

Chapter 216 - Monsters Living in Pelneet - Prequel



There were many 'poor districts' (Slums) in the east and south of Labyrinth City Pelneet. Moreover, the slums connected to the Gambling District and the Pleasure Quarter were dens of thieves. It was a place where strange groups, demonoids, vagrants, small-scaled dark guilds, hoodlums of dark guilds, magic drug sellers, and magic drug addicts hung out.

Even as Shuuya and the others were continuing the trip through the 20th labyrinth floor, there was almost every day some kind of incident here. The guards under the control of the Second Blue Iron Knight Order, which governed over the public order in the city, ran through the district. Even with the afternoon having long passed, that didn't change.

The guards running through the streets of the slums. One guy watched that spectacle while drinking his booze at the counter of a bar.

His name was Tsuan, a man of medium build. In the past he was a templar attached to section 3 of the curia. However, nowadays he belonged to a dark guild called 【Eyes of Twilight】, which was ridiculed as a group of church dropouts, in the underworld of Pelneet.

The colors of his clothes had faded. However, he wore plate armor excelling in defense against physical and demonic attacks which was referred to as templar-characteristic spirit-binding equipment.

That Tsuan hadn't stilled his thirst yet. He placed the empty goblet on the counter, saying, "——Old man, give me more wine and saika."

"I got no saika. I can give ya Benrack's mikare instead."

"That's fine. I will leave the money here."

"Sure."

He grumbled while staring at the bar owner pouring him a refill of wine.

It couldn't be helped...I had no choice but to obey Mad Knight.

His emotions were visible on his face.

Mad Knight was insane, but he was a former two-digit member at a level allowing him to be accepted as one-digit member of the Demon Extermination Agency, section 8 of the curia. Despite being a two-digit member, his power was the real deal. His anti-demon swordsmanship was eminently strong. He was called a skilled fighter in the underground world.

However, that Mad Knight was easily dealt with by the lancer. He had probably overestimated his own ability. After all, Mad Knight rose in power after killing the former guild master of 【Eyes of Twilight】, which was a two-digit dropout that he had some connection with, with his own sword.

In the end that retard got way cocky and started speaking about annihilating 【Remains of the Moon】 by cleverly using other dark guilds. Well, since the negotiations did go smoothly, it couldn't be helped that they cooperated after going along with the flow, and now this.

It's said that you fight fire with fire, but most of those, who had accompanied Mad Knight, died on that day.

There were apparently some guys trying to get their revenge, but...they were all rounded up by the group around "Flash Legs," the former guild master of 【Remains of the Moon】, and gotten rid of.

That woman is strong atop of having a mind like a steel trap. Or rather, that's why she's still alive after resigning as guild master. It's completely different for us. I mean, Mad Knight used the killing of the previous guild master to get ahead in the underworld.

【Remains of the Moon】 isn't just Flash Legs either. "Death Goddess of Blood," "Shadow Archer," "Hard Fist," etc. And the lancer who became the new guild master of 【Remains of the Moon】 despite the existence of such members.

According to what I've heard...that Mad Knight had apparently been brought down by a single spear thrust, hasn't he? Are you the elvish Eight Divine Spear King ranker of 【Mine City Tandar】. That's the retort I reflexively wanted to make when I heard about it for the first time.

Going by the rumors, it has been that lancer who also crushed 【Owl's Fangs】.

That makes it more than obvious that he possesses skills at the level of a higher rank among the Eight Divine Spear Kings who surpass Extreme and King ranks.

He employs a black cat and a black wolf. Moreover it looks like he has carved a characteristic moon-shaped scar on his chest, and likes to crush an enemy's balls, aight? Scaryyy...such a guy is the top of 【Remains of the Moon】 that also has Flash Legs in its lineup.

He was an idiot. Getting involved with such a monster is the height of stupidity. Rather, not having known that such a lancer was among our opponents, I...

As if to interrupt Tsuan's internal complaining, the bar owner placed persimmon-like fruits and the ordered goblet down in front of him.

"—Here you go."

"Aye." Tsuan answered with a sulky smile, but that didn't make the bar owner lose his cold attitude.

He brought a shiny persimmon close to his chapped lips. After roughly sniffing on the persimmon, he bit into it, and ate it after letting it slide across his teeth like a ferocious carnivore.

