

Overlord Volume 4 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Army of Death



OVERLORD 4 The Island man Heroes

3章 死の軍勢

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Part 1

“Oh, I can see it.”

Zenberu who was seated at the very back of Rororo looked to the front and smiled.

They could see the tribe that was designated as the first to be destroyed several hundred metres ahead— Razor Tail Tribe. Their size was about the same as Green Claw, but the number of lizardmen was much larger. This was probably because lizardmen from the other tribes had also gathered here. They were in the preparation for battle phase and everyone seemed to be busy.

“What an irresistible atmosphere.”

Zenberu made loud breathing sound, smelling the taste in the air. It was a scent that made one hot blooded, but Crusch who probably hadn’t smelled something like this before thought differently.

“Isn’t it dangerous for us to ride in on this child?”

They could feel the high tension from such a great distance, which made Crusch who was dressed like a vegetative monster voice her uneasiness. She was afraid that the Hydra would draw the wrath of the bloodthirsty lizardmen.

The other party probably knew about Zaryusu, but they might not have seen Crusch or Zenberu before. And not all the Razor Tail tribesmen knew about Zaryusu either.

“Wrong, the opposite is true. We won’t be in danger if we ride towards them on Rororo.”

She had a baffled look, it wasn’t visible, but that was the feeling Crusch gave. Zaryusu made a simple explanation.

“My older brother should have arrived, and he definitely would have told them that I would be riding on Rororo. News of us coming on Rororo should have been reported to my older brother, so we just need to approach slowly.”

After they advanced on Rororo for a while, a black scaled lizardman came out from the village. Zaryusu waved at that familiar lizardmen.

“That’s my brother.”

“Heh.”

“Ho.”

They responded in unison, Crusch was simply curious whereas Zenberu felt like a beast who found a strong opponent.

As Rororo closed the distance between Zaryusu and Shasuryu, they were finally close enough to make out each other faces. The two brothers stared at each other.

The two of them were only apart for two days, but because they had already steeled themselves to the fact they might not meet again, their emotions were really strong.

“It’s great that you returned, younger brother!”

“Ah, I bring good tidings, older brother!”

Shasuryu shifted his gaze to the two behind Zaryusu. Zaryusu could feel the hands of Crusch that was hugging on to him stiffen from nervousness.

As they closed the gap completely, Rororo came before Shasuryu and stretched its neck towards him affectionately.

“Sorry, I didn’t bring any food with me.”

The moment Rororo heard this, it withdrew its four heads as if it was throwing a tantrum. The Hydra couldn’t understand the language of the lizardmen, but it could tell what Shasuryu was saying through their understanding similar to that of family members. Or it simply didn’t detect the scent of food from Shasuryu.

“Well then, let’s dismount.”

Zaryusu said to the two behind him and agilely lept off Rororo. He then grabbed Crusch’s hand and assisted her in getting down. Shasuryu looked at Crusch in surprise.

“What is that Plant Monster?”

Getting this sort of reaction made Crusch a little depressed, but she didn’t retort. This was probably thanks to Zenberu’s constant teasing. But the next stunning blow made her stiffen.

“She is the female I like.”

“...Ohh.”

Shasuryu sighed. He then stared at the stiff Crusch who was still holding hands with Zaryusu.

“Muu... I just want to ask one thing, is she a beauty?”

“Yeah, I am thinking of marrying— Eh!”

The sharp pain coming from his hand made Zaryusu shut up, because the one he was holding hands with was poking him with her claw. She didn’t hold back at all. Shasuryu looked at the two of them with displeasure.

“I see... So you are picky about the appearance... And you kept playing cool, saying ‘I can’t marry’. You just haven’t met the right one yet... Alright, back on topic, I am the chief of the Green Claw tribe, Shasuryu Shasha. Thank you for agreeing to ally with us.”

Shasuryu wasn’t trying to confirm this fact, but was absolutely sure of it. But Zenberu and Crusch won’t be shaken up because of this small matter.

“We should be the one thanking you. I am the acting chief of the Red Eye Tribe, Crusch Lulu.”

Everyone thought that Zenberu would introduce himself after Crusch finished her greeting, but that didn’t happen. Zenberu was sizing up Shasuryu without hesitation.

Satisfied, Zenberu nodded and spoke with a feral expression.

“So you are the one, the warrior who could utilize the power of the druids, I have heard about you.”

“I am surprised that even the Dragon Tusk knew about this.”

Shasuryu replied as the two of them stared at each other like a couple of wild beast.

“I am Zenberu Gugu, chief of the Dragon Tusk Tribe, until the day your brother agrees to take over.”

“Thank you for coming. You are indeed worthy to be the chief of the tribe which values strength over everything, I welcome you.”

“So, want to have a match? Shouldn’t we find out who is stronger?”

“... That’s a great idea.”

Zaryusu didn’t want to intervene. Finding out who was stronger now will definitely make things easier in the future.

But Shasuryu raised a hand, diminishing Zenberu’s urge to fight.

“—I agree with you, but this an awkward timing.”

“Why is that?”

Shasuryu smiled at Zenberu’s unhappy face.

“... The scouts we sent out are about to return, we should be able to obtain detailed intelligence about the enemy. We can fight after hearing their reports, right?”



A small house was used as the conference room of the chiefs.

The chiefs of the gathered tribes and Zaryusu were gathered here, a total of six.

Zaryusu, the one who killed the previous 'Sharp Edge' Chief, bearer of Frost Pain was famous and all the chiefs knew of him. He was also the brave one who convinced Red Eye and Dragon Tusk to join the alliance, so no one was opposed to him taking part in the conference.

In the small house, the six sat in a circle. When the other three chieftains saw Crusch's white scales, they were surprised, but had already regained their composure.

After finishing their greetings, the first who spoke was the chief of 'Small Fang'.

He was petite compared to other lizardmen, but his limbs were as strong as steel. Originally from the hunter group, his ranged attack skill was the best among all lizardmen in the vicinity of this lake. In fact, during the fight to decide the position of chieftain, he settled each of his matches with just one precise rock throw.

In order to determine the position of the enemy troops, he mobilized all the hunters to reconnoiter.

"The enemy numbers nearly five thousand."

This number exceeded the total population of all lizardmen, but was still within expectation. Some even sighed in relief when they learnt of this number.

"... And the leader of the enemy?"

"I can't say for sure, there are monsters that looked like giant mass of red meat in the middle, but it's too difficult to get in close."

"What about the make up of the army?"

"An army of undead, mainly skeletons and zombies."

"The undead of lizardmen?"

"No, they are not lizardmen. I don't really know about the creatures living on land, so I can't be certain. But it should be human types, I didn't see any tails either."

When Zaryusu heard that, he was sure that they were the race living on plains, humans.

"Can we launch a surprise pre-emptive attack?"

“That would be difficult, the other party is using an open space cleared out from a corner of the forest. How long did they take to clear the trees? It is strange that the felled trees are nowhere to be found— Ah, I digress. Anyway, they are in the forest. Leaving whether we can succeed aside, it would be very hard to bring warriors along.”

“What about a sneak attack with just the hunters?”

“Spare us, Ms. Crusch. There are roughly twenty five hunters, how could we defeat the undead army of five thousand? We will just get wiped out.”

“Hmm... What about using the power of the druids?”

Several of them nodded in agreement to Shasuryu’s suggestion and their eyes fell on Crusch. But the one answering was Zaryusu.

“No, let’s not do that.”

“Ah? Why?”

“The other party had kept their words so far, but they won’t do so if we attack them.”

“Indeed. We should avoid initiating the attack before we gather all the tribesmen.”

“So we will prepare for a defensive battle?”

“Defend, hard.”

The lizardman who spoke with a strong slur was the chieftain of the Razor Tail.

He was covered in white armor that was shining in a different manner from metals.

The armor was emitting a soft magical gleam. That was one of the four treasures of the lizardmen, White Dragon Bone.

It was a set of armor made from the bones of a frost dragon that had resided in the Azellerisia Mountain. Armor made from bones — even that of a powerful dragon — would not be imbued with magic. But that set of armor was enchanted with magic without anyone knowing when.

The problem was that the magic could possibly originate from a curse.

This was because the White Dragon Bone converted intelligence into defence power. If an intelligent lizardman wore it, it would turn harder than steel, matching mithril and even the legendary adamantium.

But even if you removed the armor, the intelligence would not recover. That’s why there were some who said this magic was actually a curse.

Among the lizardmen, he was widely known for his intelligence. After wearing this armor, the defence of the armor was strong enough to deflect all the weapons of the lizardmen, even one of the four treasures, Frost Pain. It was probably as strong as adamantium.

And normally, those who don the armor would lose all intelligence and appeared to be brain damaged. But he was still able to think, proving how high his original intelligence was. Hence, 'Razor Tail' had never decided the position of chieftain through physical combat after his birth.

"Here, swamp, weak foundation, wall... easy break down."

"I see, so we should initiate the attack?"

"Yeah, why not, attacking is better than defending, each of us just needs to take down three to four foes right? We just need to defeat them, piece of cake."

The others in the conference looked at each other after hearing what Zenberu said. In the end, Crusch changed the topic.

"The problem is enemy reinforcements... They might be gathering their forces."

"Hmm... That is hard to say. From the size of the open space, they can't fit in anymore undead... Though they just need to place them inside the forest."

The undead don't need food, rest or large open space to set up camp. It would be hard to gauge their numbers from the size of the area.

"To play it safe, we need to consider a defensive strategy."

"Well then, we the Red Eye will take care of strengthening the walls for a defensive fight. I hope everyone could provide help."

The other chieftains nodded in agreement, even the depressed Zenberu did so.

"In short, we need to prepare our defences and set up a command structure."

"First of all, we should leave the druids to Crusch, their command would be left in your hands."

Amidst the agreement of everyone present, one person raised his objection.

"The chieftains should form a special team."

The gaze of everyone fell on Zaryusu who had spoken.

"I see... So that how it is, brother."

“You are saying we should form an elite team?”

“That’s right. The enemy outnumber us, if we don’t take out their commander, we might lose. If the monster that visited all the villages shows up, we can’t win by numbers, and have to destroy it with a small group of elites.”

“Wouldn’t our forces be leaderless then?”

“From the warriors... choose... choose leader... will do.”

“Even if there is no commander, they just need to charge the enemy right...”

“... The special team will command from the back, and will only move out if we discover the enemy commander or if the battle is not going well. Is that okay?”

“That should be fine. Well then, including Zaryusu, how about the six of us forming one team?”

“No, we should form two teams of three.”

Splitting up meant they could fight on two fronts, but their force will be spread out and weakened.

“One team will attack the enemy commander, the other will be in charge of the defence.”

“Well then, we three chieftains will form a team, Zaryusu and the two chieftains you brought over will form another, that should be the best way to divide ourselves. The mission of the teams should be to react to the situation.”

“Yes, that is great. Any problems, Zaryusu?”

“I understand. Any objections, Zenberu, Crusch?”

“I have no objections.”

“Me too. It’s a pity I can’t fight as I please, but I will follow the will of the victor.”

“Well then, there is still four days before they attack us, right?”

“Correct.”

“Are there anything we need to prepare for?”

“We need to stock up on throwing stones and strengthen the walls. Also, we need to interact with the other tribes and set up a chain of command, ensuring that all of the tribes can function as one.”

“As for the allocation of work, we, the ‘Small Fang’ tribe wish to leave that to Shasuryu like before.”

“We... okay with that... what about... you two?”

Crusch and Zenberu nodded in agreement too.

"Then I will take over the command. Next, we will decide the details of all the work we need to do in the next three days.”



After the work for the day was done, Zaryusu walked silently in the noisy and lively village. Several lizardmen greeted him with respect when they saw Zaryusu’s mark on his chest and Frost Pain on his waist.

It was a bit irritating, but in order to raise morale, he had to answer them. Zaryusu thus answered them with a serious, proper and confident expression.

Zaryusu maintained this attitude as he headed to the outer walls of the village. They were rushing to construct walls over there, many lizardmen were concentrating on their work.

First, they bound the stakes that were some distance apart with vines. Mud with low water content was then smeared on. The druids then casted some magic to remove the moisture, and the wall is complete. There were some cracks on it, probably because not all the water had evaporated. They then repeated the same steps in another place.

“Ara, what is it, Zaryusu?”

“Nothing, just wondering what you were doing.”

Walking with splattering noise in the wetland, Zaryusu made his way to Crusch who was dressed like a vegetative monster and pointed at the work that was being repeated in front of them.

“What is that?”

“Mud wall. We don’t know what type of enemy will be coming, but I wanted to make it hard for them to move in... But there is no time, we are not even half done.”

“Is that so... But isn’t it easy to destroy things made from mud?”

“No problem. If the mud is thin, it is easy to break it. But thickening it will make it tougher. Because this is a rushed job, and there's shortage of sufficient materials and it will weaken if it rains. But it won’t break down so easily.”

That is true, no matter what material it is, it would be hard to destroy if it was thick enough.

In front of Zaryusu who was thinking about that, dozens of lizardmen were working as fast as they could, but progress was as slow as a tortoise. Even if they worked on it for three days, it wouldn't be much wider. But it was better than nothing.

“For now, the parts the wall couldn't reach would be covered by fence that would be hard to tear down.”

In the direction Crusch was pointing at—

The stakes over there were pulled out, and planted some distance away, forming a triangle with the two other stakes besides it. Between the stakes were vines loosely bounded together, forming ropes blocking the passage between them. Zaryusu thought for a moment, and recalled that the fence around the 'Red Eye' tribe looked like that too.

“What is that?”

“By placing something heavy there, the fence won't fall even if it were being pushed or pulled. As for the ropes, they are meant to prevent enemy from getting through. If the ropes are pulled taut, it would be easily cut by swords or knives, that's why we left some slack on it.”

Crusch answered Zaryusu's questions excitedly.

During their short journey, Zaryusu was always the one teaching her. Being able to teach something to Zaryusu made her happy. Apart from this, there was another feeling involved.

“I see... it is harder to destroy it that way.”

These impressed words made Crusch felt proud.

Zaryusu nodded deeply.

The plan to turn the village into a stronghold was progressing steadily. It couldn't match up to the defensive structures of humans and dwarves, but for the wetlands that were hard to traverse on, there was no better way.

“By the way, Zaryusu, did you tell the warriors—”

As Crusch was saying that, the cheers of the warriors were carried by the wind into their ears. It was an intense and hot blooded noise.

“What is happening? This sounds familiar... I know! These are the cheers when you guys battle. Could it be a duel between your brother and Zenberu?”

Zaryusu nodded and noticed that Crusch looked worried.

“... As the commander in chief, wouldn't it be troublesome if your brother loses?”

