

## **Intermission 1 - Enigmatic Magician of the Opposite Extreme, Kimbley of the Bursting Flame**

"By the way, it's something I suddenly thought of, but..."

"What's on your mind, Earl-sama...is it about Doushi?"

"No, not him..."

Previously, when I had a duel with that retarded Duke, Burkhart-san talked with me about famous magicians.

One is the person quietly sitting at my table, eating breakfast right now, Lisa.

And the other famous magician Burkhart-san mentioned back then is 『Kimbley of the Bursting Flame』. Once I looked at Lisa, I got somehow curious about what kind of person he might be. I haven't met him personally yet, so I asked Burkhart-san, who knows him, about Kimbley.

"Ah, that guy, huh?"

"Is he a really scary person?"

"He's not a bad guy. Rather, he's actually nice. If you deal with him normally."

Somehow I feel bothered by something in the way Burkhart-san phrased it, but it looks like there are also people with a very common sense among the great magicians which have many eccentrics in their group.

"Among the famous magicians, he forms a matchless pair of people having plain common sense together with me."

""""""""Eh?""""""""

Our eyes gathered on Burkhart-san all at once because of his unexpected remark.

Even Elise seems to share our sentiment. She's pulling a face as if having heard something surprising.

"Common sense? You, Burkhart-san?"

I wonder?

I don't think that it's wrong, but I might be only thinking so because Doushi, a pure cluster of irrationality, is next to him, causing me to compare the two with each other...either way, it caused the atmosphere in the room to become a bit difficult.

"I'm a very sensible man, no!? Earl-sama, you're a lot more eccentric than I am!"

"Uuh...being told that..."

I'm at a loss for words after having Burkhart-san point out that I'm an oddball.

If I take into account reasons I can't tell anyone else, I feel like it's not weird for me to be slightly treated as an eccentric...

But, I mean, since I'm doing my best as a noble in this world with its many ties of obligation, I shouldn't be that much of an eccentric.

"Earl-sama, let's drop this topic."

"Yeah..."

In the eyes of society, we are all oddballs as we handle the unusual superpower called magic. There's no real need for us fellow magicians to pointlessly belittle each other.

"Lisa is Blizzard, and Kimbley is Bursting Flames, right? Are they treated as one set with both countering each other in the magicians' society?"

It's not like both of them are forming a pair, but such an image certainly comes to mind here.

"Because it's ice and fire, huh?"

"On top of that, Kimbley is a man. Well, such rumors pop up every once in a while."

It looks like there's gossip going around that they might have a romantic relationship despite being rivals.

However, we know that those are merely unfounded rumors.

Men won't approach Lisa when she's wearing that outfit and make-up, and in her current, pretty onee-san mode, she can't talk with men.

"Those seem to be nothing but irresponsible rumors." (Katharina)

Lisa denies the rumors with Katharina as interpreter.  
Her shaking her head energetically looks rather cute.

"It's because they are close in age, too. But then again, Kimbley is married. And additionally, he's renown for being a devoted husband."

"A devoted husband as Bursting Flames?"

For some reason I had imagined Kimbley to be a stuffy fellow like Doushi.  
Even though Doushi looks like this, he also enters the category of devoted husbands.

"No, he's a very normal guy, basically. In the first place, I don't quite think that the magic you use is related to the character of the caster."

"Well, that's true as well...so, what's with the basically?"

It's a term that's weighing on my mind.

"It might be better for you to meet the guy himself. That would be the fastest way for you to understand."

Having said that, Kimbley and I are busy people.  
Just when I thought that there might be no opportunity to meet, it was arranged that I'd meet him at a perfect timing.

\* \* \*

"Earl Baumeister-han, can't you help me out here?"

I had accepted a request from Baron Rembrandt, to whom I'm indebted, as adventurer, and Kimbley himself was participating in that request as well.

"It's a request from my wife's family."

It looks like it's a request of the Baron Rottner House, the family of Baron Rembrandt's first wife.

"It concerns the liberation of a small monster domain in the Rottner Barony..."

The Rottner Barony lies in the kingdom's north. It looks like they want to develop the territory while using the acceleration of commerce triggered by the peace treaty with the Empire. However, there was one problem.

"There's a very small monster domain right in the middle of the barony."

It's small-scaled, but because of this domain, the residential area has apparently taken the shape of a donut with the monster domain in the middle.

"This monster domain is small, and as it's not very popular with adventurers, it doesn't bring much revenue either. That being the case, talks have progressed into the direction of liberating it, and building a road connecting the Kingdom's areas with the Empire's border."

It will ease the transportation within the barony, and it will become possible to expand the potential living areas and develop farm fields on a larger scale.