Thanks to the fruity sweetness of the persimmon, satisfaction dyed his expression. He grasped the goblet and drained the wine with a force as if striking it against his protruding front teeth. The wine spilled over from his mouth, but Tsuan still kept the goblet tilted, heartily drinking the booze with his Adam's apple audibly jumping up and down.

Once he had downed around half of the wine in his goblet,

"The Re'Uby here is really great stuff."

"Yeah..."

The men eating fish and drinking booze close to him said. Tsuan heard it as well. He put the goblet down, and turned his eyes towards the men.

"What's wrong for you to pull such a gloomy face?"

"It's my home town. It's a place east of Hekatrail, and close to Zamalia and Leften."

"While we keep losing battles in the west, there are signs of war in the east as well, huh...?"

War, eh? Tsuan thought.

That's how life goes, I guess. Come to think of it, my home country was also on bad terms with everyone except for the Holy Kingdom. Even though there's the crusade against the demons, I hear

they picked fights all over the place, including the northern Rollolizza, the western Ay'Han, and the southern Sect Leader Arnefu State.

...They are likely doing it to get their hands on a great number of elven slaves, though.

Tsuan carefully listened to their conversation while being reminded of his home country's situation as he drank his wine.

"I just thought, I might as well return home if this place's also going to turn into a war zone anyway."

"Taking your son and wife along?"

"Of course I'm going to take my family with me."

Family, huh? Tsuan recalled the words of his ex-wife when he was troubled by work: "No matter how lonely one might be, it's still better than dying." I think it was something along those lines. Right now I'm at the peak of loneliness, but I won't go out of my way to die just because of that.

"...I'm not goin' to stop you, but what are you going to do about money? I think you know, but I'm the Penniless Todo, remember?"

"For me to be taught about this by you."

"I'm poor, but I can at least read some characters. Anyway, you won't get any dough from me."

"Humph, I know that without you tellin' me. All you gotta do is to pay for this wine."

"There's really no leisure for the poor, eh? You intend to sponge off me, the demonic hole dweller?"

"I got no clue where to find that demonic hole of yours, neither do I feel like talkin' bout it anyway."

"You know it. It's full of monsters. Once you leave outside through such a demonic hole, time has passed in a flash, turning into night. It's that kind of story, right?"

Demonic hole? I have heard about it in Lindabalm as well. My current life is just like a demonic hole.

Tsuan, who started to feel like looking at the summit from a deep abyss, had an urge to urinate at that point.

I'm going to take a piss...

He walked towards a place inside the bar that wasn't approached by others overly much. Tsuan ended up missing the toilet, and left towards an alley with a tipsy feeling. Continuing from the bar, he headed deeper inside the alley. Then he took out his dick and pissed while standing, and pondered at the same time.

...Today's customers are different from usual, aren't they?

Contrary to customers who talk badly about others, insult each other, fight, and seem to live in dumps just like me, those guests displayed a refreshing friendship of laughing together, thanking their friend from the bottom of their hearts, encouraging each other, even if the complaints were still the same old ones... It ain't as though they had been abandoned in the slums either, aight?

Once he finished urinating while thinking such things, he revealed a refreshed expression and shook his head.

Suddenly he discovered a path located behind the bar at the edge of his visual field.

Hah? There was a path in such a place?

Tsuan slovenly put his dick back into the trousers, and walked towards that path while tottering. He found a stairway unnaturally continuing downwards to a basement behind the bar. A stairway to a basement which should usually be locked behind a large, iron plate.

"What's that?"

Tsuan, as a former templar, wondered whether it was related to evil. Such thoughts crossed his mind.

If I do my best at my job of exterminating evil like in the past, I should be able to become an adventurer as well, right?

That was the simple conclusion he had arrived at.

He grasped the hilt of the sword hanging at his waist, and turned his feet towards the stairway.



The stairway Tsuan was descending continued deep underground while at the same time drawing an arc. It reminded him of his old job. He often got orders from Consul Okyanus of the 【Outer Demon City Lindabalm】, or direct commands of the foreign office of the curia's section 3.

Us templars were entrusted with various jobs: Finding missing slaves, investigating areas with thin veils, annihilating the demons that infiltrated the city, and eradicating demons, which infiltrated through scarred places of the spirit world and devastated the country, alongside the army.

