a jumble. T-, The truth is, there was this really obviously suspicious guy at my shop called Pistachio."

"Pistachio, you say!"

Remilia-san was shocked. Will it work?

"Remilia-sama, the names certainly sound the same. Would it not be appropriate to search for a Pistachio as well while we conduct our searches?"

Some support fire from Raiden-san. That's great. More please.

"Mumu... It is the truth that I was only semi-conscious at the time. Very well. Everybody, please cooperate with me to see if there isn't anybody by the name of Pistachio."

""Understood.""

Phew, thank goodness. Looks like I made it work.

But still, to think Or shared his name with so many people. Ah, but he does come from a major noble's family, so they have a lot of branch families that share the name.

Guess I can relax for now. Later on I have to tell Or to stay inside more until things calm down.

Anyway, is this the end of the meeting? No, looking at Remilia-san, it looks like there's still something more. Fumu. This long meeting has made me kinda thirsty. It looks like they have a kitchen in the next room, so should I make some tea for everyone?

"Um, Remilia-san, since the first topic has finished, shall we have a short break? I can go make tea for everyone."

"Good point. Thank you, Tilea."

"Not at all."

I headed into the kitchen to emphasize to her, "I can do housework. I'm considerate too."

Now then, ummm, tea, tea... I looked through the cupboards.

And then...

Ohh~ Isn't this a *maybell* fruit! And they've got *laurel* drops too.

Ku ku, I have a good idea. Let's test out Miss Pratoline. I'll add in just a little to enhance the taste. Let's see if she realises~

I brought out enough tea for everyone.

Heh. I'll show you the skill of a pro. There are knacks to brewing great tea. The temperature, as well as the timing in which you put in the tea leaves can make huge differences in the taste.

What you do is boil fresh water first. Once it's bubbling, you enter the right amount of leaves before pouring in the boiling water. Immediately cap it with a lid, and then boil

it with respect to the size of the tea leaves. Once the right time has passed, you gently stir it to bring up the tea leaves.

It's at that point that the *maybell* fruit is the most effective, so the trick is to put in *laurel* drops at that moment too.

After that, you just pour out every last drop while making sure that the strength of the tea is uniform.

Yup~ I can really smell the sweet fragrance. The *maybell* fruit and *laurel* drops really form an exquisite harmony. Quite well done, if I do say so myself.

After finishing my preparations, I handed the steaming *maybell* tea out for everyone.

"Here, Remilia-san."

"Umu, it smells great."

No, no, you smell *much* nicer.

"Here you go."

"Hmph. I would've preferred alcohol."

I'll kill you, you bearded meatball!

After handing it to everyone else, finally it was the most important one. Miss Pratoline.

"Here you go."

"Thank you."

It's on.

Miss Pratoline drank it. The way she would occasionally enjoy the fragrance was the very picture of an aristocrat.

"Hmm. Your taste isn't bad."

"Meaning?"

“Did you think I would not notice the *laurel* drops?”

Tsk, so she noticed. But it looks like she has what it takes to brag. I only added just a tiny drop...

“But if you were going to do this, then it would have tasted better to add *barbar* fruit to bring out the astringency.”

Mu! I certainly thought that at first too, but...

That kind of thing would make a chef cry. The balance needed to prepare that is just terrible.

“If you don’t use the *barbar* fruit properly, it’ll overpower everything, so...”

“That’s where the skill of the chef makes the difference. I can do it.”

“Y-, You’ve said it now. E-, Even I can do it if I try.”

“Then do so to begin with.”

“Damn it! J-, Just to let you know, if you think this is the limits of my ability, you’re sorely mistaken, okay.”

“Heh. Talking big takes no ability.”

“F-, Fine then. Fine. It’s on. I challenge you to a cooking duel.”

“My my. You think you can win against *me*? I have more skill than even the royal chefs, you know.”

“Even I—”

“You two, enough fighting!”

“B-, But Remilia-san, this curly blonde butterfly girl...”

“W-, Who did you call a curly blonde! My hair has a long pedigree of—”

“Enough! Break time is over. We will be discussing tonight’s real issue now.”

No good, no good. Remilia-san got angry. I'm reflecting.

Now then, what might the real issue be?

But whatever it is, at least I can relax now that the Or thing is over. I guess I'll just have some tea while I wait.

"At present, the invasion of our nation by demons has been progressing in secret."

Eh, really?

Remilia-san's sudden jab caused everyone to tense up. And hey, another demon attack? I hope nothing bad happens.

"The royal family, the Guild, the Royal Guards... You can consider all organisations to have fallen under the control of the demons."

"S-, So it's true. This weird feeling I've been getting since coming back to the Capital really is..."

"Yes. Exactly as you suspect. The people gathered here were either absent from the Capital during the raid, or people who have only newly arrived. It is no longer possible to trust anybody else."

Mn!? But I was smack bang in the middle during that attack...

"U-, Umm, Remilia-san, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I was in the Capital during the entirety of the demon raid..."

"You're a commoner, so it's fine. I was speaking of those related to organisations like the Guild or Public Safety Force. Combat personnel. And besides, most importantly, you're my friend, and I trust you the most."

"Remilia-san!"

—Hang on, this isn't the time to be praising your lover. The people around us have started to get really noisy.

They're all muttering stuff like,

“So the Captain really...” or “The Guildmaster truly was...”

I-, I’m getting a bad feeling about this.

