

Toriaezu Densetsu no Yūsha no Densetsu:Volume 7 The Limit of a Genius

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Misunderstood Legendary Heroes' Legend

The Limit of a Genius[[edit](#)]

A chosen person.

He was a chosen person.

He was different from other people.

He was different from normal people.

“You're different from those weaklings—you're an elite.”

He'd grown up being told that.

And that, Zohra Rom thought, was natural.

“... That's right. Naturally,”

He murmured, staring at his reflection in the mirror.

Tea-coloured hair, competitive and strong blue eyes.

He was still only ten years old.

Obviously, in the mirror was a very young appearance.

However, age had nothing to do with it in this place.

Here in the Roland Empire that gathered geniuses and placed them in the **Hidden Elites**, talent was what was important.

The ability to kill another person.

The ability to overwhelm another person.

The ability to crush another person.

Zohra possessed all that.

In other words—

“I'm an elite.”

Strong in killing.

Strong in magic.

Hand-to-hand combat, knowledge, intuition, all and everything—he had it.

And so he was chosen.

By the secret organization that gathered those who were competent, the **Hidden Elites**.

Staring at his reflection, Zohra smiled.

He was wearing the special uniform that only the **Hidden Elites** were allowed to wear.

Black cloak, light navy blue armour—a well-fitting uniform. It was an outfit designed to allow the user to easily slip into the darkness and kill others.

Right.

It meant he was the genuine article.

“I’m an elite~!”

Zohra said, striking a pose in front of the mirror.

“I’ve done it!”

Incidentally, to be accepted into the **Hidden Elites**, he’d had to carry out a number of missions to reach the top.

Most of them had been assassination missions.

The number of people he’d killed...

Ah, um~ How many was it, again?

“.....”

Uuum... Well, moving on.

He had to do everything he could for his name as an assassin to become known in Roland’s underground.

Already, here in the **Hidden Elites**, there was no other assassin who was his equal.

He’d truly reached the top.

Number one!

He would become a super elite—the super awesome Zohra Rom and the envy of everyone—and be given a special mansion as one of Roland’s VIPs that could put the nobles to shame.

“Fufufu,”

Zohra said in a happy voice that overflowed with confidence and turned his gaze from the mirror to his surroundings.

Right now, he was living in a mansion that was clearly too large for one person.

Two storeys.

Twelve rooms.

Four servants.

Twenty subordinates.

“Hehehe~. I'm amaaazing, aren't I!?”

Again, he struck a pose in front of the mirror, smiling proudly.

Born as the child of slaves, he was now living practically like a noble.

That was a good reason to smile, wasn't it?

Of course, it definitely hadn't been easy to make it this far.

Only talent mattered here.

Ever since he was three and saw his parents be killed before his eyes for being considered trash, he realized that if you didn't have power, you wouldn't survive.

Since then, he'd worked insanely hard. And so, he'd been recognized as a genius.

However, he hadn't stopped working.

Higher.

Stronger.

Stricter.

More, more, and more.

And to reach that, he never gave in.

He knew.

In this country, someone who gave in would die. More skill, more power—one had to keep reaching further.

If you stopped walking, you'd be killed.

Just as his parents were.

That was why,

“... Well then, is it time to wrap things up?”

Like before, his expression became earnest.

Staring at the mirror, he clasped the armour across his chest.

“All right. Claspings, OK!”

Confirming that he had his waist knife, chest knife, and concealed shoe knife,

“Weapons, OK!”

Slowly.

Slowly, he confirmed his equipment.

He didn't miss anything.

No matter how trivial or small it was, he missed nothing.

That was his strength.

After checking everything, he stretched the muscles along his back, before staring at the mirror again.

However, this time, there was no longer a child's face being reflected.

Sharp eyes.

A beast's eyes.

They were an assassin's eyes.

It was fine.

Today, he was full of energy.

“Nooow then, I guess today's the day to finish my work?”

He said, before looking at the three documents pasted to the side of the mirror.

Two of them were orders.

This time, they were assassination missions from the country.

And the other one was...

Zohra stared at the paper.

“.....”

Silently, he narrowed his eyes.

On that paper, something like this was written.

Biore Mente.

Female.

Unknown affiliation.

Body, physical appearance, and features are unknown.

Over the past three years as an assassin, she has fulfilled more than two thousand tasks.

The Greatest Assassin in Roland.

Staring at the paper in which that was written,

“... The Greatest in Roland? Ha. But she's not from the **Hidden Elites**...”

Zohra muttered.

Presently, she was his rival.

Comparing her achievements to his own, as she was still carrying out assassination missions, he was still a newcomer.

If that was said, if it was just her alone, then Zohra wasn't needed.

If he weren't needed... then he'd be killed. This country was that kind of place.

“... A threat, huh?”

He said.

“... That girl is a threat.”

That was why he had to kill her.

He wouldn't give in.

It was necessary—it was only necessary to keep moving. That was what had to be done to survive in this mad country.

Zohra reached forward and grabbed the documents off from the mirror's side.

The document on Biore Mente had been an order he'd given to his subordinates, and the other two were from the army.

These three documents.

“.....”

To make a name for himself, he had to kill them all.

He turned the papers over, looking at the time limit on each of them.

First one.

Within five days, kill Count Garfoll, currently staying in the neighbouring Runa Empire.

Second one.

Within two days, kill the Taboo Breakers Peria Peruula and Pia Varliere currently staying in holy kingdom of Veiohl.

“.....”

They were considerably strict requests.

Even if it was the neighbouring country of Runa, it'd take days to get there. It'd be easy enough to cross the border, seeing as how they had an alliance.

In other words, the order was telling him to, within five days, cross the border, find Count Garfoll's residence, bypass his strict security, and kill him.

Even beyond that was the second order—to travel from the southern continent to the central continent, where the holy kingdom of Veiohl was located...

“Geez, they're always making unreasonable demands, huuuh?”

Zohra smiled wryly.

Of course, though, the army gave him these requests because they believed he could carry them out.

Therefore, he would do it.

And that was,

“Right.”

Again, he looked at the mirror.

And he spoke.

“If it's me... I'll do it.”

He spoke as if he were having a conversation with himself.

“That's right. I'm a genius, after all. It's fine. I'm the best. In this country, I'll become the best.”

With that said, he began to move.

◆

Under the clear blue sky, he took a step out of the mansion.

It was an utterly clear sky without a cloud in sight.

On a day like this, no one would expect anything bad to happen in Roland... It gave off that illusion.

But—

“.....”

At the blinding sun, Zohra frowned.

In his narrow field of vision, he could see the figure of a lone girl.

Red hair that reached her shoulders.

Because she was looking down, he couldn't see her face...

She seemed to be around the same height as Zohra.

As for her age... she seemed to be around fourteen or fifteen?

Though she was older than Zohra, she was still young enough to be called a girl.

She was dressed in a housekeeper's clothing.

“.....”

*A new housekeeper's been employed for a **Hidden Elite** again?*

In this area, with the **Hidden Elites'** mansions, there were plenty of housekeepers dispatched.

That said, as they kept getting killed, there were never enough.

There was a paper-thin difference between a genius and a madman.

As they'd been blessed with power, the **Hidden Elites** were an unusual group of people.

They were a group of people that amused themselves by killing their servants.

That was why there were always new ones coming in...

Zohra turned to the woman and spoke to her.

“Hey.”

She didn't notice him the first time.

So Zohra said again,

“Hey, you.”

At that, she finally lifted her head.

“... Yes?”

Upon lifting her head, she had a pretty face. A surprised expression. With round eyes the same colour as her hair—

“Um, are you talking to me?”

At that, Zohra asked,

“Are you a housekeeper?”

She nodded.

“Yes.”

“Hmm. Just as I thought. Then, who are you working for?”

Zohra asked.

Well, he could take a guess...

Maybe for the famous murderer of women, Barl Taimo, or for the one who liked to torture people, Ato Tos.

Most new servants were for one of them. Between the two of them, they'd killed five people in the last month.

Well, she'll die regardless of which one she's sent to, but if it's Ato Tos, that's especially pitiable...

That was what he thought.

On top of his fondness for torture, he was quite the pervert as well.

That was why Zohra asked,

“For Ato Tos?”

She shook her head.

“Then, Barl Taimo?”

However, she shook her head again.

“Then who?”

At that, she smiled.

“For Master Ryner Lute.”

“Ryner Lute?”

At that name, Zohra tilted his head.

He was a newcomer who entered the same time that Zohra did.