“I don't know, but my elder brother is strong. If he had the chance to use his druid powers, he will become even stronger, even I might lose to him.”

Shasuryu who casted several buffs on himself was very strong. He would probably refrain from using offensive spells in a mock battle, but if he does, Zaryusu won't be a match without Frost Pain.

The reason why the original owner of Frost Pain didn't use its special ability that could only be used thrice in one day against Zaryusu was because he had used it up during his fight against Shasuryu.

“That's great...”

Zaryusu was wondering whether he should show Crusch how strong his brother was in a fight, but he remembered something else that had been worrying him.

He hesitated, but decided to voice it out in the end.

It was despicable to say this after all the plans had been set in place. But he couldn't hide this from the one he likes, that's how pure and strong he felt about Crusch.

“I am worried about one thing—”

Hearing Zaryusu's anxious voice, Crusch smiled. That was a deliberate smile, something that was not her style — an expression that didn't fit the situation — stopping Zaryusu from continuing. The one who spoke in place of Zaryusu was Crusch.

“— You mean that thing you didn't bring up during the conference right? If the enemy already anticipated this, and was waiting for us to form an alliance.”

Zaryusu fell silent, she was right.

The other party gave them time, announced the order of attack deliberately and didn't get in the way of Zaryusu's efforts to form an alliance. What if their plan all along was to gather all the lizardmen in order to annihilate them.

“I have many worries, someone who thinks as deeply as you should feel even more so. But no matter what, we will fight this battle with our foes... We can think about the other things after that.”

“They won't give up even if we win. The chance of them giving up is abysmal.”

“That might be so, but what you said that night is true. Look—”

Crusch extended her arms toward the empty space before her. But Zaryusu understood that she was referring to the entire village.

"Look at all the lizardmen from the various tribes working towards the same goal."
“所有的蜥蜴人都朝同一方向努力的姿態喲”

Indeed, the lizardmen from all the tribes were advancing together as one.

The image of the five tribe banquet surfaced in Zaryusu's mind. The tribes were interacting harmoniously together without reservation. It would be a lie to say the survivors from the two destroyed tribe bore no grudges. But they displayed the will to swallow their grudge in the face of this incident.

The irony.

Zaryusu muttered. He always thought their divided worlds would carry on forever, he never thought the appearance of a mutual enemy would allow him to witness the unity of the lizardmen.

"We need to protect the possibility of our future, Zaryusu. The alliance of all the tribes would promote our development."

Building walls with mud was a technique Zaryusu had never seen before. But now, the other tribes knew about this technique. In the future, all the lizardmen tribes would build such walls. With such strong walls, it should be able to keep the monsters from breaking in. That way, the chances of the weak young ones being attacked would fall, and the number of lizardmen would increase.

They could meet the increase in demand for food by using Zaryusu's fish breeding farm.

Maybe in the near future, all lizardmen will unite into one giant tribe in these swamps.

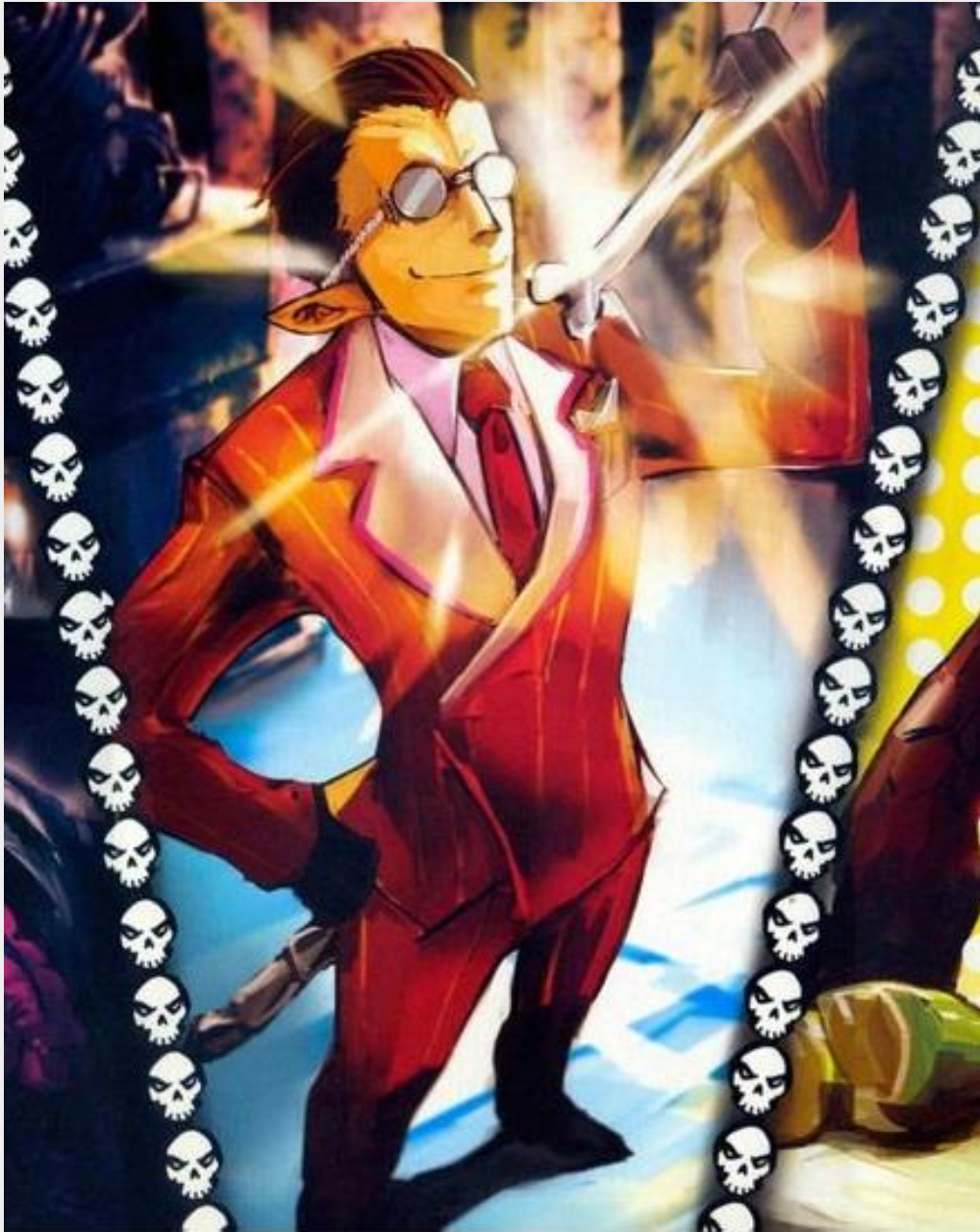
"Let us obtain victory, Zaryusu. It is impossible for us to know what happens in the future, maybe everything would be over after this battle. If that is so, we can start developing a wonderful world without food problems and the need for lizardmen to kill each other."

Crusch smiled. Zaryusu suppressed his emotion, if he allowed his feeling to run loose, he might not be able to reign in it; but he had something he had to say.

"You are an excellent female lizardman— After this battle is over, please tell me the answer to that question I asked when we first met."

Crusch smile became even more brilliant.

"I understand, Zaryusu. I will tell you my answer after this is all over—"



Demiurge was in a great mood as he hummed while he worked.

He picked up the polished bone, wondering where he should put it for the best presentation. Shortly after, he made his decision and sliced off the tip and place it within the item he was building.

The bone fitted in perfectly like a piece of a puzzle.

If building a house without using nails is known as 'precision wood joint', then what Demiurge was doing should be 'precision bone joint'.

"That looks great."

Demiurge caressed the bone with a smile on his face. If he continued to work on it, he had a feeling he can complete an outstanding piece.

"But... I am lacking the right femur of a man about 1.2m in height."

He could complete it even if he don't find that bone. But without it, it wouldn't look as nice.

Usually, Demiurge would compromise and make do with this. But this gift was meant for his beloved master, so he had to make it perfect.

"It would be great if I can find something suitable."

Demiurge, who was in a good mood, started moving.

Actually, Demiurge liked to create such items. His interest was not in using bones to make items, but in carpentry work. His interest in this field was rather wide, from art pieces to furniture, his skills had surpassed that of weekend hobbyist.

In fact, if you ignore the material he was using, anyone would be impressed by the quality of his work.

The other items displayed in this tentage, such as the bronze bust of the master cast from lava, all sort of chairs and clamps are all made by Demiurge. They might be for practical use and lack decorations, but they were all excellent pieces.

As Demiurge was studying a material he picked up from a corner of the tent, he felt some movement near the entrance.

Demiurge put the bone in his hands back gently and held the item bestowed to him by his master that might not be replaceable, focusing on what was happening outside. Normally, the one outside should be his underling or colleague. No one could have broken through all three layer of Demiurge's defences without him noticing, but he had to be wary of the one who had controlled Shalltear.

Several seconds later, someone opened the entrance of the tent. He was dressed in pure white, wearing a mask with a long beak like a bird.

Peruchinera.

He was a clown, a creation of the Supreme Being just like Demiurge. For this operation, he had been assigned to assist Demiurge.

Confirming that he was not under mind control, the tension in Demiurge's eyes dispersed, and he relaxed the grip on the item in his hand.

"Demiurge-sama, the skin has been peeled."

These words made Demiurge felt a bit of pity.

Demiurge wanted to enjoy this work himself, but in order to guard against the mysterious enemies, he couldn't leave his post most of the time and had to assign the task to Peruchinera.

Demiurge did not express his emotions and gave new instructions to Peruchinera.

"Good work. Well then, begin the next phase. It would be disrespectful if we give that thing to Ainz-sama like this."

Demiurge asked Peruchinera who was bowing gracefully.

"So, how many died?"

"None. Thanks to the tormentor, they only lost consciousness, therefore we can continue peeling their skin soon. A few were unwilling to be healed... but that was within expectation, so there is no issue."

"That is splendid."

It took a lot of effort to collect the materials, they had to peel few more times for it to be worthwhile. That might be so, but he didn't want to peel the skins in a painless fashion or drug them.

"I want everyone to be happy."

Peruchinera said suddenly, making Demiurge remember his personality.

Peruchinera was known throughout Nazarick for his gentleness and mercy. He was created for the purpose of making everyone happy, and his action was based on this belief.

"The people in the Great Tomb of Nazarick find happiness in serving Ainz-sama."

Demiurge nodded in agreement.

"I see. Let me ask you, Peruchinera, do you mean that other people will feel happy when they serve Nazarick?"

"How could that be, I don't mean that. Serving Ainz-sama makes us so happy that we could cry tears of joy. But if they were forced to do the same, that's not happiness."

“Ohh, then what should we do about this?”

“Simple, just pick one person and cut off his arms. That way, the others will compare themselves with him and know that they are more fortunate. How wonderful. And to make the one whose arms were chopped off feel blessed, we just need to chop off another person’s legs. Ahh, I made so many people happy!”

Demiurge looked with satisfaction at the clown that was throwing his head back in laughter.

“I see, you are right.”

Part 2

It felt long if you spend all your time waiting, but when you prepare for something with a deadline, you would feel that time passes by in a flash.

The promised time had come.

That day, the burning sun crawled up in the sky as slow as a tortoise, the sky was blue and devoid of clouds. There was no sound from the wind, the world seemed so quiet that you could hear a pin drop.

The tension was so thick that you could cut it with a knife.

Some of them gulped, others breath in deeply.

An unknown amount of time passed since the gathered lizardmen had turned silent.

Suddenly, a dark cloud that seemed to appear from a hole in the sky spread speedily across the blue sky just like it did before.

Shortly after, the cloud blocked out the entire sky, and the surrounding dimmed with the absence of sunlight—

The lizardmen saw countless undead march slowly from the border dividing the forest from the wetlands. With the trees in the way, it was impossible to tell how many of them there were, they just kept emerging like an endless flood.

The invaders included 2,200 zombies, 2,200 skeletons, 300 undead beasts, 150 skeleton archers, 100 skeleton riders. An army of 4,950, not including the commander and its guards.

Opposing them was the five tribe alliance of lizardmen.

‘Green Claw’ has 103 warriors, 4 druids, 7 hunters, 124 male lizardmen, and 105 female lizardmen.

‘Small Fang’ has 65 warriors, 1 druid, 16 hunters, 111 male lizardmen, and 94 female lizardmen.

‘Razor Tail’ has 89 heavy armor warriors, 3 druids, 6 hunters, 99 male lizardmen, and 81 female lizardmen.

‘Dragon Tusk’ has 125 warriors, 2 druids, 10 hunters, 98 male lizardmen, and 32 female lizardmen.

‘Red Eye’ has 47 warriors, 15 druids, 6 hunters, 59 male lizardmen, and 77 female lizardmen.

Their combined strength were 429 warriors, 26 druids, 45 hunters, 491 male lizardmen, and 389 female lizardmen. A total of 1,380 troops, excluding the tribal chiefs and Zaryusu.

The battle where one side outnumbered the other by three to one thus began.



It was a house made from wood.

There were no decorations, the wooden structure was plain to see and the design was as plain as a cabin. But the ceiling was five meters from the floor while the length and breadth were more than twenty meters either way.

There were almost no furniture inside, just a giant mirror on the wall, a huge and sturdy table as well as the chairs around it.

Several people were seated on the chairs, and parchments rolled into scrolls were placed on the table before them— scrolls imbued with magic.

“And finally, these are the last set. These are teleportation scrolls.”

After the loud voice of a young girl said so, another scroll was placed on the table.

The one who took out the scrolls was a human female in maid attire.

The young girl had a cute face, with her hair tied up into buns on either sides of her head. But she had a distinct aura about her, with the most exceptional thing being her eyes.

Her eyes were big and round, but there were no light in them, just like low grade glass balls, and she never blinked.

Her petite body was covered by a modified maid costume, with propped collars covering her neck completely. Aside from her face, she didn’t show any skin at all.

She was one of the battle maids, Entoma Vasilissa Zeta.

“And, this is the ‘Message’ scroll, but there are a lot. Could someone please tidy up the table?”

Entoma requested the figure occupying the seat of honor and that person nodded slowly.

“Tidy it up.”

“Alright~, please clean it up quickly then.”

With Cocytus’ acknowledgement and Entoma’s instruction, the figures surrounding the table started working together.

They were all of the heteromorphic race, some had the form of praying mantis, some looked like ants, there were even ones that seemed to be an exposed brain.

They might all appear different, but they had two common points. They were all servants of Cocytus and they belonged to the organization of Nazarick.

That was why they obeyed the command of Entoma who was weaker than them.

