

Chapter 7 - Beginning of the Duel - Blizzard vs. Former Duchess

"Therese, how do you feel?" (Amalie)

"This last month I improved my magic greatly thanks to Wendelin's attentive teaching. I won't lose one-sidedly." (Therese)

"Therese-sama, didn't I teach you occasionally as well?" (Burkhart)

"Of course I haven't forgotten thy assistance, Burkhart." (Therese)

"By the way, why did you focus on learning fire magic?"

"The other side is called Blizzard. I just took its antipode, fire. After all, I couldn't see myself winning with the same attribute." (Therese)

"Well, the other side trained in magic for more years than you are old, Therese-sama." (Burkhart)

"Thee see?" (Therese)

For the sake of raising Therese's mana as much as possible, I kept her company in her training in the morning and at night (I know, old man's joke) in this last month.

So far her mana qualities had been hidden, or rather, couldn't be pulled out by anyone but me at present, but Therese's talent is considerable. It might be comparable to that of Katharina or even above hers.

However, there were limits with just one month available.

Besides, although it was for the sake of increasing her mana, I spent everyday with Therese as my partner which caused dissatisfaction to accumulate among Elise and the others.

No matter how short on time we might have been, since it would be troublesome if Therese were to harm her health by overdoing it, we kept it moderate, I guess.

Even so, she should have become unbelievably strong in a short time compared to other magicians.

"Well, I intend to go at it moderately so that I won't die." (Therese)

"I will come to cheer you on." (Elise)

"Me too." (Luise)

"Me too." (Ina)

"I will come as well." (Katharina)

"That's very appreciated, but is it going to be alright with thy physical condition?" (Therese)

Therese worried about my pregnant wives.

It was difficult to judge whether it was not good for the body or the prenatal care to observe a duel at the early stages of a pregnancy.

"I will watch them properly." (Katia)

"It will be fine since Katia and I will be present. Amalie-san will be with us as well."

"I can't defend in the unlikely event of a spell being hurled at them, but as long as it's taking care of pregnant women, I got it covered. It's Wend-kun's children, so watching a magic duel might actually not be bad as prenatal care." (Amalie)

Katia, Wilma, and even Amalie were brimming with the intention to come watch Therese's duel.

"I see. Thank thou for thy great support. It's not that I don't have any sympathy for that spinster since she likely won't have anyone cheering for her, but..." (Therese)

"Lass! I'm already here, you know!?" (Lisa)

As a matter of fact, Lisa had shown up at the mansion early on as it's the appointed day of the duel, but Therese knew that she was present and thus had been provoking her.

"Damn it! You're saying they are pregnant after marrying in their teens!? That really pisses me off!" (Lisa)

"Big Sis, calm down a bit...eh, you're more worried about that part than Therese?" (Katia)

"Katia! I don't want to be told that by you!" (Lisa)

"What are you telling me to do about it, Big Sis!?" (Katia)

Hearing about Elise's and the others' pregnancy, Lisa seemed to feel angry with no chance to vent it. Katia tried to intervene somehow to settle it peacefully, but even if she, as newly wed, tried to intervene here, it just added unnecessarily fuel to the fire, let alone being meaningless. Though it's not like I particularly impregnated Elise and the other three just to spite Lisa.

"I will beat the shit out of you just as I announced in advance!" (Lisa)

Lisa begins her duel against Therese with a smoldering anger in her chest over being unable to marry.

I think they should be able to avoid going at it for real since they are fellow magicians, but it was decided that Katharina, Burkhart-san, Doushi and I would go in-between at such a point. Some injuries would be inevitable, but it was for the sake of avoiding the worst case.

"Therese-sama, kept going at it after all..." (Burkhart)

"Normally one wouldn't become so strong in such a short time." (Armstrong)

Without missing her daily magic training, she increased her mana by also doing her best at night with me. Nowadays her mana had risen to around the lower levels of the advanced rank. Even in regards to magic, I believe that she progressed at a terrifying rate if one listens to just the spells she can use.

"But, well..."

Even so it's unlikely for her to be able to win against Lisa who has a little less mana than the current Katharina.

And even before that, the difference in experience has been overwhelming.