However, it seemed that he'd received a low evaluation from the country.

And yet, to be receiving servants...

Then—

“Well then, I'll be going now. If I'm late, the master will be angry.”

With a smiling face, she bowed her head and started walking.

Zohra looked at her face.

She truly had a smile on her face.

“.....”

Suddenly.

Suddenly, it hit Zohra.

Fifteen years old.

Female.

Ah... that's it.

And with that in mind, he looked up at the sky again.

The clear blue sky.

And again, he thought.

On a day like this, here in Roland, no one would expect anything bad to happen...?

“Haha.”

However, at his thoughts, Zohra let out a quiet laugh.

After all, such a thing was impossible.

Fifteen years old.

Female.

And a guy with poor results receiving a servant...

Staring at her, Zohra spoke.

“... I see. You're Biore Mente?”

At that, she turned around.

With a slightly troubled expression, she tilted her head.

“... Um, my name is Anna Feem. I think you have the wrong person...?”

At that.

A smile arose in Zohra's face.

After all, that wasn't it.

When he called her name just now, her smile faltered and the atmosphere changed.

That was why Zohra's body tensed.

Withdrawing his waist knife with his right hand and looking at her troubled face, Zohra spoke.

“... Are you going to kill me?”

“... Eh—? W-Why would I do that?”

“Because I've already seen through you.”

“That's why I said you have the wrong person...”

And in response to her troubled expression, Zohra shrugged.

“Well, it's fine. If someone from the **Hidden Elites** dies, it has nothing to do with me.”

“L-Like I said—! ... Ah, never mind. Is it all right if I go now?”

At that, Zohra lightly nodded.

“Go. And go kill this Ryner or whatever his name was.”

“Why would I do that to the master... no, that's enough already. Well then, pardon me.”

After saying that, she started walking again.

Watching her back, Zohra contemplated.

If you didn't have power, then even if you were a **Hidden Elite**, you'd be killed.

This country was that kind of place.

If you didn't have power, if you were of no use, if you couldn't help, then you would disappear at once.

And so Zohra spoke.

Pointing directly at the housekeeper's back—

“Hey, Biore! Since I'm gonna become the best soon, you won't be of use anymore. So you should get ready to run away as far as you can!”

However, over there,

“Oow!”

The housekeeper tripped over a rock on the ground.

“Owowowowowo... ugh~. Tripped~.”

Looking at her half-crying face as she said that,

“... Wait, what?”

Zohra asked incredulously.

H-Huuuh?

M-Maybe I really do have the wrong person...

However, just then, a sharp sound rang out.

From the fallen girl, a knife flew out with tremendous force...

“Uwa—!?”

Zohra dodged it.

The knife pierced through a rock behind him.

The knife was coated in a purple liquid. Poison. Zohra understood that. If that had cut open a wound on him, he could've died instantly—the worst method.

After looking at that with half-closed eyes, Zohra let out a whistle.

“Woow, that's the Greatest Assassin in Roland for you. The sharpness of the knife is different, huh?”

However, in response, Biore smiled.

“... Huh. To dodge the knife just now... the **Hidden Elites** really are monsters. Maybe you *can* become the best.”

At that, Zohra smiled proudly.

“What's this? Are you admitting defeat?”

She shook her head.

“I wasn't competing with you in the first place. After all, I'm on my final task... Well, it's fine as long as I persist.”

Zohra's eyes widened.

“Huh? What are you talking about?”

“.....”

However, she turned on her heel and started walking again.

To her back:

“Hey. Could it be that you're retiring?”

“.....”

“But you...”

Before he could finish, she disappeared.

Thus, Zohra stopped.

An assassin, retiring.

What that means... does she realize?

What that means...

“.....”

However, Zohra stopped thinking about it.

“... Well, it has nothing to do with me...”

If Biore Mente died.

If Ryner Lute died.

None of that mattered to him.

Zohra took out the document on Biore from his pocket and threw it away.

It was no longer needed. If she was stepping down from the seat of the greatest assassin, then he no longer needed to kill her.

It wasn't necessary...

“.....”

Zohra snapped his fingers.

In an instant, two men, dressed in the same black attire as Zohra, appeared.

They were both clearly older than Zohra. One of them looked to be in his mid-twenties. The other one was entering his thirties, maybe?

Nevertheless, both bowed down on their knees before him.

He looked down at them and spoke.

“... That girl just now... keep an eye on her from now on. And then report to me.”

“... Understood.”

“Go.”

At Zohra's command, the two disappeared.

That was necessary.

He always did whatever was necessary.

To never falter.

Now then.

“I should start my work soon, huh?”

He said, taking the documents out of his pocket.

Next was Runa.

In addition to that, within five days.

“Ah, geez, that's not a lot of time, huuuh~?”

Loosening his body and again stretching his back muscles,

“Well then, time to go on a little trip~♪”

He said in a frivolous voice, as he began walking in the opposite direction of Biore.

◆

It was dark.

Slipping through this darkness, Zohra moved.

“.....”

His movements didn't make a single sound.

There were no signs of his presence.

When he'd passed the border between the Runa Empire and Roland Empire, none of the border guards had noticed him.

Right now, Zohra was in the southern part of the Runa Empire, in the area known as Rohm.

And the noble ruling over this land was Marquis Parfor Oroh.

According to his investigation beforehand, this was where his target, Count Garfoll, was staying...

There, on top of the hill.

In the mansion of the Runa noble, Marquis Parfor Oroh.

At that,

“... Mansion, huh...”

He said with a surprised face.

“... That's a big mansion, isn't it...?”

Zohra had also been granted a large mansion from Roland as a member of the **Hidden Elites**... but it didn't compare to the building before his eyes.

Rather than a mansion, it was practically a palace.

This was a noble's home...

“... Uwa, I feel snubbed... Geez, I'm going to become the Greatest Assassin in Roland, so I should live in a place like this, shouldn't I?”

Grumbling over that, he continued to run silently.

And nonchalantly, in his line of sight, he confirmed the situation of the building. Moving lightly like this had a purpose.

“Now then~. What should I do about the high and mighty noble's fortress?”

He said, looking at the building.

From what Zohra could see, it had a rather tight defence.

Stretching around the palace was a solid castle wall. It was designed for the sake of keeping a lookout.

With this many guards in the way, where should I enter and how will I escape...?

“... Hmm.”

Then, he recalled the contents of his request.

Kill Count Garfoll...

Kill—

That was what had been written.

As an assassin, to kill...

As an assassin, that meant to kill your target without being seen.

In other words, he had to consider how to kill Count Garfoll.

A detested thing...

“... Here, killing him in a flashy manner wouldn't be too good after making it into the top brass, huh?”

Again, Zohra thought it over in his head.

According to his investigation beforehand, drugs were being bought and sold in this building.

A drug trade.

Generally, after receiving an assassination request, he immediately looked into it.

Regarding the drug trade, it'd spawned a huge interest... That was why Count Garfoll was to be killed.

At the same time, Roland wanted to display what happened when you betrayed them for Runa...

Because of that,

“... Is it saying to kill Count Garfoll in a flashy manner?”

It wasn't a simple mission.

If he didn't have to worry about how he killed his target...

“This would be an easy victory,”

After muttering that, he withdrew his waist knife.

By that point, the castle wall was just before his eyes.

Running, he held out his hand and started drawing a magic circle.

He completed it...

And.

“WHAT I SEEK IS THE LIGHT FIELD >>> BAKUSHU.”

In an instant, a rope of light appeared.

Grabbing onto it,

“Capture the target's wall... After capture, quickly contract!”

Zohra chanted.

Pushing the rope of light against the wall, it clung to it. And then, using the recoil of the contraction,

“Let's go,”

Zohra said in a quiet voice, and then jumped.

Like that, he landed on top of the castle wall.

In front of him were five guards.

Two of them had their backs to him, while the other three looked at Zohra in shock.

The one in the center said,

“... B-Bastard, what the hell are you...”

To that,

“Please be quiet,”

Zohra said, brandishing his dagger.

With that, he ended the man's life.

The other two reached for their swords...

“Too slow~.”

With that, he ended it.

He'd stabbed one of them in the heart, and as for the other, he'd broken his neck.

And right now, the remaining two hadn't noticed Zohra's presence yet...

“.....”

Perhaps they hadn't noticed even their own deaths.

And then Zohra easily broke into Marquis Parfor Oroh's mansion.

There had been a considerable number of guards...

They were all the same to Zohra, though.

