

Chapter 98 - vs. Demon King Yataro ③

I transfer the authority of the sectors we usurped so far to Kanon. And after allowing my subordinates to take a rest for eating and sleeping, I resupply the items that were used up and the subordinates that got killed. I decide that we'll embark to invade the next sector once all preparations are perfectly in order.

"...The hell?" I unintentionally leak such an emotional voice when stepping into the next sector.

A clear sky, and countless sparkling stars. Big and small rocks are scattered ahead of us. Not a single plant is growing on the ground.

Until now the domains had the form of caves, but this one is a wasteland.

According to the initial intelligence, all the sectors ruled by the two Demon Kings were cave types. One of the deciding factors why I thought of trying to let the Demon Kings here join as my subordinates is heavily based on the precondition of this being a Domain with indoor sectors where I can personally make an appearance.

"A harassment towards me, huh?" (Shion)

"Rather than harassment, you could call it a countermeasure, no?" Rina calmly rebutted my words filled with irritation.

It's no problem at the moment since it's night. The night wind is pleasant, allowing me to even call it the best environment. However, once dawn breaks — the blazing sun will definitely seep my strength.

Because it's a vampire attacking, they increased the sun exposition in the Domain. ...It's the correct way to deal with me.

Should I leave the invasion team? However, I won't be able to invite the Demon King of this place then. And, if it's a Demon King who's so quick-witted, I want to have them join me by all means. My **【Body】** stat will weaken from B to C and my **【Mana】** stat from B to D during the day. Given that I'm wearing the highest-level items, I don't think that I will become inferior to the run-of-the-mill small fry around here, but there's still some uneasiness remaining.

Should I have chosen Daylight Vampire as the evolutionary path? I tend to blame my past self whenever I fall into unforeseen situations.

Invading as before will be dangerous, I think. If the other side reads my actions, then I have no choice but to take actions I haven't used so far.

"We're going to return to our Domain for the moment." (Shion)

""""Yes, master!""""

I choose to retreat here.



After returning, I start pondering about a strategy on how to proceed with the invasion.

It's very likely...that the enemy will be fully aware of our actions. So, what should I do to attack the enemy's unguarded flank?

Actions I haven't adopted so far. I can come up with one right away. I don't know how much the enemy knows about us, but so far I had always two units — Rina's and Chloe's party carry out the invasion of a Domain at the same time. The reasons were an increased invasion speed and the division of the enemy's combat forces.

However, this time I want to let the two Demon Kings join as my subordinates. In such a case you could call forcing them to split up their combat forces a poor move.

Hence, I will have Rina and Chloe combine their units this time. My only worry would be the question who should lead the unified forces, Rina or Chloe, but...there won't be any problems if I take command.

Another unusual action. Let's set up a surprise. It's unknown how effective it'll be, but it might be able to give us the chance to create a blind spot.

I alchemize a Heavy Mithril Armor, a Mithril Shield, and a Mithril Helmet. Then I put on the Mithril set, and pick up shield and spear.

I move the shield and spear several times and jump on the spot to ascertain the sensation.

It's difficult to move, but it's not as heavy as I had expected. Is this an effect of my enhanced body? —Kanon, come here.

Next I call Kanon through a telepathic message.

"I'm heere. What is it?" (Kanon)

After waiting for around three minutes, Kanon shows up.

"Oh? Shion-san, where are you?" (Kanon)

Kanon flies about and surveys my room where three living mails were lined up.

—Katakatakata!

I reflexively start to tremble because of Kanon's comical expression, causing a metallic scraping sound to reverberate.

"—? Ah!?! Shion-san! What are you doooing?" (Kanon)

Kanon notices my presence and comes to a halt atop my shoulder.

"You realized, eh...?" (Shion)

"Well, if you look closely, it's seedy-looking...s-stylish." (Kanon)

Kanon hurriedly fixes her word choice.

"Stylish, huh...? Do you think that you'd notice on the smartphone's live stream during battle?" (Shion)

"I see... That's what's going on here. True, it's possible that we would notice as we're used to seeing living mails, but I think the possibility of it not being noticed if not familiar with living mails is rather high." (Kanon)

Kanon sees through my thinking and gives me an accurate reply.

"But rather than that...isn't that heavy?" (Kanon)

"Not as much as I thought it'd be. However, the visibility is bad and it's stuffy." (Shion)

Readying a shield because of the bad visibility and the difficulty to move might be the best a living mail, whose only task is to serve as a shield as someone wearing full plate armor, can do. Simple movements at the level of lifting a shield and thrusting a spear are possible, but it's definitely unlikely that I will be able to fight during battle as always.

"Kanon, are there enough subordinates and items?" (Shion)

"Pardon? There's nooo problem." (Kanon)

No problem, huh? Currently I have 2400 CP.
——I have 20 chances.
Even if it fails, I will simply use them for defense.

