

Chapter 350 - Huge Coffin

The lid of the huge, sarcophagus-like coffin slides off due to the power of the big, red arm. Appearing from within the red bordering is a giant with a crimson body. It has dry, dull white hair, and crooked, long but thin ears. It's not the long ears of elves. Big antlers are growing from within its hair, above the ears. Many piercing-shaped gems are dangling at the tips of its antlers. All the gems contain lots of mana.

Is it supplying mana into the head through the antlers?

Veins, like those of leaves, are fiercely pulsating on the surface of its facial skin. The thumping blood flow can be heard all the way over here.

The skin on its arms has many scales. It's a giant with a huge body frame, so its heart must be big as well. I imagine it as a pump using a huge chamber.

But rather than worrying about imagining something like that, it's three eyes on the head are of more importance. A blackish fire borders its eyes. Half a part of its eyes, which seem to burn despite not doing so, is protruding out a bit. I'm unconsciously drawn to stare at them...

Bulging Demonic Eyes, huh?

"Gubobobo, a spearman who resembles a human but isn't one."

Whoa, it started to talk all of a sudden. The tone of its voice is deep and profound. As it speaks, its thick lips, similar to mushrooms or frankfurters, tremble.

"...You mean me?"

Even as it listens to me, the giant's lips continue to tremble. Then they twitch faintly as if to adjust their shape.

Is it because it was born out of a coffin? Maybe the pressure inside that coffin is different than out here.

"...Right. I finally found you, spearmaster."

This guy was looking for me? The center of its bulging eyes squirms. A magic crest as iris? A Demonic Eye-like crest...while dividing a bit, it transforms into the shape of a star.

Then it moves oddly again. Up, up, down, down, left, right, left, and right. It's going to be the 『Konami Code』 if BA follow next.

The giant seems to check the situation around it. One of the star-shaped irises, which now look like compound eyes, also perceives Nemus' group. The other star-shaped irises whirl around, letting their look wander across Higlia, Rollodeen, and then me.

Scary.

Are the eyeballs magic crests? It's not just crooked star shapes on the surface of the eyeballs which are clad in black flames.

8,0,1.

9,3.

Such number strings are randomly wriggling, and at times, moving counterclockwise on the surface of those eyeballs. A mandala-like microcosmos? It reminds me of geometrical formulae as you'd encounter them in kabbalah.

The giant with those mysterious Demonic Eyes is strange, albeit showing no sign of starting to attack me. For now, at least. I guess I'll try to negotiate with it.

"...So, do you have some business with me, Mr. Crimson Giant?"

"...Spearmaster, are you trying to be rude? I'm not some Mr. Crimson Giant. I have a proper name, Fallen Coffin Giant Schmihazar!" [efn_note]The Fallen stemming from Fallen Angel, one who fell from heaven.[/efn_note]

That's a funny reaction. Schmihazar, eh?

"My bad, but I do have a name as well. It's Shuuya Kagari."

"...I see. I have been rude as well then. So your name is Shuuya Kagari, spearmaster."

"Nyagooo~" Rollodeen introduces herself as well.

"Winged, blacked beast, I do not speak the language of beasts."

Isn't Schmihazar unexpectedly polite? No wait, it'd be bad to get deceived by his conduct. Schmihazar's atmosphere and the blood stench...besides, my intuition...all of these scream that it's going to turn into a battle.

It's been just an instant, but it felt like Baldok quivered as if reacting to something. Is it bloodthirst for a change?

Wondering that, I look at the red ax blade and spear. The ax blade dimly gleams scarlet as it reflects the moonlight.

Did I only imagine it?

I keep gazing at the Legendary weapon created by Bon and Zaga...nothing. It doesn't form a fist like Bon can.

I shift my eyes to Schmihazar. Let's ask him about the coffin suspiciously floating next to him.

"So, Schmihazar, what's that sarcophagus or coffin floating next to you?"

Its lid is huge. That big lid is eerily bobbing up and down just above the river. Also, the level of the religious drawings on the surface of the coffin is abnormally high. It sure looks like I could fetch a fairly decent price if I were to sell the coffin. It might be an item suited for the Underground Auction.

