

まおゆう魔王勇者

①「この我のものとなれ、勇者よ」「断る!」 著／橙乃ままれ

魔王と勇者が手をたずさえて
暗黒の中世に灯をともし物語



DISCLAIMER: The work translated here is the legal property of its original copyright holder. It is translated here without monetary incentive solely for the purposes of promoting domestic interest in the work and improving personal language proficiency. Should the work be licensed for English translation or upon request by the original copyright holders, please stop distribution of this document at once.

Please send any and all comments to nanodesuadmin@googlegroups.com

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

Bells toll in the distance

The Hero: "..."

Wind howls

The Hero: "This is... Where is this? Where is the Demon King!?"

Wind howls

The Hero: "This Demon King's castle is massive, but it doesn't have any guards or warning systems. AS for traps.... Well there's a lot of traps. I just need to get over that, and..... Well I don't have any regrets..."

Wind howls

The Demon King: "Good afternoon."

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "Good afternoon, Hero."

The Hero: "Wha- What are you!?"

The Demon King: "The Demon King. ... Oh? You didn't know...?"

The Hero: "Wh- Wh- Why is the Demon King a woman!?"

Wind howls

The Demon King: "Don't say that. It's a traditional title after all, I can't help it."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Damn it. This is a tactic to throw me off. Is that right!? Come out, real Demon King!"

The Demon King: "Hey hey. I am the real Demon King. The real thing. The forty-third Demon King, also known as "Ruby Eyes"."

The Hero: "Hmph."

The Demon King: "Why won't you believe me? Look I've got a seal here too..."

The Hero: "Don't show me your chest!?"

The Demon King: "No, look. There's the evidence."

The Hero: "Shut up. Don't even think about seducing me."

The Demon King: "I haven't even done anything yet..."

Wind really howls

The Hero: "Damn it. This is worse than traps or whatever else. I've already decided to take down the Demon King. This is the right thing. I'm going to make the right decision! I'm going to take this person down!"

The Hero: "Demon King! En garde!"

The Demon King: "Alright, let's do this again from the start. --- Good afternoon"

The Hero: "Ugh... Why do I feel so exhausted"

The Demon King: "Hmm. That was a bad response. Okay, let's try this... How fareest you?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Farest?"

The Demon King: "I've waited for a long, long time. Such a long, long time for the Hero to appear. You probably can't imagine how long I've been waiting. I've been really looking forward to having this conversation with you."

The Hero: "Eh...?"

The Demon King: "It's a bit sad that we can't exchange greetings. But since that's how it is, we've got no choice. --- Well then. Let's raise the curtains. The very first Act of the legend of the Hero and me... Or the very last. Hero, it's finally here, these secrets I've kept within me for such a long time."

The Hero: "Wha... What are you saying, you Master of Demons!"

The Demon King: "Become mine, Hero"

The Hero: "I refuse!"

Wind howls

The Demon King: "No matter what?"

The Hero: "Don't be stupid! How many countries do you think you've lain waste to!?"

The Demon King: "Is this about the Forest Kingdom?"

The Hero: "The sky turned black, the people fell into poverty..."

The Demon King: "Didn't they inflict this on themselves by converting the forest into charcoal and causing pollution?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Pollution...?"

The Demon King: "Ah. Umm... You don't know, huh."

The Hero: "Don't lie to me! The minister of the Tin Kingdom was possessed, are you telling me that wasn't the work of demons!"

The Demon King: "Didn't that perverted, greedy minister just unsuccessfully embezzle the country's resources and attempt to create a massive harem of princesses. When he got caught he claimed his mind was being controlled by demons; seems like it's just the bad habits of bad humans."

The Hero: "I can't forgive... This lie..."

The Demon King: "I'm not lying."

The Hero: "Then how about the war with the Southern Kingdoms!? I've seen hundreds of humans being slaughtered by the armies of Demons with my own eyes."

The Demon King: "And?"

The Hero: "What? How can I forgive the Demon King who invaded the land of the humans!"

The Demon King: "We seem to have a different understanding of who has invaded whom. There's some good points on this side as well... Well, it's true that we are at war."

The Hero: "You are evil."

The Demon King: "You could say I am evil. ---- Of course, after you kill me, you're going to massacre the nobility of the Southern Kingdoms aren't you?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "What? You're the only one that's evil."

The Demon King: "How about all the humans who've been killing demons? Who decided that demons are bad and humans are good?"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Wouldn't it be nice if as a Hero you could just say, 'I am the Law!' or 'I am God!' or maybe even 'I am Gundam!'"

The Hero: "Shut up!"

The Demon King: "I really like you, Hero, so we'll stop here."

The Hero: "Don't say that you like me."

The Demon King: "Take a look at these data."

The Hero: "What's this, this is... Isn't it vellum? It's thin, and white, and smooth..."

The Demon King: "That's printing paper. But that's not important, what's written on it is important."

The Hero: "... Umm, Explosion in Demand... Employment? Curve? Consumption Trends... Economic Dependency Ratios?"

The Demon King: "Do you understand?"

The Hero: "What the hell is this, some kind of evil ritual?"

The Demon King: "No. It's an economic analysis of the utility of war to the consumption market."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "... Utility?"

The Demon King: "That's right."

The Hero: "What meaning is there in war? You damn demons invaded the human world to wipe us out. Do you think you can fool me, Demon King? Don't try to wrap this all up in smoke!"



Pollution: In the process of heavy industry, various contaminating by-products are created which may be harmful to people. Even in the Middle Ages, there were numerous cases of mineral residue which flowed down rivers and caused diseases among the people.

Vellum: The hairs of animals (particularly sheep) are removed from the hide, tanned, flattened and cut thinly so that it may be used for writing purposes. Strictly speaking, vellum is not paper. It can be resiliently folded and hence fetches a high price.

Printing Paper: Paper was invented in the 2nd Century BC in China and was brought to Europe around the 12th Century AD. Compared to vellum and papyrus, paper was thinner, could be folded and bent and was easy to store.

The Demon King: "Hero..."

The Hero: 'Ugh. Why is it a woman. And such a beautiful one too!? This is unbelievable!!' (thought)

The Demon King: "If you really have to fight, then let's fight."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: “!?”

The Demon King: “Like I said, I’m cool with us fighting.”

The Hero: “I’ll take your head right this instant.”

The Demon King: “Alright, so listen to what I have to say for just half a day.”

The Hero: “...”

The Demon King: “Such an opportunity will never present itself in all the eternity of the universe.”

The Hero: “..... Fine. Speak. But if you say anything strange, I’ll chop your head off at any time.” *Unsheathes sword*

The Demon King: “I understand. Then allow me to explain. Please look at the first page of the data in your hands.”

The Hero: “It’s a diagram.”

The Demon King: “It’s a graph. ... That’s a visual representation of the spending patterns and expenditure of the Central Continent over the last 50 years.”

The Hero: “...Umm”

The Demon King: “You will notice that since the war started 15 years ago, the economic climate of the Central Kingdom has been steadily improving.”

The Hero: “... That’s a lie”

The Demon King: “That’s not a lie. Take a look at page 2. This one combines a few sets of data.”

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "The death toll of people in this war has been..."

The Demon King: "Since the war began, the population of the Human World has started increasing."

The Hero: "What kind of lousy reasoning is that! How could the population be increasing when people are dying from this war?"

The Demon King: "Well, usually that would be the case. But in this world, the pre-war circumstances were different. Before the war --- well, it's been this way for a few hundred years --- the primary cause of death among humans were pestilence and famine."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "These two are very strong enemies, and they've been undefeated for the last 500 years or so. Sometimes pestilence rears its ugly head, and far from a population increase, entire countries are wiped out."

The Hero: "Pestilence and famine are things beyond human control. Perhaps they're a way by which the spirits are testing us humans. Don't compare them to the Demon invasion!"

The Demon King: "Well, it's true that they're sometimes unavoidable. But that doesn't mean they're undefeatable, or that they shouldn't be defeated."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience



Consumption Trends: Trends which determine whether consumers (buyers of goods and services) loosen or tighten their purse strings. Also, trends of what this expenditure is directed at.

Market: A place where goods are bought and sold. Originally referred to the marketplace itself.

Economics is concerned with aggregating every market in the world, then considering the behaviour and changes of this abstraction of a massive market. That's a market.

Utility: In Economic terminology, the value of satisfaction which a consumer receives from the purchase of a good or service. However, even though there may be utility, a less scarce resource (like water) would still fetch a lower price. In other words, prices are not determined solely by utility.

Demand: Demand refers to the portion of desired goods which people are actually willing to spend. In other words, "I don't have pocket money, but I really want this game" isn't demand, but "I have the money to buy it too" is demand.

Employment: To employ is to give money to people so that they will work for you. Employers are obligated to pay their workers and employees are obligated to create output for their employers.

The Hero: That's...

The Demon King: "Ever since the start of the war, the death toll from these two causes has fallen by 60%."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "What's the reason for that? Is it not a grace granted by the Spirits upon witnessing the tyranny of the Demons?"

The Demon King: "I've lived for a really long time but I've never seen anything like Spirits ... The reason is clear. The biggest reason is the formation of the Central Continental Emergency Council."

The Hero: "...?"

The Demon King: "In other words, the Human Kingdoms coming together in order to combat the Demons."

The Hero: "And why would deaths decrease from that...?"

The Demon King: "Countries with an abundance of food send them to countries without, countries advanced in healthcare or agricultural technology also share this expertise."

The Hero: "Doesn't that just display this feat of human cooperation!"

The Demon King: "That humans need a war with the Demons to achieve such a basic level of cooperation is quite astonishing really."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Don't feel sad. The Demons aren't that far away ourselves."

The Hero: "Is... That so...?"

The Demon King: "It's just chaos. Demons operate in a feudal society. Powerful chieftains and expansive warlords have time and again fought bloody wars to attempt to gain power."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Well, in this case, the war has saved both Humans and Demons."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Don't bite your lip like that. Isn't it already bleeding?"

The Hero: "Don't touch me!"

The Demon King: "If that's what you want, then I won't touch you..."

The Hero: "...?"

The Demon King: "Do you understand the benefits now?"

The Hero: "... I suppose... War might have some benefits."

The Demon King: "I am relieved to hear you say that."

The Hero: "But that's no reason for it to continue. And that's no reason for it to begin either. You are a war criminal. Put an end to this war right now and prepare to stand trial at a tribunal."

The Demon King: "Oh—"

The Hero: "I see now that this war was not waged for your own selfish benefit. I will escort you there, so just surrender,"

The Demon King: "That could be a bit difficult."

The Hero: "Why?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "There's two reasons. Please take a look at page 6."

Flip

The Demon King: "This records the relationship of the Goods Flows between the Southern Kingdoms and the Central Continent."

The Hero: "Good Flows...?"

The Demon King: "Well to put it simply, the flow of goods. Food or clothing, from daily necessities to weaponry, metal, wood and so on."

The Hero: "And these are heavily utilized by the Southern Kingdoms?"

The Demon King: "That's right. Wars require massive consumption after all."

The Hero: "... And how are the Southern Kingdoms paying for this?"



Warlord: A warlord independently controls territory and civilians, with a sovereign armed forces gathered by himself. However, if one takes orders from a Central Government, even if one controls a territory and leads a large army, as long as one is dependent on a higher command, he is not a warlord.

Good Flows: The flow of goods. If one creates a good, were he to just leave it there, he would be unable to generate any significant income. The passing of these goods to consumers is necessary. That's a good flow.

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "Hm?"

The Hero: "Don't you need money to buy these goods?"

The Demon King: "Oh, you've noticed the point. Very good."

The Hero: "Don't even think of touching me."

The Demon King: "Oh whoops that was accidental. I can't touch you as long as you don't give me permission. I'm the type that takes promises very seriously heehee."

The Hero: "So how do they buy it?"

The Demon King: "Using the Conflict Aid Fund provided by the Central Continental Emergency Council Resolution."

The Hero: "...?"

The Demon King: "In other words, the world sends aid money to the Southern Kingdoms."

The Hero: "Is that so! Humans really are warm hearted. Do you see now, Demon King, this is the nobility of the human race."

The Demon King: "Well, most of this money is used to buy goods from the countries in the Central Continent. In other words, they give pocket money for people to buy from their own stores."

The Hero: "...?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "This system is a bit hard to explain... In other words, stockpiling money might create 'Wealth', but it doesn't contribute to 'Prosperity'. Goods and capital flows must be established without stagnation in order to achieve 'Prosperity'.

The Hero: "...Are you trying to lie to me?"

The Demon King: "Well, that's the way it is. Rather than trying to do everything yourself, you cooperate with skilled workers from different countries.

Theoretically, that's the best thing to do. By exchanging timber and metals you can best improve the standards of living of the people."

The Hero: "Hmm... I can kind of understand that. It's rather like the market in the Royal Square, isn't it?"

The Demon King: "That's exactly it."

The Hero: "But isn't this situation different?"

The Demon King: "In what way?"

The Hero: "The countries of the Central Continent send money to the war-ravaged Southern Kingdoms, right? And in the end, while this--- Good Flows? do take place, the money they send is sent back to themselves, isn't it?"

The Demon King: "Mmhmm."

The Hero: "In other words there's no mutual exchange of specialized products"

The Demon King: "Yes there is."

The Hero: "The Central Continent doesn't receive anything from the Southern Kingdoms. In other words, this is just charity. This is all donations and charity."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "The Southern Kingdoms provide 'Safety'. In other words, the human blood which is shed in this war is changed for money. --- You've seen it haven't you? How the whole world is stained by the fires of this war."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "The inventions of new and more advanced chariots, brighter lights, richer plantations... Do people not continue to dance and revel into the night? Are there no nobility who continue to be inebriated by wine?"

The Hero: "... That's certainly true. But it's just a few people."

The Demon King: "In other words, it's this way. Human society is dependent on the Southern Kingdoms as a defensive line and a great consumer of their products."

The Hero: "Dependent...?"

The Demon King: "That's right, completely reliant. One might even say, drowning in it."

The Hero: "But most people don't have the capability to fight. That's why they need the Southern Kingdom's warriors and knights protect them, and can only send food and supplies back. How is this system wrong!"

The Demon King: "Well, it's not wrong. This could be charity, and from an emotional standpoint one cannot refute this argument. But at the same time, economically, were this to end, human Good Flows and Foreign Exchange would definitely crumble. At this point, the Government Sector is already entwined with the Private Sector to the roots."

The Hero: "Crumble..."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "That's right. It's in the data, isn't it? If this massive consumption were to stop, the Central Kingdom's industrial will suffer significant damage, especially the metallurgy and shipbuilding industries. As this damage spreads, tens of thousands of people could die."

The Hero: "... That's..."

The Demon King: "But since this comes from the mouth of The Demon King: it's probably a lie, huh."

The Hero: "It's a lie?"

The Demon King: "At the very least, I'm completely serious. But maybe there's a way of preventing this that I don't know about."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Well, this warped economic system which is dependent on Good Flows is just one of my two reasons."

The Hero: "What else is there..."

The Demon King: "The other one is much easier to explain"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "The explanation might be simple, but the problem itself isn't..."

The Hero: "What do you mean?"

The Demon King: "Since being involved in a war with the Demons, human society as we know it has ended. Good Flows have improved, medical technology is widespread, pestilence and famine have been reduced."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Yeah, you said that already."

The Demon King: "That's just half of the explanation. Good Flows are indeed more vibrant than they were before. In the past, countries where half the people starved to death did not cooperate with their neighbouring rich countries."

The Hero: "Yes...?"

The Demon King: "However, while Good Flows have increased, world production of food has not increased significantly."

The Hero: "...?"

The Demon King: "You don't get it? ... In other words, there are still people starving to death."

The Hero: "Ahh. In my travels I have seen many villages with starving children."

The Demon King: "In this world, what would happen if people didn't die from wars? If people didn't fall by the sword in this long war, who knows how many tens of thousands would still be alive. And if they're alive, then they need food. The human population is increasing, isn't it? --- But, food stocks aren't increasing. Humans have after all, just invented the wheel."

The Hero: "That's..."

The Demon King: "That's the reality."

The Hero: "But, but."

The Demon King: "Just why have you come here on your own?"

The Hero: "... What?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "This is the corrupted Demon King's palace, you'd expect it to be swarming with Guards hunting for you. Don't tell me you came here on a whim and only managed to get here by some freak coincidence of happenstance?"

The Hero: "What are you saying?"

The Demon King: "The job of ending the war is the military's, isn't it? Aren't you a hero?"

The Hero: "I am a hero. This is my mission."

The Demon King: "Isn't the job of singlehandedly taking the enemy king's life that of an assassin's?"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "The human kings probably understand this as well. --- Whether the humans win the war or lose the war, humanity will suffer."

The Hero: "..."



Foreign Exchange: Instead of using cash, this systems relies on credit. By cross referencing accounts from both places, one can avoid the risk of physically transferring large amounts of cash over long distances. The Catholic Church in the Middle Ages gained significant profit from this practice.

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "That's why you went out on your own."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "That might be somewhat one-sided, but the truth is that it's the same for the Demons as well. You probably know this, but even though you call us Demons, the truth is we're just the same... In this feudal society, powerful people keep this war going on, catering for just a minority of the people. There are of course sadistic elements, but most powerful chiefs just cruelly enjoy war and adopt a selfish view."

The Hero: "Is that so..."

The Demon King: "Yes. That's right. ... As you can see, my wrists are small and I'm just a weak, dainty lady, aren't I?"

The Hero: "Don't you fight with magic?"

The Demon King: "Well, that's true, I do, but I wouldn't say I can perform any incredible Demon magic."

The Hero: "Then why are you the demon king?"

The Demon King: "The most important reason would be timing. It's probably a coincidence. ---- My family has a lot of eccentric people and we're at the forefront of Demon world research on longevity. My specialty is actually Economics."

The Hero: "What's Economics?"

The Demon King: "I don't believe the level of human civilization."

The Hero: "That makes me feel annoyed, Demon King."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "This isn't really about Demons or humans. ... If this war ends, for example if it is the Demons who win, then a more chaotic world than ever before seen will emerge. This time, the human world will be the stage of the opening of a new Act of violence and a scramble for the proliferation of Slavery. Powerful Demon clans will invade the human kingdoms at will, pillaging and plundering as they establish a new era of Colonization."

Clans which have grown rich and powerful from the war will be able to oppress the weaker clans, larger and bloodier wars will be fought with the goal of Unification, but attempting to unify a world even more chaotic than it is now will be no mean feat. More blood than ever before will flow."

The Hero: "Colonization?"

The Demon King: "The practice of invading someone else's land and exploiting their resources for oneself."

The Hero: "I cannot forgive such a thing."

The Demon King: "If the humans won, the same thing would happen in the Demon World."

The Hero: "Humans wouldn't..."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Do you mean to say humans wouldn't do it?"

The Hero: "..."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "Well, many worlds have already been laid waste to in this fashion."

The Hero: "Worlds?"

The Demon King: "Ah, that's just research that's been done by our clan. Don't worry about it. I want... I want to see something that has never been seen before."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "As The Hero: you should understand."

The Hero: "What about?"

The Demon King: "I can't really put it in words."

The Hero: "Aren't you a scholar?"

The Demon King: "A scholar...? Yeah I guess I am."

The Hero: "Then explain it."

The Demon King: "Hmm..., in essence"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Have you ever thought, 'There's something beyond that hill yonder' or 'What will there be at the place where this ship is sailing'? That happy, expectant feeling?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience



Economics: The production of goods within a society and the storage of said goods until deemed fit, the searching of people who need these goods and the distribution of goods to said people, and the selling of goods to people who need them.

Slavery: The practice of making a person the property of another person. The slave has to follow the orders, work for, and may even be bought and sold by the owner. Most slaves were not allowed to own any wealth, but some countries like the Roman Empire allowed slaves to save money until they could buy back their own freedoms.

Colonization: The practice of acquiring territory outside one's own country. Particularly during the Great Age of Navigation, many European countries acquired colonies in Asia and Africa. Many colonized people were heavily exploited and lived in harsh conditions.

The Hero: "I suppose it happens, actually, it happens quite a lot."

The Demon King: "It does doesn't it? You're a Hero after all!"

The Hero: "Why are you so happy?"

The Demon King: "That's exactly what I want to see!"

The Hero: "... You want to be a hero?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "Close. But no cigar. Like I said I'm a scholar, and furthermore, I'm the Demon King..."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "I can't say it's a great fortune that I am, but I do feel a sense of responsibility, and I would hate to push this on to someone else. I don't intend to waste time on entertaining fantasies of a person who can never be a Hero trying to be a Hero. ---- But, I want to see things which I've never seen before."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "I'll say it again. 'Be mine, Hero.' So that what I foresee will not occur, be my eyes, be my light, be my sword."

The Hero: "I refuse."

The Demon King: "No way?"

The Hero: "No way."

The Demon King: "Absolutely not?"

The Hero: "Absolutely not."

The Demon King: "Is there any room for negotiation?"

The Hero: "No."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "Are you kidding? Of course not."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "I see that there is."

The Hero: "Why do you insist on looking down on me? You think you can adopt this attitude because you're a scholar?"

The Demon King: "I'm a scholar, but I'm also an economist. An economist never gives up. No matter what it is, there will always be a compromise for tomorrow."

The Hero: "That sounds even more heroic than me."

The Demon King: "According to the stories, I'm supposed to offer you 'Half the World.'"

The Hero: "Heh. Half."

The Demon King: "There's a lot of surplus."

The Hero: "There probably isn't such a Hero out there. Or if there is, he isn't a Hero if he can change his convictions."

The Demon King: "Yeah, all the stories I know off end in this way too."

The Hero: "Uncool."

The Demon King: "I think so too. From the beginning, there really isn't much point to this whole Demon King world conquest thing. Even if I were to transfer 50% of everything in the world to you, from a Market standpoint or even a Legal standpoint, there are a lot of problem with this agreement."

The Hero: "You can't shake a Hero's conviction with such lies."

The Demon King: "It's just as you say."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "From the beginning, I would never accept 50% of the Demon World. Owning a land which I know nothing about wouldn't make me happy in the least. I'm also not the kind of Hero who's interested in Bribery or gold. As long as I have a bed, and have enough food to make me happy, that would be enough for me."

The Demon King: "So you have the convictions of Honourable Poverty."

The Hero: "Don't talk about poverty, you're the Demon King."

The Demon King: "Even I have no interest in the Annexing of territory anyway."



Bribery: The practice of giving gold or money to a person, in order to obtain special favours and concessions for oneself. Originally, this was limited to Governments and people in positions of power, but the Hero has no wish to be involved in this practice.

The Hero: "What? Really?"

The Demon King: "From the point of view of the next administration, there will be problems with pride or popular needs and the embers of conflict will still remain. While this negotiation is important, I have no intention of inflicting further evil on the next generation."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Hmm... Is that the case?"

The Demon King: "That's right. There's no easy way of expressing this '50%' agreement. It's not a simple case of pointing out 'This or That'.

The Hero: "What do you mean?"

The Demon King: "In other words, it's a problem of how to divide the world. The problem is with focussing on dividing the world only into 'The Human World and the Demon World' or 'the Hero's World and the Demon King's World.'"

The Hero: "Yes, that's quite right."

The Demon King: "Isn't it? If we were to do this sort of transfer, the war will surely begin again in the next generation. This isn't a negotiation or a cooperation, it's just a delay."

The Hero: "Hmph."

The Demon King: "And that's why I reject such an arrangement."

The Hero: "Then, negotiations have failed. You've taken up exactly half a day. ... Even though I don't have the will to fight you anymore... Do you know what I'm say, Demon King?"

The Demon King: "Wait, I have a proposition."

The Hero: "Really, what?"

The Demon King: "Let's not be stingy with just half of it. I'll give you the whole thing."

The Hero: "Eh?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "I'll transfer the whole thing. But the land doesn't belong to me so I can't give it to you. I want ---- the Hero. In return, I give myself to you in my entire. These are my terms, and I offer myself to you. So please, become mine."

The Hero: "Y-You"

The Demon King: "You look stupid if you just flap your lips."

The Hero: "Wh- What the"

The Demon King: "That's the terms of my proposition."

The Hero: "Do you know what you're saying?"

The Demon King: "Yes I do."

The Hero: "So, you're serious!?"

The Demon King: "Of course."

The Hero: "Think about what you're saying! Ha- Ha- Have some discretion! You're
The Demon King: aren't you?"

The Demon King: "You don't have to be so surprised. I've been told that in the Human World, even 15 year old sons of farmers and daughters of innkeepers get involved in such affairs and sweet talk and sweet promises all over the place."

The Hero: "Don't listen to these sort of things."

The Demon King: "I really read about it in a book. --- But merely reading about something doesn't compare to experiencing it for oneself. This is another one of those 'Things I Haven't Seen Yet'.

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "What are you saying?"



Honourable Poverty: The practice of not aiming to further one's desires or attain personal benefit, but merely to live righteously and in poverty. Some may even call it the Conviction of Honourable Poverty. The Demon King is probably referring to the Hero's stance of righteousness and his surprising lack of comprehension.

Annexation: The practice of ceding a country's territory to another country. This usually occurs after a war or diplomatic conflict. Annexation usually tears apart history and ethnicity, causing people to lose their homes and in the long term tends to sow the seeds of trouble.

The Demon King: "A great proposal is a proposal that fulfils even 10% of the proponent's goals at the time of the proposition. I've never had this precious experience of confessing, "Let me give you my virginity" before. It's making my heart beat so fast."

The Hero: "Yet you look perfectly calm."

The Demon King: "I'm not allowed to?"

The Hero: "No-no!"

The Demon King: "Absolutely not?"

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Absolutely."

The Demon King: "It seems to me that we have more room for negotiation than before."

The Hero: "Don't come any closer."

The Demon King: "As long as you don't give me your permission, I won't do anything of the sort. I'm a late-bloomer."

The Hero: "Didn't you say before that you were a Contract Idealist?"

The Demon King: "That's the truth. 'Late Bloomer' is just a cover for the truth."

The Hero: "Why do you have to be so impossible!?"

The Demon King: "Hero"

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "Mm... I'm not very good at talking."

The Hero: "You were very articulate when you were describing all those tragic futures."

The Demon King: "That's because it's my field of expertise."

The Hero: "What sort of expertise is the death?"

The Demon King: "Economics is a war without blood."

The Hero: "That's scary. Actually, the thought of a Demon King who can't even fight in the first place is already scary."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "It wasn't my intention to scare you... I'm sorry for all the confusion."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "I'm going to do a bit of sales talk."

The Hero: "Ohh... There she goes again."

The Demon King: "You'll really benefit from owning me"

The Hero: "How so?"

The Demon King: "I'm a brilliant accountant, I can guarantee it'll be perfect."

The Hero: "So that's what it was? An accountant?"

The Demon King: "Also"

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "We can finish this war."

The Hero: "Didn't you already say that was impossible?"

The Demon King: "Of course, it'll be impossible to end it immediately. The Human kings would never agree to it either. Even were I to surrender, I would simply face a coup. A new Demon King would rise in the Demon World and the humans would welcome that. This war has become a vital part of human society, no matter how bad you think it is."

The Hero: "..."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "But, precisely because of this, if we can welcome this 'Alternate Future', not just for me, but for the Three Thousand Worlds, this will be another thing that has never been seen before."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "So what of it?"

The Hero: "It's..."

The Demon King: "Hm?"

The Hero: "You are"

The Demon King: "Yes, I am."

The Hero: "You've been thinking about this all this while?"

The Demon King: "If ending the war is the job of the military, then finding the end is the job of the King."

The Hero: "And for that purpose--- Umm, you want me...?"

The Demon King: "Yes, well. You could say that."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Oh but don't be mistaken. I really do want you. I want to go with you together to the other side. I want to take morning walks with you. And I really am an accountant, that wasn't a lie. If you wanted me to, I could do our household budget sheets and our health planning. Is that enough? Is it enough? Oh, it isn't... Well, even though I won't say I'm the best, I'm pretty good to be around. I'm a very quiet Demon King."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

Even if you left me in a room all day, I promise I won't be a nuisance. I'm probably not very good to sleep with, but it all comes as part of the set."



Explanation

Three Thousand Worlds: This refers to the entire universe. In Buddhism, a thousand small worlds makes a medium sized world and a thousand middle sized worlds makes a large sized world. In the biggest of the worlds, there are three levels of thousand worlds, hence Three Thousand Worlds.

The Hero: "Why are you so flustered?"

The Demon King: "So that you don't get cheated in this contract, let me just warn you that I'm horrible at cooking. Cooking is a science, isn't it? I lack the ability to do things like colloidization or emulsification so it might be really difficult."

The Hero: "She is really missing the point..."

The Demon King: "And also, ah—Well. I think I really lack the physical beauty that most adult human males desire... I don't exercise enough, I don't have the proper upbringing..."

The Hero: "Is that so? I.. I don't think so."

The Demon King: "No, it's true."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: "Oh, oh?"

The Demon King: "It's because I'm wearing these special robes which the Chief Maid made for me--- They hide my flaws. You probably can't see it, but they pinch my flabby arms together."

The Hero: "You look like you're going to cry."

The Demon King: "Isn't it so flabby!?"

The Hero: "No, it's... You look gorgeous... Especially your chest and breasts."

The Demon King: "It's okay, you don't have to comfort me. I'm fully aware about this and I apologize for it. You must understand that I come from a race with a long tradition of prizing intelligence over physical appearances..."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Demon King: "We're a strange race of demons who are completely unconcerned with physical appearances. – When I was a little girl, about 150 years ago, if I had paid my concern to my body and my appearance, I wouldn't be faced with this fear of a Recall that entrepreneurs tend to face during such an important negotiation."

The Hero: "Your terminology is very complex."

The Demon King: "There are many complex things in this world."

The Hero: "Oh jeez."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "In any case, while this item may give a physically unsatisfactory impression, in terms of Economic knowledge... knowledge... Umm, isn't it just knowledge? Is that all I have to offer!?"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Another thing I can offer is loyalty. I come from a race of long lived scholars. And we really advocate contracts. Once a person like me takes up a contract, it is bound deep into our soul, regardless of past or present, with ties perhaps stronger than steel --- I will stay by it. In sickness or in health, I will stay by your side, I promise it..."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "What's wrong? Don't you want to be mine? I'm not selfish, I'll be satisfied as long as we can get to 'The Other Side of the Hill'."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Hero---?"

The Hero: "Hey, Demon King"

The Demon King: "Yes...."

The Hero: "If... If, I become yours... A lot of blood will flow"

The Demon King: "--- Yeah"

The Hero: "I'd have to kill people, wouldn't I?"

The Demon King: "..... Yes. I won't lie to you."

The Hero: "There'll be rivers of blood, won't there."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "Until this all ends, I cannot promise your hands will not be sullied by blood. Whether it's you or me, we'll probably have to do some terrible things."

The Hero: "I... I'll be called a traitor."

The Demon King: "I can hide your true identity. While we use my name, your legend will remain beautiful, this I can also promise. The Hero is--- the hope of humanity."

The Hero: "Do we really have to go to the other side of the hill?"

The Demon King: "... That's not true. We also have the choice of continuing this waltz-like conflict and waste of resources, enjoying a peace made from mountains of corpses and rivers of blood."

The Hero: "And that would require an unbelievable amount of sacrifice, wouldn't it? Ultimately... This extremely long war would have to continue. Even if I kill you, even if I take down the Demon King."

The Demon King: "But you wouldn't have to dirty your hands directly."

The Hero: "You don't want to make a contract with me anymore?"

The Demon King: "I don't want to make a dishonest contract. This is... The world's most important conversation."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "A gain from a lie lasts but a night."

The Hero: "You have very strong convictions."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "This isn't about good or bad. It's just economics proven by Game Theory."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "In short, to overcome 'The Prisoner's Dilemma', we should cooperate to achieve a stable relationship."

The Hero: "Okay, I'll be yours."

The Demon King: "Is that okay?"

The Hero: "Yes. ... But just so you know"

The Demon King: "?"

The Hero: "I'm not just doing this for the boobs!"

The Demon King: "So all you need is this? **rub rub**"

The Hero: "Don't rub yourself!"

The Demon King: "Hero"

The Hero: "What is it, Demon King?"

The Demon King: "-----"

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "I want to touch. May I please touch you...?"

The Hero: "..."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Demon King: "You don't believe me?"

The Hero: "It's just that your voice suddenly became very polite."

The Demon King: "I want to touch you just for a little bit. ---- Am I not allowed to? I, I don't have any strange intentions. You can tie me up if you want, too. I'm a very contractually obligated Demon King."

The Hero: "That's enough, I understand. --- Fine."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "Your hands are very cold."

The Demon King: "Cold? --- I'm sorry."

The Hero: "No, it feels good."



Game Theory: An extremely new 20th century branch of Mathematics. It is the study and investigation of what happens when several players work together to achieve a certain goal. It is especially important to the fields of Economics and Computer Science.

feels

The Demon King: "---- I belong to the Hero."

Chapter 1: The Demon King's Castle, that Profound Audience

The Hero: “--- I belong to the Demon King.”

The Demon King: “The Contract is complete.”

The Hero: “The Contract is complete.”

The Demon King: “Yayyyy”

squeeze

The Hero: “... Ukh. Let me go.”

The Demon King: “You said It was okay to touch you.”

The Hero: “Ugh. ... Are you done? That’s... So what should we do first?”

The Demon King: “That’s true... Let’s start with getting some food.”

The Hero: “We’ve got a long trip ahead of us.”

The Demon King: “You don’t seem to like this.”

The Hero: “No. I’m used to trips. More importantly, are you okay with this?”

The Demon King: “Of course. I’m going to have a Hero, and. Well. From now on I never plan to leave you.”

The Hero: “Of course. It’s a promise, I’ll protect you.”

The Demon King: “Of course. --- Let’s go search for ‘The Other Side of the Hill’ in this great world.”

END OF CHAPTER 1

— The Winter Kingdom, the Village of Wintering

The Hero: “Ooh, it’s turned cold.”

The Demon King: “That’s because winter is coming.”

The Hero: “Are you alright, Demon King?”

The Demon King: “Alright... I want to say I am, but to tell the truth, I’m tired from walking. Why am I so tired?”

The Hero: “That’s the way it is with snowpaths. Moreover, you don’t have very much physical strength.

The Demon King: “I’m an intellectual Demon King.”

The Hero: “... Is it alright to be coming to such a remote location?”

The Demon King: “Remote?”

The Hero: “No, I mean, as you said, the food of the Central Continent revolves around Grain. In that case, shouldn’t we be focussing on Grain?”

The Demon King: “Yes, that’s right.”

The Hero: “In that case, wouldn’t it be better to head to wheat producing, agricultural countries like the Lake Country or the Elm Country?”

The Demon King: “If they’re willing to listen to me.”

The Hero: “Ah—”

The Demon King: “I also think it’s better if you didn’t show yourself for the time being.”

The Hero: “Oh?”

The Demon King: “Yeah. You were sent to me for some reason, somebody might have some kind of vendetta against you.”

The Hero: “Nothing of the sort.”

The Demon King: “Besides, if we wanted to revolutionize any place, in order to be persuasive, we’ll need actual experiments and data.”

The Hero: “That’s true.”

The Demon King: “I’ve made arrangements in this village. We’ll be experimenting on agricultural support for grain and other crops.”

The Hero: “Is that so?”

The Demon King: “I’ve already sent an agent to infiltrate it.”

The Hero: “You’re good at planning, huh.”

The Demon King: “It is fundamentally crucial to plan for anything.”

The Hero: “In this village, then?”

The Demon King: “Yes, this is a completely unexceptional village, no?”

The Hero: “Yeah, I know a lot of villages like this.”

The Demon King: “This is a typical Pioneer Settlement on the outskirts of the Southern Kingdoms. It comprises of a network of smallholder famers and craftsmen working in a relaxed compound agricultural system.”

The Hero: “And to think there’s still a war with the Demon Army raging.”

The Demon King: “Even so, they still cling to their life on the earth. That is an admirable trait of Humanity.”

The Hero: “So, who’s your agent?”

The Demon King: “I’ve got her to prepare a small lodging for us, I wonder where it is, I only know its somewhere in the village.”

The Hero: “Ah—, is that so? It shouldn’t be very difficult to find, but the sun is about to set and we can’t possibly wander about in this cold.”

The Demon King: “Mmm, that’s true.”

The Hero: “Yes it is.”

The Demon King: “Demon King! Demon King! ~ <musical note, can someone help me insert it? I have no idea how>”

The Hero: “Wha-“

The Demon King: “Oh, I know that voice.”

The Chief Maid: “Demon King ~ ♪”

The Demon King: “Allow me to introduce you two. Hero!”



Grain: As an agricultural product, there are many sorts of grain including Wheat, Barley, Oats and Rye. Though wheat is important and easy to eat, because it needs to be ground with a mill and is difficult to grow in the cold, it is considered an extravagance in Northern Europe.

Pioneer Settlement: In order to create fields from a wasteland, villages need to be set up from nothing at all. Villagers need to endure extreme

hardship, removing stones, pulling out tree roots and tilling wastelands for ploughing. In return all the prepared land become their property.

The Hero: “What a fool! This is a human village! Don’t go about shouting ‘Demon King, Demon King!’”

The Demon King: “Hmm, that’s true. Take care in future.”

The Chief Maid: “Hehehe, I understand, Demon King!” **grin**

The Demon King: “Well, it’s alright. Don’t be so angry.”

The Hero, “—”

The Chief Maid: “You’ll get wrinkles if you continue to be so mad.”

The Hero: “And who is this?”

The Demon King: “This is my subordinate, leader of the Maids, the Chief Maid.”

The Chief Maid: “As introduced, I am the Chief Maid. I have been taking care of the Demon King since she was little. Having watched over her all this while, I am so elated by the marriage between the Hero and the Demon King that my chest is positively shaking.”

The Hero: “There’s a lot of issues with that, but first of all, we’re not married.”

The Chief Maid: “Is that so?”

The Hero: “We merely have an Unlimited Mutual Ownership Contract.”

The Chief Maid: “I see, isn’t that the same as a marriage?”

The Demon King: “That’s the difference between a Dutch clover and a Clover.”

The Chief Maid: “Are they not the same things?”

The Demon King: “They have different names so they’ve got a different charm.”

The Chief Maid: “Ah, I understand! It’s like the difference between a Maid, Servant, Handmaiden and a Human Pillow.”

The Demon King: “Is that also a different charm?”

The Hero: “... Are they for real?”

The Chief Maid: “Charm is very important. It is no exaggeration to say that charm alone forms 80% of the relationship between a man and a woman.”

The Demon King: “For real! In that case, there practically aren’t any materials left!?”

The Chief Maid: “That’s the beauty of it.”

The Hero: “Umm— It’s cold, so...”

The Chief Maid: “Oh dear”

The Demon King: “The Hero said that he’s cold, can we do anything about it?”

The Chief Maid: “Just come this way, I’ll show you around.”

The Demon King: “Ohh, how did it go?”

The Chief Maid: “It’s nothing exceptionally large, but I’ve refurbished an old mansion near the village.”

The Demon King: “Very good, Chief Maid.”

—- In a Dilapidated Mansion.

The Hero: “Hey, hey, isn’t this rather massive?”

The Chief Maid: “It’s nothing. It isn’t even 1% of the Demon King Castle.”

The Hero: “That’s a Dungeon, don’t group them together.”

The Demon King: “But I live there.”

The Hero: “Ah, that’s true.”

The Chief Maid: “Please come this way, I will serve you tea in just a moment.”

The Demon King: “I’m sorry—”

The Hero: “Just what sort of relationship do you have with this subordinate?”

The Demon King: “Hmm, you might not be able to tell, but the Chief Maid is a relative.”

The Hero: “She’s a scholar? Like the rest of your race?”

Chapter 2: Please Make Us Humans

The Demon King: “Mm—It might be a bit inaccurate to call us scholars. More accurately, we’re ‘A Race that can’t control our Curiosity’”, and a race that focuses on a specific field of study. Even though she’s older than me, the Chief Maid has adopted ‘The Way of the Maid’.”



Dutch Clover: Basically just a clover. As a legume, it is capable of Nitrogen Fixation. In other words, natural nitrogen fertilizers are produced and enrich the soil. In addition, bees can be reared from which honey can be obtained and it can also be used for animal feed.

Dungeon: A prison located in the basement of a castle. Additionally, legend tells of a massive labyrinth located in the basement. Further, the

stage of danger situated in this underground labyrinth is also a dungeon.

The Hero, “Hmm”

The Chief Maid: “It’s rather similar to you, Sir, who has adopted The Way of Chivalry.”

The Demon King: “That’s quick.”

The Chief Maid: “Here is some red tea. I have added ample honey.”

The Demon King: “Well, I’ve been brought up in this manner, sometimes I even let her command the Demon Armies.”

The Hero: “Hey, is that something maids can do!?”

The Chief Maid: “Whatever my master requires of me. That is ‘The Way of the Maid’.”

The Demon King: “On another note, who does this house belong to?”

The Hero: “Yeah, I’d like to know as well.”

The Chief Maid: “It appears that the building formerly belonged to nobility of this land. The heir of the family died in the war, and since then, the building has been abandoned.”

The Demon King: “I trust you went through the proper channels?”

The Chief Maid: “Yes, of course. Even the construction crew who we used to refurbish the place were paid in cash.”

The Demon King: “Hmm.”

The Hero: “That’s surprisingly reasonable.”

The Demon King: “One day, an opponent may appear that requires us to demonstrate our true prowess. Until then, as long as we can solve issues peaceably we shouldn’t resort to force. ... It would be problematic if we were hated.”

The Hero: “?”

The Demon King: “Nothing really... Then, let’s stay in this place. What should we do about our identities?”

The Chief Maid: “I have already made overtures to the Village Chief and various other elders. I have told them that you are the noble daughter of a highly influential scholar from the College of Divinity in the Holy Royal Capital.”

The Demon King: “Will that be alright?”

The Hero: “As long as you dress the part?”

The Demon King: “Would this Lab Coat and Robe do?”

The Hero: “Doesn’t look like it.”

The Chief Maid: “No way.”

The Demon King: “But it’s so comfortable...”

The Hero: “Noble daughters don’t choose their clothes based on comfort.”

The Chief Maid: “That’s true. You should probably wear some clothes that draw attention and provoke nervousness.”

The Demon King: “Are you saying I don’t provoke nervousness?”

The Chief Maid: “That is not what I was saying. However...”

The Demon King: “What?”

The Chief Maid: “Please lend me your ear for a moment.”

The Demon King: *whispers*

The Demon King” Hero, Hero

The Hero: “What is it?”

The Demon King: “Meat which does not provoke nervousness is useless meat, right?”

The Hero: “What’s this all of a sudden?”

The Demon King: “It’s as I said”

The Hero: “Ah—”

The Demon King: “Is it useless meat? Is it not!?”

The Hero: “Ah—That’s—”

The Chief Maid: “Would you like another cup of tea?”

The Demon King: “Do I make you shake and tremble?”

The Hero: "I can't really comment."

The Chief Maid: "Especially because you don't get enough exercise in the winter."

The Demon King: "Ohhhh"

The Hero: "... That's, shouldn't you wear something flashy every now and then? For a change of view. It brings out the charm that person was talking about."

The Chief Maid: "Indeed, Demon King."

The Demon King: "Is that so..."

The Hero: "Right, so how did the greetings go?"

The Chief Maid: "Yes, that's right. I explained to them that the College's researchers took an interest in the village in order to teach new Farming Techniques."

The Demon King: "That saves a lot of work"

The Hero: "That's true, farming is a lot of work to begin with."

The Chief Maid: "Yes. ... Demon King."

The Demon King: "Hm?"

The Chief Maid: "What should we do about the Demon Army?"

The Demon King: "Ahh. That's right."

The Hero: "Has something happened?"

The Demon King: "The Hero and I had a climatic showdown in the Demon King's Great Hall. Spread the rumour that the both of us were seriously injured. I'm currently recuperating from my injuries in the Demon King Castle. The fate of the Hero is uncertain, but one theory holds that he managed to escape."

The Chief Maid: "As you command."

The Demon King: "What do you think of that, Hero?"

The Hero: “Ahh. It doesn’t matter to me. I am after all yours.”

The Chief Maid: “My my.”

The Demon King: “Don’t laugh— This rumour should buy us about a year. The Aggressive Faction of the Demon Army should believe I’m planning something and hold off any actions for the moment.”

The Hero: “One year, huh.”

The Demon King: “I have other plans as well. If we really intended to hold out, we could probably extend it to three years. If we drag this on for too long, there’ll probably be an all-out war between Humans and Demons.”

The Hero: “...”

The Demon King: “We have to find the ‘Ending Which Has Yet To Be Seen’ before that.”

The Hero: “Don’t you just want to see it?”

The Demon King: “... If I don’t find it, I’ll be hated by my master.”

The Hero: “Ah. That. Th... That’s. That’s right.”

The Demon King: “Let’s leave that for now.”

The Hero: “Y-Yeah.”

The Demon King: “To bring about this ending, we need to reform agriculture.”

The Hero: “Agriculture?”

The Demon King: “The practice of farming.”

The Hero: “Isn’t the practice of farming just sowing seeds and reaping the harvest?”

The Demon King: “We’re going to reform that.”

The Hero: “Uhh, can it be reformed?”

The Demon King: “Do you know that if you continue sowing grain in the same plot of land, the quality of the soil will gradually worsen?”

The Hero: “Ah—, I’ve heard of this. You erode the Blessings of the Earth, don’t you?”

The Demon King: “To circumvent this, the Three Field Rotation System was developed, where you split the fields into three plots. One is used in winter, one in summer and one is allowed to rest. And then you Rotate. The Blessings of the Earth are hence restored to the plots which are allowed to rest.”

The Hero: “That’s gotta be tiring. Wait. Why would you even use Rotation? Why don’t you just till a new field? If you use a new piece of land, then there’ll be lots of Blessings in the Earth.”



Three Field Rotation System: By rotating between the Winter Crops Plot (Wheat or Rye) -> Summer Crops Plot (Barley or Oats) -> Resting Plot (Pastures), you can farm without destroying the nutrients of the earth. This was predominant in the Middle Ages through Northern Europe, England and Northern Germany.

Rotation: I’m going to skip this explanation because I expect you to understand what Rotation means. This word, like most terminology, is given in English, so it would be unknown to some Japanese people.

The Demon King: “How stupid. It’s a huge mistake to think that everyone has the monstrous battle ability and body strength and magical dispellation powers that you do.”

The Hero: “I-Is that so?”

The Demon King: “Relocating takes a lot of time and a great deal of effort. Furthermore, as you increase the area of agriculture, you will also have to increase the distance that you will need to harvest and sow your crops, and the area which you need to protect against monsters and wild beasts.”

