

## **Chapter 7 - It seems to Be Something better not to be Imitated**

The Demon King's army was flustered. Though, you'd need to be precise and narrow it down to precisely one person.

At this point, the territory of Jade Rajah was supposed to be on the verge of capitulation, with the Demon King's army having destroyed all the smaller towns dotting the territory, and having cornered the remnants to the extent of the city, where they had secluded themselves, being their final bastion. And to top this off, even the battle in that city might have been over and done with after one more hour.

However, with the arrival of just one dragon, a wind wall surrounding the entire city manifested. Not only did the wind pressure produce quite a number casualties and injuries, the wall itself made it impossible for the army to advance on the city.

Furthermore, this wind wall here had nothing to do with the regular spell <Wind Wall> which wouldn't be able to protect an entire city as it wasn't a magic art of such a high grade.

Having said that, all those capable of using magic in the Demon King's army were completely unable to erase that wall, despite pooling their efforts.

"What the hell is going on here!?! Gaahhh!" A woman wearing a black, goth dress stomped her feet in the troop headquarters of the Demon King's army.

Going by her appearance, she very likely had passed her twenties long ago. The woman was assuming the shape of a human as you could find them anywhere with a white skin and black hair reaching all the way down to her hips.

The sight of a human woman making such a huge racket in a place crowded with demons was extremely abnormal if judged by this world's common sense, but none of the demons around here showed the slightest indication of considering her presence to be odd. Instead, all of them looked like they actually held some kind of respect towards her.

"It's just an ordinary <Wind Wall>, right!? Why can't you cancel it out!?"

"It is either the ability of the caster, a difference in mana invested into this, or a combination of both, I would presume. At present, all our casters are working on the cancellation while using all their strength, but..."

"I don't give a flying damn about the reasons why you can't get it done!" While wearing black boots, the woman kicked the reporting demon.

Judging by their difference in weight and physique, it was questionable how much damage was dealt by her kicks, but usually, if a human acted like that towards a demon, it'd spell their doom. But, the demon, who was still being kicked by her, didn't react in the slightest, obediently allowing her to keep going just like an elephant would ignore a pesky mosquito.

"For heaven's sake, you guys are completely useless garbage!" The woman kept kicking for a while

longer, letting her irritation free reign, but seemly perceiving that she wasn't getting through to the demon with what she was doing, she stopped kicking, with her breathing going roughly, and flopped down on the chair set up in the middle of headquarters, especially for her.

Without even cleaning off the place that got treated with kicks by her, lowered his head, showing the woman, who was reclining on the chair, his utmost respect and politeness.

"I am terribly sorry. We shall use everything at our disposal without any breaks to cancel the spell."

Sighing deeply, "Hey, do you understand?" Contrary to the courteous demon, the woman stuck with her arrogant attitude, adding, "This war is something His Majesty entrusted to me! A glorious duty he personally assigned me to, okay!?! To this Sazane Kuromitsu!"

"It is exactly as you say, your Ladyship."

"And you don't consider this state, where my war is hampered by some childish, fake spell, to be pathetic!?"

"It is exactly as you say, your Ladyship."

"If you get it, then get your ass moving, and do something about it!"

"As you wish, your Ladyship."

While he responded like some answer machine, some of the present demons headed out to pass on the orders just now to the front line, but their movements looked somewhat mechanical. Coupled with the abnormal situation of demons meekly obeying the orders of a human, it created a somewhat unreal scene. That being said, those caught in this abnormality didn't seem to notice anything. The woman in the black dress, Sazane, cockily sat on her chair while slovenly fanning herself with the hem and collar of her dress.

For some reason, just this behavior of hers caused the faces of the demons around her to look entranced.

"Give me a break. This is such a major pain." Sazane muttered while continuing to flap the hem, seemingly feeling hot and stuffy from her outfit which used plenty of thick cloth.



A stifflingly sweet fragrance hung in the air, appearing to be blended with her body odor and perfume.

"Here I am, stuck with this annoying mission, even though I want to be assigned a great mission like taking over the world! I've got to wrap it up quickly!"

The first obstacle standing in Sazane's way was the wall of wind, protecting the city.

Back when the woman with the name Kuromitsu Sazane was summoned to this world alongside two men, she was informed by a being calling itself the demon god that the demons of this world were shunned by the other races, and were currently on the brink of destruction. According to that god, he had granted the three of them various blessings for the sake of saving the demons from their peril.

What she had received as a blessing was the skill <Temptation>. It was such a dangerous ability that the term "Siren" would appropriately describe it even in her former world, but when it came to actually using it, the user's character, combined with a considerable amount of intelligence, played a major role.

