

Chapter 102 - vs. Demon King Yataro ⑦

Eleven hours since the life or death struggle.

The fire spell released by the elderly Demon King caused a huge explosion, which kicked up a cloud of dust that blocked visibility.

《Fire Blast》 in this situation...?

We had finished investigating the enemy's information in advance. Hence I had all the living mails wear items with high magic resistance. The effect of the spell is flashy, but its damage is insignifi...the effect is flashy?

——Leila! You and your dhampirs, prepare your 《Binding Whips》!

Eleven hours of mortal combat — we had defeated many enemies and I lost a not negligible amount of trained subordinates. What I always kept in mind was the existence of the enemy's biggest combat asset — the shadow ogre.

If my prediction proves to be right...

Within the cloud of dust, which has bad visibility, I focus my attention on the back of one of my subordinates — Shadow.

——!

The horned girl appears from within Shadow's shadow, with her body clad in a jet-black outfit, and stabs a dagger into Shadow's neck with a flowing movement.

Shadow, who slowly turns around towards the girl, crumbles down on the spot.

——Everyone, get your Flash Orbs ready!

At the moment when the girl is about to sink into the shadows once more — I throw a flash orb high into the air.

——Unleash your 《Binding Whip》! Red, get the mithril chain ready!

I rapidly fire off instructions, and my subordinates loyally carry them out.

The Whip of Chaos, swung downwards by Leila, coils itself around the girl's body, which failed to vanish because of the flash orb. The dhampirs' whips, that were unleashed a moment later, twine themselves around the girl in the same way.

——Red! Arrest her!

Red binds the horned girl with mithril chains.

Once the dazzling light of the flash orb has dispersed, I can clearly see the horned girl, wrapped up in chains, lying on the ground next to Shadow.

"——!?! K-Kaede!?! W-What are you doing!?! Release Kaede!" The elderly Demon King raises his voice in panic. "I order you! Unhand Kaede at once!"

The elderly Demon King keeps rattling on, in a loud voice filled with irritation and impatience. However, there's no reason for my subordinates to heed his words. They quietly ready their weapons, preparing for the enemy's attack.

"W-Why...!?! Why don't you listen to my orders!?! Demon King Shion has died...I'm your new lord——" (Yataro)

"Don't just kill people off of your own accord." (Shion)

I throw off the Mithril Helmet, which has been narrowing my visual field.

"——!?! Y-You bastard are..." (Yataro)

"Nice to meet you. Is it okay to start with that? Anyway, I'm Demon King Shion."

I introduce myself while smiling.

"——Wh-!? Then, the one laying over there is..." (Yataro)

"A dhampir subordinate. Leaving that aside, can I add one more thing?" (Shion)

"D-Dhampir, y-you say...", mutters the elderly Demon King in a daze, seemingly not listening to my words.

"By the way, it's fine to assume that you're the lord of this Domain — its Demon King, right? Or are you a kin of the girl Demon King over there?" (Shion)

I ask, while pointing at the girl, who is struggling within the chains binding her. If I consider their actions so far, I think it's fine to assume the elderly devil man to be the Demon King, but...I will make sure just in case.

"It's me... I'm the Demon King of this Domain. I'm Yataro." The elderly Demon King — answers with a feeble voice.

"Demon King Yataro, huh? I will offer you three paths.

First, we will continue the battle. However, since I obtained a souvenir (girl), I will have you allow me to withdraw temporarily.

Second, you will agree to «Surrender». I will guarantee you a suitable amount of daily necessities.

Third...rejoice, it's your big chance. I will accept your initial proposal.

Now then, I offered you three options, Demon King Yataro...you may choose whichever you fancy."

"The last suggestion...if I chose a one-on-one duel between subordinates, Kaede would..." (Yataro)

"There's no way that I'm going to give her back to you, is there? This girl is our spoil of war." (Shion)

I glance at the wrapped-up girl — Kaede, and reveal a bold smile.