...Should I aim at stealing it?

"...This is my residence. The grand tool of my great master..."

Residence...for it to be his home...is it inside actually similar to a magically-created house? Or is it an item box?

But, rather than an item box, that's...

A black mist is wafting inside the red borders of the coffin. Is Schmihazar living in that domain? And...everyone once in a while, monster-like objects seem to be crossing through that domain...how ominous.

Do other beings like Schmihazar live there? ...Or is it kinda like a gate? Is it connected to another dimension?

While pondering about all that, I mumble, "...Hee, so you have a master who manipulates a coffin that seems to be connected to a different dimension, eh?"

"...Of course. He's a great person from a previous life."

Previous life!?

"So you're saying he's a reincarnator?"

In that case, it's pretty much set that he'll be a formidable enemy.

"It is as you say. He was born with big retinas in a family with a great lineage, one with the symbol of gold, in the middle of Benandanty's ritual. Moreover, I hear he read and mastered the Summa Theologica in his younger years."

I don't get what he's saying. But, a reincarnator, huh? Still, this guy's master doesn't seem to be Japanese. If it's the Summa Theologica, I heard about it. He mastered the book of Thomas Aquinas...? In that case, he must be a European, I think. A former catholic believer who likes memorizing things? Or a religionist or bishop who's fond of Aristoteles and Dante?

Maybe someone related to the light god and the Holy Church of the Religious State Hesliphath in this world then... Going by the blood stench emitted by Schmihazar, I was sure it'd be a vampire, though. No, it makes no sense to lump his previous life and now together. After all, reality is an extremely odd tale.

Even as I consider these questions, I'm curious about the reincarnator who's Schmihazar's master.

"...I'd say, a previous life is just that, a previous life. Is he currently great as well?"

Mana gathers in Schmihazar's demonic eyes. It looks like he perceived my words as disrespectful.

"...Spearmaster Shuuya, my master is a special being that ordered me to 『Investigate and Negotiate』. That's why I'll tell you. My master is the last, great Ascended Masters who descended into the underworld through YHVH's domain Aracure. And he kindly bestowed me "Inner Eye." He's proceeded through the Last Judgment, and is accompanied by 250 demons who are led by the Four Knights of the Apocalypse." Schmihazar announces with his white hair standing on end.

At the same time, the Demonic Eye on his forehead extends to the left and right, adding to his acting. But, somehow the words can't be quite translated?

Ascended Masters? Is his master good at golfing?

"I don't really understand all of what you've said, but is your master a golf master?"

"...Wrong! He's no goldif! Are you messing with me?"

"Yes, I am."

Immediately after I answer with a smile while placing Baldok on my shoulder, Schmihazar mutters some words that sound English "...What an impolite man. 'He knows not his right hand from his left.'"

The bulging Demonic Eye gleams with a part of the black, burning mana line bordering it glistening. And as soon as that gleam jumps out of the eyeball like some electrical discharge, the mana line connects to a part of his body.

Has he entered his combat mode? Is he supplying mana as energy? Whatever it is, it looks like I pissed him off.

Though it could be that he's trembling from the offense, maybe? But look, it's kinda inevitable for me to think of golf if you start talking about masters.

While thinking all that, I follow the magic lines protruding out of his three eyeballs with my eyes. One of them sticks to his thick breastplate that would fit the Burning Knights. Another attaches itself to the shoulder armor that's similar to the shoulder protectors in American football and has the shape of a mask.

Then, several blackish magic lines rotate in spirals, heading for his huge gladius that's fused with one of his arms. The fist of that arm is integrated into the central part of the sword. Just who made that arm, and how? It looks like a huge robot arm blade has two fists stuck to it on the left and right.

The magic lines twine themselves around the thick sword blade like black snakes. And then they connect to each of the dark red gems making up the central part's surface.

Given that those broad magic line flames extending from his Demonic Eyes are winding, bouncing, and bending themselves, they look like snakes, electrical charges, tubes or similar.

That gladius vividly reminds me of the Magic Sword Dueminas, used by Galroh, the leader of the Shadow Wing Brigade.