However, Sazane was originally a short-tempered, egoistic woman. Even her current goth outfit wasn't anything she had started to wear after coming to this world, but rather clothes she had liked to begin with, as they suited her personality. In other words, she was a woman unable to conduct herself like the beauties of old who'd pretend so as to be liked by the men they fancied.

Sazane herself seemed aware of her own flaws, and demanded for the ability's performance to be boosted considerably during the blessing bestowal, arguing that a normal <Temptation> wouldn't cut it, and had the wish of hers granted.

The ability of Sazane's <Temptation> affected even the dead, as long as they were male, and it stole the free will of its target, turning all the affected men into Sazane's loyal underlings. With the ability having become this powerful, the demon god told her that she wouldn't be able to accept any blessings to increase her physical abilities or similar, but Sazane readily consented to that.

'In the first place, I'm not the type of person who does something by herself, so, as long as I can manipulate others with this ability, I'll never be forced to do anything by myself.

Because Sazane's ability was as mighty as that, she was given an army by the demon king which resulted in her being entrusted with its command too, but this ability also had downsides.

First, it wouldn't work on women at all. But this didn't matter to Sazane at all. All she desired was to be pampered and fawned upon by the opposite sex. Being loved by women bore absolutely no meaning to her.

Second, it was a fragrance released from her body. Or in short, this ability had no effect where the fragrance didn't reach. Because a certain level of effect would remain after inhaling it once, she could order a huge number of soldiers around, but <Temptation> was meaningless when it came to men who never smelled it before. If Sazane became serious, she could extend the effective range to a circle with a radius of one kilometer. This feature demonstrated a tremendous power during the captures of cities and towns. After all, it was a means to stop soldiers from attacking, and without

knowing about it, there was no way to block out her scent as it spread along the wind. Because she could hand down order without using words once someone fell under her rule, even strong castles were helpless in front of her as she could freely cause friendly fire within, or coordinate her army's actions with her puppets inside the castles.

Sazane had planned to bring down the city where Jade and his men had holed themselves up, but just when she thought that the defenders' area very soon fell into the effective range of her ability, she was shut out by a wind wall. No matter how powerful her ability might be, its true identity was no more than a scent, and scent wouldn't just be unable to penetrate a wind wall, but also get blown up high into the sky, where it would mix with the air and turn harmless after diluting.

Renya having covered the whole city with a wind wall might have simply been owed to his great affinity with wind arts, his apprehensions about an earth wall possibly getting destroyed, his belief that it'd become quite unpleasant for him and his friends if he had used a fire wall, and his missing imagination where he should obtain all the moisture needed to for a water wall, but unexpectedly this choice by elimination turned out to be the best defensive method.

"Even though I could eradicate a town like that in no time, if not for that wind wall!"

Although it was just a bit, the work on the wind wall's removal had advanced. At some spots the wind's force had started to wane, and you could see some spots looking like they might soon turn onto genuine holes, but overall, the progress felt slow.

The frustration over things not going how she wanted pissed off Sazane. Given that she didn't possess any abilities besides her <Temptation>, she had no means to do something about the wall by herself.

'I gotta promptly take this wall down through my underlings,' she thought while glaring at the loathsome wall blocking her way.

Suddenly a part of that wall became thin, and she noticed how the wind calmed down. That place was still too small at the moment, and because it was directly affected by the after-waves of the surrounding wall, it wouldn't allow for Sazane's scent to pass through, but this sight of the wall definitely breaking apart caused Sazane to become overjoyed as it'd spell the end of this war.

However, at that very moment something, which easily disproved Sazane's joy, flew out of the gap in the wall. It was a single, long, deep crimson ray. That, which was obviously some kind of spell, pierced through the open gap in the wall and penetrated a part of the Demon King's army alongside the demons frantically trying to cancel out the wind wall over there.

After the ray had passed through, nothing happened for a moment, but after yet another moment, thunderous roaring and explosive flames blew away everything in the way of its trajectory while faithfully pursuing the path the red ray had taken.

"...Haaah!?" Sazane cried out stupidly when confronted with that unforeseen event.

Until now, no such mighty counterattacks had been launched by the enemy army holding up in the city. Because both sides, defenders and attackers, were demons, both sides' strength was even to some extent, lacking any such one-sided attacks of mass destruction.

And, as if to confuse Sazane even further, two figures appeared from within the gap in the wall.

"Ha ha ha! So I was right! This way suits me much more than some silly dress! Yep, this is truly great!"

The one walking in front was Emil. In addition to her outfit consisting of the usual tube top bra, hotpants, and a long coat, she also wore, for some odd reason, unusually pointy equipment pieces such as spiky shoulder guards, elbow and knee protectors, and fingerless, black leather gloves with rivets.

The one behind her was Shion, who walked onwards with her mithril-based katana drawn and a somewhat fed-up look. But, except for her holding her a drawn katana, nothing had changed from usual.