That means, if they manage to develop the barony successfully, the barony will have the potential to have a higher harvest - and thus tax revenue - than a poor Viscount House.

Certainly, if there's a monster domain in the center of a territory, it's inconvenient for the efficiency of the development and the traffic access.

"Has it possibly been designated a barony because of the monster domain?"

"Earl Baumeister-han, you grasped the point here. Hence, if they develop after the domain has been liberated, it'll have the territorial scale of an average Viscount territory," Baron Rembrandt explained.

"As for monster domains, there's also one in the northern part of the barony, and many adventurers gather over there. So it'll be fine to just keep that one around. I will definitely pay you a request fee in accordance with the market price. Please help me out here."

If Baron Rembrandt promises that he will pay the reward, there should be nothing to worry about. After all he's a rich man. He will probably lend the funds necessary to liberate the monster domain and develop the freed-up land to his wife's family.

"I will also be troubled if the domain isn't liberated."

Given that the Baron Rottner House will be able to increase the number of retainers if the liberation goes well, it's probably planned for Baron Rembrandt's sons to take up posts there. Okay, so it means he can't fail for the sake of his children,

"I'm indebted to you, Baron Rembrandt, so you can of course count on me."

It's only natural for me to answer Baron Rembrandt's request, seeing as he plays an important role in the development of the Baumeister Earldom which will continue for a good while.

"That's a big help. Earl Baumeister-han, thanks a lot."

Under such circumstances, Baron Rembrandt and us teleported to the Rottner Barony. Erw, Wilma, Katia, and Lisa accompany me.

『It's regrettable, seeing how it was a good opportunity for actual combat.』

『Make sure to not neglect your training.』

『I think I will follow thine advice as thou are my senpai, Wendelin. Please don't forget the souvenirs.』

Therese stayed home under the pretext that we want to hide the fact that she has become a magician as long as possible, and as it had been Burkhart-san's opinion that she's still too inexperienced. Given that she's become able to use quite a bit of magic, she probably wants to quickly test it out in real combat, though.

"Will the party be properly balanced without Elise and the others here?"

"Erwin, normally you don't have such extravagant parties like this one, you know?"

Katia rebuts Erw's question.

But she's right, since we even got two pure magicians with us, it might be an extravagant party.

"Besides, Bursting Flames is going to join in as well, no? I think it will be alright unless we're very careless."

"But, even if it's small, it's still a monster domain. There should be quite a lot of monsters in there."

"Ah yeah, because it's untouched, you mean. Those guys sure multiply like rats."

Katia had an understanding look towards the point Wilma made.

Since we have heard just now that it's not used much by adventurers due to its lacking popularity,

it's possible that it's crowded with more monsters than expected.  
Going by the fact that it hasn't been liberated so far, it might be an unexpectedly difficult request, too.  
That's probably the reason why Baron Rembrandt requested us to do it.



"Huh? Aren't there somehow many people here?"

We head to the monster domain in the center of the Rottner Barony with Baron Rembrandt as guide, but many adventurers have gathered to hunt there.  
Erw reports this fact to me after having noticed it.

"Don't tell me, they hired so many adventurers?"

"You see, Katia-han, that's because you don't have to pay any taxes to the Baron Rottner House in this monster domain."

Usually the tax paid to the Baron Rottner House and the fee paid to the adventurer's guild amount to 30%, but right now adventurers only have to pay the fee to the adventurer's guild for the harvested goods and game caught in this monster domain.

It's only natural for many adventurers to gather if you can increase the earnings by 20% with the usual loot.

It appears to be a strategy to have the number of monsters lowered by luring helpers with the chance to make a profit.

"As expected, the fee to be paid to the adventurer's guild hasn't been waived."

"Well that makes sense, Wilma-han. It ain't like the adventurer's guild will directly profit from the Rottner Barony's development progressing."

Even the adventurer's guild can't treat the Rottner House alone favorably.

"Are we going to join the subjugation as well?"

"No, the tax-free campaign has already been running for a month. As a result, the number of monsters has dropped significantly." (Rembrandt)

I don't really mind if we warm ourselves up by killing the few remaining monsters, but Baron Rembrandt explained to Erw that our main task will be to join up with Bursting Flames and kill the boss.

"Is the boss here a dragon?"

"Since it's such a small monster domain, there ain't anything like a dragon. 『Berserk Bird』 is the boss of this domain." (Rembrandt)

Simply put, Berserk Bird is a huge bird monster.

I think it's one of the weakest monsters among the bosses of monster domains.

However, I was taught at the adventurer's prep school that it's sometimes troublesome to subjugate it.