I also looked up documents to find the whereabouts of elven slaves that had disappeared. Five without arms and feet, nine who couldn't speak, and eight who could serve. There were times when those slaves arrived at 【Outer Demon City Lindabalm】 in the thousands before heading to the Sect's Capital, Heslipha, but...each time several hundreds went missing without fail. I recall examining the tax register at such times, but the numbers never matched.

Incidents of slaves unnaturally disappearing have existed since ancient times. Even the records of Year 205 of the old Nostarius Calendar mentioned the disappearance of 500 slaves. I also found other records with similar entries.

Places with a thin veil (interstice) exist in every city. Just as its Outer Demonic name suggests, Lindabalm is famous for being a place with a thin veil.

It's being said that those are the traces of the elven Great Ancient Empire Befaritz, but...going by the analysis of the ancient documents, the ancient elven sages of Befaritz had intentionally thinned the veil. I heard they had used that to directly talk with the gods of the spirit world, something which is a huge taboo nowadays.

There was gossip that envoys of the spirit world had kidnapped the slaves to the underground of 【Outer Demon City Lindabalm】. Parents often used that story to educate their children, but since it was said to actually be possible to get in contact with beings of the spirit world, those rumors must have had some authenticity.

The great numbers of missing slaves might have actually headed to the 【Golden Capital of Darkness】 said to be located in the Ten-layered Hell of the spirit world. Something like getting trapped in demonic holes of the veil and becoming unable to leave?

At the time when the disappearances of slaves accumulated, diseases, which were hard to cure with healing magic, spread within 【Outer Demon City Lindabalm】. Those might have been caused by the gods of the spirit world having released something into the city, making use of the thinness of

the veil there. Back then, swarms of undead came into existence at various places in the suburbs of Lindabalm, too. And thus the order to directly investigate those undead swarms was handed down by the higher-ups of the curia.

Forming a platoon with my friends who were directly subjected to the cardinal, we went to the undead swarms at various places, and exterminated many beings connected to evil. That's why I have confidence in dealing with basements like this one.

If it's wraiths, furies, evessas, or evil of the category A and B, I might be able to exterminate them by myself. I will get it done. My life will change from here on.

That's how Tsuan, whose motivation got boosted by the wine's effect, recalled his former glory. He was a former templar with plenty of experience, and also a member of the former dark guild 【Eyes of Twilight】.

But, he didn't know. No, he didn't try to realize.

That there existed a stage, where monsters, which didn't fit into any categories like the Spearmaster and the Black Cat, happily enjoyed hell while holding maniac banquets, in Pelneet, unrelated to the veil, the spirit world, the evil domain, or the surface...

Tsuan got encouraged by his own pride as a former templar, and kept descending into the hot pot of the abyss' darkness as if hitting a temple bell with a bamboo blowpipe.

His ears didn't register the maniac melody of darkness by the instruments like cymbals, electric guitars, trumpets, and horns that seemed to howl from within the darkness.



At the end of the stairway, which Tsuan had descended, existed a group wearing jet-black, hooded robes in a space that resembled a distorted entrance hall tinged in madder red. A great number of captured women were in front of that group.

Magic darkness shackles had been put on the women's hands. However, their mouths or legs weren't bound.

Seemingly with the intention of assessing those women, a single person with an obviously huge build stepped in front from among that hooded group.

Lame leather mixing black and golden colors peeked out at the instep of their boots. The person sidled up to the women while causing wet footsteps.

"Hiiii!"

"Don't come over here."

"H-Help."

"Why are you doing something like this?"

"Bring me back home..."

"No, don't come closer!"

"Release me! My master, who has been living in the Martial Arts District, won't forgive you!" A human woman who wore the clothes of a servant shouted.

"...Fufu."

On the other hand, only one among the captured women, a woman with silver hair and darkish skin, didn't show any intent to resist, and chuckled as if looking forward to something. The tall person with the lame boots took one and then two steps forward.

That person didn't take any notice of the silver-haired woman, who had laughed as the only one among the captured women, and spoke with their cod roe-like mouth peeking out from beneath their hood, "In the name of Bellahozuma——"

Stating so with a powerful voice, they lifted their jet-black hood and exposed their face while making the characteristic, curly, golden sidelocks sway.