“Silence, everyone! It is true. As you have suspected, the leaders of all public institutions have been turned by the demons. There are vampires lurking in my Public Safety Force as well. I also tried to discover the mastermind behind the vampires, but they chose suicide just before I could finish interrogating them.”

“Then we have no clues...?”

“We do! Before the vampire died, they screamed the name of their master.”

“Ohh! And what was that name?”

“I was caught off guard and could only hear part of it, but he screamed,

“Long live Edi-something!”

before dying.”

H-, Hang on, the most forbidden secret just got revealed. And the Guild? The military? Edim, just how damned cornered were you!

ABABABABABABA! This is a crime! A total crime! If this gets out, I’ll be hanged along with Edim.

CHAPTER 9

AWAWAWA, BEING A SPY IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME

I wiped down the maybell tea with a handkerchief.

Oh crap, the shock made me spurt stuff everywhere.

Because the maybell tea went spraying everywhere, everybody frowned at me. Worst was Raiden-san who was sitting opposite me. I got it all over him, and he's still glaring now.

Hii, I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Actually, it's a bishoujo's spit, so please think of it as a reward.

"What happened, Tilea?" asked Remilia with worry.

"S-, Sorry. I was just so shocked when I heard about how they were taking over the country."

"Honestly," grumbled a man, "This is why commoners are..."

The people around me all looked at me with disappointment.

"A... haha... It accidentally went down my windpipe."

"Well, Tilea's shock was hardly unreasonable," added Remilia.

"U-, Umm, could it be your imagination? I mean, people might just be tense because they were there during the raid."

"No, if you can tell, you can tell. At a glance they seem like the same people, but they're different people."

Well, yeah. I mean, all these people that used to be "I LOVE ARCUDAS!" turned into "Hahh, hahh, Edim-tan, you're the best♪"

Anyone who knew them would definitely think of them as different people. But I can't give up now. It's Edim's, my, and Timu's lifestyle at stake here.

“R-, Really? People turning into demons? N-, No way! I haven’t noticed at all.”

“That’s because you’re one of the townspeople. I do not suppose the demons have infiltrated the masses yet.”

“It is just as Remilia-sama says. The Captain was always so passionate about hunting down the remaining demons, but now he’s suddenly stopped it all? He even harshly punished the people that protested! It’s too strange!”

“Yeah. The Guild suddenly stopped handing out demon subjugation missions too. It’s supposed to be the most important thing right now. There’s definitely something fishy going on with the management!”

The people around me began strongly voicing their opinions. It’s probably true that the leaders have stopped the search for demons, but that’s all for Edim’s sake. They’re not trying to take over the country, or conquer the world or anything, okay? They just want to let Edim live life as a normal girl.

But it’s not like I can say that. If I did, these people would definitely try and kill her. In other words, I have to find a good explanation for what’s been happening.

“U-, Umm, this is just the humble opinion of a normal person but...”

“Mn? Tilea, if you have something to say, then do not hold back. Just say it.”

“Y-, Yes. Could it be that the leaders have all stopped the demon hunts because they don’t want any more losses? During the raid, everyone saw just how abnormally powerful the demons were.”

“Wha-, YOU! Are you looking down on the National Army! My regiment aren’t weaklings who would bow to the demons!”

“Yeah! The old Captain would never have done something so cowardly! He’s a completely different person.”

“H-, However, you guys can only say that because you weren’t there. It wouldn’t be strange for people to change their opinion if they had been there personally.”

“Y-, YOU! A mere informant dares to look down on us!”

Uwah, o-, oh no. Did I go a little too far?

All these soldiers were red in the face from their anger. It looks like they won't listen. They weren't there during the attack. Should I try turning to Remilia-san?

"U-, Umm, what do you think, Remilia-san?"

"Well, you may have a point, Tilea. It is true that the demons were vastly more powerful than we were. It is certainly possible that the Guildmaster and Royal Family would take a meeker attitude after that."

"T-, That can't be, Remilia-sama..."

Everyone was shocked.

"But it is the truth that vampires have infiltrated the Public Safety Force. And this is simply my instinct as a warrior, but I suspect that the top brass aren't moving for the sake of the country. They are working for some other purpose."

As expected of Remilia-san. That's correct. They're working for their master's, Edim's, sake.

"In that case, we must not tarry, Remilia-sama. We must immediately seek out the mastermind behind them and kill them!"

"Exactly! If we don't fix things now, this country is doomed."

"I understand your opinions," said Remilia. "In that case, we will observe those who are suspicious, and wait for them to contact their puppetmaster. We then catch them all together."

T-, This is so bad. I can't turn back the flow of things. Everyone was vocally agreeing with her. At this rate the Vampire Destruction Plan is going to be a thing.

Think, Tilea! You have to convince them right now!

I took a deep breath.

And then...

“I-, I OBJECTTTT!”

My sudden scream drew their attention.

“What’s the matter, Tilea?”

“I-I! I don’t think you should be spending time on this!”

“What are you saying!” shouted a man, “An amateur should butt out!”

“Yeah!” added another, “You’re speaking out of place, you mere informant!”

I thought this would happen. It was a storm of booing. But Remilia stopped them with one hand, and looked right at me.

“Tilea. For what reason are you objecting?”

“I, I just can’t believe that the demons are taking over. You said it yourself that it was just intuition, and if you have time to be spending on dubious things like that, I think you should be focusing it on improving the public order and maintaining the infrastructure.”

“You! Are you still saying that you don’t believe us!”

