

Chapter 274 - Japanese for the First Time in a long while

I heard Sazihali and Balmint's voices from behind, but I only answered by lifting a hand. Rollodeen (Black Panther) and I rushed into the cave, and advanced through a wide corridor with a bedrock floor.

In front, I spotted the back of a pig-gorilla monster, a black-furred back with bulging muscles. I slashed Baldok's ax blade at it, cutting through its back in a straight line.

Blood spurted out in a fountain from the cut wound. Its blood spray looked like some sort of starting signal, turning into a spark igniting the cave battle.

We first began with the large goblins at my left front. They hadn't noticed our presence yet, and kept advancing inside the labyrinth while showing us their defenseless, large backs.

"Rollo, I'm going to handle this side——" I started to run after giving my instructions to Rollo.

"Nyaa."

I aimed at the back of the goblin closest to me. With the target set, I charged while extending Ganghis straight ahead, as if performing a lance charge.

The large goblin's back got stabbed by Ganghis' moon-shaped spearhead. I could feel the gob's weight through the spearhead. But, without minding that, I forced Ganghis through its back into that of another goblin with a force as if crushing soft tofu.

A pile of goblin corpses dangled at Ganghis' spearhead as if I had created a new goblin tassel. Given that it weighed down on the spear a bit, I swung Ganghis sideways to dispose of the meatball corpses at the spear's end. The goblins were blown away, clashing into a group of wandholders about to unleash magic.

"——Guaaah."

"The corpses are in the waaay!"

As the group on the left was dragged into the collision with the corpses, many of them fell down. However, the magicians that didn't get hit tried to unleash spells at me.

At that moment, "Garururu——"

The directional, crimson flames breathed out by Rollodeen alongside a beastly roar swallowed up the entire left area as if being alive while causing deafening screams.

However, some among them managed to react to Rollo's fire breath. The wand-holding demonoids were excellent magicians. They immediately canceled the offensive spells they were about to fire at me, and deployed a square-shaped, defensive barrier. But, no matter how good demonoids might be at defense magic...there was no way that they'd be able to resist a divine beast's fire breath, resulting in them turning into coals alongside their barrier.

The heat vividly reminding one of a subtropical area penetrated even my whole body. Those were terrifying flames which made me even feel as if my bangs got slightly burned. Rollo might have upped the intensity of her flames, seeing how Helme wasn't with us. Either way, it was a superb follow-up by my partner.

"Thanks, Rollo."

"Nyaoo——"

Rollodeen answered while jumping at another monster with her divine beast movements.

I'll go this way...

I glared at the people rolling around on the left side. Kicking off the stone floor with a mana-charged Magic Combat Step as if causing an explosion, I rushed onward in a forward-bent posture. While actually feeling the tremendous speed through my own body, I not only used the spears in my three hands, but also invoked <Water Wheel Slash> as I swung Murasame, which I had a <Magic Hand guided by Thought> grab, at a low position.

It looked as if the end of the mana hand's arm blurred. The afterglow of the shining katana, which had been wielded like a gale, remained in the air like a neon trail while the people laying on the floor were ruthlessly bisected and melted.

The large amount of blood that didn't manage to evaporate in time danced in the air as if creating a gate. While absorbing this blood into my vampiric body, I shot my <Chains> in front and diagonally to the side. The <Chain> extending towards the front pierced through many monsters and demonoids. On the other hand, the right-handed <Chain>, which extended diagonally to the upper left, pierced into the cave's ceiling.

I reeled in both of those chains. At the same time as the chains returned into the factor mark on my wrists, my body was moved towards the ceiling. After placing my feet on the ceiling, I surveyed the entirety of the cave while standing upside-down.

...It looks like there's no more corps commanders around anymore. And, I feel like something is watching me——

I drove many <Dusk's Stakes> into the wall where I perceived the watching eyes, plastering it with a great number of stabbed stakes. At that moment, the feeling of being watched completely vanished.

Was it the labyrinth system or something like that? I might have done something fairly bad here, but...it felt disgusting, so I simply wrecked it.

"——What the fuck!?"

"A newcomer using spears and weird chains has fallen into our back!!!"

"A violet knight armor? Spears, and that shining blade..."

"There's also the magic he used to attack the wall. Spread out!"

"——Gyaooo."

""Gyaagyagyagya.""

"Gogyaagya!"

They shouted while pointing at me who stood on the ceiling after pulling off some weird stuff like attacking the wall. Currently my body was wrapped up in the violet Evil Dragon King armor version, and since a great number of monsters, which had been penetrated by the slowly contracting <Chain>, were dangling from the chain as bloody sobs, you could definitely describe it as an abnormal sight.

At that moment, voices other than the monsters and demonoids pointing at me could be heard from deeper down the cave. They came from monsters in the middle of retreating.

I wonder, are they being pushed back by the female magician's, the labyrinth master's, forces?

Black, pigheaded gorilla monsters, large goblins, and locust monsters were running away in my direction. One of the fleeing gorilla monsters had its head cleanly cut off.