As for the reason: usually there's one, or at most two bosses, but only in the particular case of the Berserk Bird, you have to hunt down a big number of bird monsters because of its strong breeding over the course of a short time.

If you're unlucky, it's even possible that you will be tormented to death by a group assault of Berserk Birds.

"Several dozens of birds with a maximum span of five meters when fully grown out, huh...?"

Moreover, Berserk Birds seems to be unexpectedly clever.

A simple method such as rounding them all up after gathering them in one place won't work.

Berserk Birds are smart enough to torture their enemies to death with great numbers that would gather as necessary while at the same time not crowding together under normal circumstances to prevent their annihilation.

We only know those traits from having read about them in books, though.

"However, since its attribute is non-attribute, all kinds of offensive magic works against it."

"..."

"Eh? Ah, I see. According to Big Sis, it's certainly true that all kinds of magic work, but she says that the magic must be so powerful that it kills the bird in one blow."

It looks like Katia is going to work as an interpreter today.

Appropriate for a veteran adventurer, she provides us with information about Berserk Birds. She might have had to subjugate them in the past.

"Moreover, she says it's not good to ignore the wounded birds."

According to Lisa's explanation...though Katia does the talking...if you leave the wounded birds alone for five seconds, they seem to go mad as its name suggests.

Once that happens, it will start attacking any living beings around it at full power without even fearing its own death.

It appears there are occasionally cases where unskilled magicians allow Berserk Birds to go berserk with half-assed attacks, resulting in them being killed.

"Because of this, it's said that it's necessary to gather several powerful magicians to definitely complete the request, which also connects to the reason why Bursting Flames is joining as well. Unfortunately, I'm bad at offensive magic..." (Rembrandt)

Given that Baron Rembrandt is a unique magician specialized in 『Relocate』 and 『Teleport』, he's not good with offensive magic.

His arsenal of offensive spells is close to zero.

"I suppose that's an opinion that makes sense. Very well, it will be a joint operation."

"Well then, let me introduce you to Bursting Flames-han."

Because we're trying to liberate the monster domain, the Rottner House is managing the big number of gathered adventurers with a temporary dispatch of their feudal army.

Once we move to the tent serving as headquarters, we encounter a male magician, who looks to be around 30 years old.

I think his face is normal, but he gives me a strong vibe of a family-oriented father. He doesn't look like an excellent magician bearing the nickname of Bursting Flames at all.

"Bursting Flames-han, I have brought Earl Baumeister-han."

"Baron Rembrandt-dono, please allow me to thank you for granting my wish."

Kimbley of the Bursting Flames politely thanks Baron Rembrandt.

However, I can't feel anything resembling Bursting Flames from his appearance, after all.

"So you are Earl Baumeister-dono. I have heard quite a few rumors about you."

Kimbley greets me politely, too.

Him adding -dono and not -sama towards a noble is owed to the position of high-ranking magicians in society compared to nobles.

It's not like he's trying to be rude here.

"Your friends look quite reliable as well..."

I introduced Erw, Wilma, and Katia to him, and Kimbley revealed an expression showing his admiration after having assessed their abilities.

Well, such measuring of abilities between fellow adventurers often takes place.

"So, as for the young lady over there...I feel like we have met somewhere before..."

Kimbley apparently can't identify Lisa, who has been compared with him frequently, because of her excessive change.

"But, this mana..."

"Kimbley-san, this person is Lisa the Blizzard."

"Hee, just when I thought that I remembered that particular mana...eh, wait! Ha——ah!?"

Kimbley raises his voice in surprise over Lisa who has stopped with the flashy outfit and make-up, now wearing the attire of a normal magician.



"That was certainly quite the surprise..."

Kimbley is startled once more while fixedly staring at Lisa.  
Lisa seems to be capable of making eye contact with Kimbley whom she met relatively often so far.  
As for talking...it's still impossible if it's men, or rather, me.

"Lisa and Kimbley-san, did you go out with each other in the past, after all?"

"Wilma-san, that's an unfounded rumor."

Wilma bluntly threw that question, which was fairly hard to ask despite everyone wanting to know the truth, at Kimbley.  
I think she's actually quite gutsy.

"Your ages are almost the same, your amount of mana as well, your special magic attributes are fire and ice, and you are man and woman. There's some foundation to the rumors, isn't there?"

Certainly, if I were told that they have gone out with each other, I might have actually believed it.

"I have a wife, okay?"

Kimbley is earning money as a famous magician.  
It's a world where it's rare for men, who have such high income and social standing like him, to stay single beyond an age of thirty.  
It's likely difficult for him to reject formal marriage interviews, too.

"Hee, what kind of person is your wife?"