Nobody had been given the chance to even cry out before their lives ended.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight people... He stopped counting up until that point.

He'd accomplish his mission without caring.

He felt nothing.

He'd always done it in this way.

Good people, bad people, women, children...

He'd kill them all.

If he hesitated, then it'd be all over with that.

It'd be his turn to become nothing but a corpse...

He'd die as a weakling.

"... Well, if I want to become Super Elite-kun, I can't have that~,"

He said lightly, as he entered Count Garfoll's room.

The time it took was eight minutes.

That was unbelievable skill.

He'd killed ten-odd people, and yet everything was still quiet.

Of course, if he took too long, someone was bound to notice that something was off...

By then, he'd have to be gone.

"Now then~. Let's hurry up and finish this."

Reaching for the door in front of him, he opened it.

Inside was a bald, fat man in his forties and a blonde-haired girl who looked to be around eighteen, on top of a bed...

To that,

"Pardon me... could you please tell me which way is Count Garfoll-sama's room?"

Zohra asked.

The man lifted his head and looked at Zohra as a lustful smile spread across his face.

"Oh, oh, a boy. Have you also been sent to me?"

It seemed that was the man's tastes.

At that, Zohra smiled sweetly.

"Yes. As Marquis Oroh-sama says so..."

“Hoho. Marquis Oroh is quite generous...”

“Then, the sir and Maruis Oroh-sama...”

The man nodded with a “uh-huh”.

“That's right, that's right. Now, come closer. Serve me...”

“.....”

However, Count Garfoll didn't finish.

After all, his head had been severed from his body.

Zohra wiped his dagger, wet with blood, on the bed sheet.

He was finished.

His task was complete.

Now,

“Com—plete.”

Zohra smiled in satisfaction as he lifted his face.

Before him was only the girl, pale in the face.

Meeting Zohra's eyes, she looked at him in fear and opened her mouth.

“Kya...”

However...

“Goodbye.”

As Zohra touched her neck, her scream disappeared.

And with that, he was completely finished.

He'd done his task perfectly.

He didn't know how Runa and Roland would deal with this incident afterwards, but that wasn't his responsibility.

He'd simply carried out his task, and now he only needed to leave this place without a sound.

Right.

He'd truly done it perfectly.

Again, he'd climbed up.

Genius.

Elite.

The title he desired—the Greatest Assassin in Roland—was just before his eyes.

It was just before his eyes...

However...



One month later.

Zohra was already out of the Roland Empire and in a distant country.

“... Uuum, from here, which way should I go?”

Holding the map in a sight-seeing guide that he bought from a nearby bookstore, he looked around.

Right now, he should be past the border of the Runa Empire and Cassla, and in the country of—

The holy kingdom of Veiohl.

If Roland, Runa, and Nelpha were part of the southern continent, then this was a great country in the central continent...

“Eh~according to this guide... the holy kingdom of Veiohl boasts the third highest strength in the central continent... then, this country's power... whoa, unbelievable... i-it's three times stronger than Roland... no way? ... Three times stronger, the third strongest...”

Then why haven't these guys in the central continent invaded the south yet?

Regarding Zohra's simple question, the next page in the sight-seeing guide answered it.

It seemed that while the holy kingdom of Veiohl was the third-strongest country in the central continent... It couldn't afford to be attacked by other countries.

In other words,

“Like Roland and Estabul...”

Zohra understood.

After a long period of fighting with one another, the Roland Empire and the Estabul Kingdom currently had a truce, though whether the war had truly ended was another story.

After all, Estabul had sent a fair number of spies into the **Hidden Elites**, eight of whom Zohra had disposed of.

Though on the surface, there was no war, the truth was that the unsightly conflict always continued.

Regarding that,

“Even though this country seems like it's at peace...”

Again, Zohra looked around.

The streets were lively.

People had smiling faces.

“.....”

It was different from Roland, where, thanks to the nobles' tyranny and the ruin from the long wars, the streets had a suffocating atmosphere of darkness.

But if you looked between the pages,

“This country is the same,”

Zohra thought.

After all, even this country had assassins...

And even if you were a traitor who desperately begged for your life... you'd calmly be killed.

“Well, about being an assassin in this country—that can be said about me, huh...?”

Zohra said, taking out his order.

In the capital city, Veihl, of the holy kingdom of Veiohl, the missing **Taboo Breakers**, Peria Peruula and Pia Varliere had finally been sighted.

“Then, maybe this is Veihl?”

He said, looking around, before approaching an old man.

“Hey, hey, old man, old man.”

“... Hmm? Oh?”

The man stopped moving and turned around.

“What is it, boy?”

To that, Zohra asked,

“Excuse me... but is this Veihl?”

“To not recognize Veihl—are you a foreigner?”

Zohra shook his head.

“No, no... I'm from a village near the city. Today my dad entrusted me with an errand, and it's the first time I've gone to the capital city alone, you see... and then I got lost.”

At that, the old man had a surprised expression.

“What, going on an errand by yourself? That's unusual.”

He said that kind of thing.

Geez...

Zohra thought.

Geez, I'm still a pretty young kid, and yet those guys from Roland are sending me out to a faraway place like this...

So, he smiled, and,

"I know, right? Isn't it terrible? Well, setting that aside—old man, could you tell me where the Panforn shopping district is?"

That was where the **Taboo Breakers** had been sighted.

The old man smiled.

"What's with you—you're really lost, huh? If you're looking for the Panforn shopping district, it's right here, you know?"

"Huh? No way?"

"Really."

"Whoa—! Seriously? I'm incredible! I found my destination even though I was lost! I'm an errand genius, aren't I!?"

"A-ha-ha. An errand genius—sure, let's go with that. Well then, this old man will be going now, errand boy."

"Right. Thanks, old man."

"Uh-huh,"

The old man said, and then left.

Zohra waved goodbye, before looking down at his errand memo.

It was a document requesting that he get rid of another party.

Written in the document were details on Pia Varliere and Peria Peruula, who seemed to be the same age as Zohra.

Around ten years old.

Furthermore, they'd fled Roland when they were approximately six years old...

"**Taboo Breakers** at only six years old... That's some history..."

Taboo Breakers—that was the name of those who learned Roland's magic system and then unlawfully left the country.

However, the country wouldn't allow that.

After all, if the secrets of their magic were leaked, it would pose a large threat to their existence.

Therefore, in order to deal with the **Taboo Breakers**, the **Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad** would be dispatched.

However, if the **Taboo Breakers** couldn't be dealt with by the **Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad**...

"... A genius like me is sent out."

It was no trivial matter that these **Taboo Breakers** fled from Roland, after all.

The country truly wouldn't allow it.

For starters, it didn't matter how old they were—they would still be labelled as **Taboo Breakers**...

And on top of that, they were willing to send out someone from the **Hidden Elites** to ensure the erasure of their existence.

“.....”

Staring at the document that demanded the deaths of the **Taboo Breakers**, Zohra narrowed his eyes.

The two's profiles were rather interesting.

First person.

*Pia Varliere. Female. Fled from Roland at the age of six. **Congenital Magic Abnormality** user.*

At this, Zohra lifted his face.

“... I see. **Congenital Magic Abnormality**, huh?”

Congenital Magic Abnormality... It was said that that would grant the owner an abnormal amount of magical power.

For example, if a Congenital Magic Abnormality user were to use Roland's lightning magic, **Izuchi**.

The strength would be several times greater.

However, at the cost of such power, they would be unable to control their magic.

Additionally, they held a mental defect that prevented them from cooperating with others easily.

To be flawed people that lacked control of their magic power... that was what it meant to be a **Congenital Magic Abnormality** wielder.

In other words, they lacked the necessary composure to deal with a war.

Those of them who existed in the **Hidden Elites** weren't particularly remarkable people.

Regarding that,

“... Well, this Pia girl isn't a threat...”

Zohra went back to the document.

Second person.

*Peria Peruula. Male. Fled Roland at the age of six. A result of the **All Enchantment** experiment.*

At this, Zohra raised his eyebrows.

“... Hey, hey, a survivor of the **All Enchantment** experiment... this is gonna be just a bit tough, isn't it?”

The **All Enchantment** was the work of Roland's researchers in their magic experiments.

It was an experiment in which the subjects, against their will, had a magic circle inserted into them that, at the cost of their normal senses, allowed them to sense things over a wide distance.

The subjects were primarily children.

Everyone except the children were unable to deal with the strain, went insane and died.

