

## Side Story (Sayama Rina) 1

*A/N: It's the story of a human on Law's side. This time's side story has 5 parts in total.*

"Uwaaaaaah!?"

"Jus-!? ...W-Wait!"

Falling in panic my comrades—who were called heroes—run away, everyone striving to be the first.

"Eh!? W-Wait..."

I stretch out a hand in the direction of a comrade as if imploring them.

"Shut up! All of it is your fault!"

"Don't get me involved in Rina's selfishness!"

The people who u-s-ed to be my comrades shower me with jeers and escape along the path we came.

Those who used to be my comrades fled. The ones left behind are me, who can't move due to my injured foot, and my former comrades who had turned into silent corpses.

And then——

"Now then, all your friends ran away, but what are you going to do? ——Hero of the Black Sword-sama?"

The main culprit of the tragedy——the silver-haired Demon King looks down on me while revealing a cold hearted smile.

I wonder, just where did I go wrong?

I think there have been several points where fate diverged dependent on my decisions.

Was the decision to attack this inviolable area a mistake?

Getting carried away beyond my means after being cheered on as hero; was that a mistake?

Dreaming of being a hero due to the support by the government was a mistake?

Going along with the invitation on that day...was a mistake?

One thing's for certain——the simple, cruel fact that my life would crumble away very soon.



A certain day in the year 20XX.

All humans received a single mail on their smartphones.

The next day inviolable areas appeared all over the world. The inviolable areas were forests, mountains, huge monoliths, cities...they had various shapes, but what all of them shared was their inaccessibility for humans.

The humans, who had built their lives in the inviolable areas, were expelled outside before they even realized what was happening. The government made efforts to shelter those people...temporary

housings flooded the soil left to humanity.

It was confirmed by a later investigation, but the number of inviolable areas across the whole world was roughly 1 million. The estimated size of an inviolable area is 6 km<sup>2</sup>. An area of 6 million km<sup>2</sup> had become no-man's-land. The whole world's surface area is 147,244,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Going by simple calculations, the inviolable areas cover 4% of the world's land. However, reality wasn't that easy-going.

The reason hasn't been clarified, but many inviolable areas appeared in regions with dense human populations.

Around 16,000 inviolable areas popped up in Japan. The total size covered by all Japanese inviolable areas was 96,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The total land area of Japan is 365,000 km<sup>2</sup>. As such 26% of Japan's soil was affected by inviolable areas. If you break it further down in urban areas, 60 inviolable areas appeared in Kanezawa, the place where I live. They cover a total of 360 km<sup>2</sup>. The total size of Kanezawa is 467 km<sup>2</sup>, or in other words, 77% of Kanezawa was covered by inviolable areas.

If you summarize this situation with a single word, it would be 'despair'.

Many people started to evacuate to the countryside with its few inviolable areas, but...the overwhelming shortage of land wouldn't be resolved by that. Infrastructure such as electricity, gas, water supply, and telecommunication was barely working, but the shortage of living places and food had become critical.

At this rate the population will likely decrease to less than 10% of its former size in the near future. That's what the TV commentator said.

In a world engulfed by such despair, I——Sayama Rina, who is no more than a student, habitually went with the flow of the world.



30 days after the appearance of the inviolable areas.

The day of a huge turning point.

That turning point swooped down on me when I was walking inside the campus of the university that's used as temporary shelter.

That turning point was the suddenly announced——『Revelation by a Goddess』.

10 am on a certain day.

『Oh my precious, lost humans. My dear children. Right now your world has been wrapped up by despair.』

I could hear the revelation as if it was directly transmitted from heaven into my mind.

『My dear children. You must not lose hope. I shall grant you power. I shall grant you the power the dispel the despair. My dear children, rise. Liberate the Domains, which bring despair to humanity, with your own hands.』

The revelation continues with a mystical, solemn voice.

『I equipped your terminals——your smartphones with the power to eliminate that despair. The beings reigning over the Domains are mighty and fiendish. My dear children, you must not take the enemy's power lightly. Your power——science, which is the crystallization of your wisdom, won't

work against your enemies. My beloved children, using the power granted by me, take back humanity's future with your hands.』

I'm not the only one hearing this voice. Once I look around me...all people in sight are concentrating on the voice that's directly speaking to their minds, even while being bewildered.

『My dear children, the doors of the Domains that are causing you so much grief have been pried open. I beg you, my precious children, save this world——』

The revelation ended.

I'm totally at a loss. Just what was the voice I heard a moment ago?  
The people around me start to make a commotion.

"Rina! Rina! Did you hear!?! ...The voice just now? Isn't that dangerous!?"