"B-But...Then!? Isn't that too much of a drawback for our side!?" (Yataro)



"Drawback? That's only natural, no? There's no way I would offer you conditions that would be to my disadvantage, is there?" (Shion)

In the instant the enemy was convinced of his victory, he was tossed down into hell. There's no doubt that I have taken the initiative, even on the mental side. I'm completely ruling the negotiation table. I'm pretty sure that I will be able to pull out the answer I desire.
The decision Demon King Yataro reached is——

"Then I will choose the fourth path!" (Yataro)

"Fourth path? Okay, let's hear it." (Shion)

I chuckle in my mind as I hear Yataro's words.

"A one-on-one fight between the two generals — the two Demon Kings! If you can't accept this condition, I will resist to the bitter end!" (Yataro)

Yataro makes the proposal I had expected him to do. The point was to have Yataro offer this alternative himself.

"A one-on-one fight between the Demon Kings? In other words, you're saying the outcome of this battle will be decided by you and me?" (Shion)

"Indeed!" (Yataro)

I will compromise with my opponent's suggestion. In that case, my opponent will likely find it impossible not to concede to one of my conditions.

"Why not. I will compromise with you. However, I have a condition." (Shion)

"Tell me." (Yataro)

"The duel will take place in one hour. If you can't accept this condition, I will have you resist to the bitter end." (Shion)

"...Got it." Yataro unwillingly agrees.

I had the time to observe the enemy for eleven hours. I'm mostly done with my analysis of him. Once the sun sets — in one hour, my victory will be set in stone.



One hour later.

The unpleasant sun has sunken beyond the horizon, and darkness now rules the lands. I take back the items I had given Shadow — my original equipment, getting my preparations perfectly in order.

As expected, night is really the best. The aroma of the air as it tickles my nose. The darkness

wrapping around me. It's as if the world is blessing me.

"I'm ready. We can start at any time." I call out to Yataro while loosening my body.

As a result of my analysis, I know that Yataro has a higher Mana stat than I do, even at night. I overwhelmingly surpass him in my Body stat, however. His prided offensive ability is fire magic. 《Fire Arrow》, 《Fire Lance》, 《Firestorm》, and 《Fire Blast》. Those are the four types I could confirm. If the conditions were completely even, I might have had a chance of 70% to win. However, the conditions aren't even. I exceed Yataro by leaps and bounds in one certain aspect — the rank of the items I'm wearing. Moreover, I have also prepared several accessories that raise my fire resistance.

If you adjust the odds by adding my items into the mix, I have a chance of 90% to come out victorious.

Furthermore, Yataro doesn't know my combat style, but I have completely grasped his. If I take this fact into consideration as well, my chance of winning goes beyond 99%.

I get ready for battle while harboring a suitably small amount of tension.

"I have kept you waiting. Well then...let's fight to the death!" (Yataro)

Yataro squares off against me, with his robe loosely fluttering in the wind.

"What are we going to do about the starting signal?" (Shion)

"I'm fine with you deciding." (Yataro)

"In that case, I will have you set it. Timing is more important to you, isn't it?" (Shion)

"Then...start!" (Yataro)

I dash towards Yataro as soon as he speaks. It wasn't a handicap to yield the signaling to him. Entering combat just as one speaks is no more than a hindrance causing one to be late.

"——Ugh!?"

Seeing me quickly approaching, Yataro raises his wand overhead.

This motion is...

According to his movement, a flame lance —— a 《Fire Lance》, which he released without any chanting, approaches me, while burning the atmosphere.

However, as long as I know the timing! ——《Mist Separation》!

Just before the fire lance stabs me — I turn my body into mist, allowing the fire lance to slip through it.

——Hot!?"

The lance evaporates a part of my mist body, but I close in upon Yataro without minding that.

"Check mate." (Shion)

Once my mist body rematerializes, I thrust Gáebolg right at Yataro's neck.

"——!?"

Yataro is shocked when he sees the edge of the spear's blade being pressed against his neck.

"Do you surrender? Or, are you going to continue?" (Shion)

I slightly slightly cut into Yataro's neck with Gáebolg.

"I-I give up." (Yataro)

As a red drop falls to the ground from the cut line at his neck, Yataro declares his surrender with a bitter expression.

Chapter 103 - vs. Demon King Yataro Conclusion

I had gained victory in the one-on-one battle against Demon King Yataro.