"I will squander my CP a bit." (Shion)

"What?" (Kanon)

With a sidelong glance at the dumbfounded Kanon, I start on creating dhampirs.



The gender of the created dhampirs is set randomly. The probability for a dhampir to be male is 50%. According to my calculations, I had planned for ten male dhampirs to be created, but...

"Seven men, huh...?" (Shion)

Greed sensor? Creation sensor? The number of created male dhampirs was lower than expected. Although the looks of them resemble each other, their physique and hair length is different upon closer inspection.

"I think this one will do..." (Shion)

I call over a dhampir fitting my objective.

"Kanon, give him the same hairstyle as I have." (Shion)

The selected dhampir has long hair and a physique similar to mine.

"Okaaay...wait, isn't it way too optimistic for this dhampir to be seen as you, Shion-san?" (Kanon)

"As long as we have him wear sunglasses, I think it'll work...if he's seen by someone not knowing me well." (Shion)

Those knowing me will definitely find out if they see him, but all others aren't aware of my personal traits except for my physique, age, hairstyle, and my appearance to some extent, I believe. Even while complaining, Kanon skilfully dresses the dhampir's hair in the same way as mine. It would be fine to have him wear a 『Mask of Devilishness』 like Rina, but it's not desirable for him to stand out in a bad way. If it comes to sunglasses, those might be able to work out as 『Sunglasses during the day because he's a vampire, right?』. I have the dhampir, who now has the same hairstyle as me, equip the items I'm usually wearing and somewhat largish sunglasses.

"...What do you think?" (Shion)

"Well...he does resemble you a bit, but...since I know you well...he only looks like a crazy fan, or rather, a cosplayer to me." (Kanon)

"Ah, true! Let's have the guys in the residential area review him." (Shion)

"You mean the humans you turned into bloodkin?" (Kanon)

"If it's them, they don't remember my face well, do they?" (Shion)

"Yeah...you've been completely ignoring them, after all." (Kanon)

Because the humans, who I turned into bloodkin in the past, were no use in battle, I left them in the residential area. I haven't visited to check on them, but according to Kanon, they seem to have recently worked hard at agriculture.

While still in full plate armor, I move to the residential area while taking Kanon and the dhampir posing as me along.

"Oh!? Shion-sama!? It's been a long time! Did'cha have an image change? Those sunglasses look good on you!"

"Eh!? S-Shion-sama!? I-If you like...this daikon... The goblins eat them happily each time!"

"S-Shion-sama... L-Long time no see... Please...allow us to keep farming like this..."

The former invaders, who had become completely spineless, are toady towards the dhampir disguising as me.

"See? That's how humans regard me." (Shion)

"It looks like it." (Kanon)

Kanon and I smile wryly.

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"The sectors we're going to attack from now will be formidable. Therefore I will reorganize the units! Step forward if your name is called out!" (Shion)

I announce loudly while standing in front of my subordinates that have gathered in a large, broad space.

"Rina! Leila! Flora! Iron! Guy! Red! Dakel!" (Shion)

The seven bloodkin step forward.

"Next, Chloe! Blue! Noire! Rouge! Kureha!" (Shion)

They also step forward. Chloe, who regards Rina as her rival, sends a sharp look at Rina who's standing next to her.

"Lastly, as for the bloodkin, a special named dhampir — Shadow." (Shion)

"Yes, master!" (Shadow)

The sunglasses-wearing dhampir who had been created just a while ago — Shadow, appears from behind me.

"""" ____!?""""

"S-Shion...isn't that a bit unreasonable?"

Comprehending my thoughts after seeing Shadow, Rina calls out to me.

"If he's next to me, it's obvious that he's a different person, but...that doesn't seem to be the case if he's seen by those unaware of it, you know?" (Shion)

"R-Really...?" (Rina)

"It might be hard to trust me on this, but as a result of actually testing it...the humans in the residential area mistook Shadow-san for Shion-san." (Kanon)

"""" ____!?""""

My subordinates expose their surprise at the words of the wryly smiling Kanon.

"I-In other words...you're saying those inferior, incompetent farmers mistook the likes of a dhampir for master? ...What blasphemy." (Chloe)

"Leaving Chloe's words of calling him the likes of a dhampir aside...the eyes of those fellows are rotten and not needed any longer." (Leila)

"I shall eliminate them at once." (Izayoi)

The trio of religious fanatics — Chloe, Leila, and Izayoi start talking about dangerous stuff.

"Wait!" (Shion)

Once I hold them back in a hurry, the eyes of all subordinates gather on me.

"This is my idea. In short, you're saying that you're objecting to my thinking?" (Shion)

"N-No...nothing of that sort..."

"E-Excuse me...now that it has come to this, I shall make up for this with my life..."

"I'm resigned to accept any kind of punishment..."

The fanatics trio completely abolishes their previous anger and kneels down on the spot.