In the power structure of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the most important thing wasn’t combat power, but the fact that one was a creation of the Supreme Beings. From this point of view, Entoma had a high level of authority.

After confirming that the tables had been cleared—

“Well then, please accept this, Cocytus-sama.”

— Entoma said without moving her mouth, picking up the bag by her feet and fished out several scrolls of parchment.

“These are ‘Message’ scrolls. According to Ainz-sama, these are made from skins Demiurge-sama went through great effort to obtain. Ainz-sama conveys that he wants a report if there are any problems when using them.”

“I see... Understood. I will test this out.”

Cocytus used one of his four hands to pick up several of the scrolls.

“Demiurge has pulled further ahead.”

Cocytus said to his subordinates with a wry smile. When his subordinate heard that, they smiled along too.

With the parchment in his hand, Cocytus fell into deep thought.

He had heard about the stock of low level magic scrolls being diminished gradually.

Finding a place that would provide the raw ingredients to make various types of items was an important issue that needed to be resolved. They had plenty of stock right now, but it would deplete with constant use. And so, a lot of people had start taking action, including their master.

Cocytus heard that the apple tree in the 6th floor was one part of the plan.

For Cocytus whose duty was to guard Nazarick, he couldn't do anything, which was obvious since he wouldn't be able to move out and search for ingredients.

Demiurge who was creating an outpost outside would definitely solve the problem. This was something he expected.

His comrade completed his duty.

Cocytus should be happy for him, and he actually is, but he couldn't completely suppress the fire of jealousy in his heart. For his colleague to be of use to the Supreme Being—the master they adored, made him envious.

His mission was to defend Nazarick.

This important task was probably more crucial than any orders received by the other Guardians. No matter who you asked, they would answer that this was a crucial task. They had to keep the lowly ones from desecrating the residence of the Supreme Beings.

However without invaders, there was no way to prove Cocytus' loyalty and hard work.

That was why Cocytus wanted to achieve something.

For the Guardians, aiding their master would bring strong sense of joy. Cocytus wanted to taste that happiness too.

And that chance was right before him now.

Cocytus turned his head and looked at the scene reflected in the mirror and tightened his grip on the scroll.

What was shown wasn't indoors, but a location somewhere in the wetlands. That's right, the scene shown in the Mirror of Remote Viewing was the reason why Cocytus was holed up for two days in this wooden house built by Aura.

The battle this time— No, in the face of the absolute strength of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, it would be a one sided slaughter, so it was just a mean of collecting carcasses. When Cocytus received this harvesting mission, his master gave him several orders.

One, Cocytus was prohibited from taking to the field. This included his servants. The issue had to be solved with the troops that were allocated.

Two, the Lich assigned as the commander was to be held in reserve until the last moment.

Three, he was to carry out the mission by his own judgement.

There were some other minute details, but the main points were these three.

He had to use the soldiers dispatched to the lakeside region to obtain victory. If he were to succeed, Cocytus could then display his loyalty to his glorious master.

“Thank you for your hard work, please relay my thanks to Ainz-sama.”

Entoma nodded weakly.

“And so... Will you be going back?”

“No, I received orders to witness the battle here 'til the very end.”

So she was here as an observer.

Cocytus concluded, and felt hot blooded thinking about the heavy responsibility bestowed on him.

Well then, time to begin.

Cocytus activated ‘Message’ and issued an order to the undead commander.

"— Advance."



Two bonfires on elevated platforms illuminated the surrounding with flickering light.

On the stage stood several lizardmen, comprising of the tribal chiefs and key figures.

Before the stage was a large group of lizardmen preparing for battle, the noise they were making undulating like waves. Uneasiness, anxiety and fear— They tried their best to conceal these emotions, but they couldn’t hold down their worries, that was why they were so noisy.

What followed next would be war. The friend beside you might become a corpse the next moment, the one who might fall in battle could be themselves. What they would be marching into would be a cruel field of battle.

Shasuryu Shasha stepped forward from amongst the tribal chieftains to stop the rowdiness.

“All lizardmen, listen up!”

The majestic voice echoed out and the open space became silent, making Shasuryu’s voice exceptionally clear.

“I know that we face a great number of foes.”

No response, but the uneasiness could be seen clearly in the eyes of all present.

Shasuryu paused momentarily and continued loudly.

“But do not fear! For the first time in history, we the five tribes have formed an alliance. After this alliance, we are now all of one tribe. That’s why, the ancestral spirits of the five tribes will watch over us— and bless us even if we were of a different tribe in the past.”

“Head Druid of all tribes!”

Taking the cue, Crusch led the five head druids of tribes and stepped forward. She removed the dress covering her and revealed her white scales.

“Leader of Head Druids, Crusch Lulu!”

In response to Shasuryu’s introduction, Crusch took another step forward.

“Let our ancestors descend!”

“—Listen, children of this large tribe!”

What was this new tribe?

Crusch spoke with determination. Her voice was tense at times, calm at others; alternating between a mighty roar and the melody of song.

In the beginning, almost everyone was disgusted by Crusch albino appearance, but seeing how she present herself confidently, the feelings of dislike faded away.

Crusch’s body swayed gently during her speech. The white scales sparkled brilliantly under the light of the bonfire— The reflected gleam made it look as if the ancestors had descended onto Crusch.

Everyone’s face started to show signs of adoration.

“Now, our five tribes are now one, that means the ancestors of the five tribes will watch over all of us! We are all witnesses! All lizardmen! Behold the countless ancestors— descend by our side!”

Crusch spread her arms out with a grand gesture, pointing to the sky. The gaze of all present followed, but what they saw was just the cloudy sky with no signs of miracles descending. But someone said something softly.

He said— there is a tiny beam of light.

The soft voice gradually became big, several other lizardmen said: “I see them.” Some said they were small beams of light; some shouted they saw lizardmen descending; some uttered that were large fishes; some screamed these were children; some even uttered in disbelief those were eggs.

All the lizardmen had the same thought in mind— the ancestors really descended.

“The ancestors are here to protect us!”

It was only natural for them to shout something like that.

“Feel this! Feel the power flowing into your body!”

Crusch’s voice reached the heart of everyone, the sound seemed so far, yet so near.

Led by that voice, the lizardmen felt some sort of energy surging into their body.

“Feel it! Feel the strength bestowed onto you by the ancestors of the five tribes!”

All the lizardmen present definitely felt it.

They felt that surging power. The feeling of their hot blood flowing washed away all their unease, their body started heating up as if they just drunk alcohol.

This could be taken as the best proof of their ancestors descending.

Crusch looked away from the revel faces of the lizardmen and nodded to Shasuryu.

“Lend me your ears, lizardmen. The ancestors have descended onto us. We cannot match the enemy in numbers, but will we lose?”

“No!”

The lizardmen intoxicated in the atmosphere responded to Shasuryu in unison, shaking the very air.

“That’s right! With the ancestors upon us, it is impossible for us to lose! Defeat the enemy, and present victory to our ancestors!”

“Warrghh!”

The lizardmen was in high spirits, no one felt uneasy anymore. There were only lizardmen who had morphed into warriors as they head toward the battle that was upon them.

There were not charmed by magic. Even with so many druids, there was no way they could spare the energy before battle to cast such magic on all the gathered lizardmen.

This was just the effect of the special drink that was given to all lizardmen before the ceremony.

It was a beverage that grants courage, passed down from previous generations of lizardmen. It was brewed from a special herb that made the lizardmen feel intoxicated, happy and see illusion for a short period of time.

Crusch's speech was just buying time for the herb to take effect.

Once the truth was known, it wasn't much. But for those who saw the effects with their own eyes—the lizardmen who witness the ancestors descending, it was a ritual that brought out the courage in them.

“Well then, we will hand out the paint to everyone. It used to be one colour for each tribe, but right now the ancestors from all five tribes are among us, so use all the colours to paint yourself!”

Several druids carried pots and walked through the lizardmen crowd.

The lizardmen took paint from the pot and started drawing war paint on themselves. They believe these were the drawing of the ancestors who had descended onto them, so they allow their fingers to move freely, painting patterns onto their body.

With the ancestors from all five tribes descending onto them, many of the lizardmen covered their whole body with paint. But the lizardmen from 'Green Claw' didn't draw many war paints on themselves. This was because Zaryusu, Shasuryu and the elites of the tribes didn't draw any. In a way, this was like fans imitating their idol.

After surveying the crowd and confirming that everyone had finished, Shasuryu drew his greatsword and pointed at the main gate.

“Move out!”

“Wargghhh!!”

Countless roars shook the surrounding.

Part 3

The forces of the Great Tomb of Nazarick were roughly divided in two and deployed onto the wetlands.

From the view of the lizardmen, the zombies were on the left while the skeletons were on the right. Skeleton archers and riders were positioned behind the skeletons.

Undead beasts were situated behind as the core of the army.

The lizardmen army had a smaller force and were divided into two groups as well. Facing the zombies were female lizardmen and hunters, while the warriors and male lizardmen were set against the skeletons. The Druids were placed inside the village protected by walls.

The lizardmen formed up outside the village because there were nothing to be gained from a defensive battle. They had no incoming reinforcement and the walls weren't really sturdy. On the other hand, the undead army didn't require any provisions or rest.

With such a disadvantageous position, a defensive siege battle would be foolish.

But after both sides set up formation, the difference in numbers was clearly shown.

One lizardman had to fight against three, ten against thirty, the ratio remained the same. But the difference was prominent when it was a thousand against three thousand. Just lining up three thousand undead was highly intimidating.

Even so, the lizardmen did not show any fear. With their ancestors descended amongst them, numbers were not a problem.

Moments later, the undead army started advancing slowly. The first to move were the zombies and the skeletons. The skeleton archers and riders remained in place, therefore they were probably conserving their forces.

The lizardmen army started their march too.

“Warrrggghh!”

Deafening roars covered the entire wetlands, followed by the splashing of water. The mud flew everywhere and the water splashed.

The two army continued their advance and were about to clash mightily. At this moment, something happened to the forces of Nazarick.

Although the zombies and skeleton moved forth at the same time, their pace was different. This was because the zombies were slow and stiff while the skeletons were agile and fast. Most important of all, they were in the wetlands which affected mobility.

The movements of the stiff zombies were obstructed by the mud, slowing them down. But the light skeletons were not affected much.

Hence, the first to clash were the skeletons and the lizardmen warriors.

The lizardmen did not have any formation, simply charging ahead to engage the enemy, with no stratagem to speak of.

Leading the way were the five warrior captains from each of the tribes. For the commanders to be in the frontlines could be considered foolish in some ways. But they were the highest ranking combatants, so the morale of the lizardmen would plummet if they don't lead from the front. Thanks to their effort, all the lizardmen were highly motivated.

Right behind them were the 89 'Razor Tail' heavy armor warriors. Wearing leather armor and shield, this group had the highest defence among all the tribes.

With their shield raised, they form a wall that was charging into the skeleton army.

An intense collision—the vanguards of the warriors and the warriors smashed into each other.

In that instant, countless bones flew everywhere as the lizardmen unit crashed a hole into the skeleton formation.

Angry roars accompanied the cracking sound of bones. There were occasional moans of pain, but the bone cracking sounds were overwhelmingly louder.

The lizardmen gained a staggering advantage in the first clash.

If it were a human army instead, the result would be reversed.

Because the skeletons were made up of bones, piercing weapons were ineffective and they had resistance towards slashing attacks too. Hence, for the human army with swords as their primary weapon, it would be difficult to deal effective damage against the skeletons.

Because of their blunt weapons such as maces and warhammers, the lizardmen completely gained the upper hand. The bane of skeletons were blunt weapons.

Whenever a lizardmen swung the weapon in their hand, the bones of the skeletons shattered easily. Even if they survived one hit, they would be crushed in the next attack. On the other hand, whenever the skeletons attacked with their rusty swords, it got deflected from the tough scaly skin of the lizardmen. Some of them were hurt, but no one suffered mortal wounds.

The very first clash.

The shattered bones of five hundred skeletons littered the wetlands just like that.



The image reflected in the mirror stunned Cocytus.

It was just the initial clash, but the combat prowess of the lizardmen were beyond his imagination. Cocytus was an excellent warrior and could judge how good his opponent was to a certain extent. The skeletons were behind the lizardmen in single combat. But they should be able to make up for it with their numbers.

But it ended with such a result, what is happening? It even made Cocytus suspect that the lizardmen were strengthened by some unknown powers.

The ones that could defeat the lizardmen in combat would probably be the skeleton archers and riders.

As Cocytus was observing the situation, the skeletons were being crushed. The usefulness of the skeletons and zombies were reduced to tiring the opponents.

In that case, the effective forces would be the remaining 300 undead beasts, 150 skeleton archers, and 550 skeleton riders. They were outnumbered instead.

Cocytus started calculating in his heart.

The undead were strong in battle, especially in a drawn out fight. The undead didn't feel anything, and wouldn't feel neither fear nor pain. They didn't need rest or sleep.

The advantage these characteristics brought were evident with no need for any explanation.

For example, most creatures would fall from a powerful hit from a mace to its head. Even if they didn't die, they would bleed profusely and feel pain. The one who got hit would lose all will to fight. Some warriors who were trained to resist pain might be able to stand their ground, but most people would lose the will to fight.

This was natural for living beings.

But what about the undead?

Smash its head? It would keep on attacking.

Break its arm? It would stab at you with its stump.

Take out its legs? It would crawl at you.

That's right, as long as their negative life force remains, the undead would continue to fight. As long as the condition for its death was not met — which was cutting its head off for most undeads — it won't lose its will to fight like humans. This meant that the undead was in a way, the perfect soldier.

In terms of individual strength, the lizardmen obviously had the upper hand. But that could change.

Cocytus' raised his evaluation of the lizardmen by one level and acknowledged that they were not enemies that could be defeated easily. What he needed to do now was to turn this into a battle of attrition.

"How about retreating for now and observe the situation?"

"I believe this is a wise move, my lord."

"Sending out the skeleton archers and riders might be a better option, master."

"No, I think we should press on with the attack and sap them of their stamina, my liege."

"How would waiting for them to tire help? If we can't destroy the enemy's base camp, they would be able to rest and recover right?"

"Indeed. Our foes had strengthened their defences with just a fragile wall. How about taking that village and routing them?"

After hearing the response from his underlings, Cocytus picked up a 'Message' scroll. He glanced at Entoma from the corner of his eyes and observed her expression.

Entoma seemed disinterested as she looked in the directions of the mirror. She was putting green biscuits she took from somewhere towards her chin. In the next instance, clear cracking sound could be heard. Her attitude seemed to be implying that she wasn't involved. That was probably why she her facial expression was blank.

— Wrong, that expressionless face was just a decoration.

