

## **Chapter 276 - Birth of the <Servant Leader> Corps**

Rollo and I returned to our home in Pelneet through the 24-faceted orb. Then we walked through the corridor towards the living room after leaving my room with the mirror.

"Master, welcome back."

"Welcome back."

The maids, with Anna in the lead, greeted.

"Yo, I'm home."

"Nn, nyaaa——"

Rollo was full of spirit. While greeting the girls, she ran as if sliding with her paws across the wooden floor. She proceeded towards the entrance, leaving me behind puzzled as I wondered what happened to the grip of her pads. The way of her sliding was somewhat funny and cute.

I wonder, does my partner plan to convey her sadness over parting with Balmint to Popobumu? Probably also to Alray and Hueremy who are supposed to guard the gate.

While pondering about that, I showed the Twin Stone I received from Akemi-san to Anna. Isabell and Krychiwa were nowhere to be seen.

"...I thought about decorating the shelf with this pretty stone, but what do you think?" I passed the stone to Anna with a smile.

After scrutinizing the stone with sparkling eyes, she answered, "...How beautiful...it's a lovely stone that seems to hold stars within...it has a dreamy color which any woman would love! Understood! I will place it next to the steel plate you added to the shelf as decoration the other day, Master."

"Thanks."

I contacted my bloodkin through blood messages, telling them that we went to Sazihali and Balmint's refuge, and then met with Akemi-san, the labyrinth master...I also informed everyone...about the war, and I confessed to Mysty, who was in the middle of class, that I had forgotten about the scales, but she didn't complain about it in particular.

After briefly and smoothly communicating with all of them, I surveyed the living room.

"I don't see Helme anywhere..."

"Ah, if it's Helme-sama, a-after buying plenty of...potted plants and coming back to the mansion, she went out on a walk towards the Heim River, and still hasn't come back yet. We lost sight of her..." Anna replied while looking slightly shaken.

"I see."

Still, why does she know the full account of Helme's actions down to the minute? Well, whatever. It looks like everyone is out...

I left the living room, going out on the courtyard.

Let's have a look at the corps commander's corpse.

I headed over to the place with the bulging lawn on the courtyard's left. It was the location where I had set up the gravestone a while back.

Rollo was in front of the stables. Alray and Hueremy had joined her while in their cat forms. All of them had a mysterious conversation with Popobumu.

No, I guess it's a jumble of trumpeting and cat voices. It kinda sounds like a rhythmic ensemble.

The servants around Mimi had joined them, giving fodder to the animals. All of them had a pleasant, harmonious mood going.

Hmm, has Alray become emotionally attached to Mimi? The light brown tiger is repeatedly bumping her head against Mimi's knee after jumping a bit. Mimi, you've totally evolved into a beast tamer servant...

While watching that spectacle, I retrieved the corps commander's corpse from my item box in front of the gravestone, and placed it down on the lawn.

Hazarn's uniform...the fabric is dietary fiber, apparently garnished with silk. It's not like it's been refined in the same way as the Gatrance Form, but...it might be a technique that can't be reproduced around here. The many buttons, the small metallic clasps at the holes, and the badges at the chest are pretty neat. Could I invade the base of Hazarn's imperial army while wearing this as long as I know where it's located?

While imagining one of those infiltration missions I was secretly yearning for, I searched the inner pockets of the uniform. Inside one of them, I found a pendant serving as an accessory.

Is this an identification tag? Just like the military on Earth...

I could read the letters engraved on its surface. Once I opened the socket in the back...a picture of his family... Whoa, wait a minute...Güntogan Altenbolloh had a family? So even demonoids have families...?

Although it was the outcome of a battle to the death in a war, I felt bad about it.

Next time...I'll refrain from picking up the corpses of humanoids. I don't want to be burdened with the heartrending backgrounds of the people I killed. I stored the ID tag in my item box.

Let's just stick to checking the armor and weapons...

A longsword containing mana, shaped like a gladius. I also checked the classy sword belt adorned

with silver gems. I might have Suloza's shop keeper appraise it someday. I put all of it, together with the corpse, into my item box.

Since I'm here now anyway, I'll pour some mana into this gravestone, I suppose. I think it'll be impossible to quickly release the people locked up in there, but...I guess I can have a little chat with Anko Kudo, Keiko Tachibana, Katy Lombard, and John Maclain until my bloodkin come back home.