"Don't treat your lives without respect...how many times do I have to tell you until you understand?" (Shion)

""Excuse me, master!""

All members of the fanatics trio prostrate in front of me.

Good grief, I'm happy about their passionate loyalty, but...they're taking it too far. Chloe, Leila, and Izayoi are irreplaceable combat assets. Especially Izayoi is a precious subordinate I created by lowering my maximum CP. And even if it comes to Chloe and Leila, they have grown quite a bit, and it would require a tremendous amount of time to recreate their combat prowess. I'd really like them to value their lives a bit more.

"Well, fine. Let's get back on topic. Treat Shadow as me — Demon King Shion during the invasion." (Shion)

""As you command.""

"Shion, can I ask one thing?" (Rina)

"What is it?" (Shion)

I face Rina.

"This time Chloe and I...our two units will invade for the first time as one group. What are you going to do about the leadership?" (Rina)

The surrounding atmosphere changes upon Rina's words.

"The leader will be...me." (Shion)

"Huh?"

""——!?"""

Hearing my reply, my subordinates are surprised.

"Mmh? You unhappy about me being the leader?" (Shion)

"N-No, that's not it..." (Rina)

"M-Master! It's dangerous! If you leave it to us, we will definitely usurp the domain for you!" (Chloe)

"Chief, this time's domain will be filled with sunlight, no ~ssu?" (Blue)

"If you provide us with an awesome plan as usual, we will defeat the Demon Kings in a flash, boss."

My subordinates voice their protest towards me participating in the invasion.

Having them talk back to me is rather novel. Did these guys obtain their own egos? Watching my subordinate frantically object makes me happy instead.

"Certainly, it's dangerous. That's why I'm expecting great efforts from you guys. Protect me to the bitter end, okay?" (Shion)

"Understood."

"I will protect you, even at the cost of this life."

My subordinates replied to my light words, which I told them while smiling, that they will stake their lives on it.



I add six living mails and two dhampirs to the lineup, and then we resume the invasion into the sector we had temporarily evacuated with 24 members in total.

The invasion started at 2 p.m. Sunset is still around four hours away. It would have been fine to resume at night, but feeling that the risk of being attacked as dawn breaks would be high, we have started the invasion at this time.

"Shion-sama, are you alright~?" (Flora)

Flora calls out to me as she's walking behind me. This time I'm disguised as living mail. However, I have no intention to act as a tank at the front row. I'm staying back in the rear as guard for Flora who's at the end of our group.

"I feel hot and sluggish, basically really bad, but...I'm fine." (Shion)

My Body stat decreases drastically during the day. Because of that, the armor I'm wearing feels heavier than at night, and my condition is down in the drain.

"There's no hint of traps or enemies... Do you think this is some kind of trap as well?"

Rina asks Shadow with a slightly loud voice. The one she's addressing is naturally me and not Shadow.

—I really wonder. The opponent changed the domain's structure majorly. It's also possible that they didn't have the time to plant traps.

I answer Rina with a one-way telepathic message.

"It would be nice if it's like that..." (Rina)

—Well, don't slack on your vigilance. The opponent is a Demon King whom you mustn't underrate.

"Okay." (Rina)

After six hours of invading while being cautious of traps, around the time when the sun went down and a pleasant night wind started to blow, we arrived at the second floor.

Just like on the first floor, there were no traps or enemy attacks on the second floor either.

There's nothing but a detestable wasteland with the sunlight blazing down.

Despite deliberately transforming the domain into a wasteland, no traps or enemy attacks...?

What's the enemy's aim?

What would I do in their place...?

A mighty enemy has come invading. The overwhelming enemy consists of high-ranking monsters, and their equipment is nothing but high-ranking items. Encountering them from the front will inevitably lead to defeat. The part I'm excelling at are the numbers that I can throw at the enemy all at once. And the enemy's weakness, the sunlight.

As long as I can defeat the Demon King, it will be an upset. The powerful monsters securing his vicinity are secondary.

I simulate having become the enemy Demon King in my mind.

It's meaningless to dispatch a half-assed battle force. That's obvious from the previous defenses (the defense battles over the two sectors that were stolen).

What would I do then? At what moment would I throw all my forces at the enemy?

—!

I reach a single answer.

—Rina, check the time of sunrise.

I wanted to look it up on my own smartphone, but right now the possibility of the enemy watching our every move is high.

"5:42." (Rina)

Currently it's 20:10 (8:10 p.m.).

—To everyone: The enemy's raid is expected to happen in 9:30 hours. From now on, we will march on for 6 hours and take a break for 3:10 hours.

If I were the enemy, I would attack at the same time as the sun rises. Putting it another way, the possibility of us being attacked until then is extremely low. In that case, we will proceed with the invasion in one go...and at the same time we should probably secure a location that's easy to defend. Having noticed the enemy's aim, I start giving out orders for the sake of acting swiftly.