"I will have you 《Surrender》 — just as we had agreed upon before." (Shion)

I urge Yataro, while still thrusting Gáebolg's pointed end at his throat.

"I know...I have already prepared the 【True Core】." Yataro answers with a clear voice, and a demon general holds out the 【True Core】 to me.

How meticulous. Did Yataro predict this outcome from the very start?

"I — Demon King Yataro abandon my life as Demon King, and offer 『Surrender』 to thee — Demon King Shion." (Yataro)

Yataro stares directly into my eyes with a sincere look, and fluently recites the line needed for 《Surrender》.

"——I accept." (Shion)

I declare my acceptance of Yataro's 《Surrender》.

As if acting in concert with my words, the 【True Core】 in my hand shines, and vanishes. At the same time, the ground beneath my feet, the space, and the entire sector shakes violently.

『

>> Alien elements shall be purged for the sake of integrating the Domain.

>> The purge of alien elements was successful. The unification of Domains shall be carried out.

>> Unification of Domains succeeded. From now on you are granted a 24-hour 【Pseudo-Peace】.

』

I check the success of Yataro's surrender on my smartphone.

"You had been under attack by the humans, huh...?" (Shion)

"Correct. I would have lost one sector in another three hours." (Yataro)

Yataro indifferently informs me of that fact.

He hadn't mentioned a single word about being attacked by humans in the middle of his battle against us. Because he was prioritizing his survival...he probably invested all of his power into the battle against me.

That choice wasn't wrong.

This is how I welcomed my third former Demon King subordinate, who looks like he will be reliable.



I have 24 hours to get my defenses in order, without being hindered by invaders.

I will set up a schedule for the 24 hours granted to me through the 《Pseudo-Peace》.

I have welcomed Yataro as subordinate, and the work I'm expecting him to do is...defending my Domain. In that case, it will likely be more efficient to entrust the construction of the sectors to Yataro as well. What's necessary for that to work out is — sharing information.

It will be indispensable to have Yataro set up the combat assets necessary for defense based on my way of thinking.

I think we will need one hour to share our information.

The number of sectors I'm currently ruling amounts to 51. The sectors I want to entrust to Yataro among those, are the 27 sectors likely to be invaded. 22 of those sectors have a foundation. Only the five new sectors have to be built up from scratch.

"Yataro, how long would you need to rebuild five sectors?" (Shion)

"Five...in other words, the sectors you usurped from me, right Shion-sama?" (Yataro)

"That's right." (Shion)

"Hmm. Let's see...five hours, I'd say. Why do you ask something like that?" (Yataro)

"I plan to assign authority over some sectors to you through 《Separation》. It's for the sake of adjusting our future schedule." (Shion)

"I see... 《Separation》? What's that?" (Yataro)

"——Huh? You know about 《Surrender》, but not about 《Separation》?" (Shion)

It's something I heard from Kanon, but Knowledge B is needed to gain knowledge about 《Surrender》. Hence, only Knowledge C should be necessary to know about 《Separation》.

"Hmm. Did 『Laplace』 mention information about something like 《Separation》? Is your rank higher than mine by chance, Shion-sama?" (Yataro)

Yataro gives an incomprehensible reply to my question.

『Laplace』? Rank? Come to think of it, he also mentioned 『Laplace』 in the middle of our battle... Well, whatever. I will postpone asking about that. Let's first get things done in order of priority.

"Yataro, you're not a Demon King anymore." (Shion)

"That's right." (Yataro)

"You can't use Domain Creation and Subordinate Creation anymore either." (Shion)

"...That's right." (Yataro)

Seemingly realizing anew that his position as Demon King had been taken from him after hearing my words, Yataro replies with a depressed tone.

"If I use 《Separation》, I can assign authority to rule over domains to you. The defense of my Domain——" (Shion)

"W-W-What did you say!? Assign authority!? Then...I will be able to use 《Domain Creation》 and 《Subordinate Creation》!?" Yataro talks on and on in excitement after hearing my words.