The Hero: “Now that you say it.”

The Demon King: “This place does use Three Field Rotation, but”

The Hero: “Mmhmm”

The Demon King: “I aim to reform the system in order to increase the crop yields.”

The Hero: “I understand your aims, but what exactly are you going to do?”

The Demon King: “Rotation is a good idea. I intend to reform this into Four-Field Rotation.”

The Hero: “Mhm”

The Demon King: “In other words, a Four-Field system: a field for Barley, a field for Clover, a field for Wheat, and a field for Turnips. These four fields will be set a four year period.”

The Hero: “That doesn’t sound very different from a Three Field Rotation.”

The Demon King: “A Three-Field Rotation has a cycle of complete rest, doesn’t it? This has a similar resting period, but the rest consists of growing Clovers.”

The Hero: “Is that a very big difference?”

The Demon King: “The secret to making the difference, is not just the Grain, but also the Turnips.”

The Hero: “It’s great for stew, but what could happen just by using it?”

The Demon King: “Of course, people can eat it too. It’s not healthy to just subsist on grain. But these turnips can also be used for feed, specifically pig feed.”

The Chief Maid: “Pigs?”

The Demon King: “As you know, meat is an extremely important source of nutrients in this poor and cold place. In the winter, it is difficult to get sufficient fruits or vegetables and to hunt for game. However, in order to consume pork, in order to successfully rear the pig, food is necessary. But in the winter, do people not already lack food?”

The Hero: “Yeah, that’s right. That’s why before winter, pigs are slaughtered to a minimum number. They are made into sausages, bacon or ham and are stored as food for the winter. It’s a scene which characterizes the winter no matter which part of the Southern Kingdoms one is in.”

The Demon King: “Although supplementary crops are grown in the winter... in other words, the season in which agricultural nutrients are insufficient, in the end, one is still growing crops like any other season. Is that not inefficient? Unfortunately, one can’t even maintain animal husbandry nor increase the numbers of livestock.”

The Hero: “... Now that you say it...”

The Demon King: “In this case, one may use Clover and Turnips. In the summer, Clover can be used as pastures for pigs and goats. Even without livestock, they can even be used for fertilizer. Turnips are useful in the winter as animal feed.”

The Hero: “— Is that so?”

The Demon King: “That’s right. This technique fulfils the three ideas of ‘Not resting the fields’, ‘Not decreasing the yields’ and ‘Growing crops apart from agricultural products’.”

The Hero: “And that’s why it’s this village, then. You’ve thought this through, Demon King.”



Four Field Crop Rotation: The Norfolk Crop Rotation system. This technique began in 18th Century England in Norfolk. Planting follows the sequence of Wheat -> Turnips -> Barley -> Clover. The ground does not need to fallow, yet livestock may still be reared. Known as the Agricultural Revolution, this was a key reason for the large increase in human population.

The Chief Maid: "What do you mean?"

The Hero: "A village like this does both agriculture and livestock rearing, in such a self-sufficient system, this agricultural system may be most appropriate. This applies for experiments as well. In urban areas, only wheat is grown in large quantities, hence for this to happen they are established in warm, nutrient rich areas, reducing the point of the experiments. This is, in short, an idea for 'Saving cold, poor areas'."

The Chief Maid: "Is that so!"

The Demon King: "There are other ideas as well. Such as fertilizing the fish of the South Ice Seas or reforming agricultural implements."

The Hero: "You have many ideas, then."

The Demon King: "The difficult bit is reorganizing the village. If we were to create pastures, it would be difficult to control the livestock like the sheep."

In this dangerous age, a simple turf war for the 'Right to New Pastures' could turn into an all out war."

The Hero: "That's true, that we wouldn't want that."

The Chief Maid: "But as you have said before, people value their land. Can we really solve it as we discussed?"

The Demon King: "That's why we need Demons."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "Demons appear and attacks the village. After all, there doesn't seem to be a garrison, does there? We just need a few demons. We'll threaten them a little and raze it moderately."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "After the villagers escape, the Demon Hordes and Imperial Demon Army skirmish with the Knights who charge in to the rescue before pulling out. When the pioneers return, they then fall under the protection of the Feudal Lord. In such a situation, neither the agricultural reorganization nor the collectivization of the villages will be a problem to carry out."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Are you disillusioned?"

The Hero: "... Demon King."

The Demon King: "Of course, we'll hold back. To begin with, with this technique, we will require someone in the Kingdom, or at least someone in the Knights as a turncoat or to understand my plan. But such a strategy will result in accidents. It is impossible to prevent blood from flowing."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: “However I have decided what to do. At this rate, this nightmarish war of attrition will rage for a century. I have no intention of allowing this unsustainable impasse. I want to read the ‘Legends of the End’.”

The Hero: “...”

The Demon King: “Do you have complaints? Do you hate me? Bu... But you can’t. You’re mine after all, and I’ll never let you go.”

The Chief Maid: “...”

The Demon King: “I suppose you want to exterminate the Demon King after all. In that case, there’s nothing for it... Since I’m yours, I can’t dodge your blade...”

The Hero: “Ugh. You’re way too scared, Demon King.”

The Demon King: “...”

The Hero: “Even so, people will be saved right? There will be people who will be saved by this 3-year interregnum right? Moreover, if this Four Field Rotation System succeeds, tens of thousands of starving children will be able to greet the summer every year, right? — And after doing this to end the war, everything goes back to the people, right?”

The Demon King: “That’s right.”

The Hero: “Then I am, after all, yours.”

The Chief Maid: “...”

The Hero: “But while doing this may be for the best, please try to avoid unnecessary sacrifices.”

The Demon King: “Ugh...”

The Hero: “What should I do? ... Well I kind of know already.”

The Demon King: "It's as you expect. You need to help me carry out the 'Side of Righteousness'. Drive back the invading demons and become the military vanguard of the leaders of the Southern Kingdoms."

The Hero: "What a farce."

The Demon King: "Yes. You're talking to the Master of Evil, a farce is to be expected after all."

The Hero: "You're incorrigible even if you visited hell a 100 times."

The Demon King: "Good that you know."

The Hero: "But it would be best if we didn't use this strategy from the start."

The Demon King: "But this is the last resort. At any rate, let's first try to raise the crop yields. Eliminating malnutrition is more important than anything else."

— The Village of Wintering on the way back from the home of the Village Chief

The Hero: "Damnit!"

The Demon King: "This is more difficult than I thought."

The Hero: "That's true."

The Chief Maid: "I didn't think he would be so ignorant."

The Hero: "There's nothing for it. This may be part of an experiment to us, but for a small, impoverished village like this in the Winter Kingdom, this is just one year of not working that will result in famine."

The Chief Maid: "That's true..."

The Demon King: "If you think about it, the Demon World may be a better place to do this."

The Hero: "That's true I suppose."

The Chief Maid: “Has Sir Hero been to many parts of the Demon World?”

The Hero: “Yeah. More than any other human, I believe.”

The Chief Maid: “But with the Village Chief having that sort of attitude, how will agricultural reforms go? It’s difficult...”

The Demon King: “Hm. It wasn’t blatant rejection so it’s not difficult to deal with.”

The Hero: “If you look at it from the Village Chief’s Point of View, the Demon King looks like a Princess of Nobility. He can’t just oppose it to your face.”

The Chief Maid: “In that case, shall we...”

The Demon King: “Absolutely not.”

The Chief Maid: “But, your Majesty, to achieve our goals, we should be willing to use any methods.”

The Demon King: “To achieve agricultural reform, it is unavoidable that we must exterminate petty squabbling lords and landlords. It’s essential for raising productivity. But in order to achieve the technological level required for intensive farming in the first place, to exterminate the leaders of our first experimental subject will bring about a hundred disadvantages and not a single advantage.”

The Hero: “Very true.”

The Chief Maid: “What a pickle.”

The Demon King: “Hmm... AS I thought, education levels are the bottleneck.”

The Hero: “Education?”

The Chief Maid: “How are they related?”

The Demon King: “Well, there’s a few. This is the next level, but it seems if I don’t get involved here and there, things will not progress.”

The Chief Maid: “What do you plan on doing?”

The Demon King: “Think about it. Even if we were to increase the productivity of the village, if this doesn’t get passed on to the other villages, we won’t be able to achieve large scale reform. Yet if we were to go around teaching this to everyone, it’s impossible from both a time and economic perspective.”

The Hero: “That’s true.”

The Demon King: “That’s why, we need specialized staff who know the new methods to spread them to the various countries. Well, whether comrade or subordinate is unimportant, human resources are important.”

The Hero: “Hmm”

The Chief Maid: “And hence, education?”

The Demon King: “On a side note, how is education done in the human world?”

The Hero: “Even if you say that, what is education in the first place?”

The Chief Maid: “... Huh”

The Demon King: “Ehh, ahh”

The Hero: “It’s pointless then. As expected, you will require some difficult vocabulary.”

The Demon King: “In short, it’s passing information to children and teenagers.”

The Hero: “Say that from the start then! That’s simple isn’t it? Of course human society has such a thing, To start with, babies learn how to speak, right? Following that, they are cared for by Granny and Gramps and brought up by them. When the parents are out farming or hunting, the many kids in the same generation help take care of the child.”

The Chief Maid: “How efficient. Even the elderly can work.”

The Hero: “Despite their age, they can still be of use in agriculture. They don’t know difficult words like you do, but things like when and what to plant, how to read the weather, how to avoid wild beasts, come naturally after just 5 years in a farming village. Moreover, winters here are deep. Snow falls abundantly and storms are likely to happen. Villages in these parts spend most of winter shut up out here. At this time, the peasants make handicraft or knit clothes from wool. Children listen to knowledgeable people during the long winters, listening to tales like Heroic Legends or Kingly Legends or even fairy tales. Ahh—Wait.

There are tales of Demons as well. The smarter ones, or sons of the village chief, also learn to read and write.”

The Demon King: “Hmm...”

The Hero: “This is different in the cities. City education is done by priests in Church or governors. Do you know of governors? Umm... They’re like personal scholars teaching Legends, Reading and Writing or Arithmetic. Rich merchants or noblemen engage governors for their children to learn every knowledge and technique.”

The Chief Maid: “And the Hero also went through this?”

The Hero: “Well, in a way. My grandfather was rather like a governor... Well in any case, let’s drop it. What do you think? Is education this sort of thing?”

The Demon King: “Yes, it’s like that.”

The Hero: “Leave affairs of Human Society to me.”

The Demon King: “Well, human education is really backward.”

The Hero: “Backward!?”

The Demon King: “Mm. It has a bad performance. It’s completely underdeveloped.”

The Hero: “That’s not the same!”

The Demon King: "I'm just kidding."

The Hero: "Ugh"

The Demon King: "But this is natural education. It's understandable."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Yet, considering that we're aiming for an unnatural level of growth, we're going to need an unnatural environment. ... However, education requires money."

The Hero: "Money, huh. I'm a Hero. Leave it to me. If I sell my gear, will I be able to raise enough money?"

The Chief Maid: "Umm, if you sold your sword, your shield and your armour... You should be able to get about 18,000 gold pieces?"

The Hero: "Oh? Impressive, eh?"

The Chief Maid: "How much do we require?"

The Demon King: "Hmm. Let's see, extrapolating a pattern from this year's statistics, we would need a minimum of 2,600,000 gold pieces."

The Hero: "M... My... A Hero's... Equipment..."

The Chief Maid: "Don't be at such a loss, Sir Hero."

The Demon King: "Chief Maid, further contact is prohibited."

The Chief Maid: "Yes, your Majesty ♪"

The Hero: "Jeez."

The Chief Maid: "Well, winter is coming, and no matter what, agricultural activity only begins in the summer, right? We should use this winter to slowly build up our preparations."

The Demon King: "One could say that."

The Hero: "We are in a rush though, we only have three years."

The Chief Maid: "Well, well, today we'll make a pork and potato stew."

The Demon King: "That sounds delicious."

The Hero: "Well, worrying isn't going to solve any of our problems."

The Village of Wintering, in the Hearth Room of the Acquired Mansion

The Chief Maid: "Well then, since there are many preparations to be done, I will leave you here. Dinner will be served in an hour, as I will inform you when it is time, please feel free to stay by the hearth."

The Demon King: "I understand, I'll leave it to you then."

<bang>

The Hero: "... Ugh"

The Demon King: "Are you tired, Hero?"

The Hero: "Yeah. My body isn't exceptionally exhausted though. I've been thinking of things which I don't usually have to think of and it makes my head hurt."

The Demon King: "Hehehe. I see."

The Demon King: "Hey, Hero."

The Hero: "Mm?"

The Demon King: "The hearth is warm, isn't it?"

The Hero: "Yeah. It's warm. The cold in this place is more or less tolerable in front of the hearth."

The Demon King: "Hey, Hero."

The Hero: "Mm?"

The Demon King: "Umm, if it's okay with you... Would you like to come over beside me?"

The Hero: "Why?"

The Demon King: "From this angle, the hearth is warm and feels great."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Demon King: "That is so. Look, there's a special seat for you."

The Hero: "Hm. It's true. There is."

The Demon King: "How is it?"

The Hero: "You seem very pleased with yourself, Demon King."

The Demon King: "Hm... Well, it's true that the warmth of this hearth is no achievement of mine."

The Demon King: "...."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Hero?"

The Hero: "Mm?"

The Demon King: "May I touch you?"

The Hero: "I don't really mind, but... Why?"

The Demon King: "It's nothing perverted. Your hair is dark so I want to touch it for a bit. Ah, don't be so serious."

The Hero: "My ancestors were Samurai."

The Demon King: "They were what?"

The Hero: “Eastern Knights. They could cleave armour and helmets with a single stroke.”

The Demon King: “I see, what fierce warriors.”

The Hero: “My ancestors are a bloodline of warriors.”

The Demon King: “Is that so? Apart from that, you have a lot of other wonderful things, don’t you?”

The Hero: “Is that so—”

The Demon King: “That’s right. For example, despite being next to me, you don’t show any signs of fear.”

The Hero: “The Demon King is weak, and a woman. And she doesn’t exercise.”

The Demon King: “But I’m the Demon King.”

The Hero: “Is that so?”

The Demon King: “That is so.”

The Hero: “You’re rather meek, though.”

The Demon King: “That’s a strategy.”

The Hero: “?”

The Demon King: “I’m going to negotiate with you.”

The Hero: “What about?”

The Demon King: “If I told you, this wouldn’t be a negotiation any longer.”

The Hero: “How can I understand without telling you?”

The Demon King: “That is a very complicated question. I want to explain it properly to you without incurring any misconceptions if possible.”

The Hero: “Why don’t you try telling me?”

The Demon King: “In other words, it’s cold outside, right? The Winter Wind has blown in. And it’s warm and comfortable here. Until dinner arrives, wouldn’t you like to do anything in the meantime? Of course, there is an entire mountain of issues we have to deal with, and the gargantuan task of dealing with these issues towers over us. But, since the Hero’s head hurts in the present situation, we can’t possibly carry out any efficient work.”

The Hero: “Ah—”

The Demon King: “Of course, this is just my personal view, it’s nothing more than a completely unsubstantiated personal thought, but taking into consideration your present state of fatigue, perhaps even this legend, this urban myth, as a rule I think we should not disregard any possible effective. I have read in ancient texts that warriors occasionally used this Honey Garden to remove their fatigue. But I doubt you’re used to indulging in such a method.”

The Hero: “What do you intend to do then?”

The Demon King: “I would like you to rest your head on my lap?”

The Hero: “Sure.”

The Demon King: “Ah. Uwaa. Hero...”

The Hero: “I belong to the Demon King. No need to hold back.”

The Demon King: “Hero.”

The Hero: “Mm...”

The Demon King: “Your head is so fluffy.”

The Hero: “Don’t play with it.”

The Demon King: “I’m just touching it.”

The Hero: “You smell good as well.”

The Demon King: “I bathe properly everyday, that’s why.”

The Hero: “For real?”

The Demon King: “Yeah, for real. Ever since I left the Demon World, the Chief Maid has shown me no mercy. Even though in the past I could go one week without changing clothes while I was carrying out experiments.”

The Hero: “You have very smooth thighs.”

The Demon King: “I-Is that so? Is it not flabby?”

The Hero: “It’s a good sleeping place.”

The Demon King: “Is that so. Thank goodness. You really are a master with a big heart.”

The Hero: “Umm— ... I’m a master with perverted intentions.”

The Demon King: “?”

The Demon King: “Well, Hero.”

The Hero: “What is it —?”

The Demon King: “Before, when you said you didn’t need to hold back.”

The Hero: “?”

The Demon King: “Is that true?”

The Hero: “Yes, it is.”

The Demon King: “Is that so.”

The Hero: “... What’s this about?”

The Demon King: “Mmm”

The Hero: “Don’t keep quiet, it’s scary.”

The Demon King: “I am also completely terrified.”

The Hero: “Huh?”

The Demon King: “No, how can I just leave. ‘To seek things I have yet to see’, that’s the theme of my life.”

The Hero: “??”

The Demon King: “That’s, Hero...”

The Hero: “What is it, you can just relax and say it.”

<BANG>

The Demon King: “What’s that sound?”

The Hero: “It’s from the back ... The stable?”

<DADADA>

The Demon King: “Hey! I said wait up!”

— The Stables

The Hero: “Here!”

The Demon King: “It’s pitch black,”

???: “... ..”

The Hero: (A human presence?)

The Demon King: “Wait a bit. I’ll chant an Incantation of Light...”

<Elder Sister shivering>

<Little Sister shivering greatly>

The Hero: “... What? They’re children.”

The Demon King: “What’s happened, they’re just wearing underwear.”

<CLANK>

The Chief Maid: "Well, well, my, my."

The Demon King: "Chief Maid."

The Chief Maid: "Lost and snuck in here again."

The Demon King: "Who are these people?"

The Chief Maid: "Escaped slaves. This place has been deserted for a very long while. Despite being deserted, it's not a ruin and the surrounding villages have different systems of ownership. This is a good place to escape to."

The Hero: "Slaves?"

The Chief Maid: "Yes, that's right."

The Hero: "Where would slaves come from around here?"

The Chief Maid: "From somewhere near? Aren't most of the humans around here slaves?"

The Hero: "No, They're not slaves!"

The Chief Maid: "Oh, so I was wrong?"

The Hero: "Slavery is barbaric. We'd never allow it."

The Chief Maid: "Even if you were to say such a thing."

The Demon King: "These people are Serfs."

The Hero: "Serfs...?"

The Chief Maid: "So they're slaves after all then."

The Demon King: "Serfs are different from slaves."

The Hero: "Look here. The Southern Kingdoms doesn't have slaves."

The Chief Maid: "Is that so?"

The Demon King: “The difference between Serfs and Slaves is that Serfs are allowed to have personal wealth. They own their own homes, and even their farming implements belong to them. They live together with their own families as well.”

The Hero: “Yeah, of course.”

<Elder Sister shivering>

<Little Sister shivering>

The Demon King: “On the other hand, they don’t have the freedom to choose occupations or to move around. Most importantly, their Demesne... They lead a working existence devoid of choice, tilling the lands of their landlords.”

The Hero: “...”

The Chief Maid: “... That’s totally different from slaves. Hmmmmm.”

The Hero: “...”

The Demon King: “Chief Maid, stop right there... While slavery is probably a tragic thing, within society, that it makes sense economically is a fact.”

The Chief Maid: “Is that so?”

The Demon King: “Chief Maid.”

The Chief Maid: “... I over-spoke. I offer my sincerest apologies.”

The Demon King: “...”



Serf: Peasants who do not have the right to choose occupations or migrate. They own their families, lodgings, agricultural implements, and other fixed assets. However, they have to fulfil corvee labour and an annual land tax. There are also semi-serfs who own some land and have the right to buy and sell produce.

Demesne: All the villages and farmland which a Feudal Lord controls. Within a demesne, the

Feudal Lord is the landlord, the master and the judge, answering to a superior (another Feudal Lord like a King or higher).

Within the demesne, produce from the farmland under the direct control of the Feudal Lord, the land belonging to free farmers and the land worked on by serfs; as well as tax levied on the serfs are the Feudal Lord's income.

The Hero: "..."

Little Sister shivering

Elder Sister: "U, umm... We will go in the morning. We, we don't want... Any trouble... Just for one night."

The Chief Maid: "..."

The Demon King: "Chief Maid. This isn't the first time, right? How have you been dealing with this until now?"

The Chief Maid: "Escaped slaves... I mean serfs. This is a serious crime. It's also bad for relations with powerful people nearby. We report it immediately and they come and pick them up."

The Demon King: "Is that so?"

The Hero: "..."

The Chief Maid: "Sir Hero, are you uncomfortable with this?"

The Hero: "... Is this not a bit too harsh?"

The Chief Maid: "A destiny you cannot control is merely the existence of an insect. I hate insects. I can't stand seeing insects with their wings torn off."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "Hey!"

The Chief Maid: "Isn't this just a molehill among mountains? To antagonize the nearby powerful people over such a trivial thing brings no advantages."

The Demon King: "That's... True..."

The Hero: "Demon King..."

The Chief Maid: "In that case"

The Demon King: "No, we can wait until tomorrow morning to contact them. Get the bath running. We have some extra clothes, do we not? No arguments. We will do this for now. That is my decision."

— The Mansion of the Demon King, a Small Room

The Demon King: "Ah. What is it?"

The Hero: "... You're very evasive."

The Demon King: "I'm an economist. I'm bad at such things."

Elder Sister: "U, umm. Thank you very much."

Little Sister cowers

The Hero: "Don't worry about it."

Elder Sister: "We've never worn such splendid clothes before."

<Little Sister dozes off>

The Hero: "Is that so? They're just clothes left over in this mansion by the previous owner though."

The Demon King: "Ah—. Are you hungry? Are the beds okay?"

Elder Sister: "Yes. The straw is soft and warm and it is a very pretty room."

The Hero: "Even this tiny, dirty room..."

The Demon King: "These are their surroundings."

Elder Sister: "That's... Even though you've treated us so well... Tomorrow, morning, the..."

The Demon King: "That's..."

The Hero: "..."

Elder Sister: "Please, don't tell them. That's not it."

Little Sister tears

Elder Sister: "We'll run away. It's really just for a little bit. Please wait until daybreak."

The Chief Maid: "What are you talking about? You don't have proper shoes. Your clothes might as well be garbage. You have no money or tools. Do you intend to beg for alms on the road?"

Little Sister sobs

The Hero: "Can't we... Can't we do something for them?"

The Chief Maid: “Nope. The life of a slave is horrible. There’s nothing they can do. There is no hope. They have to continue living, telling themselves, ‘I am guilty, I must continue to live this way’. It’s probably hell on earth. But”

Elder Sister: “...”

The Chief Maid: “What they do is no different from what I am doing. Following the will of one’s master, taking the word of one’s master as law. Holding on to life for the sole purpose of fulfilling the dreams of one’s master. — I am no different from a slave myself.”

The Demon King: “Chief Maid. I have never thought of you as a slave in my life.”

The Chief Maid: “Yes, Demon King. I have also never thought that Your Majesty has ever treated me in such a manner. Precisely due to this, I cannot tolerate what I am witnessing. Despite being in the same line of work, these weaklings are unable to take charge of the own destiny. They should just be burnt to death.”

Little Sister: “That’s not true! It isn’t! The girl wearing spectacles is evil. We’ve managed to run away so well. It’s not true that we can’t do anything. We’re going to the capital, the two of us, and we’re going to live there.”

The Hero: “That’s...”

The Chief Maid: “What kind of bullshit”

Little Sister: “But we’re doing it”

The Chief Maid: “Let’s concede a hundred steps and call your passion hard work. You creep into somebody else’s house, relying on their good will. You are given a bed and food, yet you repay this by escaping. And you think this is right? Is this the way you serfs behave?”

Little Sister: “But! But!”

The Chief Maid: “I shall say this one more time. An existence where you don’t take charge of your existence is just that of an insect. I hate insects. I despise insects. I refuse to consider people who are insects as human.”

Elder Sister: "..."

The Chief Maid: "Do you understand?"

Elder Sister: "Yes..."

The Chief Maid: "Beg for forgiveness"

Elder Sister: "We have brought much... Inconvenience to the honoured members of this house. Sorry."

The Chief Maid: "Good"

Elder Sister: "..."

Little Sister sobs

Elder Sister: "....."

The Chief Maid: "... Is that all?"

Little Sister: "No... We have to go back, no... It's scary."

Elder Sister: "... Sister, be quiet."

The Chief Maid: "...."

Elder Sister: "Please treat us... Like humans. We think you are our destiny."

The Chief Maid: "When you bow your head, do not grovel in such a manner. After going through all the trouble of wearing a skirt, take the dress lightly in your fingertips and present the Drapes while curtsying gracefully."

<Elder Sister bows>

The Chief Maid: "Your Majesty. This mansion is but a hovel compared to the Demon Imperial Palace, but it is very difficult to manage on my own. Should we not hire a few maids?"

The Hero: "Is that okay, Chief Maid? You just said you hated them. Can you now forgive them?"

The Chief Maid: “What I hate are insects. Maids are not insects, they are things I like. There are no people in this world who hate maids. Suppose we considered them as reborn.”

The Demon King: “I allow it. Train up these girls for me.”



Drapes: The beautiful pleats that skirts and dresses are made from. Cloth was much more expensive than it is today, hence drapes, which required a significant amount of cloth, were a sign of economic power.

— Village of Wintering, in the Forest of Snow

Maid Little Sister: “Sir Hero— Sir Hero—”

Maid Little Sister: “Where is Sir Hero— I’m bringing some delicious bread—”

The Hero: “Oh, thanks for the trouble.”

Maid Little Sister: “A waist cloth!? Where were you?”

The Hero: “I teleported. Your voice echoes throughout the forest.”

Maid Little Sister: “Hehe— <musical note>”

The Hero: “Well, this place is safe so there’s no need to worry. But what a carefree person.”

Maid Little Sister: "Sir Hero, I've brought you this."

The Hero: "Oh!"

Maid Little Sister: "It's lunch! A cream bread, and a spring onion and bacon omelette!"

The Hero: "Seems delicious."

Maid Little Sister: "Elder sister made it."

The Hero: "She's learning fast, great!"

Maid Little Sister: "Is it good?"

The Hero: "It's delicious! The hot red tea almost makes me cry. You ran here?"

Maid Little Sister: "Yep."

The Hero: "I drank it in one gulp."

Maid Little Sister: "Yep!"

The Hero: "Even though it's the afternoon, it's tough working outside. I'm really discouraged now, damnit."

Maid Little Sister: "Oh, that's right. The sister who does the management has a message for you."

The Hero: "What is it? You should have said this earlier."

Maid Little Sister: "Today you are to catch 6 boars. This may be substituted for 2 bears. Also scout out the upper reaches of the river. If you see any flooded areas, fix or destroy them with magic."

The Hero: "She really knows how to use people... Right, how is school going?"

Maid Little Sister: "This afternoon is physical training."

The Hero: "Can you do physical training?"

Maid Little Sister: "Currently we're a bit short on people. There aren't any children of the same age as me. Bringing food to Sir Hero is my afternoon exercise."

The Hero: "Oh. You know how to say 'Age'."

Maid Little Sister: "The sister who does the managing taught me."

The Hero: "She's busy, but still working so hard, that Demon King."

Maid Little Sister: "Next is Arimethic"

The Hero: "Arithmetic?"

Maid Little Sister: "If I do it well, I can get rich!"

The Hero: "That economist. All she writes about is 'Getting Rich'."

Maid Little Sister: "She also writes about the Break-Even Point."

The Hero: "This education is way too one-sided, isn't it!?"

Maid Little Sister: "Ehehe. Sir Hero, how's your work going?"

The Hero: "Another... Two more. If we switched to boars."

Maid Little Sister: "Hotpot!"

The Hero: "So sudden!"

Maid Little Sister: "Boar Hotpot?"

The Hero: "Yes, that's delicious!"

Maid Little Sister: "Let's have Boar Hotpot!"

The Hero: "All you care about is food, huh."

Maid Little Sister: "Please bring lunch back for us, Sir Hero."

The Hero: "Yeah, I will."

Maid Little Sister: “Being able to be full makes me real happy.”

The Hero: “That’s right.”

Maid Little Sister: “There is no conflict. No need to grovel to the Village Chief’s son. We’re warm everyday. We have warm mattresses and pretty clothing. I can be with my sister everyday. This is happiness.”

The Hero: “...”

Maid Little Sister: “What’s wrong?”

The Hero: “No, I’ve realised that Heroes are fairly useless.”

Maid Little Sister: “?”

The Hero: “I don’t have the knowledge, I don’t have the financial ability. I can’t farm or take care of animals, all I can teach is... Maybe swordsmanship. I know that bit very well. Even though I offer lip service to achieving Peace, what Peace even is, or how to go about achieving it— I haven’t even thought about what to do if there was Peace.”

Maid Little Sister: “It’s difficult—“

The Hero: “It is.”

Maid Little Sister: “Boar Bacon is delicious isn’t it?”

The Hero: “What, do you like it?”

Maid Little Sister lights up

The Hero: “You like it?”

Maid Little Sister nods

The Hero: “Then this Hero is going to get some boar in just a moment.”

— The Hall of the Mansion, in the middle of a Lesson

The Demon King: "... The above are the primary structures of the wartime economy as derived from the present economic status of the Southern Kingdoms."

Nobleman's Son: "..."

Merchant's Son: "... Umm"

Soldier's Son: "..."

The Demon King: "I'm no expert on this, but the Attrition Rate needed for the annihilation of an army is"

Soldier's Son: "Until the very last man"

The Demon King: "It is said to be approximately 30%. That's three in ten. Consequently, as Standing Armies and permanentMercenaries find it difficult to hold the Battlefront, Skirmishes and Strongholds have formed the bulk of the war against the Demon King."

The Demon King: "Are there any questions up to this point?"

Maid Elder Sister: "And what about the Holy Crusaders?"

The Demon King: "Umm, they are an exception."

The Demon King: "How much do you know about the Holy Crusaders? Hmm... Nobleman's Son."

Nobleman's Son: "Ah. Yes. The Holy Crusaders were formed in the Central Continent at the Crisis Council as a holy expeditionary force. Their goal is to exterminate the evil race of Demons and end the war. Two expeditions have been held over the last 15, 16 years. Pushing through the gate located in the Southern Continent, they managed to raze two important Demon cities before the accursed Demon King, by way of cowardly strategy, disrupted the Supply Lines and forced them to retreat."



Attrition Rate: The percentage of casualties within an army, including the dead, wounded, sick and deserters. There are many methods of expressing this rate, whether it be the daily rate of attrition or the number of casualties from the original strength. In this case, the latter.

30%: When casualties are incurred, men are needed to send the bodies and wounded back.

Furthermore, within an army, there may be many non-combatants such as Communications units, Supply units or Rear Guards. As a result, if just 30% were to be lost, there would be insufficient units on the battlefield.

Standing Army: These refer to units mobilized in both peace and wartime, capable of deployment at any given time. As they are constantly trained professionals, if numbers are equal, their combat ability is higher than for levies.

Mercenaries: These refer to soldiers which can be hired for money or units formed from such soldiers. As they fight based on a monetary contract, when they are no longer paid, they also stop fighting. Once the contract expires, they may sign another one with another country. Today's friends may be tomorrow's enemies.

Battlefront: The front line of a battle. This usually occurs at the area where two opposing armies meet. If the entire line is not fully supported, the enemy may freely strike and invade any undefended area on the line.

Skirmish: This refers to a single battle which takes place when two armies apply force on the other. Countries without a standing army may jointly arrange a time and a place for this to take place wherein the winner will be decided.

Chapter 2: Please Make Us Humans

The Demon King: “Wow. That’s almost full marks. — Such expeditionary forces require enormous military power. Firstly, the whole world needs to be passionate about ending the war. If a single large expedition is sufficient to end the war, then the people of the war will be willing to accept high levels of sacrifice, and hence are born fanatics willing to throw their lives.

Soldier’s Son: “The Spirits of virtue will surely bestow upon us a great victory.”

The Demon King: “This has one more Economic back up. I have brought this up many times over the lesson, but without Economics, any social or military endeavour is bound to fail. After all, humans need to eat to survive.”

Nobleman’s Son: “There are some things more important than money or food.”

Soldier’s Son: “If one does not put aside one’s abacus, one can fight no wars, ma’am.”

Merchant’s Son: “... Is that right?”

Soldier’s Son: “Hunger is merely an excuse for weaklings.”

Nobleman’s Son: “In the first place, a Feudal Lord willing to subject his subjects to starvation does not exist.”

Maid Elder Sister: “... So you’re saying starvation does not exist?”

The Demon King: “... Next we’ll talk about the Southern Frozen Ocean. In other words, the body of water which envelops the Southern Kingdoms and the Continent. This ocean is both militarily and economically vital. At present, approximately 25% of battles with the Demon King’s Army take place in this ocean...”

<RING RING RING>

The Chief Maid: “Madam, it is time to end the lesson.”

The Demon King: "Is it already time? In that case, today's lesson ends here. We shall resume tomorrow. The Swordsman will arrive tomorrow to give you lessons."

Soldier's Son: "I have been looking forward to this."

Nobleman's Son: "Tomorrow will be great."

The Demon King: "Well then, you are dismissed. I have to proceed to the House of Elders to deliver a lecture on Agriculture at nightfall."

— In the Corridors of the Mansion

The Hero: "Hey. Good work."

The Demon King: "Good work."

The Hero: "You look very tired."

The Demon King: "Why did I even bring up education in the first place... I didn't think it would be so tiring to have human children as my opponent. They're just like animals. You can neither reason nor converse with any of them."

The Hero: "Ahh."

The Demon King: "Why are these people so proud?"

The Hero: "It's because they're the sons of noblemen, soldiers and merchants, is it not?"

The Demon King: "I'd rather turn them into frogs."

The Hero: "Don't joke about this."

The Demon King: "I'm not joking."

The Hero: "You should stop."

The Demon King: "Is that so?"

The Hero: “You’re headed to the home of the Village Elder, right? It’s along the way for me as well.”



Stronghold: For any sort of military exercise, a staging point is needed. In military terms, this may be a fortification or a critical city. Here, the army’s military strength is gathered, supplies are stockpiled, rested and may attack.

Supply Lines: This refers to the route which important supplies (such as food and ammunition) for combat forces are shipped. Those who operate along this route are collectively known as

Supply Units. If this route is shut down or Supply Units exterminated, without supplies a troops will no longer be capable of combat.

— From the Doorstep of the Mansion towards the Village Centre

<wind blows>

The Demon King: “Brr. It’s cold.”

The Hero: “It’s not even snowing.”

The Demon King: “But it is cold, Hero.”

The Hero: “I was hunting boars for an entire day in this cold, wasn’t I? You were at home so don’t complain.”

The Demon King: “No. It’s cold.”

The Hero: “...”

The Demon King: "... I can't say that either?"

The Hero: "Fine, look here"

The Hero hugs the Demon King

The Hero: "Is that warm enough?"

The Demon King: "Yep, it's warm."

The Hero: "You're in a good mood."

(... I'm always in a good mood. If I'm with The Hero.)

The Demon King: "Hehe. It's not bad."

The Hero: "You look good."

The Demon King: "It's really great that I own you."

The Hero: "Ah—. Ahem"

The Demon King: "?"

The Hero: "Me too."

The Demon King: "Well, we've finally carried out the lessons. It's strange that I'm complaining about them right now."

The Hero: "Well, well."

The Demon King: "It's sad that we still have to rely on power politics... It's only because we accepted the son of a nobleman that we gained the prestige required for the farmers to cooperate to learn these new farming techniques. These experiments will commence for real in the summer."

The Hero: "Within the Southern Kingdoms, the distance between the nobility and the people is already rather close. Compared to the Central Continent, social distance is already fairly lessened."

The Demon King: "Is that so...? It's already considered close here...?"

The Hero: “But this is the first step. Don’t be hasty. We may have a few years before any results.”

The Demon King: “No, we’ll see results next year.”

The Hero: “Can it be done?”

The Demon King: “I have a secret weapon.”

The Hero: “And just what is that?”

The Demon King rumrages

The Demon King: “This.”

The Hero: “What’s this round thing?”

The Demon King: “This is a Potato. It’s a produce.”

The Hero: “?”

The Demon King: “This is a plant. It looks like this because it’s been unearthed, but usually this round bit is in the soil.”

The Hero: “Uh huh.”

The Demon King: “This is a rather delicious and nutritious fruit. On top of that, the edible portion can be buried under the soil, where it will not be Attacked by Birds.

Moreover, it grows beautifully in Unfertile Soil, frozen soil and even hard soil. And on top of all of that, the Crop Yield is calculated to be three times more than that of wheat.”

The Hero: “For real!?”

The Demon King: “Yeah, I’m completely serious.”

The Hero: “A miracle food!?”

The Demon King: “You could say so, though it’s from the Demon World.”

The Hero: "..."



Potato: A product of the Andes Mountains in South America. It was carried to Europe in the 16th century and has been used as food since the 16th century. Resistant to cold, it can be planted many times. Adam Smith wrote that 'it has three times the yield of wheat'.

Attacked by Birds: For produce like fruits, leaving them in the open will result in them being vulnerable to being eaten by birds. Potatoes,

being underground, are resistant to birds.

Unfertile Soil: Soil which is difficult for plants to grow on. As it is lacking in the necessary bacteria, even the application of fertilizer or supplements will not be broken down and absorbed by plants. For this reason, compost is added to introduce bacteria and improve the quality of the soil.

The Demon King: "That's the great about contact between different cultures and civilizations. No matter how unfortunate the means of contact are, contact is still contact."

The Hero: "I have very mixed feelings about this."

The Demon King: "To begin with, one cannot say the potato has no flaws."

The Hero: "What does it have?"

The Demon King: "Well for one, it's Poisonous."

The Hero: "Then we can't use it!"

The Demon King: “No, it’s not a strong poison. It only becomes poisonous when it has been exposed to sunlight and germinates. If harvested and stored in the proper conditions there are no problems. If it’s kept in a dark place it can even store for up to a year.”

The Hero: “Hmm...”

The Demon King: “There are also Difficulties with Replanting. But if this potato meets the requirements, then it can be planted three times a year.”

The Hero: “It sounds amazing, as to be expected from a plant from the Demon World.”

The Demon King: “Yeah. But in the process it sucks up a lot of the soil’s nutrients, in other words, ‘The Blessings of the Earth’ are greatly depleted. As it only uses the type of Blessings that it requires, if one were to continue planting it in the same area, the yield quality would decrease and one might even fall sick from it.”

The Hero: “Hmm”

The Demon King: “Just a bit more.”

The Hero: “What?”

The Demon King: “Hold me just a bit more. If there’s a gap then it’ll get cold.”

The Hero: “Y, yeah... Ah—. It’s problematic if we get to close.”

The Demon King: “... Does my body disgust you?”

The Hero: “No, no, it’s not like that.”

The Demon King: “Well, in any case. I intend to use this food to combat the frozen famine. As long as we take care to avoid the poison, we shouldn’t have many problems. But the real problem is the difficulty with replanting.”

The Hero: “I’m starting to understand this better, but...”

The Demon King: “The Blessings of the Earth will return in time, but if we don’t work to restore them, there is a limit to the level the yield can increase until.”

The Hero: “Should we pray to the Guardian Spirits of the Earth?”

The Demon King: “That’s right, it’s a type of prayer.”

The Hero: “Aren’t you an Atheist?”

The Demon King: “It doesn’t matter if I’m an atheist or anything, as long as it’s useable, as an Economist, I will use it without stop, without pause and without shame.”

The Hero: “You’re some kind of evil demon.”

The Demon King: “We’ll make Sacrifices to the land as a proof of contract. These sacrifices work whether in human society or in economics. Things like burnt food or animals, the excrement of animals or leftover food.”



Crop Yield: The quantity of produce that a certain plot of land is capable of producing. In modern times, 1 hectare can give 4 tons of wheat, 30 tons of potatoes or 5 tons of rice. Potatoes have more than 8 times the yield of wheat.

As technology in the world of the novel has yet to fully progress, the yield is only half.

Potato Toxicity: Potatoes contain poison. It is particularly present in the skin and shoots. Due to its poisonous nature, strange shape, and the fact that it is not written about in the Bible, it was originally believed to be the plant of demons and shunned.

Difficulties with Replanting: As the same plant is repeatedly planted, things necessary for growth like soil nutrients get depleted and it gradually becomes difficult to sustain life. For this reason, in order to prevent this, extra fertilizer or rotation systems must be adopted.

Atheism: The system of belief which rejects belief in gods and the belief that the world was created or sustain by gods. Agnosticism is simply the lack of belief in any organized religion, but does not reject the belief in gods. Atheism goes to the extreme of rejecting belief in the existence of gods.

Sacrifice: This refers to fertilizer or nutrients added for plants to grow. In the modern day, nutrients, phosphates and calcium are the three main ingredients. Fertilizers help to replenish this and allow produce to grow.

The Hero: "Hmm. That really doesn't seem like a sacrifice."

The Demon King: "What I really want are Fish from the Southern Frozen Ocean."

The Hero: "Why?"

The Demon King: "Fish make good sacrifices."

The Hero: "Do you want to buy some? I can teleport us there."

The Demon King: "I'm grateful for that but, we're going to need more than we can carry that way. One field will require 50 of them. We'll need that every year. Surprised?"

The Hero: "Wow. I am."

The Demon King: "Is that unreasonable?"

The Hero: "Yes."

The Demon King: "But there's a bigger problem."

The Hero: “What? There’s problems with the Southern Frozen Ocean?”

The Demon King: “Yeah. There are two. The first, as I’m sure you know, is the Southern Frozen General.”

The Hero: “... That old man?”

The Demon King: “Yeah, that guy. Even for a member of the race of Fangs, he’s tough. I hear he continues to aggravate violence even though the Demon King is in hiding. As the commander of the race of Silver Scales, the race of Flying Fish and the race of Metal Tortoises, he’s a person to be feared in the Demon World.”

The Hero: “I’ve fought with him a few times. He’s ridiculously huge and he’s really good with his harpoon.”

The Demon King: “If we want to operate in the Southern Frozen Ocean, we will inevitably clash with him.”

The Hero: “Hmm...”

The Demon King: “And another thing is the ‘Union’.”

The Hero: “The what?”

The Demon King: “I was going to tell you this later, but... Now is quite a good opportunity to explain.”

The Hero: “Yeah.”

The Demon King: “Its official name is the ‘Economic Union of Southern Independent Cities and Free Merchants’. But it’s known as the Union everywhere nowadays.”

The Hero: “I seem to have heard of it, is it famous?”

The Demon King: “The name is famous but, there aren’t many humans who know exactly how it works. It is especially unimportant to people who are not merchants.”

The Hero: “In other words, it’s an assembly of merchants?”

The Demon King: “Yeah, that’s right. About 50 years ago, the grain producing free cities along the coast banded together to form an organization. It was created to protect the Special Trading Rights of its constituent members.”

The Hero: “Special Trading Rights?”

The Demon King: “Yeah. In order to carry goods from one street to another street, you’ll need permits, right?”

The Hero: “Yeah.”

The Demon King: “Merchantmen want to obtain this ‘Permit’, and when they get it, they want to protect it. Of course, the presence or absence of the permit decides whether or not one can even trade. It’s a matter of life and death.”

The Hero: “Mmhmm.”

The Demon King: “As time passed, the taxation systems were revised. Even the same permits had different levels of taxation. In this way, royalty and nobility could come into contact with the economy through taxation. But the converse was also true, and Economists, in other words merchants, also came into contact with people in positions of power like nobility and royalty.”

The Hero: “Wow, that’s really complicated.”



Fish from the Southern Frozen Ocean: This refers to Herring. After extracting the herring oil, the body can be dried to form herring flakes, which are an excellent fertilizer. Aside from fertilizer, they can also be used for chicken feed.

General: I don't think this needs explanation.

Union: Merchants buy the rights to cities from their owners, and these cities as a union may have enough power to stand up to other countries. An example is the Hanseatic League during the High Middle Ages.

Special Trading Rights: The rights to certain privileges when trading. Lower rates of taxation, exclusive rights to certain harbours or even expulsion of rival merchants.

The Demon King: "The Union is the biggest of such merchant organizations. The scope of their operations is beyond what you can imagine."

The Hero: "Eh? How big can it be? About a thousand people?"

The Demon King: "In this case, population is not the issue at hand."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Demon King: "It's an Economic organization. Their weapons are the amount of wealth they can move and their ability to influence economic flow. Military might has nothing to do with population."

The Hero: "That seems logical... Then just how much power do they have?"

The Demon King: "Their economic influence extends to both the South and Centre, the entire land area of the Continent. Nobody knows just how large their economic scope is, but extrapolating from their economic involvement in world history, it's bound to be an astronomical figure."

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Even as a least estimate, they could buy the Southern Kingdoms five times over."

The Hero: "Ehh!?"

The Demon King: "That's the kind of organization it is."

The Hero: "What the hell!?"

The Demon King: "Furthermore, even if we limited it to just the Southern Kingdoms, about 60% of all wheat which flows through cities goes through the hands of the Union. If they felt like it, they could replace a Feudal Lord or even a Prime Minister."

The Hero: "What monsters"

The Demon King: "Unmistakeably monsters. The lives of Humans are carried on the backs of Monsters."

The Hero: "I have received multiple requests from the Union in the past, and made quite a few motivational speeches."

The Demon King: "Is that so?"

The Hero: "Yeah. Things like 'Take down the Demon King, hey, hey, hey!'. Ladies with flowing dresses would appear singing on balconies and shout words of encouragement."

The Demon King: "It's Propaganda. I suppose you got a few thousand gold pieces for it."

The Hero: "All they gave me in thanks was 15 gold coins!? Ughh. That's the kind of guy..."

The Demon King: "Don't be so depressed, Hero."

The Hero: "I was cheated by those people..."

The Demon King: "Economics isn't your strong seat, it's not unexpected."

The Hero: "I told you about the affectionate, sparkling eyes of those ladies. Just those alone filled my heart with pride and sent me flying to the Demon World."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "The young man whom I was commissioned by told me he was counting on my return for a Victory Parade Party. He even elbowed me and told me I was really popular with the ladies... Now that I think about it, he must have been a merchant too."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "Ughhh. I'm a failed Hero."

The Demon King: "Hmm, harsh lessons are often necessary."

The Hero: "In other words, those people are not the enemy."

The Demon King: "Don't say such impetuous things."

The Hero: "It's okay, they're the enemy. I'm going to use the highest level Lightning Area Magic on them."

The Demon King: “Don’t use Siege Spells so flippantly!”