Cocytus remembered her true identity and realized how stupid he was when he tried to read her expression.

She was a Familiar Eater. Even Cocytus' friend, one of the 'Evil Five', Kyouhukou (Lord of Terror) said without hesitation that 'she is the most scary one'. That was Entoma's true identity.

Cocytus gave up trying to read Entoma's thoughts from her face and used the scroll to issue the instruction to the commander.



"Are they looking down on us?"

Zenberu mumbled. He wasn't loud, but it was enough for everyone surveying the enemy from on top of the mud walls to hear.

“Their archers and riders are still held in reserve, I think they are underestimating us...”

“That’s right, I thought the enemy will charge at us at one go...”

“Fight with zombie, smooth.”

There were only 45 hunters fighting the zombies. Using hit and run tactics by throwing rocks at them, the hunters were luring the zombies slowly away from the skeletons. The female lizardmen moved slowly to the flank of the skeletons.

“Aren’t their movements rather queer?”

“... Indeed.”

Instead of being lured, the zombies were focusing completely on the hunters. Was the commander agreeing with this? No, there was no way any commander would accept this, but in actual fact, that was how the zombies were moving. Then, what is the objective of the enemy? Everyone present were baffled by this.

“I don’t understand why they are moving this way.”

“Yes, I agree with Shasuryu.”

No matter how they thought about it, there doesn’t seem to be any purpose in the zombies’ action.

Zaryusu thought about it for a moment and shared his thoughts with the others.

“Maybe there is no commander?”

“No commander...? Ah, you mean the undead are just following the very first instruction they received?”

“Yes, correct.”

Among the undead, the lowest tier comprising of skeletons and zombies lack intelligence, so giving timely orders would be the most efficient way to utilize them. But the enemies this time felt as if the only order they received was to eliminate any lizardmen near them. That’s what Zaryusu meant.

“That is to say our foes thought they could win against us if they have the numbers... No, could this battle be just an experiment to see how well the undead fight without a commander?”

“That may be so.”

“Damn it! What kind of joke is this?”

The one lashing out in anger wasn't Zenberu, but Shasuryu. Even Shasuryu couldn't take it anymore, the lizardmen were betting their lives on this war.

“Calm down Shasuryu, it might not be so simple.”

“Ah, my apologies... It is a good thing that we have the upper hand.”

"You are right older brother, we have to use this chance to diminish the enemy's' numbers."

The fatigue from battle was heavy, the mental strain would be enormous in a chaotic fight. Without knowing if the enemy would come from the front, back, left or right, just swinging your weapon under such conditions a few times would be much more tiring than normal.

But the undead wouldn't get fatigue and would fight without rest.

The difference between the living and the undead would become more prominent with the passage of time.

Time was the enemy for the lizardmen.

“Tch, I want to take the field too.”

“Endure, Zenberu.”

If the skilled Zenberu was to join the fray, they could level the skeletons in no time. But that would mean revealing their own trump cards. Zaryusu and the other five were the ace in the hole. They had to show their ace if the situation called for it, but before the strongest foe shows itself, they must not show their hand.

“But wouldn't it play right into our hand if the enemy doesn't advance?” Zaryusu said to the others. The others agreed with him, and Zaryusu asked Crusch who was beside him: “How are things on your end?”

“... Yes, the ritual is going as planned.”

Crusch answered as she looked inside the village behind them. The group of druids were performing a ritual inside the village that could become another ace for the lizardmen. It usually took a lot of time, but with all the druids of all five tribes gathered here, the progress was sped up and it could be used in this battle.

“... Teamwork, what an amazing thing.”

“Yeah... That's true, we did share some information after that war... But there are so many more things I want to do after the war now.”

The other tribal chiefs strongly agreed with Zaryusu's view. They shared their knowledge because of this war, and witnessed first-hand the importance of developing together as a community. There were alliances in the past, but the three chiefs who didn't exchange views in the past were doing so more freely now.

Zaryusu smiled as he looked at the five of them.

"What's so funny?"

"Nothing, it is just that despite being in such a situation, I still feel really glad."

Crusch understood Zaryusu's thoughts immediately.

"— Me too, Zaryusu."

Seeing Crusch smiling brilliantly, Zaryusu squinted his eyes as if he was looking at something bright. Both of their eyes were filled with admiration and love for each other.

They didn't touch each other physically. That was obvious. After all, there were lizardmen dying out there even at this very moment. They couldn't do as they please despite knowing that. But their tails were like an independent creature, squirming around and tangling together sometimes.

"Muu..."

"As the older brother, how does it feel?"

"We are out of their loop."

"How passionate."

"In conclusion... It's good to be young. Their future is bright."

The four older lizardmen nodded in unison as they watched their cute juniors.

It was impossible for Zaryusu and Crusch to miss that. Although their tails were twitching about, they still had a poker face.

"Elder brother, the enemy is moving."

Shasuryu and the others smiled wryly as Zaryusu shifted gears so suddenly. They looked towards the enemy formation and saw the skeleton riders flank the battle in front of them before advancing.

"Hey hey, are they charging for us?"

“With skeleton riders? Are they planning to bring down our morale by striking at us?”

“No, they are probably flanking to the rear of the warriors and male lizardmen to surround them.”

Not good.

Everyone came to the same conclusion that the mobility of the skeleton riders was a threat.

If the skeleton riders were deployed at the start of the fight, the lizardmen could exterminate them first. Right now, the warriors and male lizardmen were in a chaotic fight, the hunters were luring the zombies and the female lizardmen were throwing rocks from the flank of the skeletons, there were no available forces to stop the skeleton riders.

“I think we should take action.”

Accepting the proposition from the chief of Small Fang, Shasuryu nodded in agreement.

“The problem is who we should send... Let’s show the enemy our strength.”



Skeleton riders.

Skeletons with lances riding on skeletal horses. Nothing special to note except their strong mobility, which was exceptional in the wetlands. With their body made from bones, their feet sink shallowly into the mud, allowing them to traverse the terrain with the speed of horses.

The one hundred skeleton riders took the roundabout way to the back of the lizardmen army for a pincer attack.

They could see three lizardmen running at them to the left of their advancing route — which was the direction of the village — but the skeleton riders ignored them. Without any orders, they would ignore anything if they were not attacked. That was the kind of monster the unintelligent undead was.

They almost reached the rear of the lizardmen army when the skeleton rider leading the charge suddenly tumbled. The skeleton rider was flung high into the air before it fell heavily into the wetlands.

A human would be confused and wouldn’t be able to act immediately. But the unintelligent undead skeleton rider moved instantly in order to carry out its instructions.

It stood up immediately, but was limping slightly due to the damage.

That skeleton was hit by another skeleton rider, and their bones were scattered all over the wetlands.

Such a scene happened consecutively in several places.

The reason this was happening in the wetlands? The answer was simple— traps.

Open boxes were buried in the ground and the horses would tumble if they were to spring the traps.

The skeleton riders fell one after another. If they were humans, they would slow their advance. But the skeleton riders didn't do that. They had enough wits to avoid a hole that was already there, but still fell for hidden traps. They didn't receive any orders to do so and didn't had the intelligence to make such a judgement call.

The scene of them going full speed into traps was like mass suicide.

The traps might be very effective, but they could only stall for time. Some damage was dealt to the skeleton riders, but it was not enough to destroy them. The skeleton riders that had fallen all over the place got up with their bodies covered in mud.

At this moment, a whistling sound was heard and the head of a skeleton rider flew off just like that.

The skeleton riders saw this as an act of hostility and looked around the vicinity.

Another skeleton's head was knocked off like shattered glass.

The skeleton riders discovered three lizardmen about 80 meters away from them. They could also see them using slingshots, shooting rocks to snipe the head of the skeleton riders——

The skeleton riders started moving.

At the same time, the fight with the skeletons was changing.

With the sound of bow strings releasing, arrows rained down on the battlefield.

The 150 skeleton archers fired arrows at the skeletons and the lizardmen simultaneously. It wasn't just one shot, but two, three...

This was an unexpected assault for the lizardmen.

Several lizardmen were hit and fell. They couldn't defend against the arrows while they fought against the skeletons.

The skeletons were hit too, but took no damage.

Placing the skeletons that were resistant to piercing attacks in the front and the skeleton archers firing from the back was a great combination. With the time needed to defeat 2,200 skeletons, this tactic would be enough to wipe out the lizardmen.

But the problem was that this tactic was implemented too late. If it was used at the very beginning, the lizardmen would definitely be in a dire state. The skeletons would then overwhelm them with numbers and earn a decisive victory. But it was too late.

Ignoring the dwindling skeletons, the lizardmen charged at the skeleton archers.

The arrows from the 150 skeleton archers fell like rain, downing several lizardmen onto the mud, but it was just a small number.

With the thick skin and hard scales of the lizardmen, their defence was on par with humans wearing leather armor. Even if arrows pierced their skin, their tough muscles might be able to stave off fatal injury.

Another reason for the minimal casualties were the weak arrow shots. They didn't have enough power to kill the lizardmen.

The lizardmen roared fearlessly as they charged. In the face of the rain of arrows, the lizardmen crossed their arms to protect their head, braving ahead even if their body was pierced.

On the third wave of arrow attack—

This was the limit of how fast the skeleton archers could shoot. If they had intelligence, they would probably retreat. If they moved back and regrouped with the surviving undead army, they could be utilized in a better way.

But the skeletons did not have the mental capacity to store such complicated instructions. They didn't receive any other orders, so they simply executed their original mission— Even with the lizardmen closing in, they could only fire arrows at them.

With a roar, the skeleton archers were swarmed by the lizardmen, just like they did to the skeletons. At this distance, archers lost their advantage and could only be attacked one-sidedly. As they fell one after another, almost all the skeletons had fallen into the wetlands, and just the army of zombies was left.

Finally, a new enemy was unleashed.

Undead beasts.

Undead created from wolves, snakes, cobras and all sorts of animals. A monster that combined the tenacity of zombies with the agility of animals.

The undead beasts rushed at the lizardmen. The fast moved fast, the slow travelled slowly, an assault with no formation to speak of.

The attack coming from down low was unexpectedly hard to evade. The undead beasts will gnaw onto the feet of the enemy. After immobilizing them, it will deal the killing blow, a style similar to wild beasts.

For the lizardmen who were getting more and more tired, this attack was difficult to fend off. Several lizardmen whose movements had dulled got their necks torn apart by the undead beasts. Even those who believed the spirits of their ancestors was with them couldn't help but panic when they saw their comrades fall.

The Head Warriors fought at the front, but were pushed back slowly. As they were thinking that it was just a matter of time before their battle lines will be broken, the wetlands suddenly swelled up.

What appeared was two conical masses of earth about 160cm in height, with no head or limbs.

The two masses started moving.

It moved smoothly across the wetlands despite the absence of limbs, heading straight for the undead beasts. After closing the distance, whips that were longer than its height emerged from where its shoulders should be.

That was one of the lizardmen's ace in the hole, the fairy of the wetlands summoned through the combined effort of all the lizardmen's druids.

The wetland fairies charged into the midst of the undead beasts, flinging its whip like tentacles to grab the enemies. The undead beasts engaged it ferociously with claws and fangs.

It was a battle between creatures without fear. But the wetland fairies had the advantage due to their superior combat power.

Their priest could overpower the undead. This fact revived the courage of the lizardmen and they renewed their attack.

An intense battle ensued

Unlike the fight with the skeletons, the lizardmen also suffered casualties. But the scale of victory was tilting towards the lizardmen who had the advantage in pure numbers.



He was going to lose.

Cocytus understood this fact.

His forces lacked any undead that have intelligence. That was the reason for the loss, and was something he was worried about from the very beginning, but Cocytus didn't imagine the army to be this weak.

Cocytus regretted deeply for his shallow thinking. There was a way to turn the tide under such a situation, but it wasn't a good method as taking such a step was equivalent to admitting his loss.

On the other hand, how could he report this failure to his master? Cocytus picked up the 'Message' scroll. Who should he contact at such a crucial moment—
但是，能向自己的主人作失敗的報告麼

“... Is this Demiurge?”

『Yes my friend. For you to actually message me, something happened?』

A steady voice sounded out in Cocytus' mind. Demiurge's intelligence was top notch in Nazarick, he might be able to think of a solution.

In a way, Demiurge was one of Cocytus' rivals, so Cocytus was not too fond of asking him for help. But avoiding defeat took priority, how could an army from the Great Tomb of Nazarick fail? To avoid losing the fight, Cocytus threw away his pride and lowered his head for help.

“Actually—”

After using a scroll to explain the current situation, Demiurge who listened quietly gave a troubled sigh.

『And what do you need from me?』

“I wish for you to lend me your wisdom, the battle will be lost if this carries on. I can accept it if it was my personal fight, but I do not wish for Nazarick and the Supreme Beings to be disgraced by this.”

『Does Ainz-sama truly wish for victory?』

“What do you mean by this?”

『I am talking about why Ainz-sama formed an army from such lowly serfs.』

Cocytus also had doubts about this. He couldn't fathom why they had to form an army from the lowest servants in the Great Tomb of Nazarick.

“... Ainz-sama must have his reasons, but what is his intention?”

『... I can think of several possibilities.』

As expected of Demiurge— Cocytus didn't express this out loud and kept his respect in his heart.

『Let me ask you... Cocytus. You had been in this place for several days now, shouldn't you be gathering intelligence on the lizardmen before the attack?』

Demiurge was right. But—

“But Ainz-sama ordered me to defeat them with the forces given, and to do so in a direct confrontation.”

『That might be so, but I want to think about it carefully, Cocytus. The important thing should be what kind of result do you want to present to Ainz-sama, right? If the objective was destruction of the village, you would need to consider the best way to go about it, correct?』

Cocytus couldn't answer, Demiurge got right to the point.

『Ainz-sama must have considered all this when he gave those serfs to you.』

“... You mean Ainz-sama intentionally gave me forces that wouldn't be able to win the fight?”

『That possibility is high. If you had collated intelligence beforehand, you might have been able to tell that the forces you have on hand is not sufficient to take the village. In that case, you should report to Ainz-sama that ‘the current forces are not enough to complete the mission, I will need more reinforcements’. That should be Ainz-sama's goal.』

Which meant that Cocytus had to understand the true intention of his master. He should not just follow orders blindly and had to make adjustment on the fly. That was what Demiurge was trying to say.

『This was Ainz-sama's method of changing our way of thinking. But he seemed to have another objective as well...』

“What else is there?”

Cocytus asked Demiurge in panic. He had already made one mistake, he doesn't want to risk another one.

『Ainz-sama sent out messengers to the villages, but did not mention Nazarick by name. He also forbid you from taking the field. This means—』

Cocytus gulped and waited for Demiurge to carry on. But Demiurge didn't continue.

