

Chapter 53 - Trends

"Is everything going well for Rina-san?" (Kanon)

"Yeah, I think it is." (Shion)

"Hooh...let me have a look." (Kanon)

Hearing my answer, Kanon sits down on my shoulder with an effort and watches the live stream of Rina and the other bloodkin on my smartphone.

"Hey, you can also watch it while flying, can't you? Mmh? Did you become heavier?" (Shion)

"Wh-!? H-How rude!! I'm in my growth period!" (Kanon)

I think it's more rude to ride the shoulder of your master... Oh well, whatever. I stop the live stream for the moment and look through the net news.

"Eh!? Why did you turn it off!?" (Kanon)

Ignoring the huffy Kanon, I begin looking up the things that interest me.

The search keywords are 『Domain, expansion』, 『Domain, transformation』 and such... In addition I also skim through the anonymous message board to investigate the movements of the Demon Kings existing all over the world.

Ooh...as expected, they have increased.

103 Nameless Adventurer ID:mosefse

Just when I wondered whether the Domains in my hometown had disappeared, they merged?

107 Nameless Adventurer ID:sdeyhgt

Not just cities, towns, and villages; even for Domains it's the age of consolidation, huh?

108 Nameless Adventurer ID:lkseuhj

It seems even the Demon Kings are striving to fight against an aging population and want to strengthen their financial situation lol.

They shouldn't get all worked up rofl.

112 Nameless Adventurer ID:zsedfgk

The liberations of Domains all over the country by the heroes is proceeding daily after all. Ah! Thank you very much for your daily efforts, dear heroes. lol

114 Nameless Adventurer ID:fjdtxvc

Since the Hazard rank of the Domains becomes higher than before the merges, the Demon Kings might be really frantic to survive, too.

There are reports of successive Domain expansions happening all over the country. Fortunately there are no such reports in Kanazawa, but there was one such case in Komatsu within the Ishikawa prefecture.

The noteworthy articles were the ones reporting about the Domains continuing to grow in Tokyo and Kyoto.

The size of the Domain continuing to expand in Tokyo is an estimated 50 km² in total. Very likely seven or eight Domains are under its rule. The size of Kyoto's Domain is an assumed 40 km². It's guessed that six Domains have fallen under its rule.

Sooner or later these will probably serve as sparks spreading across the whole country like a wildfire.

The weak Demon Kings will be eliminated. The strong Demon Kings will expand their influence. In order to survive, I also have to become latter, a strong Demon King.

"The Demon Kings continue to increase the Domains they rule, don't they? Do you feel worried about your rivals, Shion-san?" (Kanon)

"Rivals, you say...I don't even know their names or faces. What worries me are the future trends." (Shion)

"The future trends?" (Kanon)

"Kanon, what did you think after watching Rina's group's state?" (Shion)

"They're doing fine?" (Kanon)

Kanon answers while cocking her head in puzzlement.

"Indeed, they're doing fine. To say it clearly, there's too much of a difference in combat strength." (Shion)

"That's right, isn't it? Even if we leave Rina-san out of the quotation, the opponents of our side, which is composed of B and C rank subordinates, are E rank goblins." (Kanon)

"Correct. I feel bad for the A district's Demon King, but they probably have no means to resist us." (Shion)

What I felt when watching Rina's group's invasion of the Domain was — it will be an easy victory. What's the main cause for the difference between mine and the target Demon King's strength having widened so much? I think a lot of it is related to luck, but I believe the answer is that I always prepared while focusing on reaching the cutting-edge.

For example, people who play the newest content that's regarded as broken in an online game; they will always compete with their fellow players and prepare meticulously by performing countless tests to constantly reign at the top.

It's difficult to say that I'm currently at the forefront, if looking at it on a global scale. However I always put in great efforts to aim for the top group. If you miss the leading group, you will be

degraded to a weakling. And weaklings are devoured by the strong...

What's displayed on my smartphone are my subordinates as they exterminate a group of goblins. That scene can't be called a battle — it's a slaughtering.

If I had been negligent on my hard work, or if I'd had bad luck...it wouldn't have been all that strange for me to be in the same situation as that Demon King. Watching my overwhelming subordinates, I rather felt danger encroaching upon me.

I had enjoyed watching my subordinates invade the Domain at first, but now I lost interest. Without any need to give individual orders, there's nothing for me to gain out of watching goblins being massacred. It will probably take a bit longer until they come across the Demon King.

I decided to draw up a plan for my future activities.

"Huh? You're not going to check Rina-san's situation anymore?" (Kanon)

"I don't think it's necessary that I do." (Shion)

"Eh!? Isn't that a bit too coldhearted?" (Kanon)

Google-chan obstructs my thinking time. Is there no power switch for her? Looking at Kanon who moves comically, I really wish for the implementation of a power switch function.

I want to keep her at distance, but Kanon possesses knowledge that's indispensable for my considerations. That's quite the dilemma, isn't it?

