

Chapter 40

"Uuh...uuh..." (Kanon)

Kanon groans as she watched the live video of the hero party together with me.

"Toilet? It's soon our turn——" (Shion)

"You're wrooong!" (Kanon)

My kindness is disregarded by Kanon, my subordinate.

"What's wrong then?" (Shion)

"I just thought that it's really strange." (Kanon)

"What is?" (Shion)

"The current situation." (Kanon)

I cock my head in puzzlement at Kanon's reply that lacks any explanation.

"Umm, that is, Shion-san, your strategy is proving to be right. The heroes are utterly struggling in a hard fight, aren't they?" (Kanon)

"That's right." (Shion)

"Since I was almost killed by them, it's not something I should say, but...aren't they too weak? I mean, they are Kanezawa's strongest humans who liberated four domains, right?" (Kanon)

The hero party that was displayed on the smartphone is - as Kanon said - struggling. Three of their comrades have already fallen.

"I guess that's how it is." (Shion)

"What's with the 'I guess that's how it is'! I was really afraid of today!" (Kanon)

As I snort with laughter, Kanon gets angry.

"The reason why they have so much trouble is simple." (Shion)

"Simple, you say?" (Kanon)

"Yeah, they willingly relinquished their strongest forte. That's all there is to it." (Shion)

"And what would that forte be?" (Kanon)

"What do you think it is?" (Shion)

I start to enjoy the conversations with Kanon. Having been freed from isolation, I picked up the skill to have fun speaking with others.

"Umm...they level quickly? There are many of them? ...They are riajuu!? Sorry, I give up." (Kanon)

"Oh well, since we don't have any time, I will tell you the correct answer. Their — humanity's strongest forte lies in the multitude of options, I think." (Shion)

"Options...you say?" (Kanon)

Kanon tilted her head in contemplation upon hearing my words.

"They have many alternatives. For example, it would have been possible for them to pick the option of withdrawing from my Domain. Even if I held them back with "Don't go back!", they would retreat, right? After all the option of retreat doesn't exist for us." (Shion)

"Yes, it doesn't." (Kanon)

"Furthermore, they can choose the Domain which they will invade, and they can do so whenever they like. In contrast, we..." (Shion)

"...can't choose the humans that are going to invade." (Kanon)

Once I shift my eyes towards her while telling her the correct answer, Kanon completes the words I wanted to say.

"Correct. In other words, we can't do anything but wait for humans to invade. When? How? Who? How many? We don't know whether they will come invading. We only wait. Moreover, the source of our combat assets, CP, is limited." (Shion)

"Now that you mention it, this world is unfair, right?" (Kanon)

"Indeed, it is." (Shion)

I agree with the lamenting Kanon.

"However, this time it's different. Kanezawa's officially recognized hero party was so kind to announce their invasion. They abandoned their biggest advantage of being able to invade whenever they like. In addition, the information about them, who are celebrities, from their combat power to their prided spoils was easy to research on the net." (Shion)

I wonder, wouldn't it have been better for the humans to confiscate all net devices from Yay lol, who diligently updated his SNS? But, as long as there are companies — or put another way, 『Sponsors』 that support the other members as well, an exposure beyond necessary would be demanded.

"In short, if you can grasp the combat power, the date and time of the enemy's invasion, it's just about preparing countermeasures, right?" (Shion)

As a matter of fact, had the hero party come invading all of a sudden, I think many of my subordinates would have become their experience points, and I would have suffered serious losses.

"I see." (Kanon)

"Oh! The hero party will arrive at the third floor any time now. Kanon, begin the preparations."
(Shion)

"Yes!" (Kanon)

There's around 500 m left until they arrive at the stairs leading to the third floor. I think it will take them approximately one hour?

I started the preparations to greet the hero party.



Alongside the deployed subordinates, I'm silently laying in wait for the hero party that will appear in a little bit.

The concept of the third floor is —— surprise attack.

What awaits the hero party that proceeded onto the third floor is a long passage wrapped in silence. Ahead of the passage lies a small room which uses a floor material that's obviously different from the other places. A rest area — a taboo place for those of us belonging to 【Chaos】 that we can't enter had been set up there.

——!

The echoing voices of people reach my ears.

"Yay lol, look at that! Hey! That's a rest area, isn't it!?" (Masakado)

I can hear the voice of Yay lol who kicks up a fuss with an excited tone.

"So we can take a break at long last...?"

"Let's reorganize our further plans at the rest area." (Hideya)

"I'm bummed out..."

What's audible afterwards are the mixed and tired voices of men and women.

Their delighted voices get closer together with their running footsteps.