It's impossible for a person at Burkhart-san's level to not notice that.

"You have once again raised your mana in a short time, haven't you...? I will beat you up, lass, and investigate the secret behind that!" (Lisa)

"Damn, so she didn't forget." (Wendelin)

"Wendelin, things don't proceed so conveniently. Me winning and making her submissive is..." (Therese)

Therese falters.

Well, it's probably impossible anyway.

"I will destroy you long before that." (Lisa)

Lisa also appears to think that she won't lose against Therese.

She provokes Therese to fire her spell first as if telling her, "Show me what you've got."

At first glance it looks as if she's careless, but since an expert at Lisa's level can gather a lot of information in the instant her opponent fired her spell first, there are also cases where starting first becomes a drawback.

"That's convenient. I will show thee the sole, big technique I learned." (Therese)

Therese readies her wand, and creates a huge fireball in the air, making it gradually grow.

Once it reached a diameter of around two meters, the flames became bluish white, and the temperature went up next.

In other words a 『Fireball』 that emphasized temperature and fire power before size.



"Lass, you seem to be better than I thought, but why are you putting so much mana into it?" (Lisa)

As if betting everything on this one blow, Therese charges most of her mana into the blue fireball in the air.

Even the fireball's size has finally grown to a diameter of around ten meters.

"It's because I won't be able to put up a fight if I were to fire small and neatly arranged spells. Just eat this!" (Therese)

Therese unleashes the completed, huge fireball at Lisa.

"Gosh! This is why you're an amateur!" (Lisa)

A considerable amount of mana should be necessary to invalidate this fireball, but Lisa deploys her blizzard spell in an instant, and throws it at the fireball.

At the moment both clash, a great amount of steam spreads into the vicinity.

Since the duel's location is a place intended to have a residential area constructed, nothing but grass grew here, but all of it started to wilt after being hit by the steam.

We deploy our 『Magic Barriers』, blocking the water vapor.

"Hubby, sorry." (Katia)

"Well, that was amazing."

It's a clash of Therese, who earnestly learned a fire spell with a high output, and Lisa, the ice magic master.

The firepower of both's spells were outrageous, but the conclusion of the match was already clear.

"I give up as I'm out of mana." (Therese)

Therese, who had invested almost all her mana into the fireball, raised both her hands and gave up. Seeing as she has no other trump card to play while also being out of mana, you can call Therese's decision to be correct.

"Give up?" (Lisa)

"I have no intention to continue with a match that I can't win. Well then, please excuse me with this. I believed they would offset each other, but it's slightly cold. I think I will have Amalie pour me some tea. No, I suppose this is the time to have Wendelin warm me up?" (Therese)

Therese, who had given up all too quickly and easily, tried to return to the mansion just like that.

"Hey! Wait!" (Lisa)

"What do thee want, Lisa or whatever thee were called?" (Therese)

"Since I won, be obedient and tell me how you increased your mana!" (Lisa)

"Thee are saying some strange things there." (Therese)

Therese dons an expression, clearly stating, 『Why do I have to tell thee something like that?』.

"I won, didn't I?" (Lisa)

"Thee challenged me to a match, but thee haven't mentioned any terms after winning, right? Both of us strove in our studies of magic. It was a very worthwhile time." (Therese)

"Pupupu! Certainly, that's true." (Armstrong)

"Certainly...kukuku! Lisa didn't mention any conditions." (Burkhart)

Having it pointed out by Therese, Doushi and Burkhart-san seemed to have trouble not bursting into laughter.

"What was that one month for!" (Lisa)

Come to think of it, in this one month she tried to investigate as much information about me as possible, going even as far as becoming the crown prince's guard.

Being treated like an old hag by a certain person at that time, she turned him into ice so that he couldn't move any longer after giving her rage free reign. As a result she was pulled off His Majesty's guard duty, but even after that she looked for opportunities to hang around me without doing any proper work for this month.

"I don't know anything about that. Isn't it thy own matter what thee have done in this one month?" (Therese)

It was obvious that she had her difficulties, but Therese bluntly declared that those were Lisa's own circumstances.