Well, almost all of the children died as well...

So, the survivors lost their sight and hearing.

The researchers had hoped for their senses to reach as far as other countries so as to probe into their secrets... but in the end, their ability was more limited than that and they could only sense the district around them.

“... Well, once he senses an assassin like me coming after him, he'll just be scared that much sooner, won't he?”

However, he understood what the document was saying about the other party.

And how they fought.

Perhaps, the **All Enchantment** user and the **Congenital Magic Abnormality** wielder would fight as a duo...

The **All Enchantment** user could sense him coming, and then the **Congenital Magic Abnormality** wielder could launch a powerful spell?

At that, Zohra smiled wryly.

To him, that was a childish way of fighting. Well, it might work on a second-rate pursuer...

“Then they don't know me.”

He turned the document pages.

On the last page, this was written.

Both were formerly trained by Germer Kleisrole.

Looking at that.

“Heh—”

Zohra laughed scornfully.

Germer Kleisrole.

Called the Icy Assassin, she was a famous female soldier.

“... The Icy Assassin... huh?”

At the name, Zohra couldn't suppress a laugh.

Her fame was exaggerated. That said, she was still a very talented individual.

After all, she was at the front stage of discussions.

She was different from Biore Mente.

Different from Zohra Rom.

Different from the **Hidden Elites**.

And before he received the order to kill Peria Peruula and Pia Varliere, he'd already received a request to kill Germer Kleisrole.

It seemed there was some confusion amongst the top brass and it'd been put on hold...

This morning, the request had come again.

After getting rid of Peria Peruula and Pia Varliere, execute the matter regarding Germer Kleisrole.

That was the request.

In other words.

I'm already stronger than the army's Icy Assassin—I get it. If it's me, Zohra Rom, I'll kill Germer Kleisrole...

So right now, dealing with the famous Icy Assassin's pupils was the same as dealing with small fry.

“... It'll be an easy victory.”

If he was stronger than their teacher, then he shouldn't have any difficulties with them.

It'd be a good chain after killing Count Garfoll.

Zohra tucked away the document.

“No, well, for it to be an easy victory, I have to find those **Taboo Breaker** guys first...”

It'd already been one month since they were last spotted.

It was possible that they would have already stayed there for at least two months.

Two months...

For people who were being pursued, they couldn't afford to stay in one place for that long.

“Ah, geez, that would make them stupider than I thought...”

Zohra said and started walking around the district.

If they were here, it wouldn't be difficult to spot them.

The reason why was because bearers of a **Congenital Magic Abnormality** had a distinct attribute.

Clearly out of place with just one glance, they possessed azure-coloured hair—

That was the proof of a **Congenital Magic Abnormality**.

Well, this Pia person might've cut off their hair to avoid being noticed by pursuers...

“But Pia or whatever—she's a girl, isn't she...? Then she wouldn't have shaved her hair...”

Zohra muttered to himself while walking.

No, but to hide her distinct characteristic as a **Congenital Magic Abnormality** bearer, she could've dyed her hair, at least...

In that case, it was possible that he had no way of identifying her.

“Huh? But then how did the investigator find the **Taboo Breaker** guys?”

Like I thought, her hair's probably still azure?

*And here I thought that after being on the run for four years, those **Taboo Breaker** guys wouldn't be such idiots...*

“Well, I'll start by going to the inns in this district and asking around there...”

However, Zohra's words stopped there.

In his line of sight, an incredibly pretty girl appeared.

“.....”

She was at an open café.

She was a girl who gave off a refined air, as she enjoyed her tea time.

A well-featured face, a determined aura, and charming eyes.

Her age... She seemed to be around the same age as Zohra.

And—

Above all else, what caught his attention the most was her hair.

It was a strange colour.

Impossible for normal people, her hair was azure...

“... Found you,”

Zohra murmured.

There was no mistaking it.

Before his eyes was Pia Varliere... the **Congenital Magic Abnormality** bearer.

But—

But that wasn't what he was seeing.

The azure hair of a **Congenital Magic Abnormality** bearer was out of place and gave off a strange feeling.

It was an impossible hair colour.

It was a sign that she wasn't a normal human.

Even so, she was...

“... Pretty...”

Zohra moaned.

One couldn't help but notice her.

She stood out.

She stole the gaze of all the men around her.

Even though she was only ten years old, she was undeniably beautiful.

With slender hands, she lifted her teacup. Then she lifted it to pretty peach-coloured lips. She drank her tea with a happy expression.

At that, the people surrounding her sighed.

Smooth movements.

Acting like a blooming flower.

That was what Zohra was seeing.

Like an idiot, his heart began beating faster.

“... Hey, what is this...”

At that, Zohra groaned.

This was the first time he'd felt like this.

He was simply looking.

Why was his body acting like this at just a look...

His mind felt hazy...

“.....”

Then.

Zohra curled his hand into a fist and punched his head.

“... Hey, hey, hey, what am I feeling dizzy for... idiot. Don't fall for her charms... Your eyes will burn.”

Right.

Those who lost their cool fell apart.

As if to push down the throbbing of his heart, he pushed down on his chest.

And with a frowning face, he spoke.

“... Ah, damn it. It's because she's pretty. But right now she's the girl I have to kill... what a stupid reaction!”

After saying that, he breathed in.

And then he breathed out.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out.

As he continued to inhale and exhale, his heartbeat immediately began to relax.

It was all right.

He'd trained his body's responses.

“... Calm down.”

And so, he calmed down.

“And now that I'm calm, I have to accomplish my task.”

The violent throbbing within his body disappeared.

Nothingness.

Sharp nothingness.

Feeling nothing, inside of him was simply a sharp knife.

It was enough to pierce through that girl.

With that, his work would be done.

Am I ready?

“Of course.”

He answered his own question.

It was all right. There were no problems.

He was stronger than her teacher, Germer Kleisrole. He wouldn't be defeated. He understood the other party's level.

After all, this was his chance.

With that azure hair, that girl wouldn't be very good at dealing with a crisis.

Perhaps, thanks to her beauty, she hadn't needed to rely on tactics.

And so she'd survived for four years.

However, this way of fighting—

“It won't work on me.”

If he was going to do it, it was now.

Right now, her partner, Peria Peruula, wasn't here.

He looked around. However, there wasn't a boy her age in sight.

Without the **All Enchantment** user, the **Congenital Magic Abnormality** bearer wouldn't be much of an opponent.

Now, to kill her.

“OK~.”

Zohra withdrew his waist knife.

And then he lowered his body.

He gathered up power in his entire body.

So that he wouldn't become weaker than those around him... For that, he decided, his hand wouldn't falter.

And he'd survive.

Slowly, slowly, he gathered up power.

From where he was standing to where Pia was sitting was about eight steps away.

In an instant.

In an instant, her head would fall.

It was the same as now.

She hadn't noticed him.

He finished gathering his power.

“Bye-bye, cutie-chan.”

In that moment.

He surged forward.

One step.

Two steps.

Three steps.

Slipping through the crowd, he didn't make a sound.

Naturally, she hadn't noticed him.

Four steps.

Five steps.

Six steps.

Still, she hadn't noticed him.

As he'd thought, she was small fry.

And.

Seven steps.

Eight steps.

“... It's over.”

Zohra flashed his knife.

Honestly, she still hadn't noticed him and was drinking her tea...

From behind, Zohra moved to cut off her neck...

That was how it was supposed to be.

However—

“Guaaa!?”

An anguished voice rose... from where Zohra was.

In the moment that passed by, he saw.

The joints of the arm holding the knife were bent, and furthermore, he was sent toppling onto the ground.

“—!?”

He had no idea what just happened.

He sat up from the ground and looked around.

Before him, with her head still on her neck, Pia, still elegantly drinking her tea, looked over at him.

“My, what's this? Tripping dramatically like that—are you all right?”

She said kindly, tilting her head slightly.

At those words, Zohra became increasingly confused.

W-What?

What the hell just happened?

I was about to attack.

So why am I on the ground?

He didn't understand.

That girl didn't do anything. No, Pia hadn't responded at all.

Then, who attacked me?

*The **All Enchantment** bastard?*

Damn it! I'd forgotten!

There were two enemies.

And yet the **All Enchantment** bastard was nowhere to be seen.

The situation was rather bad.

Like this... Like this, I'm going to be killed!?

Should I withdraw from here?

Or should I try again?

He hesitated for a moment.

And his answer to that was,

“Before I hesitate—”

With his left arm, he corrected the joints in his right arm. Picking up his fallen knife, he again swiftly lunged at Pia.