My friend——Kayama Saori, who walked next to me, calls out to me. Saori is a friend who has stayed with me for now more than 6 years, since middle school. She has bright, bleached light brown hair and wears a conspicuous, slightly revealing camisole. She's a small girl with peculiar Bambi eyes, making one recall a small animal. Up until her high-school days she was a bit more pristine, but she did what's called a university debut.[efn\_note]Basically using the change of environment for a total image change. Is also used as "High school debut" with the same meaning but different school level[/efn\_note]

"Yeah, I did." (Rina)

In contrast to Saori who speaks full of excitement, I merely returned a plain reply.

"I wonder what that was!?! The voice just now, was that god? A goddess? Even though it was a reeally amazingly mystical voice, mentioning 『Smartphone』, isn't that risky stuff!?" (Saori)

Due to Saori's words, I suddenly became curious about the powers said to dwell in my smartphone.

"Hey, listen! I'm going to TenniPara next. Will you come with me, Rina?" (Saori)

Saori calls out to me, being even more hyper. TenniPara is the name of the circle to which Saori belongs. It was one of those usual circles that do whatever seems fun while focusing on tennis.

"Sorry. I will pass." (Rina)

I apologized lightly to Saori and returned to my temporary room which I'm sharing with four other students.



Currently I live in a room of the university I attended. My family has already evacuated to Suzu, relying on distant relatives. There are two reason why I stayed behind. First, I was preferentially alloted a multi-tenant room as temporary housing as enrolled student of the university. Second...it

was painful to meet my family.

One roommate had stayed back in the room.

I simply greeted her and climbed on top of the two-staged bed which might as well be called my private space.

I operate the smartphone while laying down on the bed.

——?

An unfamiliar app had been installed on my smartphone.

The app's title is——『World Salvation Project』.

I guess the Goddess has installed it on my smartphone. Even the gods have advanced into an age of high-tech.

I start the app labeled as 『World Salvation Project』.

『My beloved child, first you will get to know your own aptitude.』

What was shown on the display is a line that seems to be the Goddess' words.

Once I go on, 【Status】? ... was projected on the display.

『

Name: Sayama Rina

Aptitude: Law

Class: Warrior

Lv.: 1

CP: 100

Body: F

Knowledge: G

Mana: H

BP: 3

Special Abilities:

– Slash

– Swordsmanship E

』

——?

What kind of joke is this?

I stare at the screen displayed on my smartphone and cock my head in puzzlement.

It looks like the interface of some half-baked game.

I don't have any experience in games, but I at least knew a little bit about them.

Warrior? Lv? ... A joke?

Once I was shown only so little, I thought that it might be some ill-natured prank.

But, in reality humanity has been driven into despair by the appearance of the strange phenomenon called inviolable areas. The voice, which previously directly addressed my mind, was heard by other people besides me as well.

Recently one weird thing happens after the other here.

In that case, I think that this cliched game-like interface is real.

Be that as it may... 【Swordsmanship E】, eh?

I wonder whether E is an abbreviation for something? Or does it become stronger in the sequential order of E, D, C, B, and A, following the alphabet?  
It will make me laugh, if it's the latter. My swordsmanship being E was verified by the world.  
I know it even without that certification.  
Is my abandoned past chasing me even in this broken world?  
Laughing at myself in mockery, I moved onwards to the next screen.

## Side Story (Sayama Rina) 2

『Please assign your BP. My dear child, you must not give up hope. Continuous effort will transform into power, without fail.』

——?

A cryptic sentence is displayed on the screen that followed the status screen.  
Once I tap the sentence away, the entries **【Body F】**, **【Knowledge G】**, and **【Mana H】** are displayed.  
Please assign your BP?  
BP means this value that shows 3, right?  
I'm supposed to assign this value of 3 to Body, Knowledge or Mana?  
Someone please explain.

Even if I wanted to consult with her, my relationship with my roommate is at the level of greeting each other. That's no basis allowing me to consult with her. Saori, who's my closest friend, is probably in the TenniPara club room right now, but I'm really bad with the mood in that circle. Even when I try returning, no return button is being shown on the display. And when I try to forcibly shut down the screen, the smartphone doesn't even accept that command.

"Haa..." (Rina)

How troublesome.

"U-Umm...if you tap on it, you will be shown an explanation of the status."

"Eh...t-thanks." (Rina)

I guess she heard the sigh that escaped my lips unintentionally. My roommate provided some timely help. She informs me with just a few words and then hurriedly returns to her own bed.  
Following her advice, I checked the description of each entry.

I see...? The meaning was almost exactly as the words' original meaning. Solely the explanation of **【Knowledge】** was limited to an abstract 『Depth of Knowledge』 which made it difficult to understand what it's about.