The Lives of Humans are borne on the Backs of Demons: In Thomas Hobbes’ philosophical treatise ‘Leviathan’, governments were seen as a type of political monster. People derive power from it, and in return pledge to protect the right of other people. In this manner, massive corporations can also be seen as monsters. In this case, the Union as seen as a humanly necessary economic monster.

Propaganda: Media meant to indoctrinate a set ideology into the people. It originally began as a way of spreading one’s righteous beliefs, but it has come to use lies and exaggerations to twist reports in order to misinform people towards following a certain path.

The Hero: “But I was lied to!”

The Demon King: “Are you a little kid? — To begin with the Union doesn’t even have an ideology. They’re just a collection of merchants with the sole purpose of getting richer, pooling their knowledge, protecting themselves and their interests. At the end of the day, they’re just a monstrous organization whose aggrandizement is unrelated to personal will. They may have lied to you, but it wasn’t their aim, and taking revenge on the Union will not hurt those involved.”

The Hero: “Ugh, how unnecessarily infuriating.”

The Demon King: “They are neither are friends nor our enemies. They’re rather like wild beasts.”

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: (But, possibly...)

The Hero: "Ugh. It's all just a bunch of things I don't know."

The Demon King: "Don't complain."

The Hero: "Well, it's fine. As long as it's time to fight, I have every intention of being at the forefront."

The Demon King: "... I will always be by your side."

The Hero: "Likewise."

The Demon King: "Ah—. Ah—."

The Hero: "What's up?"

The Demon King: "Look, it's the Village Elder's house. Today I have to give a talk on how to Crystallize the Blessings of the Earth using clover."

The Hero: "I, Is that so?"

The Demon King: "... Umm."

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Demon King: "I'll be back in four hours, so"

The Hero: "I understand."

The Demon King: "S, see you soon."

The Hero: "Yup! See you soon!"



Crystallizing the Blessings of the Earth: Legumes such as clover have a specialized bacteria known as Rhizobium in their roots that converts nitrogen in the air to nitrates. For this reason, fields that have first had legumes planted on them become nitrate fertilizer rich.

END OF CHAPTER 2

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

— The Kingdom of the Lake, in the outskirts of the capital

<teleports>

The Hero: "... Alright." *rubs hands*

The Demon King: "Hm. Teleportation Magic really is convenient."

The Hero: "Can't you use it since you're the Demon King?"

The Demon King: "Nope, in terms of individual long-distance teleportation ability and the ability to pick locations, my magical abilities are far less generalized."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Demon King: "Our techniques are different. If there's an opportunity I would like to research it."

The Hero: "Well, let's focus on the task at hand."

The Demon King: "Yeah. How is it?"

The Hero: "Over by that hill. Cover your face just in case."

The Demon King: "I understand. In contrast to formal wear, this casual outfit is a lot more comfortable."

The Hero: "It has its good points as well."

<walking through the grass>

The Demon King: "Is that it?"

The Hero: "Yeah, that stone building is the Monastery of the Holy Order in this area."

The Demon King: "Religion is the only thing that I find difficult to understand."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: "It's hard for me to explain as well. I'm no expert on this issue. Well, if you were to call the Union a monster, then the Church is a monster on a similar scale."

The Demon King: "Hmm... We'd best be on our guard then."

The Hero: "Yeah, definitely. Especially because you're the Demon King. You're definitely Number One on their wanted list. You are, after all, the enemy of the Spirits."

The Demon King: "Hahaha. I'm not scared of things like gods... Are they scary things?"

The Hero: "Not Gods but spirits. The people who invoke the names of the Spirits are truly scary."

The Demon King: "Hmm, I'll keep that in mind."

The Hero: "Well then, shall we go? I've already sent word of our arrival, but..."

The Demon King: "In the worst case scenario, couldn't we just escape with your magic?"

The Hero: "I suppose we've gotten used to bad situations."

— The Monastery of the Holy Order of the Lake

Templar: "Please come this way, valued guests..."

The Demon King: "It's quiet."

The Hero: "Yeah."

Templar: "Our monastery is currently going through 'The Path of Silence'. Please be careful not to..."

The Demon King: "Y, yeah..."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: (Drink in this atmosphere, Demon King)

<footsteps>

The Hero: (There's a very special atmosphere in this Monastery, eh?)

Templar: "This room has been prepared for the conference. I am terribly sorry but I must inform you that our Monastery will shortly be undertaking Afternoon Prayers. Kindly wait for a moment."

The Hero: "We don't mind, thank you for the information."

The Demon King: "Well then. Our infiltration is successful."

The Hero: "We'll speak to the Grandmaster in a moment."



Holy Order: A group of people who surrender themselves to a life of religious discipline as monks. To fulfil this goal, there are many different types of Holy Orders including pure prayer, providing education to the people, proselytizing and even protecting pilgrims with military strength.

Monastery: A place for people to work and live together, following the Spirit of Light and striving to uphold the virtues of Poverty, Purity and Discipline. Christian monasteries are segregated by gender, but within this novel, men and women live together.

The Demon King: "Yeah."

The Hero: "We'll be winging it this time, right?"

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: “Well, no matter how much material I studied, it’s difficult. Even though this was originally a plan with humans in mind and has many merits for the humans.”

The Hero: “Because our opponent is the Church, after all.”

The Demon King: “That’s right, the religion of the humans in this world is the Spirits of Light, right?”

The Hero: “Yeah, the vast majority of people in the Central Continent follow the Spirits of Light.”

The Demon King: “You’ve just said a whole bunch of blasphemous things, is your faith weak?”

The Hero: “I wouldn’t call it weak. Once you’ve placed your life on the battlefield, especially against armies of Demons, one does feel closer to the Spirits.”

The Demon King: “Hmm.”

The Hero: “My faith is definitely not weak, but I would say I have a more friendly relationship with the Spirits.”

The Demon King: “Is that so? That’s a very precious feeling.”

The Hero: “Oh I’m a little special. I receive revelations from them in my dreams.”

The Demon King: “Gods exist!?”

The Hero: “They’re not gods, they’re the Spirits of Light.”

The Demon King: “Hmm...”

The Hero: “Extremely benevolent people, rather similar to the Demon King, exist don’t they? The Spirits of Light as well. It has a rather weak-willed personality, the kind that cannot refuse even troublesome requests.”

The Demon King: “Can such an existence even be the target of a religion?”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: “Well. Besides faith and religion, the Church holds far greater meaning for humans. It is a massive organization. Even in terms of people involved, the Union cannot even be compared to the Church.”

The Demon King: “In terms of research or scholarly pursuits as well, then?”

The Hero: “Yeah. One could even say that the vast majority of information in the world is under the power of the Church. Have I not said this before? The city people all learn to read and write from the Church.”

The Demon King: “You expect a lot for this organization.”

The Hero: “Well, today is the first meeting, so even if we fail there won’t be a lot of damage done. The Church is such a massive organization that there are many sectarian divisions within it. Each sect is represented by a different Holy Order. At present, there’s an almost unbelievable number of Holy Orders.”

The Demon King: “But they all believe in the Spirits of Light?”

The Hero: “That’s right. That’s why each Holy Order builds a superficial image of friendliness. They are, after all, the forces of good. But actually, their methods of worship are different, their fervour is different, and if one were to look deeper, even the practice of stealing and converting each other’s followers is not uncommon.”

The Demon King: “That’s not very different from the territorial feuds between the Demon races. It’s much easier to understand the difference between the Inferno God and the God of the Abyss.”

The Hero: “These sorts of religions exist!?”

The Demon King: “They do. But they’re mostly a passing Fad.”

The Hero: “Well, hmm... The Holy Order of the Lake is one of the more practical and stable sects.”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!



Grandmaster: This refers to the head of the Holy Order. Originally the leader of a group of monks, the power of the grandmaster grew steadily and by the Middle Ages, he came to occupy a similar existence to Feudal Lords or Bishops.

Fads: This refers to people who do not originally believe in a religion, but ride on it like a current, and decide to try out the new religion. It appears that which god Demons believe in appears to

change rapidly and steadily.

The Demon King: "Oh?"

The Hero: "Their primary activities include agricultural support for farming communities. They provide manpower, grape cultivation methods, household planning... Oh, and hospitals."

The Demon King: "Even hospitals!"

The Hero: "That's right, hospitals are the work of the Church. Though the Church rejecting patients is not a rare occurrence."

The Demon King: "You're very familiar with this."

The Hero: "That's not true. I heard all of this from a very old acquaintance."

The Demon King: "... Hmm"

The Hero: "Demon King?"

The Demon King: "What?"

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: "You... Sometimes, umm, make a very lonely expression. Like you did just now."

The Demon King: "Is that so?"

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Demon King: "I didn't even notice myself."

The Hero: "Is that so? Well, Demon King. Just what sort of thing are you looking at with those eyes?"

<door opens>

The Demon King: "Ah—. Nice to meet you."

The Hero: "Salutations. Allow us to make our introductions."

The Demon King: "I am currently conducting agricultural research in the Southern regions. I am known as the Crimson Scholar. Pleased to make your acquaintance."

The Hero: "I am her assistant and companion, the White Swordsman. As we have but carelessly intruded onto the Monastery, we humbly beg for your mag... mag... magnanimity."

The Female Paladin: "..."

The Demon King: "This is my first time coming to the Temple Headquarters of the Holy Order of the Lake. It is a truly magnificent building."

The Hero: "... Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "You say you are the White Swordsman?"

The Demon King: "Yes."

The Hero: "Uhh. Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "The Hero!"

The Hero: "Oh."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Female Paladin: “What’s up with this ‘White Swordsman’ thing. Where have you been wandering about until now! It’s been a year!? I haven’t even heard your voice for a year!”

The Demon King: “What’s going on!”

The Hero: “Umm... That’s...”

The Female Paladin: “All he left behind was a note saying it’d be best if he went ahead alone! He didn’t even consider the feelings of the people he left behind at that border crossing. We were so worried. I’m so angry right now!”

The Demon King: “Ahh”

The Hero: “That’s because.”

The Female Paladin: “Don’t give me that bullshit! Ah. I’m sorry. I accidentally said ‘bullshit’, Great Spirits please forgive me.”

The Hero: “Uhhh”

The Female Paladin: “Forgetting about both me and grandpa, even the mage got really depressed.”

The Demon King: “This party seems rather unbalanced.”

The Hero: “The Paladin and I got by with the healing.”

The Female Paladin: “Are you even listening!? Hero”

The Hero: “I am sorry.”

The Female Paladin: “... Hmph. Well, what do you want now?”

The Demon King: “Ahh”

The Female Paladin: “! Ah! I apologize, scholar. I did not even offer you a seat. I will get you a cup of tea right away.”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!



Party: Within the world of Role-Playing Games, a group of comrades who go adventuring together is known as a party. Within a game, factors like Offensive Power, Magical Power and Healing Abilities must be balanced out when selecting members, but, without healing abilities, the Hero's party had to make do.

The Demon King: "Th, thanks."

The Hero: "What should we do, then?"

The Female Paladin: "I was originally of the Knights of the Holy Silver Crown. By fate, I have come to serve with the Holy Order of the Lake to improve the lives of the people."

—- The Holy Order of the Lake, Conference Room

The Hero: "Well. This is the situation. The Demon King was seriously injured. But as the Royal Demon Army began to mobilize, I decided to beat a retreat."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so... So you've been convalescing this whole while?"

The Hero: "No, that's not it. Well, various things happened, and I haven't been able to show my face on the world stage..."

The Female Paladin: "To think the United Kingdoms would do something of this order!?"

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: “——”

The Hero: “What?”

The Female Paladin: “No, it’s nothing. I understand.”

The Hero: “That being said, why have you come all the way here to be the Grandmaster of the Lake?”

The Female Paladin: “Well. I was originally born in this area. I was conferred a knighthood by the Church as well. I was a Knight of the Church.”

The Hero: “Oh that’s right.”

The Female Paladin: “... To tell the truth, after the Hero went towards the Demon King’s Palace. I reported this to the United Kingdoms’ Military Command, after a month, a special envoy arrived... The Hero’s body was reported to have been washed in arrows in combat against the Demon King who did not even need to turn around to face him. Upon saying this, all the comrades received a stipend.”

The Demon King: “Hmm”

The Hero: “You”

The Female Paladin: “What?”

The Hero: “It’s annoying, so stop speaking in that formal manner.”

The Female Paladin: “～! It took me quite a lot of effort to master this formal register. In any case, don’t be mistaken. We didn’t except this stipend. ... After that... In compensation for the great work we did until then, we were awarded high positions of power in the Kingdoms...”

The Hero: “I see.”

The Female Paladin: “... It was practically retirement. But I didn’t want it. Getting promoted because you stupidly went and got yourself killed left a bad taste in my mouth, so I went back to my hometown and decided that this time I would work for the good of everyone.”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: "An excellent force of will. No, from the beginning you have always been someone who would do accomplish you set your heart to do, truly a real man."

The Female Paladin: "... Sure."

The Hero: "And what of the other two?"

The Female Paladin: "Yeah."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "... That perverted old man, was originally a soldier, right?"

The Hero: "Yeah, that's right."

The Female Paladin: "That's why he went back to the United Kingdoms' Army. He accepted the stipend as well. He's serving in the Intelligence Brigades of one of the Kingdoms in the South, last I heard. ... And, sorry."

The Hero: "What are you apologizing for? Is it not a good thing that we get rewarded for our efforts? He seems to have really made a name for himself as well."

The Female Paladin: "... Y, yeah."

The Hero: "And what of the Mage? Did she also accept the stipend? She was always such a beancounter, despite how she looked. She probably expressionlessly said, "I... bought some... Magical grimoires... From the... East..." She's quite an interesting person."

The Female Paladin: "The Mage... Went in alone."

The Hero: "Eh?"

The Female Paladin: "She went after you into the Demon World."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "..."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Female Paladin: "... I am sorry."

The Hero: "Didn't you stop her?"

The Female Paladin: "Of course we did! But by the next morning, all her things were gone..."

The Hero: "Well, there's nothing for it. I understand how you feel, and you should not be blamed for this in any part. To begin with, this all happened because I decided foolhardily charge in."

The Female Paladin: "... Hero."

The Hero: "More importantly, we've come to negotiate something."

The Female Paladin: "Yes I've already read the introductory letter, but..."

The Hero: "Well... That's not really it. Scholar."

The Demon King: "That's me. Allow me to introduce myself again. I am known as the Crimson Scholar, I am an academic."

The Female Paladin: "Pleased to meet you. I am the Hero's ex-party member, the Female Paladin."

The Hero: "We have come today to borrow the strength of the Holy Order."

The Female Paladin: "I'm listening."

The Demon King: "Firstly, please look at this."

<produces object>

The Female Paladin: "What's that?"

The Demon King: "It's a plant known as a potato. A detailed report has been prepared on this sheet of vellum, but most importantly, it is a crop capable of growing in frozen soil, with a yield three times that of wheat."

The Female Paladin: "!?"

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: "Of course, there are many considerations that need to be made, but there are a great deal more benefits. Cultivation is also not difficult. I am certain you understand..."

The Female Paladin: "— This crop can help to save many victims of famine."

The Demon King: "That's right."

The Female Paladin: "What sort of support do you wish from us? Money? And what method of reward should we use in order to best express our appreciation for your efforts?"

The Demon King: "Look, Hero. This is the reaction of the person who understands the implications of such a crop."

The Hero: "I'm sorry I'm stupid."

The Female Paladin: "... Do you intend to use our political positions and influence? Perhaps you wish to be conferred a peerage? I apologise, but our order does not have this level of influence with the royalty or the nobility. We can probably only manage a pecuniary compensation at best..."

The Hero: "No, that's alright. I understand how bad you are at these things."

The Female Paladin: "I am not talking to you, I am talking to the esteemed scholar."

The Demon King: "If you could help to finance this to whatever extent you can manage, that would be great, but that's not my objective for being here."

The Female Paladin: "What do you mean?"

The Demon King: "At the borders of the Kingdom of Winter, there is a remote village known as the Village of Wintering."

The Female Paladin: "Yes."

The Demon King: "I would like you to construct a Branch of the Order over there."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Female Paladin: “Would that be alright?”

The Demon King: “Naturally I will back you up. Using this Branch of the Order as a centre point, I would like to propagate the cultivation techniques of the potato to the villagers.”

The Female Paladin: “If that is your wish, then our Order can certainly mobilise to fulfil it... And is that all you require?”

The Demon King: “On top of this, if the potato cultivation is successful, I would also like for you to open branches in neighbouring villages and kingdoms and help to further increase the spread of the cultivation techniques.”

The Female Paladin: “In doing so, we can also help to expand the influence of the Order and I believe this serves our interests as well, but how would you benefit from this?”

The Demon King: “Actually, my objective is also the spread the cultivation techniques of the potato. I hope to revolutionise the agricultural situation in the frozen lands of the South.”

The Female Paladin: “Is... that so.”

The Demon King: “Moreover, I do not just hope to plant potatoes. We are also undergoing research to revolutionise farming methods. Changing the previous three-field rotation system, we have discovered a more efficient method of production.”

The Female Paladin: “Is that so!?”

The Hero: “It’s quite an amazing method.”

The Demon King: “Physical application of the method has only taken place in the aforementioned Village of Wintering, hence even if it succeeds, we do not have the organisation nor the manpower to effectively disseminate the information. As a result, we hope to cooperate with you to achieve this.”

The Female Paladin: “You are truly a miracle sent from the Spirits of Light!”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Hero: “I wonder—”

The Demon King: “...” <pinch>

The Hero: “Ow!”

The Female Paladin: “If this is indeed the case, then we will offer whatever assistance we can— No, I will personally go to the Village of Wintering, bringing with me the combined abilities of our Order.”

The Demon King: “How very kind of you.”

The Hero: “No, this is...”

The Female Paladin: “Do you have something you want to say, Hero?”

The Hero: “No, well... Umm...”

The Female Paladin: “Annoying.”

The Hero: “I’ve always been a depressing and nihilistic sort of Hero, so if you get too close to me then you’ll be exposed to a lot of...”

The Female Paladin: “I have experienced this for myself a long time ago. Are you saying it is bad for me to go to the Village of Wintering?”

The Hero: “Umm... Because, there’s the Demon King and everything...”

The Demon King: “Don’t be rude to the Grandmaster of the Order who has agreed to aid us, Hero.”

The Hero: “Ehh!?”

The Female Paladin: “... You are very sure of yourself.”

The Demon King: “That is because we do not have the abilities for such a task and must seek your assistance. I am an advocate of contracts, and I give my highest respects to the person I make contracts with.”

The Hero: (Save me—)

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Female Paladin: “In any case, I never thought I would see you again... Being reunited with the Hero after a year, and being brought such a miraculous crop by the Scholar, truly the Spirits of Light shine favourably upon us. This is truly the calling of our Order.”

The Demon King: “No, this is an entirely human effort... The hard, spirited work of humans.”

The Female Paladin: “... Yes, of course.”

—- The Holy Order of the Lake, Front Hall

The Female Paladin: “Are you sure you do not want me to send you off?”

The Hero: “Yeah, we are fine. We’ll do it from the room with teleportation magic.”

The Female Paladin: “That’s true”

The Demon King: “In that case, we’ll see you soon in the Village of Wintering.”

The Female Paladin: “Yeah, it’s far too difficult to move in mid-Winter. I will decide who to command the Order in my absence and I will join you in the Spring. It will also be advantageous if you could obtain a friendly permission from the Feudal Lords and other powerful figures in the area.”

The Demon King: “We will do whatever we can this Winter.”

The Female Paladin: “Thank you very much.”

The Hero: “You guys are so friendly it’s almost scary.”

The Female Paladin: “Huh? Did you say something?”

The Hero: “No I didn’t.”

The Female Paladin: “Till Spring!”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: “Yes, we will see you in the Spring.”

— Spring in the Village of Wintering

Small Villager: “Ohh, the day has finally shown her face.”

Thin Villager: “It has. Ahh, the warm air has blown in.”

Village Huntsman: “Hey, hey.”

Small Villager: “What’s up?”

Thin Villager: “The weather is magnificent today.”

Village Huntsman: “That’s right. I feel something great is going to happen this year.”

Small Villager: “Already?”

Village Huntsman: “Yeah, I’ve caught four hares today. I’m taking one to the Village Chief right now!”

Small Villager: “That’s great!”

Thin Villager: “There’s also a lot of smoked boar left this year.”

Village Huntsman: “Yeah, I was surprised.”

Small Villager: “This is all due to that Swordsman at the village outskirts!”

Thin Villager: “He even taught my boy to polish our axe.”

Village Huntsman: “With the bears in the forest taken care of, it’s much safer too.”

Little Maid Sister: ∼♪∼♪

Small Villager: “Oh, speak of the devil, it’s the sisters from the mansion at the village outskirts.”

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

Thin Villager: "So it is. Hey, hey!"

Village Huntsman: "Where are you going?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Good morning everybody."

Little Maid Sister: "We are going to the Village Chief's place to get some raspberry jam from him."

Small Villager: "Is that so? Awesome."

Thin Villager: "Are you having some guests over?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Yes, that is correct."

Village Huntsman: "I see, I see... Hmm, alright, please bring this hare to the scholar as a gift."

Small Villager: "Oh, how generous, Huntsman."

Village Huntsman: "Not at all. After all, they did help make the forest safer. I can always catch some more hares since it's spring."

Little Maid Sister: "Thank you very much — ♪"

Small Villager: "That's true. I've gathered some watercress as well, here, take some with you."

Elder Maid Sister: "Thank you very much."

Thin Villager: "Make sure you call me in to repair the rafters after the snow melts."

Village Huntsman: "That's right, you can always count on us."

Small Villager: "Umm, umm."

Thin Villager: "Why is everyone just standing around dazed?"

Village Huntsman: "Ahh, everyone who works at the manor is really pretty after all."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

Elder Maid Sister: "... Umm"

Small Villager: "That's right, it's true. They're completely different from us. Intelligent, kind and beautiful, we all really look up to the two of you."

Little Maid Sister: "Thank you!" *<beams>*

Elder Maid Sister: "... I apologise."

— The Manor at the Outskirts of the Village, at Night, in the Room of the Hero

The Hero: "Alright!" *<heaves luggage>*

The Hero: "Is that everything? I've got medicine, and after that I can get whatever I need when we're there."

The Demon King: "Are you assembling your equipment so late at night?"

The Hero: "Demon King..."

The Demon King: "Even though you belong to me."

The Hero: "Ahh. Yeah. ... Sorry."

The Demon King: "What's with that lousy expression? You're a Hero."

The Hero: "People who are guilty make this sort of expression."

The Demon King: "You belong to me, don't you? And I belong to you."

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Demon King: "Did you think I would stop you?"

The Hero: "..."

The Demon King: "Don't think so poorly of me."

The Hero: "Eh? You're okay with this?"

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: "Here"

The Hero: "What's this?" <catches>

The Demon King: "I think it belongs to my predecessor. It's the Abyssal Forged Armour. Don't worry, it's not cursed or anything."

The Hero: "... ?"

The Demon King: "Since I, the Demon King, am no longer there, it's gotten a bit chaotic. I'm counting on you to help sort the place out."

The Hero: "Y, yeah."

The Demon King: "This is a list of Demon Chieftains whom you can trust, I've included a letter of introduction. You're going to need help if you want to find somebody in the Demon World."

The Hero: "Yeah, even though she looks like that... She can really get around. I'm sure she's fine."

The Demon King: "If that's the case then you shouldn't need to search for her."

The Hero: "Demon King..."

The Demon King: "You should be thanking me right now."

The Hero: "Of course. Thank you."

The Demon King: "...."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "Is that all?"

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "That's, you know. Humans, umm, they... When lovers... That is to say when a couple separates, isn't it customary for them to do something?"

The Hero: "Eh—, umm... Yeah."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: "... Is it because of all this flab?"

The Hero: "What's up with this timing? And stop with the puppy eyes!"

The Demon King: "Is it because it's outside the purview of our contract?"

The Hero: "Eh—, ah—. That's."

The Demon King: "As I thought, it's because we don't have enough skinship."

The Hero: "What's that?"

The Demon King: "Actually, the Chief Maid explains this to me every week. 'Demon King, you do not have the prerequisite skinship. To begin with, you're neither cute nor exposed enough, so if you don't have skinship then how will things turn out? Get it? The basis of battle is numbers. If you can use Brute Force Attacks to destroy a person's reason, then you won't even need tactics.'"

The Hero: "In terms of tactical theory, that's not wrong, but"

The Demon King: "We can't?"

The Hero: "That's... It's embarrassing to... Do such a thing. Let's wait until we're both more composed."

The Demon King: "You call yourself a Hero. Heroes are supposed to be brave and courageous but you're just a coward."

The Hero: "Nonsense. I'm the world's bravest person, that's why I'm the Hero, aren't I!?"

The Demon King: "So you've come to your senses?"

The Hero: "How does your mood change so fast, Demon King!"

The Demon King: "It's been half a year, hasn't it!? Living together in the winter when neither of us can travel should have many advantages. But somehow time just went by without us making any progress, I can't tolerate this any longer! Under this situation, the Order will begin its construction and when Summer

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

begins, the Hero's number one woman will move in. On top of that, my Hero is now going to look for his number two woman! How can I not take any action!"



Brute Force Attack: When one is being attacked, the defender can take steps to prevent this attack or safeguard against it. However, if the volume of the attack is too large, the attack can merely swarm over all of the defences. This is a Brute Force Attack, particularly as used in the hacking world.

The Hero: "Why have you started to number off my friends!?"

The Demon King: "...>angry<

The Hero: "Jeez."

The Demon King: "..."

The Hero: "...>kiss<

The Demon King: "... sigh"

The Hero: "What's with that dissatisfied look?"

The Demon King: "Just the forehead?"

The Hero: "What's wrong with the forehead? If you don't want it, I'll take it back."

Chapter 3: Where have you been wandering about until now!

The Demon King: “You can’t do that. Everything you have belongs to me. In other words, this kiss on my forehead is also an asset of mine. There is no room for argument.”

The Hero: “Sigh...”

The Demon King: “...”

The Hero: “All that’s left to do is to return!”

The Demon King: “It’s a promise then, Hero. You’re definitely coming back!”

<Door slams shut>

END OF CHAPTER 3

— At the Village outskirts, in the Mansion of the Demon King, Central Hall

The Female Paladin: "Well then, is this all you have prepared, my Lords?"

The Nobleman's Son: "*Pant, pant.*"

The Merchant's Son: "... Ughhh. Die!"

The Soldier's Son: "..."

The Female Paladin: "Then, allow me to explain the weapons. What you currently have in your hands is an exceptionally precise weapon from the Southern United Kingdoms' Army, the Longsword. This weapon has strength, very good balance, and as a product of the Kingdom of Steel, exceptional quality. Balancing and redistributing the weight is the key to deciding the outcome of any battle with this weapon, hence properly consider the grip you have on this weapon."

The Nobleman's Son: "..."

The Merchant's Son: "..."

The Soldier's Son: "E, enough nonsense!"

The Female Paladin: "What did you say?"

The Nobleman's Son: "..."

The Soldier's Son: "I said that this is stupid. Why do we have to be thought swordsmanship by a woman?"

The Female Paladin: "..."

The Soldier's Son: "When the White Swordsman was teaching swordsmanship, he did not accept women as disciples. Women deserve to be at home making cakes."

The Female Paladin: "Hey, fat boy."

The Merchant's Son: "Wh, what!? M, me?"

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

The Female Paladin: "Grasp the sword firmly in both hands."

The Merchant's Son: "... Uhh. Like this...?"

The Female Paladin: "HA!" <*sword flashes*>

The Nobleman's Son: "!?"

The Soldier's Son: "!"

The Merchant's Son: "Th, th, the sword! It's split! Into two!"

The Female Paladin: "HA!" <*sword flashes*>

The Merchant's Son: "I, it's become shorter!?"

The Female Paladin: "If you keep this in mind, you will be able to slice even just 5cm off a blade."

The Soldier's Son: "H, h, how?"

The Female Paladin: "That soldier boy over there"

The Female Paladin: "I am a female Paladin of the Lake Country. I am a woman who has fought at least a thousand battles alongside the Hero in the Demon World."

The Nobleman's Son: "T, the great Hero!?"

The Merchant's Son: "!?"

The Soldier's Son: "Don't tell me you're the 'Demon Knight'!? The 'Empress of Mythical Power'!? The 'Wall-Destroying Female Guardian of Heaven'!?"

The Female Paladin: "You seem quite familiar with me."

The Soldier's Son: "... " <*shudders*>

The Female Paladin: "I wouldn't call this Mythical Power, it's really just technique... By keeping the blade still and concentrating power on a particular area, even you, gentlemen, will be able to utilise this technique. As for the Hero..."

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

Ah- The White Swordsman, is too much of a prodigy. His constantly ‘whatever’ way of doing things, as his teacher, is just completely unsuitable.”

The Merchant’s Son: “Don’t tell me... The White Swordsman is your disciple!?”

The Nobleman’s Son: “I, is that so!”

The Soldier’s Son: “Is that true...”

The Female Paladin: “H, hmm. Anyway. The White Swordsman is on an Imperial Quest.”

The Nobleman’s Son: “Imperial Quest... Is that on order of the King?”

The Soldier’s Son: “A quest! That’s the sort of thing a real man is supposed to do!”

The Female Paladin: “In any case, starting from now on, I’ll be taking over your training four times a week.”

The Merchant’s Son: “U, understood!”

The Female Paladin: “I’m different from the White Swordsman in that I intend to combine theoretical and practical methods, teaching you from the basics up. I will train your combat abilities so that you can use them for a practical purpose.”



Longsword: A one-handed, straight, double-edged blade commonly used by the knights of the Middle Ages. It’s length is 80 – 90 cm and it weights 1.5 – 2 kg. It was made for attacking enemies while on horseback, and would not break or bend upon contact with armour.

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

The Nobleman’s Son: “It is an honour to receive training from a comrade of the Hero.”

The Soldier’s Son: “From what you have said, there’s nothing for it then. I will diligently pursue the Way of the Blade.”

The Female Paladin: “Then, to begin with run three rounds around the forest to the North. After that do one round while practice-swinging. When you get to the stream, go up to waist level in the water and do 500 swings of the sword.”

All Three: “Whaaaaat!?”

— The Demon King’s Mansion, in the Office

Cicadas chirping

The Demon King: “You’re very lively today.”

The Chief Maid: “That is to be expected. However, the Female Paladin seems to be having quite a lot of fun over there?”

The Demon King: “Is that so? I’d have expected her to be as mad as a badger with an arrow in its butt that the Hero just up and left.”

The Chief Maid: “The kind of person who would devote everything when given a task. What a cute person.”

The Demon King: “Hmm.”

The Chief Maid: “Her body is even more toned than yours.”

The Demon King: “Hmm.”

The Chief Maid: “No, no. Your style isn’t bad as well. The places where you should really have volume are very impressive indeed. A truly immodest and sexy body.”

The Demon King: “Your way of describing things is truly immodest.”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

The Chief Maid: "However while your body may be sexy and even soothing, your personality is neither sexy nor soothing. This completely unrelated point may prove to be your Achilles Heel."

The Demon King: "Let's drop this subject."

Bang bang, clang clang, klink klink

The Chief Maid: "What's that sound!?"

The Demon King: "Hmm. I'm conducting an experiment with the help of a craftsman I've hired. We'll have to test it out and note the bits that need improvement."

The Chief Maid: "What is it for?"

The Demon King: "It's for something called a Compass. What he's making now is an improvement for it. These two shafts and this large glass orb will keep the compass inside level."

The Chief Maid: "Hmm. So what was it like before you improved it?"

The Demon King: "We just floated a magnet on water. Look, it's really the same concept for that thing floating inside."

The Chief Maid: "I sort of understand. But it's really become a great deal bigger, hasn't it?"

The Demon King: "There's no choice. This is an experimental model. To make it more practical, we'll probably have to make smaller models."

The Chief Maid: "What sort of improvements does this have?"

The Demon King: "Hmm, compasses are used for determining direction. The magnet on the water surface inside here will turn and demonstrate which way is North... For this to happen, it is critical that the water surface is perfectly level."

The Chief Maid: "Uh huh."

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

The Demon King: “People who really need to know the direction will be on ships right? It is an exceedingly difficult task to keep the water level on a rocking ship or on a day with a strong breeze.”



Compass: Essentially a lodestone for determining direction. It was invented in China in the 11th Century and transmitted to Europe around the 13th Century. The suspension-type compass was invented in 16th Century Italy.

The Chief Maid: “Then what have people been doing up to now!?”

The Demon King: “Persistence?”

The Chief Maid: “...”

The Demon King: “...”

The Chief Maid: “Humans are impressive, aren’t they?”

The Demon King: “Well, with this suspension-type system, while finding a place to install it may be difficult, even on a rocking ship, the compass will be kept steady as it is suspended.”

The Chief Maid: “Hmm. And it would be possible even if you weren’t a persistent person.”

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

The Demon King: “No. The Female Paladin once told me that to be human is to be persistent, hence persistence is ultimately necessary. What this helps to reduce is the skill required. Compass navigation requires a highly specialised skillset. This simple add-on will help to increase the number of skilled operators.”

The Chief Maid: “But this village isn’t even on a coast, is it?”

The Demon King: “Hmm. This device is for selling.”

The Chief Maid: “Did you not buy it for them?”

The Demon King: “We need an honest method for these people to accumulate money, and hence come into contact with The Union.”

The Chief Maid: “As this is within the expertise of the Demon King, I will leave it to you then.”

The Demon King: “Leave it to me.”

The Chief Maid: “On an unrelated note, shall we have potatoes for dinner?”

The Demon King: “Hmm, I would really love some fried potatoes.”

smiles

— **The Demon World, the Beast Fang Tribe, Stronghold of the Black Wolves**

Demon Wolf: “Growl”

Demon Wolf: “Auuuuuuuuu!”

The Hero: “Whoa. You’ve all gathered here.”

Demon Wolf: “Growl... Bark! Bark!”

The Hero: “You guys. If you don’t want to get hurt then go away!”

Demon Wolf: “Bark!?”

Demon Wolf: “Ha... Ha... Ha... Whimper!”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Winged Fairy: "Mr Black Knight, over here!"

The Hero: "Do I know you?"

Winged Fairy: "The Queen. Over here!"

The Hero: "Leave it to me! Curse of Explosions!"

Winged Fairy: "Up here—!"

Black Wolf Guard: "None shall pass."

The Hero: "Demon, eh? Get out of the way!"

Crash! Rumble!

Winged Fairy: "The Black Wolf Tribe. There are even bigger things here."

Black Wolf Guard: "Don't worry, your journey ends here."

The Hero: "I really didn't want to kill anyone, but hah!"

Clash!

Winged Fairy: "You poked his forehead!?"

Black Wolf Guard: "Mommy!"

Faints

The Hero: "I didn't even cut you."

Winged Fairy: "There's more coming this way!"

Black Wolf Guard: "Intruders!"

Black Wolf Guard: "Who are they? What strange people"

Black Wolf Guard: "Despite knowing that this is our Demon Tyrant Army's"

Black Wolf Guard: "Black Wolf Stronghold, they still dare to attack!?"

The Hero: "How annoying."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Winged Fairy: "Y, you mustn't! Don't damage the Stronghold!"

The Hero: "Oh, right. There's a Queen at the top of it."

Winged Fairy: "That's right."

The Hero: "In that case!" *Boom!*

Black Wolf Guard: "He took down the wall empty handed!?"

Black Wolf Guard: "Run away!"

The Hero: "This technique needs a bit of distance... Don't stand around, if we don't get there in time, it's a matter of life and death—. Ah, I think I sprained my back from that."

Winged Fairy: "Amazing!"

The Hero: "As directly transmitted from the Great Sage! Sung about in the great legends! "The Sealing Lance of Light"!"

Rumbling in the distance

— At the Top Tower of the Black Wolf Stronghold

Winged Fairy: "Pant, pant."

The Hero: "I'm sorry."

Winged Fairy: "You're mean."

Queen of the Fairies: "What is this?"

The Hero: "Oh. Is that her?"

Winged Fairy: "Your Majesty!"

Queen of the Fairies: "Aren't you the Winged Fairy?"

The Hero: "Nice to meet you, I apologise that I do not come bearing gifts."

Winged Fairy: "Your Majesty, this here is a hero of the humans."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Queen of the Fairies: "I can tell."

The Hero: "I'm a hero."

Winged Fairy: "I'm really smart — ♪"

Queen of the Fairies: "Please hurry and flee. If the Demon Wolf General arrives, we won't be able to beat him."

The Hero: "Even though I already have?"

Queen of the Fairies: "What? So humans have this sort of power. But, that's not all! Behind the Demon Wolf General is an even more fearsome power in the Demon World, an unparalleled warrior, the Black Wolf King..."

The Hero: "I took him down too. Last week."

Queen of the Fairies: "!? Y, you are!"

Winged Fairy: "The Black Knight, a human."

The Hero: "Yeah. I'm the Black Knight. The sword of the Demon King. I'm a correctional officer doing my best to preserve loyalty and order in the Demon World."

Winged Fairy: "So cool."

Queen of the Fairies: "Is that so... It's true that the seal on that armour belongs to the Demon King. Wait, don't tell me that's the Demon King's personal armour...?"

The Hero: "I do not have the words to reply to your question."

Winged Fairy: "Super cool—"

Queen of the Fairies: "So you're here to eradicate the race of the Black Wolves that dare to oppose the orders of the Demon King, constantly making a sport out of the mindless slaughter of human beings and regularly sacking even Demon cities and villages."

The Hero: "Nope, it was really a split second decision."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Winged Fairy: "..."

The Hero: "Ahem. -- Well. I can overlook the violence of the Black Wolf Tribe. But while this does not mean that we have to be charitable to humankind, the word of the Demon King is absolute. I will not forgive those who oppose it."

Queen of the Fairies: "You're a human! Why are you so loyal?"

The Hero: "Hahahaha. I am the Black Knight. None can stand against me! I am the sword of the Demon King."

Queen of the Fairies: "You really live up to the expectations of the Demon King." *Beams*

The Hero: (This is a really good atmosphere! Even though I'm a lackey of the Demon King.)

Winged Fairy: "Your Majesty"

Queen of the Fairies: "Yes?"

Winged Fairy: "Shall we search?"

Queen of the Fairies: "Search?"

The Hero: "Yes. That's right. Uhh. By orders of the Demon King, I am to search for a particular human. To begin with, I am here for Your Majesty, the Black Wolf Tribe is just a side quest if you will."

Winged Fairy: "The human girl who came to Your Majesty!"

Queen of the Fairies: "Ahh. That mage..."

The Hero: "Where is she now?"

Queen of the Fairies: "She was hiding a superb set of magical abilities. Having learnt Fairy Magic, she left on a journey to seek even greater abilities."

The Hero: "A journey? Where to?"

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Queen of the Fairies: "I'm afraid I do not know, but..."

The Hero: "Just how much effort is she going to make me do, that emotionless girl. Even though she's already the strongest in the Human World."

Queen of the Fairies: "That's right..."

The Hero: "What's right?"

Winged Fairy: "At the edge of the Demon World, within the waterfall basin of the Falls of the Sands of Time, there is an ancient bench. It is said that travellers who sit on this bench will be able to reach the 'Cosmic Library' at the edge of the stars. — She was earnestly researching this myth."

The Hero: "The Cosmic Library? I understand."

Queen of the Fairies: "However, this is just a legend. Not even the Fairies know where it is or how to get there."

The Hero: "This is not an issue. To fulfil the orders of the Demon King, I will be able to find any place in the world!"

Winged Fairy: "So cool!"

Queen of the Fairies: "I will pray for your safety."

The Hero: "The Demon King wishes for the Tribe of Fairies to return to their original location and continue to treat and enrich the lives of the citizens there."

Queen of the Fairies: "Long live the Demon King."

The Hero: "Eh, ahem, ahem. I have already spoken to the remaining members of the Black Wolf Tribe. The Black Wolves were originally honourable citizens. They have promised to become honourable citizens, loyal and upright in their service to the Demon King."

Queen of the Fairies: "As long as the Black Wolves are no longer a threat to the Fairies, we have no problem with this arrangement. I solemnly swear that we will hold no grudges."

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

The Hero: “... I will convey your magnanimity to the Demon King. Then, it is about time. I must leave to find her. If it is fated, I hope we shall meet again.”

Queen of the Fairies: “I will not forget this.”

Teleports!

Winged Fairy: “So cool!!

Queen of the Fairies: “He has saved the Tribe of Fairies. ... So the Demon King has such a subordinate... She’s really changed from the weak, useless figurehead we used to call her. As the Demon King...”

Winged Fairy: “What?”

Queen of the Fairies: “As the Demon King...”

(The Waterfall Basin of the Falls of the Sands of Time — An old bench— The edge of the stars— ‘The Cosmic Library’ —-)

Queen of the Fairies: “The Cosmic Library...”

Winged Fairy: “?”

Queen of the Fairies: “There is one Tribe among the Demons who were confined to the Cosmic Library... This Tribe sought knowledge and could see into the past and the future, they carried with them the ‘Cosmic Knowledge’, a hunger for knowledge that burns in their souls...”

Winged Fairy: “?”

Queen of the Fairies: “It is said that the Demon King herself is from the Cosmic Library...”

—- **The Kingdom of Waves, the City of the Gulf, the Chambers of Commerce**

Young Merchant: “This is truly amazing. Absolutely astounding. Wonderful.”

Middle Aged Merchant: “Hey. What did you call me out here for?”

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

Shrewd Accountant: “Isn’t it too early for breakfast? What’s up? Did the wine harvests from the Kingdom of the Lake fail? Or are there movements in the exchange rate of the Holy Kingdom?”

Young Merchant: “Well, take a look at this. I received it yesterday and I’ve just set it up.”

Middle Aged Merchant: “—!”

Shrewd Accountant: “Th, this is...”

Young Merchant: “As I thought, you understand as soon as you lay eyes on it.”

Middle Aged Merchant: “A compass? I’ve never seen them come in this shape before.”

Shrewd Accountant: “But I understand just by looking at it.”

Middle Aged Merchant: “I don’t know who or where this craftsmanship is from, but this is something big. Astounding.”

Young Merchant: “Yeah, I feel as if someone threw a huge rock at my head.”

Shrewd Accountant: “These... Two rings allow it to remain level in any circumstance. And it can even be stabilized with this counterweight.”

Young Merchant: “It is exactly as it seems. It doesn’t use any special technological breakthrough, but what a remarkable invention.”

Middle Aged Merchant: “From the way it looks, I’m willing to say the craftsmen from the Kingdom of Copper will be able to make a smaller version. Alright! Oi! Where is this thing from? If you were to commercialise this, we would make a huge killing! You would be able to become a political cadre, no, it wouldn’t even be fantastical to say you might make it into the Council of Ten!”

Shrewd Accountant: “Yes, this invention could be highly profitable for the Union, my comrades.”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Middle Aged Merchant: "You can realize the dream of young merchants everywhere, rising through the ranks at such a young age!"

Shrewd Accountant: "Though I'm sure you would have been able to do it anyway."

Young Merchant: "This is going to change the world."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Yes, the world is about to change."

Young Merchant: "Well, it'll be difficult."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Naturally."

Shrewd Accountant: "Why?"

Young Merchant: "We haven't thought about the significance of this being here at this particular point in time."

Middle Aged Merchant: "It's definitely true that we have a huge opportunity in front of us. Like a large barrel of an excellent vintage wine. I am ecstatic. However, apart from this barrel of wine, are there any others like it? Further, could we be walking into a trap? We are businessmen, not drunkards. We ought to really use our heads to discern the available benefits."

Shrewd Accountant: "That's right..."

Young Merchant: "To begin with, the one who invented this isn't even us, it was delivered to me. We should try to consider the intentions of this person..."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Do you know who it is?"

Young Merchant: "The letter says 'The Crimson Scholar'. The sender appears to live in the Southern United Kingdoms, the Kingdom of Winter, the Village of Wintering."

Middle Aged Merchant: "A small, frozen village."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Shrewd Accountant: "I don't seem to have memory of special products from that area. —No, wait."

Rumraging

Young Merchant: "What is it?"

Shrewd Accountant: "As I recall, I saw the name in the news... Ahh, here it is. The Holy Order of the Lake established a new Branch Order in this village."

Middle Aged Merchant: "The Order of the Lake? The one in the Kingdom of the Lake? Has its influence already grown to such an extent?"

Shrewd Accountant: "No, this is way out of its area of influence, it's a very suddenly built Branch Order. It's clearly not for any missionary purpose, that's why there was a special report on it..."

Young Merchant: "Hmm. Strange."

Middle Aged Merchant: "It certainly appears to be connected to me."

Shrewd Accountant: "Have you had any contact?"

Young Merchant: "Of course I have, that's very important. In order to derive the most profits from this compass, the Union would need to acquire sole trading rights."

Middle Aged Merchant: "However, it's clear that this compass is a revolutionary work. The fact that its revolutionary nature is so easy to understand not only means that it'll be a powerful business weapon, but it also suffers from the weakness of being extraordinarily easy to imitate."

Shrewd Accountant: "That's true."

Young Merchant: "If the Union keeps the compass a classified secret, we could only install this on ships belonging to the Union and hence boost our trade advantage, or sell this to the entire Central Continent and increase our profits. Either way, we must confer with the scholar who invented this."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Shrewd Accountant: "While it may be easy to imitate, how can we be sure that this scholar isn't intending to sell the invention to other organizations or countries...?"

Middle Aged Merchant: "In this case..."

Young Merchant: "I certainly hope it doesn't come to that. We are merchants, not assassins after all."

— The Village of Wintering, late in the Summer

Small Villager: "Hoi, hoi"

Thin Villager: "Hoi"

Small Villager: "The weather sure is fine today."

Thin Villager: "It sure is, the barley is growing great as well."

Small Villager: "Since the Holy Order was established, we've learnt a great deal."

Thin Villager: "Oh, it's the Templar."

Templar: "Good afternoon, working hard today?"

Small Villager: "Good afternoon." *Bows*

Thin Villager: "Good afternoon." *Bows*

Templar: "What are you doing today?"

Small Villager: "I'll be fishing for trout down by the stream today."

Thin Villager: "I'll be gathering firewood."

Templar: "Excellent."

Small Villager: "And you?"

Templar: "Hohoho, well actually, the crop we've been experimenting with is soon about to derive its second harvest!"

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

Small Villager: “Even the Templar is excited about it!”

Templar: “Of course, I’m really excited. The Earth has given us its blessings. This is truly an encouraging message from the Spirits of Light. I’m just on my way to report the harvest to the Scholar.”