“Yeah! If the damned demons take over our country, you think there’s going to be any infrastructure left to maintain!”

“B-, But, the public order has really gotten bad. There are burglars all over the place... Everyone is spending their days anxiously.”

“You should solve trifling things like that on your own. We’re busy with what really matters.”

“Exactly. If you’re worried about safety, why not just hire some guards from the guild?”

“H-, How can you say that... Do you know just how much money it would cost to do that! We’d all go bankrupt. And that’s even assuming we can trust the people we hire. If we hire somebody we can’t trust, we’d have to spend every night afraid of being attacked!”

“It’s a small sacrifice for a great cause. Our country is on the brink. If the country falls, then it’s putting the cart before the horse.”

“W-, What are you saying! What are you going to do if the people are doomed first!”

“Are you mocking the country!”

Oh no. All the ultranationalists are fired up now. They started advancing on me like they were going to attack.

Save me Remilia-sa—hang on, Remilia-san is advancing too?

“Remilia-sama, this girl is being much too arrogant towards the nation. What will we do?”

“Remilia-sama, it might be better to teach her a few manners.”

Oh my god, the ultranationalists are trying to stir her up.

Remilia-san, you wouldn’t use violence on a friend, right? I believe in you.

I gave a trusting, or rather, a begging look at Remilia-san. For some reason she clenched her fist.

H-, Huh? A-, Am I done for? Yeah, of course. Remilia-san has always been really loyal to the country.

Aah, oh no!? Remilia-san’s fist is...

“FOOLS! HAVE YOU NO SHAME!”

“GUHAH!”

But contrary to expectations, the punch wasn’t directed at me, but at one of the ultranationalists. Then, before my eyes, Remilia-san lowered her head.

“I’m sorry. As the Captain tasked with keeping the public order, I apologise from the bottom of my heart.”

“Remilia-sama, please stop that. To lower your head to a commoner is—”

“SILENCE! Have you lot no shame! We exist to protect the country. I believe this too. But if the citizens are crying for help, and as the leaders we trample over their earnest pleas, do you really believe we can fix this country!”

Remilia-san’s grave rebuke startled the ultranationalists into silence. The other members were shocked too. Perhaps it got through to them, because the ultranationalists began apologising to me.

What leadership and determination! What resplendent nobility!

I guess this is what you call real charisma. It makes you want to follow her. I’ve fallen for you all over again, Remilia-san. You’re just so cool.

With that, the discussion ended.

The result was that the participants seriously reflected on my opinion. They decided to improve the public order first.

I did it! Well, they’re still keeping an eye on suspicious people, but I guess we can call it compromise. They’re looking for a guy called Eddygar too, so I doubt it’ll lead them to Edim.

Huhu, this is all thanks to my fake info about Pistachio and Eddygar, two suspicious people that visited my shop.

Phew, I thought I was going to die from stomach pain during that meeting, but it looks like I made it.

While I was basking in the relief, Remilia-san came up to me.

“I knew it was a good idea to bring you, Tilea. It was good to find out how the common people were feeling.”

“No, I didn’t do anything at all.”

“No, Tilea. Because we are all warriors, our views are too monolithic. But thanks to you, we ended up having a good discussion. Did you not also provide us with a lead! Tilea, I am grateful to you.”

“I-, I’m honoured.”

I'm sorry. It was fake info so please don't feel so grateful. Uu, I feel so bad. I've been doing nothing but lying to my future girlfriend.

"I will be expecting a lot out of you."

"Y-, Yes. If I hear anything, I'll let you know."

"Umu. The next meeting is next month. I'll be counting on you."

"S-, Sorry? U-, Umm, isn't the meeting over...?"

"What are you saying. In order to revive the Capital, there are countless things that we should discuss as trustworthy individuals. The Loyalist Committee for the Extermination of Demons. From today onwards, you're an intelligence operative in our operation," said Remilia with a bright smile.

W-, What's with that CIA agent-sounding role?

And Remilia-san, how can you just let a mole into your group like this? I'm on the demon's side to protect Edim, you know.

Aah, I think my stomach pains just came back. It looks like my worries won't clear up so easily.

CHAPTER 10

WE'RE IN DANGER OF BANKRUPTCY AT THIS RATE

GYABON! T-, This month is in the red as well...

I collapsed onto my table in shock.

Ever since “Restaurant Berum – Capital Branch” has opened, not once have we ever made a profit.

Why? Why is this happening? Our food isn't any worse than the other restaurants. No, actually we could even brag that we're two ranks above everyone else. But then why aren't we making money?

Isn't it weird? We get a decent amount of customers too...

Or could it be that just this amount isn't enough?

This is impossible. I'm a total amateur in terms of management. I can't tell what's happening at all. After all, I've never had to think about the management side of things before. Instead of wasting my life being a NEET I should've picked up some classes in administration damn it!

Even back home, it was Dad and I doing the cooking, with Mum doing all the management so I don't have any of the expertise at all.

But does that really have to mean that our restaurant makes such a huge loss?

I glared at my account book. Written in red ink, the numbers '30,000,000 gold' stared back at me.

Wife, it's 30,000,000 gold! 30,000,000 gold!

Haha, that's enough of a debt to crush two or three small shops. Normally we'd have to declare bankruptcy. We're only holding on because Or keeps endlessly contributing

money. If he ever stops, our shop would be done for in an instant. I'd have nothing but debt left.

Hahh~ Will Or finally snap when I tell him we're in the red again?