Pia didn't move. To Zohra's movements, she didn't react.

That was why killing her would be easy.

Alone, she would die here.

Zohra thrust the knife towards her.

Just as he figured, she didn't react to his movements.

“Die.”

And the knife is stabbed in her chest!!

At the same time he thought something like that...

“Wha—!?”

Zohra couldn't believe what he saw.

Pia grinned broadly.

On her well-arranged face, the smile of a demon arose.

She mischievously stuck out her tongue, and then suddenly...

Her figure disappeared from his line of sight.

At the same time.

Someone grabbed his neck from behind.

And close to his ear, a sweet voice spoke.

“You're an idiot, aren't you? If you're hesitant, the right thing to do is put it off, you know? You're pretty stupid.”

“Damn—”

Zohra swung his head.

However, there was no one behind him.

“W-Where are you!?”

Then,

“Ov-e-r here.”

Again, a voice came from behind him.

At that, Zohra prepared his knife and whirled around...

Pia was again sipping her tea at the table as if she hadn't a care in the world.

Like that, she smiled pleasantly.

“Come now, I'm getting annoyed—do you want to die an early death? Just wait a little—I'm drinking my tea. After all, this café has a good flavour.”

Zohra glared at Pia.

Honestly, he didn't know what was going on anymore.

How did she disappear and reappear? Even if she was just moving abnormally quickly, why couldn't he catch her

movements?

What kind of trick was she using?

Maybe she was using some kind of magic?

“... B-Bastard, what the hell did you do to me...?”

For some reason, at the question, she lifted a hand to her mouth and,

“Fufufu—”

She was clearly laughing at him as if he were an idiot.

“W-What's so funny!?”

Zohra yelled.

But with a cheerful expression, she—

“The ‘*What the hell did you do to me?*’ thing you said is what's funny~. After all... I didn't really do anything? I simply dodged the knife.”

“Liar! You didn't just dodge my knife!”

Right.

That wasn't possible.

For a mere **Congenital Magic Abnormality** wielder to respond to the movements of Zohra, who was called a genius in the **Hidden Elites**...

Again, Pia laughed.

“Aha. You're beyond amusing! I see! That armour—you're from the **Hidden Elites**, aren't you? If it's the **Hidden Elites**, that makes you a genius~. A supreme genius like you would see through my movements, huh~? Kyaa, I'm scared. I'm going to be killed~.”

“A-Are you making a fool out of me!?”

“Oh my, am I getting on your nerves? Then, come on, stab me, stab me, stab me—hurry up and kill this girl!”

“T-This girl...”

He held the knife towards Pia's mocking face.

“Kya—n! ♡”

For some reason, after letting out a girlish cry, she sipped at her tea.

What was this?

“B-Bastard, you're making fun of me! I'll seriously kill you!”

At those words, Pia smiled.

“Do it~?”

At that, Zohra thrust the knife at Pia's neck.

This time, he used all and all and all of his power.

Despite that.

Drinking her tea with her right hand, Pia easily grabbed Zohra's arm with her left hand. She bent it. She bent it past its joints. Then, grabbing his neck, she kicked his abdomen with one leg, sending him flying...

“Gaha—”

Zohra hit the ground.

From above, a voice descended.

“Ye—s. Now that you've shown off your slow moments, don't you see that there's nothing you can do? Mister self-proclaimed genius.”

At that.

At that, Zohra didn't stand up.

“... N-No way.”

Why was there such a difference in strength...

“Impossible.”

But she smiled.

“What is possible, though, is this thing here~.”

“D-Don't screw with me...! I-I'm... stronger than your teacher, Germer...”

In that instant he said that.

Suddenly, his face was kicked.

“Gua—”

For a moment, he lost consciousness.

But if he couldn't dodge... then he'd die...

“... Gaa...”

He couldn't dodge.

And so, as his face was kicked, he was sent flying.

At that moment, he noticed it.

For the first time, right now, he felt Pia's killing intent.

He'd never felt such strong killing intent before...

I-I'm going to be killed.

There's nothing I can do.

I-if I don't escape...

“... Au, a...”

However, his body wouldn't move. With his brain shaking, he couldn't move.

During that moment, Pia slowly walked over to him. In her hand, she held a fork.

And holding that fork near Zohra's eye,

“I have an important question for you~. If you don't answer correctly, then with this fork, I'll stab your eye~. Do you understand...?”

“.....”

“Answer me—!”

And the fork drew closer.

At that, Zohra frantically said,

“Y-Yes!?”

Pia nodded in satisfaction.

“Good. Now, time for the question. Just now, you said that you were stronger than Germer—on what basis? It couldn't be that you killed Germer...”

Zohra understood the reason behind Pia's question.

She thought that Germer had been killed. And if Zohra claimed to have done so, then she'd stab his eye with the fork.

He had to prevent that, no matter what.

Thus,

“I-I didn't kill her,”

Zohra answered.

Despite that, the fork drew closer to his eye.

“S-Seriously! I'm telling the truth!”

However, she seemed doubtful.

“Reallyyy~?”

“Really! I'm serious!”

She pressed a finger at the nape of his neck.

“... Ri—ght. But your heartrate is incredibly fast? Don't tell me you're lying?”

As she said that, the fork moved towards his eye...

“H-How am I supposed to keep calm when you have that fork by my eye!?”

“My, a big man like you—plus a genius from the supreme **Hidden Elites**—is afraid of something like this? Lame~.”

“... Au—”

“Ah, just now, at the ‘Lame~’ part, your heart stopped again... Your almighty pride is meaningless here, you know? Well, the average person is proud like that too.”

“... T-This girl... well, you're, you're—you're going to stick a fork into my eye!”

“Yes, yes, I'm going to stick the fork in your eye, so don't make such a fuss, child.”

“W-What did you saaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaay!?”

She was serious.

She was completely serious.

She was seriously going to stick the fork in.

What should I do?

How do I get out of this situation!?

As he was thinking over that, the fork touched his eye.

“U-U-U-Um! Let's have a honest conversation, so stop it with the fork?”

But the fork didn't stop.

With an urgent expression, Pia said,

“Nooooo, how about you get someone with psychic abilities to stop my hand? ♡”

“Don't screw aroooooooooound—no, s-seriously, wait! Y-You see, I really didn't kill Germer! Right now, she's alive in Roland, and after I finished with that **All Enchantment** bastard with you, she was going to be my next target because of how famous she is... See, the military gave me an order to kill Germer, which means that the country concluded that I'm stronger than her, right? That's the only reason I think I'm stronger than her...”

But still, the fork didn't stop.

“Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeh, that's not enough? Then what should I say? Ah, are you annoyed that I said that I'm stronger than Germer? Uuum, then, uh, I misunderstood! I'm weaker, so what I said was no good? Hey? Ah, I feel it! Right now, my eye...”

Then, finally, the fork stopped.

Pia stood up and smiled pleasantly.

“OK~. I believe you.”

Like before, she had a cute face.

Again, at that, Zohra stared.

All of a sudden, his heartbeat quickened...



His chest hurt...

He was confused at that.

What's with this reaction...

Am I afraid?

Am I afraid of this girl?

He didn't understand anything anymore.

Meanwhile, Pia stood alone, mumbling to herself.

"I see... if you killed us, then Germer... hmm. Then they'd send an assassin after Ryner as well... Geez, Roland is the same as ever. But that gloomy guy should be all right... ri—ght. It should be enough to return to Roland one more time. But there are a pile of things to... Anyway, I need to discuss this with Peria."

With her arms crossed, she started talking to herself.

However, Zohra didn't move.

If he didn't escape, then he might be killed.

If he didn't move, then he might be killed.

The girl before his eyes was on a completely different level.

Honestly, and he'd thought himself to be a genius.

This was a true genius.

This was a true monster, right now, standing before his eyes...

Zohra stared at the beautiful girl before him.

Noticing his gaze, she tilted her head.

"... Ah! Whaaaaat's with those eyes!? You're not thinking something like about how this super genius beautiful girl is scary, what a monster, what a demon, or something like that, are you?"

"... Au—"

That was exactly what he'd been thinking. Already, she could see straight into his heart.

Then, at that:

"Oh my, oh my, bulls-eye? Already, the supreme Pia can see straight through average people like you."

Saying that, Pia cackled.

"....."

An average person...

That was the first time he'd been told such a thing.

He'd always been told, again and again, that he was a genius.