『Urg! Cocytus, my apologies, I have an urgent matter to attend to. Sorry but I need to go, may you obtain victory.』

Demiurge cut off the communication suddenly and the ‘message’ ended.

Cocytus could guess what made the calm and collected Demiurge so flustered. He shifted his eyes onto someone in the room. He saw Entoma casually tearing off a tattered talisman from her forehead.

For a Talismancer to use a talisman meant—

Everything was too late.

It was time to deploy the undead that was held back until the very last moment, the ace card. But was this really the intention of his master?

This was probably the first time Cocytus thought about the intention behind the orders of his master. But he could only come to one conclusion.

Cocytus activated the ‘Message’ spell.

“— Lich Commander, I order you to attack. Show the lizardmen your true powers.”



An old and luxurious robe covered its body of skins and bones. One of its hands was holding a twisted staff. Its rotting face was just a skin covered skull with evil eyes full of intelligence in its sockets. The emitted negative energy covered his body like a thin fog.

This undead magic caster was — a Lich.

The undead obeyed Cocytus' command and looked at the wetlands. He then issued orders to the Blood Meat Hulks standing behind him. They were undeads with fresh red muscles and fats, made by the Supreme Being just like him.

“Kill those three lizardmen.”

The two Blood Meat Hulks obeyed the orders and walked towards the three lizardmen destroying the skeleton riders.

Although Blood Meat Hulks were low-tier undead that could only attack with brute force, they had regenerative abilities. If they were facing physical attack on the same level as them, they would be able to stall for time.

The Lich was certain the Blood meat Hulk could stall for sufficient time.

This wasn't a good strategy. As a magic caster, the Lich was not good in melee battles, so having the Blood Meat Hulks close to protect him was the orthodox way to fight.

However he couldn't use such tactics.

The order he received was to 'show the lizardmen your true powers'. Hence, he had to take the base camp of the lizardmen alone with his overwhelming power.

As the Lich advanced, his terrifying face laughed softly.

He felt this was too easy.

As a creation of the Supreme Being Ainz Ooal Gown, he was far superior to the Liches that spawn automatically in Nazarick. And his mission was to display his might to the lizardmen.

He vowed to win in the name of his master.

"I, Iguvua, will present this victory to my master."

Part 4

After finishing the extermination of the undead beasts, the lizardmen stooped their shoulders tiredly and sighed in relief. They were saddened by their losses, but had a faint smile as well.

There were many injuries, but they count themselves lucky they didn't lose more. If the wetland fairies didn't join the fray... No, if they had appeared any later, their formation would have been broken and they would have been routed.

"Let's go."

The Head Warrior said, announcing the commencement of the next fight.

Everyone were weak from fatigue, and only managed to pick up their weapons after some time, and seemed too tired to wield them. They might be exhausted, but the war wasn't over.

They were needed to take care of the zombies in the distance and guard against enemy reinforcements.

"Alright, bring the heavily wounded back to the village, the rest follow us—"

A sudden burst of flame cut his speech short.

A heat wave radiated out to the surrounding, the two fairies caught in the midst of the fire were swaying weakly.

After the flame dispersed completely without a trace, the appearance of the two fairies was terrible. They were on the verge of falling from that one attack.

Before anyone could scream, the flame blasted once again. The fairies couldn't withstand the attack and their bodies began to crumble, dispersing into the fire.

The powerful fairies that displayed unmatched strength against the undead beasts were gone. The lizardmen couldn't process what was happening and had blank expressions.

What happened?

They knew the wetland fairies were destroyed, but they were rejecting this reality. If the two wetland fairies were really defeated, that meant a stronger monster than them was approaching.

The lizardmen couldn't suppress their confusion and looked around in fear. When they saw an undead in the distance, a fireball was shot from its hand once again.

The fireball that was the size of a human head flew through the air and blast into the lizardmen unit taking point.

Normally, fire would be put out when it come into contact with water, but this fireball was a magical phenomenon and ignored such common sense. The moment the fireball hit the water surface, it exploded as if it had collided with solid ground, creating a tornado of fire.

The exploding flame engulfed several lizardmen— and disappeared.

An illusion— it disappeared so fast that this was the feeling it gave. But the smell of burning flesh— from the lizardmen that laid on the ground motionless was definitely not an illusion.

The undead advanced slowly, its attitude so casual and arrogant. That was the pace of a powerful being confident in its strength.

As the lizardmen were hesitating whether they should charge in just like how they had handled the skeleton archers, the fireball struck again.

The fierce explosion robbed several lizardmen of their lives in a blink of an eye.

The overwhelming power made the previous battle seem like a game.

“Warrgghh!”

The lizardmen roared and shook off the fear in their hearts. As several of them were about to charge in with no regards for their lives, a cold voice erupted from an unimaginably far distance.

“— Fools.”

With this word, another fireball burned the charging lizardmen before they could scream.

The undead moved slowly, and the hundreds of lizardmen immediately took a step back. The wall separating the truly strong from the weak forced them back.

“Run!”

A spirited roar sounded out, shocking the lizardmen like lightning. It was one of the Head Warrior.

“That fellow is different from the other enemies! We are no match for it!”

That was correct. The enemy advanced slowly by itself, that majestic swagger made all the lizardmen feel a chill on their skin.

“Run back and report to the Chiefs and Zaryusu.”

“Let us buy some time!”

Yet another fireball exploded, felling several lizardmen.

“Run! Report to them!”

The five Head Warriors ordered the lizardmen to escape as they gauged the distance between each other. They spread out with the blast radius of the fireball in mind, their goal was for one of them to reach the enemy. It was a suicide formation for this sole purpose.

The five of them of them looked at each other after spreading out and sprinted at full speed.

The distance was about a hundred metres. It was a hopeless distance, but they still charged in with all their might. They knew even if they fell while rushing in, it would leave clues for the chiefs and Zaryusu who were watching from behind.



The lizardmen escaped, scattering like the spawns of a spider.

Zaryusu watched this scene calmly. No, Zaryusu had been watching its every move since the powerful enemy showed itself. Watching the undead that was spreading the flames of death.

The movements of this foe was different from the unintelligent enemy earlier, he was probably the enemy commander.

The undead started using the wide area ‘fireball’ attack when the five Head Warriors were about a hundred metres from it. Even though they attacked from five different directions, all the Head Warriors attempting the assault were burned alive en route.

“It is time for us to fight.”

Zaryusu nodded in agreement with Zenberu, Crusch gave her consensus too. She acknowledged that the time when she might sacrifice in the battle field had come.

“That’s right, it is our turn. That one is too powerful. This is probably the right hand man of that Supreme One and the commander of this army... At the very least, it must be an ace.”

“Indeed, it is impossible for anyone to control several undead of that level. But how should we do this? It is a little too far away.”

Crusch’s question gave Zaryusu a headache.

Their aim was not to sacrifice themselves in battle, so a strategy was necessary.

Zaryusu and Zenberu couldn’t fight at such a long distance, they had to close in for melee attacks. And the problem was this distance of one hundred metres.

Zaryusu and the others could take a couple of hits from fireball, but they will suffer more than a couple of attacks before they close the gap. And the real test begins after reaching the target. It was easy to see that taking the attack of the fireball from the front will kill them.

“Such a despairingly long distance.”

“Ah... Really, I didn’t know one hundred metres could be so long.”

Zaryusu’s group thought about how to reach the enemy without injuries— or with minimal injuries.

“How about tunneling through the wetlands?”

“Even for the powers of a druid... that would be difficult. It would be great if we could use ‘Invisibility’.”

They could sneak close immediately using ‘Flight’ after casting ‘Invisibility’. But these were not among the spells a druid could learn.

“How about making a shield while we advance?”

“Making a shield will take too much time.”

“What about dismantling... a house?”

Zenberu smiled wryly as he knew the proposal he just said wouldn't work. The enemy was attacking with fireball explosion, even if they could protect one side, the heat would still get in from the side. There was no time to craft a full body shield to protect against the heat.

"Oh right... there is another way."

"What is it, Zaryusu?"

Crusch who was a little afraid asked. *Did I make such a scary expression?* Zaryusu thought. But it couldn't be helped, he was so troubled that he wanted to curse out.

"No... I just... found a shield."



Iguvua nodded with satisfaction at the current situation.

It was progressing smoothly. The two Blood Meat Hulks were still battling, but he was making good progress towards the village.

There were several foolish lizardmen who wanted to charge him, but they seemed to understand the futility of their action after witnessing the power of fireball. The five that spread out before the assault had the best record right now, but they only made it to fifty metres.

It was as though Iguvua was walking alone in the wilderness as he advanced silently. He might pity the lizardmen as weaklings, but he didn't let his guard down.

It was a short distance to the target village. He planned to shoot fireball consecutively and raze the houses together with the lizardmen.

But the lizardmen would definitely try to stop him from reaching the village. It should be about time for someone to attack. Iguvua who was musing about this found himself proven right.

"... Oh, I see."

Iguvua saw a hydra heading straight for him.

If that was the ace of the lizardmen, he will crush it with overwhelming strength and sap their will to fight. That would make the destruction of the village simpler.

To play it safe, Iguvua checked for other enemies in the surrounding and the sky. After confirming it was clear, Iguvua stopped and waited leisurely for the hydra to enter his attack range.

When the hydra got into the region that was hard to determine whether if it was within the attack range, it started charging. That's right, it ran full speed towards Iguvua.

“Fools, you think you can cover this distance with your snail-like pace? Beasts will just be beasts.”

Iguvua laughed mockingly and shot the fireball he conjured at the hydra.

The fireball flew straight and scored a direct hit on the hydra. The eruption of flames engulfed the hydra.

Although the hydra staggered, it continued to advance. It carried on charging even though it was on fire. No, the flames dissipated instantly, that was just the imagination of Iguvua. The scene before Iguvua conveyed the exemplary determination of the hydra.

Iguvua frowned with displeasure. His pride was seriously wounded when the beast endured the attack.

Indeed, the hydra had damage resistance buff casted on it, but it wasn't any of the high tier spells and could not negate all the damage.

... I remember hydras have the special ability of fast regeneration... But it shouldn't work against fire attacks... No matter, it has high vitality since it is a monster. It is no surprise for it to tank one hit.

Iguvua consoled himself that way, but he could not appease his wrath. Iguvua was a special creature created by the Supreme Being, Ainz Ooal Gown. It is disrespectful for the enemy not to fall from his attack.

Iguvua casted an icy glare that was the opposite of his seething anger at the approaching hydra.

“... How unpleasant, die!”

He fired a fireball once more, engulfing the hydra in flames again. It even gave the illusion of charring flesh from such a distance. The wounds might not be fatal, but it would make it hesitate from advancing further.

But—

“— Why isn't it stopping? Why is it still coming?”

Part 5

Rororo ran relentlessly. It might be huge, but it had a speed matching the lizardmen since it was traversing the wetlands. Ripples splashed everywhere with loud splattering sounds.

Its amber eyes turned white from the high temperature, two of its four heads had lost its strength.

Despite that, it ran.

Another ‘fireball’ struck Rororo squarely in the body. The heat inside the ‘fireball’ exploded in an instant, penetrating Rororo’s entire being. It felt a pain equivalent to being punched all over its body, its eyes were dry as the fiery air burned its lungs.

With burns all over its body, the feedback of pain that came nonstop from its body warned Rororo: it will die if it was hit again.

Even so— it ran.

Ran.

And ran.

It didn’t stop advancing nor stop its feet. The high temperature peeled the scales away, warping the skin underneath it and blood gushed out. Despite that, it still ran.

Unintelligent beasts would have definitely escaped, but Rororo didn’t.

Rororo was a type of monster called hydra.

There were all sorts of monsters, with those that surpass humans in intelligence, and those that were no different from animals. Rororo belonged to the latter.

For Rororo who was only as smart as a normal animal to continue advancing on the verge of death— towards Iguvua who was dealing such pain to it, it was incredible and hard to fathom.

In fact, even its enemy Iguvua was baffled, and suspected Rororo was being manipulated by magic.

But that was not so.

That’s right, that was not the answer.

Iguvua would probably never understand.

Rororo who only had the intelligence of a beast— it was running for the sake of family.

Rororo didn’t know its parents, though not because of hydras being the type of monster to abandon its offspring. Before it reached a certain age, it should have had lived with one of its parents to learn the way of survival through them. But why didn’t Rororo do so?

That was because Rororo was a deformed baby. Normal hydra would be born with eight heads, and that will increase as it grows older, up to the maximum of twelve heads.

But Rororo was born with just four heads, so its parents abandoned Rororo and left with its other siblings.

Although hydras become powerful creatures in their adulthood, it was only a matter of time before Rororo would have died in nature's harsh environment without its parent's protection during infancy.

If it wasn't for the male lizardmen who happened to pass by and picked it up.

— And so, Rororo got a family that was its father, mother and close friend.

Rororo's consciousness was about to fall apart from the pain when it thought about a question it had always pondered.

Why was its body so big? Why did it have so many heads?

It thought about this when it looked at its foster parent. And Rororo held a belief from old conclusion.

Some of its heads would fall off in the future, limbs would sprout out like grass, and it would look like its foster parent.

If Rororo really morphed like that— what would it ask its parent to do?

That's it. They hadn't slept together for a long time, it will ask for that. They had to sleep apart because Rororo got too big, which made it feel a bit lonely.

The flames seemed to blow Rororo's thoughts away and filled its entire field of vision as incredible pain hit its entire body. It moaned weakly as the pain pulsed through its entire body.

The pain was comparable to being hammered countless times.

It hurt so much that it couldn't think anymore.

Rororo's legs sent signals to stop advancing in the form of spasms.

But even so—

But even so— Rororo did not stop moving.

Rororo's advance got slower. Its muscles were burned and rigid, it couldn't maintain its usual running speed.

Just taking a step forward was hard.

It was hard to breathe and it hurt when it inhaled, its lungs probably being damaged by the heat.

Only one of its heads could move, the others were just a burden now. The image of the undead conjuring a fireball from its hand appeared vaguely in Rororo's murky eyes.

Its instinct as a living being told it one thing.

If it was hit again, it will definitely die. But Rororo was fearless as it relentlessly braved ahead—

That was the request of its parent and friend, that was why he would not stop.

As Rororo used all its might — although it was exhausted — to stumble forward a few steps, a red fireball flew from the hand of the undead once again, slicing through the air towards Rororo.

This hit will definitely rob Rororo of its life, that was an undeniable fact.

Death awaited it.

This was the end—

If—

That's right— if that male lizardman wasn't here.

Will that male lizardman allow Rororo to die before his eyes?