Or already contributed everything to the restaurant's start-up. Even if it's reparations for when he attacked me, this much is still way pushing it. I'm really taking it all.

Alright. Time to come up with a plan to turn this around without relying on Or anymore.

-poku poku poku... ching!-

The answer has come to me... Quite frankly, it's impossible. It's absolutely impossible to come up with some plan to pay back thirty million gold.

Hahh~ I'm just a huge failure of a manager. If I went on that Tigers' Den show, I'd be done for sure. "You're looking down on society!" they'd yell at me, "You've never seriously worked once in your life, have you?" they'd say at me...

But anyway, for this month at least, I'll just have to rely on Or's pity.

Having decided that, I headed down into the Evil God Army's secret hideout.

I wonder where Or is.

With brisk steps, I wandered the hallways of the underground.

And then... There he is.

Or was whole-heartedly training in Gravity Room C. Incidentally, there are four training rooms in this underground empire, ranked from A to D in terms of gravitational strength. According to Timu, Gravity Room A is 100G's, and right now it's being used exclusively by Timu. Gravity Room B is 50G's and is being used by only Pervert(Nielsen) and Dryas-kun. Gravity Room C is 30G's and is where all the other leaders are training.

Geez, these guys sure love this kind of stuff. I tried out the other gravity rooms myself and they really did feel heavier. Only barely though.

Apparently Timu analysed my Pettanko spell and applied it to each of the rooms. Honestly, why are these guys so fixated on chuunibyou. Thanks to that, there's always somebody in there.

As I mentioned, Or was in Gravity Room C. It felt just a little heavier in there. I could only barely feel it. But it's nice, having just a little extra weight to train.

Training in an enhanced gravity environment...

Honestly an opportunity that would make any chuunibyou drool. Or was training hard in the 30 times(lol) gravity room just like some manga character.

I walked towards him as he continued his sit-ups. When he noticed me coming, he immediately stood up and ran over to me though.

"Why if it isn't Tilea-sama."

"Sorry for disturbing you during your training."

"Not at all, I was just about finished."

How do I break this to him? I'm telling him about a debt, so I can't mess this up.

"Aahh~ Ortissio-san. There is a large favour that I would like to ask of you."

"Whatever you need," smiled Or as he wiped his sweat down.

I'm sorry, Or. What I'm about to say will destroy that smile of yours.

"The truth is... It is very difficult to say this, but the truth is that I am in a rather difficult position.

"Tilea-sama, there is no need to mince words with the likes of me. Please stop. Whatever problems you may face, I, the lowly Ortissio, will put my life on the line to help you."

I suppose he has a point. It's weird if I suddenly change the way I speak. I suppose you *would* be suspicious if a friend you're casual with suddenly begins talking so politely. This is bad. Did I make a mistake in the way I started this conversation? Maybe it would have been better to just been straight with him.

Okay. Forget about being subtle about it. I'll just tell him.

"Ahh~ Or, so, you know that shop I'm managing upstairs?"

"Yes."

"Teheh♪ I'm in the red again this month. And so, please lend me more money!"

Was I too casual about it? I tried sounding casual and friendly as usual. Did it work? Or looked completely stunned for some reason.

"Tilea-sama, when you said you were in a difficult position I thought it would be a bit more serious. I understand. I will provide funds as usual."

Eh? What's with his attitude? Is that fine? I'm going to take advantage of you like this. No matter how rich your dad is, if you keep using his money like this he won't be happy about it...

"Is something the matter, Tilea-sama? Will the usual amount be insufficient? In that case, I will provide even..."

"Ahh~ Wait, wait! Is this really okay? To be blunt, I've borrowed tens of millions of gold from you already, you know."

"Tilea-sama, I must sincerely apologise. I have only given you some tens of millions of gold...? In that case I must increase the——"

"N0000000! That's not it! D-Don't you realise that this much debt would be enough to crush a normal shop? It pains me to say this but are you really going keep investing in a horrible manager like me!?"

Perhaps he finally understood how serious this was after my shouting because Or's expression turned meek. Yeah. Please think about this carefully. You might really throw away your family's fortune at this rate.

"In other words, you are lamenting the loss of capital for our Evil God Army. Correct, Tilea-sama?"

"W-Well, I suppose if you express it the way you guys do, that's right. Because of my management of the shop, we've made a loss of 30,000,000 gold."

“Please be at ease. Just that much is nothing much. It will have no effect on the operations of our Evil God Army.”

This son of a major noble family smiled brightly at me. Oi, oi, thirty million gold is “nothing much”? Just how damned rich are you.

“T-, Then, you’ll provide money as well, this month?”

“Why of course. I could double the amount if it pleases you. And besides, everything in this world belongs to you to begin with, Tilea-sama. Please do not be so worried and just spend as you please.”

Oi, oi, are you telling me to spend your family’s fortune as I please? Is this Pretty Woman or something? I’m seriously going to run into a shop and buy “everything from *here to here*”, okay.

“Aah~ Then, if I asked you for a *hundred* million gold...?”

“I would prepare it at once.”

Oi, this guy just replied without a millimetre of hesitation, you know.

Why is this guy going so far for me...?

-gasp!- Don’t tell me!

“Say, Or, could it be that you’ve fallen for me?”

Nothing would make me guiltier. After all, my heart already belongs to Remilia-san. Taking money from somebody you’ll never love back is just horrible.

Tell me, Or. What’s your answer.

“Of course I have. The depths of your mighty power is like an unfathomable abyss, and each day I tremble with delight at having the opportunity to serve one as sublime as you.”