"It's great of you to have asked this!"

"Eh!?"

Once Erw asked him about his wife with the intention to have a light chat, Kimbley jumped at that topic vigorously.  
It looks like he had quite the strong urge to talk about it to someone else.

"Mary is my childhood friend. She's two years older than I am, though."

What started all of a sudden now was a story of bragging about the beginning of Kimbley's love towards his wife.  
Come to think of it, I heard that he's a devoted husband, but it looks like he really fits that description to a tee.  
Even during my time as a salary man there was a guy who started long bragging marathons about his wife and children at drinking parties.  
I remember how it caused a slightly difficult atmosphere to spread as it was definitely impossible to tell him to stop it.  
Considering your social life, there was no way that you could bluntly show them that you don't care...  
Once I look in Baron Rembrandt's direction, he has 『I failed!』 written all over his face.  
He's probably regretting about not having warned us to not touch on that topic beforehand.

"(Earl Baumeister-han, now that Bursting Flame-han has started to brag about his wife and daughters, it's going to take a long time...)"

We ended up endlessly listening to Kimbley's bragging about his wife and his two daughters for around two hours after that.



"Let's see how it goes and kill as many monsters as possible before facing the Berserk Bird?"

After Kimbley's bragging came to an end, we finally entered the monster domain together with him. Baron Rembrandt, who would be no combat asset here, stayed outside.

"It looks like most of the monsters have been killed by the other adventurers."

Erw, who is acting as scout and advance guard, keeps walking through the monster domain which is almost emptied out of monsters.

Wilma and Katia follow behind him, searching for presences.

"Since they don't have to pay taxes to the Rottner House, the majority of the adventurers in this area have gathered here...there are a few monsters left, but..."

My 『Detect』 reacts to the presence of a medium-sized monster around a hundred meters ahead of us.

"I will kill this one." (Kimbley)

"In accordance with your nickname?"

"No, the monster materials would get burned then."

Kimbley steps forward and creates a small flame on the tip of his finger.

Once he lightly blows at that flame with a "Pheew," the small flame leaves his finger and flies toward the monster which is still a good distance away. Looking at it closely, it resembles a bear. The flame leaps into its mouth, and immediately after, the monster writhes around with smoke escaping from its mouth.

A few dozens seconds later, the monster convulses and stops moving.

"Eh? What kind of magic is that?"

Katia is surprised by Kimbley's magic and its behavior. We others are also surprised. He easily defeated a monster while using only a very small amount of mana.

"Do you know, Big Sis? ...Oh, I get it. That flame apparently burned the monster's lungs."

Kimbley is a fire magic master.

Since fire magic causes extensive damage to monsters, it's called a disadvantageous attribute for

adventurers.

On the other hand, it's the most reliable attribute in a war, though.

"Given that there are only few monsters where the lungs are used as material, I make it impossible for the monsters to breathe by burning them."

Meaning, he efficiently burns only the monsters' lungs.

There's also the trick to it that the oxygen in the lungs is used up by the fire, increasing the effect even further.

The monster won't be able to avoid dying from suffocation.

If you defeat them in such a way, the majority of their raw materials will remain unharmed. If you have as much mana as Kimbley, you will be able to kill many monsters with this method.

In other words, you can make good money with it.

"That's no bursting flame." (Wilma)

"Wilma-san, the bursting flames spell is my strongest technique, but I do know when to use it."

The reason why Kimbley got the nickname Bursting Flames is apparently because he blew away a mountain with explosion magic when he was summoned to a strife between fellow nobles and watched the two armies there.

Because of its overwhelming firepower, the soldiers of both armies naturally started to call Kimbley with 『It's Bursting Flames!』.

Ever since, his nickname has apparently been Kimbley of the Bursting Flames.

"I think we should take on the Berserk Birds tomorrow."

Following Kimbley's opinion, we devoted ourselves to hunting as many monsters as possible for today.



When we returned to the headquarters since it had become evening, we were greeted by Baron Rembrandt.

"Earl Baumeister-han, everyone, are you alright?"

"Yes, did something happen?"

"Well, it looks like there were adventurers who picked a half-cocked fight with the Berserk Bird..."

He said that they suffered an unforeseen accident of losing more than twenty adventurers in just one day.

"A young adventurer party apparently inflicted an injury on one Berserk Bird."

Wounding a Berserk Bird half-assedly is the worst you can do.

The wounded bird will go berserk and attack those who attacked it until death. There were many of them.

Adding the attacks by the unwounded birds that got provoked by all this, there were many casualties outside the party which triggered it all recklessly.

"Therefore, I have no choice but to ask you, Earl Baumeister-han, Kimbley-han."