Alongside a careful selection of subordinates I hide in a side passage extending to the left and right, which I created slightly in front of a passage continuing to the rest area.

——Teams A, K, X get ready!

Team A — a range assault unit composed of only goblin archers.

Team K — a range assault unit composed of dark elves, who are strong at magic, led by Kanon.

Team X — the priceless unit composed of dark elves, who are strong at archery, led by Chloe.

——Fire!

I have instructed team A and K to randomly shoot at the hero party without discrimination.

Yay lol, let me reward your achievements so far with my strongest combat asset.

Ten dark elves belong to team X. All of them made an effort to practice archery every day. The name of the arrow, which all of them hold in their dominant hand, is —— Lunatic Arrow.

The order I gave team X is to snipe Yay lol.

While countless arrows fired by team A pour down and countless spells unleashed by team K sweep over the hero party — the ten arrows filled with bloodthirst pierced into Yay lol who's running at the front.

"Ueh——" (Masakado)

It's very likely an overkill. The 10 released A rank arrows easily snatched away the life of the hero — Yay lol that held a Silver Spear which threatens my existence.

"——Wh-!?"

"——Eh!?"

"Uwaaaaaahhh!?"

"——!?"

"What!? What happened!?"

The hero party falls into panic after being struck by despair right in front of hope — the rest area. ——Team B, S, assault!



Team B — elite subordinates equipped with high ranking items and led by Blue, and team S — kobold knights equipped with high ranking items and led by Silver assault the hero party.

Team H — a group of ghouls led by Hope has been instructed to defend the rest area to the last. The panic of the hero party gets worse upon being attacked by a group of monsters who wore higher ranked equipment than themselves.

Only I conceal myself with 【Darkness Veil】 and slip through the hero party that had been forced into a melee.

【Darkness Veil】 doesn't have a stealth ability that completely erases my presence. At most its effect was to make my presence exceedingly thin. However, because they have succumbed into panic, they never noticed my existence. I easily got into the back of the hero party.

I put strength into my dominant hand that's grasping the Mithril Spear, and stab it into the heart of my target — the female intruder manipulating fire magic from behind.

"...Eh?" (Ruriko)

With a line of blood flowing down from her mouth, the woman slowly looked over her shoulder and then collapsed on the spot.

"Kyaaaaaaaaaa!?"

The female invader specialized on healing magic notices her fallen comrade and the being that defeated her, and screams.

"——!?"

A man, who had readied his bow, falls on his backside while trembling once he meets my gaze. The last two supporters attempt to escape in panic.

I focus my attention on the man who has fallen down, and snap the fingers of my right hand.

——【Dark Induction】!

Once the man's head is covered by a black fog, he stands up with vacant eyes and shoots an arrow, piercing the right foot of the woman resolutely wielding her Black Iron Sword — the 『Hero of the Black Sword』.

"Huh? W-Why...?" (Rina)

With her right foot shot, the 『Hero of the Black Sword』 looks at the shooter as if she'd seen something unbelievable.

"Eh!? J-Just what did I..."

That man recovered his sanity...throwing away the boy in his hands while trembling all over his body.

Hmm~. It looks like dark induction takes effect easily if the target is ruled by fear, but its effective time is short if the other party is a human, I guess.

While disappointed at the effectiveness of dark induction that came to an end quicker than imagined, I stabbed the man, who threw his bow away while screaming as if he was broken, with my Mithril Spear.

The battle has been decided.

"Uwaaaaaahhh!?"

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

The hopes of humanity referred to as heroes — escape towards the stairs returning to the second floor, all striving to be first.

"Ehh!? W-Wait..."

The 『Hero of the Black Sword』, who was delayed in her escape because of the foot injury, stretches out a hand, asking for help from her comrades.

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

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

Jeers were hurled at the 『Hero of the Black Sword』 in response.

My subordinates are scrambling towards to deliver the finishing blow.

While keeping my eyes on the 『Hero of the Black Sword』, who had resolved herself for death, I ponder how I should deal with the hero party that escaped.

Mmh?

The 『Hero of the Black Sword』, who looked into my eyes, has accepted her death, but she hasn't broken.

——Stop the attack!

I make my subordinates suspend the attack and approach the 『Hero of the Black Sword』.

The humans so far couldn't become my bloodkin as their hearts had been broken due to fear, even if I handed them the 【Blood Chalice】. Humans in a normal state couldn't become my bloodkin as they instinctively felt hate towards me, a member of 【Chaos】.

Will it work out if it's a human who was attacked, betrayed and abandoned by her friends and yet hasn't broken?

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

I smiled while looking down on the 『Hero of the Black Sword』.