Red knife-shaped objects float up in the air right above the gems embedded in the middle of the broad sword. I guess those knives are a gimmick to add ranged attacks to the offensive options. Though it doesn't seem to be a skill similar to <Magic Hand guided by Thought>...I suppose it's linked up to the one-handed sword.

There are many hands that seemed to have shifted the coffin's lid at the end of his other thick arm. His bulky chest betrays a powerful trunk. The waist is also broad, befitting a giant. And all of this is finished up by two thick legs.

Are those hooves...at the end of the legs? They're quite close to the legs of people. Well, I'd say human legs with horse hooves for feet.

With only his shoulders and eyeballs being abnormal, his body build is...maybe ideal for a giant. Either way, Schmihazar possesses a Heracles-like figure.

The magic lines linked to his Demonic Eyes are connected to various places of his body. Going by appearance, the body gets a direct boost from the Demonic Eyes, I think. Or maybe the power of his magic is simply so strong that they appear in plain sight. Like the sun's prominence. A power similar to electromagnetic waves?

But, I can't sense any overwhelming presence from Schmihazar, including his Demonic Eyes. ...Collector Shiki and Goddess of Magic Poison Misea are way superior, I believe. Their Demonic Eyes also had some impact.

Well, I've experienced all kinds of things after all...

I don't feel any particular, crackling psychic waves either. But, let's say that I'm simply not affected by them. It'd probably be different if Helme were to be in my left eye.

Thinking of her, I become lonely all of a sudden. As expected, her presence is important to me.

While experiencing pangs of loneliness, I focus on the giant's shoulders. There might be people's heads beneath those masks on both shoulders. One of the magic lines is connected to a mask.

Just as I watch it, the mouth of that mask starts to widen as if tearing apart diagonally.

What the hell's going on? Does Schmihazar know that I'm analyzing him?

The point of a magic spear with a scarlet gladius-shaped blade and a sword blade with a solemn coloring seem to grow out of the torn mouth, like bamboo shoots springing out of it in realtime. It's funny to watch, but...after showing me the spear and sword points, they automatically settle back inside the mouth. An instantaneous, automatic umbrella stand? It's somehow like a bread maker.

Contrary to my expectation of the shoulder possibly being shaped after heads...it could actually be an item box with the mouth acting as a fastener of sorts? Should I be careful of a fly being opened?

Schmihazar turns his head around as if saying that he's got stiff shoulders. His firm muscles creak from being relaxed. And then Schmihazar opens his mouth, exposing densely crowded, sickening teeth similar to shark fangs. There's a bleeding magic symbol at his epiglottis. That mouth of his looks as though it could shoot bloody, magic bullets at any moment. I recall the special fire spheres fired by the Evil Dragon King.

"...Garururu." Rollodeen strengthens her growling, apparently also recalling the past.

She leaves it at that without attacking, though. Still, she has deployed her tentacles into the air as if she's manipulating a flock of crows. I think those tentacles can be launched as attack at any moment...but she hasn't aimed them at Schmihazar yet.

Even Schmihazar, who has opened his mouth so widely that it almost looks like he's dislocating his jaw, hasn't attacked us yet. Is he possibly just yawning?

I've got no clue...

Should I take a peek with the Kaleidoscope? It might be a good idea to check whether his brain is normal.

Thereupon, he speaks up, denying the yawning theory, "...Black Beast, is the growling just mere child's play?"

"Nnnnn, garururu." Rollodeen reacts to Schmihazar's provocative question.

She continues growling while adding a throaty purring to it, and moves sideways in the air with me on her back. She changes the angle of her magnificent, griffon-like forepaws, but that throaty purring of her sounds only cute to me. Rollodeen still doesn't seem in the mood to fight. It's because that giant doesn't seem to be so bottomless powerful...

"If you're going to fight...I'll answer in kind. But, my master's order is..."

Schmihazar spreads his arms, and crouches down. It's a peculiar stance with him stooping as if he's capitalizing on the arm that's fused with the gladius. However, he doesn't move beyond that.

...I guess I'll ask for the name of his master for starters.

"...What's the name of your master that gave you the order?"

"Vampire Angel of Death, Melchior Hoffmann-sama."