Small Villager: “I see, I see.”

Templar: “Yeah. This crop is called a potato. It’s sweet and soft and incredibly delicious.”

Small Villager: “Is that right. I want to try it just once.”

Thin Villager: “What does it taste like?”

Footsteps

The Demon King: “Shall I invite you to try some?”

Templar: “Ah, this is the Scholar!”

Small Villager: “Good afternoon, scholar.”

Thin Villager: “Good afternoon, scholar. The weather is great today.”

Templar: “I’m here to deliver a report.”

The Demon King: “Ahh, thank you. I was thinking that it was about time too.”

Maid Elder Sister beams

Templar: “We’ve harvested it all according to plan. It’s really great. Enough to completely fill two carts.”

The Demon King: “And the soil collection?”

Templar: “As instructed, we’ve stored large amounts from 6 separate locations. Doing this, even though our Order has been compiling agricultural technology for decades, is still an unprecedented method.”

The Demon King: “I’m happy that the results are encouraging. And this is it?”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Templar: "Yes, they've really grown well."

The Demon King: "Great, let's celebrate!"

Templar: "Celebrate?"

The Demon King: "The most important thing for spreading the potato is to allow everyone to experience eating it, no? The best way of doing this would be to arrange for a feast."

Small Villager: "Is that so, Scholar?"

Thin Villager: "Is that really alright?"

The Demon King: "Of course it is. Templar, what do you think? Can we borrow the front courtyard of the Holy Order?"

Templar: "Of course. But I thought the idea was to sell the potatoes to raise funds."

The Demon King: "Well we do want money, but we don't need a monopoly. We won't be able to advance if we don't stop starvation and create prosperity for everyone. To do this, we'll need the help of everyone in the village. If each person were to tell everyone he knows that potatoes are amazing, then we should be able to spread the word well enough."

Small Villager: "Wow, now I really want to eat it, Scholar!"

Thin Villager: "Will we be able to grow it at home as well?"

Templar: "Of course. We've tried it ourselves as well and it's not even as difficult as growing wheat. Of course, there are a few things you need to be careful of, but we'll teach all of this at the Holy Order."

Small Villager: "I'll go home and tell my family at once!"

The Demon King: "Ohh, that's right. We probably lack the manpower for such a feast. If your wives happen to be free, we would like to request their assistance. What do you think, Master Templar?"

Chapter 4: “Please don’t disregard the people”

Small Villager: “Ah. Scholar. Our wives aren’t sophisticated enough to help you enough, but if you really want their help, I’m sure they would love to help you. I’ll go and tell mine right away!”

Templar: “Yes, I’ve already compiled my report, so I’ll be heading back to inform the other Templars and the Grandmaster. Oh that’s right, what should we do about the food?”

The Demon King: “Don’t worry about that. —Can we do it?”

Maid Elder Sister: “Yes.” *Bows*

Maid Little Sister: “We can do it! We’ll make a lot!”

Templar: “That’s right, we haven’t done any research on how to cook potatoes.”

The Demon King: “Ah—. I’ve told them lots of times, but they at least need to make fried potatoes, right?”

— The Kingdom of Winter, the Royal Palace, the Royal Hall of Winter

Prince of Winter: “Old man, hey, old man.”

Butler: “What may I do for you, young man.”

Prince of Winter: “Stop calling me young man. I’m already 20 years old.”

Butler: “What may I do for you?”

Prince of Winter: “Do you know about potatoes?”

Butler: “Hmm. Have you also eaten potatoes?”

Prince of Winter: “Yes I have. They’re delicious!”

Butler: “I’ve heard it was brought here by a travelling scholar.”

Prince of Winter: “On top of being delicious, to think we even a destitute country like ours could cultivate it.”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Butler: "Indeed."

Prince of Winter: "Do we have reports on it?"

Butler: "We do indeed."

Prince of Winter: "Hmm."

Butler: "There's a related chapter in this book."

Flips page

Prince of Winter: "So the crop is principally distributed by the Holy Order of the Lake?"

Butler: "It appears to be so. The Holy Order of the Lake has also implemented various charitable improvements."

Prince of Winter: "Hmm? What sort of improvements?"

Butler: "Well, first they introduced the Four Field Rotation System. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that this allows grain agriculture to be carried out for four years without depleting the Blessings of the Earth. Compared to the Three Field Rotation System we used to use, not just wheat harvests, but pig and lamb numbers are also steady."

Prince of Winter: "Even in Winter?"

Butler: "In Winter, the Livestock are fed clovers. Agricultural implements are also being improved by the Holy Order as with the establishment of Order Schools."

Prince of Winter: "Schools, hmm."

Butler: "Moreover, they've even brought in a Windmill."

Prince of Winter: "What's that?"

Butler: "It resembles a Water Wheel, but instead of moving water it uses the flow of wind to move its vanes."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

It appears that the Holy Order hired a truly remarkable shipwright to construct it. The North of our great country has many highlands but lacks a substantial water body, hence it is indeed practical."

Prince of Winter: "What do you mean?"

Butler: "Using the power from the windmill, water is carried to the top of the hill. This allows fields to be cultivated in previously non-arable regions."

Prince of Winter: "... Hmm."

Butler: "Are you interested in it?"

Prince of Winter: "Well. I'm happy that our tax income will rise, but... Well, this isn't the sort of thing that can end the war. This potato thing isn't going to save our country. Well, I don't think I can help but overlook it."

Butler: "That's true. Well, I'm not sure about the effect on tax revenue from all our demesnes and villages, but... The involvement of the Holy Order has already brought about a 5% increase in areas under their influence."

Prince of Winter: "That's a lot."

Butler: "Don't underestimate it. They have managed to achieve this many reforms in less than a year, and we can't tell what will happen next year."

Prince of Winter: "The winter wheat harvest is about to begin soon, eh?"

Butler: "This potato can be planted many times in the year."

Prince of Winter: "Is that so?"

Butler: "It's very surprising, but yes it is."

Prince of Winter: "Hmm."

Butler: "While this isn't reflected in our tax receipts, it seems that the farmers are very grateful to it for improving their lives."

Prince of Winter: "I believe what you say, old man."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Butler: "I am honoured."

Prince of Winter: "So what should our course of action be?"

Butler: "Hmm. As this has just begun, perhaps it might be best for us to simply observe for the time being."

Prince of Winter: "Hmm."

Butler: "I believe that this move of the Holy Order's, while beginning in our country, is targeted at establishing the rest of the Southern United Kingdoms as part of their territory. I believe that once they achieve their desired results, they will attempt to make contact with the Royal Palace."

Prince of Winter: "I see. And the Grandmaster of the Holy Order is..."

Butler: "The Female Paladin."

Prince of Winter: "Is it alright to not have not gone to meet her? Are you not acquainted with her?"

Butler: "Well, when I was serving with her, I had the impression that she was a very strong-willed, virtuous lady. She had small breasts, though... She probably hates me as well. I am a traitor after all."

Prince of Winter: "Is that so... I am sorry. It was unreasonable of me to inquire."

Butler: "It was not an issue, young man."

Prince of Winter: "The actions of the Demon King have been blunt this year."

Butler: "I'm afraid the rumours about the Hero may be true after all."

Prince of Winter: "Even though he wasn't our direct subordinate, we may have been the ones who forced him to certain death... Is there no news that might suggest his survival?"



Livestock: Humans rear some animals and they provide goods such as milk, meat or fur for use in human life.

Butler: “None.”

Prince of Winter: “Will this war never end?”

Butler: “If this war were to end, the first country to be completely annihilated is our Kingdom of Winter.”

Prince of Winter: “...”

Butler: “Alongside the other Southern United Kingdoms like the Kingdom of Ice, the Kingdom of the White Night and the Kingdom of Metal, the Kingdom of Winter has a harsh climate and insufficient food supplies. We’re an underdeveloped country. It is because we are at the frontlines of the war with the Demon King that we receive economic assistance and food aid from the Central Continent. While we are often called the Shield of the Central Continent, it would be no exaggeration to say we are merely a tool of theirs. If the assistance were to end, the people would face widespread famine.”

Prince of Winter: “But to not inform them and let soldiers sacrifice themselves for this is a betrayal to them. Is it not just a farce?”

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Butler: "It is just a farce. However, even conducting such a farce is the job of a prince."

Prince of Winter: "... But."

Butler: "Please have faith, young man. No matter what, you must not throw the people aside."

Prince of Winter: "I will be glad to give my life on the battlefield. As a warrior of the Frozen Sea, this spirit flows through my bloodline. However, to lie to the people, to trade their lives for the survival of the others..."

Butler: "Young man. It doesn't matter what you want or what you do not want, you are not a warrior but a prince. If you do not concern yourselves with the people, what then? The people require a King who truly cares about his subjects... I have come here for this very purpose."

Prince of Winter: "... I understand, I will remember your words."

Butler: "No, I spoke too harshly."

Prince of Winter: "For how long will this continue... This waste, like a rain that washes away the path."

— The Demon World, the Holy Hall of the Dragon Race

The Hero: "... Ugh. I'm tired. And sluggish. And hungry."

Fire Dragon Lord: "You've done well, Black Knight."

The Hero: "You're tough yourself, Fire Dragon Lord."

Fire Dragon Lord: "... I will not retreat."

The Hero: "I've cut off your hands and your tail at least ten times."

Fire Dragon Lord: "And I will continue to regrow them no matter how many times you cut them off."

The Hero: "Ugh. Just what should I do."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

Fire Dragon Lord: "Just end my life. For a person with such power, why do you insist on being so halfhearted?"

The Hero: "I did not fight you with the intention of killing you. I simply want you to withdraw your forces."

Fire Dragon Lord: "This is impossible. For the heroes of the Fire Dragons, it is imperative to seize the Gate City."

The Hero: "Ahh, so it's that."

Fire Dragon Lord: "You too! As the right hand of the Demon King, you should also be working with us to take back the Demon City which the humans have seized from us!"

The Hero: "That is certainly true—"

Fire Dragon Lord: "Why do you hesitate! Should all humans not be slaughtered?"

The Hero: "For the time being, the Demon King has not given the order to take back the Gate City."

Fire Dragon Lord: "The Demon King is a coward! If the Demon King were to come from one of the Dragon Race, she would not be such a weak-willed weakling!"

The Hero: "In other words, you intend to overthrow the Demon King?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "..."

The Hero: "This clearly violates the contract. The infighting of the warlords has often threatened to destroy the Demon World, it was extremely difficult to see cooperation restored. Do you wish to do away with that and cause anarchy in the Demon World?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "The Demon King gave no orders to take back the Gate City."

The Hero: "Yes."

Fire Dragon Lord: "However, she gave no orders not to take back the Gate City."

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

The Hero: "Oh, you noticed."

Fire Dragon Lord: "Do not use the seal of the Demon King to slander under her name, while we are currently taking back the Gate City, this does not violate the contract because only my race is involved and hence this is an independent decision which I have reached. Nobody can say anything to the contrary!"

The Hero: "If you can win me."

Fire Dragon Lord: "Hmm! Kill me if you can! I was born in the magma of the Demon World, I am the Fire Dragon Lord! I will not run nor hide!"

The Hero: "Oh damn. This is difficult, what a troublesome person. How I miss the hero days when I just killed whoever I wanted to... In those days, I never had to do any of this hard work negotiating with people in order not to kill them... Heroing is supposed to be an enjoyable occupation. How strange."

Fire Dragon Lord: "What are you talking about! Black Knight! Come!"

Fire Dragon Lord roars and stomps

The Hero: "Wait! Fire Dragon Lord!"

Fire Dragon Lord: "What is it, Black Knight."

The Hero: "Then, let me go there."

Fire Dragon Lord: "...?"

The Hero: "The Gate City is the Holy Land for many Gods of Demonking. It must be painful for the humans to take it over. I understand that. However, the Dragon Race is also to blame for attacking the Human World and forgetting to guard and hence prevent the humans from conquering it in the first place.

Fire Dragon Lord: "That's..."

The Hero: "Don't try to make excuses... I understand the humans are despicable, but they did win that city in battle. Victory in battle is holy. Do not forget that

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

unwritten law in the Demon World. Particularly as defeat was induced by carelessness."

Fire Dragon Lord: "... But."

The Hero: "Moreover, the place which your troops are poised to attack is the only place in the Demon World where humans reside. It is no simple feat to take back the city. The elite Holy Crusaders are defending it after all. In the worst case scenario, the Fire Dragon Race will be exterminate. Please consider this outcome as well, Fire Demon Lord."

Fire Dragon Lord: "We will never know until we try!"

The Hero: "Then kindly wait until the Spring."

Fire Dragon Lord: "What!?"

The Hero: "I give you the word of the Demon King, as the Black Knight. That the Gate City will be reclaimed as the personal territory of the Demon King."

Fire Dragon Lord: "The personal territory of the Demon King!?"

The Hero: "What the Fire Dragons as a race value most is honour, is it not? You cannot allow the Holy Land of Demonkind to be conquered by humans. This emotion is understandable. However, if the Demon King's Army were to retake the Gate City, then there will be no problem with it become her personal territory, will there? By taking back the Holy Land, we can also counter criticisms of the Demon King's weakness as well, no?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "..."

The Hero: "Say something, Fire Dragon Lord."

Fire Dragon Lord: "If this does not occur?"

The Hero: "Then we can truly say that the Demon King is weak."

Fire Dragon Lord: "I will show no forgiveness?"

Chapter 4: "Please don't disregard the people"

The Hero: "Yeah, the Demon King is no longer suitable. In this case, we will let the title of the Demon King to another. I promise this as the Black Knight."

Fire Dragon Lord: "..."

The Hero: "So?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "So be it."

The Hero: "Really?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "So be it."

The Hero: "Oh! Great. I'm so relieved. I was really scared about what I would have to do if I had failed."

Fire Dragon Lord: "Hmm. You're welcome to finish me off any day."

The Hero: "We are both loyal servants of the Demon King. I have no intention to do that."

Fire Dragon Lord: "Hmm."

The Hero: "I will put my life on the line to protect her."

Fire Dragon Lord: "Gahahahahaha! You really have a fighting spirit! Is anyone there! Call the Lady!"

Stomping

Fire Dragon Lady: "Father, your daughter is here."

The Hero: "Umm. Is this your daughter?"

Fire Dragon Lord: "If you fulfil your end of the promise, then I will give her to you as a wife! Gahahahaha!"

The Hero: "W-Wait! What!?"

END OF CHAPTER 4

—- The Mansion in the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering

The Demon King: “I, is this alright?”

The Chief Maid: “Yes. Hmm, well. You look completely different.”

The Demon King: “What’s with that comment?”

The Chief Maid: “Since the Hero is gone, you haven’t been paying attention to the things you eat.”

The Demon King: “Don’t say such inauspicious things like ‘The Hero is gone’. He’s just on a short trip.”

The Chief Maid: “Yes, of course. I would spend my entire life never forgiving a person who would be able to simply throw the Demon King aside and go off gallivanting.”

The Demon King: “... You’ve just said something really harsh.”

The Chief Maid: “Today is a beautiful day, Demon King.”

The Demon King: “Hm. I’m not satisfied.”

The Chief Maid: “That being said, you’re going to be doing negotiations. You ought to dress up.”

The Demon King: “Even so, how should I put it.”

The Chief Maid: “?”

The Demon King: “Is this dress not a bit too gaudy?”

The Chief Maid: “Isn’t it amazing?”

The Demon King: “I’m a bit worried that the neckline is way too deep.”

The Chief Maid: “That’s called being stylish.”

The Demon King: “Nooooo”

The Chief Maid: “Are you embarrassed of your disgraceful flab?”

The Demon King: “Hey, shut up! I, I’m not that flabby! The Female Paladin isn’t even very glamorous, but no one says anything about her. I’m just very motherly.”

The Chief Maid: “I mean that your non-maternal meat is very flabby.”

The Demon King: “Oooh. You’re really mean today.”

The Chief Maid: “You’re a bit worked up. The defence organizations have been assembled.”

The Demon King: “How is that?”

The Chief Maid: “Horror Ghost and Night Ghost have been activated. Well, will mobilising the soldiers even be enough...”

The Demon King: “Are you worried?”

The Chief Maid: “Our enemies aren’t noblemen or even soldiers, they’re merchants from the Union. This sort of thing is really best left to you.”

The Demon King: “You believe in me too much.”

The Chief Maid: “I’m uneasy with things I cannot help with.”

The Demon King: “It can’t be helped. This is a barrier we can’t surmount by avoiding it.”

The Chief Maid: “At least if the Hero were to be here...”

The Demon King: “If the Hero were to be useful, then that would mean negotiations have completely failed. In such an instance we should run. Hence, there is no meaning in him being there.”

The Chief Maid: “I’m worried that you won’t be able to bluff the noblemen.”

The Demon King: “Eh?”

The Chief Maid: “Well, that’s fine as well.”

The Demon King: “Don’t mess with me.”

The Chief Maid: “It’s almost time.”

Maid Little Sister: “The guests are in the hall ∼ My sister is currently serving tea to them ∼”

The Chief Maid: “Please don’t stretch the ends of your sentences.”

Maid Little Sister: “Understood ♪”

The Chief Maid: “Demon King? Are you prepared?”

The Demon King: “Ahh. ... Umm, Chief Maid, am I supposed to button this button?”

The Chief Maid: “That button is decorative. It is not meant to be buttoned.”

The Demon King: “Then, allow me to wear my lab coat over my dress! At least I’ll look like a scholar!”

The Chief Maid: “You’re not a comedian.”

Maid Little Sister: “Mistress, you have wonderful boobies ♪”

The Chief Maid: “This girl. Well then, Demon King.”

The Demon King: “Ahh, there’s nothing for it. Let’s go!”

— The Demon King’s Mansion, the Guest Hall

Door opens

Young Merchant: “Ahh, this is!”

Shrewd Accountant: “Hoho.”

The Demon King: “I apologise for the long wait. I am the mistress of this house, but that’s a meaningless position, really. In any case, please call me the Crimson Scholar.”

Chapter 5: Pick One of the Two Routes

Young Merchant: "Pleased to meet you. I am the Young Merchant, the Union's trade manager in the Southern Frozen Sea."

Shrewd Accountant: "I am an accountant who has come specially to greet you. I hope to make your acquaintance."

The Demon King: "Ah, such a polite greeting, I am very much obliged."

Young Merchant: "We truly cannot hide our astonishment! A scholar and an inventor. Pardon my words, but as a person with such in depth knowledge into agricultural engineering, I had imagined you to be an elderly sage, but to think that you were indeed such a beautiful and exquisite lady."

The Demon King: "Oh you praise me far too much."

Young Merchant: "No, no, to think the Scholar would be not just brilliantly intelligent but would also have beauty radiant beyond comparison." *Smiles*

The Chief Maid: (The flattery of merchants is truly powerful.)

The Demon King: "It's my pleasure to be able to meet such a witty and handsome person. I think we will be able to negotiate despite my shallow, female intelligence."

The Chief Maid: (Oho, the Demon King is well guarded)

Young Merchant: "No, no. ...After receiving that improved compass, I had to rush down here immediately."

The Demon King: "And that took you a whole month?"

Young Merchant: "Hahaha. I'm embarrassed about that. For a novice merchant like myself to begin such a large undertaking with the Union, there are an entire slew of procedures which must first be done."

Shrewd Accountant: "We are terribly sorry to have made you wait this long."

The Demon King: "Well then, I believe we should begin negotiations... Please look at this first."

Young Merchant: "This is..."

Shrewd Accountant: "Some sort of grain? I've never seen it before."

The Demon King: "This is a plant known as maize."

Young Merchant: "Hoho."

Shrewd Accountant: "Maize? Not a compass?"

The Demon King: "The special qualities of this food product are detailed in this book. I would like for you to take it back with you. For the time being, allow me to explain this to you personally."

Young Merchant: "Please do, Scholar."

The Demon King: "This maize is an annual crop. It's greatest advantage is that it is capable of growing healthily in an environment with little water. In fact, high water environments are uncondusive for its growth. Of course, there is a minimum level of water required. And furthermore, temperatures of 30 degrees are required for germination."

Young Merchant: "30 degrees, huh?"

Shrewd Accountant: "Surely that's a little high."

The Demon King: "Yes it is. It will be impossible to replace wheat with this maize."

Young Merchant: "Hmm."

The Demon King: "In other words, this maize is something which we cannot grow here, but is perfectly suited for the barren wastelands in the Central Continent."

Young Merchant: "...!"

The Demon King: "In terms of food preparation, it can be dried and milled into a sort of flour and used to make bread, it can also be used to make dumplings. This flour is fragrant and deliciously sweet. After being dried it stores excellently in the right conditions.

In terms of its use as livestock feed, it's many times more effective than barley or tulips. Furthermore, it has many other uses aside from food. With its high oil content, oil can even be extracted from it."

Young Merchant: "... Oil, huh."

Shrewd Accountant: "..."

The Demon King: "Hmm. A cartload of maize will probably only be able to make 2 bottles of oil. However, this oil can be obtained during the milling process. In other words, you get both of the products. Naturally, the oil can be used for food preparation, alongside a variety of other uses."

Young Merchant: "It is certainly true... That oil increases in demand year by year. The Union definitely requires it"

The Demon King: "My friends, I would like you to consider this new business product."

Young Merchant: "..."

The Demon King: "Of course, this will require a massive start up capital. This capital will be used to send settlers to the wastelands to found farming communities. If this succeeds, then we can begin to turn them into maize colonies. To open a village in a wasteland requires both capital and manpower, this can be achieved if you were to follow my plan. Large scale organized farming that covers the entire area as compared to the present situation in every part of the Central Continent with small farming communities forming a mosaic across the land will require a cooperative and organized farming system, but is certainly possible. Moreover, all of these new colonies will be completely under the influence of the Union as a sort of massive market. Beginning with maize, new markets for other commodities and perishables like wood, salt, metal and cloth will arise."

Young Merchant: "In other words..."

Shrewd Accountant: "... Just what do you want?"

Young Merchant: "This is not about products or agricultural techniques, this is about selling the Union as an ideology, is that correct?"

The Demon King: "That is correct."

Young Merchant: "I understand, I... heard what you had to say and I understand the price that must be paid. Your words... I don't think anyone would say anything like that in the cities of the Central Continent... no, I don't think anyone would say anything like that anywhere in the world..."

The Demon King: "Ahahaha. You've got a nice expression."

Young Merchant: "I'm sorry?"

The Demon King: "You make a very smarmy face when you're trying to butter me up."

Young Merchant: "Is that so? Well. In any case, I meant what I said earlier. But is it really alright?"

The Demon King: "Is what really alright?"

Young Merchant: "What you said just now, and the compass which you have given me. All of these are basically 'theoretical' things. You have given me neither the technology nor the product. In other words, there is no way for me to manufacture anything which you have mentioned."

The Demon King: "That's true."

Young Merchant: "Have you not considered that we will simply manufacture these for our own profit without paying attention to your plan? Where will you benefit? Do you not intend to protect your rights?"

The Demon King: "I have to surrender to the circumstances."



Milling: The act of creating flour. This is especially done with grains like wheat or maize, which are ground up into powder. The act of removing the husks of the grains and chaff from the harvest is commonly included in this terminology.

Young Merchant: "I'm sorry?"

The Demon King: "The technology and the plans are brilliant. It is truly worthy of research. There are also advantages. If there's money to be made, I would like that as well, because I would like to carry out even more research. However, if I tried to preserve sole rights are prevent technological transfer for material gain, the impact on the world would be limited. What's important is transfer and penetration."

Shrewd Accountant: "Is this some sort of theological treatise? It's too complicated, I don't understand."

Young Merchant: "..."

The Demon King: "Does the Young Merchant understand?"

Young Merchant: "..."

The Demon King: "What's wrong?"

Young Merchant: "In that case... You..."

The Demon King: "... .."

Young Merchant: "Need us to make a choice?"

The Demon King: "You came here to make a choice did you not? As I understand, that's what it means to negotiate something."

Young Merchant: "But, that's... Just what is your intention?"

The Demon King: "An early end to the war."

Young Merchant: "!?"

The Demon King: "Moreover, I am aiming for an end which is neither victory nor defeat."

Young Merchant: "That's..."

The Demon King: "As I understand, the Union's chief involvement in the war with Demonkind is as the primary sponsor to the Central Continent."

Young Merchant: "Demons are the enemies of humanity. As one wing of the force that opposes the Demons, is it not exceedingly obvious that we would throw everything we have into it?"

The Demon King: "That's a very politically correct view point."

Young Merchant: "It's the correct view point."

The Demon King: "Whether high or low, whether North or South, whether arid or frozen, working as an intermediary between the competing forces of light and shadow, cooperating and doing business, and in so doing, deriving benefits. Is that not the job description of a merchant?"

Young Merchant: "Y, you..."

The Demon King: "Yes?"

Young Merchant: "Are you a friend or a foe of the Union?"

Chapter 5: Pick One of the Two Routes

The Demon King: "I am a business partner."

Young Merchant: "..."

The Chief Maid: (Demon King, you can do it!)

Young Merchant: "You are asking me to pick between two routes."

The Demon King: "What do you mean?"

Young Merchant: "As a human, your previous statements are a betrayal. Even from the Church, they are still contradictory. I should probably just capture you and take you back to stand trial."

The Chief Maid: (Demon King, we have Black Ops units positioned in the forests awaiting an ambush.)

The Demon King: (Keep it under control.)

The Demon King: "It's too depressing to split the world simply into friends and foes."

Shrewd Accountant: "... We have forces standing by."

Young Merchant: "Fine... Allow us to test you."

The Demon King: "..."

Young Merchant: "Has it been this way previously?"

The Demon King: "Of course. In the arid regions of the Central Continent, we have begun to replace water wheels with functional windmills. Though it does deplete some of the forestry, we have also begun to introduce paper as a replacement to vellum and hide as writing material."

Young Merchant: "Just what is your focus?"

The Demon King: "I am a scholar, specializing in Economics."

Young Merchant: "Economics...?"

The Demon King: “I’m sure that’s a word you have not heard often. I specialize in the flow of goods and money, the calculation of revenues and costs, the production of goods in a society and the transfers of said goods both historically and for the future.”

Young Merchant: “Revenues and costs, huh.”

The Demon King: “That’s right. My focus is just the same as yours.”

Young Merchant: “For this, you intend to betray humankind? Your dream may be to put an end to this war, but just what makes you think this benefits me?”

The Demon King: “I have faith.”

Young Merchant: “What do you have faith in? Me? The Union? Humanity?”

The Demon King: “Profit motive is a vocabulary we both have in common. This is the second strongest bond in all the world.”

Young Merchant: “— Ahahahahaha!”

Shrewd Accountant: “What?”

Young Merchant: “No, it’s true. It is just as you say. Before being a human, I am first a merchant. Before being an adherent of the Church, I am first a merchant. This is truly the motto of the Union.”

Shrewd Accountant: “That’s...”

Young Merchant: “What an unexpected surprise, even for me. Hmm... Let’s do it. Let’s sign a contract to bring light to tomorrow.”

Shrewd Accountant: “That’s...”

Young Merchant: “Yeah, you can back out of it if you want.”

The Demon King: “You’re really breaking into cold sweat, Young Merchant.”

Young Merchant: “Oh my. I’ve never experienced such a level of nervousness even when dealing with Eastern Merchants. What a relief that you are a scholar and not a merchant.”

The Demon King: “I am but a powerless and weak existence.”

Young Merchant: “No, no, as a member of the nobility, you do have some level of power even here.”

The Chief Maid: (Of course. The Demon King is still royalty even here!)

Young Merchant: “But, that’s... The second strongest bond, eh”

The Demon King: “...”

Young Merchant: “When can you begin shipping the corn?”

The Demon King: “I apologise, but as we are still experimenting, we have yet to begin cultivating the shoots. We will ship them to you next Spring.”

Young Merchant: “That’s early enough. After listening to your plan, it seems I must try to get a strong footing in the core territories of the Union. For this huge profit, it would be easy to ship the goods but we must control the rights over the profits. No matter what, in order to see your dream to fruition, you will need much more power.”

The Demon King: “It’s great that the compasses came into use after all.”

Young Merchant: “Allow me to use them as much as possible.”

— The Mansion in the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering, at the Door

The Chief Maid: “The day is drawing to a close, please take care.”

The Demon King: “You have a caravan waiting nearby, do you not?”

Young Merchant: “A ‘caravan’ eh, hahaha.”

The Demon King: "I have also made some precautions, for us both."

Young Merchant: "Wow, today is just a series of surprises."

The Demon King: "I have heart problems. Also, my clothes are too revealing."

Young Merchant: "That's right... You said we share the second strongest bond. What is the strongest?"

The Demon King: "As I'm sure you know, Love."

Shrewd Accountant: "—- That's"

Young Merchant: "Ahahahahaha. Yes! Amazing! Splendid. You've given me this feeling twice in one day!"

The Demon King: "This is something even little children know." *Smiles*

Young Merchant: "Definitely! I am now lost on those two routes which I spoke to you about earlier. I've given up on killing you. Now... I can only ask for your hand in marriage."

The Demon King: "Wh, wha, what the hell!?"

Young Merchant: "What do you mean? It's a marriage proposal."

The Demon King: "Don't say such things so lightly! Know your place!"

Young Merchant: "My, my. Because you keep looking at the obvious, you lose sight of the subtleties in life. Really. Do you think I would earnestly ask for your hand in marriage without first preparing some sort of dowry?"

The Demon King: "I, I, that's..."

Young Merchant: "No, no. These sort of things require more effort to tackle. Cultivating a strong relationship will be the deciding factor, it's an important weapon for any merchant."

The Demon King: "No. The answer will still be the same no matter how long you take."

Young Merchant: “Well then, till we meet again! Perhaps in the city or on a boat. I will send you the contract as soon as possible, Beautiful Lady. Hahaha... Do you mind if I call you that?”

The Demon King: “Don’t call me that!”

—- A Small Room in the Mansion on the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering

Maid Little Sister: “～ ♪ ～ ♪”

Maid Elder Sister: “You’re in good spirits.”

Maid Little Sister: “Yep. I really enjoy scrubbing these pots.”

Maid Elder Sister: “We’re really lucky to have been able to find such warm and productive jobs.”

Cicadas chirping

Maid Little Sister: “Yep. Just last Autumn, we were so terrified of nightfall.”

Maid Elder Sister: “Yeah.”

Maid Little Sister: “This time I want to study real diligently like everyone else.”

Maid Elder Sister: “Really? Good luck with that.”

Maid Little Sister: “Are you not doing that as well?”

Maid Elder Sister: “I am, and you’re starting to use some difficult words.”

Maid Little Sister: “It’s alright. Remembering words is for, umm...”

Maid Elder Sister: “‘The whims of the nobility’?”

Maid Little Sister: “Yes, that’s right! That’s what the Spectacles Sister said.”

Maid Elder Sister: “The Chief Maid really takes care of us.”



Maid Little Sister: "But she's scary and gets angry real fast."

Maid Elder Sister: "She's not angry. She's just scolding us.. She's actually a really kind person."

Maid Little Sister: "Is that so? My ass hurts because she made me sit on the chair in that painful position."

Maid Elder Sister: "That's because you ate food that fell on the floor."

Maid Little Sister: "You used to do that too."

Maid Elder Sister: "Don't they give us enough food?"

Maid Little Sister: "Yeah."

Maid Elder Sister: "Then don't do such embarrassing things."

Maid Little Sister: "What are you going to do for the New Year's Festival?"

Maid Elder Sister: "What do you mean?"

Maid Little Sister: "It seems like you're going to dance in the center of the village?"

Maid Elder Sister: "With whom?"

Maid Little Sister: "The boys and girls of the village, lots of them."

Maid Elder Sister: "I think I'll pass."

Maid Little Sister: "Really?"

Maid Elder Sister: "There's lots of chores to be done."

Maid Little Sister: "But the Spectacles Sister said we could go and dance, didn't she?"

Maid Elder Sister: "True..."

Maid Little Sister: “The mistress isn’t very lively. How fun it will be when the Hero returns.”

Maid Elder Sister: “Hmm. —Oh right.”

Maid Little Sister: “?”

Maid Elder Sister: “Let’s prepare some presents for everyone in the mansion for the New Year’s.”

Maid Little Sister: “Let’s!”

— The Mansion in the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering, the Master Bedroom

The Demon King: “Write, ‘I would like to increase the number of experimentation grounds. I would also like to increase the amount of available manpower. In return I will offer some gold from the Holy Kingdom.’”

The Chief Maid: “... ..” *Scribbles*

The Demon King: “Seal that with Beeswax.”

The Chief Maid: “As you desire.”

The Demon King: “Hm—. What’s this?”

The Chief Maid: “It is a letter from the Huntsman.”

The Demon King: “Oh yes, I remember, I passed him the Telescope.”

The Chief Maid: “Yes.”

The Demon King: “What’s this, what’s this, ‘It is convenient and extremely useful.’”

The Chief Maid: “It seems to be of great use to him.”

Chapter 5: Pick One of the Two Routes

The Demon King: “I was disappointed by its low magnification, but its fixed zoom seems to contrarily make it even more useful.”

The Chief Maid: “Yes.”

The Demon King: “Well then, reply as such. ‘I am glad for your speedy report. One’s work in the forestry is indeed difficult, but this house has interest in developing a map of the surrounding areas. As we greatly desire a conversation with you, kindly pay us a visit when it is convenient.’ Send that out.”

The Chief Maid: “Kindly read this as well.”

The Demon King: “This is the report from the Holy Order.”

The Chief Maid: “My, my.”

The Demon King: “The potato harvest is increasing as planned.”

The Chief Maid: “That appears to be so.”

The Demon King: “However, experiments on the soil samples have shown that nutrients in the soil tend to dry up in high temperatures. This causes the immune systems to falter and raises the risk of Infestation.”



New Year’s Festival: Since ancient times, the Europeans have celebrated a festival at the end of the year to mark the Winter Solstice. This is the day when the days begin to get longer and it celebrates the rebirth of the sun. The Christian religion involved themselves in it by designating December 25 to January 6 as Christmas.

Beeswax: Wax created from the hives of honey bees. It is used for making candles in religious functions. It is also used as a lubricant and as medicine. In this instance, it is used to seal the letter by heating the wax and imprinting it onto the envelope.

Telescope: The inventor of the telescope remains unknown. While it's earliest recorded patent appears to have been in the 17th century, it was likely already in existence in the latter half of the 16th century, and hence the patentee was likely not the inventor. It is prominent as one of the few European inventions of the pre-Renaissance period.

The Chief Maid: "Hmm..."

The Demon King: "This matter will need to be reassessed for the Holy Order."

The Chief Maid: "Shall I write a letter?"

The Demon King: "No, we'll settle this when I visit them next. Make a note of it."

The Chief Maid: "As you desire." *Scribbles*

The Demon King: "How is the Paper going?"

The Chief Maid: "It's much easier to write on than vellum."

The Demon King: "Yet mass production has yet to take off."

The Chief Maid: "It's quite simple to be produced, but to create it in bulk creates other problems..."

The Demon King: "What's that stack!?"

The Chief Maid: "This stack comes from the Union. Patents, receipts, clarifications, reports..."

The Demon King: "Ah—. Copper, lenses, glass, sand? Even pepper, silk and nails?"

The Chief Maid: "It's all in the list of procurements you have submitted."

The Demon King: "I understand. I almost couldn't recall. Do we know who it is from?"

The Chief Maid: "Let me check the accounts book. Oh my."

Flipping pages

The Demon King: "What a complete mess."

The Chief Maid: "Don't tell me we've got our work cut out for us again."

The Demon King: "It can't be helped. Let the Maid Elder Sister do it."

The Chief Maid: "Her?"

The Demon King: "Why not?"

The Chief Maid: "Nothing."

The Demon King: "...?"

The Chief Maid: "It's alright. I'm sure she's up to the task."

The Demon King: "Is that so." *Smiles* "In that case, the maintenance of the accounts will be her task from today."

The Chief Maid: "We've really managed to assemble a functional maid corps."

The Demon King: "What have you done?"

The Chief Maid: "Nothing. ... That's right, would you like some tea? The fresh orange leaves have just arrived from the Holy Kingdom."

The Demon King: "Hmm, I'm tired."

The Chief Maid: "Indeed."

The Demon King: "I'm so tired."

The Chief Maid: "You can't just go around collapsing like that."

The Demon King: "Hmm—"

The Chief Maid: "Are you sulking?"

The Demon King: "It's already Autumn."

Chapter 5: Pick One of the Two Routes

The Chief Maid: "That's right, it's the season of fruition. The chestnuts are delicious. And this year's bacon has been prepared as well."

The Demon King: "Even though it's already Autumn!"

The Chief Maid: "Sorry?"

The Demon King: "I haven't heard his voice in half a year."

The Chief Maid: "Well, well, my, my."

The Demon King: "When I speak to you it's like all my frustration pour out."

The Chief Maid: "That's the special ability of a maid."

The Demon King: "Why can't he just send word!"

The Chief Maid: "Hasn't he?"

The Demon King: "All he talked about was helping the fairies and beating the Three-Headed Lion."

The Chief Maid: "He seems to be doing fine and lively."

The Demon King: "He's the Hero. What if in this period, he comes to meet a pretty, ditzy village girl... No, what if he's doing pervy things with a Siren!?"

The Chief Maid: "Really? He's a virgin isn't he? That means he's got really strong convictions about this sort of thing, I'm sure it will be fine."



Infestation: The devastation of crops due to insects. Potatoes are particularly affected by tiny 1cm long insects known as potato weevils which destroy the roots. In the event of an infestation, yields can fall to lower than 50%.

The Demon King: “I can’t even remain calm.”

The Chief Maid: “If you keep worrying, you’re going to have permanent wrinkles between your eyebrows.”

The Demon King: “If he does that, I’m going to bite him.”

The Chief Maid: “Now, now. Let’s get warmed up by the hearth. I’ll make some sweet red tea and we can call it a day. Just wait here for a bit.”

The Demon King: “But”

The Chief Maid: “There are many books here that require your attention, make sure you take good care of your body.”

The Demon King: “Hmm. I understand. Thank you for the tea.”

The Chief Maid: “As you desire, Demon King ♪”

Door Opens. Footsteps...

The Chief Maid: "What... The Demon King was just talking about you."

The Hero: "Ah, I've been discovered."

The Chief Maid: "It's the maid senses."

The Hero: "I get discovered every time."

The Chief Maid: "And your letter this time?"

The Hero: "I've written it here."

The Chief Maid: "In that case, please wait for the tea over here."

The Hero: "Sorry."

The Chief Maid: "No, no, it is my job as a maid."

The Hero: "Well then, do you have an inkwell and some vellum?"

— The Mansion at the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering, the Master Bedroom

Door Opens

The Chief Maid: "I am sorry for the intrusion. How is everything?"

The Hero: "Ah, I've just finished my report."

The Chief Maid: "Is that so... Here is some tea and some light night snacks. This time we've made some things using potatoes. This here is boiled in sweet cream."

The Hero: "It looks delicious."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "It's hot. Delicious! This time, I had to fight with the Fire Dragon Tribe, but through this, I somehow managed to prevent them from retaking the Gate City."

The Chief Maid: "... Hero."

The Hero: "?"

The Chief Maid: "This time as well?"

The Hero: "Ah—. Yeah."

The Chief Maid: "Are you hiding from the Demon King?"

The Hero: "Uhh—"

The Chief Maid: "Are you hiding from the Demon King?"

The Hero: "Y, yeah."

The Chief Maid: "... I may be overstepping my boundaries as a servant, however, while I have proceeded without question, I am unclear of the extent I am to do so. I will continue to keep this a secret from the Demon King, hence if you have any issues, I would humbly request that you share them with me."

The Hero: "Yeah..."

The Chief Maid: "That's some sort of attitude you've got there. It's that, isn't it? You've gotten to know some pretty barmaid, or perhaps you've been whispering sweet nothings to a ditzy, well-endowed dairy maid?"

The Hero: "No!"

The Chief Maid: "Then what is it?"

The Hero: "I can't say it isn't that, but"

The Chief Maid: "Technically, since you can teleport, even if it's difficult to come back everyday, you should still be able to come back every week, no?"

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Chief Maid: "You have been lucky that the Demon King hasn't noticed this yet, but..."

The Hero: "Yeah....."

The Chief Maid: "Just what is going on?"

The Hero: "No. It's just. Well."

The Chief Maid: "Yes?"

The Hero: "... The Demon King doesn't really rely on me very much."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "From the beginning it was always about 'Becoming Mine' or 'Things I Haven't Seen Before'."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "I thought that she intended to use my powers for the purpose to purge all the rebellious elements in the Demon World, for instance by closing the gate and hence ending the war."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "But in the end, she has barely used my combat abilities, in fact, we haven't been fighting anyone at all."

The Chief Maid: "Yes."

The Hero: "It's almost like I'm important and beloved to her."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "Wasn't this the contract? I belong to her and she belongs to me. If either of us feel it is necessary, we can put the other's life on the line. Wasn't this the contract? ... Because of that, I agreed to become hers."

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "But somehow, it's not."

The Chief Maid: "The Demon King, she—"

The Hero: "I know. I'm not that stupid. I have no intention of giving the cowardly excuse that because I don't believe she truly likes me, I cannot like her in return."

The Chief Maid: "Then why?"

The Hero: "Because, I'm dead."

The Chief Maid: "....."

The Hero: "Whether or not we succeed at this, I am still a human, and will die before the Demon King."

The Chief Maid: "That's."

The Hero: "Moreover, I'm a Hero. ...In the end, all I know how to do is fight. If my emotions towards the Demon King were to pile up, it would really interfere with my work."

The Chief Maid: "That's not true."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Chief Maid: "....."

The Hero: "But, somehow"

The Chief Maid: "... ..."

The Hero: "Recently, all I've been able to think about is the Demon King's worried expression, like she's going to cry."

The Chief Maid: "That's."

The Hero: “I’m surprised myself. But I feel frustrated just thinking that this is how the Demon King feels. Maybe being a Hero is a profession which means you will never attain happiness— That’s how I feel.”

The Chief Maid: “... ..”

The Hero: “I don’t really feel like a Hero right now!”

The Chief Maid: “This problem differs from being a maid, except for one thing.”

The Hero: “Yeah.”

The Chief Maid: “You belong to the Demon King. You are completely the Demon King’s, and I am completely my master’s.”

The Hero: “Yeah, that’s right.”

The Chief Maid: “Please do not forget that.”

The Hero: “Yes.”

The Chief Maid: “In that case, all your nervousness, your worries, your desires to suppress your feelings, your excitement, your hopes and your prayers, are all emotions directed at the Demon King. They all belong to the Demon King as well.”

The Hero: “... ..”

The Chief Maid: “Your happiness and misfortune all belong to the Demon King. If you say you are unable to be happy, then that is the fault of the Demon King. At the same time, the happiness of the Demon King is also your—”

The Hero: “Yes.”

The Chief Maid: “Please do not forget that.”

— The Kingdom of Winter, the Royal Palace

Prince of Winter: “Ahh, how annoying.”

Butler: "Yes."

Prince of Winter: "I'm so angry."

Butler: "Is this about the United Southern Kingdoms Council?"

Prince of Winter: "....."

Butler: "What else has happened in the Holy Capital."

Prince of Winter: "It was just a lot of poof."

Butler: "... Is that so?"

Prince of Winter: "You know most of it already, don't you?"

Butler: "Indeed. The Intelligence Division was already in place."

Prince of Winter: "To put it simply..."

Butler: "It was about arms."

Prince of Winter: "Yeah."

Butler: "Since last year, the offense of the Demon Race has slowed down. In this period, the cost of the Imperial Troops guarding the Human World has fluctuated and many people have been thinking about this as well."

Prince of Winter: "It seems that by appealing to the evilness and terror of the Demon Race in the absence of a human victory, they have been able to raise their price. There's also been a directive for another expeditionary force."

Butler: "Is this about the Holy Crusaders?"

Prince of Winter: "It's a directive from the United Kingdoms. However, the Central Continent has shown no interest in this. No matter how you try to disguise it, the previous Crusades have been failures. After expending so many troops and supplies, all we have manage to take are one or two Demon cities. Furthermore, the Crusader vision of 'Taking the Demon Capital and Restoring Peace to the

World' is not even compatible with what the Central Continent wants. If the war were to end, they would face their own internal troubles."

Butler: "... ..."

Prince of Winter: "However, this is something we have in common. If the war ended, we would stop receiving gold subsidies. Countries would fight each other for small change. Countries themselves would become mercenaries. It would be terrible."

Butler: "Young man..."

Prince of Winter: "However, this time."

Butler: "What happened at the meeting?"

Prince of Winter: "There was still no conclusion."

Butler: "I understand... It became a situation of 'Let's get rid of the Demons, but we can't afford to send the Crusaders.'"

Prince of Winter: "It's going to be the sort of war where the military might of the United Kingdoms is used and yet it is the Central Continent which gains the splendid fruits of the war. How could we just lamely agree to such a proposal?"

Butler: "How did the Kingdoms of Ice, White Night and Metal react?"

Prince of Winter: "Well, they were all deeply conflicted. Ahh, the Kingdom of White Night agreed eagerly."

Butler: "Their new queen is a lady from one of the noble families of the Holy Kingdom. They are trying to strengthen their connections with the Central Kingdoms and hence form allegiances with strong countries against the rest of the Kingdoms."

Prince of Winter: "So that's the way it is."



Intelligence Unit: Intelligence refers to the gathering of data from rival countries or organizations with regards to politics, military and economics. To achieve this, spies may use non-legal methods. However, in real life, apart from these, things like assassinations or sabotage, which cannot be exposed or declared may also be conducted.

Butler: "Indeed."

Prince of Winter: "The meeting is going to continue."

Butler: "....."

Prince of Winter: "It is likely that the Isle of Light will be the next battle ground."

Butler: "Is that so?"

Prince of Winter: "The Isle of Light in the Southern Frozen Sea is the only Demon Territory in the Human World. It is there that the gate to the Demon World is open, if we were to fight the Demons, that would be the only place to do it."

Butler: "Yes."

Prince of Winter: "It is certainly a blow to the Humans that the Demons are allowed to occupy the island."

Butler: "Well, at present, I do not believe this impacts us greatly. Please consult your father on this."

Prince of Winter: "Yes, I will."

Butler: "....."

Prince of Winter: "However, because of Demon control over the area, naval transport and the Southern Frozen Sea fishing industry have suffered serious setbacks."

Butler: "Indeed."

Prince of Winter: "Ahh! At the time, my father and the other Kings, in their bravery and wisdom, decided to prioritize the defense of the island over the taking of one or two Demon Cities."

Butler: "It could not be helped. What was the composition of the forces like?"