You're a chosen person.

You're different from other people.

You're different from normal people.

That was what he'd been told while growing up.

Even though the title of the Greatest Assassin in Roland was just before his eyes...

Despite that, why was there such a difference in power...?

What the hell is going on...?

Zohra didn't know anymore.

When he'd encountered the famous Biore Mente, there hadn't been much of a difference in strength.

If anything, he thought that he was slightly above her.

But this girl wasn't like that at all.

This is... a true genius...

Then...

"... Then I... for what reason do I exist...?"

Zohra spoke in a trembling voice.

If you didn't have power, you were killed...

He knew that better than anyone.

Those without power weren't qualified to live...

He knew that better than anyone.

That was why his parents were killed.

That was why his friends were killed.

And now.

And now, it's my turn...

"....."

Zohra made up his mind.

In the meantime, at his silence, Pia stared at him with a troubled face.

"... My, could it be that you're hurt?"

"....."

"He—Ilo? Are you all right~?"

She waved a hand in front of his face.

But ignoring that, Zohra spoke.

“... Kill me.”

“Eh?”

“... Kill me. My life has no value anymore. So kill me.”

As Zohra said that, he stared at Pia.

As he thought, she was cute.

Pretty azure hair.

Determined eyes.

Looking at her, his heartbeat quickened.

Maybe it'd be fine if he were killed by her.

To be killed by a pretty and unbelievably strong girl wouldn't be shameful...

“Now, hurry up and kill me,”

Zohra said.

But before his eyes, her pretty face changed in an instant.

“U—wa~, what's with this, u—wa... You can stop it with those lame words already~?”

Suddenly, she said something like that.

“Eh... I-lame?”

At that, without thinking, Zohra became flustered.

L-Lame?

“Um, eh? Eh? J-Just now, those were my serious feelings...”

However, Pia made an increasingly exasperated face.

“Uwa, it came out. He's a major one~. This misunderstanding guy... That's why you're a majorly average person.”

At those words,

“... Auu—”

Again, Zohra was in shock.

She called me an average person again!?

Not only that, but now I'm a majorly average person!?

But Pia's words continued.

“Geez, why is it like this? When it comes to men, whenever they're defeated, they want to die in a manly way! Is that them being romantic!? Don't you think that's lame?”

“L-Lame...”

This was honestly the first time he'd been told that.

That he wasn't a genius, but an average person.

And furthermore, that he was lame...

He was so shocked, as his head kept spinning around and around, that he couldn't think clearly.

However, Pia didn't stop.

“Ah, geez, this is stupid! Men are stupid! Really, they're no good. It's impossible to figure out such an inferior species!”

“W-We're... an inferior species?”

“My, you didn't know~?”

“S-Sorry.”

“Geez, you should've been like that before. Well then, shall we continue talking so I can educate you some more?”

“Y-Yes.”

“You see, men really are a different species. They exist to serve women, the superior species.”

“I-Is that so?”

“Isn't it obvious!? There's no other need for such incompetent men.”

At the question, Zohra's mind was spinning around and around as he replied.

“... Um, uh... I thought the reason of my existence was because I was a genius and so had to devote myself to Roland...”

Immediately, Pia interrupted him.

“Yes, that's all lies! That's what you're brainwashed into thinking when you become a part of the **Hidden Elites**. That you're a 'chosen person' and whatnot—you were told something like that, right?”

“A-Ah, yeah. That's what I was told.”

“And that you're a genius and everything?”

“Y-Yeah.”

“But that's all brainwashing. That's Roland's specialty brainwashing. You didn't have any idea?”

“... Now that you mention it...”

Now that she mentioned it, he might've known.

You're a genius.

A chosen person.

So devote yourself to Roland.

That was what he'd continuously been told.

That was why he aimed to become the Greatest Assassin in Roland.

But Pia—

“But in reality, it's not like that! Men's true purpose is to serve the superior species, women! And yet men forget this and say stuff like ‘My life has no value anymore~’, and it's troubling. Ahhhh, geez, always complaining about that—I'm really sick of what Roland does!”

For some reason, when she shouted, Zohra trembled.

And then, instinctively, he—

“S-Sorry!”

For some reason, he apologized.

Pia nodded in satisfaction.

“Mmm! Then you've reflected on it—good!”

She reached out and patted his head.

Somehow, that made him really happy.

Somehow, being praised by this girl, shorter than him, made him strangely happy.

More.

He wanted to be praised by her more...

“.....”

Wait, what?

What's with that?

Why am I...

Meanwhile, Pia looked around.

“Ah geez, you interrupted my long-awaited tea time, and because of you running around recklessly, all the customers and even the employees ran away.”

She pouted.

Again, at that,

“I-I'm really sorry!”

He instinctively apologized.

And then, for some reason:

“L-Let me get you some more tea?”

“My, this is unexpected. Then, I'll be depending on you.”

And again, that face.

That incredibly pretty, cute, and cheerful face.

Looking at her cheerful face was really refreshing...

“Then, with this... I'll start undoing the brainwashing...”

“For crying out loud, my throat is dry!”

“Ah, understood! Right away!”

And with that, Zohra frantically ran into the café.

He hurriedly searched for tea leaves, boiled some water, and looked for a teacup and spoon.

As he poured the hot water into a pot,

“Hot!”

The water spilled onto his hand.

In that moment.

Zohra—

“... What the hell am I doiiaiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiing!?”

He knocked over the tea set in front of him.

And then he turned around.

He looked at the figure of Pia, who was sitting in a stool as elegantly as before, waiting for Zohra's tea.

Looking his way, she smiled kindly and waved her hand.

From that alone, his head was already dizzy. His heart was beating violently.

“... S-Shit... this is seriously shitty...”

Zohra moaned.

There.

He realized it.

T-T-T-This is love!

I-I can't be mistaken—without a doubt, this is love!

Zohra pushed down on his chest, where his heart was throbbing painfully.

“... Auu... t-this is...? This is the rumoured love... Then, this is what everyone gave up their lives for...”

They were idiots.

That was what he'd always thought.

Just by the charm and scent of a woman, people would foolishly give up their lives...

It wasn't something worth giving up your life for, he'd always thought...

He looked in Pia's direction.

In that instant, his heart throbbed painfully again.

"... Hau—!?"

Zohra groaned.

He wanted to stupidly shout to the world about how cute Pia was...

He could easily say that just by looking at her, he liked her 120% within!

Looking at her made his heart explode!

From her cute voice to her flexible movements to her strength that was beyond being worth jealous of to her merciful nature—he liked everything about her...

"... W-What should I do about this...?"

Dangerous.

This was dangerous.

"... Uuu..."

If it was dangerous, then he should withdraw from here.

That was what Pia had said.

If he was hesitant, then he should withdraw. If you didn't, then you were being foolish.

That kind of life—Pia was used to that kind of life.

But what should he do as a man?

As expected, running away from here...

Then, over there.

"Still not ready~?"

Her cute voice!

"A-Almost!"

It's not even anywhere close to almooooooooooooooooooooooooooooost!

Alone in the kitchen, Zohra held his hand and sat down.

Uuuuuuuuuuu, what should I do? What should I do, what should I do, what should I do? Like this, it wouldn't be so bad to elope with her, would it?

We can deal with any assassins from Roland...

Between the two of us... No, even with just Pia alone, she can easily take care of any assailants.

Surely, if it's Pia...

“.....”

The image of him and Pia running away together and fending off an assassin floated into his mind.

It was an incredibly strong assassin.

He was about to kill Zohra; however, Pia easily dealt with him.

And then looking at Zohra, she said,

“Uncool.”

Wait, that's not what I want to heaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaar!

N-No good.

Right now, that's no good.

I have to be strong.

In order to protect Pia, I have to be strong.

“You're strong, Zohra~! I love you! Chuu! ♡”

“This is it!”

Zohra stood up.

He'd already made up his mind.

For the sake of his love, he decided to betray Roland.

He decided that he'd become stronger and run away with Pia!

Zohra stood up.

And then he looked in the direction of his beloved Pia.

And, over there.

“.....”

Zohra saw from the kitchen.

He saw an unbelievable sight at the table where Pia was sitting.

There was an unknown boy, talking to Pia.

He had a ladies' man haircut, with blond hair that reached his shoulders.

Closed eyes with a conceited face.

He looked to be around Zohra's age, but was a bit taller.

And the air he gave off was strangely calm, unlike that of a child's.

That boy spoke.

He said something to Pia.