"I want to think about my future plans." (Shion)

"Okaaay." (Kanon)

Seemingly having read between the lines, Kanon stays silent on my shoulder.

"The time of big changes visiting the Demon Kings — what do you think? When are we going to hit a juncture?" (Shion)

"Juncture? Isn't that when the Demon Kings start to reach level 10?" (Kanon)

Once a Demon King becomes level 10, they can their Domain. And it apparently will be possible to integrate human land into the Domain. Indeed, that's a big change.

However the road until level 10 is long and thorny.

Yes, long and thorny... What should I do to survive until then?

"Kanon, what do you think? What's the number of Demon Kings that's stronger than me?" (Shion)

"It depends on the criterion of strength, but...going by my net investigations, I think you belong to the top 10% in the country. Within the city, number one, right? Within the prefecture, I'm certain that you're in the top 10?" (Kanon)

Kanon answers my vague question with a vague reply.

"How do I compare in level then?" (Shion)

"If it's level...there's a great number of Demon Kings above level 3. I wonder about level 5 and

beyond, though?" (Kanon)

The existence of Demon Kings that evolved — went beyond level 3, has been confirmed in various places. Even if I'm optimistic and assume that many Demon Kings are exactly level 3, they will likely go up to level 4 before I reach level 6. If I consider it realistically, there are probably many Demon Kings who are above level 5.

Seeing as the elimination of weak Demon King has started already, the levels of the surviving Demon Kings will stay within a small range to each other.

In such case the difference in strength between fellow Demon Kings will be negligible.

That will give birth to a difference in individuality, also called race. It might also create individual differences between statuses such as Body build or Creation build.

Mmh? Individual differences through status?

Currently B is the highest rank, even for specialized builds. To rank up from B to A, you need 50 BP. Even if you spend all your BP for the same stat, it will require level 13 to rank up the stat to A. Even if they obtained the same bonus as Kanon and I, they still have to reach level 11.

Are there actually any Demon Kings who would allot their BP to the same stat until level 11? Even if there was such a Demon King, would they be able to survive? It's possible if it's a Creation build, but...they would still need to get to level 11 to reach Creation A.

The ones at advantage at the beginning were the Demon Kings specialized in **【Body】** and **【Mana】**. Both are not easy to defeat if you rank them up to B. However, what about the current trend...?

"Kanon, what do you think is the current trend?" (Shion)

"Eh!? What kind of question is that all of a sudden!? U-Umm...the celestial raiment of water!" (Kanon)

"What kind of trend is that supposed to be...?" (Shion)

"Rather, what kind of trend did you ask about?" (Kanon)

"The stats of specialized Demon Kings." (Shion)

Having suddenly a question dumped on her, Kanon gives a wrong answer. I decided to explain my earlier consideration to Kanon, despite it being a pain.

Even while I consider it troublesome, I enjoy my conversations with Kanon somehow.

Chapter 54 - Invasion, start! ②

"I seee. Omitting that explanation, you have often asked the prev——" (Kanon)

I get irritated at Kanon who acts all condescending for some reason.
——Roll up your skirt!

"Eh!? Kya!! T-That's unreasonable!" (Kanon)

"Unreasonable? Isn't that the nature of relationship you wished to have with me, Kanon?" (Shion)

"C-Certainly, I offered my surrender, but...this is a bit..." (Kanon)

"Well, it's fine. So, that do you think is the current trend?" (Shion)

"Umm, that is...currently it's **【Creation】**, I think?" (Kanon)

"Tsk...the same as me." (Shion)

"Eh!? You clicked your tongue despite me being correct!?" (Kanon)

The current trend — the stat, promising Demon Kings specialize in nowadays is **【Creation】**. That's because the recently rapidly-growing Demon Kings will be the ones to leave their Domains thanks to freely putting their bloodkin to use. The subordinates of Demon Kings specialized in **【Creation】** have high ranks. On the other hand, the bloodkin of Demon Kings specialized in **【Body】** or **【Mana】** will be immediately killed as they are weak, even if they are dispatched outside the Domain.

I don't think it's an exaggeration to even say that the era of the **【Creation】** Demon Kings has come. However, this creates a problem. Although they might be called **【Specialized Builds】**, the stat is currently maxxed out at B. Honestly, it's not that difficult to raise **【Creation】** to B even without being a specialized build.

Until they reach Creation A, it will still require a lot more time. And it's not just the Demon Kings that are growing. The humans are growing at an astounding rate as well. Only decline is awaiting the weak that have stagnated.

"What will be necessary to tower above all the surrounding Demon Kings once they've raised their **【Creation】** to B?" (Shion)

"Given that a Demon King can't leave their Domain until the reach level 10...——!?" (Kanon)

"Oh? You realized?" (Shion)

Kanon's expression brightened up as she had apparently noticed something.