In the space she had created with her first attack, Emil thrust her hand into her coat's pocket, without even looking at the enemies around them, took out several magic stones, and crushed them inside her right hand. While sprinkling the fragments, which were loosely falling down after being pulverized, into her own crimson hair, almost like doing some kind of makeup, and then roughly ransacking her own hair, Emil yelled, as if allowing some uncontrollable emotions to burst forth, "Pheeeww!! Nice! That's how it gotta be! Yep, this feels right now! It works all the way down to my soul!"

"Does Renya's mana also have some kind of bad drug reaction...?" Muttering that, Shion knocked down a demon, who had approached her, with the back of her katana's blade, just to send another one flying with a kick. Then she called out to Emil who seemed oddly elated, "Say, Emil...what happened with the talk about you not really wanting to kill your brethren?"

'I'm not certain about the guys who got blown away by the explosion, but those who got penetrated by the first ray must have died,' Shion assessed.

In reality, the remains of that attack were scattered all over the place as far as Shion could see, making for a fairly tragic sight.

"You sure remember some small stuff, partner. Well, it hasn't really changed, though." This time she put a magic stone into her mouth. While crunching down on it like a shaggy dog would chew away at dried meat, Emil glanced back at Shion, "I mean, all the guys at the front line are already dead anyway. For some kind of reason, this army has even employed corpses, using them as soldiers."

"Eh? But now that you mention it, I sense some sickly-sweet fragrance."

"Ha ha ha! Scent, huh? Truly, it's the scent of some bitch!"

There was quite a distance to the place where Emil and Shion had shown up from the Demon King's army's headquarters, but Sazane could perceive situations and conversations as long as they took place within the range of her own ability. In other words, Sazane overheard the talk between Emil and Shion, but the two didn't know that. Of course, it wasn't as though Emil or Shion would have softened their tone in consideration of Sazane, even if they had known about being overheard.

"I've got this for this stinkin' army of the dead!"

The instant Emil held her hand up, the soldiers of the enemy army, who tried to encircle Emil and Shion, were blown away alongside the ground, turning into a jumbled mix of earth, sand, and demon bodies. Emil looked back at Shion with a very happy smile, and shrugged her shoulders exaggeratedly.

"That said, living demons should be in the rear of the army, so I think it's cool to not worry 'bout it too much."

"Okay. Then let me apologize now, in case I should mistakenly cut down a living demon."

"Don't worry 'bout it. This is a war, so yeah."

Around the time of Emil's reply, several heads were already dancing through the air. When Emil started to follow Shion's movements with her eyes after staring blankly for a moment, another batch of soldiers returned to being simple masses of meat while releasing fountains of crimson blood after getting slain by Shion.

"Now that you've mentioned it, they definitely feel a bit slow."

Some soldiers also attacked with their weapons at the ready. But, their movements looked awfully sluggish to Shion, which allowed her to agree with Emil that this was an army of corpses. While lopping off heads and cutting away arms, without even exchanging any decent rallies, and then kicking away the remaining torso, Shion thought that there was no need for her to get so worked up if she had known that it'd turn out like this.

"Anyway, it looks like we'll be able to carry out our work."

"You so damn serious, Shion. That's also a good part about you, though."

After pushing back Emil, who had been leaning her body against Shion's as if snuggling up to her while laughing foolishly, without putting too much strength into it, and clearing her throat once, Shion readied her katana anew.

"Well then, until the work inside is done."

"Aren't you looking forward to this mop-up operation, partner?"

While shrouded by a screen of sweet fragrance, teeming with poison, silver sword flashes and crimson lights began to tear through the Demon King's forces as they advanced on the two in great numbers, almost as if ripping through the atmosphere.



The full swing of Emil's punch directly impacted on the face of a demon who had approached her. Her fist, which had plenty of power added to it through mana on top of her physical strength as a demon, pulverized the demon's head after meeting almost no resistance. White and red pieces were blown across a wide range behind the demon.

Originally that'd be more than enough to cause a huge fountain of blood to spray out of the cut section on the demon's neck, but without anything like that happening, only a gooey, crimson liquid continued to run down from the neck to the torso.

The fact that there was no reaction by the being that had been alive confirmed Emil's belief that someone was manipulating the demon soldiers deployed to the front line for some reason through some method, and that all those demons were those who had been murdered in the towns along the Demon King army's invasion path, very likely just like the town Renya and the others had seen during their journey to this place. She had somehow grasped it from their presence, but now that she had actual proof, there was no need for her to hold back any longer.

Kicking away the body which was still trying to grab her despite having lost its head, she performed a vigorous turn on the spot, as if dancing, and vertically cut through the body of another soldier, who had closed in on her from behind, with the hem of her coat which was as sharp as a blade.