The one who had unleashed that sharp slash was a slime humanoid wearing a bone helmet. It even looked like a slim person, but because it was jelly-like, it was of a different species. On top of that, two jelly mounds were seductively swaying around on her body.

Marvelous. Since her face is also jelly, I can't make any clear judgment, but despite being made out of jelly, her boobs had quite the nice shape.

Immediately following, a light blue penetrated the chest of a nearby large goblin, blowing it away. The spear wielder was a slime humanoid wearing a knight armor. Light blue spears were equipped to her slime arms.

Behind her, a black-haired magician showed up, too.

She's the magician Sazihali asked me to rescue, right...? She isn't all that tall. Either way, let's greet her.

But, there's still lots of monsters left... I guess I'll first get rid of Hazarn's military forces that are swarming the place below me.

I made the <Chain>, which anchored my body to the ceiling, disappear and thus fell towards the ground. Luckily, a fleeing gorilla monster just passed the place right below me. Hence I used the opportunity to use its head as a landing point, crushing the pig head with Arzen's Boots in the process. While I was at it anyway, I fired a big charge of <Dusk's Stakes> into the torso of my landing platform. The gorilla's torso was slapped against the bedrock without even the time to blink, and was squashed flat.

A demonoid that had been escaping nearby shouted some incomprehensible stuff, but I ignored it.

If it's a simple move relying on quantity...

After pondering about it, I erased Gudorl from my lower right arm.

『Catiza, come out.』

My lower right arm changed as it fell to the ground, transforming into Catiza. A hole was gaping at the place where my lower right arm had been in Hal'Konk's armor, but it was immediately covered by violet scales, blocking the hole.

As expected of a Mythological item. Mmhwee!

While I was praising Hal'Konk in my mind, Catiza had finished transforming into her human figure with silver hair and a choco milky skin. If Helme had been here, she would have probably said something.

"Emissary-sama♪"

"Yo, Catiza. Sorry for being abrupt, but defeat the monsters fleeing towards the exit over there. You don't need to particularly chase after those that manage to get away. Just do what you can do."

"Okaaay."

She transformed the tips of her hair into a huge scythe. While brandishing that weapon like a pendulum, she mowed down the legs of a locus monster. Next, she extended her black nails from both hands in all directions. After stabbing the torso of a fleeing goblin, she used that goblin's body like a meat hammer, ramming it into sword-wielding demonoids, who were in the middle of escaping.

"Catiza, those are some fine moves. Oh, the High Ancient Dragon Sazihali might enter through the entrance, so attack while paying attention to that."

"Please leave it to meee♪ I won't let them get awaaaay~ After all it's been a while since I could manhunt as an individual♪"

While happily rattling on, she made her scythe hair unravel, splitting it into countless strands, and then had that army of hair tips sink into the stone floor. Just as I wondered what she was planning to do, her silver hair was lifted up altogether in one go while connected to the floor. It caused the stone floor carrying many of the fleeing monsters to clash against the ceiling.

She got the whole bunch of monsters in one throw...

When the stone floor, which had been slammed against the ceiling, crumbled into small pieces and dropped down, it allowed a look on the monster remains sticking to the ceiling after getting sandwiched between floor and ceiling.

A huge amount of meat chunks and blood rained down. Crazy shit. It hadn't occurred to me and

Rollo that such a method existed, but she thought of it. Is it because she's a former caterpillar?

I admired her like that, but...a huge pitfall was created at the place that used to be a stone floor made out of bedrock.

At that moment, "Oh my, there's even a lady possessing amazing hair...also, Mr. Lancer over there..."

...I hear a woman's voice addressing me from behind. She uses the same language as Sazihali.

I quickly turned around. She's the female magician, huh...? She isn't talking in Japanese, but I think she's still a Japanese.

The memories of my first encounter with Yui revive in my mind. She's a modern-looking, young woman. Around the age of a senior high school student?

Her eyebrows were thick and trimmed. Her long and narrow eyes gave me the impression of a meek woman. She had a cute face with a small nose and a duck mouth, reminding one of a fox cub.

And, seemingly trying to protect that lovely woman, slime knights were surrounding her. Especially conspicuous was a tall bone knight standing in the middle. That one hasn't previously been there, though.

Its face is grim due to its bony shape, but it's a female monster? The place around her chest is bulging with something like a black crest surfacing.

I could also see the small Sliyo at the magician's feet.

Now then, let's start with introductions. Seeing as this place is called a labyrinth, she might regard adventurers as natural enemies. So I should reassure her that it's not the case.

I focused on the language Sazihali was using, "...Hello, I'm Shuuya Kagari. I'm a spearmaster and a friend of the high ancient dragon."

"Okay! I heard so from Sliyo. So you're called Shuuya, hmm? Nice to meet you. I'm called Akemi Suzumiya."

So the magician's name is Suzumiya Akemi-san? [efn_note]Above the name was written in katakana, here it's kanji.[/efn_note] She seems to be nervous...seeing how she seems to be swallowing down her saliva. She's sweating, and her face looks flushed.