As expected. He's told him to not attack, but "investigate", huh? Was it an order to "get in contact" with us?

If it follows my expectations, it's unnecessary for me to force things either as of yet. I suppose I'll leave the Kaleidoscope away and ask him directly.

"...The vampire Hoffmann who fought the Death Butterfly people, huh? One of the <Head

Servants> directly descended from Empress Familia who leads the Valmask family in their stronghold 【Great Tomb of the Blood Court】. You mean that Hoffmann?"

"Right...we were beaten to the punch in the battle against the Death Butterfly people. I heard you fought those cursed Death Butterfly people as well, Spearmaster Shuuya." Schmihazar says happily.

"Guess so. They might be watching us right now..."

Recalling the battle against Ciel, I surveyed the vicinity. If it's that mysterious violet red purple woman, she seems likely to transform into a small butterfly and keep monitoring us. Same can be said for Jody.

Though it's also possible that they're staying away since Ciel used up her mana or got injured in the battle against me. Those two girls were talking about the revival of their god Golgonchura.

I'm curious...

Those girls, who might be twins or sisters for all I know...seem to pin their hope on Golgonchura's divinity. It seems reasonable that the butterflies aren't their only secret.

While I'm pondering, Schmihazar relaxes his stance a bit as if agreeing with my words.

"...The ancient Death Butterfly people...are beings of such a level that they frighten Hoffmann-sama. Those abominable things have been living in this area for an eternity now."

They seem to be quite famous. They're whimsical butterflies who change from a sociable attitude to being coquettish or threatening. As a matter of fact, I don't really dislike them all that much. Their fickleness resembles mine after all...

Above all, scythes and spears are quite compatible. To be honest, I enjoyed the strength contest. I'd like to fight them again someday.

However, I haven't really heard of them in Pelneet. Hmm, you could probably call it reasonable though? There's another world called New World on the 15th floor of the labyrinth. And the 20th floor houses the Evil Domain Hellrhone. I had various fun adventures on that floor.

...There are countless divine powers, evil entities, humans, and other races involved with the labyrinth. Being filled with so many existences of such levels, I guess you could call this world chaos.

"...The universe houses all kinds of creations. Although it's inevitable, the <Servant Leaders>, which Hoffmann-sama fostered carefully, were all slaughtered by the Death Butterfly people. All his talented, excellent <Servant Leaders>..." Schmihazar's voice has dropped.

Yuo died in the battle against us, though... Looks like Hoffmann doesn't exactly know who has finished off Yuo.

"<Servant Leaders>, huh...?"

I recall Yuo's agonized expression.

"Indeed, all the hard work has come to nothing. The plans of the great Hoffmann-sama have all ended in failure as well. But, that doesn't matter anymore. Now I'm going to follow the important order of my master" Schmi hazar straightens himself, and then bows his head.

And then, as he jerks his head back up, "——Spearmaster Shuuya, my master wishes to meet you in person."

So Hoffmann wants to get in contact with me, huh? But, that's not an option right now. Or rather, does he really believe that I'll be so willing to be friends with him after he tried to kill Arry and Taack?

"...That's impossible right now."

"A refusal, huh? In that case, it might be a good idea to ask the people over there...what this could mean."

Is that a threat? I guess he's seen through our current weak point through Rollodeen's and my movements. However, I'll teach him that his thinking is foolish.

If he takes such an action...I'll chase down his master to the end of the world after slaughtering this guy.

"...If you do something like that, I will not only butcher you, but also leave no leave no remedy untried to find and annihilate him," I snarled.

"...Your eyes tell me that you mean it. I've been strictly ordered by my master to not take a hostile stance with you, so don't worry. But, why is a magic response similar to that of the precious items entrusted to my master coming from that small creature over there...? It makes me curious."

——Oh shit. He noticed the valuable items Moga snatched, I guess.

He's been talking while using one of his Demonic Eyes to keep Nemus and the others in sight... For the time being, I'll stay on my toes to be ready to launch a preemptive strike...

While strengthening my gaze...I ponder whether I should <Throw> Baldok into that alien-like mouth of his. Then I could slow down his movements with a combo of my chains and language ice spells while arresting him with <Tree of the Evil King>, and after closing the distance with <Blood Mana>, I'd stab his chest with Ganghis' <Thrust>...