"Baron Rembrandt-sama, do we know the estimated number of Berserk Birds?"

"I've been told that they are probably exceeding fifty."

Baron Rembrandt answers Erw.

"That's a lot..."

Not all of them are adult birds, but even the young ones become a nuisance once they go berserk. That's because the Berserk Birds stop caring about their own safety unlike other animals and monsters.

Since they keep attacking as if having their limiter removed, no matter how broken their bodies become, their threat level is high.

"The majority of this monster domain consists of forest. Even if they are monsters, it'll be impossible for birds with such big bodies to launch attacks in a agitated state of mind."

"Well, they would likely crash against the trees, so yeah. But, doesn't that depend on where we fight them?"

"Wilma-han, Erwin-han, Berserk Birds are the weakest bosses, but they are still domain bosses. Something at the level of a tree will be simply mowed down during their flight."

This is yet another reason why it's so troublesome to subjugate Berserk Birds.

Even if it might be the weakest among the domain bosses, it's still overwhelmingly stronger than any normal monster.

"I guess we will go to sleep in preparation for tomorrow's battle..."

"Yes. Let's take an early rest to be ready for tomorrow."

On that day we stayed the night in an outdoor tent provided by the Rottner House. The Berserk Birds subjugation operation together with Kimbley would finally start on the next day.

\* \* \*

"..."

"Good morning, Kimbley-san. Is anything wrong?"

I call out to Kimbley who's looking at the monster domain by himself with a mysterious expression.

"Earl Baumeister-dono? Good morning. No, I won't mind if you laugh at me, but... The subjugation will start any time soon, but somehow I have a bad premonition, and I can't get it out of my head," he said.

"Intuition? ...It's important to have that."

Two of the reasons for elite adventurers to be top-class are their luck and intuition.

It's difficult to explain these logically, but it was the same with my debut battle.

Going by my own perception, I feel like we have had a lot of bad luck, but in the eyes of others, we are evaluated to be very lucky as adventurers.

If the adventurers, who participated in the hunt, had stopped the subjugation for such a vague reason like having a slightly bad premonition, they wouldn't have been annihilated after being attacked by unexpectedly formidable enemies.

Adventurers, who can avoid disaster because of such vague feelings, often become elites later on, Burkhart-san told me before.

He also said that adventurers need abilities that are hard to understand like luck and intuition at times.

『Only this is something I can't teach to others either, you know? All the more at the prep school. That place is an educational institute after all. Besides, look, if they stopped their activities after feeling such things, it's no definite guarantee for their safety since there are also guys dying after being run over by a carriage.』

It's probably impossible to teach such uncertain things like luck or intuition.

During my short time at the prep school I wasn't taught about those things either.

In short, it means that top-class adventurers 『possess something』.

"Let's proceed carefully while making sure to immediately retreat if some unforeseen situation crops up."

"You're right."

On this day Kimbley and us went into two different directions, heading towards the central part of the monster domain where the Berserk Birds are considered to be.

"Monsters, few." (Wilma)

"It's because they have been killed thoroughly until now."

We were attacked by a few monsters until reaching the scheduled point of operations, but those few were finished off easily by Wilma and Katia.

"Say, Wend. Was it okay for Kimbley-san to work alone?"

"He himself said it would..."

Baron Rembrandt offered to send out guards from the other participating adventurers, but Kimbley

refused, saying that it'd be better for him to act independently.

"It's alright if it's someone so powerful?"

As I was feeling so since I had seen Kimbley's precise, efficient magic, someone tugged on my robe.

It looks like Lisa wants to tell me something.

"According to Big Sis, others being around Kimbley-san will be a hindrance when he gets serious."

"A show of his real ability as Bursting Flames, huh?"

Given that he has the image of using magic that will likely cause damage to the surroundings as well, I think it's easier for him to act by himself.

The magic, which burned the lungs of a monster yesterday, probably won't work against the Berserk Birds.

"Wend, found one." (Erwin)

Once we got close to the center of the domain, Erw discovered a single Berserk Bird.

It's quite big since it's a monster, but it looks like a bird you can find anywhere with its light brown wings.

"What a plain bird."

"Wend, you don't have anything else to say about it?"

"Wend-sama, plain birds are delicious."

"Ah, there was that as well...yakitori, huh?"

"Wend-sama, with salt for me."

"Sauce for me, I guess."

Despite being the boss of the domain, the raw materials of Berserk Birds don't really sell.

Their flesh and intestines are treated as high-class delicacy, but besides those and maybe the magic stone, the difficulty level of subjugating them doesn't match with the obtainable profit.

Even the feathers don't seem to have much use at present.