Watch such injustice unfold in front of him?

That was impossible.

“— 「Icy Burst」 !”

Zaryusu who was running behind Rororo lept out to the side and shouted as he swung Frost Pain.

The air before his sword seemed to freeze instantly, forming a white wall of mist before Rororo. That was an extremely cold wave of air.

One of the abilities of Frost Pain.

A powerful skill that could only be used thrice a day— ‘Icy Burst’, it could freeze everything within range instantly and deal heavy damage.

The wall of cold mist blocked the incoming ‘fireball’ as if it was solid barrier. The fiery ball and chilly wall— according to magic theory, it was wise to counter one with the other.

It hit—

The ball burst into flames, struggling mightily against the white mist.

Both sides were like a white and red snake struggling and devouring each other. After pushing back each other for a moment, the two energies disappeared.

The undead was stunned and taken aback. It was the most natural reaction after seeing his spell dissipating.

There was still some distance between the two groups, but they were close enough to make out each other's expressions— and actions. An impossible distance was covered thanks to Rororo’s effort and determination, bringing the three lizardmen this far with no injuries.

“Rororo...”

Zaryusu didn’t know what to say. In the end, he chose a clear and simple phrase from the millions of expression in his mind.

“Thank you!”

After shouting his gratitude, Zaryusu sprinted without looking back. Crusch and Zenberu were right behind him.

A weak cry that was almost inaudible came from behind. That was a cheer for one’s family.



Speechless. His ‘fireball’ was negated, making him express his disbelief with words.

“Impossible!”

Iguvua cast ‘fireball’ once more. He was not willing to acknowledge that the lizardmen rushing at him had dispelled his magic.

A ‘fireball’ rocketed towards the three lizardmen.

It was blocked by a wall of mist conjured by the leading lizardmen with his sword, and it disappeared together with the wall. That’s right, it was the same situation as before—

“Try all you want! I will block all your attacks!”

The angry roar of the lizardman projected over.

Iguvua clicked his tongue with a face of displeasure.

For the magic casted by me, who was created by the Supreme Being Ainz-sama to be blocked by a mere lizardman!

Iguvua suppressed his wrath with all his might.

It was very likely that ‘fireball’ wouldn’t work anymore, but since they had to hide behind the hydra during their approach, there should be a limit to how many times this defence could be used. It might be ten times, or it might only sap some stamina for each use, and could be conjured indefinitely after recovering enough.

How should I deal with them? If possible, I want to test his words out...

Iguvua could shoot many more fireballs, but it was hard to judge which of the lizardman’s words were true.

Iguvua and the lizardmen were less than forty meters apart.

The lizardmen charging in seemed to be warriors and as an undead magic caster, Iguvua wanted to avoid melee combat.

He couldn’t use fireball in this situation. Iguvua wasn’t dumb enough to confirm how many times they could block his spell. If they didn’t hide behind the hydra in the beginning and had closed the distance, Iguvua might test it out. But that chance had been destroyed by that damn hydra.

“Curses... just a mere hydra.”

After spitting out these words, Iguvua decided his next course of action.

“— Well then, how about this?”

It just so happened that they were running in single file. Iguvua pointed his finger at the three charging lizardmen who were drawing close. Electricity sparked on his finger.

“Taste my 「Lightning」 !”

A white flash of lightning emerged and—

Even from this far, the white light on Iguvua’s finger could be seen— ‘Lightning’.

Icy Burst from Frost Pain could fend off fire or ice element attacks. But Zaryusu had never used it against Lightning before, and wasn't sure if it would work.

Should they try their luck, or spread out to minimize the damage they will take?

Zaryusu gripped Frost Pain tightly.

The air was buzzing with static electricity, proving that a lightning attack was imminent.

“Leave this to me—!”

Zenberu made his judgment before Zaryusu did and jumped forth with a shout. The spell was casted at the same time.

“— 「Lightning」 ”

“Warrghhh— 「Resistance Massive」 !”

When the lightning looked as if it would pierce through Zenberu, his body buffed up, deflecting the lightning arc that was supposed to hit the other two behind him.

Resistance Massive.

A skill of monks, granting the ability to reduce magical damage by dispersing the Qi from one's body in an instant.

This was the skill Zenberu had learned as a traveler after losing to the Frost Pain's 'Icy Burst'. Although it was a wide area attack, it worked against any magic that dealt damage.

Both friend and foe yelped, but Zaryusu and Crusch who trusted their teammate weren't too surprised. Hence, the lizardmen drew nearer while the undead was shocked.

As Zaryusu ran, he finally figured something out.

If he used Icy Burst during his duel with Zenberu, he would be blocked by this skill. He would then be wide open for an attack and lose. That was probably why Zenberu was luring Zaryusu to use that skill.

“Haha! Too easy!”

Zenberu's casual voice made Zaryusu smile, but his face tensed the next moment. Zaryusu realized that his voice had hints of pain in it.

Even a male lizardman like Zenberu couldn't suppress his pain completely, his wounds must be serious. Furthermore, Zenberu wouldn't agree to hiding behind Rororo if this technique was perfect.

Zaryusu stared ahead, the enemy was less than twenty meters away. That impossible distance had been cut down to this last stretch.

With the distance drawing close, Iguvua judged the group before him to be strong foes that were not to be underestimated. They could defend against his spells and were worthy of praise. Iguvua had other means of attacks, but he needed to consider his defences too.

“Not bad for a sacrificial offering, worthy enough for me to show my might.”

Iguvua activated his magic with a cold sneer.

“ 「4th Tier Summon Undead」 .”

The wetland bubbled and skeletal bodies with four hands holding round shields and scimitars emerged to protect Iguvua. They were undeads known as Skeleton Warriors, much more powerful than normal Skeletons.

He could summon other undead, but he chose skeletons for their resistance against cold attacks. Iguvua and monsters made from bones were immune to cold attacks.

Iguvua looked loftily at the approaching enemies under the protection of his guards. That was the attitude of a king facing against challengers.

The distance had been closed.

There were just — 10 meters left.

That was all that was left. After seeing that the undead showed no signs of attacking, he glanced backwards.

He looked at the distance they had covered. This was a short distance for a sprint, but these one hundred meters were deadly grounds with no place to take cover. If they didn't have either Rororo, Frost Pain Zenberu or Crusch, there was no way they could have made it through. But they had come so far and the enemy was within reach.

They overcame this distance.

Zaryusu was relieved to see Rororo being carried back to the village by the other lizardmen. He then cursed himself for relaxing and glared at the undead.

Zaryusu admitted that it was a formidable opponent.

If he had not met it under such circumstances, Zaryusu would have definitely ran away already. His instinct was telling him to escape just by seeing it face to face, and even his tail was standing on ends. Zaryusu could see from the corner of his eyes that Zenberu's and Crusch's tails had the same reaction.

The two of them must be thinking about the same thing as Zaryusu. That's right— they were doing everything they could to suppress their urge to flee as they faced the undead.

Zaryusu tapped the backs of the both of them with his tail.

The two of them looked at Zaryusu in surprise.

“We can win if we work together.”

That was all that Zaryusu said.

“That's right, we can win, Zaryusu.”

Crusch stroked her back that was patted by Zaryusu and replied.

“Hah, things are getting interesting!”

Zenberu answered with an arrogant smile.

And the three of them covered the final stretch.



— Eight meters apart.

Zaryusu's group who had sprinted all this way was out of breath. In contrast, the undead had no need for breath. The two groups locked eyes and the undead spoke first.

“I am the Lich serving the Supreme Being, Iguvua. If you forfeit now, I will grant you a painless death.”

Zaryusu couldn't help smiling. He could tell this undead named Iguvua knew nothing at all.

No matter how you thought about it, there was only one answer.

Although Zaryusu was smiling, Iguvua didn't feel displeased and waited quietly for an answer. Iguvua knew he was strong and was confident in disposing of Zaryusu's group. That was why he displayed the arrogance of the mighty, and was even thankful for saving him the hassle of walking all the way.

“Let's hear your answer.”

“Haha, you really need one...”

Zaryusu raised Frost Pain tightly; Zenberu lifted his fists and took a stance; Crusch didn't do anything, as she felt the mana deep within her, prepared to cast her spells any moment.

“I will give you an answer then— fat hope!”

The Skeleton Warriors who judged the reply to be hostile raised their scimitars and shielded their bodies.

“Then die an excruciatingly painful death. You will regret rejecting my final offer of mercy!”

“That's what I want to say, go back to hell undead! Iguvua!”

At this moment, the battle that would decide the outcome of this war began.



“Zaryusu! Get him!”

Zenberu who dashed out faster than anyone else stretched his giant arm and attacked the Skeleton Warrior.

He didn't care when the Skeleton Warrior blocked it with its shield, using brute force to press them back. The shield was dented, and the Skeleton Warrior staggering back collided with the other Skeleton Warrior and lost its balance. At the same time, Zenberu used his tail to swipe at another Skeleton Warrior, but missed.

The formation of the Skeleton Warriors was broken and Zaryusu used this chance to slip through.

“Stop him!”

Two Skeleton Warriors slashed at Zaryusu after hearing Iguvua's command.

It was possible for Zaryusu to dodge; he could also use Frost Pain to block if he wanted to. But Zaryusu did neither of these. Dodging would mean he was slow, Zaryusu didn't want to make any unnecessary moves in front of Iguvua.

And more importantly, someone already took care of it—

“ 「Earth Bind」 !”

The earth moved like whips, binding the two Skeletal Warriors. The whips made from mud were like steel chains, restraining the movement of the two Skeleton Warriors as Zaryusu charged into the gap in their formation.

That's right— Crusch was present too.

Zaryusu wasn't fighting alone, he just needed to trust his comrades.

Even Crusch's magic couldn't seal off their movements completely. The scimitars of the Skeleton Warriors still grazed Zaryusu. But that was nothing, his boiling blood made him impervious to this pain.

Zaryusu ran with brisk strides.

He charged at Iguvua who was pointing his finger at him. Even if he got hit by a spell, Zaryusu had to endure it and charge the target. He moved with iron willed determination.

“Fools! Know true fear! 「Scare」 !”

Zaryusu's vision shook and he was confused about where he was. A strange unease spread in his heart and he was paranoid about things around him attacking him...

His legs was slowing down to a stop. Zaryusu was shaken mentally due to the effect of the spell 'Scare' and his legs was not responding to him. Even though his mind was telling his legs to move, but his heart was stopping him.

“Zaryusu! 「Lion's Heart」 !”

The moment Crusch shouted, his fear vanished instantly and his will gushed out from within stronger than before. The magic that granted courage defeated his fear.

Iguvua glared unhappily at Crusch and pointed a finger at her.

“Annoying! 「Lightning」 !”

“Hyaa!”

— Crusch screamed.

Zaryusu who started running again was almost consumed by hatred, but got hold of himself in the end. Hatred could be a good weapon sometimes, but in the face of a powerful foe, it could get in the way instead. What he needed when fighting a strong enemy was fiery heart and an ice cold mind.

Zaryusu would never turn his head.

Iguvua attacked Crusch just now, but that meant Zaryusu could use this chance to close the distance. Dismay could be seen on Iguvua's face and it knew it made a mistake. This reaction made Zaryusu, whose beloved female was harmed, sneer mockingly.

“Tch! 「Light…」”

“Too slow!”

Frost Pain that sliced in from the side knocked away Iguvua's finger.

“Ugh!”

“A warrior has reached you, magic caster! I will let you know your spells are useless now!”

The legendary mages aside, magic casters who were in melee range could be stopped from casting their spells.

Even a powerful undead magic caster like Iguvua was no exception.

Zaryusu narrowed his eyes, he felt something was off. It felt strange when Zaryusu slashed at Iguvua, he must have some defence against physical weapons.

But he wasn't invulnerable. That's right, if he had resistance against damage, Zaryusu just needed to deal more damage.

What he needed to do was to keep on slashing.

Talk was simple, but doing that would be hard. Zaryusu knew that too. But that was the only thing Zaryusu who was a mere warrior could do.

“Don't look down on me, lizardman!”

Three arrows of light suddenly flew towards Zaryusu from Iguvua's body. The arrows of light that appeared without any preparatory actions or signs made Zaryusu block them with his sword on reflex, but the magic arrows went through the weapon and hit Zaryusu's body, inflicting dull pain.

This was 'Silent Magic: Magic Arrow'. Silent Magic didn't require any preparatory actions, so it could not be disrupted from being casted. Not only that, Magic Arrow was also a type of spell that could not be evaded, so Zaryusu couldn't dodge it either.

Zaryusu gritted his teeth and cleaved at Iguvua with Frost Pain.

“Ughh! Critters! You are just a mere lizardman!”

Magic Arrow might be undodgeable, but its damage output was low too. For someone who had gone through tough training like Zaryusu, he was not so weak as to be rendered unable to fight from this bit of magic damage.

Magic Arrows struck Zaryusu once again, the pain pierced through his heart and will. Zaryusu endured the excruciating pain and struck back.

After several exchanges, Zaryusu's movements became dull. The sharp pain prevented him from making agile movements, which was contrasted by the undead who knew no pain.

Iguvua and Zaryusu who understood this point made entirely different expressions.

The weak fall and the strong prevail, that was the natural law of the world. The result of the one on one duel between the two was obvious. But it was also a fact that the unity of the weak gave them a chance to fight on par with the strong.

“「Middle Cure Wounds」 !”

Zaryusu's pain disappeared with this voice and he regained his vitality once again.

The calm Iguvua was angered by the healing spell that came from the back and shouted:

“Damn lizardmen!”

Zaryusu was fighting together with companions he trusts. Crusch, Zenberu and—

“Rororo... I will not lose!”

“Imbecile... How could I, a creation of the Supreme Being lose?! How foolish!”

Iguvua glared at the three lizardmen with his venomous eyes. He didn't use any summoning magic as the undead he had summoned earlier were still around. As long as those undead were still around, he could not raise new ones. Hence, Iguvua continued casting Silent Magic: Magic Arrow while Zaryusu slashed away at Iguvua's body— this monotonous fight kept repeating.

It felt as though this battle would never end.

In that case, the duty of breaking this stalemate rests on the ones behind them. When one side receives reinforcement, the match will be settled in an instant.

Both Zaryusu and Iguvua were sure about that.

Enduring the pain of the lightning attack coursing through her body, Crusch pulled through and casted '3rd Tier Summon Beast'.

With a 'dong', a giant crab about 150cm big appeared— a crab with a large right claw.

It appeared as if it had been waiting under the wetlands the entire time, but it was actually a nature beast summoned by ‘3rd Tier Summon Beast’.

The nature beast advanced to Zenberu’s side and hammered the Skeleton Warrior with its oversized claw.

