

Chapter 203 - The Final Frontier

In the middle of a meeting with my bloodkin and the leaders of **【Remains of the Moon】**.

"Eva's metal blades defeated the person who manipulated steel-hard darkness threads. It was amazing. In an instant. Even I was like "Eeehh! A cloudburst of metal!?" It was really surprising."

"Nn, thanks to the new emerald emperor steel. Mysty made the metal easy to use." Eva modestly praised Mysty who wasn't present at the moment.

"I was surprised by those as well...small metal blades? It was such an amount that it almost buried the alley, wasn't it?" Bennett added more praise.

"Indeed, I reflexively rubbed my eyes." Mel chipped in.

Both had pale faces as they apparently felt slightly scared.

I had heard about the battle run-down before, but...Eva's ESP-like skills or mana as well as her mind force were apparently growing steadily.

As for the recovered prohibited books, "...You defeated the dwarf, the leader of **【Skull Ogre】**, and picked up his prohibited books, but what are you going to use them for, Mel?" I asked

"Yes, I will sell them and use the money for our operation funds, or I will keep them in custody since they can be used as incentive for leader-class personnel to join us. I'm not sure yet." Mel replied.

Well, let's leave the minor details to Mel.

"I see. I asked something unnecessary." I said.

"No, not at all." Mel assuaged me.

"Guild master, you can just leave it to Mel~ Although she said this and that, Mel bought up even the materials for my horned bone soldiers." Veronica put a good word in for Mel with a smile.

"Yeah, yeah, she properly selected a bow made by a famous dwarf artisan and bought it for me as well. Really, she's reliable in that area, and her meticulousness is amazing, I mean, given that she was the former guild master, that's only natural, though." Bennett complemented while also smiling.

While listening to their remarks, Mel smiled with the graceful face of a lady. It's not just her being the former guild master. Even when we met for the first time, she had the atmosphere of a smiling beauty hanging around her.

Coupled with the slenderness of her legs, she really makes me feel something. She's a nice woman.

"...That's true." I admitted.

After that Paulsen, Angie, Robalt, Lulu, and Lala lightly recounted the details of the battle against the skilled experts of **【Nose of the Large Bird】**.

"The shadow user was more eerie than the longsword user..."

Once I asked about her appearance, she was a beauty with black hair and a mark on her forehead. Her name is Yomi...maybe she was a former Japanese? It would probably be something like Underground Spring? [efn_note] Her name is ヨミ (Yomi in katakana), Underground/Yellow Spring or Underworld (黄泉 read as よみ) is the Japanese name Yomi[/efn_note]

If she's a reincarnator or transferee who can freely manipulate shadows, she will be a considerably formidable enemy. Or rather, I don't feel like I can defeat her...she might not be such a simple enemy on whom the light attribute shows an effect.

I feel like I want to once try whether the spear will work by stabbing her, but it appears that she will disappear by turning into a shadow or something like that. Come to think of it, the evil god possessed the same power...

But, I think getting her to join us might be impossible. Then again...if she's quite a beauty, I want to meet and talk with her.

"Angie had been stabbed swiftly. She's quite strong." Paulsen explained.

"Yeah." While quietly agreeing, Angie placed a hand on her chest. She was apparently recalling the time of the blade penetrating her chest.

"...They withdrew from our territory, right?" I asked.

"Yes. We could confirm that. The Warehouse District is the turf of **【Remains of the Moon】**. In the middle of the battle, the enemies mentioned having obtained something and things staying "unsettled", but...since it was only two enemy leaders, it's probably a safe bet that they were a reconnaissance party of **【Nose of the Large Bird】**. I guess their goal was to investigate our power as the ones who crushed **【Owl's Fangs】** by personally confronting us rather than getting intelligence through thief guilds." Paulsen said while touching his curly mustache.

I wondered whether they might be bug carriers seeing as they were connected to Pax, but it might be completely unrelated.

"...Since Pax mentioned something like having a dispute with **【Nose of the Large Bird】** when I fought him, it might be connected in one way or another. The members of **【Nose of the Large Bird】** came here to assassinate or settle things with Pax, but since Pax wasn't around, they might have said that it's unsettled. It's very likely that they checked out our strength while at it." I guessed.