I feel like you could call it only natural that there are few adventurers who take up the subjugation of such a low-profit boss.

Because of that, we have decided to consider the birds as ingredients for yakitori.

Maybe the skin and cartilages of Berserk Birds are delicious?

I must try them by all means.

"I think it's okay to kill that one bird in this case?"

My robe was tugged once again.

It looks like Lisa is going to give us some advice.

Of course, since she still can't talk to me, Katia is going to work as her interpreter.

"That one bird is something like a scout. If we defeat it, its friends will come rushing at us one after the other. But, nothing will start if we don't do it, she says. Also..." (Katia)

"Also, what?"

"Big Sis says that yakitori is better with sauce."

"Wait, that's what she wanted to tell me...?"

I decide to consider it as Lisa having gotten used to us to such an extent.

"We have no choice but to kill it, do we?"

Even if we proceed while ignoring it, it will attack us sooner or later anyway, and if it gets wounded, it will go berserk.

Since its friends will swoop down on us as well, we have no other option but to kill it in one shot, it seems.

In other words, it's an annoying monster.

"Big Sis says that she'll kill it."

"Please do so."

As I ask her to go ahead, Lisa creates an 『Ice Lance』 in an instant, and brings down the Berserk Bird several dozens of meters away by skewering its head.

Her spell creation speed, control of the 『Ice Lance』, and penetration force was great. It makes me actually feel that Lisa is a magician worthy of being called top-class.

"With this a chain of birds is going to appear from deeper in, hubby."

"I see. We should prepare to fight them back then."

It will be difficult for Erw and Katia to kill the Berserk Birds, which will come at us using a high speed, in one blow.

Accordingly I will have them guard Lisa and me. Wilma plans to cut off or crush the Berserk Birds' heads with her big ax.

"I won't use my usual iron bow."

"It will be an issue if you miss with that, and there will be many targets, too."

If it's one Berserk Bird, Wilma can shoot it down with her powerful iron bow, or if she fails to kill it, she will have the time to use her big ax, but since she has heard that there will be many opponents, Wilma says that she can definitely bring down the birds with lower risk when wielding her ax.

"I wonder if it would have been better if we hadn't returned the magic guns."

"It was inevitable since we couldn't have maintained them anyway. Besides, if it's the mass-produced versions that they might have borrowed us, the penetrative force would be lacking."

Magic guns have enough effect against wild animals and people, but they still lack the power to be used against larger monsters.

There's also the prototype that has enough firepower, but it has great flaws on its maintenance side, costs vs. efficiency, and manageability.

That's why magic guns, which have issues on the cost side that's directly linked to income, haven't spread among adventurers yet.

"Wend-sama, they're here." (Wilma)

"They really came, eh?"

Wilma and I confirmed very quickly approaching Berserk Bird-like responses exceeding 50 birds through 『Detect』.

Since my rob was tugged at almost the same moment, Lisa seems to use 『Detect』, too.

Next I could hear a series of intense explosion sounds from a place on the other side of the monster domain's central area.

"Lisa, that's Kimbley-san, right?"

"He has started to fight, she says." (Katia)

Even in this situation Katia faithfully worked as Lisa's interpreter.

"Approximately 50 birds are incoming on this side, and Kimbley-san is in combat, too. The estimated number of Berserk Birds has been definitely wrong."

Erw says while clicking his tongue, but it's usual to encounter errors of this level.

Besides, today it's not just me, but Lisa is with us as well. We should be able to manage one way or the other.

"I will go with 『Wind Cutter』!"

I send a 『Wind Cutter』, which had its power raised, flying like a boomerang, following the strategy of cutting off the Berserk Birds' heads.

Lisa lets several 『Ice Lances』 float above her head, choosing to fight by stabbing the Berserk Birds' heads in order as they get closer.

"...Huh? It didn't manage to completely cut off the head?"

Going by my estimate, my 『Wind Cutter』 should have cut off the head in one go, but it stopped after cutting only half of the neck.

And yet its charging speed in our direction hasn't dropped, but instead it got more than twice as fast. The berserkification is terrifying.

A single bird isn't overly powerful. However, since they come charging while mowing down large trees, they are plenty dangerous so that one can only say that they are weaker when compared to a

dragon.

Furthermore, given that they keep charging with half of their heads gone while spouting blood, it might turn into a trauma for some people.

Their name Berserk Bird appears to be not just for show.

"My training is still fairly lacking, I guess..."

If Burkhart-san had seen me failing in bringing down the Berserk Bird, he would have likely given me a good scolding.

It's good that he's not here today.

Lisa continues defeating them by piercing their heads with her ice lances without missing her aim even once. Her accurate aim makes me think that nothing less could be expected of her.

