

Chapter 272 - Dark Bullet of the Demonic Hitman

I separated from Rollodeen in the air, erased Ghangis and Baldok from my hands for the moment, and touched Dark Hell Boneknight.

In the middle of falling, as I summoned the Burning Knights, a light thread attack approached me from the ground.

I dodged those light threads by tilting my head to the side, but, the threads grazed my cheek, widely tearing the surface of my skin apart.

Ouch—the blood trailing from my cheek hit my earlobe.

Without minding that, I resummoned Baldok and Ganghis in my left and right hands. While actually feeling pain from a wound for the first time after a long time, I cut the light threads still heading for me with Baldok's red ax blade.

The one persistently shooting those threads at me was a humanoid enemy. I extended my left hand towards him, and shot <Chain>.

The chain, which transformed into a bullet, pierced through the humanoid's head who had unleashed his attacks by releasing the light threads from the end of his arms.

—Alright, headshot!

I landed on the ground with <Chain> still fully extended. The place where I came down...was at the right side, a bit away from the entrance to the cave reminding me of a giant's mouth.

"Burning Knight Zemetas is now here. Leave the small fries to us."

"Burning Knight Adomos - please order their obliteration to us."

The Burning Knights had formed on the ground.

While erasing the extended chain, I swiftly instruct them, "As you can see, we're surrounded. I leave the judgment to you. Just make sure to not get dragged into the rampage of the crimson dragon, Sazihali, over there."

My target was what seemed to be a human with the lower body and legs of a locust. It was a monster holding crooked bone spears in its long arms on the left and right.

"I'm going ahead——"

Exactly as said, I took the Burning Knights, who were competing to be first in the melee, by surprise while ignoring their motivational cheers.

I reduced the combat distance to my target as I charged in a forward-bent posture.

At that moment, I registered Rollodeen at the edge of my front right field of view. She had pushed down a large goblin as if pressing it down with both her forepaws. Her claws were stuck in its chest. As might be expected of a divine beast!

But, now's not the time to praise her——

As the locust with the multiple legs approached in front of my eyes, I shifted into my attack motions. I slid my right hand's grip on Baldok slightly to the front, and then swung it - after changing to a short hold - in the left direction.

I swept Baldok's spearhead through the air as if drawing a folding-fan-shaped line. The red ax blade dug into the locust's leg. It was a light sensation. Just like that, I cut through several legs in one go, capitalizing on my strength as Lucival.

The locust-shaped monster that had lost its legs crumbled down while screaming, "Ugyaaa!"

Next I unleashed a <Thrust> with Ganghis in my left hand. Ganghis' spiraling spearhead drilled through its humanoid upper body, just as I had aimed for. I immediately pulled out the divine spear. The monster's upper body was riddled by a round hole, and a spray of blood gushed out of it. But I immediately partook in that blood.

"Geeh."

I ignored how it vomited blood, and unleashed another <Thrust> at the boundary between its upper humanoid body and its locust legs with Baldok after pulling back my right hand beforehand. The red spear gouged out a part of its upper body, and the red ax blade shredded the surrounding flesh like a mixer.

At that moment, a huge rift spread from the side of the big hole caused by the first <Thrust>. In the process, the upper body's torso was torn off from that rift, and sent flying. The locust-type got flashily defeated.

However, a human holding a longsword and a large goblin ferociously swarmed towards me, who had fully extended both arms, seemingly aiming for that momentary chance. No, it wasn't a humanoid. Seeing how two horns were growing out of its forehead, it's probably a demon.

I rotated my body, using my toes as an axis, and avoided their slashes lunging at me. While dodging, I concentrated on my third arm, the new lower right arm at my side. That arm was grasping Murasame, and wielded the blade, which shone in a dazzling turquoise as it buzzed, as if drawing an 8 in midair. The approaching sword and spear were fended off by melting them. While pulling back Baldok and Ganghis, I performed a rotational evasion handling my body like a spintop. Within the ever changing visual field, I checked the demon's appearance once more. Its appearance resembled that of some place's military, but as I thought, it wasn't human.

After confirming that, I swiftly pulled off a cartwheel, and jumped up with just the power of my arms, shifting my body towards a movement so as to deliver a dropkick against the nearby large goblin. Of course, the both soles of Arzen's Boots smashed in the goblin's head.

Using the crushed head as foothold, I leaped diagonally upwards.

"——He's in the air!"

"He's airbound, stab him!"

"Gyo! Gya!"

"Gyagya!"

"No, aim for the moment when he lands!"