"What you will be capable of is using domain creation and accessing information about the domains assigned to you." (Shion)

"——!? Wh-, W-What about 《Subordinate Creation》? And 《Random Creation》!?" (Yataro)

"Those are impossible. By the way, 《Alchemy》 is impossible as well." (Shion)

"I-I see..." Yataro returns to his depressed tone after listening to my reply.

I continue to organize our time schedule, while casting a sidelong glance at the crestfallen Yataro. The time he needs to reconstruct five sectors amounts to five hours, huh? If it comes to reconstructing the other sectors he will manage through 《Separation》...he should be able to do it within ten hours, I think.

With this, there will be 13 hours left.

As for what I should do afterwards...it would be gathering information from Yataro, I suppose. The true identity of the shadow ogre, and information about the mysterious word 『Laplace』. Then I will check the abilities of Yataro's former subordinates. Once that's done, we will talk about our future course of action. I guess it will be fine to create a residence for Yataro's group if there's any time left over.

Inside my head I put together a plan for the 24 hours...or 23 hours and 20 minutes to be precise, granted to me through the 《Pseudo-Peace》.

I suppose I will first join up with the self-alleged strategist Kanon, to share information. I create a 《Transfer Array》 nearby, and return to Kanon with Yataro and my bloodkin.



"Welcome baaaack." (Kanon)

Once I transfer to the deepest part of the first sector given to me — the First Domain, by using a 《Transfer Array》, Kanon flies over to me with a smile on her face.

"I'm home. These are the rumored two Demon Kings — Yataro and Kaede." (Shion)

"Nice to meet youuu. I'm Kanon, who's serving as Shion-san's strategiiist." (Kanon)

When I introduce Yataro and Kaede to Kanon, Kanon smoothly falsifies her position in her own introduction.

"Strategist, you say? In other words, even that strategy of Shion-sama——" (Yataro)

"The bug over there is no strategist of mine. At most, a strategist apprentice. And currently she's a search tool." (Shion)

"——Wh-!?" (Kanon)

I interrupt Yataro, who was about to praise her, and tell him the truth. Kanon is shocked for some reason, but for me, the expression of Kanon, who had falsified her position without any scruples, is the astonishing part here.

"Strategist apprentice...? Going by her appearance, she's a high pixie, but is this fairy possibly a SSR subordinate as well!?" Yataro is shocked after hearing my words.

"...SSR subordinate? Sorry, I don't get the meaning behind those words, but Kanon is a former Demon King, just like you, Yataro." (Shion)

"Former Demon King...I see." (Yataro)

"Oops, time is limited. Let's get straight to the point, okay?" (Shion)

"Okaaay." (Kanon)

"Uh huh." (Yataro)

If we continue to chat like this, we will only waste precious time pointlessly.

"First, I will tell you what I have decided. I will leave the defense of the Domain to Yataro. The sectors I will assign to him through 《Separation》 are the 27 sectors that could be invaded by enemies." (Shion)

"——Wh-!? I-I will..." Kanon freezes while opening her mouth widely.

"Remain at your usual post." (Shion)

"In short, strate——" (Kanon)

"Google-chan." (Shion)

"At least give me the official position of strategist——" (Kanon)

"If you dislike my decision, I will have you party with Saburo and——" (Shion)

"I'm your Google-chan! Please ask me anything!" (Kanon)

Kanon accepts her position as Google-chan, which she hated so much. Saburo is really amazing...at being hated that is.

"Good grief. Where was I?" (Shion)

"At the part of assigning 27 sectors to me through 《Separation》." (Yataro)

"I will tell you my way of thinking so that you will be able to accomplish your task, Yataro."
(Shion)

"I see. A training principle...no, a management principle? ——Not a Demon King principle!"
(Yataro)

"Well, you could see it that way. Afterwards I will tell you about the subordinates I can create, the subordinates I possess, and the items I can alchemize. Moreover, tell me about the items, subordinates, and CP you will require." (Shion)

"Roger." (Yataro)

Afterwards, I explain the concepts for the sectors in the different areas, and my way of thinking, assisted by Kanon. Next, I give him a run down on the subordinates I can create and their features. Lastly, I delegate the explanation of the items I can alchemize to Kanon, because of the many types of items.