The last few days I've been training my martial arts every day, except for the times when I went on dates with my bloodkin. Even right now I'm in a fierce mock battle with Helme——

Helme withdrew her body slightly to the left, and in a stance of her legs being in an L-shape, she adopted a defensive posture, holding her ice sword vertically with her arm being clad in a black mist.

With my left hand, I aimed Tofinger's Weeping Ax at Helme, swinging it diagonally down. But, Helme parried the slash, letting it slide along the water flowing on the ice sword's surface.

——Wow! It's a technical feat she's capable of because she's a spirit.

While admiring Helme's water technique, I slashed the second Tofinger's Weeping Ax from right next to me to the left. Helme slantingly extended the ice sword in her right hand, making it cross with the one in her left, and thus succeeding in blocking my ax with both ice swords.

——A sound as if glass shattered.

In an instant, a transparent, savage, light green lion head appeared from Tofinger's emerald ax blade.

Oh! So this is Tofinger's illusion!?

The illusion with its conspicuous lion fangs passed through Helme's right sword, though I didn't understand the theory behind that, and sunk its teeth into Helme's torso just like that.

Helme fell down, rolling across the stone paving. "——Ugh, Your Excellency..."

The illusion that bit her vanished at that point, like morning fog clearing away in the sunlight. Helme sat up, but with a pained look. A wound was visible on her seductive torso.

Bite holes, huh?

A liquid that wasn't blood oozed out from those holes.

"...I give up. It appears the illusion appearing from that ax has a physical attribute, too." While admitting her defeat, Helme caused several small water sprays, which seemed to wind like vortexes,

to spring forth from her body's surface.

She healed the injured part in a flash, and stood up with ease.

"To be strong enough to injure a spirit like you, as expected of a Legendary weapon——"

I poured mana into the twin axes in my hands. In response, a mana thread was generated, joining the handgrips of both axes together, and transforming them into one big weapon with ax blades on the upper and lower side.

"During the mock battle...it didn't transform into such an ax spear."

I agreed with Helme's observation, "True, I deliberately didn't use this function since the movements would become too similar to my usual spearmanship."

I checked the balance of the double-edged ax spear. Next I performed the steps of the 『Single Fold Stick』, also using that opportunity to stretch my legs and changing to 『Single Feather』.  
[efn\_note]Both are Wind Style Techniques. Single Fold Stick seems to be a way of walking.  
[/efn\_note]

My body looked as if it was dancing atop the stone paving. I rotated Tofinger's Weeping Ax, which I held in both hands, vertically in front of my chest, just as I would handle a normal spear, and shifted towards a one-handed grip. Then I put the now free hand on my back as if being in a fencing match, and rotated myself sideways like a spintop, using my toes as an axis.

While revolving, I shifted the ax spear to my back, still holding it in one hand like it was done in some martial art school. With both my hands on the back, I hopped like a rabbit.

"...Hiding the ax behind yourself is going to make it difficult to predict your next attack, Your Excellency."

"That's the idea."

While agreeing with Helme's words, I changed how my left hand held the ax spear's grip, and then I lifted the spear towards the front of my chest, drawing a semicircle from diagonally below to diagonally above, while at the same time stopping to rotate. Hoisting the weapon up above my head, I made sure of its weight as halberd.

...That felt great. I'll leave it at that for today.

"——Milord, you're done with your training, right!?" Bia, who had been spectating, rattled out.

The other combat slaves had gathered as well. While sensing their looks on me, I had Tofinger's Weeping Ax split apart at the grips.

"Ooh, it came apart."

Tofinger's Weeping Ax had returned to being two one-handed axes. With an image of blood clinging to the weapons, I made the ax hilts rotate in my palms, moving them up and down. In the

end I stored them inside the item box at my right wrist.

"——Now it's over."

The training, that is.

"Bia's tongue has extended further than usual. Is it some kind of health barometer?"

"No clue, it seems to change depending on her mood."

"...Milord, are you actually an ax wielder?" Bia asked, seemingly not minding Helme's and my exchange.

"Well, I can use <Powerful Slash> with Baldok's ax blade, so far as it goes. Having said that, as of yet I haven't acquired any ax skills..."

"Milord, I've never heard of a martial artist obtaining a skill every time they use a weapon. Don't worry about it."

"You're right. But, since Master accumulates tremendous practice hours...he might acquire some kind of skill sooner or later..."

Bia and Mamani said with serious looks.