"If thee had so much spare time, it would have been better if thee had gone hunting in the Demon Forest." (Therese)

For the current Lisa it's almost impossible to get through our firm vigilance and investigate the secret by being close to me.

Hence Therese mercilessly criticized Lisa that she could have earned money by hunting.

"Certainly, I could have earned money if I had done that, but...since you lost, tell me the secret of your mana!" (Lisa)

Lisa tried to lunge at Therese, but Doushi and Burkhart-san intervened.

"Lisa, Therese-sama is an important guest who was entrusted to us by the Empire. If something happened to her, it would become a diplomatic issue." (Burkhart)

"In that case you wouldn't be able to avoid taking responsibility for it!" (Armstrong)

"Uuh..." (Lisa)

As Lisa is no idiot, she backs off after being warned by Doushi and Burkhart-san.

"In that case, Katia!" (Lisa)

"Eh? Me?" (Katia)

"To begin with, it was all about me being bothered by your mana having increased! And your damn mana has grown in this month again!" (Lisa)

"It's been exposed!" (Katia)

"Don't look down on me! I was the one who taught you magic! Why has your mana increased? Tell me!" (Lisa)

"..."

It's the result of me treating everyone equally, including my pregnant wives, and not just favoring Therese.

Katia had her mana raised to the upper levels of intermediate rank, but I think she really won't be able to talk about that secret if you also combine it with the embarrassment of voicing it out.

"Speak!" (Lisa)

"Even if it's you, Big Sis, I can't tell you." (Katia)

"Whaaat? You say you can't tell me!? In other words, there's some really amazing secret!" (Lisa)

"Argh, damn!" (Katia)

Because Lisa tried to press on Katia, who let a little bit slip, I forced my way between the two at once.

"Katia is my wife, the wife of Earl Baumeister. I think going any further is rude." (Wendelin)

"Hubby..." (Katia)

"Are you alright, Katia?" (Wendelin)

"Yeah." (Katia)

As I apparently managed to skillfully cover for her by getting between the two, there was no harm done to Katia.

Good, good.

"Kuuu! I didn't see that coming! However, I won't consent!" (Lisa)

Lisa declared that she would continue observing me until she found the reason for the increase in mana.

Even though I impregnated Elise and the others at long last, it might be a bit bad for their prenatal

care if she stalked us all the time. Hence I decided to use my final means.

"In the case, have a duel against me. If I win, you will obediently congratulate your pupil's marriage and leave. If I lose, I will tell you about the secret." (Wendelin)

"I accept! I am a fairly experienced magician, too. You better don't think you will be able to win that easily just because you're Earl Baumeister." (Lisa)

I don't know about the ups and downs, but in the end I would have a duel against Lisa.



"Earl-sama, I don't think that you can't win, but how are you going to fight against her?" (Burkhart)

"I will play it by ear." (Wendelin)

For the sake of fairplay, the duel between Lisa and me was held on the next day after she recovered her mana and energy.

The location is the same as the one where Lisa and Therese had their duel yesterday.

The grass has started to wither away due to the large amount of steam created after the collision of the big fire and ice spells, but since it's going to be completely mowed down at the time of the residential area construction anyway, there's no need to worry about it.

Before the start of the battle, the witness Burkhart-san came to ask me how I'm going to deal with Lisa.

"Seeing as the opponent is called Blizzard, I will also throw a big fire spell at her, I guess." (Wendelin)

"You better hold back on that." (Burkhart)

"Why?" (Wendelin)

"Those watching will have their view blocked by the steam." (Burkhart)

"For such a reason?" (Wendelin)

Burkhart-san didn't say that it wouldn't have any effect or such, but that it would become a hindrance to his spectating.

"Since there's also the aspect that one will get burned by the steam if it's not blocked with a 『Magic Barrier』, it's a quite important point." (Burkhart)

"It's just as Burkhart-dono says. I would hate to not see the match because of bad visibility!" (Armstrong)

Being warned so by Doushi as well, I decide to fight Lisa in another way.

Now that it has turned out like this, I guess it will be for the sake of my magic training.

It's a quite nasty handicap, but the two might think that I won't lose despite this.