And then Pia laughed cheerfully.

The boy said something.

And then Pia laughed cheerfully again!

Again!

Again, again!

That was more often than when she talked with Zohra!?

“Hey, hey, heeeeeeeey!? Haaaa!? W-What's with that bastard!? W-What the hell is he doing with my Pia!?”

But the boy said something to Pia yet again...

She started to look at the boy fondly...

“... I'll kill him.”

He'd erase him.

He'd already reached the end of his patience.

Zohra took out a knife from his boot.

And,

“A guy who gets in the way of someone's love deserves to be killed!”

He said, crouching down.

He gathered all of the strength in his body.

From here in the kitchen to where the boy was would take about two steps.

In an instant.

In an instant, he'd cut off the disgusting, smooth-talking bastard's head off and send it flying, and then Pia would say,

“Thank you, Zohra! I was feeling troubled by that unpleasant, smooth-talking guy! I love you! ♡ Chuu! ♡”

“Ehehe, like that...”

In his head, he imagined Pia kissing him, and without meaning to, he felt embarrassed.

He glared at the stupid brat before him.

The stupid brat was talking with Pia cheerfully.

“Fufufufu, laugh all you want, because right now, in this instant...”

Zohra finished gathering up all his strength.

“I'll kill youuu!”

In that moment—

He released killing intent.

His body burst forward.

One step.

The stupid brat had his back turned to him.

After all, he was stupid. He didn't notice Zohra at all.

Two steps.

In that moment, Zohra thrust his knife towards the stupid brat's neck...

He thrust it forward...

However—

Even though the stupid brat wasn't facing him and thus shouldn't have been able to see him, he accurately dodged the knife.

“Wha—!?”

Zohra let out a shocked sound, but it was too late.

The stupid brat turned his body and easily kicked Zohra in the face...

“Hoi—”

“Gya—”

With that, it was over.

Zohra was sent flying. And then, he clumsily hit the ground.

I was beaten by another man so easily before Pia...!?

To that, the stupid brat—

“Who is this?”

He asked Pia.

Smiling pleasantly,

“We just met a while ago. This is Amusing-kun,”

Pia said something like that...

Amusing-kun...

Amusing...

“.....”

As before, the stupid brat didn't look at him as he spoke.

“Huum. That armour's from the **Hidden Elites**?”

At that, Zohra was shocked.

“H-How could you know without even looking...”

Then, it hit him.

Right. Somehow, he'd forgotten after seeing Pia's face, but Pia had fled Roland with someone else—the **All Enchantment** user.

One who held the ability to perceive his surroundings without looking at them...

“... You're... Peria Peruula.”

Zohra glared at Peria.

He turned his way, and,

“Right. That's correct. You are?”

“Ha. What kind of assassin would so easily give out his name to a piece of crap like you...”

Then, Pia—

“That reminds me—I never asked for your name, did I? What is your name, anyway?”

“Zohra! Zohra Rom! Please call me Zohra!”

Peria smiled.

“Then, Zohra.”

“Don't call out my name so familiarlyyyyyyyyyyy!”

“Eeeeeeeeh!? J-Just now, you said we should call you Zohra...”

“You asshole! Pia! I want Pia to call me that!”

“.....”

Trembling due to Zohra's killing intent, Peria stayed quiet.

Then, he turned to Pia.

“... I see. He really is Amusing-kun.”

“I-I'll kill youuuuuuuuuuuuuuu!”

Zohra stood up, took out a concealed knife, and then threw it.

This time, he'd kill him.

At this distance, he wouldn't be able to dodge it.

If he could dodge it... then he'd be a monster.

Stab him right in the chest!

At the same time he thought that—

Peria easily caught the knife without looking.

And,

“I'll be returning this.”

He said, and with a “Hyu—”, threw it back.

It was incredibly fast.

He didn't have time to react at all.

No way.

This is bad...

I'm going to die...

He thought.

The knife flew towards him.

It cleanly pierced where the scabbard of the knife hidden in his boot was.

At that—

“... Ugu—”

Zohra shook.

It was the same despair he felt when up against Pia.

Peria's power was clearly above Zohra's.

A monster...

He was on a completely different level from Zohra—he was a monster.

“.....”

Then, before, w-what...

What did all that mean?

Where do I stand...?

Again, Zohra's head spun as he tried to figure everything out. Meanwhile, Peria spoke.

“Then, our arranged carriage should be arriving soon... Shall we be going?”

Then, at his side, Pia—

“Ah, arranged carriage? So that's why you were delayed. Good grief, don't you know you shouldn't keep a lady waiting?”

“Eh, but the time... it hasn't even been fifty minutes. Are you saying that instead of riding in a high-class carriage like

a noble, you'd rather not be delayed, Pia?"

"Ah, ah, what? Peria, are you talking back to me?"

"... No, um, that's not it..."

"Then, what is it?"

"Eh? Ahhhh, ummm—haa. I'm very sorry."

"Mmm! Good! I'll pat your head."

"Ehhhhh!? No, that's all right. Pia, you'll mess up my hair."

"Fufufu, for a brat like you, that's a pointless worry. Now, head out,"

Pia said, standing up.

At that, Peria moved to escape.

"No!"

Again, a mischievous smile spread across Pia's face.

"Fufufu, if you think you can escape from the great genius Pia Varliere, you're sorely mistaken!"

"That's enough already! Come on, Pia, we don't want to miss the carriage! Shouldn't we be going to the next country?"

They had that kind of conversation.

Those two were clearly close, as they interacted noisily, moving to leave the area.

At that,

"....."

Zohra stared, dumbfounded.

At the sight before him.

It seemed that they were already in love...

It clearly seemed as if Pia and Peria were already lovers.

"... Then, what about my feelings?"

Zohra said, watching the two disappear into the distance.

At that,

"U-Um, hold on!"

He called out.

At his voice, the two turned around.

Pia tilted her head to the side and,

“What is it?”

Again, she spoke in a cute voice.

And by her side was Peria.

At the figures of those two—

“... Au—”

For some reason, Zohra felt like crying.

I can't be fulfilled...

My weak self... I'm still a kid... I don't have the right to stand by Pia's side yet.

I can't protect her.

She won't accept someone like me.

As he thought that, the tears started to overflow.

At that, Peria looked shocked.

“E-Ehhhhhhh—w-why is he crying?”

“S-Shut uuup, you piece of shit, it's none of your business!”

“No, that... um, maybe when I kicked you, it hurt... I should've gone easy for once...”

“I said to shut up!?”

“But see, night is going to come soon... You shouldn't go back alone. We'll escort you to your inn...”

“... A-Asshole... are you trying to embarrass me...”

Suddenly, Pia let out a sigh, before she spoke.

“For crying out loud, Peria.”

“Eh? What?”

“Could you please be quiet for a bit?”

“Eh?”

At Peria's clueless expression, Pia held up a finger to her lips.

“That's enough. That's why men are really... well, no. Just hold on for a bit.”

“Eh? Pia?”

“Then we'll go.”

“But...”

“Are you refusing to listen to me!?”

She said, reaching out to pat his head.

“Ah, ah, I understand! I understand! Then, I'll wait?”

“Right.”

“We don't have much time, so be sure to hurry?”

“I understand.”

“Well then, I'll be going.”

“Please hurry,”

Pia said, shooing Peria away with her hand.

Finally, that nuisance left.

Then, with a “it can't be helped” expression, Pia turned to Zohra, who continued to cry, and smiled faintly.

“... Geez, if you're a boy, you shouldn't cry. It's all right. Don't let it get to your self-confidence—you're plenty strong. Not every average person has the potential to become a genius, you know? You're definitely stronger than Germer. That's pretty impressive.”

She was speaking kindly, as if talking to a child throwing a tantrum.

However, Zohra didn't want that.

That kind of—

“That kind of half-assed strength... there's no meaning in it...”

To that, she smiled once more.

“Because you couldn't win against Peria?”

“.....”

“... Or because you can't protect me?”

“.....”

Both.

It was both.

Like this, already, he wouldn't be accepted by her...

Pia smiled mischievously.

“Good grief, loving a woman~. It makes all men who walk by me so unhappy~,”

She said jokingly.

At that,

“... Do... Do I even have a chance?”

Zohra asked.

To that, she smiled again.

“What do you think?”

“... Um, that guy from before... do you like him?”

She laughed.

“N—ow now, asking about that? If I like Peria... but that guy isn't dependable enough just yet~.”

“Then, then... i-if I become strong...”