"I see...that follows logic." Paulsen nodded.

"Therefore, Paulsen, Angie, keep doing your normal jobs." I instructed the two.

"Yes!" Paulsen answered crisply.

"Understood." Angie obediently confirmed.

"Guild master, what's our job?" Lulu inquired

"Lala is going to work as well!" Lala interjected.

Hearing the words of the Massacre Sisters, Paulsen's face became gloomy. Apparently he wasn't very good with babysitting them. Is it because of Angie's existence? He had a sullen look that was easy to understand.

Let's have the Massacre Sisters assist Robalt who had been entrusted with the Pleasure Quarter.

"...You two will make the rounds as Robalt's assistants and protect you mamas. Robalt, you fine with that?" I asked.

"Roger," he readily acknowledged.

"Understood." Lulu said.

"Oki. Since Robalt protected me the other day, I will help him." Lala also agreed.

After that, Mel reported, "Guild master, the other day it had been **【Skull Ogre】** who was hostile, but it was confirmed that the other leaders returned to **【Iron Corner City Lalahbuin】**."

"It's because they picked a fight with my <Head Servant Leaders>. Should they enter the city next time, I think I will erase them from the root?" I announced with the intention to make a light joke, focusing on forming an Arc-like smile.

Mel smiled tactfully and while immediately producing an expression that suited her image as former guild master of a dark guild, "Guild master...that's a scary face. I'm going deliberately along with it, but if you're going to crush Skull Ogre yourself, I'd like to accompany you," she said.

She went along with my joke for a bit.

"It's a joke. Even if I were to go defeat them, I would still need enough capable personnel to whom I can entrust a whole city..." I amended.

"Milord, if you order, I shall lead your troops towards Lalahbuin, though." Kaldo, who stood next to me, proposed while adopting a militaristic pose.

"You're an insurance in case I'm not present. That's why I want you to stay here." I ordered.

"Leave it to me. I plan to carry out my work as advisor." Kaldo affirmed.

"Shuuya, for the name of Dad and not Viine to appear so often when it's related to dark jobs, means you're trusting Dad quite a bit." Yui was apparently happy about me relying on her father and said so with a womanly "Fufu."

I smiled back, and calmly stated my assessment, "...Indeed. Yui's father is the man who gave birth to you, and survived through the world of darkness while experiencing many battlefields. I respect him as a man even before as a subordinate."

"Master's respect..." Viine muttered with her beautiful, silver eyes trembling.

...Is it that unexpected?

From the start it hasn't changed that I also harbor respect towards Viine for her extensive wisdom, including her lock-picking skills...

...Well, I respect each and every single of my comrades.

If it's men, there's also the cool Kazun-san with his sombre voice.

"...Milord, I'm deeply grateful...full of happiness. This Kaldo won't even mind to offer his life if it's for the sake of milord! I intend to strive to the best of my abilities as one of your katana." Kaldo's eyes became bloodshot, befitting a vampire. He was excited.

"Yeah. Including my chosen bloodkin, I respect everyone who's present here." I stated powerfully.

"Respect, what's that?" One of the Massacre Sisters raised her hand.

"Ah, Lala!" Lulu yelled.

"A gentle heart trying to protect your mamas like Lulu and Lala is admirable. That's what it means." I explained.

"Yaaay, I don't really understand, but I will respect guild master as well~" Lala announced.

"..."

At that moment, "...Guild master, thank you," resounded Mel's vice-guild-master-like, refined, womanly voice, and after a short pause, "I'm going to return to our topic then. Even if you were to crush **【Skull Ogre】**, it would take a little time and effort if it comes to building a branch in Lalahbuin from scratch. Right now we are at a point where I want to firmly solidify our foundation in Pelneet, also including bribes to the governmental officials. Especially the area around the Warehouse District, which is connected to the port, has many sailors and hoodlums...there are also ship companies in every nook and cranny. Since there are still many untouched places to deal with..."

Because of Pelneet's size, it might be difficult.