"Yes! An excellent staff office——" (Kanon)

"Wrong." (Shion)

Kanon didn't realize anything. Kanon's existence is surely a big help. **【Knowledge】** B. Or to put it another way, 17 BP. It has a value proportionate to four levels. However, I won't tell her that.

"There are three points I've come up with." (Shion)

"There it is! Shion-san's prided three finger coun——" (Kanon)

——Roll up your skirt!

"Kya!? W-Why...?" (Kanon)

I got Kanon involved thinking that I would get some useful input rather than thinking by myself,

but I made a mistake, didn't I?

"First it's Alchemy. Even if subordinates at the same rank run across each other, the ones with the better weapon ranks will come out victorious." (Shion)

"But, the Demon Kings, who raised 【Creation】 and 【Alchemy】 to B...won't increase in number from now on, right?" (Kanon)

"I think they will." (Shion)

If it's a Demon King aiming to actively expand their Domain in the future, it will be indispensable for them to keep the strengthening of their combat forces in mind as well. If they are going to reinforce those forces — in short, their bloodkin, for the sake of invading Domains, there are only two stats that will allow them to do so, 【Creation】 and 【Alchemy】. Once they maxxed out 【Creation】, they will probably raise their 【Alchemy】.

"That's where the second point comes in. The expansion of Domains. In other words, an enhancement of the maximum CP. Once 【Alchemy】 becomes B, there are items that require 1,500 CP at the highest grade." (Shion)

"『Gáebolg』, you mean?" (Kanon)

"That's the one, if we're talking about spears." (Shion)

The maximum CP rises by 100 per level. If one simply raises 【Creation】 to B, buying that item will have to wait until level 15. However, the maximum CP also grows by 100 for each annexed Domain. Or to sum it up, expanding one's Domain is related to a strengthening of one's combat assets.

"There's a big merit besides that. If the maximum CP grows, the CP recovery will become faster, too. In short, the material warfare will also become advantageous." (Shion)

"Only good things, huh? However, to tower above the other Demon Kings, you have to expand your Domain, right? Isn't that putting the cart before the horse?" (Kanon)

Google-chan noticed that contradiction!?! While hiding my surprise, I explain the third point.

"The third point is the strengthening of the bloodkin." (Shion)

"Seeing how you acted all standoffish, it's a fairly norma——" (Kanon)

——Roll up your skirt!

Subordinates grow as well. If Chloe fights against a dark elf that had just been created, Chloe will always win. A subordinate's status goes up faintly, and a part of their special abilities improves noticeably.

"If you summarize all of it, it means that it's necessary to have my bloodkin gain even more combat experience than until now, and to hasten the annexation of Domains before the surrounding Demon Kings can snatch them." (Shion)

"Uwaaah...that's the very picture of a black company[efn_note]Workplaces that exploit their employees for little money.[/efn_note] work." (Kanon)

"Say whatever you like. I will do anything it it's for the sake of survival." (Shion)

"I agree with that view." (Kanon)

Eventually Kanon agreed with me.

"By the way, if I create new bloodkin, will I be able to invade several Domains at the same time?" (Shion)

"Hmm, I wonder? It might be possible, but...I think the success rate will go down, and the survival rate will drop considerably, too." (Kanon)

"Thought so..." (Shion)

The main reason why they can advance steadily right now is Rina. The monster bloodkin are obedient, for better or worse. If I order them to invade, they will keep doing so while forgetting to eat and sleep. Of course their performance would get worse, and before long they would run out of steam. If I order them to not die, they will avoid battle at the slightest hint of danger. In that case they wouldn't make any progress at all. And in the end they would easily fall into a trap. Even if there was an obvious trap, they would step into it if not for Rina's warning. I often saw such scenes taking place.

If I plan them to be victorious to some extent, it's necessary to turn high-ranking subordinates into bloodkin, and equip them with high-ranking items, in the long run. In other words, high costs. Furthermore, if they get killed, the high-ranking items will fall in enemy hand. In the end, Rina's presence as someone possessing flexibility and experience as former hero is essential.

"Making humans into bloodkin is rare, isn't it?" (Shion)

"Yeah. If you search the net, it's not like there are none, but..." (Kanon)

"How do they attack other Domains without having humans helping them out?" (Shion)

I suddenly became curious how the other Demon Kings handle this.

"What I read was a net article called 『Monsters are invading a Domain in the Mie prefecture!』. It looks like a material warfare? The article mentioned something like 『Monsters are continuously invading the Domain!』." (Kanon)

"I see. Disposable pawns, huh...?" (Shion)

"I'm against that. Isn't that just a war of CP attrition if it's always just disposable pawns...? I think it's prone to failing." (Kanon)

"Oh, how rare. A real staff officer view for a change." (Shion)

After I let that slip, Kanon started to turn around happily.

"Eh? Really?" (Kanon)

"...It was a lie." (Shion)

"Wha-!?" (Kanon)

The cheerfully revolving Kanon froze in mid air.