Zenberu who received unexpected reinforcement smiled. For Zenberu who had to endure the attack coming from all sides and protect Crusch, he was glad to receive help.

“Hey! Strange crab! I will leave those two over there to you!”

The crab who acknowledged its duty, the giant crab— Snap Grasp, waved its smaller claw and moved towards the Skeleton Warriors.

How should I put this... The situation might be serious... but the two of them are so alike.

Crusch thought about something she shouldn’t be thinking about at such a moment and smiled. But she stopped her smile immediately and surveyed the battle, regulating her breathing with deep breaths.

She had been casting defence buff and healing magic on Rororo when they charged here. She had also casted support buffs on Zenberu, overextending herself.

The consecutive use of spells and the summoning magic on top of that had exhausted Crusch, she couldn’t even stand steadily at this point.

She didn’t even have the energy to spare to heal herself. Analyzing calmly, Crusch concluded that her worth as a combatant was depreciating and healing herself would be a waste of mana.

Even so, it would make Zaryusu and Zenberu who were fighting in the frontlines uneasy if she was to fall. Blood dripped from the corner of Crusch's lips as she bit the inside of her mouth to keep herself conscious.

“ 「Middle Cure Wounds」 !”

The healing spell flew towards Zaryusu who was locked in melee combat with Iguvua.

Her legs lost strength and her vision wavered. She could feel the sensation of water all over her skin.

Crusch couldn’t understand what was happening, why and when did she fall into the mud.

But she understood immediately that she didn’t suffer new wounds, so she probably blacked out momentarily.

Crusch was relieved, not because she was still alive, but because she could still fight.

She didn't force herself to stand. No, she didn't have the energy to do so, so she decided to conserve her strength.

In her blurry field of vision, she could see Zaryusu and Zenberu fighting. The back of her companions during their short time together. Zenberu who was fighting the four skeleton warriors and Zaryusu who was enduring Iguvua's magic attacks were covered with wounds.

Crusch adjusted her breathing and casted her spell.

“「Middle Cure Wounds」 !”

She cured Zenberu's injuries.

“「Middle Cure Wounds」 !”

She healed Zaryusu's wounds.

“Huff, huff...”

Crusch panted hard.

But her breathing was still rugged, she felt the air wasn't coming in even though she was breathing so hard.

This was probably the symptoms of mana exhaustion. She felt tremors of violent headache. Even so, Crusch worked hard to open her eyes.

They had sacrificed so much for this battle, how could she be the first to retire from the field.

Crusch used all her effort to open her eyes and chanted.

“「Middle Cure Wounds」 !”



Zenberu bashed the skull of a Skeleton Warrior with his clenched fist. The sensation of him making a slight dent turned into the feeling of the skull shattering. And so, he killed off a Skeleton Warrior.

“That's the second one. Huff... Hah.”

He expelled the air from his body in an attempt to push the fatigue out along with it, and glared at the remaining Skeleton Warriors. The crab summoned by Crusch was nowhere to be found. Zenberu only managed to defeat the other two thanks to it fending off two enemies.

He only hung on because of Crusch's support.

Two more to go. After that will be Iguvua.

Flexing his thick right arm, Zenberu confirmed that it could still move.

His left arm was wounded badly and couldn't exert power. Zenberu had used his left arm as a shield a little too eagerly. He stared at his limp right arm.

"Never mind, just think of it as giving them a handicap."

Zenberu glared at his annoying foes. He attempted to move his left arm, but the pain coursing through his body was not what he expected from moving his fingers.

This is nothing. A comrade continued charging even after its heads became burdens. I, Zenberu, don't want to be mocked by them.

Zenberu understood how strong the Skeleton Warriors were after fighting them. Two of them could fight Zenberu on par. That's how strong they were.

If he took on four at the same time, chances of victory would be slim.

Thank you, giant crab. I will not eat mud crabs for a long time as thanks.

After offering thanks to his beloved food, Zenberu turned his killing intent towards the two Skeleton Warriors closing in.

He clenched his fists.

I am still standing, I can still fight.

To be honest, Zenberu was surprised that he could still fight on.

"Stop thinking about foolish things!"

There only need to be one reason.

Zenberu mocked the past him.

Behind the Skeleton warriors was Zaryusu's back. The figure that did not retreat a single step while facing the powerful existence Iguvua.

"That back is really broad..."

Really—.

Zaryusu, Crusch and Rororo. We fought together all this time, that's why I can still go on.

“Hey hey Zaryusu, you are wounded all over. Aren't you in worse shape than when you fought me?”

Zenberu sent a Skeleton Warrior flying with his large arm, and used his left arm to block the scimitar of the other Skeleton Warrior.

But he failed to parry the sword, which made another wound in his abdomen. That was the place Crusch had healed with magic.

“Crusch is already shouldering a heavy burden, and now you do this.”

He was healed by Crusch's healing spell once again and the wound mended slowly. Zenberu didn't turn to look back, but her voice came from near the water surface. It was easy to imagine what kind of posture she was in while casting the spell. Even so, she didn't stop casting her magic.

“... That's a good woman.”

If I ever get a wife, a woman like that would be great.

Zenberu who was thinking that felt envious of Zaryusu.

“I don't want to be the first to fall and be the laughing stock.”

Feinting with his large arm, he attacked with his tail. Zenberu laughed. *I am older than those two.*

The two Skeleton Warriors hid their body behind shields and closed in. The shields blocked the view of Zaryusu, evoking strong emotions from within Zenberu.

“Don't block the way! I can't see the back of the awesome man like this!”

Zenberu roared and charged forth—



Iguvua and Zaryusu's even match was still continuing. Their faces were reflected in each other's eyes. Zaryusu saw that Iguvua's gaze diverted slightly away from him. The undead poker face of Iguvua suddenly twisted horribly. What happened next froze Zaryusu's mind and body.

He heard the sound of water splashing behind him. Someone fell.

“Look! Your companion is down!”

He couldn't turn back. It might be true, it might be false. Thoughts that made his scales stood on end also surfaced, but the enemy before him had overwhelming strength. He didn't have the luxury of turning his head to find out. The moment he turned his head, the fight would be over. Zaryusu didn't fight this long just to lose for some stupid reason.

Zaryusu fought to secure victory firmly in his hand.

If Iguvua was telling the truth, it would be bad if he didn't dispose of the enemy reinforcements soon.

Zaryusu was steeling himself to take the next magic attack when he heard the sound of someone getting up from the water and bones cracking.

"Zaryusu! We settled this side! The rest— is up to you!!"

"「Middle Cure Wounds」!"

Zenberu roared in great pain and the sound of him falling into the water reached Zaryusu.

The moment Crusch's hoarse voice was heard, Zaryusu's wounds got mended.

"Muu—!"

Displeasure creased Iguvua's face. Without looking back, Zaryusu knew the two of them completed their task perfectly. What's left was—

"My turn!"

Iguvua used his staff to parry Frost Pain that was coming at him.

"Ku ku ku... I am the Lich Iguvua, don't look down on me just because I am not proficient in melee combat!"

Although he said that, Iguvua could tell his chance of winning was low.

In a one on one fight, Iguvua could win with superior physical attributes. But the white lizardman behind kept healing the lizardman before him, turning the tables in terms of health left.

Only one out of three blows was deflected. The other two tore at Iguvua's body. Even though he had resistance toward slashing weapons like skeletons and the additional ice damage was negated, the situation was dire.

Iguvua was panicking.

I am the creation of the Supreme Being Ainz Ooal Gown, the commander of this army. I can not fail!

He wanted to summon undead soldiers to act as meat shields, but Iguvua would be attacked whenever he tried to cast spells. It was tough to do so with an enemy right before his eyes.

He would lose if this went on.

Iguvua decided to show his final hand. It wasn't a great plan— Depending on the circumstances, this might doom him, but that was the only choice he had left.

He suddenly turned around and ran. While Zaryusu was surprised, but he still took the chance to cleave at Iguvua's back. Iguvua who took a hit on the back staggered, but did not fall. Zaryusu clicked his tongue at Iguvua's seemingly endless health, and sprinted to catch up with Iguvua who was pulling away.

Iguvua turned back to show his undead face filled with wrath, but seemed to be elated about something.

A red sphere of light appeared in Iguvua's hand. It was 'Fireball'.

Using wide area spell at such a range? He wants to kill himself— No!

Realizing Iguvua wasn't looking at him, Zaryusu was filled with fear. Iguvua was looking behind Zaryusu. He was focusing on Crusch and Zenberu who were lying on the ground.

— *What should I do!?*

Zaryusu thought frantically.

This was a major lapse. He could give Iguvua the final blow by sacrificing the both of them. If he didn't do that, there would be no telling how the battle would turn. With both parties low on health, any mistake would be fatal.

To defeat Iguvua— Didn't they fight through all this while in order to do that? So many lizardmen had given their lives for this goal.

Then he should sacrifice the two of them. They will definitely forgive him with a smile. If he was in their shoes, Zaryusu would want the other party to do so too.

— Even so.

Zaryusu wasn't someone who would abandon the comrades fighting alongside him.

Only one way was left— Save the two of them and then destroy Iguvua.

Things were simple once he made up his mind.

“— 「Icy Burst」 !”

Zaryusu created a barrier of cold air on the ground near his feet.

“Gaarrgghh!”

Zaryusu’s body was chilled by the cold air bursting forth, pain that could only be described as intense spread through his entire being.

He glared at Iguvua with sharp eyes even though he was about to lose consciousness. Zaryusu endured this numbing pain.

He couldn’t help but scream despite his best efforts as the cold fog dominated the surrounding.

The white cold air covered everything and Iguvua laughed sinisterly when his scheme succeeded.

Ku ku, you could have won if you had abandoned your comrades.

Iguvua was completely immune to cold and electricity. He who was totally fine inside the cold gush of air crushed the ‘fireball’ spell in his hands. If he casted it, it would collide with the white fog around Iguvua and cause an explosion.

He could deal the final blow to the other two after the fog dissipated. More importantly, he needed to put down the lizardman that was still standing. As he looked around, Iguvua’s face scowled. He miscalculated something.

“Well then, where is he?”

This was a fog that concealed everything from sight.

Iguvua had the ability to see through the darkness with his eyes, but couldn’t see through objects that obscured his sight like this. He had no idea where the enemy was.

But that wasn’t a big problem. With how the lizardman was shrieking just now, he seemed to have suffered great injuries. He shot out the cold air to counter the ‘fireball’, so he must have suffered damage on the same level as taking a ‘fireball’ hit.

Suffering this injury on top of his already heavy wounds, it might had been fatal. What’s left was to crush him slowly.

Leave this foggy place first?

After considering it, Iguvua decided not to.

— If he moved now, he would be giving his position away.

The important thing was to summon undead guards. With a meat shield, victory will be his even if that lizardman was still alive.

Iguvua who was about to cast his spell heard the sound of water rippling.

— One of the four treasures of the lizardmen, Frost Pain.

A weapon made from ice extracted from the lake when it froze that one and only time. It harboured three magical powers.

Number one, the sword was imbued with cold energy, dealing additional ice damage to the enemy it attacks.

Number two, the powerful skill that could only be used thrice a day, Icy Burst.

Number three—

The sound of air being sliced echoed out.

Before understanding what was happening, Iguvua saw the tip of a sharp object.

Iguvua's head was hit by a powerful strike.

The sword lodged into Iguvua's right eye rattled wildly. Iguvua who finally understood what was happening screamed.

“Hyaaa! Why! Why are you not dead!”

Frost Pain pierced deep into Iguvua's right eye socket, he could feel his health falling drastically—

In front of Iguvua who was standing unsteadily with a sword lodged in his head was Zaryusu who was covered in frost.

Iguvua couldn't understand why Zaryusu was still standing after taking such a powerful ice attack.

The third ability of Frost Pain.

Granting the user with resistance to ice damage—

Even though Frost Pain offered resistance to the cold, it couldn't completely negate a powerful skill like Icy Burst. The damage from the cold chilled Zaryusu to the bones. He was on the verge of collapsing, his breathing ragged and his movement dulled. His tail drooped weakly into the

water. It was almost impossible to fight on when you even had difficulty just breathing. That strike wasn't aimed carefully, but a blow thrown out by instinct using all his might.

It was a lucky hit.

Zaryusu struggled to keep his eyes open.

He gave everything he had to deal this final blow to Iguvua, and he could feel that it was a fatal hit.

Zaryusu who had no energy left to fight looked at Iguvua with a glimmer of hope.

Iguvua was wavering. He couldn't keep his body intact as the skin fell off his face and cracks appeared on his bones. Even his clothes were rotting away. It was a matter of time before he would fade away. The moment Zaryusu was certain he was victorious—

A bony hand covered in skin grabbed Zaryusu's throat.

"I... I am created to serve the Supreme Being... How could I be... vanquished like this!"

Iguvua wasn't even holding him with much force and Zaryusu could break free easily, but—

"— Ahhhh—!"

— Zaryusu wailed as an intense pain permeated his entire body.

Negative energy flowed into Zaryusu's body, robbing him of his vitality. Even Zaryusu who was trained to endure pain couldn't withstand the feeling of the pain caused by the cold that seemed to be injected directly into his veins.

"Die—! Lizardman!"

Pieces of Iguvua's face had dropped off, disintegrating in mid air.

Iguvua's life was deteriorating as well, but his intense loyalty towards his master made him cling on to life desperately.

Zaryusu was struggling with all he had, but he was overcome with fear as his body refused to move as he wished.

Zaryusu didn't have much health left. The negative energy Iguvua was injecting into him was draining his life force away.

Zaryusu's gaze wavered and his vision blurred.

The world seemed to be covered by a thin fog.

Iguvua who was clinging to consciousness mightily had a victorious smile as he watched Zaryusu slowly lose his strength to struggle.

Kill this lizardman, as well as the other two behind him. They should be the elite of the lizardmen.

Killing these lizardmen would be the best gifts he could offer to the Supreme Being— his creator.

Iguvua's expression was depicting these emotions strongly without words, allowing Zaryusu to surmise what Iguvua was thinking.

“Go to hell!”

His body was not reacting to him as he could feel his body temperature dropping as if a poison was spreading through his body. He could hardly breathe, and his mind was the only thing that was clear.

He couldn't die yet.

Rororo who sprinted with all its might.

Zenberu who shielded him.

Crusch who exhausted all her mana.

Not just them, he was also shouldering the burdens of all the lizardmen who had sacrificed themselves in this war.

Zaryusu who was racking his brains for a way out heard a whisper.

— The gentle voice of Crusch

— The hearty voice of Zenberu

— The playful whimpers of Rororo

Sound that should be impossible for him to hear.