"What, I'll just go at my own pace. By the way, did you guys have some kind of business with me?"

"We do. We're bored as we've finished helping with the hunting in the Great Prairie!"

"Just as Bia said, we finished helping Eva-sama. During the hunt, Kaldo-sama taught us interpersonal combat, saying that it was his final lesson... He said it was his thanks for us having taught him combat and movement techniques for anti-monster battles..." Mamani explained with her tiger whiskers continuously trembling.

Since it wasn't as though it was caused by the wind, she might feel scared of Kaldo.

"Master, it was a bit scary when Kaldo-sensei disciplined the adventurers. But, since it's been a while since my last outdoor activity, it was pretty fun. I think stuff like that is fine every once in a while. I could also shoot plenty of spells which felt great." Fuu cheerfully added.

Her soft-looking cheeks dyed crimson.

"I also had fun handling monsters outside the labyrinth for the first time in a long time. I agree with Kaldo-sensei having been frightening."

"...Same applies for me as well. Kaldo-sensei's lessons were so harsh that it reminded me of the time when I was taught my great-grandfather's combination technique, the <Greater Elbow Drop> of the <Group Tail Dance>..."

Not only did they help with Eva's ingredient hunting, but Kaldo had also changed it into a grueling

training lesson.

Makes sense, seeing how Kaldo is soon going to depart on his journey as well. He probably educated them while recalling the time when he taught martial arts and assassination techniques to Yui. He had been very gentle during the period he taught swordsmanship to me, but...unlike with the combat slaves, it looks like he followed the policy of prolonging the training while praising me... I could train swordsmanship under him while feeling really great about it.

"...It sounds like you did your very best. And now you're waiting for me to instruct you on your next job, right?"

""Yes.""

Their voices are full of spirit. Alright, in that case...I'll tell them in detail about my blood and bloodkin. If they wish to be turned into Lucival <Servant Leaders>, I'll grant it.

"It's not meant as a reply to your fighting spirit, eagerness, and reliance, but..."

"Your Excellency...don't tell me..."

"But I do. So, all of you know that I'm not normal, right?"

The four of them looked at each other, and nodded.

Mamani answered as their representative, "...Yes, we're aware of you being a vampire species."

"Good. With that out of the way, I'd like to welcome you into my family if you wish. How about it?"

""Ooohhh.""

Roars echoed across the courtyard. Especially Mamani and Bia's voices. Bia yelled, unable to articulate herself properly. Just like that, she shed off her armor, and the knee armor equipped at her belly as if blowing it away after having suddenly grown fat. Then, after touching her boobs with her own hands, she repeatedly spread her arms.

Mamani caused her body to become big. So that's her trump card, huh?

The whiskers at her chin squirmed as if being life-forms with independent consciousnesses. ...The amount of mana they contained, or rather, emitted was intense. There must be something to those moving whiskers.

Previously I heard about her being a mutant and her special body.

...Is that related to it?

Moreover, the white carapace leather armor she was wearing didn't tear apart even after Mamani grew big. It looked neat with the tips of her shoulders being exposed. Previously I had an image of her that she would be one of those tough, muscular body-builder types, but...has her slender, sharp

impression increased a bit?

The armor's name was Godtroll-made armor, wasn't it...? It appears to be quite elastic.

"...I can join mashta?" Souther shed large tears of gratitude. She couldn't spell out 'master' correctly.

"Correct. He's saying that we'll become family...despite being slaves..." Fuu also cried while pressing a hand against her mouth.

"...Us slaves who have no relatives...becoming family..."

"I'm happy as well. My home doesn't exist anymore due to the battle with the lizardmen... The name of Glinuok Evirod Ebobia Spohrohkron will truly come to an end, resulting in me officially becoming just Bia. Bia, the new family member of milord."

Mamani and Bia were sobbing, too.

Damn it, if I'm going to hear about their homes, I might start crying as well... Someday I want to act on their behalf, but I won't give them any strange hopes. For now, I gotta focus on becoming stronger.

"...Is it fine for me to take that as all of you wishing to become my bloodkin?"

""Yes!""

"Indeed!"

"Yesshh."

Everyone answered with such lively voices that it gave me a pleasant feeling.

"Fufu, you have a wonderful dedication. It'll be the birth of a <Servant Leader> Corps. In the meanwhile, I will water the potted plants I bought at the Plant Festival, and do some <Meditation>." Helme said with a smile after looking at the combat slaves with a satisfied expression, and walked towards a corner of the courtyard.