Fumu, then I guess this is like the relationship between Pervert(Nielsen) and Timu. Rather than liking me romantically, I’m more like a member of an idol group. You know, in my past life I heard about diehard fans buying several hundred CDs of their

favourite idol. But man, as a rich noble, the scale that Or operates on is in a whole other league.

In the end, it seems that the debt I was wracking my brains over was nothing much to Or. In that case, maybe it would be fine to just keep relying on him—wai-, as if it would be fine!

At this rate Or is going to become bankrupt because of me. It's not like the money just grows on trees. I'm not a sinful woman, okay. I'm happy that he's helping me with money, but at this rate I'm just going to send him straight down the path of bankruptcy. No matter how much he spoils Or and how much he loves Or, even Or's dad would have to disown him at that point.

"Or, money isn't something that you can just waste. Please stop thinking that you can just use it however you wish. That way of thinking will ruin you one day."

"M-, My deepest apologies. Then in that case, shall we destroy the restaurant upstairs to reduce the expenditure of our army?"

GABOH-! O-, Oh no...

That's putting the cart before the horse then. I want to be a cook in the Royal Capital. Tilea, haven't you forgotten the goal here? I got too carried away because of how ridiculous Or's money sense was, but I originally came here to borrow money off of him. There was no need to lecture him on how to spend his money.

"Or, that would trouble me."

"I see. Since cooking is your hobby, it would not do at all to destroy the restaurant."

"Wha-!? What did you say just now?"

"Oh, as I said, it would not do to destroy the restaurant."

"No, before that."

"Since cooking is your hobby—HAGUH-, GUWAAHH!"

Before I knew it, I had Or's face in a vicegrip. I was so angry that I was just squeezing it. Or screamed as his head creaked.

Or was groaning in pain...

But I won't forgive him! He said that my cooking was just a hobby! A professional like me, as a hobby!?

"Or! Are you trying to say that I'm just some beginner in your eyes?"

"GAh, hah, n-never would I, say such a thing... I-, I simply, hahh, hah, wanted to say, that even busy on your road to conquest, hahh, you had even reached such, a level on the side—HOGGYAHH!"

"Or! Are you trying to say that I'm just cooking to kill time on the side?"

His words poured more oil onto the fire, and my iron claw grew tighter. Or ended up spasming into unconsciousness.

Fumu, did I go a bit far? Since he made light of my cook's spirit the blood kinda rushed to my head.

But this is a grave situation. Or probably thought of me as just some amateur because the shop is in the red all the time. It's obvious that some hobbyist amateur is making a loss, he thinks.

Could it be that all the other leaders see me the same way? If that's the case it's, it's unforgivable! You've wounded my pride.

If that's how it is, then I need to make a profit no matter what.

I'll immediately form a plan and...

I know! Don't I have a strategist for these things. I have a very reliable wise general, don't I. Why didn't I think to ask him for advice first. I'll go ask him now!

After laying Or onto the ground, I immediately went to look for Dryas-kun.

Ummm, Dryas-kun is...?

I searched through the needlessly large underground empire. When I asked a passerby, I was told that he was in the conference room.

“Dryas-ku~n, heeeelp meeeee~”

I quickly trotted into the room.

The very moment I arrived, I threw the door open. Inside were Dryas-kun, Timu, and Pervert(Nielsen) discussing something or other.

Oh!? So these guys were here too. Perfect. I’ll ask these two what they think as well. As research, it’s better to ask for other opinions. Maybe I should ask the other leaders what they think too...

I’ll have the three of them stop their discussions and gather the rest of the leaders. I mean, these three are probably just playing around anyway.

Ah!? Wait, hang on. That might not necessarily be true. What if they’re talking about Edim? In that case, that takes precedence over the shop.

“Sorry for disturbing you during your discussion, you three.”

“”Why if it isn’t Tilea-sama.””

“Umm~ Are you guys talking about Edim?”

“No, we were adjusting the deployment of troops on expedition to the Manafint Confederation.”

Yup, just playing. Geez, their life sure is relaxing~ I’m completely envious. Even though I’m worrying about the restaurant, and even had that terrifying meeting with Remilia-san and the others...

And what do they mean deployment? Have they started playing something like military airsoft? It sounds interesting so normally I’d ask about it, but right now isn’t the time for that. My pride as a chef is on the line here.

“Um, let’s stop talking about manawhatchits for a moment. I have a pressing matter to discuss. Could you call all the leaders here?”

“Understood. I shall immediately convene them,”

said Pervert(Nielsen) before leaving the room.

“It’s rare for you to bring something up yourself, Tilea-sama.”

“Yeah. I kinda need to borrow your heads for a little bit...”

“If you have any problems, Oneesama, I shall spare no efforts to aide you.”

Timu’s words were reassuring. Yep, yep, three heads are better than one. It was a much better idea to call the leaders here instead of agonising by myself.

Well, my star of hope is still Dryas-kun, though. Still, I’ll be making suggestions too. Like um, how about lunchtime special coupons?

CHAPTER 11

URGENT MEETING! WE NEED TO GET THIS STORE GOING AGAIN!

An emergency meeting was being held!

Because of my decision as the generalissimo, the entire Evil God Army was in chaos. I'm not sure what exactly Pervert(Nielsen) said to the others but the officers of the Evil God Army all rushed into the meeting room.

Did everyone want to play with me that badly?