"...Got it. So, you said a part that didn't withdraw remained. Just what kind of fellows are those whimsical **【Skull Ogre】** leaders or whatever?" I inquired.

"It's a mastery dual wielder called Assassin of Crimson. None of us, including me as well, has faced him directly, but I have heard he possesses ability in the upper ranks of the divine king ranking as he has mastered the Flying Sword Style and the Peerless Sword Style." Mel answered.

Upper ranks of the divine king ranking, eh? So the same class as Rave.

It looks like he will be a formidable enemy. Though the principle behind his conduct...doesn't fit with the feeling of a dark guild.

"...Hee, so he's acting like a lone wolf rather than a member of a dark guild?" I asked.

"Seems so...I hear he has personally clashed with the Demonoid ZarlP several times." Mel let her eyes wander awkwardly.

She believed that Demonoid Zarlp is her father, didn't she?

"I see. Mel, there won't be any harm to you, right?" I tried to confirm.

"No, after all I'm simply thinking that he's my father on my own accord..." Mel answered truthfully.

"Leave him alone then. However, if you want to get involved with Demonoid Zarlp, it might be a good idea to cooperate with him." I told her.

"Really!?" Mel stuck out her face while making her honey-colored hair sway.

She bit for a change.

"...I'm sorry to spark hope in you, but I don't have any connections to him at all nor do I have a strategy." I informed her.

"Ah, that's right, isn't it...?" Mel looked down in disappointment.

"What kind of relation did you want to have with him?" I probed.

"...I don't know. I want to talk with him...about whether he's really my father." Mel stayed vague.

Talk, huh...?

"...That seems difficult. I have never seen him, and since he's a demonoid that seems to cause scandals, he's rather elusive, isn't he?" I pondered.

"Yes. Since he has wings at his feet, he appears to be fast." Mel replied.

He might leave by flying.

"...If I catch sight of him, I will try my best to capture him." I promised Mel.

"That's plenty. Having you, with your sharp senses, say that makes me happy." Her light brown eyes trembled faintly as she revealed a beautiful smile. It was not the face of the landlady and former guild master, but one typical of a girl yearning for her father.

"Guild master, the next topic on the agenda~" Veronica's voice reverberated as if relating to that girlish aspect.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Most recently the crows of the Valmask family have been active, how is the situation over at your mansion, guild master?" Veronica inquired.

"I haven't noticed anyone like that." I replied honestly.

When I stayed at the Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth, I caught sight of a crow at times, though.

"Hmm."

"I think it's owed to it being the Martial Arts District. After all it's a place where martial arts practitioners, who spurn the rule of dark guilds, and folks, who are active in the arena, live." I explained.

"I see...that means only I have been marked." Veronica concluded.

I became worried once her face became gloomy.

"...How about coming to my place if you're anxious?" I offered Veronica.

In response Veronica stuck her tongue out with a triumphant expression, saying, "Okay♪", with a smile plastered all over her face.

"Guild master — please don't spoil Veronica. She's just saying all that while deliberately pulling an anxious face. Given that she got rid of all pursuers of the Valmask family so far as if toying around with them, it's not necessary to worry about her." Mel said while looking at Veronica with a scowl.

"Ah, jeez~ Mel, you bully! Even though I thought that Shuuya would fall for it as guild master~" Veronica said playfully.

Haha, she splendidly led me astray.

However, although it was fine to mess around here by going along with it, I kept my serious expression.

"...Veronica, next time when you're challenged by the pursuers of the Valmask family, inform me or my chosen bloodkin. Since you're already our comrade, we will make them understand that it's not the **【Remains of the Moon】** from before anymore, okay?" I insisted.

"...Okay, thanks. Guild master, your serious face is dreamy as well. It got me slightly mesmerized...thus I really wanna talk with you more next to a bed...fufu." Veronica spoke as if engrossed with me.

"That's a charming invitation, but it's impossible." I replied.

Even as Veronica said something like that, my <Head Servants> silently listened. I thought they would be seething with jealousy, but...it looks like they don't particularly mind.

Well, I guess it's because they had me promise dates, shopping trips, and "various" other things...