I guess the one I'm most excelling at is Body? Or rather, isn't that the same for all humans? I kind of doubt that there's a human excelling in Mana, which is an ability that didn't appear anywhere outside of fantasy movies, in the first place?

Is it a good idea to develop my strong point here?

I assigned the 3 BP into **【Body】** with the result of it staying the same old **【F】**.

——?

Did I make a mistake? Or...if I believe in the message from the person deemed to be a

Goddess——『My dear child, you must not give up hope. Continuous effort will transform into power, without fail』, it will rank up to 【E】 someday as long as I continue raising it? Once I finished assigning the BP, only the entries 【Status】 and 【Advice】 were left on the screen. Since I have already checked 【Status】, I tapped 【Advice】.

『

My dear child, for the sake of overcoming this world,

- Once you destroy the 【True Core】 hidden in the deepest part of a Domain, the Domain will fall back into the hands of humanity.
- If you defeat the monsters in Domains, you will level up and further abilities will be drawn out of you.
- When all Domains have been liberated, the world will probably be saved from despair.

My beloved child, I implore you to rescue the world which lacks any hope.

』

Domains is about those inviolable areas, right?

If I eliminate the monster inhabiting those Domains, my level will rise. In the deepest area is something called 【True Core】. If I destroy that, the Domain will stop being an inviolable area. And eventually liberate the Domains all over the world. That's it in short, I suppose?

Even if I don't do it, someone else will accomplish it. I don't think that it's a stage where a student, and moreover a minor, like me should appear. I'm sure the adults will somehow or other deal with it...

I entrusted the future to a yet unknown hero and stretched out on the bed.

7 hours later.

Under the government's leadership it was decided for the JSDF to start an assault into 1,000 Domains...among the 16,000 Domains that appeared in Japan. The number of the mobilized JSDF soldiers is 12,000.

Why don't they focus their combat power on a single Domain? The answer to that was impossible to understand, but...as result of tests, only 12 people could apparently enter a Domain.

Japan is already in a situation where it has been invaded by unidentified enemies. As outcome from taking the balance of personnel into account and in favor of a speedy resolution, it was planned to assault 1,000 Domains with 12,000 JSDF soldiers.

And, among those 1,000 Domains, Domains close to the university where I am were included as well.

1 hour later.

The result was a disaster. The number of deceased JSDF members is 3876. 8124 people are injured. The number of liberated Domains is 0. Humanity's counterattack carried out for the first time within Japan ended in a crushing defeat.

Commentators that appeared on TV or in the net unanimously continued a storm of bashing the government with "Thanks to the Goddess' revelation, it was easily predictable that firearms won't work. The government pointlessly wasted the lives of the troops which we might have needed in the future."

Albeit they loudly proclaimed "The government ought to resolve this early on" or "Dispatch the JSDF asap!" until the JSDF went into action...I sympathized with the government's high officials whose name I don't even know.



Three days later.  
Many small but certain hopes were given to humanity.  
It's said,

—— 『12 members belonging to Hokkaido's Third Division, who raided a Hokkaido dungeon, experienced level ups.』

—— 『Powerful weapons were discovered in a dungeon that was raided by volunteer students!』

—— 『As long as it is weapons that don't use any modern technology, it's possible for humanity to defeat low-ranking monsters.』

Each time good news spread in society, a large number of people, who became obsessed with heroic aspirations, flooded into the Domains.

There's still no news of a Domain having been liberated.

But, if it goes on like this, hope might be given to the world.

As outsider, who doesn't even play a minor role in such world, I will likely keep watching the world's fate. Thinking that, I lay down on my bed...

—— ~♪ ~♪ ~♪

The sound telling me about an incoming call could be heard from my smartphone.

The name of the caller that was displayed on the screen —— Kayama Saori.

I grab my smartphone and pick up the call.

"Hello." (Rina)

『Oh!? Hello, Rina? It's me, Saori!』

"What's the matter?" (Rina)

『Listen, there's something I want to discuss with you. Can you come to TenniPara's clubroom?』  
(Saori)

"Discuss? What is it?" (Rina)

『Well, I might not be the right person to explain properly. Sorry, but come to the clubroom! I'm waiting for you!』 (Saori)

"Wai-!? Saori!?" (Rina)

Saori one-sidedly told me what she wanted and hung up on me.

TenniPara's clubroom, huh...? I really don't wanna go.

Saori is my friend. Many of my friends I got to know at university were introduced to me through Saori. After becoming university students, Saori and I started to be somewhat out of sync, but that doesn't change the fact that she's my precious friend.

I reluctantly headed to TenniPara's clubroom.