Even in regards to mana consumption efficiency, I'm not able to hold a candle to Lisa right now.

Because she has been practicing magic since before I was actually born, you might call that only natural.



"How many birds did we kill?"

"Wend-sama, 54."

Wilma, who's the first to answer, tells me the number of subjugated Berserk Birds. Even Wilma herself should have decapitated many Berserk Birds with her big ax.

"Is it over? No..."

I sense a group of Berserk Birds heading this way with my 『Detect』.

This time it's two groups of roughly a hundred birds each with a slight delay between both.

"Hey, isn't that odd? There's way too many of them, no!?"

"They are monsters, so such things can happen."

I recall Kimbley's comment about having a bad premonition this morning.

That bad premonition was about having mistaken the number of Berserk Birds inhabiting this domain, which Baron Rottner and Baron Rembrandt told us about.

"We're still fine, but is Kimbley-san going to be okay?"

While we are being pressed to deal with 200 Berserk Birds in total, Erw worries about Kimbley. Although he had wished for it himself, he's alone. If he has to take on the same number of birds as us, he will likely be forced into a difficult battle, no matter how remarkable he might be.

"I wonder, is it wrong if we don't go to reinforce him?"

"Hubby, we don't have any such spare time."

As expected, taking on more than 200 Berserk Birds is difficult. On top of that, the Berserk Birds go berserk even in case they get injured after clashing with their own. I can already see an individual that has gone berserk within the group heading towards us. For this reason, Lisa and I had to deal with them while keeping our 『Magic Barriers』 up.

"This is nothing that one or two average magicians could handle."

Either way, their big numbers are troublesome. I'm experiencing firsthand why this monster domain has been left alone for so long. Just as I was thinking about what we should do, the sleeve of my robe was tugged again.

"Lisa, what's wrong?"

"Eh!? You're not kidding, right Big Sis!?"

Katia suddenly yelled out.

"Katia, what has Lisa said?"

"She says that it's dangerous."

"We know that it's dangerous."

Even we are still under fierce attack by more than a hundred Berserk Birds. The battle progress doesn't allow any predictions.

"That's certainly true, but it's Kimbley-san who's in danger."

"However, we can't go reinforce him yet."

I'd like to go help him if possible, but we don't have any leeway either. Besides, he was the one who said that he would do it himself. As an adventurer, this statement was his own responsibility. Even if something happens to him, we won't bear any responsibility for it.

"She says it's something else! Saying that it's Kimbley-san who's in danger means something else!"

Katia couldn't pass on Lisa's words any further. That's because Lisa and I as well as Wilma and Katia, who started to learn magic, felt a presence trying to consume a vast amount of mana at the location Kimbley is supposed to be.

"Lisa!"

"...!"

Lisa and I solidified our defenses by adding a second layer to our 『Magic Barriers』. Immediately following, I was exposed to an explosion sound so loud that I wondered whether my eardrums were going to burst, a flame so radiant that it seemed to burn my eyes, and a shock wave

of tremendous power.

We were safe because of our 『Magic Barriers』, but the group of Berserk Birds, which had been attacking us, instantly went up in flames and turned into charcoal, just to be blown away in pieces by the shock wave.

Of course it was impossible for any tree or grass to remain standing in the forest.

The explosion didn't last more than ten seconds, but it was obvious to us, that the the center of the monster domain and quite a large area around it were burned down and blown away as if a huge bomb had been dropped.

"This is Kimbley-san's magic?"

"It's the one Kimbley of the Bursting Flames uses at crunch time, his final spell, 『Doomsday』, hubby." (Katia) (T/N: Author used Big Bang Explosion....sorry, but no...)

"..."

It's great that she's telling us this, but I couldn't help but to reflexively retort to Lisa in my mind that she should have told us a little bit earlier, if she knew.

\* \* \*

"We——ell, I'm sorry. When I thought, 『Ah, I might not be able to meet my wife and daughters again』 thanks to the surprisingly large number of Berserk Birds, I invoked that spell by instinct." (Kimbley)

In the end, the flock of Berserk Birds was completely annihilated together with 80% of the monster domain due to Kimbley's 『Doomsday』.

In addition, forest fires have spread to a part of the outer areas of the monster domain. Lisa and me have somehow managed to hold back the fire from spreading further by extinguishing it determinedly.

If the fire had spread to places where people live, it would have become a serious issue, but it's good that we were able to prevent that.

"Baron Rottner-han, if you consider that you can drastically save on time and labor to cut down the forest..." (Rembrandt)

"You're right..." (Rottner)

The faces of Baron Rembrandt with his few hairs and Baron Rottner with his lacking presence are frozen in front of the monster domain that has almost completely burned down, but it's impossible for them to blame Kimbley.