At that moment, Lulu and Lala whispered secretly among each other, "Why doesn't spirit-sama behind us doesn't come over here~?" "...She seems to be talking with the potted plant in her hand..." "I wanna see her shoot water with a pew!" "Right now is no good since we're in the middle of a meeting..."

Just as the two said, Helme had been in a place away from the altar spot. Sitting on a folded chair, she had been chatting with the Millennium Plant about something.

Now then, I think I will close this meeting. I clear my throat, "...Everyone strive at your respective

jobs. The meeting is over."

"See you later then——" Mel said.

Once the meeting was over, the leaders with Mel in the lead withdrew at once. Because the combat slaves around Mamani came back as if changing places with them just right then, I collected their magic stones, and gave them a day off. For a few days after that I spent a laid-back life together with everyone.



"Shuuya, let's go shopping~" Rebecca demanded.

"Nn, will guide you to delicious places." Eva chipped in.

After accompanying the cute girls on their shopping trip and giving them the souvenirs I had forgotten, I performed "various" services as promised, spending a fun time with the girls. However, the topic of the mirrors didn't come up to such an extent that it was unnatural. ...They likely hate to be separated from me. Right now I'm spending time with them, but...sooner or later I will search for the mirrors again. Besides, we can use blood messages, and it's not like we will be apart forever. That's why leaving them behind here, and going to the Benrack village or such...it might be nice to depart on a trip into the unknown. In addition, if it's the searching for mirrors that aren't buried in the ground, they can come with me. Otherwise, I might as well continue diving into the labyrinth with everyone...without going on journeys at all.



I think today it's Rollo's service time~

We played with a cat teaser, played hide-and-seek at home, I gave her a paw massage, and smoothened out her black fur with a brush. After calming down a bit, we went on a sky stroll in a place distant from Pelneet.

"——Rollo, this is fun!" I yelled.

"——Nyaoo."

Rollodeen, who had turned into her huge divine beast size, got carried away and began to ascend. The scenery below me was full of specks in the twinkling of an eye... The Heim River looked like a small string.

If I were to see the current Rollo from a distance, she would probably exceed the size of a griffon or a dragon.

The place down there shrunk away with a whoosh, but I turned my eyes upwards. We glided through the air at such a speed that it made me even feel as if time had slowed down. We charged

into big clouds — a layer of cumulonimbus, I think? My sight was instantly dyed gray. I fell for the optical illusion of being covered by blankets of snow.

I could hear the shivering sounds of Rollodeen's black fur. I was slightly cold since my body was wrapped up by damp air. But probably thanks to the minuscule amount of mana emitted from Rollodeen, it wasn't so cold that I quivered.

Because of the narrow, limited sight, I touched the attachment next to my right eye. The Kaleidoscope started up. And once I touched the item box' crystal, the Dimension Scan booted up as well. A simple map and three-dimensional frames were added to my field of vision, turning it into a vivid visual field.

"Rollo, are you okay with this visibility?"

"Nyao."

『Play』 『Fun』 『Hunt』 『Over there』 『Fun』

Since her tentacle was attached to my nape, her feelings were transmitted to me.

Well, I guess it's alright then.

Hyaahaaa, she accelerated as if igniting the afterburner——

After a short time we broke through the multilayered clouds. The sunlight was dazzling.

Even though we had passed through a damp cloud layer, Rollodeen's wings weren't overly wet. The few water drops clinging to her wings reflected the sunlight, making rainbow-colored light being scattered into the air visible.

I wonder, have the black wings a waterproof finish?

Oh, I found a swarm of jellyfish nearby. Moreover, a whale opened its big mouth widely, and swooped down on them.

I saw the same the other day as well: it was a battle between whale and jellyfish.

Rollodeen, who had discovered a single big jellyfish which was running away unsteadily, chased it while gliding.

Don't tell me...

But, it was just as I had feared.

She swiftly closed in on the jellyfish by contracting her tentacles. Once she tightly grabbed the jellyfish with her big forepaws, which had their claws extended, Rollodeen opened her mouth and bit into the jellyfish' surface. While making her Adam's apple vibrate with a "Garuuu", she ate the jellyfish meat with smacking sounds.

"...Is that delicious?"