"Roger. Girls, come to my room."

""Okay!""

I invited the combat slaves to my room, and there I used <Central Pillar of a Greater True Ancestor's Lineage> on each of them in order. We carried out a ceremony that could also be called a blood rite, allowing the girls to fully change into <Servant Leaders>.



"...I can feel power as a Lucival family member, as a <Servant Leader>."

"Me too. My body feels so light."

"The way I perceive sounds has changed as well."

"In my case, my sense of smell also..."

"You should relish in that sensation since it's only for now. Also, there's still a continuation to this. For short, I'll have you learn opening the first gateway. It'll happen in the bathroom on the second floor, so follow me."

After instructing the maids waiting in the corridor that they are to stay away from the second floor, I guided Mamani and the other three up there. We headed to the bathroom located at the end of the veranda.

The floor was slightly damp, giving the tiles a cold sensation. The shape of the bathtub was the same as before.

"You should better take off your clothes on your upper bodies."

"Affirmative!"

Bia was already naked above her waist. Her three boobs were swaying.

"Understood."

"I'm not as big as Bia, though..."

"...Here I go."

To be honest, Fuu's boobs are superb. Souther's nipples are cute as well. However, I don't stare at them with too much of a lewd ogling. I maintain a strict expression, befitting of a suzerain.

Bia's three boobs are beautiful, but they are intense, and what kind of... My perverted imagination got triggered.

"...I'm going to pass you the Virgin Blades next. Using these gimmick blades, you'll force your blood to be released." I explained the purpose of the Virgin Blades to them.

I had them use the Virgin Blades to make them acquire <Blood Path - Open First Gate> of <Blood Mana>. After a while...all of them succeeded, albeit with differences in the time needed to learn it. With this they had acquired the first gateway. Still, as expected, it took them more time to learn <Blood Path - Open First Gate> when compared to my <Head Servant Leaders>.

"...So this is the smell of blood?"

Bia's snake tongue extended with a hissing. Did the movements of her tongue become faster?

"The special skill of tiger beastmen evolved into <Extreme Blood Olfaction>, and even my combat occupation changed into <Unique Triumphant Blood Tiger>. Wow...a blood aura? It's kinda difficult to grasp..."

"Yeah, my combat occupation that used to be <Flying Sword Style Dancer> changed its name into <Swift Blood Sword Master>."

"I'm a <Blood Snake Knight> now."

"Mine has turned into <Blood Race Caster>..."

I guess each of them has mastered <Blood Path - Open First Gate>, the first stage of <Blood Mana>. You could describe them as vampire first-years.

"Everyone, you can keep in touch through blood messages, and you can also contact my <Head Servant Leaders> while you're busy outside."

""Okay.""

"Affirmative."

That means I can take these guys along to the 20th floor, and get them to gather large magic stones, huh? I'm curious about that Tiny Orbital. First I need to pick up Rollo, who's resting on the courtyard or on the roof, though...

"...It looks like you're done, Your Excellency."

"Aye."

Helme peeked into the bathroom from the entrance of the tower. She had apparently waited for us, seeing how Millennium-chan wasn't with her.

"...I will return into your eye."

"Come——"

Helme settled down in my left eye.

"I shall also serve you, milord, like Spirit-sama! I fully intend to do my best as a knight, no, Head Blood Knight of the Lucival house!"

Bia got excited after seeing Helme entering my eye.

"...Very well, then I will have you serve me. We're going to head to the labyrinth after putting our equipment in order. It's time to gather large magic stones."

"Yes! I'm going to prepare in a hurry——" Mamani headed to the veranda first.

"Me too."

"Me as well."

"So will I!"

Bia's waistless belly clashed against the tower's wall when she started to wind her body. Some of the wall material came off, but...I didn't point that out.

The strong scales of lamia exceeded armors in sturdiness. I also left the tower, and looked at Mamani. She had jumped off the veranda, landed on the courtyard, and was now dashing to their boarding house.

Since she's a tiger beastman, she looks like a feral, big tiger. In my mind, her appearance overlaps with Alray's.

『Your Excellency, I feel that the <Servant Leader> Corps is full of determination. The Holy Lucival Empire is nigh, fufu.』

I guess it can't hurt to go along with her joking every once in a while.

『Haha, is your illness showing its symptoms again? But, if it's a Butt Empire, it might be close?』

『You must be kidding!』