Technically I'm the leader of this whole group, but since coming to the Capital I haven't joined a meeting even once. I guess it can't be helped that they're so excited. Ah, the training from the other day was a different matter of course.

Still, sorry to all these guys, but right now isn't the time for games. We can't always be shouting "Dispatch the troops!" and "Leave nobody alive!" can we. The store's existence depends on this. I hope they'll take this seriously.

Just the lunch coupons aren't enough. I need other ideas besides—so fast!?

In just the short while that I was thinking to myself, the entirety of the EGA's leadership lined up in front of me. It hadn't even been five minutes yet. Why is it that you guys are only this enthusiastic when it comes to games. Well, sorry to disappoint you though.

At any rate, they were all standing there. Waiting for my orders, presumably. And they were all looking expectantly at me too. I'll bet they were imagining it was time for me to shout "Spread our banner across the lands!" or something.

Originally Timu and the others would invite me to the war councils. I was so busy with the store though, that I never had time for that. That's why I told them that I would entrust them with everything instead. Right now Timu was looking at me with this face like, 'finally, Onesama wants to play'.

I'm sorry, Timu. Right now your Oneechan is in a huge pinch. If she screws this up it's bankruptcy. We'll invade the Manamana country some other time, okay?

"Everyone, please sit."

"Milady," they acknowledged together.

It feels a bit like a real army.

"Ahem. I've called you all here today to discuss the matter of the store on the surface."

"Might you be referring to the restaurant that you run, Tilea-sama?"

"That's right. So you see, right now I'm kind of in a bit of a pickle. The place is about to shut down, so I'd like some ideas on how to get out of this mess."

Everyone's eyes were wide. It must have felt really out of the blue for them.

"Tilea-sama, with all due respect, I was led to believe that Ortissio was regularly supplying you money, but..."

"That's true, but it brings me shame to say that I'm not making a profit."

Hearing it come out of my own mouth made me hang my head. He gave me that much money and I'm still in the red.

"Ortissio! Tilea-sama is obviously upset and yet you withhold money!?"

"I-I dare not. I have already told Tilea-sama that it would be no problem to increase the amount of money."

"I care not for your excuses, Ortissio. You have wasted Oneesama's time. I trust you are prepared for the consequences."

"Hii...! B-But Tilea-sama was..."

Whoa whoa. How does it make any sense to blame Ortissio for this? I'm the one responsible.

“C’mon guys, enough of that. Or isn’t in the wrong here. This isn’t a problem about how much money he gives me. It’s true that his money is what’s been keeping it afloat so far, but what I really want to know is why we’re not turning a profit.”

“I understand now, Tilea-sama. In other words, this is a matter of pride.”

Dryas-kun is a smart cookie as always. That’s exactly right. I can’t just keep taking advantage of Or’s money here. And to begin with, it’s really weird that my food isn’t making money.

“Sharp as always, Dryas-kun. You understand my feelings.”

“I am honoured.”

“That’s right. To be frank, I have complete faith in my abilities as a cook. It’s impossible for me to be getting so few customers.”

“It is incomprehensible, Oneesama. How could anybody not understand the value of the best food in history.”

“Yupyup, I’m definitely better than our competitors.”

Even I have enough sense to scout out our rivals. I went to the more bustling restaurants in the Capital to try their food, and I was one or two levels higher than everyone out there. I can’t say they were bad. It’s just that they were B-rank cooks at best.

“Mere cooking though it may be, it is unacceptable for anybody to defeat Tilea-sama,” Pervert(Niel) exclaimed indignantly. It seems like agreement at first but...

Hey, Pervert(Niel). What did you say just now? MERE COOKING!?

You’re supposed to be an employee at our restaurant! What the fuck are you saying!?

Pervert(Niel) is my subordinate, okay? Not just in some make-believe army, but in an honest to god work environment Pervert(Niel) is my subordinate. But despite that, despite being in the culinary industry, he goes and spouts outrageous crap like that. Is that how an employee is supposed to act.

“Niel!”

“Milady.”

“Minus ten points!”

“HEBSH-!”

I pegged a pencil-thing hard at him, like a teacher throwing chalk at her bad student.

Pervert(Nielsen) staggered a bit before collapsing. Guess it was a critical hit. He was just laying there.

Hm, did I take things a bit far? Ah, that’s no good. No matter how badly the management of the store is going, it’s never an excuse to throw things at people.

“Sorry, Niel. Are you okay?”

“Uguhg. Hahh, hahh, I-, I am f-fine...”

He put up a strong front but his legs were still trembling. Ah geez, I shouldn’t have used violence on somebody so fragile. Let’s wait for him to recover.

A few minutes later...

Pervert(Nielsen) was finally able to sit back in his chair.

“You okay now, Niel?”

“There is no issue, Milady. So what mistake did I make?”

What mistake!? You don’t even understand!? Hahh~ This guy really lacks self-awareness about his job at Berum Restaurant.

“Niel. You’re my subordinate. DUU YUU ANDASTAN?”

“Certainly. I am your faithful servant, Tilea-sama.”

“Then be a bit more aware of that fact. You’re working at my restaurant, and yet you’d say something like ‘mere food’. If our employees aren’t taking their jobs seriously, do you really think we can turn this store around!”

“M-, My deepest apologies. My words certainly were counter to your desires.”

“Huu~ Think about this carefully next time, okay?”

“As you wish.”

I sighed.

Does anybody else have any ideas?

I looked around.

Mn? Edim looked like she was fidgeting for some reason.