"I've been a magician for a long time as well. I don't believe that I will lose to someone younger than me." (Lisa)

"You're not saying that you won't lose to a brat that's half as old as you, or to be precise, twelve years younger?" (Wendelin)

"Earl Baumeister, I will freeze you!" (Lisa)

It looks like the matter with her age is something to be avoided in her case after all, but I haven't lied.

Since I'm currently 17 years old and Lisa is 29 years old, it's correct that I am twelve years younger. I suppose, the only thing that went amiss was that I couldn't find an opening even after pissing Lisa off by provoking her.

Even while angry she remains cool-headed.

I guess, nothing less to be expected of her who's called Lisa the Blizzard.

"Well then, start the match."

After Burkhart-san announced so and Doushi fired a fireball into the sky as a signal, the match began.

Following the signal, both fell back to Elise and the others who have come to watch.

They probably thought that they would get dragged into our battle.

"It will become an issue if I kill you. So I will stop you from moving around by freezing you!" (Lisa)

It was Lisa who started a preemptive attack.

At once the temperature around me dropped.

Once I look at my feet, a thin layer of ice has started to stick to my robe with the ground and grasses being covered by frost.

At this rate I should become unable to move within a few seconds.

"As one would expect with that nickname." (Wendelin)

I immediately use fire-based magic, and raise the temperature around me, melting the ice sticking to my robe.

The vicinity gradually became warm, and the chilliness vanished at once.

"(Time for a counterattack.)"

Next I counterattack Lisa with a similar ice spell.

It's a strategy of agitating the opponent by attacking with the same magic which Master had mentioned before.

The temperature around Lisa fell gradually, and a thin layer of ice and frost began to cover her clothes and accessories.

"To attack me, who has the nickname of Blizzard, with ice, you're taking me too lightly!" (Lisa)

"Though it won't be an issue as long as I win the match. In such situations, looking down on others or such bull doesn't exist." (Wendelin)

"Shit! It has more power than I thought..." (Lisa)

Contrary to the duel against Therese, the duel against me looked plain.

Going by appearance, both of us are standing still while facing off. After all, we're just trying to freeze the other by lowering the temperature.

While trying to stop the opponent's movements with ice, we remove the ice clinging to ourself by melting it.

In the eyes of a person who can't use magic, it should look very plain.

"In the eyes who can use magic, it's a quite sophisticated match, but..."

"Judging by me who has just learned magic, it looks very plain..." (Therese)

"Therese-san, on a glance there's not much change between the two, but at this moment both sides are using quite a bit of mana."

"I see." (Therese)

Both sides use a lot of mana to freeze the other and at the same time use mana to not be frozen themselves.

"Because they use two spells of contrary attributes, it's an extremely high-level magic battle," Katharina explains to the peanut gallery.

"That means it's a potentially endless repetition of the same moves."

"It won't take that much time. Mana has its limits."

"At this rate it will be Wend-sama's victory." (Wilma)

"I think so as well." (Luise)

Wilma's and Luise's forecast was correct.

If both of us continue the exchange of plain magic like this, Lisa will run out of mana first since she has less than me.

The conclusion will be plain too, but if both sides were to unleash heavy spells at each other, it might lead to an accident. It would also cause troubles to the vicinity.

Because I had such concerns, it was necessary to have such a plain duel.

"Damn!" (Lisa)

And Lisa got flustered due to this development.

Even if she were to forcibly fire a big spell here, she would only speed up her mana consumption, not to mention that it would be pointless. She probably understood that she's going to lose due to running out of mana at this rate.

"Just when I thought you might be a brat who can fire a slightly big spell..." (Lisa)

Certainly, as a magician I have less experience than Lisa, but I've had my fair share of hardships by being dragged into a civil war and being close to death in the battle against master. I wanted her to accept the match after taking those parts into account as well.

"You're welcome to go ahead with your prided blizzard spell." (Wendelin)

"..." (Lisa)

All that's left is to maintain this state as is. Even without getting impatient and firing offensive magic, it will be my victory by just waiting. No matter how she struggles, the one running out of mana first will be Lisa.

"You bastard...in spite of being a brat, you're not getting hotblooded..." (Lisa)

"I have the experience of having survived a civil war, after all." (Wendelin)

There's that as well, but as a matter of fact, my inner self is already in the latter half of its thirties. I'm more experienced than Lisa...am I not?