At the same time as I whirled through the air by twisting my body and listening to the enemies' voices, I turned Baldok in my right hand, and Ganghis in my left around as if drawing a full moon in midair.

The instant Baldok's red spear, and Ganghis' moon-shaped spearhead overlapped, an enemy screamed, "Gyaaaaaaa," and chaotic noise became audible around me.

Yep, it was the sound of the demons' and large goblins' corpses falling to the ground after having been in the trajectory of the spear and blade that drew a moon. The monster that had been swarming towards me...

Most of them were scattered on the ground as corpses with blood spraying out from the places where their upper and lower bodies had been bisected into clean, round slices.

The atmosphere on the battlefield completely changed due to this gruesome, bloody spectacle. The surrounding monsters stopped moving.

I focused on <Blood Path - Open Third Gate>. The blood fountain spectacle shifted towards a blood absorption spectacle. It was a quiet sound, but the sound of how I drained up all blood definitely dominated the battlefield.

The sight of pools of squirming blood...drawing into my body seemed to mesmerize ally and foe. Sazihali had stopped moving as well.

After this, it fully transformed into a one-man-show with a bloody spotlight basking me. To be precise, it wasn't a one-man-show since Sazihali was fighting hard at the cave's entrance, and Rollodeen as well as the Burning Knights were present as well, but...

Monsters possessing a humanoid upper body, and a locust's lower body with conspicuously, shaded, vertical stripes, large goblins equipped with arms and armor, crooked monsters with four arms and a narrow and long head that was split vertically, black gorillas with pig heads that fervently carried batting ram-shaped weapons, humanoids holding longswords and wearing leather mantles and armors with badges affixed to them, reminding me of military forces, humanoids wearing the same mantles while holding wands, and humanoids attacking Sazihali by releasing light threads from their arms.

I slaughtered them, and the other monsters and humanoids besides them, by allowing them to experience my thrust techniques, my shining slashes, and my blunt hits with the Magic Dragon Gem.

At some point, a male demon, which seemed to be the commander, appeared from within the monster army that had drastically decreased in numbers.

"——To do this to our Hazarn Border Regiment...you damn, out-of-the-norm human!"

The horns growing on his forehead were big. Unlike the sheep-like horns of the Goldiba, his were right-angled horns like those possessed by oni. He wore an armor combining gray and black colors, and something like a liquid was oozing out from the streak-like gaps at the flanks. That liquid had an impressive presence as it floated only around him like soap bubbles in great quantities.

A special ability...he's obviously different from the others.

A slender sword dangled at his waist without being sheathed in a scabbard. That sword is probably his main weapon. No, the liquid around him might actually be his main weapon...

"Garururuuu."

"Rollo, hold back for now. I'll deal with him."

Rollodeen restrained her feelings like the good girl she is.

I turned my eyes towards the demon. I'm pretty sure he's glaring like a beast.

His words were in a language I had never heard before, but I could still understand them. That's why, trying to match with the other party...

I said while putting away Murasame, "I'm a spearmaster. You've said you're Hazarn's border regiment - I believe that's what you called it? - but is that a country?"

"!? You understand...Hazarnish?"

"Yes, I do."

"To not know of the Millennial Empire Hazarn while understanding Hazarnish...for the majority of our district army's rear guard...by the likes of such a cryptic, inferior race..."

"...Shuuya Kagari, if you're not going to do it, I'll take care of that guy..." Sazihali said after having returned to her human form.

She held the hilt of a dark red longsword, a transformation of her scales, in a hand. She came closer while shouldering that sword. Since her shoulder was dyed by the blood dripping from the blade, she apparently slew many monsters with it.

Balmint was at her feet as well. Has Bal grown? He's still small, but his figure has somewhat changed. His scales bordered by a blood red color looked oddly cool. Judging by Bal's appearance, he's maybe sharing his mana and experience with Sazihali?

Bal had apparently fought as well, seeing how his claws were bloodstained.

While satisfied with Bal's new look, I inform Sazihali about the gate magic that bothered me, "...Please wait a moment. The gate magic these guys used has already disappeared, but I'm curious about the spell that took on the shape of a loop."

"That's a unique spell of Hazarn. It allows them to transfer groups. However, I have only seen it being used on land with open fields and forests, but never inside a labyrinth. That's why it might be a spell with a bad utility."

"Hee."

It's not like the male demonoid, who had listened to Sazihali's and my conversation, simply stayed idle. He manipulated the black liquid that was being released from his whole body in a form similar to a wide belt, and transformed it into a fake curtain in front of him.