Even this body only had a gooey, red liquid oozing out from the cut wound, completely lacking the usual vigor of blood when gushing out. It was evidence that the heart, the pump circulating the blood, didn't beat anymore within this dead body.

Pity welled up within Emil as she saw how the corpses of her brethren were defiled without allowing them a proper burial, but this feeling was immediately painted over by her combat excitement.

She dodged a spearhead with the least amount of movements, smoothly stepped in, pressed her hand against the armored abdomen of her opponent's torso, and released her mana. The soldier who received her attack dragged all the other soldiers around him into it, burning everything down within the range of the bursting flames and explosive blast.

"Aren't you in perfect shape there?"

The demon king's army didn't consist of just demons. It also contained plenty of humanoid monsters. These ones being truly alive, though. While running through the gaps between those monsters, Shion muttered in admiration after seeing Emil's way of fighting.

During that murmur, the mithril katana, having its sharpness increased by receiving Shion's willpower, freely drew white, gleaming trails between the enemy soldiers.

"A somewhat nasty stench is constantly hanging in the air."

With Shion's strength and the techniques she had been taught by Renya to some extent added to the mithril katana which got hardened even further by her will and mana, the arms of the lifeless

puppets ranked next to scraps of paper.

The soldiers on her side also lacked any significant blood flow, as might be expected, and merely collapsed to the ground after turning into dripping chunks of meat. Not a single blood spurt clung to her katana either.

"Ain't the smell of blood and grease somewhat less offensive than this stench?"

"Somehow I feel like agreeing with you on that one."

Shion didn't know whether it was owed to them being manipulated by someone or because they were recycled corpses, but the movements of the demons were dull. Shion cut apart one demon after the other, even though just one demon would cause great havoc on the human continent under normal circumstances. As she simply kept slashing as if cutting the places she could cut, without any hesitation or delay, her movements looked extremely natural.

"I ended up agreeing with you, going with the flow, but what does grease actually smell like anyway?"

"You don't know from humans?"

Contrary to Shion, almost all of Emil's movements were brute strength approaches. She happily punched and kicked anything within range. Be it face or belly, she simply hit everything without a care whether they might use shields or wear armor. As long as her attack landed, it instantly turned into a fatal hit thanks to her strength as a demon and the mana charged into the blow, completely smashing apart the area around the place she hit.

Her power was at a level where all that mattered was her hitting. It was a way of fighting that took aiming as optional and looked extremely unintelligible as it fully disregarded technique.

"Is it somewhat unexpected?"

"I wonder?"

While inclining her head in doubt at Shion's question, Emil crushed the heads of the soldiers which she had grabbed with her left and right hand, using just her grip strength, and ripped those heads off their torsos. And yet, the soldiers' bodies didn't stop moving.

Since they were already dead to begin with, something at the level of losing their heads wouldn't hinder them in the first place. That's why Emil firmly stepped down on the heads, grabbed the belt of an attacking body's trousers, pulled it up with one hand so as to lift it into the air, and slammed it back down on the ground. Even though there was almost no distance for it to gain speed, the headless soldier was stabbed into the ground neck first with an absurd momentum, resulting in its body being scattered in all directions through the impact with the ground.

As expected, even those corpses would apparently stop moving after turning into pieces. She used the same method on the other soldier's corpse, leading to another batch of flesh chunks flying about.

Emil's arms and body had started to get dyed in blood spurts, but she didn't appear to mind the

disastrous scenery around her. Just when she tried to wipe away blood clinging to her face with her blood-smeared hand, she noticed that it'd just worsen things, and hurriedly pulled her hand away.

"Since I'm strong to begin with, techniques and such are meaningless, don't you think?"

"That's the reasoning of a wild beast..."

"I mean, partner, aren't you in the same boat there?"

Shion felt somewhat embarrassed from being called a partner by Emil. However, it wasn't a bad feeling, and to begin with, it was also her who had started talking about them being friends after slugging it out. She definitely hadn't expected that Emil would call her partner, but once it happened, it felt rather natural to Shion.

"I...you think so?"

"You've gotten a bit shrewder since having started to use a katana, but aren't you basically a reliable firepower that always breaks through from the front?"

After repelling a weapon directed at her and cutting down the enemy soldier by swinging her katana, she blew him away with her <Roar>. Given the huge number of enemies, Shion ended up heavily relying on that technique which affected a wide range with its high power output. Now she stood brooding smack in the middle of the empty space instantly created by her <Roar>. Because Renya had naggingly told her to never shoulder the katana or stab it into the ground, Shion had now reached a state where she'd unconsciously sheath the katana into its scabbard whenever she didn't use it.

In the beginning, when Shion had just received the katana, she always injured her fingers or palm as soon as she returned the katana to her scabbard, but humans getting used to things was something dreadful, seeing how she was nowadays able to smoothly return the blade into its scabbard without even looking.