Prince of Winter: "Since it's an island, the navy formed the backbone."

Butler: "Mmhmm."

Prince of Winter: "There were about 200 warships and 7000 soldiers."

Butler: "How did that turn out?"

Prince of Winter: "I would not have done it. The advantages of our Human armies are repeated offensives and maneuverability as well as communications. And above all of these, numbers. Our navy has already lost the crucial numerical advantage. From the point of view of the Demons, they do not need to kill the 7000 soldiers, merely sink the 200 ships. It was a sad verdict."

Butler: "And if it had been you?"

Prince of Winter: "I would not have fought. If possible, I would have waited until after the Demons had taken the island before engaging in a small naval battle to apply military pressure. From the beginning, there was never a chance that we would be able to achieve victory over them. On top of that, there is no meaning to this war. Are we not merely sending troops to fulfill an order from the Holy

Kingdom which merely covets security for the Central Continent? Even if we win, who will benefit?”

— The Mansion on the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering, the Central Courtyard

The Nobleman’s Son: “It seems it will soon be decided.”

The Soldier’s Son: “This winter?”

The Nobleman’s Son: “I have an uncle in the Palace of Ice, and he’s just told me that it seems it will be settled with a massive naval battle.”

The Soldier’s Son: “Is that so! There haven’t been any great battles recently. A naval battle! Doesn’t that mean that we will be affected as well?”

The Nobleman’s Son: “Yeah, of course. My uncle didn’t tell me in detail, but it seems like there will soon be a draft order.”

The Soldier’s Son: “It is time to bring down the righteous hammer of the Holy Light on the evil Demonkind!”

The Nobleman’s Son: “Will you be going too? I will be on my uncle’s ship.”

The Soldier’s Son: “Of course. If there is to be a battle, then I will serve with pride.”

Female Paladin: “Attention!”

The Nobleman’s Son: “Y, yes, ma’am!”

The Soldier’s Son: “!”

Footsteps

Female Paladin: “What a tense atmosphere.”

The Nobleman’s Son: “Master! Have you been listening to our conversation!?”

The Soldier's Son: "My blood is boiling!"

Female Paladin: "Well, I heard a bit, — the Isle of Light, then."

The Nobleman's Son: "The Isle of Light!"

The Soldier's Son: "It is the stronghold of the maggot-like Demons who have infested the Human World. The world has no need of the Demon Race!"

Female Paladin: "Oi, you."

The Soldier's Son: "Yes, ma'am!" *Stands at attention*

Female Paladin: "Neither ridicule nor contempt for the enemy have a place on the battlefield. It is far better to understand the enemy if you want to survive."

The Soldier's Son: "Ugh."

Female Paladin: "Allow me to ask you a question."

The Nobleman's Son: "... ..."

Female Paladin: "Why is it that your fathers have entrusted you to this academy in the countryside?"

The Nobleman's Son: "That is obviously because of the presence of highly skilled individuals like the Crimson Scholar and the Female Paladin!"

The Soldier's Son: "It is to train us up to be heroes on the battlefield!"

The Merchant's Son: "Is it not to entrust us troublesome children to someone else's care without paying too much?"

Female Paladin: "All wrong."

All Three: "?"

Female Paladin: “The reason why your fathers have placed you in this academy — not in an institution in the Central Continent or with a Holy Order, but this particular institution, is definitely not for you to become mere government lackeys or rank and file soldiers.

The reason why you are here is to learn from that —- annoyingly well-endowed — - Scholar about economics and other very strange theories. From the Templars, you will learn fundamental medical and agricultural skills, and from me you will learn not just swordsmanship, spearmanship and horse-riding but also basic battle strategy.

After learning all of these, your capabilities will far exceed that of a normal soldier. These are skills and knowledge that belong to people who stand at the sides of Kings or at the helm of battles. — Do not forget this. That is the value of the skills you have mastered or will come to master.

At institutions in the Central Continent or Holy Orders, you will come to polish other skillsets. You will master theology from the Church. You will certainly come to master social and interpersonal skills from splendid parties. These are also undoubtedly useful skills. However, your parents have chosen this academy. To tell the truth, it is undeniable that it was a large gamble on their part to enroll you in a completely unknown academy.

However, the techniques you will learn here are far more meaningful than just learning how to beat the enemy. Your fathers probably have a great deal of expectations from you, maybe even because of this. At the very least, the Scholar and I also expect a lot from you.”

All Three: “Yes, ma’am!” *Shocked*

Female Paladin: “And so? For this knowledge and this pride, just to see what battles are like, you’re going to throw tantrums like little children?”

All Three: “... ..”

Female Paladin: “Open up your eyes, clean out your ears, learn the knowledge that will allow you to win the whole world. Ask yourself if this is really the correct thing to do. On top of each of your shoulders, above each of your lives are countless other lives and property that rely on you. Demons are evil? This sort of thinking is not war. This is nothing but the division of winners and losers.”

All Three: “... ..”

Female Paladin: “If you really insist on going to war, I will not stop you. I have no right to stop you. However, I have no intention of allowing you to die. It is not yet the time for you to die. If you were to die, up to that very moment of your death you would still not know the mistakes you have made, and would pass away with a very serious face. I have no intention of letting that happen. ...Well then, let’s commence with training. Today is going to be three times tougher than usual. It’s time to wake up!”

— The Mansion on the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering

Female Paladin: “Why is it like that—”

Maid Elder Sister: “I’m sorry?”

Female Paladin: “Even though I told them” *Grumbles*

Maid Elder Sister: “Well...”

Female Paladin: “Even though I tried to say something amazing. In the end, I’m just a substitute teacher with no real powers.”

Maid Elder Sister: “I don’t think that’s true.”

Female Paladin: “Really?”

Maid Elder Sister: “I too, would like to...”

Female Paladin: “?”

Maid Elder Sister: "Do things like running, and..."

Female Paladin: "Ahh. Martial arts."

Maid Elder Sister flinches

Female Paladin: "Ohh, so you would like to train as well?"

Maid Elder Sister: "Umm... That's..."

Female Paladin: "That being said, you do attend the other classes, don't you?"

Maid Elder Sister: "Yes I do."

Female Paladin: "You're really becoming a scholar."

Maid Elder Sister: "That's really not..."

Female Paladin: "I was just really shocked by those guys."

Maid Elder Sister: "Really? I thought the Hero has been away on a very distant, highly important mission?"

Female Paladin: "The Hero really needs to cut it out."

Maid Elder Sister: "Yeah."

Female Paladin: "It's fine that he never sent word. But after one year of thinking he was dead he suddenly appeared. And then when I moved over here he went on another trip for another year."

Maid Elder Sister: "..... Yes."

Female Paladin: "It seems like I don't think I can rely on him."

Maid Elder Sister: "But you do think so, don't you?"

Female Paladin: "That's... Yeah."

Maid Elder Sister: "How splendid."

Female Paladin: "....."

Clunk

Maid Elder Sister: "Right. How about something sweet?"

Female Paladin: "What's that?"

Maid Elder Sister: "It's Cocoa Tea. It'll perk you right up."

Female Paladin: "Hot! But it's quite sweet."

Maid Elder Sister: "This is another one of the Mistress's experimental plants."

Female Paladin: "Is that so?"

Maid Elder Sister: "Yeah. She said that ever since the Greenhouse was completed, she's been able to experiment with a whole range of new plants. The whole place is filled with plants."

Female Paladin: "That shiny structure? It really surprised me. It was like walking into a glass sauna."

Maid Elder Sister: "Plants from warm climates can be grown in there as well."

Female Paladin: "But to build that structure, she's emptied out the purse of the Holy Order. Ahh, it's really outrageous."

Maid Elder Sister: "Really?"



Cocoa Tea: This is made from the fruits of the Cocoa plant from the tropical parts of Central South America. Cocoa was first brought to the Old World by Columbus in 1502. By the 17th Century, Cocoa was widespread in Europe and was also grown throughout Africa.

Greenhouse: This is typically a warm room made from glass and a metal skeleton. As the temperature inside the structure can be raised, plants from tropical regions can be grown. A massive model was built for the 1851 1st World Expo.

Female Paladin: "It's really outrageous."

Maid Elder Sister: "?"

Female Paladin: "Apart from the construction costs, that thing consumes an absurd amount of fuel."

Maid Elder Sister: "Ah..."

Female Paladin: "It burns firewood to keep warm in mid-Winter."

Maid Elder Sister: "That's true."

Female Paladin: "Just thinking about it makes me shudder."

Maid Elder Sister: "How troublesome."

Female Paladin: "Well, at least we're able to eat some tasty food, and that makes me a little bit happy."

Maid Elder Sister: "But you're not making a happy face?"

Female Paladin: "... That's not true."

Maid Elder Sister: "It would be great if you could." *Smiles*

Female Paladin: "You've really come to resemble the Chief Maid."

Maid Elder Sister: "Really?"

Female Paladin: "Yeah, you're really alike now."

Maid Elder Sister: "That's not true. I have a long way to go."

Female Paladin: "Hmm, you behave in exactly the same way."

Maid Elder Sister: "... ..."

Female Paladin: "What's wrong?"

Maid Elder Sister: "I'm not sure myself. I've become able to read words, and to do math. The number of things I can do increases every day. Even cleaning and washing. I've come to know more about the people in the village and the Mistress has entrusted me with more things, — But, I..."

Female Paladin: "?"

Maid Elder Sister: "Perhaps I'm not yet used to being human....."

END OF CHAPTER 5

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

—- The Demon World, the City of the Gate, a darkened Inn

The Hero: “Innkeep!”

Innkeeper: “What’s up, bro. You’re covered in something dirty.”

The Hero: “Hmph. What does it matter. This is one of those inns which don’t even bother with cleaning.”

Innkeeper: “Hahaha! Nope.”

Human Soldier: “Gyahahahaha!”

Human Soldier: “Bring over some drink, Demon!”

Human Soldier: “Hurry up or I’ll kill you, girl!”

Human Soldier: “Can we eat your meat?”

The Hero: “.....”

Innkeeper: “Ahh, they’re making a fuss again, business isn’t going to be good.”

The Hero: “Really? ... Aren’t humans the masters?”

Innkeeper: “Well, you could say that.”

The Hero: “Hmm.”

Innkeeper: “If you just want to drink, you can buy wine and then drink it outside. That’s the cheapest way as well. An inn sells food and atmosphere as well. This sort of commotion is really bad for business.”

Human Soldier: “Hurry up!”

Demon Girl: “Kyaaa!”

Human Soldier: “Do a lap dance as well, won’t you?”

The Hero: “.....”

Innkeeper: “Ugh, I guess there’s no choice.”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Innkeeper: "Dear customers, if you would like to enjoy such delights, could you perhaps head to the brothel just behind our inn?"

Human Soldier: "What's wrong, old man."

Human Soldier: "Just who do you think you have to thank for the security of this city!?"

The Hero: "Oi, are you alright?"

Demon Girl: "Y, yes. I'm sorry. Please don't hit me."

The Hero: "I'm not going to do that."

Innkeeper: "No, it's not like that. I understand. She is always thankful to whatever Gods that may be."

The Hero: "Always?"

Demon Girl: "Y, yes..."

The Hero: "Are there still a significant number of Demons left in this place?"

Demon Girl: "... That's"

The Hero: (She's really guarded)

The Hero: "Take a look at this." *Slides*

Demon Girl: "That's the seal of the Demon King."

The Hero: "So how is the situation in the city?"

Demon Girl: "Yes... Your Majesty."

The Hero: "Call me the Black Knight."

Innkeeper: "Ah—, oh dear. Business is going down again."

The Hero: "Has something happened?"

Innkeeper: "Ahh, I'm sorry for the commotion."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Demon Girl flinches

Innkeeper: "Are you interested in that girl?"

The Hero: "We're just talking."

Innkeeper: "Hehe."

Demon Girl shudders

Innkeeper: "Well, whatever, this girl's too scared to work properly. Oi! Go wash the dishes with my wife."

The Hero: "You have a real beauty here."

Innkeeper: "I don't care if she's a Demon or whatever, she's a valuable employee who eats the same food as us. I won't allow anyone to break her, and I've never allowed anyone to bully her."

The Hero: "....."

Demon Girl: "Well then..."

The Hero: "Oi, innkeeper. Lend me this girl for a bit, won't you?"

Innkeeper: "What?"

The Hero: "I'll tip. Here." *Coins clinking*

Innkeeper: "Hmm..."

Demon Girl flinches

Innkeeper: "Seems like you're into this girl. Ah—, whatever. At any case, she can't work, and if she were to go out she might run into those people from just now and that would be really troublesome."

The Hero: "Ahh, I just need to talk to her about something."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Innkeeper: "Hahaha, talk to her. Well, whatever. This girl lives in the dormitory at the back, she pays her rent monthly. If you really want to 'talk to her', then you should go over there."

The Hero: "Ahh, good idea."

Innkeeper: "How will your accommodations for tonight be?"

The Hero: "Do you have a room? Get one ready for me when I return."

Innkeeper: "I understand. When it is time for dinner, I will come up and get you. I'm sorry that I can't bring it up for you."

The Hero: "Huh? Yeah, don't worry, I'll be down when I'm hungry."

Innkeeper: "Hahahaha. Well, it's good to eat lots while you're still young! Hahaha."

—- The Demon World, the City of the Gate, at a Low-Class Brothel

The Hero: "Well then."

Demon Girl shudders

The Hero: "Ah. Why are you so nervous?"

Demon Girl: "I'm sorry. Are you going to do anything."

The Hero: "No I'm not."

Demon Girl: "... Eh."

The Hero: "We moved diagonally from your room and ended up here so we could talk without anyone seeing us."

Demon Girl: "I'm sorry."

The Hero: "Ah, it's okay. Would you like something to drink?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Demon Girl: "No... That's, I don't... No, I... will... drink... something..."

The Hero: "Don't make a face like you're going to die. It's alright even if you don't drink."

Demon Girl: "Y, yes..."

The Hero: "Then, I suppose we could have some tea."

Demon Girl: "Y, yes..."

The Hero: "Umm, I guess that's it for now."

Demon Girl: "Yes."

Human Soldier: "Relax, I'm not going to do anything to hurt you."

Demon Girl: "Eh, that's. ... Sobs."

The Hero: "Why are you crying?"

Demon Girl: "I, I, I"

The Hero: "Calm down."

Demon Girl: "I'm not very... good... at..."

The Hero: "I don't understand."

Demon Girl: "I may not... be able to... perform as you'd like. I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry."

The Hero: "??"

Demon Girl: "If... If it hurts... Then I'm sorry..."

The Hero: "Hm? ... Ah! Ahh!"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

—- The Demon World, the City of the Gate, at a Low-Class Brothel

The Hero: "I'm sorry if I was intrusive before, would you please calm down?"

Demon Girl: "Y, yes..."

The Hero: "No, really. This is thirty times more difficult than negotiating with the Fire Dragon Lord."

Demon Girl: "I, I'm sorry."

The Hero: "If you keep apologizing, we're not going to get anywhere."

Demon Girl: "I, I'm sorry."

The Hero: "... ..."

Demon Girl: "... ..."

The Hero: "Well, to sum it all up simply... The people who run the city are currently the Crusaders and the City Garrison, They control everything from the center of the city to the residential areas... Well, not really control, more like plunder."

Demon Girl: "Yes....."

The Hero: "How many are there?"

Demon Girl: "... A lot. ...I'm sorry."

Human Soldier: "How many are there outside the city?"

Demon Girl: "... Outside?"

Human Soldier: "Watch guards and lookouts."

Demon Girl: "A lot. ...There are four divisions."

The Hero: "Hmm"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Demon Girl: “They take turns returning to the city. When they return, they do violent, scary... horrible things.”

The Hero: (Hmm... In other words, the cities’ external garrison might be stationed at the 4 fortresses that I saw on my way in. That’s where the military strength is gathered that will oppose the irredentist efforts of the Demon Race. On top of that, the peacekeeping forces of the City of the Gate are in the middle of the city. Well, it’s to be expected. They don’t need that many people garrisoned here to preserve order. The main battle power is on the outside of the city—. Most of the Demons here have been reduced to slaves so a police force is all that’s needed to preserve the peace.

— Even though the military law enforced by the peacekeeping units seems to have degraded. Each fortress can probably hold about 2000 men, the peacekeeping forces in the city probably have 1000 men, on top of that there are probably another 1000 reserve forces and recuperating forces.)

The Hero: “Hmm.”

Demon Girl flinches

The Hero: “What’s the difference between the units in the city and the units coming back from outside the city? Is there a difference?”

Demon Girl: “Umm, that’s, the difference is...”

The Hero: “You can speak slowly.”

Demon Girl: “Social status? The units in the city have a higher social status. ...I think they’re the relatives or children of the nobility.”

The Hero: (So the nobility form the core... They put them in safe places like the City Center.)

Demon Girl: “Every night, they gather up money... and liquor... and become rowdy at the inns... They arrest a lot of demons as well.”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Hero: (This is a fairly bad situation... If I felt like it, I could probably annihilate one or two thousand of these stupid, useless noblemen's children, but— That could cause the close to ten thousand soldiers garrisoned in the fortresses nearby to do something horrible to the people. On the other hand, if I wiped out the entire human military, the Demons would be the ones to massacre the humans in revenge. There's just no way to save the humans...)

The Hero: "How many humans are there like the old man from the inn who aren't soldiers?"

Demon Girl flinches

The Hero: "Hmm. Are there a lot?"

Demon Girl: "... There are. The inns, the butcheries, the tailors, the greengrocers, are all owned by humans... There are probably only half as many Demons as humans."

The Hero: "Are the Demons all slaves?"

Demon Girl: "Slaves... I don't know... But the hard and painful things, the work which no one wants to do... That's... what... we..."

The Hero: "The Hero: "I see."

Demon Girl: "It's because we lost..."

The Hero: "....."

Demon Girl: "Because the Demons lost, we have to face this evil."

The Hero: "Demons really live in hell, huh."

Demon Girl: "... There is no choice. Because we lost."

The Hero: "That's....."

Demon Girl: "....."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Hero: "Is this what I've been fighting for as a Hero.....? We fought the Earth Dragon King and the Fairy Queen for control over this vital City of the Gate for this? If the Humans win, this is what the entire Demon World will look like, and if the Demons win, will it not be the same!"

Silence!

Demon Girl flinches

The Hero: "No, I'm sorry."

Demon Girl: "Y, yes." *Shudders*

The Hero: "....."

Demon Girl: "B, but."

The Hero: "?"

Demon Girl: "The people in the East Fortress aren't as... violent. Even though they don't really come to the city... It's said that... If you're a Demon and you need to escape, you should escape to the East."

The Hero: "Hmm."

Demon Girl: "Black Knight?"

The Hero: "Hm?"

Demon Girl: "Have I been useless..."

The Hero: "Ah, no no no. You've been very useful. Thank you for the invaluable information."

Demon Girl: "Y, yes. And..."

The Hero: "Even so... Just this much... No, the Demon King will probably want to know about money flows... This information isn't enough... Should I investigate? Maybe I'll find out more in the city."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Demon Girl: "This... May be a little rude, but, if you'd like... Black Knight..."

The Hero: "Don't, spread, your, legs!"

Demon Girl: "Eep! I'm sorry!"

The Hero: "Agh, why does this keep happening to me!? I shouldn't have to deal with this sort of thing!"

—- The Boarding House at the Outskirts of the Village of Wintering

The Nobleman's Son: "... Ugh"

The Soldier's Son: "..... Ugh."

The Merchant's Son: "I'm going to die. I'm going to die. I'm in the middle of death."

The Soldier's Son: "Don't say such heartless things."

The Merchant's Son: "Are you feeling alright?"

The Soldier's Son: "Hahaha. This is nothing." *Shivers* "Gyahahaha"

The Merchant's Son: "As expected."

The Nobleman's Son: "Ugh. How can our spirits be crushed by such a small thing."

The Soldier's Son: "Ohh, you're unexpectedly strong-willed, Nobleman's Son."

The Merchant's Son: "Yeah! What a surprise."

The Nobleman's Son: "At least let us wash our faces. And our hair... and perfume..." *Spaces out*

The Soldier's Son: "... ..."

The Merchant's Son: "Still strong willed?"

The Soldier's Son: "Well, a lot more strong-willed than when he started."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Merchant's Son: "Even though I've already gotten used to it."

The Nobleman's Son: "Ugh....."

The Soldier's Son: "It can't be helped that the training is tough. This is what it means to have an elite education."

The Merchant's Son: "At any rate, I never thought I would never meet someone like the Female Paladin in a place like this."

The Nobleman's Son: "Ugh. Since returning from the Hero's expedition to the Demon World, the three heroes seem to have retreated from the world stage..."

The Soldier's Son: "You've noticed that? If you're feeling faint you should just stop."

The Nobleman's Son: "If I don't at least break out into sweat, how can maintain the pride of us nobility."

The Soldier's Son: "Here, use this." *Passes weights*

The Nobleman's Son: "Thank you."

The Merchant's Son: "The Female Paladin and the Hero may be cool, but the Scholar's theories are amazing as well."

The Soldier's Son: "Huh? Is that so?"

The Merchant's Son: "Yeah, it is. Because I come from a family of Merchants, I've been learning things like financial management and math since I was a little child, but the theories the Scholar uses are fundamentally completely different. She really sees things from the macro perspective."

The Soldier's Son: "Macro perspective? I don't understand. You mean grubby things like saving money?"

The Merchant's Son throws down weights angrily

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Nobleman's Son: "Saving money isn't a grubby thing, what a soldier-like thing to say. Is your brain filled with miso soup?"

The Soldier's Son: "What!?"

The Nobleman's Son: "All you do is eat food, right? Soldiers don't grow the wheat, that's just imported from one or another country, isn't it?"

The Merchant's Son: "That's right. Trade and economy are the fundamentals of the world."

The Soldier's Son: "It's two against one, this is a bad situation. But even if you say that, Nobleman's Son, you don't grow the wheat either, Merchant's Son, neither do you. And you don't even have the strength to hold up this longsword."

The Merchant's Son: "That's..."

The Nobleman's Son: "That's why I tried to pick words that wouldn't start a fight. That's the brilliant advice from my grandma... My grandma's the one who put me in this school."

The Soldier's Son: "Ho."

The Merchant's Son: "Is that so?"

The Nobleman's Son: "It seems she was charmed by the Scholar after meeting her by accident."

The Merchant's Son: "Heh! Then she made the choice for you to come here. I come from a Merchant family, my eldest and second brothers will continue the company, but a third son like me has no place to be. It would be scandalous if they just threw me out, so my family threw me here instead. Even though they say it's for me to make connections in the Kingdom of Winter."

The Nobleman's Son: "Hmm. Everyone has different circumstances."

The Soldier's Son: "Indeed—"

The Merchant's Son: "How about you?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Soldier's Son: "Nothing."

The Merchant's Son: "Heh?"

The Soldier's Son: "I don't have any circumstances. I don't have any meaningful or deep circumstances or anything. It's just that my family has been heading downwards. At this rate, we might be unable to achieve honour before we collapse into a completely failed abject knight's family. To prevent that, I intend to train myself up."

The Merchant's Son: ".....By yourself?"

The Nobleman's Son: "Don't tell me, you want to?"

The Soldier's Son: "That's right. Rather than staying at home, isn't it better to be somewhere comfortable?"

The Merchant's Son: "Of all places why would you pick here!?"

The Soldier's Son: "I could not afford to travel to the Holy Kingdom."

The Nobleman's Son: "Ah—"

The Soldier's Son: "It was a great success. If I learn from the Female Paladin, I'll be able to become an official anywhere I want. I can really take up this path of the warrior."

The Merchant's Son: "....."

The Soldier's Son: "What's wrong?"

The Merchant's Son: "What a waste."

The Soldier's Son: "What do you mean?"

The Merchant's Son: "The lessons of the Scholar. The Scholar's lessons are biased towards things like economics or finance or history or geography."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Nobleman's Son: "She's only an expert on those issues. She doesn't know anything about military tactics, doesn't she? History and the records of warfare are completely different things."

The Soldier's Son: "Is that so.....?"

The Merchant's Son: "I want"

The Nobleman's Son: "....."

The Merchant's Son: "I want to stop being a third son."

The Soldier's Son: "?"

The Merchant's Son: "I am currently a third son. My clothes are old. My desk is old. My stationery is old too. Everything I own has been handed down to me from my brothers. It's what happens when you have two older brothers.

..... But, it's different here. Everything I have here isn't old. From the Scholar, at least I managed to get some things which aren't old. And, I get to do business as well."

The Soldier's Son: "On your own?"

The Nobleman's Son: "Business? Don't you go home?"

The Merchant's Son: "Yeah, I don't go back. I can't tell my family the things I want to tell them, and..... I'm no longer close to my brothers. If I go back, there won't be a share for me.

Since that's the case, it might be better to just start a new business. I don't have money or connections or anything, that's why I'm trying to learn more about business while I can."

The Nobleman's Son: "I see..."

The Soldier's Son: "That's... I don't know a lot about doing business, but..."

The Merchant's Son: "?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Soldier's Son: "It's great that you're doing well."

The Merchant's Son: "Yes. Somehow I'm getting by. Well, that's because I'm a thin person who lives alone. I only use about ten gold pieces a month for myself, I have no one else to care for and I'm content to get along in this manner. Because I have small dreams, I definitely fulfill them."

The Nobleman's Son: "I want to be part of the Central Continental society, and dance with pretty girls. I'll get to do so many fun things like going to plays, concerts, operas and balls."

The Soldier's Son: "You really are the prodigal son."

The Merchant's Son: "Hahahaha."

The Nobleman's Son: "Prodigal is such a strong word. I'm just a ceaseless butterfly playing in a courtyard."

The Soldier's Son: "That analogy hurts my head."

The Merchant's Son: "Hahahaha. The Nobleman's Son looks like the sort who would be shy around girls."

The Soldier's Son: "Is that so?"

The Nobleman's Son: "D, d, don't say such stupid things! I'm definitely not shy! I've got lots of poor ladies waiting for me out there!"

The Merchant's Son: "Eh—. That's....."

The Soldier's Son: "Ahahahahahaha!"

The Nobleman's Son: "Hey! Leave me alone! That being said, do you guys have girls that you like!? Spit it out! Spit it out!!"

— **The Shore City's Merchant Association, Association Hall**

Young Merchant: "Hmmmm"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Middle Aged Merchant: "What's up? With the increased precision, even the craftsmen from the Kingdom of Copper are amazed."

Young Merchant: "That's great. -- How is the production side?"

Middle Aged Merchant: "We've been able to meet the targets. With the cooperation of three workshops, we've been able to produce ten units a month."

Young Merchant: "Hmm, that's not bad."

Middle Aged Merchant: "It's hard work. Everyone's really gushing with interest in this new gadget, but it's really just for boosting pride, really."

Young Merchant: "If I may."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Huh?"

Young Merchant: "If I may, is it possible to raise production to fifteen units a month?"

Middle Aged Merchant: "Are you serious?"

Young Merchant: "Yeah."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Why?"

Produces paper

Young Merchant: "This is a report from the Southern United Kingdoms."

Middle Aged Merchant: "This is... War, huh."

Young Merchant: "So it would seem. We are to reclaim the Isle of Light."

Middle Aged Merchant: "The Holy City?"

Young Merchant: "The Holy City, and this time, the Church too."

Middle Aged Merchant: "....."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Young Merchant: "The Church is an organization which incurs a lot of expenses. Without a war with Demonkind, religious piety among the people has reached a zenith. That seems to be the case."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Donations and alms too."

Young Merchant: "The issue of the Papal Election is also a factor."

Middle Aged Merchant: "A naval battle, eh. Well, there's an opportunity for business."

Young Merchant: "Of course."

Middle Aged Merchant: "And that's why you want to raise production of compasses?"

Young Merchant: "Well, compasses yes, but the production of warships also needs to be raised. We're pressuring the drydocks of the Kingdom of Waves."

Middle Aged Merchant: "We'll get them somehow."

Young Merchant: "Well, it would be great if we won."

Unrolls large scroll

Middle Aged Merchant: "A naval map?"

Young Merchant: "If we can secure the Isle of Light, the Westbound trading route would be open. This route would be far cheaper than our current land route for the transportation of goods."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Yes it would."

Young Merchant: "Currently, the productive capacity of the Southern Kingdoms has been increasing."

Middle Aged Merchant: "You guys had a hand in that."

Young Merchant: "Yeah." *Smiles* "I wouldn't want to break that."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Middle Aged Merchant: "Hmm."

Young Merchant: "Moreover, an informed source has been particularly interested in the herring from the Southern Artic Ocean. The herring stocks are significant."

Middle Aged Merchant: "How much is there? Do we not already have herring?"

Young Merchant: "About five times of what we have now."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Isn't that enough to build a palace out of herring!?"

Young Merchant: "Through some magic, the herring can be turned into wheat."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Ahh, so your informed source is that beautiful lady of yours?"

Young Merchant: "Hehehe. She is my star."

Middle Aged Merchant: "How strange of yours. I'd always thought you were married for life to money."

Young Merchant: "There's a saying about lovers who 'Sleep in the same bed, but dream different dreams', but this girl and I 'Sleep in different bed, but dream the same dream'." Above love or infatuation, she's a very precious partner."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Sweet-talking, eh, it doesn't suit you."

Young Merchant: "But on the other hand, if we lose, it would be....."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Really bad?"

Young Merchant: "There would be an even greater demand for new warships, and an increased emphasis on weaponry, there would be profit to be made."

Middle Aged Merchant: "But that would be for the Central Continent. It all depends on the favour of the Church, doesn't it? As long as Demons are there, the war will never end, and the Southern United Kingdoms will just be attacked in succession."

Young Merchant: "I have no idea how it will all turn out, but"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Middle Aged Merchant: "It all depends on the battle."

— The Kingdom of White Night, the Naval Docks

Soldiers: ".....What a great number."

Soldiers: "Sh..."

Soldiers: "And so it begins."

Cape drags against floor

King of White Night: "Gentlemen! Heroes who will make history! The Shields of the Human World! The time is now! The stupid Demonkind have extended their dirty hands into our great motherland, this splendid world of light for the last 15 years! Despite our determined defensive battles, despite our righteous battles, we have traded wins and losses and eventually lost this hallowed ground of the Isle of Light. While we took the key position of the Demon City of the Gate, we too were inflicted a defeat and a terrible loss."

Prince of Winter: "And what of it? Are you trying to pick a fight with my father!? You stupid Permhead."

Butler: "Y, young man! He can hear you!"

King of White Night: "But the time is now! Listen up, my Heroes! Assembled before your eyes is the combined navy of the world. Two hundred! Two hundred warships loaded with brave and ferocious warriors will be two hundred swords plunged deep into the hearts of Demonkind! The Southern Arctic Ocean and the Isle of Light is controlled by a pirate who dares to assume the title of the Southern Arctic Shogun. The battle ability of Demon Kind is truly terrible to behold. There are gigantic demons with all kinds of abilities. However, we will take them down with our numbers. Gentlemen, if you lend me your bravery we will surely achieve a victory!"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Prince of Winter: “Oi, oi, really? Old man. If you put soldiers on ships, the numerical superiority will be useless.”

King of White Night: “Well then, board the ships! We will depart. The sun shines high for our victory. At the dawn of the reconquest of the Isle of Light, I can promise a great reward. Every member of the first ship to land on the Isle of Light will receive 100 gold pieces. Heroes, it is time to show your power for the Human World!”

— The Demon World, the City of the Gate, the Invaded Temple

Door Opens

The Hero: “This is a really ugly place...”

Demon Girl: “Yes... This is the Temple.”

The Hero: “Oh sorry. Thanks for showing the way.”

Demon Girl: “No, that’s. You paid a lot of money... The Innkeeper was... Very happy. Umm... Me too.”

The Hero: “Oh yeah. The Demons have a lot of different Gods, don’t they?”

Demon Girl: “.....Umm, yes.”

Walks around

The Hero: “Is that so. For the Humans, there is only one Spirit of Light. Must be great to have a lot of Gods!”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill



Perm: This refers to a Permanent Wave. It is a technique which uses chemicals to style to hair and maintain a long lasting shape. It was first invented in the early 20th century. However, the technique using heat through curling irons or waxing hair in order to create a wave has been around since before recorded history.

Demon Girl: “Really?”

The Hero: “If you anger one God, then the other Gods can help to cover for you, can’t they? Since the Humans have only one Church of the Spirit of Light, it’s really constrained.”

Demon Girl: “That... May be true.”

The Hero: “Hmm... This rubble is really splendid...”

Demon Girl: “Sir Black Knight, why...”

The Hero: “?”

Demon Girl: “Why are you a Knight of the Demon King... Even though you’re a human?”

The Hero: “Ah—. I’m actually not a knight or anything, it’s really hard to explain but... In any case, I belong to the Demon King.”

Demon Girl: “You belong to the Demon King?”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Hero: "Yeah." *Grins*

Demon Girl: "Like an object?"

The Hero: "That's right."

Demon Girl: "Then, you lost to the Demon King..."

The Hero: "Eh?"

Demon Girl: "Is that wrong? ... I'm, I'm sorry. The Demons... The Demons lost, so we... Lost... This... Freedom... Is that... Wrong?" *Shaking*

The Hero: "Yeah, that's right."

Demon Girl: "So you... Lost?"

The Hero: "No, that's wrong... Well, in the end it's like this, but it's different..."

Demon Girl: "?"

The Hero: "It's complicated."

Demon Girl: "Is that so..."

The Hero: "What's this statue?"

Demon Girl: "It's an Old God... The Dragon... God. Many people believe in him..... He's a very powerful God... in the Demon World."

The Hero: "Heh, what kind of God is he?"

Demon Girl: "He's righteous, and strong... He wields a spear... He's a God... Like the Demon King." *Shaking*

The Hero: "What's wrong?"

Demon Girl: "Lesser Demons like me... Aren't allowed to enter."

The Hero: "Ahahahaha. What are you scared of in a ruin like this?"

Demon Girl: "These two are....."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Hero: "They're so crumbling and ruined."

Demon Girl: "They're statues of ravens..... It's likely that in ancient times..... This is 'Memory' and 'Wisdom' is on the right....."

The Hero: "Is that their names? You sure know a lot."

Demon Girl: "They're the..... Assistants of the Gods..... I've heard from various sources..... that they really perform their duty. Ravens are..... Good kids. I've heard that..... Powerful Demons are capable of using birds with their magic."

The Hero: "Ahahaha. Is that so. They can summon them, eh? That's right, the Demon King can definitely use it brilliantly. Yep. Summons... They're... Uhh... Illusionary life-forms. Created from... Uhh... Mana in the atmosphere...?"

Demon Girl: "?"

Injured Demon: "Die... Die, Human."

The Hero: "..... Is anyone there?"

Demon Girl: "Um... Umm... Let's go over there."

The Hero: "What's that voice?"

Demon Girl: "Umm, in ruins like this, there are people who were heavily injured in the war..... There are Demons..... Recovering here. I'm, I'm sorry..... I didn't mean to... Hide it from you....."

The Hero: "Yeah."

Demon Girl: "Umm, Sir Black Knight..... Why don't we go over...?"

Injured Demon: "Die! You cocky humans who dare to steal our Holy City! You invaders of Demon Kind. I curse you a thousand times over for destroying our lives! For destroying our peace! You're all just rotten disgusting maggots who rob and plunder and invade! Die! I'll kill you! I curse you for 3000 years!"

The Hero: "No....."

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Demon Girl: “But.”

The Hero: “It’s okay.”

Injured Demon: “Ahahahahahaha! Diediediediedie! You will never rest easy again! The spirits of us dead will destroy will destroy every peace you have and submerge the Human World in an eternal and unforgiving darkness!”

Demon Girl: “.....”

The Hero: “.....”

Crows Calling.....

Demon Girl: “Umm, sorry. That’s”

The Hero: “.....”

Demon Girl: “That person, he’s..... not alone.”

The Hero: “Definitely. You’re wrong, about just now,”

Demon Girl: “?”

The Hero: “I belong to the Demon King, but, I didn’t become hers by getting defeated. If you win you get everything, if you win you’re right. If you lose you become someone else’s, if you lose you can’t do anything. That’s not what happened. That’s not what I am. What I am is — a follower of ‘the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill’.”

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion at the Outskirts of the Village

Maid Elder Sister: “These are the accounts for this month.”

The Demon King: “Mmm”

Maid Elder Sister: “While the inflows are increasing, they’re fluctuating significantly.”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Demon King: "It can't be helped. That's what happens when you go into a new industry."

Maid Elder Sister: "But there are no problems with the accounts."

The Demon King: "It's because the financial ability is low, hence there are limits to our ability to Hedge."

Maid Elder Sister: "Hedge? What's that?"

The Demon King: "It's an insurance for periods of crisis. Just, financially."

Maid Elder Sister: "Yeah..... Umm, that's complicated."

The Demon King: "You must have heard that the Union has an internal credit system similar to a bank. It is crucial that this Banking system has to be improved....."

Maid Elder Sister: "There aren't enough?"

The Demon King: "That's right."

Produces a large tube

Maid Elder Sister: "This is?"

The Demon King: "Oh, this is a Rocket."

Maid Elder Sister: "Rocket.....?"

The Demon King: "Yes, it's an improved fire arrow. When lit, it flies into the air and explodes over a wide area. Since it uses Naphtha, it has a substantially wider area of effect."

Maid Elder Sister: "..... Naphtha?"

The Demon King: "It's complex, isn't it. Well, it's a weapon."

Maid Elder Sister: "....."

The Demon King: "What's up?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Maid Elder Sister: "As expected, you're making weapons."

The Demon King: "..... Yeah, it's stupid not to prepare such things."

Maid Elder Sister: "Mistress."

The Demon King: "Yes?"



Hedge: To be precise, risk hedging. It's original meaning is to avoid risk. In order to insure products, futures (goods which are paid for before they are produced) which are likely to increase in price if the price of the product falls are bought.

Banking: The functions of banks are to accept deposits, provide loans and leverage (borrowing money in order to buy things). The first bank was established at the beginning of the 15th century in

Italy.

Rockets: In order for the flame not to be extinguished as the rocket flies through the air or pierces through something, cloth is soaked in oil or a similar liquid and stuffed into the back. During Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea (1592-1598), rocket-like firearms were used by the Korean side.

Maid Elder Sister: "That's....."

The Demon King: "?"

Maid Elder Sister: "What is war? Why does it start? Why doesn't it stop?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Demon King: “Those are very difficult questions.”

Maid Elder Sister: “I’m sorry.”

The Demon King: “Nope, they’re good. These questions deserve to be asked. But..... What?”

Maid Elder Sister: “Even the Mistress doesn’t know!?”

The Demon King: “I barely know anything.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....”

The Demon King: “A war is really just a very big dispute.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....”

The Demon King: “A dispute is, friction. When two opposing sides come into contact with each other, an altercation arises from the subsequent reaction.”

Maid Elder Sister: “That’s complicated.”

The Demon King: “Let’s say there are two village kids who meet. The first kid is different from the second kid. The second kid is different from the first kid. They are completely different existences. It is a meeting between two different existences. One of the things which arises from that is conflict.”

Maid Elder Sister: “But! People don’t necessarily come into conflict after coming into contact with each other. Meeting people is a wonderful thing, isn’t it? They can help each other, greet each other, and become great friends.”

The Demon King: “That’s right. Conflict is one part of that wonderful thing. At its basis, it’s really the same thing.”

Maid Elder Sister: “I don’t want to believe that.”

The Demon King: “Me neither.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

The Demon King: “However, that is what I have learnt. Many people die from wars. Where sadness and misery meet foolishness and madness, wars begin. From an Economics standpoint, it is a massive waste of resources, from a Historical standpoint, it is a great loss. But, this misery is one part of meeting people. It is one form of making acquaintances.”

Maid Elder Sister: “Is that meeting people?”

The Demon King: “That’s right.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....”

The Demon King: “A meeting is destiny which resembles an inevitability. Otherwise, it is an inevitability close to a destiny. But, this conclusion isn’t set. That’s why at least..... I want to struggle.”

Maid Elder Sister: “..... Yes.”

The Demon King: “Wars are a form of conflict, but conflict is not entirely war. There are other methods to resolve conflicts. Village boys competing to give flowers to the pretty girls is also conflict. Further, conflict is a type of relationship, but not all relationships are conflicts. It is a fact that there are friendly relationships and cooperative relationships.”

Maid Elder Sister: “Then, why do we have war?”

The Demon King: “I do not know, but it exists.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....Why. Why?”

The Demon King: “I think it’s because it is important.”

Maid Elder Sister: “It’s quite weird that this sort of thing could be important.”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill



Naphtha: A substance which is produced from the fractional distillation of crude oil at 35-180C. After being separated, it burns very well. It is used for things like lighter fluid. Naphtha is a crucial ingredient in the creation of napalm bombs.

Altercation: The Japanese word of altercation is 軋轢 or Atsureki. Atsu refers to the sound a carriage wheel makes as it rolls along the floor, while Reki refers to the act of the carriage being

pulled along. The contact between the wheel and the floor produces the problem, and the resultant annoying sound is the altercation.

The Demon King: “It may be paradoxical, but such things could be true. There could be a need and a meaning for this fighting.”

Maid Elder Sister: “.....”

The Demon King: “I really do not know..... I barely know anything after all.”

—— The Coast of the Isle of Light, the Navy of the Southern United Kingdoms

Soldier: “Weather is good! We are with the wind!”

Soldier: “My wrist hurts.”

Officer: “At this rate, we should be on shore by daybreak. Look out Demons, you’re about to learn the might of the Human race.”

Soldier: “Have we prepared all the axes?”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Soldier: "There were no mistakes."

Officers: "The glare will make us visible. Mix charcoal with oil and apply it over all metal surfaces."

Soldiers: "Understood!"

Sound of a flute and singing ♪♪♪

Waves crashing

Soldier: "Hmm? There's a large shape to the Northeast."

Captain: "What? In such a place, there's..... The sound of a flute?"

Waves crashing wildly!

Arrows flying in all directions!

Soldier: "Agh! It's the enemy! Kraken!"

Soldier: "Fire! Fire! Fire!"

Officer: "What... In the..."

Soldier: "Whaaa! They're, they're in the air as well!"

Soldier: "Singing! Cover your ears!"

Captain: "Crossbows ready! Axe units chop off the tentacles!"

Soldier: "Yaaa! Yaaa!"

Soldier: "Let go! Let go!"

Officer: "Heroes! Not one step backwards!"

Arrows shooting from water!

Soldier: "There are mermen firing at us from the water."

Soldier: "What!?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Soldier: "Die! You damn demons, go back to the Demon World!"

Soldier: "Allied vassals have been cut off by the mermen attack!"

Officer: "We must reinforce! Turn around! Turn us around, Helmsman!"

Helmsman: "The ship's wheel is stuck!"

Soldier: "Tentacles, Captain!"

Ships creaking

Captain: "That sound is coming from all the ships!?"

Soldier: "Eighteen ships have gone down!"

Soldier: "My god! Damnit!"

Officer: "Fire into the water!"

Soldier: "The axes are useless! We must use the rockets!"

Captain: "No! Stop! Do you want to set fire to our allied vessels!?"

Soldier: "The forward ships gone down!"

Captain: "Continue ahead! This ship must not stop!"



Crossbow: Modern crossbow designs have not changed significantly since the Chinese design in the 5th century BC, with the repeating crossbow invented in the 2nd century BC. The Europeans developed the modern design 1000 years later. While it has lower range, compared to a bow, significantly less training is required to operate it.

Ship's Wheel: The steering wheel of a ship is usually larger than 1 meter in diameter, and was first in use in the 18th century. Prior to that, ships were steered with a long horizontal bar known as a tiller.

— The Southern United Kingdoms Military Conference

King of White Night: “.....”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “Out of 200 warships, only 15 returned with a total of 500 men...”

Prince of Winter: “A decisive defeat.”

King of White Night: “.....”

King of Iron: “Hmm! Was I not opposed to this from the beginning? Going in with no strategy against the aquatic Demons is just suicide.”

King of White Night: “Shut up!”

King of Iron: “I will not shut up! You are the one who needs to shut your big mouth! What do you mean we will not lose as long as we remain brave.

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

What kind of person are you. As the Commanding Officer, you were the first to run away.”

King of White Night: “I am the King, it is my responsibility to survive.”

King of Iron: “The only reason you were saved is because the warships from the Kingdom of Winter selflessly moved in to block the enemy from your position when you turned the flagship around!”

King of White Night: “I never requested them to!”

Prince of Winter: “.....”

King of Iron: “Go and look into your heart.”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “The King of Winter was truly brave.”

Prince of Winter: “No, he lived his last moments as he did his life.”

King of White Night: “Ha! To begin with, the Isle of Light was only lost because the King of Winter failed to defend it properly. If had been willing to wager his life, we would never have lost the place.”

King of Iron: “How dare you. Where is your pride as a Southerner!?”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “That’s right, at the time, the Holy Crusaders had taken most of the soldiers of the Southern Kingdoms for their forces. It’s because of that that we were unprepared to defend the Human World.”

King of White Night: “If you put it that way, then this war was suggested by the Holy Kingdom and the Church of Light. The Southern United Kingdoms could have refused this suggestion but you people kept your hands down. That’s right! You! You! Even you, you punk! So if the King of Winter has no fault, then neither do I. I commanded the navy, I was the overall Commander, and I tried my best. This was entrusted to me by the Holy Kingdom and the Church of Light. So what if we lost 200 ships today. We’ll just build new ships!”

King of Iron: “How dare you.....”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Slams Table!

Prince of Winter: "Shut up."

King of White Night flinches

Queen of Ice and Snow: "..... Prince."

Prince of Winter: "My father fought for what he believed in, and in the process lost his life. And so, King of White Night, I do not blame you, and neither does any single person in the Kingdom of Winter."

King of White Night: "Look, there you go."

Prince of Winter: "But, this does not mean you can be absolved from the responsibility of this naval defeat. Because of our disastrous strategy, 6000 soldiers lost their lives. I believe the Heads of State assembled here today at this conference would like to know what you intend to do about that."

King of White Night: "Just who do you think you are talking to."

King of Iron: "The representatives of each Kingdom are here. You'd better give us an answer, King of White Night."

King of White Night: "Hah! Fine. Since you say that, just what do you want from me? Huh? What? You want my head? Do you think the Central Continent and the Church will allow it?"

King of Iron: "....."

Queen of Ice and Snow: "As is customary, either corvee labour or remuneration."

King of White Night: "Fine, it will be paid. But, it will come from the Kingdom of Winter, you hear?"

Prince of Winter: "What?"