Is he going to defend himself with that? I thought that his sword is the main weapon, but...I guess he's a counter-fighter.

Given that the fake curtain was slightly transparent, I looked at the demon's face. His eyes had a color reminding me of the bottom of a dark sea where light never reached, but I could sense composure from his expression. It seemed as though he was confident in his own skills.

"...Three-armed spear user of an ignorant, inferior race, I guess you're the subordinate of the ancient dragon." The demonoid addressed me through the curtain.

"I'm not her subordinate. My name is Shuuya. So, what's yours?"

"...I'm Güntogan Altenbolloh, Corps Commander of the 15th Border Regiment of the Demonoid Empire Hazarn! Let's battle!"

Spiked objects were created from the slowly-swaying, thin curtain at the same time as he spoke. Those black-lustered spikes were shot at us, moving like a wave.

Kicking off the ground with Magic Combat Step, I jumped, and thus avoided the spikes

approaching from the front.

The countless spikes stabbed into the ground, whirling up a cloud of dust.

Sazihali had also dodged the ranged attack by flying up into the sky while holding Bal. Rollodeen dashed towards the side after jumping backwards. It looked like Rollo was going to watch for an opportunity to strike from behind Guntogan.

"——Shuuya Kagari, I leave him to you."

"——Gaogao."

Sazihali told me as I was airborne as if urging me to defeat him quickly. Bal, who was carried by Sazihali, also spoke to me.

I feel sorry towards Bal, but...I'm really jealous of the back of his head which was sandwiched between Sazihali's voluptuous boobs. Her boobs wobbled due to him tilting his head cutely. The sensation of being squeezed between a pair of boobs with the back of your head, that's——

The instant I was about to access my vast knowledge, black belts, not in the shape of spikes, extended towards me from below.

In a hurry, I used <Magic Hand guided by Thought> as a foothold, and dodged the black belts. It was a ranged attack by the enemy, not allowing me to think about my vast boob knowledge.

I pulled myself together, "——You can entrust this to me. Sazihali, Bal, just as you requested, I'll handle this place."

"Stop with the words that make no sense! Don't make me listen to the utterance of an inferior life-form!" Guntogan glared at us.

Probably because of his pride as a demonoid or demon species, he apparently couldn't stomach the language used by Sazihali and me. He pulled back the black belts, settling them back into a single, black-lustered, curtain-like object.

Next, that curtain rolled up, becoming as big as a huge rock. It's an ability boasting of a fairly flexible use.

"To force me to genuinely use my <Dark Grudge Metal (Regiolas)> during a dungeon core battle in such a remote region..."

The demon unexpectedly told us the name of his own ability. Well, it's definitely an amazing ability. Is it a liquid metal? Or a skill or spell to manipulate a special metal through thought?

Guntogan fondly stared at the lump of liquid metal. Is he a narcissist?

Immediately following, many black, distorted spears were produced by that lump, and shot out at me.

I can't determine whether it's a skill or a spell, but the spears' quality is different from the previous spikes. Besides, it's a fast technique with the spears moving at a terrifying speed.

I gave up on forming a defensive shield with <Chain>. I created footholds with the crooked mana hand of <Magic Hand guided by Thought> in the air, and kept dodging the approaching black spears by jumping around. In addition, I activated <Blood Acceleration>.

The instant I invoked it, blood spilled out from the skin of my feet, dyeing the black leather of Arzen's Boots red.

In that state, I kicked off a mana hand. I avoided a black spear in a hurry, but wasn't in time.

Ouch! It seems like my cheek got sliced up to my ear. Hal'Konk was grazed as well. Violet sparks

and drops of blood danced in the air.

One black spear after the other passed through the place where I had been just now.

"Quick...an ability to increase the body's speed by manipulating blood, eh...? And, if you can talk Hazarnish, you also have the same ancestors as us? A Hazarn who betrayed us? But, if it comes to the class of a corps commander...one whose whereabouts are unknown...no way, right...?"

My opponent was arbitrarily deciding who I was supposed to be. His spears didn't have the ability to chase their targets. However, since there seemed to exist an inexhaustible supply of them, it was a bother since it didn't look like he'd run out of bullets anytime soon.

Oh? At that moment I saw black tentacles quietly moving from the opposite side of the demonoid. It was Rollodeen's attack. She had apparently moved behind the demonoid, making sure to hide in a part of the bushes on the ground. Her attack would completely take him by surprise.