Before long...

“U-, Umm, Tilea-sama.”

“My, Edim. Do you have anything to say?”

“Yes. What if I turned all the humans into my kin and ordered them to come to the restaurant?”

Edim, please don't say such scary things so casually. I hope this is a joke, but when it comes to Edim it's a terrifyingly real possibility.

And she's hurt my pride by saying something like that.

“Edim, are you looking down on me?”

“Never, I would never do such a thing.”

“You know, by suggesting a plan to force people to come you're basically saying that my cooking isn't enough to do it! Do you get that?”

“Honestly, even you're saying stupid things like Niel. Next time I'll hit you with a kukanomi, okay?”

“Y-Yes...”

After that, Timu and the others continued suggesting violent and outrageous plans. One guy even suggested massacring the ‘foolish townfolk who fail to understand the greatness of (my) cooking!’

Huu, I swear these guys have a one-track mind...

Is it actually impossible to talk seriously with a chuunibyou? I can’t believe I’m wondering this just now.

“Hey, does anybody have any serious ideas?”

“Tilea-sama, may I?” asked the previously silent Dryas as he raised a hand.

The star of the show is finally here.

“Sure, sure. Tell me what you’ve got.”

“Milady. In my humble opinion, your cooking is perfection itself. The deficit the restaurant is experiencing has another cause. The position of the store, the lack of advertising, and finally the pricing of the menu appear to be the problems.”

As expected of Dryas-kun, finally a serious answer. A chuunibyou though you may be, you’ve really shown how different you are to the others.

“Mn, mn, continue.”

“Yes, Milady. This restaurant is located at the very end of Western Street, in a place beyond notice. Furthermore, due to the lack of advertisement, I presume that many have not even heard of its existence.”

“I see. I guess this *is* pretty out of the way.”

“Finally, our position means that few pedestrians on Western Street would come as far as here. They tend to congregate towards the centre.”

Could it mean that he wants us to move the store? But that’s impossible. There’s the issue of money for one thing, but Or and Edim are still wanted suspects. We need the underground housing because they need to lay low until the heat dies down.”

“But moving is impossible, Dryas-kun.”

“Indeed. This is the best position to avoid revealing our headquarters. Moving the store would be undesirable.”

“I thought so too. Then I guess we just have to try harder with advertising? Also, you said there was an issue with the pricing?”

“Yes. To put it simply, the prices are entirely too cheap. Far from making a profit, we struggle to even break even.”

“I thought the ingredients would have been cheaper, but they were so expensive that I didn’t think any customers would come. That’s why I thought I’d focus on making a lot of small profits instead, but...”

“Tilea-sama, what if we change the target demographic to the wealthy? At this pricing, even a thousand customers a day would not bring a profit.”

“I-IT’S THAT BAD!? Mmmn, but wringing the rich for their money is a bit... I’d prefer it if more people could taste my cooking.”

“I understand. Everything is for the sake of your desires. In that case, we will adjust the prices more conservatively and order Edim’s kin to promote the store.”

“I see! GUDDO AIDEA!”

I knew I was right to believe in him. Next time I should just talk alone with him. That way I won’t waste so much time.

“Beyond that, we can shave down the cost of the ingredients a little, and order the troops to gather ingredients.”

“Yeah, I guess there are the middleman fees if we keep buying from the market, huh.”

If we were on the internet I’d be spamming the Like button right now.

“In that case the ingredients shall be gathered by sending the Second Division on expeditions.”

“W-Wait a moment. My Second Division has been working non-stop at suppressing the neighbouring settlements. It would be impossible to take on the job of ingredient gathering as well,” Or interjected.

He tried to convey just how busy he was but Dryas-kun was having none of it.

“Enough whining! Ortissio, this is not a *request*. As Chief of General Staff I am *ordering* you to do so.”

“H-, However...”

“Ortissio, I thought you were supposed to be demonstrating your loyalty!” roared Pervert(Nielsen).

“Ortissio, know that if you continue your excuses I will personally tear your mouth off,” added Timu.

You guys are a bit too harsh...

“Y-Yes, h-hic, I un-understand... Then I sh-shall... hic, accept this... mission.”

Or was really starting to cry now. Aah, not this again. I’ve told them so many times to stop picking on Or already...

“That’s enough, everyone.”

“H-However, *damned Ortissio* is being too—”

“Enough!”

Everyone went silent, and Or looked up at me with his tear-stained face.

“H-, Hic, T-Tilea-sama...”

“Or, I know that you take the occasional trip out of the capital. When you’re out there, if you happen to come across any good ingredients then I’d like it if you brought them back with you.”

“Hic, i-ingredients...?”

“Mn, if you say it’s impossible, then I won’t force you. We’re done discussing it, and I won’t let anybody say otherwise.”

“Tilea-sama... Just how far does your compassion and greatness go...”

“Huhu, your flattery is really over-the-top.”

“Not at all. I am not praising you enough.”

With that, Or was back to normal. I guess he’s done crying.

“So Or, think you can do it?”

“Yes, Milady! I, lowly Ortissio, profoundly apologise for complaining over merely accepting two tasks. Please leave it to me. I shall accomplish this without fail.”

“Okay. I’ll look forward to it then. Ah, but enough about the subjugation of the villages or whatever. You don’t need to feel pressured over something like that.”

“Please be at ease. I will prioritise the gathering of ingredients. The likes of those settlements will not take up our time. If it takes too long then we can simply exterminate them all.”