Or I can turn it into an air battle based on Rollodeen's mobility while summoning Holy Spear Arost into <Magic Hand guided by Thought> or having it hold Murasame. Then, while flying through the air, I could barrage him with wooden lances made with <Tree of the Evil King>...

While strategizing, I silently confirm Higlia's location.

"...Higlia, I can't predict what could happen, so fall back."

I send a sharp look at her who's been watching with a bated breath.

"I don't want to. It looks like you've been talking with that giant, but allowing it to set such a strong blood stench adrift in the Sea of Trees is something I can't allow!" She vehemently objects.

The fur on her back stands on end. It appears she wants to fight the giant who is the source of the blood stench. As proof of that, her pretty, silver fur, which seems to be the pride of her race, gleams even stronger as it's basked by the moonlight. Her fur is clad in a strong glow as if linked to the mark on her nape.

And then, just like back when she gouged out Yuo's heart with her claws, her special, silver claws extend at the tips of her fingers.

"Those silver claws...so even some ancient wolfman trash was around, huh?" Schmihazar hisses.

Hearing his provocation, Higlia howls, "Trash, you say!?", with an expression full of rage. "I'll gouge out your heart with my skill——"

She jumps with an abnormal speed——

Hey, hey, all of a sudden!?

An action full of bloodthirst. She's pointing her long legs instead of her hands at Schmihazar. A roundhouse kick based on a special, named technique? Sharp, sword-sized nails claws have extended from her toes. For an instant, I'm reminded of Evil Domain Monk Kire's magnificent kicking techniques.

But, Schmihazar reacts while being in the air. The mouth of his shoulder protector's mask tears open, and a few weapons appear from within. However, those weapons won't be in time. Higlia is fast.

Schmihazar is in a state of his weapons having come out halfway. But then he displays a swift kicking motion that doesn't suit his large build. He matches Higlia's kicking technique that seems to cut through the air. Silat-based martial arts movements, huh?

"——Cheeky wolfwoman! But, I'll recognize your speed that allowed you to get so close before Flair could actually respond." Schmihazar roars throatily while letting his white hair fly.

Flair is the name of that shoulder protector?

Schmihazar lifts a leg diagonally, receiving Higlia's initial kick with the knee.

"—— For you to respond to my <Wind Slice>...you're quick considering your body," Higlia rattles down.

So the kicking technique is called <Wind Slice>, eh? Her claws have stabbed Schmihazar's leg.

Higlia continues with a barrage of kicking techniques, adding more scratching wounds to the area around Schmihazar's knees. But, the giant doesn't get perturbed from getting injured.

While flashing a calm smile, "...Is that all you got, wolf?"

With those words, he blocks Higlia's kicking chain attack using just his huge leg. Then he hooks his leg around her thigh, and twists it as if to push her down with her wolf leg to break it along the spine. Higlia tries to get away by twisting her body in the air. But, she's not in time.

Having her leg fixated, Higlia screams out in pain. Schmihazar energetically lifts his opposite thigh, delivering a knee strike into her bosom.

"A leg for a leg." Schmihazar speaks fluently like a river, unbecoming of a giant.

His big kneecap sinks powerfully into the solar plexus of Higlia whose posture has completely fallen apart.

"Gyaaaaa."

"Higlia!"

— I can only call out to her as I didn't have any time to rush in to save her. Damn it!

Higlia is blown away while vomiting blood and then crashes into a clump of bushes next to the river. But, she's an ancient wolfwoman. She's tough.

Even with her leg broken and her belly crushed, she tries to somehow get up while pressing a knee on the ground. Then a part of her blood-stained armor begins to fuse with the claws growing out of her toes and fingers. Her claws transform into a shape that seems to have unified with her armor. Is this Higlia's second form or something?

A streamline shape that maintains her wolf-form... An armor with a unique form, using a silver build, engulfs her body. A part of her silver fangs evolves into small rods that support her broken leg. Those rods stab into the ground around her leg.