"It's because my family's lineage is full of such people."

"And demons are just that kind of a race, you see."

They looked at each other for a short moment, laughing, and then, as if having suddenly remembered something, Emil said with a serious expression, "By the way, what was our mission again?"

"Rout the enemy army suitably, and kill their leaders if possible."

The instructions Shion had received from Renya were limited to that. The wind wall was indispensable to buy time until the work inside the city was done, but that wall had its magic continuously chipped down, albeit very slowly. Even Renya as the caster of the wind wall knew that its disappearance was just a matter of time. For this reason it was necessary to hinder the enemy army outside the wall from concentrating on the wall's cancellation.

In reality, Renya had planned to take over that duty himself, but Frau raised an objection to that

idea. According to Frau, it was absolutely necessary for Renya to take up a position in the central part of the city for the work they were trying to accomplish inside the city, Renya learned after consulting with Croire and Frau.

Hence they suggested the alternate plan to ask Liaris to drive away the enemy army with Dra-kun, but, after a little pondering, Renya reached the conclusion that he couldn't send out Dra-kun and Liaris since it was possible for them to die in a clash with the demon king army which would be quite bad since the dragoon was borrowed from the Trident Principality.

At that point Emil suggested for her to go outside the wall and fight the enemy army herself. This also earned Renya's disapproval, but since Emil stubbornly insisted that she wanted to be allowed to at least protect the residents and retainers, and because Shion mentioned that it'd be impossible for her to not accompany Emil in such a case, Renya gave his permission after seeing that they'd handle this together.

"Routing the enemy soldiers sure is no big deal."

"Though it's a pain for them to be spread out over such a big range."

"Isn't that somehow the perfect moment where you'd want to be greedy?"

"That's, well yeah, but do you have an idea where to find the target?"

Although they blew the enemy soldiers up with magic arts and smashed them apart with <Roar>, the enemies kept flooding at them without any end in sight. In the first place, the idea that just two people could take on an army with a size that would swallow several villages and towns was already a mistake in itself, but despite them being surrounded from all sides and getting attacked from all directions, Shion and Emil covered for each other's blind spots, resulting in only the corpses of the enemy soldiers piling up. The two, who kept changing moving corpses into unmoving corpses, didn't even break much of a sweat.

"I wonder, isn't the source of this sickening stench the enemy boss or something?"

"Oh, I see. But, it certainly stinks."

"Kinda like the stench of an old hag who failed at her make-up."

"I don't know whether that's a proper allegory here..."

"It's obvious to me, partner. It's something you'd also hear frequently. Because old hags stink so much, they bathe themselves in all kinds of intense perfumes, which only redeeming feature would be their price, to gloss over their own stench. This is a chemical reaction by those perfumes blending with the original stench. It's a fermented smell that would likely kill any dog with a good nose. Once things devolve into such a state, it's too late. That's why you should take proper care of your skin, partner, since humans age much faster than a demon like me. It'd be best for you to keep using high quality cosmetics, meter the perfume to suppress the smell, and limit your cosmetics to decent brands. If you do all that, things should end for you without becoming a disgraceful hag who scatters such a nasty stench wherever she goes."

"O-Okay?" Obviously overpowered, Shion agreed with Emil who lined up one word after the other, rattling on without pause.

Only when she was told that she'd age faster, Shion felt slightly offended, but humans certainly grew old fast when compared to demons who actually boasted a long life span.

"Holy shit, even I as a demon feel dumbstruck by the thick skin of the person scattering this stench to keep on living without a care. I wonder, isn't her skin thick enough to be used as a shoe sole if peeled off?"

"I-I wonder."

"In the first place, don't you think it's absolutely indecent to scatter such a stench while being aware of it yourself?"

With those words Emil blew away the soldiers around her with a spell for a moment, and then suddenly looked all sleepy in the empty space she had created. In front of Shion who widened her eyes wondering what was going on, Emil placed her bloody right hand on her chest, and the left hand on the belt of her hotpants, acting as if she was going to slide her pants down a bit with a jerk.

"E-Emil!?"

"Shion, you should learn this by heart, okay? A girl like me, who's full of charm, is going to attract men in swarms from far and beyond by just pulling off this lil' stunt, even without scattering such a disgusting stench."

<Don't fuck with me, you stupid bitch!!>



「 Emil とシオンの頭に唐突に響き渡ったのは、  
そこそここの年齢の女性の声だった。」

「ふーん、げんげんじゃないわよ、このアバズレがっ！」

「シオンも覚えておくといいたねえ。  
ちゃんと魅力のある私みたいなオンナノコは、  
こんな臭い匂いを垂れ流さなくても、  
これくらいの動作」で地平線の彼方から  
オトコが見に来るのだからねえ」

Emil had started to explain all this while creating an alluring atmosphere. On the other hand, Shion got flustered, wondering just what was going to start from now on, despite them tentatively being in the middle of battle.