With bone swords having extended at their tips, the tentacles extended from her whole body like whips, moving in a way that resembled a peafowl.

I was sure that this would settle it with her tentacles stabbing the demonoid's back all over.

However, all her tentacle bone swords were completely blocked.

The liquid metal cluster floating around the demonoid suddenly stretched to the side, protecting his back. Going by the spectacle of how the silver bone swords bounced back after clashing against the cluster of liquid metal, they looked to me like a swarm of small fish.

"...It's useless."

Contrary to the calm words of the demonoid, mana suddenly surged out from his body. It even felt as if the air had become sultry and heavy due to his mana.

...A corps commander, huh? He's on a completely different level from the other small fry. It appears that he's also far below an apostle, but he's a strong...individual. His face is handsome, too.

Rollo undauntedly continued to attack with her bone swords, but she only made the surface of the liquid metal bend a tiny bit. Her bone swords weren't able to puncture the metal.

Going by the movements of the metal...it seems to automatically defend the demonoid without him focusing on it.

"Nyagooo!"

Rollodeen, who grasped that it was pointless to go on with her tentacle attacks, roared in frustrations while reeling the tentacles back in and running around the demonoid.

Güntogan, who had his attention drawn by that, shouted angrily, "For the likes of a shitty beast to damage my Extra Skill <Dark Grudge Metal>!!"

With that <Dark Grudge Metal> deployed all around him, he chased after Rollodeen while shooting black spears. Given that Rollodeen was running at the speed of a divine beast capitalizing on her powerful limbs, the aim of the black spears was naturally completely off, but damage? It doesn't look to me as though the metal's surface had been damaged...

Is that demonoid capable of spotting even the tiniest damages to the surface because it's a metal created through his skill? Well, whatever. I guess I'll switch over to counterattacking.

It would be another type of entertainment to see whether I can get through that liquid metal with Baldok even while suffering several injuries to my body as I slip through those spears that seem to move with lightning speed, but...I decide to try something else, even if it's just in the precious time

which Rollo has bought me by assisting me.

Before that, I canceled <Blood Acceleration>.

Let's use that spell for the first time in a long while. I'll pierce through that <Dark Grudge Metal> that gives me the impression of being a flawless defense and a special magic.

Having made up my mind, I sent mana from my arm to my fingertip, charged it, and drew a magic crest. The mana consumption was really intense. Since it exceeded what would be used for Sage Arts, it was necessary for me to resolve myself. I completely abandoned any idea of range and chain-firing. It'd be only one shot. Instead, it reminded me of my beloved Smith & Wesson with a Magnum bullet of a big caliber.

The foundation of magic is the image. This time I'm going to be particular about the molding as well.

While writing in Japanese, I charged the currently highest amount of mana into the magic crest as I composed and constructed it. The finished, improved ancient magic crest was small, but let me sense flames of darkness clad with a dense mana.

The magic crest, bordered by black flames, swayed in the air as if having its own consciousness. It was the improved version of the <Ancient Magic> which had penetrated the fragment of Evil God Steertop the last time. Even the Extra Skill used by that demonoid shouldn't remain unscathed by this.

First...I rotated Baldok on my right palm like a pen, turning the Magic Dragon Gem at Baldok's butt end towards the demonoid.

"Hey, Güntogan!"

"Wha——"

I didn't give my opponent the time to turn around. While invoking Ice Claw by sending mana into the dragon gem, I cast many instances of 《Ice Sphere》 and 《Frozen Arrow》 chantlessly in succession, and sent them flying diagonally below as if having become a fixed battery. Ice Claw, which had the size of a thick, frozen, two-hander, countless tear drop-shaped 《Ice Spheres》, and many 《Frozen Arrows》 headed for Güntogan.

The army of spells and Ice Claw collided with Güntogan's <Dark Grudge Metal>. The barrage of 《Ice Spheres》 continued to vanish as if sinking into <Dark Grudge Metal>. Ice Claw also clashed against the metal with a terrifying clang, and caused it to dent in, but didn't pierce through it.

"Magic? Useless, something like that won't work, spearmaster or whatever——" Güntogan Altenbolloh commented with scorn and a joyful expression befitting a demon.

I suppose he intends to be sarcastic. Well, I wonder what'll happen to his face...and his body. While pulling back my empty hands, I invoked the 《Dark Bullet of the Demonic Hitman (Joker Slayer - Magnum)》 and hid it amongst 《Ice Spheres》.