Unintentionally, I recall the cook of the Lodging Moon of the Labyrinth who's also a leader of **【Remains of the Moon】**. Yep, the sebalka Kazun. Though he appears to be a beastman with a special body, a mutant, or something like that...

Is it somehow related to a race specific technique or the blood flow?

"...Hoh." Schmihazar mutters in admiration.

The magic crest within the bulging Demonic Eyes located on the forehead, the middle one among the three Demonic Eyes, expands.

"...Guhahaha, I see, I see. Blessed with such a speed and great mana, you're no ordinary ancient wolfman." Schmihazar laughs while fixing his posture by pulling back his leg. "...In that case, you're Azeranu of the ancient wolfman, no, a high-ranking member with a special position, I guess."

"Blood giant, did you fight the Azeranu clan in the past?"

She's bleeding, but the transformed Higlia looks cool.

"Gubobobobo, what, I have fought and exterminated other clans besides the Azeranu. Rather than that, I've heard rumors about that claw armor characteristic to ancient wolfmen...I also saw silver-claw-styled beast armors. Are you the rumored divine princess who was blessed by God Wolf Hurley?"

"Kuh, vampire giant! Don't use your trembling mushroom lips to speak of God Wolf-sama!"

"You sure like to howl around..."

While belittling her like that, Schmihazar closes his mouth. And then he turns one of his eyes towards me.

"...I've been ordered to investigate the spearmaster, negotiate with him, and to not offend him...I'm going to revoke that."

"You can revoke your orders!? Do you have that much freedom?"

"...Do you know the term 'Choice theory'? It's only your behavior that becomes your will. Gubobobaa, my master might not know it either, but there are beings which can't be controlled by anyone."

At that moment, power is released from all three of his Demonic Eyes. An illusion of a magic crest consisting of characters, numbers, and star drawings manifests in front of Schmihazar.

"If I retrieve that wolf, I might be able to please Hoffmann-sama——"

Immediately following, Schmihazar starts to charge as if breaking through that crest.

But, don't think things will go that easy for you!

I jump off Rollodeen, clad my whole body in Magic Combat Style, and create a foothold with <Magic Hand guided by Thought>, in order to protect Higlia.

At that moment, I perceive out of a corner of my sight how an avalanche of tentacles attacks the giant while howling as they cut through the air.

However, it won't be that easy also applies for Schmihazar. He stops in midair, and pours mana into his Demonic Eyes.

In the next moment, a shower of particles appears from the magic crest I believed to be an illusion to deal with the countless tentacles. Those particles expand in the air, instantly forming a faintly glowing spider web. The ivory-white bone swords at the tentacles' tips become entangled in that web.

The movements of the tentacles, which have plunged into combat first, are stopped, just to be

followed by the next tentacles getting stopped in succession as well. The threads of the net cast by Schmihazar move as if independently winding. At the same time, they collect Rollodeen's tentacles in one place as if tying up a poster.

Rollodeen resists, trying to free her tentacles while growling. But, it causes the highly sticky threads extending from the crest to entangle the tentacles even more. The countless separate tentacles turn into a single one similar to a long rope. And then Schmihazar's magic crest, which is connected to that tentacle, begins to rotate. It's turning around as if performing a hammer throw.

Of course, the tentacles are being dragged along by the rotation, causing Rollodeen, who's connected to them, to be whirled around with a terrifying force.

Eventually, the net, which extended from the crest, snaps off, and thus blows away Rollodeen into the far distance as if having delivered a wide swing.

For an instant I worried whether she's going to be alright. But, she reels the tentacles into her body, and flaps her wings. It looks like she's been tossed quite far away, but seeing how she's moving and meowing in anger, I guess she's alright.

The sound of big trees being knocked down in the far distance reaches my ears with a slight delay. Landing in the meanwhile, I set up Baldok and Ganghis in order to protect Higlia.

"Higlia, fall back a bit."

"D-Divine Beast-sama! B-But, I've still got some strength left in me!" Higlia appeals as if to flaunt her power as an ancient wolfwoman.

Certainly her armor outfit seems to be saturated with the power of God Wolf Hurley. The god wolf's symbol is also carved onto the surfaces of her silver claws.

At that moment, Schmihazar extends an arm while starting to move again.