What loudly resounded above their heads was the voice of a fairly aged woman. Contrary to Shion who restlessly looked around her to find the source of the voice, Emil completely changed from her tempting behavior up until then, and twisted her lips while immediately getting ready for battle.

"Found you...you're surprisingly thin-skinned, aren't you?"

"U-Umm? Did you possibly provoke her, aiming for this to happen?"

"Who knows."

More than half had been Emil horsing around, but it wasn't as though she didn't see any chance in succeeding with this. It wasn't as if Emil had realized the true nature of the enemy army's leader at this point in time, but it was plain fact that the dead were moving around for some reason in addition to some abnormal fragrance hanging in the air.

Going by those two facts, Emil conjectured that they were within the effective range of some kind of skill or ability. When it came to an effective range fully covering such a big army, it'd be impossible for the user to skillfully handle their ability without grasping the situation within that big effective range through some sort of method. Moreover, if the user had no means to pass on their will within their ability's range, it'd degrade the ability to something worthless which would be limited to at most making the dead move around with some conditions added to it.

With those conjectures, Emil thought that it might be possible for her to learn the ability user's location, if she could trigger some kind of reaction from them by having the ability user direct their attention at them.

"Either way, I know where to find her now. Perfect time to hunt her down, right?"

"Leaving aside the method you used to achieve that, I consent."

Shion readied her katana so as to pursue the direction where Emil was looking at. As if to prove that Emil's guess about the ability user's location had been correct, the enemy army's defense obviously tightened in that direction, causing Emil and Shion to grin broadly.

"How very nice of her to go out of the way to prove my guess, don't you think?"

"It looks like there's no mistake. What an idiot."

Guessing that their target might be somewhere, and knowing that their target was somewhere were two completely different stories. As soon as they knew for certain that they were right, all they had to do was push their way through without holding back anything.

"Well then, partner, let's kill the leader and get ourselves some praise from Renya, shall we?"

"That's definitely a charming proposal, partner."

For just an instant, Emil's face was colored in surprise by Shion's reply. But, that expression was immediately overpainted by a daring smile, and while cladding both her hands in such a dense mana that it blew off the blood clinging to them, Emil shifted her eyes in the direction where she had detected the enemy army's ability user.

"That's just the right mood there. Now, let's go for a nice, lil' hunt, partner!"



"It's begun, huh?"

She dropped a seed, which she took out of her pocket, into a hole she had quite carelessly dug up with her foot, just to fill the hole back up just as carelessly, followed by a firm stomp. While endlessly repeating that process, Croire mumbled such a comment under her breath after noticing that the explosions and rumblings had suddenly started to become distant.

Croire was currently inside the wind barrier. While walking all over the city, she was in the middle of digging holes in a fairly halfhearted manner for the most part - although she calculated the distances between the holes to some degree - and burying plant seeds in those holes.

If she were to be asked why she was doing something like that, Croire would likely have no choice but to simply answer that she had been asked by Renya to do so. As for what meaning all of this had, she planned to slowly interrogate Renya later on.

"Anyway, I guess for now I'll do as told."

Renya himself was waiting in a plaza located in the middle of the city. Frau had claimed that she needed to be with Renya for the sake of realizing whatever Renya had asked her to do, and Rona should be with them as assistant.

And speaking of Frau who had insisted for Renya to stay in the center of the city; she was continuing to manually draw something by ceaselessly pulling lines across the city's plaza, buildings, and streets with a large amount of brushes.

Even Croire knew that she was drawing some kind of magic crest. But even so, Croire didn't understand at all what it was that Frau was drawing overall and the nature of what she drew on such a huge scale as a city. In the first place, the act of turning an entire city into a canvas to draw something had already too much of a scope for her to grasp in its entirety.

Renya, the one who proposed this, might be aware of what Frau was drawing, but Renya himself was in the middle of concentrating mentally for some reason. In short, it meant that whatever Renya was about to do from now on required that much of an effort for him, but Croire only complained in a whisper while not stopping her work, "Usually you wouldn't come up with something like this...and even if you did, you wouldn't consider putting it into practice."

'Turning an entire city into a magic crest has already happened in the past, so it's nothing that crazy,'

Croire assessed, 'It's not like I've got an explanation, but Klinge, the city ruled by Renya, seems to be the same.

Given that Croire was a fairly superb magic practitioner among elves, she at least knew whether spells had been applied to the city she was living in, even if she didn't understand the concrete nature of those spells.

'After all, Emil and Frau must have done something to it. If it's something set up by those two, it might be something terrible, but it's probably nothing I need to investigate since it's ultimately going to improve the lives of the city's residents' was Croire's approach. But, the fact that she was considering things like this was already proof that Klinge had rubbed off on her. Yet Croire planned to pretend to be deaf when having that pointed out.