“Aha. You want me to wait?”

She said.

At that, Zohra—

“R-Right! I-I'll work hard! To become a man who can protect you, Pia, I'll work hard... so won't you wait for a bit!?”

He exclaimed.

Again, Pia smiled kindly.

Her smile really was pretty, Zohra thought. He was completely taken in by that smiling face.

However, that smiling face immediately disappeared.

Again, in its place was a mischievous expression.

She stuck out her tongue and,

“No good~. I won't wait for you~. I don't like being protected.”

And then she turned his back to him.

Already, his feelings wouldn't reach her.

Looking at that, Zohra was about to burst into tears again.

But then—

Pia looked over her shoulder.

“... So... hurry up and become strong. Become stronger than me, become a man worthy of standing by my side, and then you might be capable of stealing my heart?”

“T-That...”

She pointed to a wall.

“But, well, for a beautiful girl like me, you'll have many rivals~. Like Peria over there, who's been listening attentively, you know~?”

Then, from behind the wall that Pia was pointing at, Peria stuck his head out.

“Eh, w-when did you notice me!?”

At that, Pia laughed.

“I knew from the beginning.”

“Y-You're psychic!?”

“Idi—ot. I can see right through your movements. Let's go. Now then, let's investigate the situation of the next country~.”

And once more, she moved to leave.

Steadily, her back was growing further and further away.

Staring at that, Zohra called out.

“I-I'll work hard!”

She didn't look back, instead waving her hand.

“Ye—s. Try not to die~.”

Continuing, Peria also,

“I-I'll work hard too!”

“It's enough if you devote yourself to me.”

“Ehhhh!?”

And with that, that was it.

With that, the two disappeared.

In that place, Zohra was the only one who remained.

With knives scattered around him, nobody else was around.

Well, after a disturbance like that, there was a chance that the Veiohl army would be headed there...

However—

Zohra didn't move from where he was.

Instead, with a thoughtful expression,

“.....”

He continued to stare at where Pia had disappeared...

◆

And so, everything changed.

Yesterday, with his throbbing heart, his world had been overturned, and everything he saw had changed completely.

It all felt like a dream he saw.

But it was reality.

He couldn't go back to how things were before.

The same landscape, the same world, the same dream, the same despair...

All of it changed, as he looked at things with a different expression as of yesterday.

That was why he couldn't go back.

That was why he...



And so he stared at the same scenery from before.

The suffocating darkness.

A country overflowing with despair.

Having returned to Roland, Zohra looked up at his mansion.

“.....”

Upon Zohra's return, two of his subordinates had given him the news.

“Biore Mente has died.”

To that.

Zohra looked in his subordinates' direction and asked,

“... Was she killed?”

“Yes.”

“By whom? Ryner Lute?”

The subordinate shook his head.

From that alone, he already knew who killed Biore.

It was the result he thought would come.

This was what he expected.

That was why there was nothing more to say.

“I appreciate your efforts. Stand by.”

“Yes—”

And his subordinates disappeared.

At that, Zohra let out a light sigh.

Biore was killed.

Biore Mente, who was called the Greatest Assassin in Roland, was discarded by this country so easily.

And that was only natural.

“... After all... despite how much they tell us that we're geniuses, they'll just discard us...”

If you were no longer needed, you were killed.

If you didn't have power, you were killed.

If you didn't do what they said, you were killed.

So that he wouldn't be killed, Zohra worked insanely hard.

And now, he'd reached this position.

Called a genius, entered the **Hidden Elites**, given this mansion, living in luxury.

Roland's cogwheel.

“... Fu, fufu.”

He looked up at the mansion before him, laughing without meaning to.

“Ha, haha. I see... so I'm weak...”

Keep your opinions to yourself and do what the country says.

Because you're weak, you have no choice but to live in fear and do what the country says so that you won't be killed.

Your opinion means nothing.

Even if you're strong, that means nothing.

From the beginning,

“... From the beginning, my existence had no meaning to this country...”

He killed as he was told to each day...

So that he wouldn't be killed, he did as he was told each day...

The mansion before his eyes was proof of his weakness.

“Geez.”

He looked up at the sky with a fed up expression.

At the cloudy sky.

Looking up at the sky...

“Stronger...”

He said.

“I... I have to become stronger...”

What is true strength?

Not running away, protecting those important to me, what is...

Staring up at Roland's suffocating, despairing sky, he began to think.

◆

And then, three years later.

◆

A problem child.

That was what he was called.

He was different from other people.

He was different from normal people.

"You have talent, so why won't you listen to us?"

He was yelled at, tortured, and likely to be killed...

Zohra Rom didn't care about that.

"You're idiots, aren't you? I don't listen to small fry like you assholes."

He spat out those words and took out a sheet of paper from his pocket.

His duty was to kill.

But he always chose whom he would kill.

Ever since that day, he, without fail, held onto his ideals.

I won't kill children.

I won't kill women.

I won't kill mindlessly.

I won't kill if I don't feel like it.

I won't kill the weak.

I won't kill if I don't think it's right.

He held onto those.

For an assassin, such sentiments were worthless. For an assassin... it was the worst.

So the title of the Greatest Assassin in Roland was out of his reach. Furthermore, Roland had become hostile towards him.

Because of that, they'd sent assassins after him.

However, Zohra didn't care.

And then, he fought.

If he remained a defeated dog who walked with its tail between its legs, he'd never be able to reach her...

"I won't fight children, women, or the weak—I'll only fight the strong instead."

And so he didn't fight the same way as his associates.

"So, from now on, I'll only choose strong targets? There's no point in fighting small fry."

He was completely ignoring Roland's expectations now.

He wasn't concerned about the country.

If they killed him, then that was just his level as a person.

He wasn't afraid.

If he was afraid, then he'd be defeated.

He'd resigned himself to becoming stronger.

Stronger.

More power.

In these past three years, all Zohra wished for was to fight.

To obtain enough power to protect her...

More, more, more!

"....."

He stared at the palm of his hands, which had grown considerably in the last three years.

And,

"Then, slowly, I'll be able to reach her..."

Then he curled his hands into fists.

"... I wonder... but Pia's seriously a genius, after all... It won't be easy chasing her..."

Pia's figure arose in his mind.

Three years ago.

Even though they only met once, he remembered her figure clearly.

However, his memory was still of when she was ten years old.

At that, Zohra looked as if he were about to cry.

"... Au, Pia... that cute girl... already, she's thirteen... she's becoming a woman..."

In his mind, he pictured a cute, thirteen-year-old Pia.

From that alone, Zohra felt overjoyed.

"Ha..."

However, for some reason, in his mental image of Pia, that stupid **All Enchantment** brat appeared by her side.

“H-Hey, hey, hey?”

And then that stupid brat reached out to hold Pia—

“Gyaaa!”

Zohra cried out without thinking.

“D-Don't!? You'll go crazy if you think about that?! I-I had better not see him again!?”

He held his head and immediately began to shake it back and forth.

“Come on, stop! Don't! Not yet. Not until you're fifteen—that's what you decided! Right now, you're still training, you're still training! Calm down, me!”

Telling himself this, he pushed down on his chest.

It'd been three years ago from now that Peria defeated him in front of Pia.

From three years ago.

He had to become stronger than that Peria guy.

That was his starting point.

Little by little, he was shortening the distance.

If he didn't risk death and become insanely strong, he wouldn't catch up.

For that, he chose this dangerous duty...

“A-All right, forget about that for now... Anyway, duty, duty... Now then, my associates, those strong guys... it's enough. Seriously, there's no point in fighting small fry...”

And with that, he took a sheet of paper from his pocket.

On that paper was a considerably difficult target.

It was someone with a decent reputation.

The **Greatest Magician in Roland**.

At that,

“Fufu... the Greatest in Roland...”

Without thinking, Zohra burst into laughter.

The Greatest Magician in Roland, the Greatest Assassin in Roland—this country had a lot of 'Greatest' titles.

“Aren't they idiots?”

He retorted without meaning to.

Then he opened up the profile of the **Greatest Magician in Roland**.

The target's features right now.

Belonging to the 42nd squadron of the Hidden Elites.

Black hair.

Black eyes.

Name...

There,

“Ah, that guy?”

Zohra muttered.

He heard that name three years ago.

During the time when Biore Mente was killed, he heard that name.

That was his target now.

That name was—

The **Alpha Stigma** monster, Ryner Lute.

Upon seeing that name—

An excited smile spread across Zohra's face.

To be continued!