Crusch had lost consciousness and Zenberu should be knocked out.

Rororo should have been taken far away from here.

Was Zaryusu hearing things as he loses consciousness? Imagining the voices of the comrades he knew for less than a week? The call of his family?

No.

That's right, this line of thinking was wrong.

Everyone was here with him—

“—Ahhhh... Ahhhhhh—!”

“—? You still have this much strength left?!”

Zaryusu who was on the verge of losing his consciousness roared and the surprised voice of Iguvua could be heard.

Zaryusu moved his eyeballs and glared at Iguvua. His eyes were filled with indomitable will, making it hard to believe that his eyes were unfocused just moments earlier, stiffening Iguvua's expression.

“Crusch! Zenberu! Rororo!”

“—! What are you doing! Just die—!”

Where did such vitality stem from? The huge amount of negative energy injected into Zaryusu was draining his life force constantly. Zaryusu also felt that his limbs were heavy and his body ice cold.

Even so, Zaryusu felt warmer with every name he shouted. This warmth didn't originate from his life force.

It came from within his chest— his heart.

The sound of muscle tensing erupted. It came from Zaryusu's right arm, his clenched fist. He was gathering all the strength he had left in it right now.

“Impossible—! How can you still move! You monster—!”

The scene of Zaryusu still moving despite all that was incredulous.

Heated emotion appeared in Iguvua's mind, but he suppressed it.

He was Iguvua, the field commander of Great Tomb of Nazarick's army. And more importantly, he was an undead created by the great king of death— Ainz Ooal Gown.

He cannot permit his powerful self to lose this fight—

“Die—!”

“It’s over you monster!”

Zaryusu was a step faster.

That’s right, his strike with all his might was an instant faster than Iguvua’s injection of negative energy—

The tightly clenched fist hit the hilt of Frost Pain—

Zaryusu’s fist bled. After taking such a heavy blow, Frost Pain that was lodged into the left eye pierced all the way through Iguvua’s brain.

“Oooowwwwww!!”

Iguvua was an undead that couldn’t feel pain, but— he could still feel his negative life dissipating.

“This... this... impossible... Ainz... sama...”

Iguvua’s eyes reflected his understanding of what failure was. When Zaryusu’s body fell like a puppet with its strings cut, a huge splash could be heard—

“... Please... Please... Forgive... me...”

Iguvua’s body fell as he apologized to his master.



The room was silent. The scene reflected in the mirror was unbelievable and no one said a word. Except for the maid— Entoma.

“Cocytus-sama, Ainz-sama has summoned you.”

“— Understood.”

Cocytus who had lowered his head turned slowly to face Entoma.

Basked in the worried gaze of his subordinate, he gritted his teeth in shame.

At the same time, he wanted to compliment the lizardmen.

A magnificent battle.

They turned the impossible possible and achieved a turnabout victory. The Lich did have some lapses, but it was more than capable of winning the battle despite that.

“... Spectacular. Absolutely spectacular.”

Cocytus kept repeating this phrase which reflected how he actually felt.

The lizardmen overcame this huge obstacle.

“... A pity.”

Cocytus sighed as he watched the lizardmen cheering and dancing in celebration.

The warriors reflected in the mirror might be weak, but it stimulated Cocytus’ fighting spirit.

“Ah... What a pity...”

Cocytus hesitated. He picked the worse scenario he could think of, thought about it and made his conclusion.

“— Let us be off.”

Part 6

Zaryusu felt his body being lifted out from the darkness, it was really comfortable.

Opening his eyes, a blurry world greeted him, similar to the one he sees whenever he wakes up.

Where am I? Why am I sleeping here?

He had many questions, and at the same time realized a weight pressing down on him.

— White.

Zaryusu stared at that white colour, that was the first word that came to mind in his sleepy mind. As he became more wake away, he understood what that was.

That was Crusch. She was sleeping on top of him.

“Ah...”

I survived.

Zaryusu felt relieved and almost said that out loud, but held it in. He couldn’t bear waking Crusch who was still sleeping, suppressing his urge to touch her. Even though her scales were beautiful, he couldn’t caress the scales of a female lizardman so thoughtlessly.

Zaryusu pushed the thought of Crusch out of his mind and thought about other things.

There were many things he needed to consider.

First of all, why was he here.

Searching his memory, he tried recalling what happened. After seeing the destruction of Iguvua, his consciousness was cut off. He wasn't captured and was still lying here, meaning his tribe probably won the war.

To avoid waking Crusch, Zaryusu sighed softly. He felt the burden he shouldered recently lightened. But thinking over it calmly, there were still some worries. They still didn't know about the enemy or what their goal was, there was a high chance their foes will strike again... No, they will definitely do so.

He allowed his mind to rest. Zaryusu felt the warmth from Crusch's body and sighed again.

After this, Zaryusu lightly moved his body. His entire body could move with no problems. He thought he might be maimed, but luckily he was fine.

Zaryusu remembered his brothers in arms. Aside from Crusch, there was nobody else here. What happened to Zenberu? He was uneasy, but was quite sure a powerful lizardman like Zenberu would be fine.

Crusch seemed to be waken by Zaryusu's movement and stirred, as if a soul had been injected into her supple body. She should be waking soon.

"Hmm..."

Crusch made a cute sound and moved her dazed eyes to look around her. Shortly after, she noticed Zaryusu under her and smiled happily.

"Muu—"

Crusch who was still half asleep hugged Zaryusu and grinded against him. Just like an animal wanting to leave her scent behind.

Zaryusu stiffened, allowing Crusch to grind as she pleased. An evil thought 'I didn't do anything' surfaced from a corner of his mind.

The white and smooth scales were smooth and comfortable, emitting an alluring fragrance of herbs.

It should be fine to hug her back right?

When he couldn't stand it any longer, Crusch's eyes focused and looked at Zaryusu right in the eye.

— And froze instantly.

Facing Crusch who didn't move while hugging him, Zaryusu wondered what he should say. In the end, he chose something he thought would not be a problem.

“— Can I hug you too?”

It only seemed okay because his heated passion got into his head.

Crusch made an intimidating cry and her tail thrashed around. She then rolled away from Zaryusu until she hit the wall.

He could hear Crusch who was lying prone saying ‘Stupid, stupid, I am stupid’.

“... Well, I am glad you are safe, Crusch.”

These words allowed Crusch to regain her composure— but her tail still kept on thrashing about— Lifting her head, she smiled at Zaryusu.

“You too, it's great that you are fine.”

Seeing Crusch's gentle face, Zaryusu had lewd thoughts, but suppressed it and asked a proper question.

“Do you know what happened after I blacked out?”

“Yeah, more or less. After you defeated Iguvua, the enemy retreated. Your brother also defeated the monsters and saved the three of us... That was yesterday.”

“Zenberu isn't here...”

“He is fine. He had stronger recovery speed than you and regained consciousness after receiving healing spells. He should be settling the aftermath of the battle. I seemed to have blacked out from exhaustion after hearing all that...”

Crusch got up and sat down beside Zaryusu. Zaryusu wanted to get up too, but Crusch stopped him.

“Don't push yourself, you have the most serious injuries out of us all.”

She was probably recalling the scene that time as her voice grew softer.

“It's great that you are okay, really great...”

Zaryusu caressed Crusch who was looking down and consoled her.

“I will not die before hearing your answer. I am worried about you too.”

Answer. This term stopped their movements.

They didn't say anything as the room fell into darkness, and their heartbeat almost seemed to be audible.

Crusch moved her tail slowly, tangling Zaryusu's tail. The black and white tail entangling together looked just like two snakes mating.

Zaryusu looked at Crusch quietly, and Crusch was looking at him too, their reflection could be seen in each other's eyes.

Zaryusu uttered something softly. No, it wasn't words, but a cry. That was the cry he uttered when he first met Crusch.

— A mating call.

Zaryusu didn't do anything after the cry. No, he couldn't do anything except letting his heart beat intensely.

Moments later, Crusch made the same sound— a cry. The same emotional cry while shaking her tail, that was— the cry to accept the mating call.

An indescribably seductive expression appeared on Crusch's face, Zaryusu could no longer pull his eyes away from Crusch. Crusch pushed herself onto Zaryusu, the position was similar to the one they had while sleeping.

There was almost no distance between their faces, their warm breathing mixed together, their heartbeat synchronized through their chests that were touching, and two of them became one—

“Oh! Getting busy!?”

The door was opened strongly and Zenberu charged in.

Crusch and Zaryusu froze like ice sculptures.

Zenberu looked at the two of them in confusion— at Crusch who was riding on Zaryusu. He tilted his head and asked.

“What, you haven't started yet?”

They understood what Zenberu was saying and silently moved away from each other and stood up, approaching Zenberu without a word.

Zenberu looked down at the two of them confusedly and leaned forward.

“—Gahhhh!”

He took two punches to the stomach. After exhaling, Zenberu’s giant body collapsed onto the floor.

“Wooo... What powerful punches... especially Crusch... Gahh... that really hurts...”

Leaving Zaryusu aside, the punch of wrath from the female lizardman could even win against Zenberu. That wasn’t enough to vent their anger, but no matter how much they beat Zenberu up, that atmosphere would never come back.

They held each other’s hand— It was a strange substitute for beating Zenberu up. Zaryusu asked Zenberu one thing to ease his worries.

“Forget about that for now, I have questions for you. I heard some of it from Crusch, but could you tell me what is the situation right now?”

Zenberu didn’t care about the two of them holding hands and answered:

“Don’t you know? All the tribes are having a victory party.”

“My older brother is hosting the party?”

“That’s right. Anyway, the hunters scouted the region and did not find any signs of the enemy, and no traces of reinforcement or ambush. It would be difficult to hide such a large army. We are still on alert, but your brother has already declared victory. I am here on your brother’s orders.”

“My brother’s orders?”

“Yes, your brother said —’Shahaha, just let the two of them sleep together. They might already be getting it on, shahaha. It’s a bit embarrassing to interrupt, but I am curious, shahaha’.”

“Don’t bullshit! What’s with the shahaha?”

“Oh... There wasn’t any shahaha...”

“There’s no way my brother will laugh like that, really...”

“I am just expressing it more vividly...”

“— You are the worst.”

A chill that could match 'Icy Burst' came out from Crusch's mouth along with these words. That frightening voice even gave Zaryusu goosebumps. Zenberu who was being lectured shivered and stiffened.

"So, why are you here?"

"Erm, I am here to disrupt..."

"If you dare say you are here to be the third wheel, I will let you taste all the magic that you can think of."

Zaryusu and Zenberu were pretty sure that Crusch wasn't joking.

"Eh... I am here to invite you guys to join the party. We are the key figures in this victory, right? We can't miss the party. And we need to discuss about the future of the lizardmen too..."

"I see..."

After hearing Zenberu's roundabout explanation, Zaryusu smiled wryly after catching on what he wanted to say. Zenberu meant to say: There might be another battle, now was the time to display their strength.

"I got it, are you going too, Crusch?"

The unhappy Crusch puffed her cheeks, looking just like a Delmas frog residing in the wetlands. But Zaryusu thought she was much cuter.

"So, are we going?"

Zenberu casually asked Zaryusu and Crusch who were looking into each other's eyes.

"Ah... Yeah, you are right, let's go."

After the two of them acknowledged, the trio walked out together. When they walked down the stairs and stepped into the wetlands, Zaryusu suddenly disappeared from Crusch and Zenberu's view. Something large suddenly knocked Zaryusu down.

— Bang voom voom splash.

That's roughly how it sounded like.

Zaryusu disappeared from their view, and was replaced by Rororo's figure. Its four heads twisted around energetically, pushing their noses at Zaryusu who had fell into the wetlands.

"Rororo! You are alright!"

Zaryusu who was covered in mud stood up and walked up to Rororo, gently caressing its body and observed it. It seemed to have received magical treatment, all its burn wounds from before had been healed, it was as if it was never hurt in the first place.

Rororo whimpered as it entangled Zaryusu with all of its heads, almost covering Zaryusu completely in its tight embrace.

“Hey hey hey, stop that, Rororo.”

Zaryusu laughed as he restrained Rororo with his voice. Rororo only cried happily, but didn’t let go.

Splash splash splash.

Zaryusu suddenly heard this rhythmic sound of water splashes, and was baffled when he found the source.

It was Crusch. She was watching Zaryusu and Rororo with a gentle smile, but her tail was hitting the wetlands with a fixed rhythm.

Zenberu who was standing beside Crusch shuffled away slowly with a stiff expression.

Rororo stopped moving too. It probably sensed that something was wrong.

“What is it?”

“No, it’s nothing...”

Zaryusu looked at Crusch who asked him the question and was confused. No matter how he looked at it, Crusch was smiling and happy that Zaryusu and Rororo were reunited. But somehow, it gave him a chilling feeling.

“How strange—“

Crusch smiled again.

Rororo released Zaryusu and he regained his freedom. Zenberu seemed to be fearful of something. Zenberu probably couldn’t stand this strange atmosphere anymore and changed the topic in a hurry.

“Alright Rororo, you and I will move on ahead.”

Of course, Rororo couldn’t understand the language of the lizardmen, but it obediently allowed Zenberu to mount it and ran off with amazing speed.

After those two had left, a strange atmosphere fell between Zaryusu and Crusch.

Crusch hugged her head as she shook it.

“Ah~ really, what am I doing. It feels like my heart isn’t my own. Even though it is irrational, I couldn’t help myself. This is like a curse.”

Zaryusu understood how she felt. Because he felt the same way when he met Crusch for the first time too.

“To be honest, Crusch— I am very happy.”

“— What!?”

Splash, a loud sound of water erupted. Zaryusu then moved to Crusch’s side.

“Listen, can you hear it?”

“Hmmm?”

“The things we successfully defended are also the things we have to protect from now on.”

Sounds of rowdy laughter were carried here with the wind, they should be holding a banquet right now. The banquet was meant to bid farewell to the ancestors, celebrate their victory and to mourn the dead.

Wine was originally an expensive luxury. But they managed to have several banquets thanks to Zenberu’s tribe bringing one of the four treasures that supplied unlimited wine. And because all of the tribes were gathered here, they could enjoy this unbelievably joyous atmosphere.

Zaryusu listened to the joyous cheers and said to Crusch with a smile:

“This might not be over yet, that Supreme One person might still attack, but even so... we should relax for today.”

Zaryusu then put his hands on Crusch’s waist.

Crusch followed the flow and stuck onto Zaryusu, resting her head on Zaryusu’s shoulder.

“Shall we go?”

“Yeah...” Crusch answered and after hesitating for a moment, she called out:”... My darling.”

The two lizardmen walked together, disappearing into the noisy crowd—