"Still."

When it came to the spells applied to Klinge, they were one way or another operating to amass power to some degree or supplement magic stones. But, seeing how they were setting up something similar through improvised preparations this time, and moreover, since Renya would activate it through his mana alone, all of this went way beyond being crazy.

Very likely any expert with proper knowledge about magic arts like Az would doubt the sanity or common sense of anyone mentioning such an endeavor. Apparently understanding as much, Renya hadn't told Az anything about what was going to start from now on. Without requesting anything of Az like he had asked Shion and Emil, Renya told him to stand-by with Liaris at Jade's place.

Incidentally, Dra-kun was in the midst of devoting his attention to defense by circling high above the city.

"In any case..." Croire dug out yet another hole, just to drop yet another seed into it.

'The one having the hardest job right now aren't Shion and Emil who have plunged into the middle of a big army, Renya who's accumulating power in the middle of the city, Rona who's assisting him, or me, but rather it's got to be Frau who's diligently continuing to draw lines on the ground with brushes.

That Frau was in the middle of advancing the task requested by Renya at a quick pace.

"It's way too unreasonable ~no."

Those words had already left the realm of a complaint, and were now closer to cursing. No matter how precise and swift Frau's work was, and even if she did it at a peerless speed, it was next to impossible to finish drawing a magic crest across the whole city in a short period of time. Yet Frau took up a task, which any magician around here would immediately brand as a bad joke, without so much as a complaint.

If one were to consider the reasons, two possibilities would immediately come up: First, Frau hated telling Renya that she couldn't do something, and second, it was something that was possible to accomplish. Having said that, Frau wasn't anyone who would promise something she couldn't do.

Thus she had agreed after considering her own abilities, and now that she had accepted it anyway, Frau had no choice but to get it done. Tightly grasping the brush with both hands, Frau continued drawing characters and patterns on the ground with a speed that made her hands seem to blur.

"Frau? How are things proceeding on your side?"

Once Frau looked up towards the source of the voice, she found Croire standing on the roof of a nearby building, and looking down at her work of crawling across the street. Croire's skirt was such an impregnable fortress that it caused Frau to wonder how that was actually possible with a skirt of such a length. Although it should definitely be possible to take a peek beneath the skirt considering the angle, even Frau's eyes that were looking up from quite a low position couldn't see under the skirt.

"...Frau?" Croire asked worriedly, wondering whether something was wrong, since Frau was so looking up to her with something similar to a frown, appearing as though she might be able to see something if only she squinted hard enough.

After looking upwards like that for a while, Frau lowered her eyes to the ground again, seemingly having given up, and answered while resuming her work, "As planned ~nano. If things continue like this, that is."

"I'm mostly finished on my side, okay?" Croire sat down on the roof's edge, and answered while letting her legs swing back and forth.

While fiercely continuing the drawing work, Frau said to her, "Have you spread them out relatively equally while making sure that they don't get in the way of the crest?"

"I think I've managed to plant them as you told me."

"In that case, I'd like you to make them grow bit by bit ~no. If they look like they're going to interfere with the magic crest, it will be necessary to adjust them right away ~no."

"Okay, I'm going to start then." Croire nodded, and nimbly stood up on the roof.

On that occasion, Frau pulled off the stunt to spitefully stare at the area from Croire's thighs to her waist, wondering whether she might catch a glimpse, while continuing her work, but that attempt also ended in failure with her remaining unable to see anything.

As if not having noticed Frau's look, Croire widely spread her hands right after getting up, and let her mana flow into the atmosphere while shouting, "<Listen, oh children sleeping in the ground! I am a forest maiden! Together with the forest, I am your blood-related descendant since times long past!>"

What she had recited there in Elvish wasn't a magic spell, strictly spoken. Although she had poured mana into her words, and passed mana into the atmosphere, it was a racial technique only available to the elves. It was an ability allowing the elves the growth of plants as long as they had sown the seeds, just like using a forest overgrown with plants as a barrier.

According to Croire's call, the seeds, which she had planted herself, sprouted at a pace that would

be impossible with natural growth. They began trying to grow rapidly while sucking up the moisture and nutrients from the ground, alongside the mana in the air.

"Isn't this possibly bad?"

"Are there any troubles ~nano?"

"Yes. If this place was a forest, it wouldn't be much of an issue, but..." Immediately after she started to use her ability, Croire's face took on a serious look. Croire answered to Frau, who asked what had happened, "Unlike a forest that possesses a soil suitable for an abundant growth of plants, this place is a city. It's not like there's plenty of moisture in the ground...the nutrients are apt to be insufficient, too."

"I hadn't considered that ~no."