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

King of White Night: “The Kingdom of Winter has recently come to acquire a genius scholar from the Holy Order of the Lake and is monopolising massive profits. They’ve come up with a whole lot of new crops and new windmills, even the Union has gotten involved, I’m sure they must have a massive reserve of war funds.”

Prince of Winter: “It is true that we have had some agricultural improvements.”

King of White Night: “On top of that, you still want the financial assistance of the Kingdom of White Night? The Kingdom of Winter has inherited wealth. Are you not the descendants of the Spear King of the Southern Sea!”

King of Iron: “..... Don’t be impudent.”

Prince of Winter: “..... Seizing the moment, eh.”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “?”

Prince of Winter: “No, let us carry on with the conference.”

King of Iron: “That’s right. What will we do to relieve the situation?”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “Be that as it may, we cannot ignore a request from the Central Continent. At this rate, our finances will face intense pressure.”

Prince of Winter: “What word from the emissary?”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “If we wish for additional assistance, we are to pay in warships.”

King of Iron: “Hmph. In the end, all they want is to push us to fight for them. When you’re hiding in a safe place, you can give all kinds of orders.”

Queen of Ice and Snow: “Just how much sacrifice do they expect from us?”

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

Prince of Winter: "Please listen, members of this conference. The aim of the Central Continent and Church of Light is the exaltation of the war. If we win, then great, but even if we lose, they can paint us as victims and spread that as propaganda to threaten the rest of the world in order to bring about another Holy Crusade. I believe that is all they are concerned with. — Either way, the choice is not in our hands."

King of White Night: "Well then. In the end, we're no better than dogs."

King of Iron: "....."

Queen of Ice and Snow: "....."

Prince of Winter: "It's fine even if we're dogs. Let me show the King of White Night the willpower of this dog."

King of Iron: "You don't mean....."

Queen of Ice and Snow: "You can't....."

Lone King of Winter: "From now on, I will adopt the name the Lone King of Winter. This winter, I will make preparations for the Second War for the Reoccupation of the Isle of Light."

King of Iron: "Are you serious!?"

Lone King of Winter: "As I am still young and inexperienced, up till now, I have not exercised my right to speak, however, as a member of the royalty, I feel the weight and responsibility of the sins we have committed The ones who drove the Hero on, the ones who consigned the Hero to oblivion are the four of us, in other words, it is the sin of the Southern Union. It is a sin of the Southern United Kingdoms. Because even though the members of this conference should have borne the weight of the extinguishment of one of the stars in the world, it is the Hero alone who ended up bearing that weight."

King of Iron: "....."

Queen of Ice and Snow: ""

Chapter 6: I Choose the Route that Leads to the Other Side of the Hill

King of White Night: "What's all this about the Hero. Is he really that important? He's just one soldier!"

Lone King of Winter: "A bootlicker of the Central Continent will never understand. Us royalty, have a royal ideology to follow. In other words, we have a responsibility to protect our people and our kingdoms. In order to protect these two things, sometimes we have to be heartless..... — I must also make difficult decisions, and cannot avoid them. However, us royalty must spend our entire lives carrying this burden and being responsible for our sins."

King of Iron: "Winter..."

Lone King of Winter: "As the son of the former King, I will take back the Isle of Light. This is my responsibility as the person who pushed the Hero to his death. This is only one of the thousands of points of light which the Hero brought with him, but my country and Kingdom will retrieve this point of light."

King of White Night: "Can you do it, boy?"

Lone King of Winter: "I will demonstrate this to you on the battlefield. Excuse me."

Door Slams

Butler: "Young man"

Lone King of Winter: "The conference is over Come, I have need for the Female Paladin."

Butler: "The Female Paladin?"

Lone King of Winter: "This war will need a Commander."

END OF CHAPTER 6

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

— Continental Boulevard, Checkpoint

Conscript: “Yeah, that’s right. I was also at the Battle of the Southern Frozen Sea.”

Young Mercenary: “Me too, if we go to the Southern Frozen Sea again we should go together.”

Freelance Knight: “I too was present. Indeed we should.”

Checkpoint Guard: “Lots of people here, just today 15 people have passed through.”

Checkpoint Guard: “Yeah, a lot more than usual.”

Conscript: “I’ve heard that this time’s expedition is being headed by the young hero, the Lone Winter King.”

Young Mercenary: “That’s right, as the descendant of the Spear King, the young King of the Kingdom of Winter surely has the ferocity of his bloodline.”

Freelance Knight: “On top of that, the Commander-in-Chief is none other than the young, beautiful and legendary Female Paladin, isn’t it?”

Young Mercenary: “Ohh! The one they call the Right Wing of the Hero!”

Conscript: “I’ve heard that too!”

Freelance Knight: “There’s also the one they call the Black Sharpshooter, the Left Wing of the Hero, an archer who is capable of taking down four of the Demon King’s best generals on his own at a single go. Truly another legendary hero in his own right!”

Conscript: “Actually, my family will be coming as well.”

Young Mercenary: “Is that so? What a coincidence, mine too.”

Freelance Knight: “What’s wrong with you guys? Are you trying to raise a family on the battle field?”

Conscript: “No, of course not.”

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

Young Mercenary: "Actually, I've been hearing that the Kingdom of Winter has become prosperous as of late, and its mercantile industry is really taking off too."

Freelance Knight: "Is there such a rumour?"

Conscript: "Yeah. It seems they've removed Feudal Taxes, Corvee Labour or Goods Taxes and only take taxes in coin."

Young Mercenary: "I've heard that too. If it's alright to pay taxes in coin, then we can just use our salary as mercenaries, can't we? Our families will finally be free from serfdom. If we move to the Kingdom of Winter we might even be able to acquire a field for ourselves."

Freelance Knight: "Is it really all that good?"

Conscript: "It might not be that easy from the start. They might not allow random soldiers like us to stay there if we don't die in the war first."

Freelance Knight: "Well, there's that."

Young Mercenary: "I've got a Letter of Recommendation from a Templar at the Holy Order of the Lake."

Conscript: "Letter of Recommendation?"

Young Mercenary: "Yeah, with this, they'll give me some seed potato crops to grow."

Conscript: "Seed potato? What's that?"

Freelance Knight: "I do not know myself."

Young Mercenary: "Seems like it's something like wheat seeds."

Conscript: "Hmm, it's great that they give that to you, so we can have some along the way."

Young Mercenary: "No, using those we can grow a lot more potatoes. After a time, our families will even be able to have our own fields filled with potatoes."

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Freelance Knight: “I can understand that emotion.”

Conscript: “Hey, can I get one of those Letters of Recommendation as well?”

Young Mercenary: “Yeah, the Templar who gave it to me said he was looking for people to go there. When our families come, we can go and look for him together.”

— Village of Wintering, the Holy Order, Nighttime

Bang! Crash! Bang!

The Female Paladin: “Alright! That’s it! This luggage! Hey! Ho! Why is it so splendidly packed! Ugh!”

Bangs the Door

The Female Paladin: “Please open the door, I’m sorry but my hands were not free.”

The Demon King: “I’m sorry to make you do this in the middle of the night. Is it alright?”

The Female Paladin: “Ah? Yeah, sorry. You may be a Scholar, but I’m just a normal Templar.”

The Demon King: “Oh no, I really rely on you for this.”

The Female Paladin: “Is that so.”

The Demon King: “.....” *Looks around restlessly*

The Female Paladin: “What a splendid situation, isn’t it?”

The Demon King: “You’ve already packed.”

The Female Paladin: “I was never very feminine to begin with. I always try to pack very simply for anything.”

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Demon King: "I see..... Are you alright?"

The Female Paladin: "Ahh, sorry, it's really messy, please take a seat over on the bed."

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "..... Ugh!"

Shifts piles of stuff off bed

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "Are you alright?"

The Demon King: "Yeah, it's just so rushed."

The Female Paladin: "My departure?"

The Demon King: "Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "Well, I have my orders. I will try to return as soon as I can, so please do not worry. The Holy Order will still be able to function even without me. From the beginning, I haven't really been around, and it's been working pretty well. I actually barely do anything around here."

The Demon King: "That's not true."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "It's not true!"

The Female Paladin: "What's wrong, you sound so bitter."

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "Don't worry about me. I may not be as resilient as the Hero, but I'm very trained at fighting Demons. Ahahahaha. If the ship sinks then I'll just swim back. Yep."

The Demon King: "....."

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “What’s wrong?”

The Demon King: “Umm Thank you for putting up with my stubbornness.”

The Female Paladin: “Is this about the potatoes? Or the Four Field rotation? I said this at the start, but all of these are in line with the Holy Order’s ideology and that’s why we cooperate..... That’s why you don’t need to hold back. On behalf of the Holy Order, I offer you my most sincere thanks.”

The Demon King: “Oh no, not that, I’m talking about the lessons at the Academy.”

The Female Paladin: “Ahh, the swordsmanship and military strategy lessons.”

The Demon King: “Yeah.”

The Female Paladin: “That was some good exercise, and very stress relieving. Moreover, if I didn’t burn them properly, I would be putting on so much fat. I’d become pudgy —“

The Demon King: “Ugh”

The Female Paladin: “I keep saying this, but I’ve got no boobs. It’s boring. And that Chief Maid likes to keep reminding me about it.”

The Demon King: “Sorry.”

The Female Paladin: “Just a joke. Moreover..... Teaching those three was very interesting. I came to see many things I had never even thought about, things I never knew I never knew.”

The Demon King: “..... Madam Female Paladin.”

The Female Paladin: “Hmm?”

The Demon King: “I’ve..... Always, been in the house, since I was a little kid..... It wasn’t a small house, but I’ve always been..... Brought up alone.”

The Female Paladin: “That’s to be expected from nobility.”

The Demon King: “Mm, that may be.....”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “So?”

The Demon King: “That’s why, I’ve never been close to anyone of the same gender before. Except the Chief Maid.”

The Female Paladin: “Hmm.”

The Demon King: “Umm, to me you could say”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

The Demon King: “That you’re the closest existence that I have to a friend, I guess I made this conjecture a few days ago.”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

The Demon King: “Of course, however you feel about this is completely unrelated to my conjecture. I know this is really nothing more than an idea which I reached without informing you beforehand or a fuzzy, unclear subjectivity.”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

The Demon King: “As the Female Paladin, you will be deployed as the Commander on the battlefield. This situation is definitely not unrelated to me, it is not hard to imagine that my ideology will have a Butterfly Effect on the situation. But, despite this, I.....”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

The Demon King: “I’m still hesitating, and there’s a lot of things which I’m not capable of doing. I’m so foolish and weak. It even feels like I get more foolish every day. — For example, there’s this thing about Saltpetre and Black Powder.

With these, one can start a war with a massive advantage. With one shot, tens of people could be killed. Significant work by metallurgists and an unbelievable amount of research is necessary to create it. But despite this, it can’t be used so indiscriminately. If it is used, the battle may probably be won. But, if it is used, we can’t go back. If you think about it, it’s hilarious. It makes my hands shake.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

The Demon King: “That day, I made a promise. I will take the hand of the Hero..... No matter what it takes. In order to fulfil my wish, I would be willing to sacrifice this body, this life, I wouldn’t even mind if I decomposed. Since I was young, I have been willing to sacrifice anything at all in order to see things other than what I learn from the seas of books and reports..... But, I’m not sure why, but I slowly became weaker. As I transmit this technology, I want to see what the world will be like eventually, but..... I don’t have the courage to..... Go to the battlefield together. I think it’s a horrible behaviour. I think it’s a horrible betrayal. I have no contract with you, only a technological contract with the Holy Order. That’s why, this guilty emotion I feel towards you has no basis at all. Even so, it hurts in my heart.”

The Female Paladin: “So, what you’re saying is.”



Butterfly Effect: This refers to the theory that the wind generated from the wingbeat of a single butterfly may have a domino effect that can even cause a tornado to occur a great distance away.

Saltpetre: A natural nitrate formed around Potassium and Nitric Acid. It is a key component for the production of Gunpowder. With the application of high heat, oxygen is produced and hence it is often used as an oxidizing agent. While

it can be mined, it can also be extracted from the fermentation of the urine and faeces of livestock.

Black Powder: Gunpowder produced from a mixture of saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal, which produces a fine, black powder. To make it chemically stable, one need only make it wet, and hence it is also easy to make it explosive. It has been used for gunpowder in cannons since the 14th century.

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

Metallurgy: This refers to the extraction of metals and minerals from raw ores. This also refers to appropriately mixing metals together to form useful alloys. An expert metallurgist is capable of creating stronger weapons and more durable armours which weigh the same as regular ones.

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "This Black Powder thing is just like a special, area of effect destruction spell??"

The Demon King: "Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "From what you've just said, it's a really powerful, extremely convenient weapon that even a beginner would be able to use with ease, is that correct?"

The Demon King: "That's right."

The Female Paladin: "I still won't lose without this thing."

The Demon King: "That's not it. I've....."

The Female Paladin: ".....?"

The Demon King: "I've been lying to you."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "I've been lying to everybody."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "That's why I've come here tonight. This is something I've been aiming for as well. It's one of the things which I haven't seen, Beyond the Hill.

Female Paladin. I..... I am the Demon King."

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "You know I am the Grandmaster of the Holy Order of the Lake, don't you?"

The Demon King: "Yes."

The Female Paladin: "You know I work for the Spirit of Light?"

The Demon King: "Of course I do."

The Female Paladin: "In that case, I, the Female Paladin, as the Grandmaster of the Holy Order of the Lake do accept your confession in the name of the Holy Spirit of Light."

The Demon King: "?"

The Female Paladin: "You lied to your friends. And you have confessed so to your friends and to the Spirit. Your sins have been washed clean. There are no more problems."

The Demon King: "Even though I'm the Demon King.....?"

The Female Paladin: "The contents of your repentance was for your lying, wasn't it? Is there anything else? Do you consider being the Demon King a sin as well?"

The Demon King shuffles awkwardly

The Female Paladin: "Do you regret taking the Hero to your side?"

The Demon King shuffles awkwardly

The Female Paladin: "Then, let's just leave it at this. The Holy Order of the Lake isn't very good at all these formalities and rituals."

The Demon King: "But!"

The Female Paladin: "It's fine."

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Demon King: "But, you."

(Ahh—Sorry, Female Paladin, I need to go back to the Demon World for a bit.)

(That's why, I'm sorry, but could you be their Swordsmanship teacher in my place? They're brats, so it's a bit annoying, but you could just make them run everyday. It's always important to be able to escape.)

(That's why)

(Ahh—It's hard to say. Here. This. Look at this.)

(Yeah, that's right. She's the Demon King. Oww!? R, r, really. Stop!! Stop slashing me!)

The Female Paladin: "There's no problem at all."

(Here, I'm counting on you. Really. Sit down. She's the Demon King, but..... She's not a bad person. She's extremely intelligent, though she does lack common sense. She has strong values and she's not the kind of person to break a promise.)

The Female Paladin: "No problem at all. None. —- Oi, Demon King!"

The Demon King: "Oh, Madam Female Paladin....."

The Female Paladin: "Stop with the 'Madam', please."

The Demon King: ".....That's"

The Female Paladin: "Of course, the Hero is under a contract with you. There is probably a special bond between the Hero and you. That's..... It's regrettable but there's nothing for it."

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "But, there's not just one bond. I believe in the Hero. That is my treasure..... I will not betray the Hero for anything."

The Demon King: "Madam Female Paladin....."

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “That’s why, don’t worry. I will not lose even one limb in this battle. I have no intention of falling just yet.”

— The Kingdom of Winter, Materials Stockpile by the Coast

Settler: “Hoi! Hoi!”

Settler: “Hoh— Hoh—”

Settler: “Raise! Raise!”

Lone Winter King: “How is it?”

Official: “Yes! Lone Winter King! I did not receive any report of your coming.”

Lone Winter King: “I trust you have had enough hands to pass the year.”

Official: “The work has been smooth.”

Settler: “Hoi! Hoi!”

Lone Winter King: “Nice! They’re in good spirits!”

Settler: “Hey! Your Majesty!”

Settler: “Your Majesty!”

Settler: “Lone Winter King!”

Lone Winter King: “I apologise, but please continue to work hard! When you reset for the night, there will be hot wine sent to your lodgings!”

Settler: “Leave it to us, your Majesty!”

Settler: “Hoi! Hoi! Chop this wood for his Majesty!”

Lone Winter King: “That’s a great expression they’ve got there.”

Official: “It is because of the return of the King.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Lone Winter King: “I haven’t really done anything. Ohh, that looks great.”

Fisherman: “Hey, your Majesty. You’re back!”

Lone Winter King: “How is it going?”

Fisherman: “Almost there. It’s important this year as well.”

Lone Winter King: “How long has it been, then?”

Fisherman: “Since New Year’s, it’s been two weeks.”

Lone Winter King: “Hmm.”

Official: “Would you like to examine the field camp?”

Lone Winter King: “Is it enough?”

Official: “The Volunteers..... They’ve come from the Central Continent, and there are a lot more than we had expected. At this rate, even with double the field camp size, it still would not be enough.”

Lone Winter King: “Hmm, I will be going there. If you need settlers, then I will send some. They will need more coats and gloves. —If their hands freeze they won’t be able to do any work.”

Young Merchant: “Leave this logistics issue to me, then.”

Lone Winter King: “I’ll leave it to you then, Merchant.”

Young Merchant: “Buying things is my job, after all.”

— Second Invasion of the Isle of Light, Emergency Headquarters

Butler: “Hahaha. It has been a while. Female Paladin, you seem as sullen as ever.”

The Female Paladin: “You haven’t changed either, Grandpa.”

Butler: “Hohoho. The size of your breasts hasn’t changed either.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “I’ll cut you!”

Butler: “Nyohohoho. Nyohohoho.”

The Female Paladin: “That demonic speed! I’ve had enough!”

Butler: “Nyohohoho. This is the special Archer technique for secret movement within forests known as the Art of Stealth, nyohohoho.”

The Female Paladin: “Heh! That’s why I’ve always been bad at dealing with you, Grandpa! Stay still! I’m going to shave your beard smooth!”

Butler: “Oh, isn’t it already really smooth!?”

The Female Paladin: “—!”

Butler: “Nyohohoho! You’re going to need more than that.”

The Female Paladin: “Heh! You’re only good at making shadow clones!”

Butler: “I can still make some more!”

Lone Winter King: “Ah—What’s this. Your relation is really bad, then?”

The Female Paladin: “The Lone Winter King!”

Butler: “Young man, it’s not good to peep.”

Lone Winter King: “.....”

Butler: “Madam Female Paladin, this is His Majesty the Lone Winter King of the Kingdom of Winter.”

Lone Winter King: “.....”

The Female Paladin: “..... What’s with the sudden change of attitude?”

Butler: “What are you talking about?”

Lone Winter King: “This is what Grandpa is like isn’t he?”

The Female Paladin: “From the start, till the end.”

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

Butler: "Wh, what are you talking about!?"

Lone Winter King: "I apologise for the trouble the stupid Grandpa of my Kingdom has caused you."

The Female Paladin: "No, there is nothing for it. Please do discipline him in future."

Butler: "Young man!"

Lone Winter King: "Thank you for your prompt reply to my unreasonable request for your presence, Madam Female Paladin." *Bows*

The Female Paladin: "Please raise your head, you do not represent just one country."

Lone Winter King: "No, we would all like to borrow your skills for the upcoming battle. This is why we have called Grandpa and other skilled individuals."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so?"

Butler: "Perhaps you should have deferred calling her until her breasts had time to grow."

The Female Paladin: "I'll cut you."

Butler: "Nyoho... Ahem, ahem."

Lone Winter King: "Let us make haste, this way please."

The Female Paladin: "Huh. You're going to have to help me with this."

Lone Winter King: "This is a map of the surrounding area."

The Female Paladin: "That's for sure."

Butler: "We've made this map specially for the purpose of directing the battle."

Lone Winter King: "That's right."

The Female Paladin: "It smells like old people."

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Butler: “What!?”

Lone Winter King: “Then, let us brief you on the general order of the battle.”

The Female Paladin: “Indeed, let us. I will represent my two other friends and communicate to them what I learn here.”

— The Village of Wintering, After a Heavy Snowfall

Small Villager: “Hoi! Hoi!”

Middle Aged Villager: “It sure is cold.”

Tinker: “It really is.”

Small Villager: “The snow this year is really thick.”

Middle Aged Villager: “I feel like I’ve gotten fat. This year has been bright so maybe that’s why it got cold so fast.”

Tinker: “Are the preparations for hibernation done?”

Small Villager: “Yeah, we’ve been working hard this year.”

Middle Aged Villager: “I’ve even increased the amount of bacon made this year by quite a few times. That being said, the production of pork has increased by three times since the previous year.”



Smelling Like Old People: As people age, they produce an oil that creates a distinctive smell. The oil's main component is nonenal. Smokers produce an even stronger odour.

Tinker: “Yeah, the tulips have been working, haven’t they?”

Small Villager: “Yep. I’ve caught some boars this year as well.”

Middle Aged Villager: “How long has it been since we’ve had such a bountiful winter?”

Tinker: “Yeah. I’ve also finished fixing all the farming tools that are needed for this winter.”

Small Villager: “The piglet house needs some adjustments as well.”

Middle Aged Villager: “In the snow? That’s not going to be easy!”

Tinker: “That being said, it’s been a year since the Scholar arrived.”

Small Villager: “Yeah, it has.”

Middle Aged Villager: “We really owe her a lot.”

Tinker: “Yeah, that’s right. Since the Holy Order arrived, the number of customers has really increased.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Small Villager: “If I think about it, the number of villagers has really increased as well.”

Middle Aged Villager: “It has. This year’s Festival is going to be really exciting!”

Tinker: “The New Year’s Festival?”

Small Villager: “The New Year’s Festival!”

Middle Aged Villager: “Yeah, I’m looking forward to it so much!”

Tinker: “It’s the best day in the whole year.”

Small Villager: “Even though there’re lots of people who are heading to the war.”

Middle Aged Villager: “Yeah, there are. There’s a lot of New Year Festival present deliveries for people who are headed to the war at the Holy Order.”

Tinker: “I see. It would be useful if they sent some tankards.”

Small Villager: “I would really welcome some of the Tinker’s tankards!”

Middle Aged Villager: “Heh, I’ll send you some bacon in return. We’ve got lots this year.”

Small Villager: “Them I’ll send you something as well.”

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, the Eve of the New Year’s Festival

Little Maid Sister: “～♪ Lalala ～♪”

The Chief Maid: “How are the preparations for the food?”

Little Maid Sister: “All done～♪”

The Chief Maid: “Don’t sing the ends of your words please.”

Little Maid Sister: “Okayyyy”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Chief Maid: “Damnit..... You’re really looking forward to this, aren’t you?”

Little Maid Sister: “Of course!”

The Chief Maid: “I don’t get it.”

Little Maid Sister: “That’s because you guys just moved here. The New Year’s Festival is the biggest event of the year in this country.”

The Chief Maid: “Hmm.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Is that so?”

The Chief Maid: “Ahh, have you finished ordering the books?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes. I haven’t missed a line in the accounts book or the disbursements. The packages have all been tagged, so tomorrow we should get some manpower to move them into the Holy Order’s warehouses.”

The Chief Maid: “Thank you. Then.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes?”

The Chief Maid: “Is it really going to be such an exciting festival?”

Elder Maid Sister: “It’s definitely exciting, but..... This winter is this area is harsh, for four months a year it’s practically impossible to leave the house. In that long winter, all one can do is take care of the livestock. Of course, craftwork and repairs and other things that would be wasteful to do in the Summer can be done as well. In the long winter, adults do this fine craftwork in order to relieve boredom. Children learn new words and also how to take care of the sheep. Girls who have come of age practice how to weave carpets. All of these are parts of the lives of the settlers, but.....”

The Chief Maid: “.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “It’s usually harsher on the serfs, but the winter is when we get some equality. When you can’t go out in the winter, you just sit by the fire, right? The thing we look forward the most to in the long winter is.....”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Little Maid Sister: “The New Year’s Festival ♪”

Elder Maid Sister: “The New Year’s Festival is a four day period to welcome the New Year. We prepare a large feast and exchange presents. It’s difficult for serfs to be offered presents, but we work as hard as we can to make the feast. It’s only in this period that the landlords do not find it a waste of resources to offer delicacies like bacon and ale to the serfs. Everyone sings songs and if things go well, travelling bards may come to share a few tales with us. The New Year’s Festival is the thing we look forward to the most as people who live in a country with a dreary and long winter.”

Little Maid Sister: “Ms Spectacles, Ms Spectacles!”

Elder Maid Sister: “Call her Chief Maid.”

The Chief Maid: “I don’t really mind”

Little Maid Sister: “Unless you call her Auntie.....”

The Chief Maid: “Do you want to be hanged?” *Clenches fist*

Little Maid Sister: “..... Umm. Ms Spectacles. Would you like to go dancing?”

The Chief Maid: “Umm, I don’t mind. If it’s just that sort of thing, then I’m up for it.”

Door opens

The Demon King: “Hmm, that’s true. You should really go.”

The Chief Maid: “Ah, Mistress. Do you intend to go as well?”

The Demon King: “Ahh, to think such a wonderful festival exists

The Chief Maid: “What’s going on?”

The Demon King: “No, I’ve just received the Village Chief and the Templar. They gave a really half-hearted reply.”

Little Maid Sister: “Eh, that’s not good.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Elder Maid Sister: “Hey.”

The Demon King: “Quite right. It’s not a good thing. I ought to reflect on this.”

Little Maid Sister: “Will you be coming along with us, Mistress? Umm, there’ll be lots of guys there too. You’ve got great breasts so I’m going to invite you.”

Elder Maid Sister: “H, h, hey. What are you saying?”

The Demon King: “Nope. That’s a great invitation, but I’m afraid I will have to decline.”

Little Maid Sister: “Ehh.”

The Demon King: “Chief Maid.”

The Chief Maid: “Yes?”

The Demon King: “Shall we go and send a cask of Apple Wine to the home of the Village Chief? Oh, you know, the one that Merchant sent us as a sample.”

The Chief Maid: “Is that alright?”

The Demon King: “Why ever not? It’s not even something we drink anyway.”

Little Maid Sister: “I will get a carriage ready!”

Elder Maid Sister: “That’s right, it’s impossible for us to transport a whole cask on our own. We’ll get a driver.”

The Chief Maid: “Bribes are useless, Merchant. Well, maybe not to other merchants.”

The Demon King: “?”

Both Sisters jump around happily

The Chief Maid: “What’s going on?”

Little Maid Sister: “Tada! Surprise!”



Ale: A type of beer. As beer goes through the fermentation process or zymosis, the upper layer of the mixture is known as ale and the bottom layer is known as lager. The most commonly consumed one in Japan is lager beer. Ale has a more corked and fruity taste and is distinct from lager.

Apple Wine: Wine produced from the fermentation of apples. As it tastes sweet, it is very easy to drink. In Buddhist terminology, it is known as Sidra, and in English it is known as cider. It was popularised during the Prohibition Era in America when it could be easily produced from non-alcoholic apple cider.

Elder Maid Sister: “Umm.”

The Chief Maid: “?”

Little Maid Sister: “New Year’s Presents!”

Elder Maid Sister: “We were unable to come up with any big presents, but”

Little Maid Sister: “This is for the mistress!”

The Demon King: “This is?”

Little Maid Sister: “A doll in the shape of the Hero!”

Elder Maid Sister: “I’m embarrassed.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Demon King: “Ahahahaha. How splendid! It’s for me? It’s very tanned, what a splitting image.”

Little Maid Sister: “It’s a present!”

Elder Maid Sister: “My present to you is some Lily of the Valley Perfume. We gathered them in the Autumn. I learnt how to do it from the Holy Order

The Demon King: “Ahh, I love it. Thank you.”

The Chief Maid: “Well, well.”

Little Maid Sister: “And this is for Ms Spectacles! I made it myself!”

The Chief Maid: “Eh? There’s something for me too?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yep. It’s a new apron.”

The Chief Maid: “That’s

Little Maid Sister: “The embroidery is Lily of the Valley, my sister made it!”

The Chief Maid: “Lily of the Valley, eh. To match with me?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes.”

The Chief Maid: “But, still.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Ah, as I thought. My embroidery isn’t up to scratch is it?”

The Chief Maid: “It’s very good! But

The Demon King: “We didn’t prepare any presents for you guys. I’m sorry, but we don’t know anything about this Festival business.”

Little Maid Sister: “That’s alright～♪”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yeah, don’t worry about it.”

The Chief Maid: “.....”

The Demon King: “But”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

Elder Maid Sister: “Letting us work in such a wonderful mansion is like receiving a present every single day.”

Little Maid Sister: “We are very lucky.”

The Demon King: “You guys

Little Maid Sister: “Moreover, this year.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Hey.”

Little Maid Sister: “Ehehe.”

Elder Maid Sister: “This girl is so preoccupied about the feast later. If she gets any happier, she’s going to turn into a piglet.”

Little Maid Sister: “It’s the New Year’s Festival after all!

Elder Maid Sister: “Anyway, these presents are the least we could do for you. Thank you very much. And congratulations!”

The Demon King: “Congratulations?”

Little Maid Sister: “For the New Year! And new beginnings!”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes. Happy New Year, Mistress, Chief Maid.”

— The Village of Wintering, Mansion on the Outskirts of the Village The Night of the New Year’s Festival

(I want the Hero to use my thigh as a pillow!)

(Alright then)

— Hero

(The Hero’s head sure is fluffy)

(Your smell great too, don’t you?)

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

——- Hero

(Really? Am I not fat?)

(It's nice to sleep on)

～♪～♪



Perfume: In the past, perfume was primarily used for religious purposes or as medication. In order to get the scents, the materials are steamed and the steam is collected before being cooled into liquids. From this, oils are extracted to form aroma oils which are mixed with alcohol to create perfumes.

The Demon King: “.....”

The Demon King: “..... Somehow, it seems I fell asleep while singing.”

The Demon King: “What time is it? It seems the sun is already up..... There isn't..... Anyone around..... They said they were going to the Village Chief's house.”

The Demon King: “..... My back hurts. Can't believe I fell asleep in such a place.”

～♪～♪

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Demon King: "..... Hero"

The Demon King: "....."

The Demon King: "It's already been a year, huh."

The Demon King: "I haven't heard his voice."

The Demon King: "Even though I belong to the Hero....."

The Demon King: "Even though I am the Hero's possession."

The Demon King: "Oh Hero, you've made me into such a weak insect..... I'm scared of changing the world. I never knew wars were such scary things. I am after all, the descendant of a race of demons who are more than willing to spill blood in conflicts. Even though we don't hesitate to let the blood flow..... Now, I'm terrified of spilt blood. The sea of reports I read never mentioned that metallic stench, that slimy yet warm feeling of blood. It feels like my entire body is soaked in it..... I carry the burden of my sins."

The Demon King: "Even so, I..... continue to do my best? Oh, Hero. You're doing your best too, aren't you? I admire you."

The Hero: "Ohh. -- How amazing, Demon King."

The Demon King: "Hero!?" *Blushes*

The Hero: "'Sup."

The Demon King: "Hero, Hero! Hero!"

The Hero: "Wh, what?"

The Demon King: "You fool. Just where have you been for the past year? You've been drifting like a kite with its string cut off."

The Hero: "Ow, oww, oww! Stop hitting me."

The Demon King: "No! This much isn't enough."

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Hero: "Wha- Sorry. My apologies. I am to blame for the present state of circumstances."

The Demon King: "Your apology is not sincere enough!" *Hits*

The Hero: "I, I, it is!"

The Demon King: "Hmph!"

The Hero: "Haven't I diligently sent my reports back?"

The Demon King: "That nonsense you've been sending back can't be called reports. They are at best, a travel journal with some drawings!"

The Hero: "Travel journal with some drawnigs!?"

The Demon King: "Wh, why couldn't you have shown your face from time to time?"

The Hero: "There was no choice. I was busy with all manners of things. Right now, I'm really busy with the issue of the Gate City. Trying to figure out how to supply the North Fortress is giving a real headache."

The Demon King: "Why are you doing these things?"

The Hero: "Didn't you tell me to? I need to purge the seeds of fanaticism in the Demon World! Have you not forgotten?"

The Demon King: "I expected you to use some kind of Ultra Destruction Magic to obliterate them!?"

The Hero: "It's not possible."

The Demon King: ".....?"

The Hero: "I've been working hard to make sure everybody stays alive. Every day, everyone works hard with the little that they have, to try to make their dreams come true. I cannot find it in me to obliterate that."

The Demon King: "Hero"

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Hero: “The Queen of Fairies, the Sylvan Race”

The Demon King is surprised

The Hero: “The daughter of the Dragon Lord, the lady from the Cyborg Race, the girl from the tavern”

The Demon King’s heart beats faster

The Hero: “Everyone is doing their best. As the Hero, how can I possibly destroy all these hopes and dreams?”

The Demon King: “You say that, but actually, it’s just that you can’t bear to hurt all these beautiful ladies who fawn all over you and have you wound around their thumbs and under their noses, right!?”

The Hero: “Th, there’s n- n- no way that’s true! I rejected them!”

The Demon King: “Really? Really!?”

The Hero: “Yea—there were a lot of misunderstandings that arose, but I made sure to appropriately explain myself during the investigations.”

The Demon King: “I’m sure you curried a lot of favour during your investigation.” *Temple throbbing*

The Hero: “N, n, no way Because”

The Demon King: “Because what?” *Temple throbbing*

The Hero: “It’s nothing like that! It’s because of the Demon King. Young princes, the city’s noblemen, even the elite merchantmen make lovey-dovey eyes at you.”

The Demon King: “Hmph, even though I got the Chief Maid to silence them.”

The Hero: “For real?”

The Demon King: “.....”

The Hero: “.....”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Demon King: “Th, that’s! I’m definitely not feeling guilty, but one could say that the negotiation floor is almost like a fight to the death! To begin with, high level negotiations are more like wars with blackmail and compromise, determination and profit-loss exploding overhead like flares over a battlefield.”

The Hero: “.....”

The Demon King: “Hero, what’s up with that look? You’re like a golem who’s been buried in a swamp!”

The Hero: “No, it’s just.”

The Demon King: “Hmph! You soft, weak person!”

The Hero: “Who’s the soft, weak person! I’ve been doing my best! You squishy, squishy Demon King!”

The Demon King: “Squishy!? Squishy!? What do you mean squishy! There’s something wrong with you, shut your mouth! Shut it!” *Pinches him*

The Hero: “Hey, cut it out!”

The Demon King: “I stretch and exercise every single day! I do so many bridges I can even do it on my nose!”

The Hero: “You’re the Demon King and you still take pride in such miniscule achievements?”

The Demon King: “Miniscule! The greatest of journeys begins with a single step!”

The Hero: “You stupid Demon King!”

The Demon King: “You foolish Hero!”

～♪ ～♪

The Hero: “You shut-in!”

The Demon King: “You wastrel!”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

～♪ ～♪

The Hero: “..... Haa, haa”

The Demon King: “..... Hmph!”

～♪ ～♪

The Hero: “Let’s stop”

The Demon King: “Hmm.”

The Hero: “It’s so futile.”

The Demon King: “That’s the nature of conflicts after all.”

The Hero: “..... What’s that?”

The Demon King: “Oh, that’s coming from the home of the Village Chief.”

The Hero: “Music from the New Year’s Festival?”

The Demon King: “That’s true, that’s what they said.”

～♪ ～♪

The Hero: “Is it alright if I turn on the light?”

The Demon King: “No! My lab coat is all wrinkled because I just woke up.”

The Hero: “Doesn’t it defeat the purpose if you admit it yourself?”

The Demon King: “That’s not true. A preview and the real thing have different impacts.”

The Hero: “Ah, enough!”

The Demon King: “?”

The Hero: “Y, you’re always beautiful, so..... I’m sure you look brilliant.”

The Demon King: “E, eh!? Wh, wh, what?” *Blushes*

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Hero: “Nothing.” *Smirks*

The Demon King: “Ohhhhhh.”

The Hero: “Is it already that you do not go for the feast? At the New Year’s Festival, there will be barbecued pork dumplings, wine, barbecued buttered trout, freshly baked bread with almonds, mushroom omelette wrapped in fresh scented leaves, and lots of other things won’t there?”

The Demon King: “It’s fine, I’ll be here.”

The Hero: “Then..... Ah– Umm..... How about a dance?”

— A Room in the Mansion, The Night of the New Year’s Festival, Amidst the Light Reflecting off the Snow

(Translator Note: The dancing instructions were originally written in English, I have kept them the same despite grammatical errors)

~♪ *Right step forward, right step forward* ~♪

The Demon King: “I, is this right?”

The Hero: “Push out your chest a bit,”

The Demon King: “Like this?”

The Hero: “Perfect.”

~♪ $\frac{1}{4}$ *turn left step left*

The Demon King: “Can you see where you’re stepping? It’s really dark.”

The Hero: “Nope, I can see from the light reflecting off the snow.”

The Demon King: “That may be true, but.”

The Hero: “It’s white and sparkly and beautiful.”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

~♪ ½ turn right step left back ~♪

The Demon King: “..... It’s a beautiful song.”

The Hero: “It’s a rondo from an ancient Kingdom, I’m sure you’ve heard it before.”

~♪ Touch left next to right & clap ~♪

The Hero: “Take a half step right here.”

The Demon King: “Like this? Like this?”

The Hero: “You’re pretty good, huh?”

The Demon King: “I should be wearing something prettier.”

The Hero: “No one’s looking.”

~♪ Right step forward, right step forward ~♪



Rondo: A musical form embedded in a musical piece where a main tune is repeated several times after different tunes are used. It was popularised in the 16th – 17th centuries as dance music. This rondo is a far older piece from the 13th – 15th centuries.

The Demon King: “Bu, but. Ah.”

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Hero: "Are you alright?"

The Demon King: "Sorry."

The Hero: "You smell great."

~♪ *Left step forward. 2 turn left step right back* ~♪

The Demon King: "My eyes are spinning."

The Hero: "Rondos are difficult. There're lots of turns."

The Demon King: "That's not true....."

~♪ *Right step forward. Right step forward* ~♪

The Hero: "Here."

The Demon King: "This is..... The comb that I used."

The Hero: "I found it in the Demon King's Castle."

~♪ *¼ turn left step left* ~♪

The Demon King: "I used this comb when I was a little kid. I thought I'd lost it....."

The Hero: "It seemed like something important to you. I just brought it to you on a hunch."

~♪ *½ turn right step left back* ~♪

The Hero: "It's very cheap, but this is my New Year's present to you."

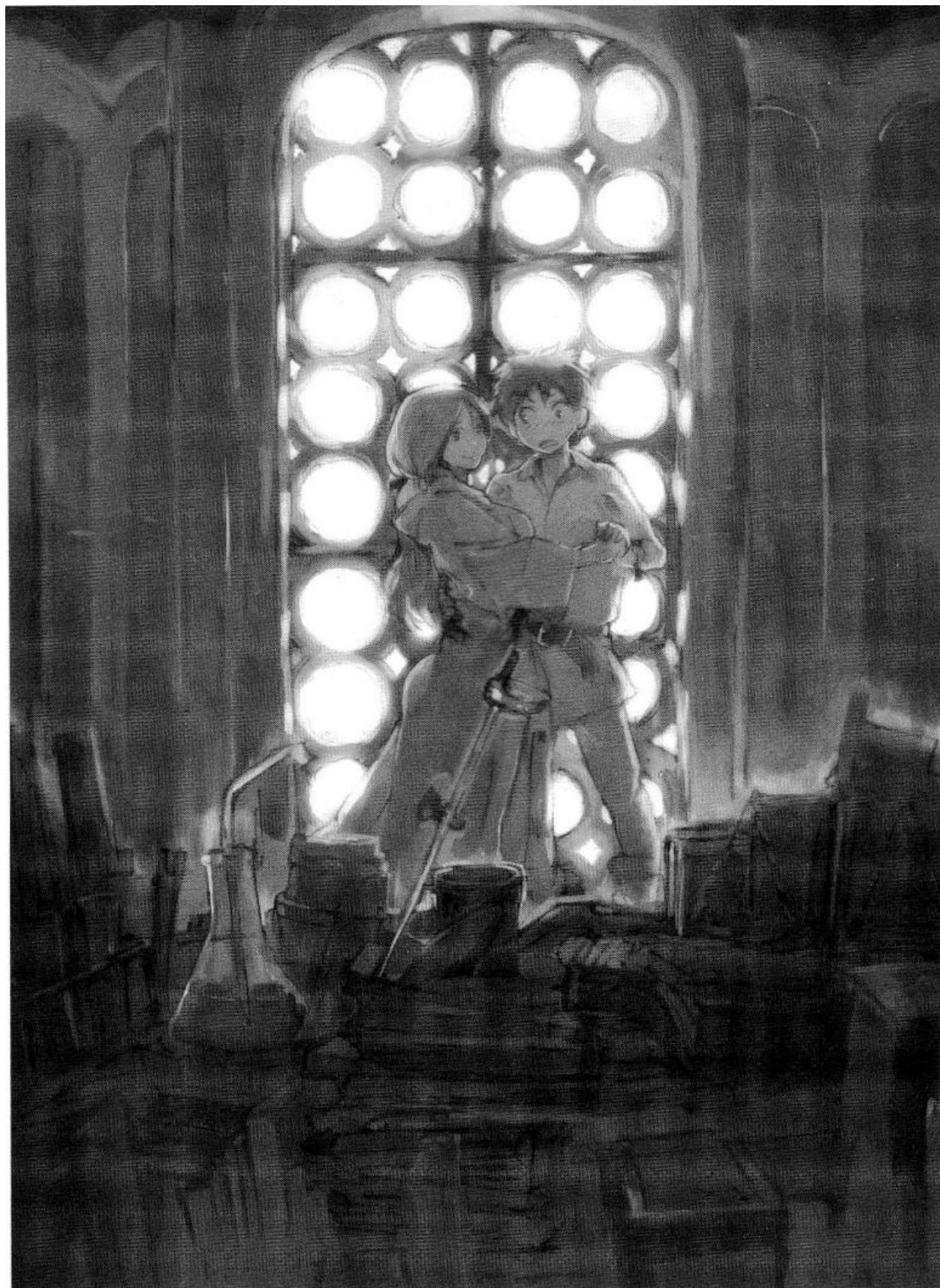
The Demon King: "..... Hero."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "I don't have a present for you..... I didn't prepare one."

~♪ *Touch left next to right & clap* ~♪

The Hero: "Don't worry. I wasn't expecting one."



Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

The Demon King: “That may be so.....”

The Hero: “The Demon King belongs to me after all.”

The Demon King: “Of course.”

The Hero: “That’s what I came back to hear.”

~♪ *Right step forward. Right step forward* ~♪

The Demon King: “How was it? Was it difficult?”

The Hero: “No, I’m not very smart. I, I took a detour.”

The Demon King: “.....”

The Hero: “When I was a Hero, when I left I would take down countless enemies in quick succession and everyone would hail me. It was easy to be a Hero.”

The Demon King: “It was the same for me..... Even though I wanted to fly over and see what was behind the hill, it’s so much more complicated to be living among humans.”

~♪ *½ turn right step left back* ~♪

The Demon King: “.....”

The Hero: “You’ve been working hard as the Demon King.”

The Demon King: “.....”

The Hero: “Half turn. Right, left.”

~♪ *Left step forward. 2 turn left step right back* ~♪

The Demon King: “—Hero”

The Hero: “?”

The Demon King: “I, definitely.....”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

~♪ *Right step forward. Right step forward* ~♪

The Demon King: “Umm, that’s. What am I worth to you?”

The Hero: “..... Eh?”

The Demon King: “Why is it that in such times my palms become so sweaty?”

~♪ $\frac{1}{4}$ *turn left step left* ~♪

The Demon King: “Ughhh..... I need you to still my heart during this decisive battle, He, He, Hero.”

The Hero: “D, Demon King? You’re suddenly very spirited?”

~♪ $\frac{1}{2}$ *turn right step left back* ~♪

The Demon King: “H, Hero. Umm.....”

The Hero: “You can’t take a step like that, Demon King..... Demon King?”

~♪ *Step.....* ~♪

The Demon King: “It’s been a while since I’ve seen you, Hero.”

The Hero: “I’m right here.”

~♪.....

The Demon King: “That’s..... If the Hero is okay with it. As your owner, I am also your reward. Of course, I definitely still have lots of flab, so maybe I’m not a reward but a punishment to you..... No, this is a reward next to an inevitable punishment.”

The Hero: “That’s.”

The Demon King: “Hero.....?”

The Hero: “.....”

The Demon King: “.....”

Chapter 7: “You stupid Demon King!” “You foolish Hero!”

.....♪

The Demon King: “Oh, the music has ended!”

The Hero: “That’s right it has! I should go.”

The Demon King: “..... Uhh”

The Hero: “.....”

The Demon King: “— Just a bit more.”

— The Village of Wintering, a Room Illuminated by the Light Reflecting off the Snow

The Demon King: “Are you going?”

The Hero: “Yep. After meeting you, my courage has increased a hundred times.”

Boots crunching in the snow

The Demon King: “Is everyone doing fine?”

The Hero: “You’ve become fairly human-like.”

The Demon King: “I’ve become weak.”

The Hero: “That’s not really the same.”

The Demon King: “I’ll see you soon this time, right?”

The Hero: “Yeah. We’ll take the Gate City in less than a month.”

The Demon King: “Can it be done?”

The Hero: “As you say, it will be done.”

The Demon King: “I want to see it too.”

The Hero: “Next time we meet.”

Chapter 7: "You stupid Demon King!" "You foolish Hero!"

The Demon King: "It will be in a place where the fires of war are being exchanged."

The Hero: "—- Alright, I'm all ready!"

The Demon King: "Hero."

The Hero: "What's up."

The Demon King: "—"

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "Ehh, shut up. I'm worried about you."

The Hero: "You don't believe in me then."

The Demon King: "This has nothing to do with believing in you..... Well, it does. I'm going to have lots of rivals from now on....."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "Hero..... I'll be heading out to the sea too. When you come back, try not to be late?"

The Hero: "Don't worry..... I am the Sword of the Demon King."

Door slams shut!

The Demon King: "Hero. You are..... My Light."

END OF CHAPTER 7

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

— The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, the Army Camp of the Kingdom of Winter

Conscript: “Hello!”

Volunteer: “Change of shift! I’ve brought your food as well.”

Soldier: “Thanks, what is it?”

Conscript: “Black bread with nuts and bacon.”

Volunteer: “How extravagant!”

Soldier: “Isn’t it leftovers from the New Year’s Festival?”

Conscript: “Really? Even though everyone ate that much at the feast?”

Volunteer: “It was the first time seeing such a festival for me.”