"...Nice to meet you. I personally asked Sazihali to bring me here since I wanted to meet the master of this labyrinth, you, Akemi-san."

Immediately after that, "——Hey, magician! The floor at the entrance is gone! Did you lay such a trap!?"

"Ah, sorryyy. I did♪"

Sazihali, who had brought Balmint with her, shouted in front of the entrance. Hearing her, Catiza apologized with an attitude as if she didn't care about it at all. Sazihali might get angry...

"What are you? Your mana and that untidy silver hair of yours are moving strangely. You smell just like a monster! A Hazarn survivor?"

"Gaogao."

Balmint, what's the point in you roaring as well? Oh...come to think of it, I feel like I forgot to properly introduce Catiza to him. I always kept her as a new, sixth finger, or had her change into a new arm during my training sessions...

"Uuuhhh, Balmint-chan! Did you forget me?" Catiza acted as if she was crying in front of the huge hole.

"...Sazihali, Bal, that girl's my subordinate, so don't mind her."

"What!? To have even such a subordinate..."

"That's right♪ Sazihali-sama, I'm the manservant of Emissary-sama♪ I'm called Catiza, one of the personalities of the <Apostle of Light Evil>. I'm pleased to make your acquaintance——" Catiza bowed while returning her hair to its normal state.

"Kukuku, my Shuuya Kagari is your Emissary-sama? It sounds like some unique ruling contract. I suppose it's an enslavement rather than subordination."

Nothing less of a high ancient dragon. She has apparently finished grasping the circumstance in no time. Still, I don't point out that the 'my' irks me somewhat.

"She's originally a Golden Caterpillar-chan."

"Yes♪"

"...A caterpillar, you say? That's yet another big surprise. Employing a divine beast with great combat prowess, and being associated with the gods by a caterpillar...Shuuya Kagari, have you achieved divinity by chance?"

"Gao?"

It looks like Bal can't quite follow. He looks up at his new mum, Sazihali, as if asking 『You not going to eat that one gao?』 in regards to Catiza.

"Divinity?"

At that point, I spotted Rollo, who had returned to her usual cat form, moving in front of the big hole.

"Nyao." Rollo sat down next to Catiza like a doll, and stared at Balmint and Sazihali while meowing.

"...All of you sure are on good terms with each other. Also, Lady Ancient Dragon, thank you very much! We've been saved thanks to you." Akemi-san expressed her gratitude to Sazihali after approaching the hole together with her subordinates.

"Long time no see, magician. If you're going to thank someone, direct it to Sliyo over there. Leaving that aside, I saved your life, so hand it over." Sazihali immediately changed her attitude after talking with me.

The quality of her mana, emitted from her entire being, and even the scent released from her entire body had transformed. As expected of a high ancient dragon, it made me sense her dignity.

"Ah, sure. Soju, you heard her, right?"

"Of course——"

The heck? What the hell is this?

Suddenly a brain connected to an arm manifested above Akemi-san's head.

"Humph, him?"

Was he invisible? Sazihali identified the brain-arm-object while casting a glare at him. It looks like she knows him.

"Well then, Lady Ancient Dragon, since I've been ordered by mistress, I shall offer you these magic stones and fragments of the dungeon core——"

The object called Soju crossed the hole, moving in front of Sazihali while repeatedly appearing and disappearing. When Soju blinked with one of the many eyes clustering on his mana-laden brain, two bags materialized in the air in front of him. He made those magic bags move at Sazihali's feet.

I guess Sazihali let this magician live because there's something she can obtain or demand as compensation.

"Nn, nyao." Rollo meowed while looking at the blinking Soju.

Still, she knew to hold back on the cat punches. It appears that she's being wary of him. She probably senses that he'll run away after she jabs him once.

"Gao!"

Bal wasn't wary at all. While trotting in front of the hole, almost falling into it, he tried to leap at the floating and blinking Soju, but Sazihali restrained him.

"Bal, don't concern yourself with him."

"——Gaoo?" After crying questioningly, he moved behind Sazihali while flapping his four wings.

After making sure to hide behind one of Sazihali's legs, he peered this way with his round and cute eyes.

I can understand the magic stones. But, what value might fragments of a dungeon core have as compensation? Are they similar to an energy source? On the other hand, there was something bothering me. Akemi-san has...been continuously drawing closer to me.

At first, she smiled happily at Rollo, who was at my feet, and extended her arms towards her, but she had definitely closed the distance between us.

I'm overjoyed about a beautiful girl getting close to me. However, it puts me on guard, seeing how it's our very first meeting. Moreover, even now she's trying to nestle closer to me, albeit only bit by bit.

At that moment I saw something like a middy uniform peeking out from a gap in her robe.

"...Akemi-san, those clothes beneath..."

"Ah, so you do recognize them after all, huh...? Shuuya-san, just as your name already suggests, you're a Japanese, aren't you?"

Oh, it's Japanese for the first time in a long while. But, she still seems to be nervous, resulting in her biting her tongue a bit.