A forest had heaps of withered, rotten wood and leaves fallen from the trees litter the ground. On top of these forming a soil with a high nutritional value, the forest itself would store the fallen rain. But, Frau and Croire were currently in a city built for people to live in. It wasn't as if anyone would care about the nutrients in the soil, and because a city would be built to be a comfortable place for its residents, people would include drainage and keep it in a state where excess water wouldn't accumulate.

If you were to sow seeds and urge their growth in such a place, the plants would run out of water and nutrients very quickly. It'd be only natural for a decent growth to become close to impossible.

"Croire-ane-sama, is it possible to spread the roots over a slightly wider area ~no?"

"Define slightly?"

"To be precise, go beyond the wind wall, onto the battlefield where Shion-ane-sama and Emil-ane-sama are fighting ~nano."

With that alone, Croire immediately comprehended what goal Frau was pursuing by mentioning this. The meaning hidden behind Frau's words gave Croire, an elf, a rather bad feeling, but right now they were in a situation where she couldn't mention anything like that.

After thinking, 'if there's one problem about this...', Croire spoke up, "It's possible, but making them spread throughout all plants is impossible."

Frau's idea was to turn the enemy soldiers, which were likely strewn all over the battlefield, into fertilizer that also contained moisture, if it was possible to extend the roots all the way to where Shion and Emil were fighting. However, those corpses weren't spread out equally outside the city. For a part of the plants it might be possible to suck the corpses dry through their roots, but if it came to spreading the nutrients and moisture across all plants equally, it'd be impossible.

"Guuhhh...Dra-kun! Draaa-kun!" After groaning for a bit, Frau looked up to the sky and shouted.

Dra-kun, who had been devoting himself to defense while circling in the sky, changed his flight route after noticing Frau's call and came down to a height above Frau and Croire, where the wind

pressure wouldn't affect the ground, while flapping his wings to keep hovering.

"It's an emergency mission ~nano! I'd like you to fly across the wind wall and carry the enemy soldiers' corpses, which should exist in heaps thanks to Shion-ane-sama and Emil-ane-sama, into the city ~no!"

Croire ended up thinking that this settled Frau's intent to turn the corpses into nutrients. Dra-kun skillfully tilted his head while hovering and at the same time pondering about the meaning behind that instruction.

"I've got no time to give you a detailed explanation ~no! I'd like you to drop the corpses all over the city, as much as possible ~no! Ah, avoid the place where the residents have taken refuge ~nano."

'The way of dropping the corpses down suitably will be much faster than carefully lowering them to the ground. But, this is based on the condition of ignoring all respect towards the remains of the dead.' Croire judged, but even she could understand as much that neither Frau, the one instructing, nor Dra-kun, the one being instructed, possessed any of such respect to begin with.

Croire wondered whether she should retort at this, but in the end she decided to focus herself on using her elven technique. This stemmed from her believing that it'd be difficult for her to make Frau and Dra-kun understand, even if she tried to explain to them the concept of respect towards the dead. Besides, it wasn't as though she'd have any benefit from saying something either.

"Hurry ~nano! If you understood, get going ~no!!"

Frau waved her hand hectically, and then pointed in the direction where Shion and Emil were probably fighting while shouting. Doing as told rather than asking for an explanation didn't really bother Dra-kun. Thinking that it might save time, Dra-kun slowly flapped his wings while gaining altitude for some time. Then he flew across the wind wall, disappearing on the other side. After a while, Dra-kun returned into the city again, but this time holding corpses in all four claws. Without lowering his altitude, Dra-kun carelessly tossed the corpses towards the ground from high up in the air.

Croire thought that he was probably throwing them while aiming at places with no people, so far as it goes, but if they were thrown down from such a high place, it'd be only logical for them to scatter all kinds of stuff into the vicinity while breaking through roofs and hitting the walls of buildings. As the residents had taken refuge at the lord's castle, Croire felt grateful that no one besides them was watching this gross spectacle while holding her mouth as she felt somewhat sick.

Contrary to Croire, Frau seemed to feel absolutely nothing from seeing this spectacle. She asked Croire in a normal tone, "Will it be possible to spread them out equally with this?"

"I don't really want to agree with the method used here, but...well, you're right. It will work."

If the corpses got terribly damaged, it'd make it easier for the plants' roots to suck them up. After all, there would be plenty of places for the roots to enter the bodies even without needing to bore through the skin, but Croire hesitated to rejoice about her work having become easier with that.

Still, her feelings on this and the things she had to do were two different pairs of shoes. Croire

immediately resumed with her elven technique, urging the plants to grow. The plants, which sped up their growth again after receiving the elven power, made their roots crawl deep through the ground while stretching towards the chunks of flesh scattered on the surface. As they eagerly sucked up the nutrients and moisture, the plants' bodies began to grow big.