"However, I suppose it will be boring with just this much..."

The opponent is a magician with ability and fame. She might not agree with such a winning way. No, it might be necessary to break the other side's hostility...through an overwhelming difference in power so that she won't probe into the secrets of others. In that case, it got to be her signature move, ice magic. In reality it's a composite magic of the water and wind attribute, but she has apparently turned it into her own weapon by researching it properly while using natural phenomena as reference. I won't have any chance by imitating her, but there exists one factor allowing me to win against her.

"(That's the concept of absolute zero...)"

It defines the temperature when the oscillation of the atoms, which is decided by the temperature, reaches its lowest level, stopping their movements.

Saying so myself, it's incomprehensible, but I feel like my science teacher explained it during my time as a senior high school student...Huh, wait? Or was it the physics teacher?

Either way. I will limit it to just Lisa's surroundings, and enclose her with an absolute zero temperature.

I will be careful to not make a mistake and freeze her over.

After all, I don't know what I will be told by the Kingdom later, if I kill a magician of Lisa's class. It would be unbearable if I were told to work for free in order to compensate for her loss.

"I still have leeway with my mana." (Wendelin)

"Brat, you're a monster, aren't you?" (Lisa)

"I have increased my mana in proportion to various hardships and certain fetters." (Wendelin)

My mana has been growing through my daily training and various troublesome matters.

"I'm not really all that jealous...however, just the aspect of having a lot of mana is enviable." (Lisa)

I ended up being pitied even by Lisa, my duel opponent.

In the meanwhile, I gradually push away Lisa's 『Heating』 spell with my 『Absolute Zero』 spell. An area of ten meters around her transforms into an absolute zero environment.

"Kuh!" (Lisa)

"If you move the slightest bit, you will die." (Wendelin)

"What!?" (Lisa)

Once I tossed a fallen tree branch into the absolute zero area as a test, it hardened like a banana cooled with liquid nitrogen. When I hit the frozen branch with a magic pebble, it shattered in an instant.

"It looks like my affinity with ice magic is good." (Wendelin)

In the end my science knowledge from my previous life, which was a 3 (of 5 levels) according to the school results, had been useful.

While at it, I came up with one more spell.

"(I will name it 『Liquid Nitrogen』 spell.)"

I will compress air and turn it into liquid nitrogen...no, since I can't separate the atoms, it should be 『Liquid Air』, huh?

I drop the 『Liquid Air』, which I created in the air, to the ground, freezing over a rock that had been bathed in it.

Once I hit that with a magic pebble as well, it was shattered to pieces just like the branch.

"I would appreciate it if I could have you give up, I think?" (Wendelin)

"Fuck! Even though I'm Lisa the Blizzard..." (Lisa)

Since she threw up her hands in the air, I canceled the absolute zero zone stretching out around her, winning the duel.

Given that Lisa was competent, it was a big help that she didn't try the impossible against an opponent that was out of her league like a beginner.

However, I ended up making an outrageous mistake here.

Because both of us did our best, I acted out of character, and went to Lisa with the idea of shaking her hand, but in reality she had received serious damage.

No matter how much I had excluded her body from the direct effect, Lisa, who had been surrounded by an absolute zero temperature, had to continue heating her own body with magic in order to protect herself.

Back then she probably decided to put off protecting her clothes and equipment. Because the items

abruptly got warm after I removed the absolute zero area...

Her clothes and items, which got exposed to a sudden, extreme difference in temperature, became brittle and crumbled away.

Lisa, who tried to shake hands with me even after showing a childish behavior, had all things she wore suddenly fall apart, resulting in her showing me her naked body.

"Kyaaa——!" (Lisa)

A Lisa, who crouched down in panic on the spot, and a Lisa who screamed like a woman which I couldn't have imagined at all.

Moreover, I learned about her unexpected secret.

"Nothing's growing....below..." (Wendelin)

"Waa——n!" (Lisa)

Having her secret revealed to me, Lisa starts to bawl like a child.

The duel ended up reaching a somewhat slovenly conclusion thanks to me.