Soldier: “Yeah, this year’s festival was remarkably exciting.”

Conscript: “Was it?”

Soldier: “Yeah. The living standards of our country really seem to be improving. Isn’t that right! Sir!”

Officer: “Hmm, you could say so…… Hey! Keep watch properly!”

Conscript: “Yes, Sir!” *Thumps spear*

Soldier: “Yes, Sir!” *Thumps spear*

Officer: “Well, we haven’t been seeing any enemies in this area, though.”

Conscript: “They couldn’t possibly attack this area could they?”

Officer: “They don’t have records of previous large-scale invasions, but they know the Human Army has camped here before in the past. Complacency is forbidden.”

Conscript: “Even so ……”

Volunteer: “Hm?”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Conscript: “Is that alright? We’ve already been here for two weeks.”

Volunteer: “Yeah that’s right.”

Conscript: “Even though it’s true that we definitely go through some tough training in this harsh cold, we can’t possibly win the battle like this, can we? At this rate, aren’t we just eating food?”

Volunteer: “Whatever the higher-ups decide is done with their own considerations.”

Soldier: “Do we not have enough ships?”

Conscript: “Hmm”

Volunteer: “Is that so?”

Soldier: “We haven’t even boarded half the ships we have. It’s likely that we are waiting for the ships to reach here.”

The Female Paladin: “Good work, sentries!”

Officer: “Salute!”

Snaps to salute

The Female Paladin: “This is an important place. Do not let down your guard.”

Volunteer: “Yes, Ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “How is the training?”

Volunteer: “Thank you for teaching us swordsmanship!”

The Female Paladin: “Whether or not you continue to live on the battlefield, will depend entirely on yourself. I cannot even protect you myself. Train hard!”

—- The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, Emergency Army Headquarters

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Lone Winter King: “..... How are the movement of supplies? Hmm?”

Butler: “The Scouts have returned, they have not yet moved out.”

The Female Paladin: “I’m feeling quite nervous.”

Lone Winter King: “Even though you’re the Commander-in-Chief?”

The Female Paladin: “Please do not call me the Commander-in-Chief. It is just an emergency title.”

Butler: “Nyohoho. Even though you’ve got a chest that wouldn’t make anyone feel any excitement.”

The Female Paladin: “Do you feel like getting slashed?” *Draws sword*

Officer: “Permission to enter!”

Butler: “Mmm, enter.”

Officer: “You have a guest.”

Lone Winter King: “A guest?”

Officer: “She says she is the Crimson Scholar. She comes with a large baggage train.”

The Female Paladin: “Ahh, the Scholar has arrived, then.”

Butler: “Ooooh.”

Lone Winter King: “The rumoured genius Scholar? I’ve been wanting to meet her for quite a while, but why would she come to the battlefield?”

The Female Paladin: “Your Majesty, it’s better that you don’t think of her as a Scholar.”

Door opens

The Demon King: “I am the one who calls herself the Scholar. I am pleased to make your acquaintance.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Butler: “This is— Highly uncommon.”

The Female Paladin: (Don’t tell me he can sense her Demonic energy!?)

Butler: “Nyoho—You have an incredible bust!”

The Female Paladin does a double take

Butler: “～!”

Lone Winter King: “I am very sorry for that greeting. I am the Lone Winter King of the Kingdom of Winter. I am afraid, however, that I have only just attained this position and am very young.”

The Demon King: “Oh no, your reputation as a King precedes you even to the Village of Wintering.”

Lone Winter King: “I haven’t had the chance to prove myself, so I’m afraid these are really just expectations at best.”

Butler: “Would you like some tea?”

The Demon King: “Thank you.”

Lone Winter King: “That being said, what can I do for you? I am extremely grateful for your aid in improving my agricultural technology. I’ve been thinking that I definitely have to come and see you, but there have been many difficult issues I’ve needed to deal with. Even though I haven’t even sent you any greetings. I am very sorry.”

The Demon King: “You are too polite. I’m sorry. In any case, Your Majesty”

Lone Winter King: “Yes?”

The Demon King: “Do you intend to win?”

Lone Winter King: “Of course”

The Demon King: “By all possible means?”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Lone Winter King: “Taking back that island is extremely important to the Southern United Kingdoms.”

The Demon King: “Just what do you mean?”

Lone Winter King: “We’ll take back the pride of the Southern United Kingdoms.”

The Demon King: “Hmm”

Lone Winter King: “The present Southern United Kingdoms is, as we speak, because of this war, running errands for other countries as if..... They are not even independent countries. If we take back the island, at the very least, we would be able to stabilise many trade routes.”

The Demon King: “..... Hmm.”

Lone Winter King: “For the sake of money, I’m willing to wager the lives of so many soldiers, even under a different pretence.”

The Demon King: “No, well, that’s good enough.”

The Female Paladin: “What.....”

Butler: “Do not be rude to His Majesty!”

The Female Paladin: “Archer. This is not our place.”

The Demon King: “I apologise for being rude.”

The Female Paladin: “Could you possibly be referring to the Black Powder? Even without that thing, haven’t I already said that we won’t lose?”

The Demon King: “No, it’s something else. I come bringing salt.”

Lone Winter King: “.....!”

The Female Paladin: “Salt.....”

Butler: “Where is the.....”

Chapter 8: "Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!"

The Demon King: "I have six layers of it in the carriage. I believe it can come into some use."

Lone Winter King: "You....."

The Demon King: "....."

Lone Winter King: "Even though you're a hundred miles away, you can still read my palm."

The Female Paladin: "There are people who say that."

Butler: "The Scholar..... Even to that extent....."

The Demon King: "If you intend to win, you must think of the possibilities."

Lone Winter King: "What do you intend for this battle? What is the price of the salt?"

Butler: "Do you want a reward? Or perhaps a position in the court?"

The Demon King: "A position is, for now..... Fine. Though a title that would require my appearance at the palace would be troublesome."

Lone Winter King: "Alright, I'll allow it. But I do not believe that is what you want."

The Demon King: "My aim is time."

Lone Winter King: "Time.....?"

The Demon King: "It's possible that for this war, this is a bigger price than any money, but."

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Demon King: "My goal is not a victory. That's why we need to control it, in the case that victory is not enough. For this purpose, we'll need time. We might even need a whole day and night."

Lone Winter King: "Impossible. Don't we need to plan a surprise attack?"

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Demon King: “I’m sure we’ll be able to come up with another plan. After all, the Commander is the Female Paladin.”

Butler is stunned

The Female Paladin: “Well, since the Scholar says so, it will be done.”

—- The Demon World, the Gate City, the Central Fortress

Crusader: “..... Again!?”

Crusader: “Here too”

Crusader: “It’s a curse, we’ve been cursed!”

Crusader: “This isn’t anything like a curse, we have an assassin!”

Crusader: “It’s just been 5 minutes since then, hasn’t it? In just five minutes of not looking, an entire squad was

Crusader: “This is

Crusader: “They’re completely desiccated.”

Crusader: “These have been burnt to ash!”

Crusader: “Getagetagetagetagetagetagetagetagetagetageta”

Crusader: “Are you insane!?”

Crusader: “Getagetagetagetageta! The, the night cometh! The full moon rises, it smiles blue! Come, come! Getagetagetagetageta! Getagetagetagetageta!”

Crusader: “What are you saying!?”

Screams echo through the night

Crusader: “This time, it’s the Third Guards at the clock tower! Hurry!”

Sprinting up steps

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Crusader: “Wh, what’s this!”

Crusader: “What’s with all this mud and sludge Ah! Wha-!”

Crusader: “Th- This”

Crusader: “It’s a curse. It’s not the work of humans.”

The Hero: “..... Hehehe. Hehehehaha.”

Crusader: “Wh, who is it!?”

Crusader: “Come, come out! We are the world’s strongest Holy Crusaders! Come out!”

The Hero: “.....You speak so much even though you don’t have the skills?”

Magic crackles

Crusader: “Ah, ahh!”

Crusader: “It- It’s black magic! It’s the Knight of Death!”

Crusader: “Retreat!”

Crusader: “Retreat, the opponent is an evil spirit! The curse has shown itself!”

Crusader: “Getagetagetageteta!”

Crusader: “Ahhhhh! There are so many dead people!? Evil spirits!”

The Hero: “Hmph. You cowards.”

Winged Fairy: “Sir Black Knight! You’re so cool!”

The Hero: “It’s just that their weak. That being said, this is a splendid image isn’t it?”

Winged Fairy: “Ahahaha! Fairies are really good at Illusion Magic!”

The Hero: “Yeah you are! At this rate, we can continue to confuse them with these illusions.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

All Three Winged Fairies: “Yes!”

The Hero: “Can you make a truly horrifying illusion?”

Winged Fairy: “Horrifying?”

Winged Fairy: “Horrifying!”

Winged Fairy: “Horrifying ♪”

The Hero: “Is the Demon Thrush around?”

Demon Thrush: “You created me, of course I am by your side.”

The Hero: “Cast an illusion at the Commanders’ Rooms. Let’s give those conceited noblemen some nightmares every day.”

Demon Thrush: “As you command.”

— The Demon World, the Gate City, the Extravagant Rooms of the Nobility

Commander: “Gyaaaaaa!”

Commander: “Hah..... Hah..... Hah..... It was..... a dream?”

Commander: “What..... What a dream. There were so many hands..... So many dead people..... That must have been the work of demons, we have the righteousness of the Spirit of Light on our side. To think they would massacre the people down to the livestock..... Wine! Bring wine!”

Demon Slave Girl: “Here is the..... wine.....”

Commander: “Don’t touch it with your disgusting hands!”

Wine cup shatters

Demon Slave Girl: “Kyaaa!”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Commander: “Th, that’s why I didn’t want you in the first place!”

Slams door

Commander: “This damned place! This damned City! Who cares about the conquest! Who cares about glory! This is just a goddamned shithole!

I’m a ruling elite of the Holy Kingdom, the blood of the Kingdom of the Mist flows through my veins. Why do I have to rot away in this disgusting Demon City! That’s right. All my work here is complete nonsense. Even though I was promised honour and glory upon my return to the Holy Kingdom.”

Demon Slave Girl: “Stop! That’s too much-“

Commander: “Silence! You second rate Demon, you’re not even equal to an animal! It’s because of shit like you! It’s because of shit like you that I can’t go back!

There are no wine-filled parties, there are no beautiful, well-dressed ladies. This backwater, dust-filled City shouldn’t even be allowed to exist!”

Banging on door

Crusader: “Commander!”

Commander: “What?”

Crusader: “It’s happened again! The Knight of Death has come again!”

Commander: “Wha-“

Crusader: “This time he hit the city centre, a few officers on leave were”

Commander: “What’s the report!”

Crusader: “They seem to have drowned in puddles”

Commander: “.....!”

Crusader: “Moreover..... The officers have—“

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Commander: “What are you saying?”

Crusader: “This must be a demonic curse. There have been a flood of people requesting permission to return home.”

Commander: “Ehhh! What are they saying! Are they not satisfied with what we’ve been giving them! All those who say they want to go back home, give them some Demon girls! Give them gold and wine too!”

Crusader: “But, but, we have no”

Commander: “Just go catch some from the streets! Those who dare to curse us have no use for their money or their girls!”

— The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, the Coast, Midnight

Fisherman: “We are here, Your Majesty!”

Lone Winter King: “Yeah, I see that.”

Butler: “We’re really here!”

Lone Winter King: “It was exactly to my expectations. You’ve done it.”

Fisherman: “No, we’re fishermen from this area after all, it was to be expected.”

Lone Winter King: “It’s impressive that you managed to get us here just one week after the New Year’s Festival.”

Settler: “Wha- It’s massive!”

Settler: “Huge!”

Fisherman: “Indeed. Your Majesty, over here we call them— Ice Floes.”

Lone Winter King: “Alright, don’t accidentally get the ships too close. We’ll break up! Hammer in the Anchor Pins! Fasten the ropes! Let’s pull ourselves to shore!

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Lash together all the ships of our comrades stuck in the ice, we’ll form the Combined Fleet together in the sea! Let’s pack the ice floes!”

Settler: “Understood, Your Majesty!”

Settler: “Hoi! Hoi!”

Fisherman: “With such small ships, we should be able to dodge the ice floes.”

Lone Winter King: “I’m relying on you.”

Butler: “I’ll fly off and scout ahead.”

Settler: “Hoi! Good! Pull the ropes!”

Volunteer: “Hoi! Hoi!”

Soldier: “Hoi! Hoi!”

The Female Paladin: “Combined Fleet form in the sea! Maintain formation! Maintain watch on port and starboard, archer units keep watch to the skies!”

Lone Winter King: “If the sea water begins to reform, throw the Salt in! It will freeze in an hour! Do not forget your sacks! Rotating two hour shifts!”

Settler: “We are alright, Your Majesty!”

Settler: “Just stay warm in the tent, Your Majesty!”

Lone Winter King: “I’m younger than all of you! Ahahaha!”

Settler: “Oh dear! Ahaha! We can’t lose to the King! Hoi!”

Settler: “Hoi! Alright! Pull the ropes!”

Lone Winter King: “Let’s build a bridge. A bridge of drift ice. No, not a bridge. Let’s make this strait…… A battlefield for our cavalry.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

—- The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, the Shore of the Isle of Light, Early Morning

The Female Paladin: “Heavy Infantry, assemble!”

Movement

Royal Soldiers: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins! The Heavy Infantry will break through the centre and form a Beachhead at the shores of the Isle of Light! The end of the drift ice is brittle. Maintain a file in the centre of roughly 500 steps!”

Royal Soldiers: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “Colonel, have one company stand by for after we land, take control of the cliff face of the West shore! Have them stand watch and ready to move on my command.”

Royal Army Colonel: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “Archer units, move ahead and keep watch to the eyes and the seas. It’s difficult for them to sink our ships in this ice, but it’ll be hard to spot the Colossal-class Demons as well! If they are spotted we are to sound a retreat while continuously unleashing volleys at them! Listen out for the sound of flutes playing.”



Ice Floes: Ice which floats on the surface of the ice. Ice which is attached to the shoreline is known as fast ice. Ice floes usually appear for a short time each year in Japan, they roughly begin to form in January and disappear by the end of February.

Anchor Pins: These do not refer to anchors, but are rather large metal pins used during mountain climbing in order to secure the climber to the rock

face.

Salt: When salt is used, the melting point of water becomes lower. However, the freezing point also becomes lower and water freezes easier. For this reason, the previously scattered ice floes can be joined together.

Heavy Infantry: Infantry which wear heavy armour. They fight in a tightly packed order with spears and swords. A well-formed formation of Heavy Infantry has immense attacking power and defensive power but lacks quick mobility. Since they are useless if they cannot reach the enemy, the forward force usually consists of a wave of light infantry.

Beachhead: When attacking a beach, the attacking force is at a massive disadvantage due to unfavourable terrain. Hence troops begin by first guarding the beach, then building field fortifications such as trenches out of wooden planks, driftwood and other materials easy to transport in order to make an emergency fort that is easier to defend.

Royal Army Colonel: “Flutes?”

The Female Paladin: “According to our intelligence, that appears to be a Summoning Technique.”

Royal Army Colonel: “!?”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Female Paladin: “If we can take out the Summons, the attack of the Colossal-class Demons will diminish as well. Everything depends on how alert we are!”

Archers: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “Brave volunteer soldiers!”

Volunteer Soldiers: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “We will entrust you with the transportation of all the sleighs. This is no trifling matter. Not only is each sleigh as long as a medium-sized carriage, the metal boards are also highly reinforced. Not only can they be used for transporting heavy cargo like armour or horses, the sleighs are also designed to be used as simple shields, no, as miniature fortifications! If we are attacked by Colossal-class Demons, these sleighs will be our shields for defence. Volunteer Spear Units and Archers combined may have the ability to take down the Colossal-class Demons and Airborne-class Demons. Let me repeat. This is not a naval battle! We humans are good at land battles! We must fight to our strengths! Soldiers will go home! We can count on our allies! Believe in our strength!”

Soldiers: “YAAAAAAAAA!!!!”

The Female Paladin: “Our first objective is the shoreline! Establish the beachhead and secure our supply lines and base camp. This time we will show them our strength! We will win! Let them see the might of the United Kingdoms!”

— The Second Invasion of the Isle of Light, on the Isle of Light

Royal Army Soldier: “Push! Push!”

Royal Army Soldier: “Third Company, advance!”

Messenger: “The rear right wing reports a large shape! It’s a Colossal Squid!”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

General: “Leave it to the Volunteers and the Light Infantry! We will defend this place with our lives! No retreat! For the Kingdom!”

Royal Army Soldier: “For the Lone Winter King!”

Royal Army Soldier: “For our Commander-in-Chief, the Female Paladin!”

Howling in the Distance

Messenger: “Right Wing, retreat! Beast-class Demons, close to a thousand!”

General: “Heavy Infantry Fourth Company break out! Stop their charge!”

Royal Army Soldier: “Alright! Let’s show the Spirit the ferocity of the Fourth Company!”

Royal Army Soldier: “Spears ready! Charge!”

Messenger: “The sound of the flute! From the North!”

General: “Longbowmen assemble behind Heavy Infantry Fourth Company and provide covering fire!!”

—- The Second Invasion of the Isle of Light, Field Headquarters

The Female Paladin: “Haa Haa Anyone! Is anyone there!”

Soldier: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Female Paladin: “Send out twenty messengers and scouts! Attach them to the beachhead. Have a communications system running. I don’t care how, but it’d better be functional in twenty minutes!”

Chapter 8: "Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!"



Volunteer Spear Units: Volunteer Units are soldiers who were originally not soldiers but joined the army from the own volition and hence do not have good armour. However, in a close formation with many spears, they can still form a strong force.

Light Infantry: Infantry who barely wear armour. As a result, they are highly mobile. They usually use bows and their chief purpose is to provide

support for the Heavy Infantry from the flanks, but because of their speed, they can also be used to rush the enemies flanks and rout them.

Soldier: "Hah!"

The Female Paladin: "Get me a fresh horse. This one is covered in sweat. I wouldn't like to overexhaust it."

Horse whinnies

Lone Winter King: "Commander Paladin! How goes the battle?"

Butler: "Take this towel."

The Female Paladin: "The landing was a success and the beachhead has been built. We have been repelling them from the cliff face and have taken some of them. We've taken down 12 Colossal-class Demons."

Lone Winter King: "12..... That's about the same as all we managed to take down in the last war."

The Female Paladin: "I'm not sure how strong their reserve fighting force is. However, I do not believe it is enough to decisively defeat us..... At least one

Chapter 8: "Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!"

battalion of Demons have been completely annihilated. Their numbers were less than we expected."

Lone Winter King: "And what of our casualties?"

The Female Paladin: "From reports, less than 500."

Butler: "Wha-"

Lone Winter King: "That's a great victory, isn't it! At this rate, victory is already in our hands!"

The Female Paladin: "That's only up till now."

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "Up till now, the Combined Armed Forces have been pushing through the centre, and hence we've been able to decrease losses while pushing the front lines. Both the front and the rear are good and the beachhead at the Isle of Light is secure, hence we can reinforce easily..... However, the Isle of Light is filled with natural caves, and the valleys form a resilient choke point. The Southern Artic General and the Demon Warriors may be trying to force us to besiege them. Of course, we will be the ones carrying out the siege. If it becomes a battle of attrition, we do not have the advantage. To begin with, in such a battle, the Demon Race can swim in the water and blend in the night, and hence they have the advantage. But, well....."

Butler: "Well?"

The Demon King: "The battle is won. We've already decided we would win it."

The Female Paladin: "Roughly."

Lone Winter King: "Madam Scholar."

The Demon King: "Well, sieges have always been difficult since ancient times. If we want to overpower them, the attacking force would need at least three times the strength of the defending force. From what I can see, the Demons have

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

approximately 8,000 soldiers remaining. Even though that’s 4,000 less than us, it’s still not enough for an easy victory. We may possibly win, but both sides would take immense casualties.”

The Female Paladin: “I do not think we can be optimistic in this situation.”

The Demon King: “In what way?”

The Female Paladin: “Even though we’ve trained them as much as we could, they are far too scattered. Especially the Volunteer Soldiers, we cannot let them face the enemy alone. Moreover, even though we’ve said it before, I’m not comfortable with a war of attrition. It is to our disadvantage if we have to ward off night raids and ambushes.”

Butler: “Then”

The Female Paladin: “I believe the Demons will prepare to rally their forces.”

Lone Winter King: “It does not sound like a simple situation.”

The Female Paladin: “It really isn’t. One could say it begins now. This is the start point. This is where the gut starts to hurt.”

Butler: “I believe the Scholar has a strategy.”

The Demon King: “Hmm”

Lone Winter King: “What sort of strategy?”

The Female Paladin: “.....”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”



Combined Armed Forces: This is a grand theatre formed from the combined use of every different service branch in the military (Navy, Artillery, Infantry, etc.) in order to cover up the shortcomings of each branch and extend the advantages each branch can provide. Since ancient times and even up to modern times, the Commander who is able to effectively apply these is the one to achieve victory.

The Demon King: “I guess I’ve got to play my hand.”

Lone Winter King: “?”

Door slams open

Messenger: “A message! I have a message!”

Lone Winter King: “Excellent! Report!”

Messenger: “To the South of the Isle of Light, a large force has appeared from the Demon World! They number upwards of 10,000! They’re, they’re, they’re, allies!”

The Demon King: “How artless of them— Reinforcements. With these numbers, the Southern Artic Shogun will surrender..... Or else, he’ll have to flee.”

— The Demon World, the City of the Gate, the War Room

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Commander: “I, I’ve had enough!”

General: “.....”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Do not raise your voice!”

Commander: “No one knows where that guy is! This whole city is a nightmare! Every night, that Knight of Death..... The curses of that impossible guy are running rampant!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “You say that, but the ones who are going around the streets squealing and screaming like a bunch of little Demon Girls are you Imperial Guards, aren’t they?”

Commander: “You’re just a mercenary!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Hehe, indeed we are. What of it?”

Commander: “You!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “If you’re still scared by your nightmares, maybe its too early to come and play with the big boys.”

Commander: “I will not put up with any more of this. I, I, I am pulling out!”

General: “Commander!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “So, just what kind of person are you? One could say that gathered in this city is the strength of the Human World, it’s a key location in the Demon World. The Commander who would be willing to throw all this away and run, I’d say it wouldn’t be too much to Court Martial him.”

Commander: “—!”

General: “You would do well to shut your mouth, sir! Commander, what do you mean!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Hey, hey, military law is military law.”

Commander: “We, we, we’re going as..... Reinforcements!

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

East Fortress Base Commander and General: “Huh?”

Commander: “We’re going as reinforcements?”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Just who are you going to reinforce? Did anybody request for reinforcements? Don’t tell me? You’re going to reinforce a phantom battle?”

Commander: “No! I heard it yesterday, but the King of White Night is championing an operation to take back the Isle of Light. Even though the King of White Night has brilliant command ability and immense bravery, all he has to rely on are those useless rulers of the Southern United Kingdoms, and hence he’s unlikely to be able to win.”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Ohh, I’ve heard about this as well.”

Commander: “The King of White Night is my uncle.”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Ah—”

Commander: “Hey! That’s not the point! This is a great event for the entire Human Race! Since this is such a decisive battle, how can we Crusaders stand by and do nothing? I will take all my forces and rush to the aid of the Isle of Light!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “A, a, are you out of your mind!?”

General: “Hmph”

Commander: “Hey! Shut up! This is my order as overall Commander! My order is as good as an order from the Holy Kingdom, or an order from the Spirit of Light himself! His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Marshal himself gave me the Staff of Command!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “And that’s precisely why you can’t possibly just abandon this whole city! Just in order to supply the soldiers in this city, it’s not just military personnel but there are immense numbers of merchants here too, aren’t there!? How will you protect them!”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Commander: “Silence, silence! All of these scum are traitors! I have no intention to spill a single drop of Crusader blood to protect the lives of commoners who would associate with the Demons!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “.....” *Temple throbs*

Commander: “That group of people came of their accord and can die of their own accord. No, I shall set fire to this city. I’m not going to surrender the city to the Demons so easily, that’s right!”

East Fortress Base Commander steps forward

Commander: “!?”

East Fortress Base Commander: “.....” *Cracks knuckles*

Commander: “Wh, what? Do you have something to say! Damnit! Do you! Do you! Huh! That’s right! If you have something against my plan, then you can go and do it!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Huh!?”

Commander: “You, you’re the Commander of your men! In that case, you can just stay here and guard the streets! Or are you all talk and no action? Huh? You’re just the Mercenaries of history, aren’t you?”

East Fortress Base Commander: “..... I understand.”

Commander: “Right then, you’ve made a pledge, so I’ll just relax and go out and reinforce! Ahahahahaha. I will leave the 10,000 Demons here your responsibility. Since that’s what you want so much!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “My men in our fortresses will guard the lives of each and every one of the civilians here with our own.”

Commander: “Fine, but I hear that the Isle of Light has lots of scary Demon warriors and even the Southern Artic General. I’d better take the entire army with

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

me. I’m sure I can just leave a few soldiers with the stupid person who would stay the defend this pathetic corner of the Demon World!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “–!”

Commander: “Since we’re such good friends, I’ll leave you about 500 men. Do what you like with them! Mercenary!”

Walks away, slams door

East Fortress Base Commander: “Ahh, how troublesome.” *Paces around table*

Aide-de-Camp: “General, I suppose you have bad news.”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Mm? Quite so. Let’s do it.”

Aide-de-Camp: “Do what?”

East Fortress Base Commander: “We have no choice. Evacuate all four Strongholds. Leave just enough to garrison. Assemble in the City.”

Aide-de-Camp: “Huh!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Call up some the influential Merchants, and the large employers of Demons. About ten or so people should suffice. Call up the nearby influential Demons as well.”

Aide-de-Camp: “Eh? What for?”

East Fortress Base Commander: “We don’t have the men, so we have no choice. I must bow my head and beg. From now on, we are the Emergency Defence Force. As of today, this city is no longer a Human City. It will survive as a Free City.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”



Marshal: In the military, this is a rank even higher than a General, it is basically the highest rank in the entire Armed Forces, though sometimes there can be the rank of Grand Marshal, which was held by the Emperor of the Empire of Japan during WWII. However, in many instances, it is just a ceremonial title.

— The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, the Beachhead

Messenger: “Reporting! The Demon Army is sallying forth from the citadel of the Isle of Light! Enemy numbers, approximately 7,500!”

The Female Paladin: “The entire army, huh.”

Messenger: “The Demon Army is now heading towards our reinforcements in the Southern Frozen Forest, proceeding at high speed!”

The Female Paladin: “Good work, messenger!”

The Demon King: “That’s really quick.”

The Female Paladin: “They probably know they can’t afford to let us meet up with our reinforcements. If they want to break out, this is their last chance.”

The Demon King: “It may not be completely decisive, but this is within our expectations.”

The Female Paladin: “7,500 Demons against 10,000 reinforcements, eh.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Demon King: “What shall we do?”

The Female Paladin: “The reinforcements are Crusaders, right? Then, in terms of both training and equipment, they should be the best in the Demon World.”

The Hero teleports in

The Hero: “Is that so? They’re an unexpectedly disgusting bunch of slobs though.”

The Demon King: “Hero!”

The Female Paladin: “Oh, you’re back?”

The Demon King: “..... Ahem, ahem.”

The Hero: “U, umm. I am! Is this a good time?”

The Female Paladin: “Yeah, you’re just on time. But how did you get the Crusaders to come?”

The Hero: “Well, that’s hard to say..... More importantly, in order to meet the timing, they’ve been marching continuously without rest, they’re probably exhausted.”

The Demon King: “In that case, they probably have a lot less fighting ability than we think.”

Door slams open

Messenger: “Our mysterious reinforcements have come into contact with the vanguard of the Demons! The reinforcements are stretched thin backwards, their forward group is few! They are being beaten back!”

The Hero: “Well?”

The Female Paladin: “Of all people, I have no affection for the Crusaders.”

The Hero: “If we don’t go and help, it could get very bad.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Female Paladin: “Moreover, to get to that side of the Island will take far too much time.”

The Demon King: “We have to do something, either way.”

Loud rumbling

The Hero: “What!?”

Door slams open

Messenger: “Report! Report! A single Colossal-class Demon is currently charging towards the camp! It seems to be the Southern Artic General! An entire Company of Light Infantry have been annihilated!”

The Female Paladin: “Sound the retreat!”

Messenger: “Yes, ma’am!”

The Demon King: “The rear guard is going to have a problem.”

The Hero: “That’s really hard on them.”

The Female Paladin: “I’ve got to maintain my pride as a commander.”

The Demon King: “However, we need to head over there and help take it down..... He’s minimizing the Demon losses and allowing them to run away.”

The Hero: “There’s nothing for it. He’s a very principled guy. I’ll go there and take him down.”

The Female Paladin: “..... No.”

The Hero: “Sorry?”

The Female Paladin: “This is my responsibility. Can I leave this place to you? Hero. This is my last request as a warrior. As the Commander-in-Chief, I have to do this.”

— The Second Conquest of the Isle of Light, the Battlefield in the Evening

Southern Artic General: “Haaa!”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Female Paladin: “Hah!”

Sword and club clashing

Southern Artic General: “Hahaha! I’m so happy you accepted this fight!”

The Female Paladin: “I’m not going to throw this fight, I will win!”

Royal Soldier: “A, amazing!”

Cavalry Officer: “The ground is sinking, it’s like they’re destroying the place.....”

Southern Artic General: “Don’t brag, take this!”

Club slams into the ground

The Female Paladin: “Too slow!”

Slashes

Southern Artic General: “I am the undefeated champion! This sort of attack is useless!”

The Female Paladin: “I’m shocked you would call yourself the undefeated champion.”

Southern Artic General: “What are you saying?”

The Female Paladin: “You’re doing this fight to the death so your army can retreat. Why don’t you just run away with them as well?” *Smirks*

Southern Artic General: “Hm! Don’t mock me!”

Sword and Club clash

Southern Artic General: “They do not call me the Southern Artic General for the affection I show to my enemies! Take this, ‘Freezing Blizzard’!”

Blizzard howls

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Female Paladin: “Here’s a technique I picked up from the Hero! Tectonic Shift!”

Ground explodes, rocks shoot up

Royal Soldier: “A, a, are they monsters!”

Cavalry Officer: “What in the world!”

Southern Artic General: “Hahahahahaha! Quite impressive!”

The Female Paladin: “Good. I’ll make a prayer for you when you’re dead.”

Southern Artic General: “How light-footed! Are you really a woman, you’re so cheeky!”

The Female Paladin: “I’m glad that you look at me as a woman, but

Female Paladin gets hit by club



Chapter 8: "Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!"

Royal Soldier: "Did that connect!?"

Cavalry Officer: "He's at least 50 times bigger than her"

The Female Paladin crawls on the floor

Southern Artic General: "I suppose you're finished."

The Female Paladin: "This, this is nothing, I can take this..... Right! Let's! Go!
Hah!"

The Female Paladin launches herself in the air

Southern Artic General: "!?"

The Female Paladin: "Not yet, not yet!"

Slash! Slash! Slash!

Royal Soldier: "What's with this insane speed!"

Cavalry Officer: "To think our Female Paladin was so strong!"

The Female Paladin: "Haaaaaiyaaaaa!"

Southern Artic General: "..... Ugh. Magnificent..... Technique....."

Southern Artic General collapses

Royal Soldier: "She won"

Cavalry Officer: "We won!"

Royal Soldier: "Victory! Victory!"

The Female Paladin: "It's too early to be happy! Sweep the place for stragglers!
Search the whole island!!"

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

— The Village of Wintering, Early Spring

Small Villager: “Really?”

Middle Aged Villager: “Really.”

Huntsman: “So, victory!”

Small Villager: “Victory!”

Middle Aged Villager: “They’ve come back from the war victorious!”

Huntsman: “Both the Female Paladin and the Scholar have returned!”

Maid Little Sister: “Good mor—ning ♪”

Maid Elder Sister: “Good morning.”

Small Villager: “Hey, it’s the two sisters from the mansion.”

Middle Aged Villager: “Congratulations!”

Huntsman: “Congratulations!”

Maid Little Sister: “Yes!”

Maid Elder Sister: “Thank you!”

Small Villager: “When did they return?”

Middle Aged Villager: “The war’s already over, isn’t it?”

Huntsman: “Fool. As long as the Demon Race continues to exist, the war will never be over. This time, we’ve merely taken back the Isle of Light.”

Small Villager: “Is that so?”

Middle Aged Villager: “But, now that the Female Paladin has become the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, it’s almost as if the legends of the Hero are being revived.”

Maid Little Sister: “That’s right ♪”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Small Villager: “Oh, I just heard those from that travelling bard! How cool —“

Middle Aged Villager: “Down at the tavern?”

Huntsman: “There’re already two taverns, this place has really grown bigger.”

Maid Little Sister: “Hey, hey!”

Maid Elder Sister: “It seems our mistresses will be going to the Palace of Winter now.”

Small Villager: “Where the King lives?”

Middle Aged Villager: “Yeah, I’m sure they’ll be getting some prize.”

Maid Little Sister: “I’m sure— There’ll be a great feast—“ *Eyes sparkle*

Maid Elder Sister: “Enough..... Why are you always only interested in the food.....”

Maid Little Sister: “Ehehehe ♪”

Small Villager: “Well, either way, it’s already Spring! Now that its Spring, we’ll have lots of vegetables and game. Recently, the conflict has died down too. Yeah, this is really a wonderful village to live in.”

—- The Palace of Winter, Peerage Conferment Ceremony

Marching Band ∼♪∼∼♪

Lone Winter King: “I apologise for making you go through this ceremony.”

The Female Paladin: “Nope.”

The Demon King: “It’s no trouble.”

Lone Winter King: “I’m not very good at this sort of thing, but it is one of the responsibilities of the King after all.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Female Paladin: “I understand,”

The Demon King: “Showing your might to people is also one of your responsibilities.”

Butler: “The preparations are complete, Your Majesty.”

Lone Winter King: “Right, let’s go.”

Door opens slowly

Crowd cheers and roars

Marching Band ~♪~~♪

Lone Winter King: “My people, my Kingdom!”

Crowd cheers and roars

Lone Winter King: “I thank you for your contribution. We have successfully taken back the Isle of Light! I know in my heart that this was only achievable due to the loyalty and courage shown by all you brave souls. After this, we now face the difficult task of defending the Isle of Light from further incursions, but I am now certain we can count on the strength of my brave people and the capable officials of this Kingdom. Moreover, as this war continues, we must also rebuild our country. As the Lone Winter King, I will definitely lend you all my power to handle this issue.”

The Female Paladin: “Even though this is still an impoverished country.”

The Demon King: “It is, however, an impoverished country on the ascendancy. Moreover, since there are so many people who are so poor they can barely afford clothes, they will be far more grateful when they are lifted from poverty.”

Lone Winter King: “It may be small, but I please enjoy tonight’s banquet. Please enjoy yourselves! Cheers!” *Raises glass*

Lone Winter King: “Please continue to listen to me with your glass in your hand. Today, the Palace is proud to welcome some guests. I’m sure many of you know

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

of this but, even including the Hero who left for the Demon World, there are now three people whose contributions to the Human World will surely be the stuff of legend. The first of these is, the Female Paladin!”

Pause

The Female Paladin: “As introduced, I am the Female Paladin.”

Lone Winter King: “The Female Paladin served the extremely important responsibility of the frontline Commander during this military campaign. Moreover, she took down the Southern Artic General in a single confrontation, surely a Heroic action. Actually, I’ve asked her to become a General in my Kingdom, but unfortunately, she refused.”

Crowd roars with laughter

Lone Winter King: “No, no, I’m sure it has nothing to do with how poor the Kingdom of Winter is! However, the Female Paladin is the Grandmaster of the Holy Order of the Lake and has her responsibilities there to uphold. The Holy Order of the Lake is a completely essential organisation to the South. For our country to tie down such a splendid character is surely an act of rebellion against the Spirit of Light! However, this does not change the fact that she is the benefactor of our Kingdom, of humanity. I confer upon the Female Paladin, the title of Duchess of our Kingdom! I’m sure all of you can agree to it!”

Crowd: “Glory to the Kingdom of Winter!”

Lone Winter King: “And here we have the Crimson Scholar. I’m sure many of you have heard of her, haven’t you? She is the benefactor of our Kingdom, the one who brought that miraculous product, the potato.”

“Ohh, the rumoured……” “Didn’t she also design the windmill?” “I heard she provided compasses to the Navy too?” “What a genius……” “I’ve heard she’s definitely seen every single thing in the world.”

The Demon King: “As introduced, I am the Crimson Scholar. Since young, I have been socially awkward, so I’m afraid I may be unable to offer words that would be

Chapter 8: "Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!"

appropriate for such a situation, but, I would love to offer my most sincere congratulations for the victory at the war. This Kingdom..... has indeed been very kind to a drifter like myself. This warmth has really melted my heart. I will never forget the smiles and laughter of the people of this Kingdom, the four seasons and four corners of this Kingdom, and the intense happiness I have had the good fortune to enjoy."

Lone Winter King: "....."

Butler: "Young man."

Lone Winter King: "Ahh, sorry. I am certain the kind words of the Scholar will remain long in this Kingdom. If it so pleases you, I would like to borrow your wisdom in order to further develop this Kingdom. As the Scholar must surely remain on the path of Scholarship, we will do our best not to confine her to the Palace, but, for her contributions, I believe it is appropriate to confer upon her the title of Countess of our Kingdom!"

Crowd cheers and roars

Attendee: "A toast!"

"To Peace in the South!" "To Victory for the King!"

The Female Paladin: "I'm glad he didn't make us do the entire ceremony."

The Demon King: "Indeed."

Lone Winter King: "I also have something to report to you all. While our country has strengthened to another level from the successful Reconquest of the Isle of Light, for the sake of our victory in the upcoming wars with the Demon Army, we will require further expertise in fields like Commerce, Education and Technology.

Throughout history, the South has been locked in Winter for a third of every year, and hence have been incapable of being any more than a collection of impoverished countries. However, the treasures of this land are our people. I believe the people of the Southern United Kingdoms possess a fighting spirit, a determination, an intelligence and a warmth unsurpassed by anyone.

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Hence, the Kingdom of Winter, the Kingdom of Metal and the Kingdom of Ice have signed an agreement. This is basically an agreement of cooperation in the fields of Commerce and Technological Innovation. With this, I’m sure we can agree we can enter a future of closer cooperation between our united nations.

We fought with each other, shoulder to shoulder. And that is why I believe we can continue to work with each other on these fields. I request for your cooperation!”

Crowd roars and cheers madly

Crowd: “Long live the King! Long live the King!”

— The Palace of Winter, during the Banquet

Marching Band ~♪~~♪

Simple Nobleman: “Hoho, three times!?”

Young Knight: “That’s amazing! No, no, is there anything wrong with it? Is it difficult to plant?”

The Demon King: “Up till now, I’ve let the Holy Order take charge of the seedlings, but I don’t think there have been too many difficulties. We provide the seedlings for free, but in terms of agricultural technology that is needed, there are no really exorbitant costs involved. Currently, in the Village of Wintering, we’ve accepted non-monetary gifts in return for our help, and this has really boosted productivity for the settlers.”

Lone Winter King: “..... That may be so, but”

Industrial Guild Master: “Haha! And that’s how the price of copper went up?”

The Demon King: “That’s right. One must consider the Theory of Comparative Advantage for International Trade. This Kingdom still has a lot of untapped metal resources and while they probably can’t be drawn on immediately, with enough prospecting it would certainly make for a worthwhile investment in future.”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Lone Winter King: ““Since young, I have been socially awkward, so I’m afraid I may be unable to offer words that would be appropriate for such a situation,” she says, and yet? There’s something about her calm demeanour and her cool attitude, her grace and beauty too. Nobility..... No, she carries herself like royalty.”

Simple Nobleman: “A toast to the Scholar!”

Young Knight: “Bottoms up!!”

Lone Winter King: “What a person..... She’s a Hero too, then? She seems like one. Yet she seems different? No, no, since I’ve become the King she’s shown only miracles! It’s not good to let down one’s guard in this world!”

— The Palace of Winter, during the Banquet, at a Balcony with Nobody

Marching Band ~♪~~♪

The Hero: “Hey! I’m sorry for the intrusion.”

Butler: “My, my, you’ve returned, Hero.”

The Hero: “You don’t seem surprised.”

Butler: “Nyohoho! If you’d died as a virgin, you might as well be some sort of Demon. You aren’t going to die as a virgin are you?”

The Hero: “Exactly.”

Butler: “..... Would you like another serving?”

The Hero: “Yeah, that would be great Mmm, delicious.”

Butler: “Nyohohoho. The cook will certainly be happy.”

The Hero: “Delicious!” *Chews*

Marching Band ~♪~~♪

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Butler: “.....”

The Hero: “Hey! This is great!”

Butler: “..... Do you hate us, Hero?”

The Hero: “Why would I?”

Butler: “We let you go on your own after all.”

The Hero: “That was something I forced upon everyone. You knew, didn’t you, Grandpa? I can’t possibly hate you. I only hope you do not hate me.”

Butler: “Really. Nyohahahaha I do not think so.”

The Hero: “Then, what”

Butler: “Then, shall I make you a cocktail with lots of liquor in it?”

The Hero: “Sure!”

Butler: “.....”



Theory of Comparative Advantage: The theory suggests that if each country were to specialise in the production of the good that the country is better at producing and then trading among other countries for other goods, on the global picture, more goods would be produced than otherwise, and on the whole, every country will benefit, hence international trade should be encouraged.

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

The Hero: “Wow, delicious..... I don’t remember when, but I think I’ve had this before at the City of Ghosts.”

Butler: “Indeed.”

The Hero: “How nostalgic.”

Butler: “Yeah.”

The Hero: “.....”

Butler: “..... Hero.”

The Hero: “?”

Butler: “Hero— You are too strong.”

The Hero: “Yeah.”

Butler: “If you wanted to, you could take on the Demon King, or even thousands of soldiers.”

The Hero: “Well, yeah.”

Butler: “Because we were a burden to you, you left us behind, right? Of course it’s because we were a burden. We all knew just how strong you were, but it must have been troublesome to have to cover for us as well, right? That’s why you left us right?”

The Hero: “.....”

Butler: “I’m not sorry that we left you to fight on your own. I’m sorry that we let you go on your own, it must have been lonely. You are strong. —But, the more you use this strength, the lonelier the world gets for you, doesn’t it? A normal person can never even come close to having this level of power. Your strength divides you from other people.”

The Hero: “.....”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Butler: “You kept the three of us around because you didn’t want us to be lonely, right? But, you’re a human. I’m fairly certain you’re a human. And yet, we let you become lonely. That is surely the fault of the three of us, of humanity even.”

The Hero: “.....That’s really not the case.”

Butler: “I apologise for leaving you alone.”

The Hero: “No, no, no. I learnt a lot from you!”

Butler: “Nyohoho!”

The Hero: “About boobs! And about butts! And about puffy, puffy happiness!”

Butler: “Indeed, we are puffy, puffy happiness brothers～!”

Waiter passes platter to Butler

Butler: “..... Please take some more.”

The Hero: “Delicious! Tasty!”

Butler: “Ahh, Hero. What a splendid night! —- If you will, please listen to what I have to say.”

～♪～～♪

The Hero: “?”

Butler: “We are not people you throw away. We are people who can walk with our heads held high! Perhaps we were not like this two years ago, but in this time, we have become at least a little bit stronger, haven’t we? Since we parted ways, we have been hard at work too.”

The Hero: “.....?”

Butler: “Can you hear that music? Can you see the light in that room? I brought up the young man myself. Hero, do you hear that? That laughter?”

The Hero: “Yeah, I hear it.....”

Chapter 8: “Henceforth, the Second Conquest of the Isle of Light begins!”

Butler: “What a great country, right?”

The Hero: “Yeah, definitely.”

Butler: “I won’t let you be lonely anymore. I may not have your insane combat ability, but I will do something for the Lone Winter King and the Kingdom of Winter. Of course, he is still but a young fledgling, and with baby steps he may avoid the dangers ahead of him, but still I will do this. Hero. I will make this a country which has done no wrong by you. I will definitely make this a place where you will never be lonely.”

The Hero: “Yeah.”

Butler: “Welcome back, Hero!”

The Hero: “Yeah. Grandpa. I’m back!”

END OF CHAPTER 8

— The Village of Wintering, Late Summer, the Diary of the Little Maid Sister

Summer is about to end. It has been half a year since the Hero came back.

The Mistress has been constantly in high spirits. The Paladin comes every day. Even when there are no swordsmanship lessons, she still manages to come up with some reason to come over. Sis has to make lunch for six people every day, so when it rains and it seems like the Paladin wouldn't be coming over, it's really a headache for her. Because that means I'll get really fat.

The Chief Maid left on a trip for a bit, and when she came back she was really angry. I'm sorry for skipping school. But, I really can't skip cleaning!

Moreover, I learnt a lot of names of flowers this year. I also learnt how to bake bread. Today I made the bento for the Hero. He goes somewhere different every day, but he always comes back late in the evening.

Today he went hunting for boars to make boar hotpot. Good job, Hero!

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, Training at the Backyard

The Female Paladin: "Slow! Raise your arms higher!"

Lousy Soldier: "Yes, ma'am!" *Swings sword*

Lousy Knight: "Yes, ma'am!" *Swings sword*

The Female Paladin: "Wrong, hold the shield properly. Don't expose your throat! Don't drop your posture! Stab hard and fast for the centre of the mass! If you expose your weak points, you will die on the field!"

Lousy Soldier: "Y, yah!" *Swings sword*

Lousy Knight: "Take, this!" *Swings sword*

The Hero: "Wrong!! It's more like this..... Swing here, then here! Then here!"



Nobleman's Son: "Hah!" *Swings sword*

Soldier's Son: "Haiya!" *Swings sword*

The Hero: "Not bad, move your leg a bit further back!"

Nobleman's Son: "Like, like this?" *Shuffles*

Soldier's Son: "You're finally getting it." *Swings sword*

Nobleman's Son: "So, like this?" *Swings sword*

Soldier's Son: "That's it!" *Swings sword*

The Hero: "See, you can do it if you try. Now another 3,000 swings!"

Nobleman's Son: "Whaaat!?"

Soldier's Son: "Wh, what!?"

The Female Paladin: "Alright, stop! Run five laps around the lake!"

Lousy Soldier: "Y, yes, ma'am!"

Lousy Knight: "F, five!?"

The Female Paladin: "It's pointless if you're not tired out. On the battlefield, running away only happens after a fair deal of fighting, doesn't it? In other words, you'll be as tired as you are now, and if your legs can't move it's really a life-or-death situation. Now hurry up and get going!"