Thanks to the Berserk Birds, they couldn't find any magicians that would take up the subjugation request so far. Moreover, Baron Rembrandt and Baron Rottner widely mistook the number of Berserk Birds living in the domain.

It was immediately obvious that it was a simple tallying mistake, but since they wouldn't be able to complain even if they were suspected to have intentionally reported a wrong number, they couldn't really call Kimbley into responsibility.

It was a situation where the excuse of it having been an emergency measure to protect his own life was feasible. You could call it a case where even the adventurer's guild would officially need to defend Kimbley.

I think the monster domain, which had lost 80% to the fire, has become easy to develop now. After all, agriculture also has farming methods where you make land arable by burning forests. A great number of trees that could have been processed into lumber has burned down, and the raw materials of the Berserk Birds and other monsters are gone except for the magic stones, but it would take time and money to prepare the soil over such a big range. Burning the forest or not; given that both options had their advantages, I wouldn't have been able to make a judgment here.

"It would have been great if we had secured at least one Berserk Bird..."

"Yakitori..."

"Why are you mourning over the yakitori to such an extent as a married couple?"

Erw, that's because yakitori was the most important task for us. And don't say that other birds will do! Wilma and I are fussy about the taste of Berserk Bird yakitori and other bird dishes.

"!! Wend-sama, eggs." (Wilma)

"Oh, there was that as well..."

I have heard that there are always eggs close to hatching if you look for the Berserk Birds' nest after their subjugation. Even though I thought about making egg dishes and bird meat + egg on rice, the eggs had all burned down as well.

"With that explosion..."

Because we had to postpone the retrieval of the Berserk Birds we defeated, the big yakitori party came to nothing. Seeing as nothing but cinders are left, they will likely taste bad and just bitter even if we eat them. Even my grandma out in the countryside said that eating burned stuff will just spoil your stomach.

"It's said that all things will lose their form sooner or later. Since the job's done, I will buy souvenirs for my wife and daughters, and go back home. See you."

We felt like Kimbley had a very "practical personality." After all he doesn't have a single regret despite having caused this much of an uproar. Once his job is done, Kimbley immediately returns to his family-oriented father mode. He bids farewell to us, and leaves in order to buy souvenirs for his family.

『Well, many magicians are eccentrics...』

The words Burkhart-san told me some time ago popped up in my mind. Simply because we didn't carefully investigate his true character and didn't take any

countermeasures, Wilma and I missed out on a precious bird dish.

"But, he was an amazing guy..."

He has snatched away my pleasure, let alone reflecting on any of it, but I don't dislike him.

"In a certain sense it's appropriate to say that he forms a perfect pair with Lisa."

"Now listen, Wilma. I have a problem with Big Sis' previous speech and outfit, but she does her work precisely and seriously."

Katia backs up Lisa without a moment's delay, and I could agree with it as well.

Her attacks against the Berserk Birds and her actions when the fire was created were swift and correct.

She's like this because she can't talk to men if she's not in her flashy appearance, but since she's doing her work properly, her schedule is always full.

The reason why Kimbley can't become a noble is probably because he has done something like today several times in the past.

Otherwise, it would be hard to explain.

"Lisa, the dispute where Kimbley-san was called Bursting Flames for the first time, possibly..."

"She says it's just as you suspect, hubby."

The dispute dragged on, and since he wanted to see the faces of his wife and daughters as soon as possible, he apparently blew a mountain away to urge both parties into arbitration.

"Leaving aside Kimbley-san, I think I still have many things I need to learn. Lisa, can I have you teach me, seeing as you're a skilled magician?"

Once I praise Lisa, she hides her face in embarrassment.

That gesture is really cute.

"In other words, it's that...Lisa who is serious with work but has an amazing outward appearance, and Kimbley-san who wings his work like this despite being a good person with a moderate outward appearance?"

"It's not like he's winging it every time. Because of his beloved wife and daughters at home, it looks like he launches that 『Doomsday』 whenever he feels the slightest feeling of impending danger that he won't be able to meet his family any longer, Big Sis says." (Katia)

What a troublesome story.

I wonder, can that magic also be used for reclamation?

If I consider the damage to the vicinity, it's necessary to be careful on how to use it, though.

"At any rate, people really don't match their appearance."

Erw, who knew that Kimbley had surprising aspects to him, seriously says while looking at Lisa. Kimbley of the Bursting Flames, and Lisa the Blizzard.

Why are the two known as opposing characters by society?  
We experienced that firsthand together with the threat of the Berserk Birds.