"To bundle up the black beasts tentacles! As expected of the <Demonic Star - Spirit Net Formation> personally stolen by Hoffmann-sama! It looks like it's run out of mana already, but...anyway, next is..." Schmihazar unnaturally says while facing downwards.

His three eyes are focused on Higlia. Is he considering her prey?

A twisted smile has formed on his lips. And then, while still in the air, he shifts to a peculiar slouching position, and starts to charge with an explosive speed.

"——He's coming!"

Schmihazar moves so fast that he's leaving a trail of mana in his wake. He extends his sword's point, trying to stab Higlia. His sword certainly is fast, but my Magic Combat Style is running at full throttle. I raise Baldok diagonally over my head, targeting Schmihazar's sword.

While hitting the sword with the red spear, I hook the sword's blade with the ax blade, and repel the sword downwards. Then I drive an upper turn kick into Schmihazar's flank after pouring mana into

my left foot.

"——Nunu."

Arzen's Boot has clearly hit Schmihazar's abdomen. He retreats while rotating in the air. However, he twists his body while slightly above the ground, and thrusts his sword into the ground, not to kill the impact of my kick, but to rapidly make his body rotate around the stuck sword, using the momentum to act like a pendulum. Just like that, he raises the fist of his other hand.

"<My Fist>!"

Mana waves surge out of his fist, and he unleashes a skill that lets the wind around the fist swell. Moreover, the red knives floating around his shoulder and sword also attack me. At the same time, he faces Higlia, and several types of gleaming sword blades are shot out of the mouths on his shoulder protectors.

A simultaneous joint attack —— am I going to be in time, seeing how his sword blades are somewhat slow?

First I repel the fist skill that approaches with a high speed by thrusting out Ganghis.

"Gueeh!"

Schmihazar, who has his fist drilled by Ganghis' spearhead, retreats while crying out in pain. However, the swarm of red knives is still incoming. There's many of them and they're fast. Going with a shield will be too late, but I'll still deal with them with the <Chains> of both arms. I also swing Baldok.

Using Baldok and my chains, I somehow manage to weather through the knives attack. But, as for a means to stop the sword blades heading for Higlia —— I've got one.

This doesn't suit me...I can imagine that it's going to hurt, but I still move my body naturally. I protect Higlia by willingly using my body as cover for her.

Once I do, sure enough, it fuckin' huuuuuuuuurrrtttz!

I feel meaty impacts from my back that seem to freeze my body. And then I directly sense the pain vibrations and the grinding of my flesh from my chest and abdomen. I guess the blades penetrated all the way through my back.

Several golden-gleaming sword blades are growing out of my belly and chest after having torn through my Gatrance-form. A part of my intestines and bones are sticking to the blades...

With a slight delay, a huge amount of blood gushes out of the wounds at my abdomen. The golden blades dye crimson as my blood splashes out. I don't know whether those shining swords register as magic swords or holy swords. However, multiple, fricative sounds, as if my flesh and bones are fighting the swords, can be heard cackling. Each time, the pain gets worse as my body repeatedly regenerates.

The swords are fighting my body's regeneration speed. Which means, they're clearly special items. Still, seeing your own guts having been chopped up sure isn't nice to look at...

"Eh? S-S-Shuuya..."

Showered by my blood, Higlia dyes crimson red while donning a shocked expression. It looks like she's crying.

Good grief...I thought she'd scold me, but instead she's bawling?

"...I told you that I'd protect you, didn't I? But, stop looking at me like that."

"S-Sorry —— Shuuya."

She extends a hand, trying to touch my wounds, but her hand is trembling.

"...No need to apologize."

I gently touch her hand with my blood-stained hand.

After all, this is a part of my small justice...

Now then, time to counterattack, I'd say. I turn around while pulling out the magic weapons stuck in my chest and belly.

"You defended her, huh...? As expected, you're abnormal. But, if it's the next, cursed magic spears...they're so special that even Hoffmann-sama can't control it..." Schmihazar says cautiously while shifting into the next attack.

Two magic spear-like weapons glide out of the mouths, which are torn open so widely that it looks as if the mask-shaped shoulder protector is completely broken.