"Nyaoooooon."

『Fun』 『Caught』 『Hunt』 『Hunt』 『Hunt』

By now she might not give a damn about the taste anymore.

Once I looked at Rollodeen chewing, I became interested in the taste of the jellyfish, wondering whether it's tasty or disgusting. I shot <Chain> at the edge of the jellyfish. While manipulating the chain's tip, I cut off a part of the jellyfish. I stabbed the severed, transparent part of the jellyfish with <Chain>, and reeled it in. I pulled the transparent part to me and grabbed it.

The touch of the transparent part transmitted through my fingers...was like wobbly gelatin. It was different from collagen fibers. It was a feeling as if jelly had solidified...then I sniffed it.

It didn't smell of stale liquor. It was odorless inorganic matter...I tried putting it into my mouth as a test.

A texture that felt smooth with no taste. Close to konjac?

If I were to sell this as gelidium jelly strips with a sauce, it might unexpectedly sell quite well...let's give it to Eva as an ingredient for konjac.

Ah, but it's possible that this ingredient is just fine because it's Rollo and me. It's because I had <Super-hyper Absorption> in me, which had been absorbed by <Power of a True Ancestor>.

As I harbored such impressions, Rollo threw away the jellyfish in the middle of eating, apparently fed up with it. Then she ascended even further.

The air became gradually thinner. Are we in the stratosphere now? Shit.

If we continue upwards, we will definitely end up in space...

As I was thinking about such things, in the blink of an eye, for a short time — there was zero gravity.

Whoaaaa— even the tufty fur of Rollodeen floated a bit. My body floated as well, but Rollo arrested it by coiling her tentacle around me.

Great work, Rollo!

While I repeatedly patted her torso with my left hand, I looked into outer space.

Space, the final frontier. In search of the Enterpr ○se flying somewhere through space, its bald captain, a philosophical alien with long, vertical ears, the Dyson Sphere surrounding the sun, a humanoid weapon that changed Jupiter into a black hole, and Mabaon, and to stimulate the evolution of living beings by showering them with cosmic rays, on IDEON's exploration journey while challenging the mysterious riddles of space...

We ain't departing on such a journey. Well, it can't be helped that I'm fruitlessly playing a slapstick duo all by myself. But, it's space. Space, I tell you. I feel the brightness of the sun. This is...radiation.

Even besides that, supernova explosions might exist as well. It's probably natural to consider space radiation as harmful to a human body...but, it looks like it doesn't work on a Light Demon Lucival.

And, even without air, Rollodeen seems fine. Is she gaining thrust through mana particles?

I don't know, but...she's my special divine beast and partner. She's indeed made out of my blood and flesh.

While stroking Rollodeen's body once more...just when I wondered whether I should try looking at the distant stars and the Milky Way through the beam rifle, using it like Kepler's Telescope...

Nuo? What's that? A flying life-form? No...it's swimming? There was an alien in the distant, empty darkness of space.

Possessing a unique skin similar to bleached resin, its entire body had a watery color. A swimming, luminescent alien-shaped monster.

Once I looked closer, tiny aliens were squirming around the parent body...aliens swimming and living in the upper orbital sphere.

Since their front was dazzling, was it actually a showdown between pirates and a space truck? It made me want to look at it as if appreciating a work of art, but...they were definitely life-forms and they looked strong.

I really don't wanna fight those.

...Let's look at a different art that's below me. The huge, beautiful, rock planet, Sera.

Super-earth, was that how the category was called? Even the Mahaheim Continent...it's obvious that it's vast.

There are some parts with oceans here and there, but the land continued on in the west, north, and east.

——Rollo, stop ascending any further. Go down and return to Pelneet's outskirts.

The divine beast Rollodeen, who gave off the impression of a huge black horse, a huge black lion, or a huge black griffon, moved her head vertically, indicating her confirmation.

It's not that she plunged into the atmosphere as is. On the way she transformed into the physique of

a normal horse, skillfully folding her limbs and making soft maneuvers which were impossible for a horse.

Are you a Zeta Gundam capable of entering the atmosphere? While wondering about that, I enjoyed the nose dive.