Ugh...the sensation of the sudden loss of mana seriously twisted my stomach. ...I don't know whether it's bile or gastric acid, but whatever it was flooded my mouth.

At the same time, a gun resembling a Smith & Wesson M29 appeared from the small magic crest. It was a deluxe Magnum gun just like it'd be used by a devil...in a Fist of the North Star setting with small, crooked rock cluttering the area.

I clutched that Magnum. It's absurdly heavy...

"...In the past this was called the strongest revolver in the world."

Güntogan probably didn't understand what I was saying, but I persisted, and pulled the trigger after narrowing down my aim. While creating a recoil and a mana-based muzzle blast, the fired darkness bullet accelerated with a dreadful force. It plunged onward while blended in with many 《Ice Spheres》. It continued flying as if tearing a straight line through space. Immediately after I pulled the trigger, the heavy gun vanished from my palm like a transient illusion.

"...You plan to attack me with quantity, huh? What a disappointment. In the end, you're——"

The instant the bullet drilled through the area between the eyebrows of Güntogan, who was ridiculing me, his head exploded.

Yep, I splendidly managed to deceive Güntogan. I had changed the shapes of the 《Ice Spheres》 to resemble the 《Dark Bullet of the Demonic Hitman》...

Changing the color was impossible, but judging that it'd be impossible to make it out when hiding it in a swarm, it resulted in a huge success. Moreover, only the 《Dark Bullet of the Demonic Hitman》 had penetrated through Güntogan's Extra Skill <Dark Grudge Metal>.

Still, despite his character being shit, he was an opponent worthy to be applauded for just his defense ability. I landed next to Güntogan's collapsed body in order to check it. I guess I'll search his pockets. Seeing how he's a leader of the Hazarn military, something...

At that moment, "Corps commandeeeeer!!!"

His adjutant? Someone looking like a female demon came running this way all by herself. She extended the point of her sword, trying to stab my throat. A horned beauty.

However, this is a battlefield. It's regrettable, but...

There was no need to dodge her either. I summoned spears into all my hands. At the same time I activated <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, and while drawing Murasame with the mana hand, I knocked down the woman's swordpoint with the upper part of Baldok's red ax blade, and then, while unleashing two <Thrusts> with Ganghis in my left hand and Gudorl in my lower right hand at her chest and belly, I poured mana into my legs and advanced with an explosive acceleration matching <Blood Acceleration>.

I closed the combat distance to the demon before she was blown backwards by the power of the <Thrusts>. Just like that, I twisted my waist, and had the mana hand sink Murasame into her neck. Once the neck vanished after evaporating from the contact with Murasame's blade, the female demon's head danced through the air.

The headless torso was blown away by the force of the thrusts.

At that point, Rollodeen, Sazihali, and the wounded Burning Knights, who had watched the entire sequence of events, gathered around me.

"N, nyaon."

Rollo fawned on me by bumping her big head against my torso.

"It was a magnificent battle."

"Gaogao!"

Sazihali and Bal commented.

"Your Excellencyyy, you're far beyond a spirit world knight!"

"——Superb! Just what was that magic tool-like spell..."

The Burning Knights' tension was as high as usual. Still, they looked tattered. But, is that proof of them having grown? It feels like they are so tattered that they are about to die any moment, but they remained here without returning to the spirit world, despite such a high number and quality of the enemies.

While admiring them for that, I provided an explanation about my new spell.

"...It's something like a new surekill technique."

""Ooohhh!""

"By the way, you two look terribly exhausted, so return to the spirit world."

"Understood."

"Okay, I'm off then."

The Burning Knights obediently disappeared. Accordingly I shifted my eyes towards Sazihali.

"...Has the unit outside been completely wiped out with this?"

"I wonder...I can still feel mana here and there. That's why I'll go check the vicinity while taking Bal with me."

"Gaooo."

Bal roared as if saying 『I'll do my best gao』.

"Okay. I'll go inside that labyrinth, and crush the monsters that entered earlier from behind."

I gotta leave the commander's pockets alone for now. If I don't forget, I'll check them later.

"Sure. Make sure to not kill the female magician by mistake, okay?"

"What does she look like?"

"She wears a robe. There were times when she wore clothes you wouldn't see around here beneath her robe...And just as I said before, she has black hair. Her skin is close to mine, flesh-colored with some whiteness."

I imagined a Japanese from that.

"Her skin color is close to mine, right? Well then, we'll join up later. Rollo, it's going to be a cave battle. Judging from its entrance, it should be wide. We're going to plunge in."

"Nyaaa."