“I-, I see... Don’t go too crazy with your games, okay?”

“Huhu, games indeed. I understand. I will calmly deal with it all.”

CHAPTER 12

EDIM AND THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MEETING

Can I get any luckier...?

I was allowed to become the faithful servant to both Tilea-sama and Camilla-sama. I was allowed to join the Evil God Army at its bottom. And when I became a vampire, a demon, I finally started to wonder.

Why are humans so frail...?

Even the Royal Capital's Public Safety Force, led by Remilia and praised as the strongest were nothing more than infants.

Ahaha, I can't stop the smiles. My mana has already exceeded the ten thousand mark. A number that would have been unimaginable to me back when I was human. Not only that but I've finished vampirising all the key members of the city. The royal family, the Guild, the Magic Academy – all of them just waiting for my single command to move as I please.

If only she desires it, they are ready to act as the spearhead for Tilea-sama's grand plan to conquer the world.

I should report the completion of the vampirisation mission at the next war council. Might Camilla-sama praise me? Or will she kick and step on me and tell me not to get proud of something so little? All I know is that I'd be overjoyed with either.

While I was enjoying my delusions, Nielsen-sama suddenly rushed past me. I've never seen him look so frantic.

Did something happen?

"Nielsen-sama?" I called out to him.

He stopped to turn at me.

"Ah, Edim. We will be holding a war council today. Report immediately to the location."

“A war council, Sir?”

“Indeed. Tilea-sama called for it. Pay attention.”

“I understand.”

“Mn. Go at once. I will inform the others.”

With that, he continued his sprint down the hallway.

Tilea-sama attending a meeting!?

This hasn't happened even once before...

I made haste with a nervous expression. I entered the meeting room to find a completely different atmosphere than normal. It was natural considering who was standing there. The tension was unreal.

After some nervous waiting, everybody was finally here.

“Please sit,” said Tilea-sama, and everybody took a seat.

What's this all about?

Is it finally time for Tilea-sama herself to make her move on the world? If so, then I can finally see Camilla-sama and Tilea-sama's greatness from up close!

What fortune!

Just imagining the two of them trampling the humans was giving me the shivers.

But unexpectedly, the subject matter at hand was...

“Do something about the restaurant's debt!”

Tilea-sama...

To be honest it was a complete let-down.

Why is Tilea-sama still so obsessed about that restaurant? Is it really something so important that we needed to suspend the expedition to the Manafint Condeferation? What does everybody else think about this?

I looked around at the attending leadership.

Eh-!?! Everybody there was nodding along with serious expressions. They even started vigorously discussing ideas. What's going on? Also, Ortissio-sama was being criticised as usual.

Eventually Dryas-sama finally spoke, and his words filled me with shame.

Of course. The food being served in that restaurant was made by Tilea-sama herself. That the restaurant was in the red is nothing less than a slap in the face to her. An insult impossible to stomach. This certainly was a matter of utmost importance. Mere food or not, any loss on Tilea-sama's part was absolutely unacceptable.

Nielsen-sama felt the same way. He basically spoke my mind. Nobody else spoke up, but they nodded along in agreement.

But Nielsen-sama's words of loyalty were met with a projectile of incredible speeds.

I-, I think that may have crossed Mach 1...

I only heard the sound of the throw after it passed. Nielsen-sama was knocked down without a struggle.

W-What power!

It could have blown over dozens of your average demons. It's only because it was Nielsen-sama that he survived. Everyone else was dumbstruck.

Later on when Tilea-sama explained her anger, my back was drenched in cold sweat.

I should have realised. Tilea-sama was presently angry exactly because of the issue of cooking.

I looked at Nielsen-sama carefully to warn myself of what would happen if I wasn't careful with my words.

S-Still, thank goodness...

I was *this* close to saying the same thing as he did. My brains would have been splattered across the wall.

Anyway, I need to think of some kind of plan. Tilea-sama's name is riding on this.

I frantically used my head.

...

I know! There *is* something I can do! I can just turn all of the foolish humans into my vampires. I'll vampirise all the humans and then order them to go to the restaurant. That way we'll get heaps of customers, and Tilea-sama's restaurant will be number one too.

I voiced my suggestion to Tilea-sama.

But instead she became enraged anyway and asked me if I was looking down on her cooking.

A chill ran down my spine—

Why didn't you realise, Edim!

I was essentially looking down on Tilea-sama. She glared angrily at me.

Uu, this is the power of an absolute conqueror. What pressure...

Even though I knew the normal, kind Tilea-sama, I couldn't keep my legs from trembling or my teeth from clattering.

A-, Anyway I have to beg for forgiveness! I frantically began to apologise. Maybe she could tell I was being sincere because I somehow got her to forgive me.

Phew, I lost a few years off my life with that.

It's easy to forget because of how kind she usually is, but Tilea-sama's power is bottomless. Truly the Evil God. I'd better pay attention to my words and actions from now on. Particularly when it comes to food.

Also, I've been wondering...

What did she mean about throwing a kukanomi at me? And thinking about it, Tilea-sama always tries to stop me from eating kukanomi. She says stuff like "It's your weakpoint, so you can't," or "Stay away from the church."

What do those have to do with each other?

I don't understand. Tilea-sama's thoughts are still unfathomable as always.

But well, thinking about it any further would be insolence.

As a servant I should avoid trying to pry into my master's thoughts too deeply. No matter what happens, to continue serving faithfully is what a truly loyal retainer is.