Lousy Soldier & Lousy Knight: "Y, yes, ma'am!"

The Hero: "Alright then, you guys go as well. Don't lose out."

Nobleman's Son: "Huh!?"

Soldier's Son: "Yes!"

The Hero: "Wait, you guys take these sacks of potatoes with you too!"

Nobleman's Son: "What!? Why!? That's insane!"

The Hero: "If you're fleeing and you see a little kid, you've got to carry the kid with you and run, right? That's what it means to be a Hero."

Nobleman's Son sobs

Soldier's Son: "Un, understood! Let's go!"

Nobleman's Son: "Ahhhhh!"

The Hero: "Ah—! What strapping young men! How refreshing!"

The Female Paladin: "They don't exercise nearly enough."

The Hero: "That's not true, someone else tires them out when she teaches them."

The Female Paladin: "You're about there yourself, you bully."

The Hero: "Really? I guess so."

The Female Paladin: "They're going to die eventually."

The Hero: "It's alright, it's alright. It's a real learning experience if you die halfway!"

The Female Paladin: "Really now....."

The Hero: "Whew, it's so hot." *Throws armour off*

The Female Paladin: "Don't throw of your armour. It's disgraceful."

The Hero: "You're so strict..... Fine. Is this okay?" *Lays it down gingerly*

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, it's a weapon for protecting your life. Treat it with some dignity."

The Hero: "Hot—. I'm going to go take a bath by the well."

The Female Paladin: "Oh, really?"

The Hero walks off

The Female Paladin walks off as well

The Hero: "Hm?"

The Female Paladin: "What's wrong?"

The Hero: "Why are you following me?"

The Female Paladin: "It's too hot, I need to take a bath too."

The Hero: "Is that so."

The Female Paladin: "Mmm."

The Hero: "Alright, shall we? Ngg!" *Cranks pump*

The Female Paladin: "Ohh. Good work! This pump thing is really convenient."

The Hero: "Really..... Have we got enough water?"

Water gushes out

The Female Paladin: "Ahh, that feels great! I'm all rested up."

The Hero: "Alright..... Let's go, let's go!"

Water gushes out

The Female Paladin: "Ahh, how cooling! So relaxing! Again!"

The Hero: "You're really enjoying yourself! Okay, here we go again."

The Female Paladin: "You're a really good guy."

Water gushes out

The Female Paladin: "Fuu, a bath after all this training is the best."

The Hero: "Indeed!"

The Female Paladin: "Then, one more please."

The Hero: "Leave it to me..... Hang on a bit, it's midsummer and I'm standing here covered in sweat for you!"

Chapter 9: "I Like to Touch this Hair"

The Female Paladin: "You're a guy and still you're so hung up on the little things."

The Hero: "This bath was my idea!"

The Female Paladin: "Here, a wet towel."

The Hero: "Nice! It feels great! Like hell it does!" *Annoyed*

The Female Paladin: "No choice then. I'll have to draw the water. Let's switch."

The Hero: "Alright!"

The Female Paladin: "Let's go then." *Stands up*

The Hero: ".....!?"

The Female Paladin: "What?"

The Hero: "H, h, h, hey!"

The Female Paladin: "Don't make such a slimy face."

The Hero: "Hey, wh, what. Why do you just have a towel on?"

The Female Paladin: "I was bathing, wasn't I? Ahh, what's wrong? Hey, Hero. My breasts are completely hidden when I'm wearing this towel, that's the size they are, is this some kind of joke!? You and Grandpa, always making me feel like I'm nothing! I'm going to cut you up!"

The Hero: "It's all white, it's all white"

The Female Paladin: "Hey, hurry up and get down there."

The Hero: "Y, yeah." *Trembles*

The Female Paladin: "Damnit. Now he's reduced to a muttering mess. Let's go. Hero, the water's coming—"

The Hero: "Y, yeah."

The Female Paladin: "Alright! Ngg"

The Hero: "It's coming—"

Water gushes out

The Female Paladin: "Wash your hair as well..... Oof."

The Hero: "I'm not a kid!"

Water gushes out

The Female Paladin: "Hey, Hero."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "I'll lend this to you. It's soap we made at the Holy Order."

The Hero: "Ohh, thanks."

The Female Paladin: "Watch out it's slippery."

Water gushes out

The Hero: "Ahhh, I'm all washed up!"

The Female Paladin: "Me too."

The Hero: ".....!!" *Jumps around*

The Female Paladin: "What's wrong? Did you get possessed?"

The Hero: "There's water in my ear."

The Female Paladin: "You're such a kid. Here, use this towel."

The Hero: "Ohh, thanks."

The Female Paladin: "Rub it in properly, your hair's all fluffy after all. It absorbs a lot of water, and probably a lot of sweat as well."

The Hero: "Understood." *Rubs hair with towel*

The Female Paladin: "Did you bring a comb?"

The Hero: "The Demon King does it for me. I don't have one myself."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so....."

The Hero: "Hah!" *Sits down*

The Female Paladin: "What's wrong?"

The Hero: "Just felt like taking a seat."

The Female Paladin: "Ahh, what a nice wind....." *Wind blows*

The Hero: "This country is really the best at the end of Summer."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, and the chestnuts will be great this time of the year."

Grass sways as wind blows.....

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Female Paladin: "It would be nice if it was like this forever."

The Hero: "Yeah—"

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Hero: "....."

Grass sways as wind blows.....

The Female Paladin: "It can't though."

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "If two of your wives are living together, then they'll compete to see who gets to be the first wife—"

The Hero: "Even within the Demon World, it's hard to say when it'll achieve peace. Though it's time for us to move—"

The Hero and the Female Paladin: "Eh?"

The Female Paladin: "Ah, ahh! That's right! Up to now, the war has been a stalemate, but obviously we don't want it to remain a stalemate."

The Hero: "That's true."

The Female Paladin: "..... What a problem."

The Hero: "Hm?"

The Female Paladin: "I've been thinking."

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "That old Archer, me, you..... and that annoyingly well-endowed Demon King. If we formed a party and attacked all those generals and fortresses, if we could completely destroy the military power, wouldn't that put an end to the war?"

The Hero: "Ahh. Well."

The Female Paladin: "No?"

The Hero: "It's hard to say."

The Female Paladin: "The Demon King is an ally of mankind, right?"

The Hero: "That's not entirely accurate."

The Female Paladin: "Really?"

The Hero: "The Demon King is trying to achieve an end to the war which is neither a victory nor a defeat. That's why I don't think she'd agree to a proposal that involves such annihilation."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so."

The Hero: "She intends to save the Demon Race as well in her way."

The Female Paladin: "Is that..... so?"

The Hero: "Probably."

The Female Paladin: "How odd."

The Hero: "I don't think so. I think this is much better."

The Female Paladin: "Really?"

The Hero: "You and I are definitely strong..... The Mage who went to the Cosmic Library as well. I'm fairly certain we can take down any enemy. However, taking down enemies and protecting our friends may seem the same, but are completely different. It's good and all for us to take down the entire Demon Army, but if we're not around and the Demon Army were to launch a counter-attack, who would defend the people then?"

The Female Paladin: "That's the responsibility of the Holy Crusaders and the rest of the Human Army."

The Hero: "Do you think that will solve things?"

The Female Paladin: "I'm sure of it."

The Hero: "Moreover, what will we do after we purge all the Demon extremists?"

The Female Paladin: "Eh?" *Stunned*

The Hero: "If we destroy the fortresses and the army, there'll be a massive number of Demons left, right? There are Demons who didn't take part in the war, or Demons who are neutral. If humans were to completely obliterate the Demon Army, that would leave the Demons defenceless. That would mean each of the Demon Races would be failed states. — And then, what will we do?"

The Female Paladin: "Th, that's....."

The Hero: "Will we hunt them? Will we make them slaves? Or will we do what the Demon King said..... Colonise?"

The Female Paladin: "What do you mean?"

The Hero: " 'The practice of invading someone else's land and exploiting their resources for oneself.' That."

The Female Paladin: "That's. There's no way Humans would"

The Hero: "That's what I said too."

The Female Paladin: "!"

The Hero: "I couldn't continue either. In any case, can you begin to understand the anger faced by the Demons who are taken as slaves from the Humans? There will be countless retaliations against the Humans and the seeds will just be sown for this world to explode into violence again."

The Female Paladin: "That's....."

The Hero: "Let's assume the Demons manage to kill of the bulk of the Human Army and advance into the Human World, breaking up the Southern United Kingdoms and conquering the Holy City. Every human, down to the last one, is conquered by the Demons. In every part of the world, humans are treated like cattle. Through the sweltering hot Summer, through the freezing Winter, they have to continue on in a state of hunger and misery. What would you do then?"

The Female Paladin: "Until my life is gone, I will kill the Demons!"

The Hero: "There you go, what's the difference?"

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Hero: "In this case, what's the difference between this and another world war? How would the five or six of us be able to put an end to it? The world would continue in misery until it ended, wouldn't it?"

The Demon King is weak. Even though she's the Demon King, she makes me laugh. If we were to fight one-on-one, well..... She's the same as the Lone Winter King I suppose. I guess that King's a bit more headstrong. But, it's about the same. Whether it's you or Granpda, I doubt there would be a problem defeating either of them."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Hero: "But, from the beginning, she's..... Already noticed that there was such a solution. It would not be difficult to end this war through a show of extreme force. But, there would be no way to put out the flames of war."

The Female Paladin flinches

The Hero: "She's quite amazing. Of course she has a stupendous knowledge, but her ability to make considerations is amazing."

The Female Paladin: "That's why....."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "That's why you....."

The Hero: "Yeah?"

The Female Paladin: (Love her.....?)

The Hero: "Yep. That's why we're comrades."

The Female Paladin: "....."

Grass sways as wind blows.....

The Hero: "On another note—"

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Hero: "You're pretty amazing yourself—"

The Female Paladin: "Eh?"

The Hero: "You became the Grandmaster of the Holy Order after you came back from the Demon World, right? You helped to raise the living standards for the poor farmers, and other good things, even though just a year before, you were slicing Boar Demons to 3cm slices!"

The Female Paladin: "That's because you brought it back!"

The Hero: "But, still, amazing." *Distant smile*

The Hero: "All of you were amazing. I was surprised, shocked even. Every day we ate our fill, and I was always luckily enough to have such warm people by my side. I was happy."

The Female Paladin: "There was no outcome to that."

The Hero: "Really? But, still—Heh."

The Female Paladin: "....."

Grass sways as wind blows

The Hero: "All I know how to do is destroy things, so the two of you were..... No, everyone was..... Wonderful."

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, Bathroom

Door opens

The Hero: "Heyyyy!"

The Demon King: "Hi, is training over?"

The Hero: "It's over, it just finished."

The Demon King: "Good job!"

The Hero: "Are you taking a break as well?"

The Demon King: "Mmm, the negotiations over the proposal have concluded."

Little Maid Sister: "The Mistress has been all jittery and excited over your coming back home, Hero!"

The Demon King: "What are you saying, what are you saying" *Squeezes cheeks*

Little Maid Sister: "Boohoo. I'm..... Sowwy....."

The Hero: "Ah, what good friends you are."

Little Maid Sister coughs

The Demon King: "It's because she said something unnecessary."

Little Maid Sister: "Alright, please take a seat. I'll bring some orange water in a while."

The Demon King: "What's that?"

The Hero: "Is it cold?"

Little Maid Sister: "It's water cooled in bottles in the well ♪ I came up with it myself!"

The Demon King: "Well, well."

The Hero: "It's delicious!"

Little Maid Sister: "Thanks ♪"

The Demon King: "This is..... Carbon Dioxide?"

Little Maid Sister: "I learnt it from the mistress, so I wanted to put it to some use!"

The Demon King: "You're still too young to be a brewer."

The Hero: "It's bubbly and delicious. The sweetness of the honey goes great with it too."

Little Maid Sister: "Thanks ♪"

The Demon King: "That girl is probably going to be a great chef some day."

The Hero: "Heh? That glutton?"

The Demon King: "An excellent chef has to be someone who knows how to appreciate food."

The Hero: "Really?"

Little Maid Sister: "Chef?"

The Demon King: "Someone who cooks great food."

Little Maid Sister: "That sounds wonderful ♪"

The Hero: "Wow, there are flowers in it too."

The Demon King: "Amazing!"

The Hero: "This is so good it really makes me want to drool."

Little Maid Sister: "I've got to go tell sis!"

The Hero: "What about?"

Little Maid Sister: "I've become a chef! I'm going to make a feast every single day!"

The Hero: "I think you've misunderstood something!"

Little Maid Sister: "I'm going!"

Door slams shut! Little Maid Sister runs off!

The Demon King: "How boisterous."

The Hero: "Yeah, but she seems happy."

The Demon King: "?"

The Hero: "AT the beginning, she was always hiding behind her sister."

The Demon King: "Yeah, but she still had a lot to say."

The Hero: " 'The girl wearing spectacles is evil', right?"

The Demon King: "Ahh, that's right. The Chief Maid really surprised me!"

The Hero: "Really?"

The Demon King: "Yeah, what did she say after that. 'An existence where you don't take charge of your existence is just that of an insect.' That's what she said."

The Hero: "Yeah."

The Demon King: "On a side note."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "What's up with you?"

The Hero: "What do you mean?"

The Demon King: "You're so unkempt."

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "You're terrible. I'll comb it for you."

The Hero: "Oh, my hair. It's fine isn't it."

The Demon King: "It's not fine. Take care of yourself more."

The Hero: "Hehe."

The Demon King brushes the Hero's hair

The Demon King: "It's all fluffy."

The Hero: "You've really brushed it."

The Demon King: "Of course. It's my hobby after all."

The Hero: "Why..... How troublesome."

The Demon King: "It's good. But, it would be nice if you let your fringe grow out. Why don't you?"

The Hero: "Hmm—It'll be troublesome if it gets in my eyes during battles."

The Demon King: "Tomorrow..... That's happening right?"

The Hero: "Yeah, the Committee for the City of the Gate."

The Demon King: "Are you going?"

The Hero: "Yeah. Of course. I'll be going as the Black Knight, representing the name of the Demon King."

The Demon King: "That's the way it is."

The Hero: "Is something bad about that?"

Brushes hair

The Demon King: "Nothing bad per se, but the Fire Dragon Lord."

The Hero: "Ahh, him? It's true that when I first met him, he was a stubborn old fool just as they say, but recently he's become more cooperative? Especially when his daughter was made the representative for Outskirts Demons at the Committee for the City of the Gate, he didn't make one complaint."

The Demon King: "Yeah, that's the heart of the problem."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "Ahh. Ahem, ahem. When the Committee is over, you'll come straight back?"

The Hero: "No, this time it seems they're having some Ennichi celebrations on the streets."

The Demon King: "Ennichi?"

The Hero: "It's some kind of Eastern festival. The East Fortress Commander suggested it."

The Demon King: "Hmm."

The Hero: "It seems there'll be lots of free, cheap and special food to eat and the night will be lit up with lanterns. After that, there'll be a band to play music."

The Demon King: "The goal is for interaction?"

The Hero: "Yeah, relations are still tense between the human merchants and the Demons. In this way, the merchants will get to interact with the Demons while having fun."

The Demon King: "Do you understand the feeling of being conquered and colonised?"

The Hero: "Yeah, I experienced it myself."

The Demon King: "What an unfortunate example. The administration of the Human Holy Crusaders wasn't just bad, it can be said to have been a disaster."

The Hero: "The Merchants don't discriminate so heavily against the Demons and there are people like the East Fortress Commander who treat them fairly."

The Demon King: "Though he needs to calm down a little."

The Hero: "Well, he's done his best. Now I'll be the representative of the Demon King. As long as I stand glowering from the balcony, I'm sure the members of the Committee will behave themselves like good children."

The Demon King: "Hmm, is that so..... That being said, what's the topic for discussion?"

The Hero: "There has been a proposal for the construction of a hospital to help treat injuries and boost healthcare and hygiene."



Ennichi: A special day where people go to Shinto temples to pray. A lot less common nowadays, it was also a day for people to throw festivals and set up stalls selling food and games.

The Demon King: "Ohh, a good viewpoint."

The Hero: "It was proposed by the Fire Dragon Lady. It's not going to be a charitable mission but the Fire Dragon Race has already proposed to put up half the funding as well as tools and building materials. This job will require a large labour force, so there have been a lot of poor Demons flooding the streets, it's not a very nice thing to say, but it's creating a very bad vibe in the area."

The Demon King: "Public good, eh? It will be interesting to watch what the economic result will be."

The Hero: "Anyway, it seems all of us will be heading to the Ennichi festival, the Fire Dragon Lady mentioned something about Apple Candy, so I'll be back home late."

The Demon King: "—"

The Hero: "Showing my face and helping the residents to relax more is also one of my responsibilities."

The Demon King: "—"

—— The Winter Palace, the Study with a Mountain of Books

Lone Winter King: "It's this bad?"

Butler: "Young man, are you alright?"

Lone Winter King: "Bring me a strong iced wine—— No, alcohol is suicide. Bring me some tea. Make it really strong."

Butler: "Yes."

Seneschal: "Your Majesty, while we prepare for the next group."

Lone Winter King: "I, I understand. Five minutes, let me rest for five minutes."

Butler: "Young man, here's your tea."

Lone Winter King: "This is really hard work."

Butler: "Indeed it is. As it should be."

Gulps down tea

Lone Winter King: "Can we speed up the deliberations?"

Butler: "Nope, the very nature of deliberations are slow."

Lone Winter King: "But at the present state....."

Butler: "Yes, but it really can't be helped."

Lone Winter King: "Don't tell me because of that Tripartite Agreement, the number of reports, petitions and appeals have accumulated to this extent!"

Butler: "It was beyond our expectations."

Lone Winter King: "To begin with, have we not already split tax collection into Spring and Autumn and gotten the landlords to move the goods to warehouses in the cities?"

Butler: "Indeed."

Lone Winter King: "Municipally, we've already issued the decree to abolish serfdom and settled the issue of nutrition in the army. So why is the workload still increasing!?"

Butler: "With the route through the Southern Artic Ocean open, we've got port docking permits. We've got tax invoices from merchants, applications for migration..... It's probably impossible for you to handle everything by yourself, your majesty."



Public Good: A good or service provided by the government or other bodies such as roads or bridges that the entirety of society will be able to benefit from, which is paid for by public money. In more developed and urbanised countries like Japan, this is needed a lot less, but in places like the Demon World, it is utterly necessary for development to take place.

Docking Permits: Ports must set a limit on the number of ships which are allowed to enter to prevent congestion. For this reason, docking permits can become very expensive.

Immigration: At present, migration is no longer a particularly special occurrence. There were also many migrants in the Middle Ages and before that. It has been said that the true story of the 1284 Pied Piper of Hamelin was that the community migrated to the East.

Lone Winter King: "That's right, where's the rest of my officers? Don't I have Tax Officers?"

Butler: "The system collapsed after an intense week and people moved to other jobs. To begin with, tax collection is a family business. That's why we should have a dedicated civil service like the larger Kingdoms in the Central Continent.

Seneschal: "Umm, Your Majesty? It's time for the next delegation of merchants. May I send them in?"

Lone Winter King: "Yeah, there's no choice, come in!"

Merchant's Son: "Very pleased to make your acquaintance, Your Majesty!"

Bows

Lone Winter King: "Ohh, glad you could make it, Merchant."

Merchant's Son: "What a splendid study."

Butler: "This?"

Seneschal: "I'll look in the mountain. Is it this?"

Lone Winter King: "Or is it this? That's not right!"

Merchant's Son: "What are you looking for?"

Lone Winter King: "Oh, sorry. You're here to trade in herring, right? We've received the certificate you sent us, and it's here somewhere..... There's also the issue of this month's tax. I'm sorry, everything is everywhere."

Merchant: "Oh if you're looking for that." *Rumrages through mountain*

Pulls out paper

Merchant's Son: "Here it is. This is the letter of introduction I submitted earlier..... and the tax is"

Pulls out paper

Merchant's Son: "Noted in this slip here."

Pulls out paper

Merchant's Son: "These are the permit applications. This month's is all tied up here, it's just a few sheets but it's quite messy."

Lone Winter King: "Ohh! Good job! You've saved us a lot of time."

Butler: "Every day is a battle in here."

Seneschal: "Always a pointless battle. A battle of attrition so to speak."

Lone Winter King: "So, Merchant. About the herring."

Merchant's Son: "I'm afraid you have it all mixed up. I'm the third son of a merchant family, the one who does the herring transactions is the second son, and the one who sits on the Merchant's Union and handles the finances is the eldest son, I do not have anything to do. In other words, I am jobless."

Lone Winter King: "Hmm, that's a problem. Then, what have you come to my Palace for?"

Merchant's Son: "This Letter of Introduction....."

His education is complete. Please use him for any work you find necessary, he is highly capable.

—- *Crimson*

Lone Winter King: "....."

Merchant's Son: "If the Palace is willing to lend me a small ship, I believe I can be useful in trading or in gathering economic intelligence. I am, after all, the son of a merchant family."

Lone Winter King: "Hmm. You've come to the right place. Ahahaha."

Butler: "This country always welcomes promising young people."

Chapter 9: “I Like to Touch this Hair”

Merchant’s Son: “Eh? Why are you all so happy?”

Lone Winter King: “Hahaha! Don’t worry about all the small things! Ahahaha!”



Tax Collector: This can be split into levying (the act of deciding who the tax burden goes to) and collection (the act of physically collecting taxes). The former is usually done by a higher-level official. Naturally, a fair degree of power is endowed to tax collectors to fulfil their duties.

— City of the Gate, A Large Boulevard during Ennichi

♪♪♪

The Hero: “Heh, it’s fairly exciting out here.”

East Fortress Base Commander: “Yeah, everything’s going according to plan, this is a good start.”

The Hero: “What a nice smell.”

East Fortress Base Commander: “That’s roast pork. Heh, how nostalgic. Hey, Black Knight. Let’s buy some.”

The Hero: “Oh, let’s, let’s!”

East Fortress Base Commander: “And some cold ale too.”

♪♪♪

Human Merchant: "Welcome!"

The Hero: "Give me four slices of that wonderful smelling pork."

Human Merchant: "Coming up! That'll be two silver pieces!"

The Hero: "Can you really sell things for that price?"

Human Merchant: "For today's festival, the City's Merchant's Association is absorbing half of all prices. We're also going to have a big dance later on!"

The Hero: "Really—. That's a really wonderful smell!"

Human Merchant: "That's right. This roast pork is marinated in secret spices from the Kingdom of the Dunes. Bro, you've really bought something good!"

～♪～～♪

East Fortress Base Commander: "Give me two flagons of ale!"

Demon Merchant: "Hey, aren't you the East Fortress Base Commander?"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Ahh, sorry for bothering you."

Demon Merchant: "No, no, not at all. Two flagons? I'm cooling them right now, give me just a moment."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Thanks..... So how is everything?"

Demon Merchant: "Quite prosperous. I think the militia ruffians aren't taking to the streets just for today. It's such a happy festival."

East Fortress Base Commander: "That would be nice."

Demon Merchant: "Somehow, it's best when we're not fighting. I'm really sorry for this whole war. Whether you're being burnt out of your home or chased from place to place, it's a tough life, isn't it?"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Yeah, I promise I'll do my best to make sure such a thing doesn't happen around here."

Demon Merchant: "Hahahaha! The promises of a Human..... But, it's the Commander, after all! In this City, perhaps you may keep your word. Here, two flagons! It's cold!"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Ohh, just put it down here."

～♪～～♪

The Hero: "Commander, I've got it!"

East Fortress Base Commander: "I've got the ale here too."

The Hero: "Eat up, eat up."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Alright. Wow! It's delicious!"

The Hero: "To drink this in this volcano-like heat is really refreshing!"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Cold ale really hits the spot! It's the best! Oi, this is what I call food!"

～♪～～♪

Fire Dragon Lady: "So you guys were here."

Demon Girl: "Ah, umm..... G, g, good afternoon."

The Hero: "Ah—"

East Fortress Base Commander: "We went out for a bit."

Fire Dragon Lady: "What do you mean? I told you, this observation is our public duty. And to think the two of you were slacking off here."

The Hero: "W, we weren't really slacking off."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Yeah? I'm here to get stuff for my subordinates."

The Hero: "I..... don't have any subordinates....."

Demon Girl: "S, sorry....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "You should feel ashamed about yourself, it's too late to find an excuse. Sir Black Knight!"

The Hero: "Y, yes?"

Fire Dragon Lady: "I am your wife. What kind of attitude are you showing me? Even though I'm a Fire Dragon, I feel like crying a whole river right now."

The Hero: "You're not my wife. That's just something that old Lord guy said....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "No matter how you try to coax me out of it, my heart, my body, everything of me belongs to you."

The Hero: "No it doesn't. We don't have that kind of relationship."

Demon Girl: "I, I, I'm sorry."

The Hero: "No, none of this is your fault."

Demon Girl: "No, umm..... I told her..... that the Black Knight went out..... I'm..... Sorry."

The Hero: "Well, no matter what we do, we would have been found out eventually."

～♪～～♪

East Fortress Base Commander: "That being said, aren't you a little overdressed?"

Fire Dragon Lady: "Of course..... That's because you said, 'Ennichi is a day even the poorest peasant will dress up', didn't you?"

The Hero: "But isn't that a little too little cloth?"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Hahaha! Haven't I said this before? No matter where you go, you'll find that people from the East all dress like this, it's so incredibly hot after all....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "I had to rush it out. It takes too long to sew."

The Hero: "I think....."

Demon Girl: "Oh no, everyone's..... Looking..... Here....."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Ohh, the Demon girls are really quite cute."

Fire Dragon Lady: "It took me very long to get this girl to wear what she's wearing now. She's very troublesome."

Demon Girl: "I, I'm sorry..... Sorry."

Fire Dragon Lady: "No, no, it's okay."

Demon Girl flinches

Fire Dragon Lady: "It's just that, even though you're from a lower class than me, at the very least, a girl should care about how she looks. A Demon who's yet to be married needs to show off her skin from time to time!"

Demon Girl: "That's a Fire Dragon custom..... It's embarrassing....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "It's a Demon thing."

Demon Girl: "Ah, ahhchoo!"

The Hero: "Ohh— Roast potatoes, even in a place like this."

East Fortress Base Commander: "That's a local delicacy."

The Hero: "Oh right, I forgot it came from the Demon World."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Eat up! Eat up! It's delicious!"

Fire Dragon Lady: "Husband?"

The Hero: "Delicious, the butter is great."

East Fortress Base Commander: "Right? It's the rock salt."

Fire Dragon Lady: "Husband!!"

The Hero: "Yes!?"

Fire Dragon Lady: "How is it?"

The Hero: "How? It's a great Ennichi festival."

Fire Dragon Lady: "How?" *Snorts fire*

Demon Girl: "I, I, I'm sorry, Black Knight."

The Hero: "This is a really delicious potato, isn't it?"

Fire Dragon Lady: "How, is, it!?" *Snorts fire*



Rock Salt: Salt which is mined as opposed to dried from seawater in salt flats. Seas may have receded from ancient times, or mountains may have moved due to tectonic shifts, resulting in mineral deposits of salt inland. These are abundant in many places throughout the world.

East Fortress Base Commander: (Small voice) "Hey, she's talking about that."

The Hero: (Small voice) "What?"

East Fortress Base Commander: (Small voice) "Compliment her clothing."

Fire Dragon Lady fumes

The Hero: "Ah—, yeah! It really suits you! You've got a great sense of style, and your idea of mixing international fashions is really splendid! It's a bit revealing, but that's alright, it's a festival, after all!"

East Fortress Base Commander: "Hey, that's going a bit too far."

Fire Dragon Lady: "R, r, really!? Husband! I'm the luckiest girl in the world!"

—- The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, the Study

The Demon King: "Hmm....."

The Chief Maid: "If you include this month, that's twice already. The rumblings have really gotten bigger."

The Demon King: "And the intervals have gotten shorter as well."

The Chief Maid: "Yes, I believe we're at the limit....."

The Demon King: "How much time do we have left?"

The Chief Maid: "It's better if we get it over with as soon as we can, but I would say..... about a week."

The Demon King: "Alright, in a week then."

The Chief Maid: "..... I will do my best."

The Demon King: "No, it's been nearly two days. We've done a good job of holding it, it's nearly time for that day."

The Chief Maid: "Yes."

The Demon King: "Prepare my sleeping quarters at the Palace of Death."

The Chief Maid: "Understood."

The Demon King: "We've got to hurry up and conclude our work in the Human World."

The Chief Maid: "Yes."

The Demon King: "Don't make such a face."

The Chief Maid: "....."

The Demon King: "We'll go back soon. We'll meet again soon."

—- The Kingdom of Metal, on a Hill outside the City

The Demon King, the Hero and Elder Sister Maid teleport in

The Demon King: "The air is really moist here."

Elder Sister Maid: "My head is still throbbing....."

The Demon King: "Are you alright."

Elder Sister Maid: "Y, yes....."

The Demon King: "Don't push yourself. Take deep breaths."

The Hero: "Now that I think about it, that was your first time teleporting."

Elder Sister Maid: "Yes, it was, enlightening..... I'm alright."

The Demon King: "It's just motion sickness, it can't be helped."

The Hero: "Just take your time and you'll recover."

The three walk through the grass

The Demon King: "It should be about 20 minutes to the city."

The Hero: "Indeed."

Elder Sister Maid: "So that's the Capital of the Kingdom of Metal, how massive!"

The Demon King: "Hmm, there's lots of smoke issuing from it, huh? Looks like there are a lot of factories down there."

The Hero: "That being said, what are we here for today?"

The Demon King: "Yeah, it seems that the prototype of the machine I asked them to construct is finished."

The Hero: "So we're here to look at it? With the Elder Sister Maid?"

The Demon King: "She's taught me a lot during my work with her. She's much more capable than any nobleman or merchant."

Elder Sister Maid: "That's an exaggeration."

The Demon King: "Alright, shall we go into the city?"

Right Gate Guard: "Stop!"

Left Gate Guard: "Where do you come from, are you mercahnts?"

The Demon King: "I am the Scholar from the Kingdom of Winter. This is my Identification."

Right Gate Guard: "The Royal Seal of the Kingdom of Winter! Please, come right in!"

The Demon King: "Identities are such useful things."

The Hero: "I'm thankful we managed to avoid trouble there."

Elder Sister Maid: "Amazing! Are all the houses built from stone?"

The Demon King: "Hey, hey, it's dangerous to walk around looking upwards."

The Hero: "Well, where to?"

Elder Sister Maid: "Where?"

The Demon King: "Hmm, I don't know."

The Hero: "What, how useless. Show me the letter."

The Demon King: "Here." *Unfolds letter*

The Hero: "Ahh, this is the Craftsmen Quarter by the River."

Elder Sister Maid: "You know this place well!"

The Hero: "I'm sort of a vagabond, I have to memorise all kinds of cities in order to not get lost, navigation is kind of my strong suit."

Elder Sister Maid: "What an amazing ability."

The Demon King: "That's because he's mine. Shall we go?"

The Hero: "Yes, yes."

The Demon King: "Hoho, so this is the Kingdom of Steel. That workshop seems to be making silverware?"

The Hero: "You're very interested."

The Demon King: "This is my first time actually being here."

The Hero: "What sort of workshop are we headed to? A munitions workshop? Or an agricultural implements workshop?"

The Demon King: "The workshop specialises in Copper Casting, but it's neither munitions nor agricultural implements we are here for. You mentioned something about education before right?"

The Hero: "Yeah, I did."

Elder Sister Maid: "?"

The Demon King: "I was thinking that education should really play a much bigger role in this world."

The Hero: "..... Hmm."

The Demon King: "The true expanse of the world is so big, none can guess at its size. Humans, as beings which possess knowledge, seek to try to gain more practical and theoretical knowledge. They are trying to understand more about the world around them"

The Hero: "That's what you think. But you seem to be convinced that your methods are correct, and that you are always right."

Elder Sister Maid: "....."

The Demon King: "In order to wrestle with this darkness, knowledge is important. Well, that's one level of education. Perhaps a more important reason for having education is the reality of not having an education and the denying of understanding to those who have no education."

The Hero: "Huh? That's a bit too complicated for me."

Elder Sister Maid: "I agree."

The Demon King: "Elder Sister Maid, do you understand?"

Elder Sister Maid: "Yes. That's..... For example, serfs, who have little education, and hence little knowledge, are unable to comprehend that there exists a better world. That is why they will always be in poverty."

The Hero: "But surely they can see that the landlords live a better life than they do."

Elder Sister Maid: "Yes, but they cannot see what they should be doing. Or rather, they cannot see that it is possible to do things this way to get better results."

The Hero: "....."

The Demon King: "....."

Elder Sister Maid: "This is a very unfortunate thing, to not know your place in the world and who you could be..... No, one would not even know whether one was happy. — That's why I can really understand what the Mistress is saying."



Casting: Metal is heated to its melting point and then poured into a mould such that when the metal cools it will take the shape of the mould. If one is able to increase the temperatures involved as much as possible, costs can be lowered during large scale production.

The Hero: "Is that so....."

The Demon King: "An so, for such an important thing like education, there's a noticeable flaw in it. Do you know what it is?"

The Hero: "What is it?"

Elder Sister Maid: "I don't understand....."

The Demon King: "That is that the speed of learning is too slow. For one person to transmit knowledge to another person, a significant amount of time is required. Moreover, there are limits to the number of people you can transmit knowledge to at one time. If it continued to be that one teacher could only accept one student at a time, even if one spent his whole life doing this, the sum of human knowledge would never increase."

The Hero: "Ahh, I understand what you mean."

Elder Sister Maid: "But, knowledge is such a precious thing, so there's really no choice. The more I learn from the Mistress, the more I don't feel like I can catch up....."

The Demon King: "That's a system which you have convinced yourself to believe. Whoever decided that just because knowledge is precious, learning has to be difficult?"

The Hero: "Is that so?"

— The Kingdom of Metal, the Craftsmen Quarter, in a Large Workshop

Opens door

Chief Craftsman: "Ahh, the Scholar! You must be tired from your long journey!"

The Demon King: "Thank you for all your help, Chief Craftsman."

Chief Craftsman: "No, no! It is truly everybody's pleasure to be able to receive such interesting assignments even at such an age."

Elder Sister Maid: "What a huge workshop!"

Chief Craftsman: "Ahh, it's dangerous to walk around like that, young lady."

Steam hisses out of a vent

Chief Craftsman: "There's steam shooting out of everywhere. It's important to cool down the molten metal."

Elder Sister Maid: "Y, yes." *Scared*

Chief Craftsman: "Well then, you must be tired. I'll get you some tea, so how about we head to the back....."

The Demon King: "No, that's quite alright. Above all, I'd like to see the prototype."

Chief Craftsman: "Ahahaha. Your eagerness hasn't changed since we last talked in the Kingdom of Winter! In that case, please come over here. We've designed a special warehouse."

Churnm, churn, churn, churn

The Demon King: "So this is it!"

The Hero: "It's massive!"

Elder Sister Maid: "Is this a.....? It looks like a Threshing Machine, but it's so much bigger....."

Chief Craftsman: "It's meant to be a temporary structure, so we had to make it bigger. It was originally a rather small machine. But once we made it bigger, it functions fairly well as a warehouse."

The Hero: "Warehouse?"

Chief Craftsman: "Come in."



Threshing Machine: A machine which is used to separate the edible part of the grain from the chaff that surrounds it in cereal crops like barley or rice. In the process of separating the chaff, there is the opportunity to remove the chaff as well. Some threshing machines work as combine harvesters, harvesting, threshing and separating the chaff at the same time.

Clank, clank, clank.....

Elder Sister Maid: "What a lot of drawers and cupboards."

Chief Craftsman: "This is what's inside." *Opens drawer*

The Hero: "Are these stamps?"

Elder Sister Maid: "Or seals?"

Chief Craftsman: "Yeah, they are called Printing Types."

The Demon King: "This is our new weapon."

Chief Craftsman: "We call it the Moveable Type Printing Press."

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, Late at Night in the Corridors

The Female Paladin: "....." *Shocked*

The Demon King: "....." *Shocked*

The Female Paladin: "W, why, a, are you here?"

The Demon King: "That's my line."

The Female Paladin: "No, where's the washroom?"

The Demon King: "It's in the opposite end of the corridor."

The Female Paladin: "So why are you over here?"

The Demon King: "Th, that's..... Umm"

The Female Paladin: "That's?"

The Demon King: "Hey, what's that! Your shimmering, white nightgown! Isn't that s, s, silk!? What a luxurious item!"

The Female Paladin: "It's fine isn't it? People should be allowed to wear what they want!"

The Demon King: "That sort of thing is not fine!"

The Female Paladin: "In that case, why are you hugging a pillow?"

The Demon King: "..... That's"

The Female Paladin: "Are you trying to sneak into this door?"

The Demon King: "Nothing of the sort."

The Female Paladin: "Are you intending to go to the Hero's room this time at night?"

The Demon King: "N, n, no! I'm going for some night tea."

The Female Paladin: "If that's the case, then I'm going for some night tea as well."

The Demon King: "In what world does a woman wear a silk nightgown to go to a man's room for some night tea! Stupid!"

The Female Paladin: "Don't lecture me when you're on your way to drink tea while hugging a pillow!"

The Demon King: "Mm, look here Female Paladin."

The Female Paladin: "What?"

The Demon King: "I thought that you were my only friend in the Human World....."

The Female Paladin: "..... That's right, Demon King."

The Demon King: "That's why you should get out of my sight right now."

The Female Paladin: "That's not possible."

The Demon King: "Come again later. I have something important to talk to him about."

The Female Paladin: "I have something important to talk to him about too."

The Demon King: "Like what?"

The Female Paladin: "Like this!" *Unfurls handkerchief*

The Demon King: "What's that? "I promise to be forever faithful to my love"? Isn't this a woman's handkerchief..... Eh? Ehh!?"

Chapter 9: "I Like to Touch this Hair"

The Female Paladin: "That's right. It belongs to that Fire Dragon Lady. I'm being worked to the death here, but I still want to go and grind this person to dust." *Cracks knuckles*

The Demon King: "Definitely....." *Cracks knuckles*

The Female Paladin: "And that is why I will not back down tonight. My sword hungers for a divine massacre!"

The Demon King: "What kind of issue is that! For the remaining few days—"



Printing Types: Using a chisel, stamps are carved with single letters. This was invented in China around the 11th century. The first printing types were made out of stone. From the 14th century onwards, the Koreans began making printing presses out of metal. It first began to be produced in Europe in the 15th century.

Moveable Type Printing Press: In 1455, Gutenberg created a printing press using a chisel and printing types. This is an improvement from the Printing Type Press invented in China, but it is still unclear if it was not invented earlier in another place.

The Female Paladin: "Eh?"

The Demon King: "No, it's nothing. In any case, I'm not backing down either."

The Chief Maid: "I'm afraid I must step in."

The Demon King and the Female Paladin: "Eh?"

The Demon King and the Female Paladin: "Eh!?"

The Chief Maid: "So the Hero has invited you both? Now, it's not my place to judge these sorts of activities, I'm just a servant myself. But what we're seeing here is a three way?"

The Demon King: "What are you saying, Chief Maid!?"

The Female Paladin: "Hey, that's really indecent! Have you no shame!"

The Chief Maid: "It's because the two of you are inexperienced, that's why you have that burning feeling of rivalry, right? Victory is not guaranteed. In such times, what you really need is some generosity of spirit and leniency. If you don't get into the room with him, you can't say you've become a real woman."

The Demon King: "That's probably true, but....."

The Female Paladin: "It's true that this is rather embarrassing."

The Chief Maid: "In that case, hurry up and get it over with, I'll be waiting over here."

The Demon King: "Don't lump these things together!"

The Female Paladin: "I can't possibly be doing these things as a Paladin!"

The Chief Maid: "In that case, stop making such a fuss in the corridors. No, why don't the three of you repair your relationship." *Smiles*

Closes door!

— The Village of Wintering, the Demon King's Mansion, the Hero's Room

The Demon King and the Female Paladin: "Ahh!"

The Hero: "..... What are the two of you doing?"

The Female Paladin: "No, that's, we've got something we need to talk about."

The Demon King: "Hmm, it'll take a significant amount of time to convey the deepest details of this particular issue, but as you know the world is currently in a particular state of chaos and hence while it may be inconvenient, it is still currently expedient to speak to you within this time, despite having, unfortunately, to rouse you from your slumber."

The Hero: "You're going to have to calm down if you want me not to be confused."

The Demon King: "In other words, this time we have come here in order to pick up leads that will help us to uncover the light, and are you not obliged to aid us by being forthcoming in this quest? It's true that there are many risks to be taken in this, but are we not about to take the next step already?"

The Hero: "Calm down!" *Hits table*

The Demon King: "Ugh!"

The Hero: "Summarise exactly what you want."

The Demon King: "....." *Shudders*

The Female Paladin: "....." *Shudders*

The Hero: "Don't avoid eye contact with me."

The Demon King: "Time."

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "You were there at the War Committee when I brought it up, weren't you?"

The Hero: "Huh?"

The Female Paladin: "What sort of war are you talking about?"

The Demon King: "This is a conference I would like to have as the Demon King. Diplomacy is my domain. We can decide this quickly with a discussion."

The Female Paladin: "What do you mean?"

The Demon King: "I will be on top, and the Female Paladin can be at the bottom."

The Female Paladin: "What kind of attitude is that, Demon King!?"

The Hero: "How free these people are."

The Demon King: "What do you mean? I'm talking about which bunk we'll sleep on."

The Female Paladin: "O, oh. I see. I was mistaken."

The Demon King: "Is that alright?"

The Female Paladin: "Wait, where will the Hero be?"

The Demon King: "It's been decided that he will be on top."

The Female Paladin: "Then doesn't that mean I'll be alone at the bottom!"

The Demon King: "No? Then how about we do a time sharing agreement?"

The Female Paladin: "A what?"

The Demon King: "We'll share him, and we can have him for specific time slots."

The Female Paladin: "Sounds like a troublesome agreement."

The Demon King: "I believe it's a very productive agreement."

The Female Paladin: " "So, how will it be exactly."

The Demon King: "The Hero will sleep in your bed in the day, and in my bed at night."

The Female Paladin: "Won't you just have him to yourself, then!?"

The Hero: "What a petty discussion. Please finish it quickly."

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, the Room of the Hero

The Hero: "What's with this situation, why am I even awake!?"

The Demon King: "In diplomacy, there is always dishonesty and euphemism. It's a very sad picture."

The Female Paladin: "You're the one who's hiding what you really want. But, there's nothing for it. My grandmother always said, "When there's only one piece of bread, be grateful if you can have half.""

The Hero: "What an object I am."

The Demon King: "What do you mean! You've got two girls fighting over you! Unless..... You're not satisfied?"

The Female Paladin: "Maybe you've got a thing for Fire Dragons, huh!?"

The Hero: "No, that's not it."

The Demon King: "It's just because I'm squishy, right!? Because I have flab!? Even though you already said you belonged to me!"

The Female Paladin: "Just because I have small breasts!? You really like that kind of thing? The virgin's greatest virtue is her purity. That is something even the Spirit has decided!"

The Hero: "Ohh, why, why is this happening to me."

The Demon King: "Hmm. At this rate, what the Chief Maid said is right."

The Female Paladin: "..... It's annoying, but it seems that way."

The Demon King: "Let's have a one hour truce."

The Female Paladin: "Good idea."

The Hero: "Do you really have to argue about this over my head?"

The Demon King: "It's not over your head, is it? It's just within your earshot."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, it's more over your shoulder, really."

The Hero: "....."

The Demon King: "What, are you nervous?"

The Female Paladin: (It's about his own sleeping position! Of course he is!?)

The Hero: "Well, everyone should calm down."

The Female Paladin: "Well, this isn't a life or death situation or anything."

The Hero: (It's like some fight to the death!)

The Demon King: "How warm! And fluffy!"

The Female Paladin: "Mmm, it's an unexpectedly good place to sleep."

The Hero: "..... .."

The Demon King: "Are you asleep, Hero?"

The Female Paladin: "He must be, he's really tired."

The Hero: (How could I be asleep? If a virgin could sleep in such a situation, I would destroy him with a Thunder Destruction Spell.)

The Demon King: "The Hero's hair is so fluffy."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, it's like a big dog."

The Demon King: "I like touching this hair. I'm the one who has to put it in place, aren't I?"

The Female Paladin: "Well, he's been with me much longer, I'm sure you know this."

The Hero: "..... .."

The Hero: (Th, this is bad. I have to pretend to be asleep. They're very astute! I've got to calm my soul!"

The Demon King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "Hey, Female Paladin."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah?"

The Demon King: "I'll be returning to the Demon World next week."

The Female Paladin: "Eh?"

The Hero: "Eh?"

The Demon King: "Yeah, I've got to renew my Demon King License."

The Female Paladin: "License? You've got a license for that?"

The Demon King: "Yeah."

The Female Paladin: "I see..... Will you be coming back quickly?"

The Demon King: "No, well. At earliest, I'll be gone for a few months."

The Female Paladin: "What's going on? Demon King..... Are you having second thoughts?"

The Demon King: "No I'm not. I've got no choice. As the Demon King, I have to..... Well, it's hard to explain this. I've got to go pay my respect to the graves of the generations of Demon Kings before me."

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "Moreover, within the Demon World, there are lots and lots of citizens who support an invasion of the Human World. At present, there are a lot of people who are saying that I was killed in the fight with the Hero, and are supporting a coup d'etat. I need to show them I'm still there, otherwise the more

radical elements in the demon World could rise up and the war would begin again, but worse."

The Female Paladin: "But, then....."

The Hero: (.....)

The Demon King: "Yeah?"

The Female Paladin: "So you're going to the Demon World to deal with the factions which support a renewed war effort? That seems remarkably dangerous."

The Hero: (It really is. Discourage her some more, Female Paladin.)

The Demon King: "My specialties are Economics and Diplomacy. I'm sure I can apply this. I don't think there are any living things who can fight wars without food or money."

The Female Paladin: "But shouldn't you bring someone else? Umm..... Like the Hero. I could even go with you?"

The Demon King: "No....." *Deep in thought.....*

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Demon King: "It's fine— The tombs of the Demon Kings are in a place known as the Palace of Death, this is a place which no one other than me must know about. I cannot bring you or anyone else along. I must go alone."

The Female Paladin: "Is that..... the case....."

The Demon King: "Yeah, that's why, I was hoping to feel some of the Hero's body heat before I went."

The Hero: (.....)

The Demon King: "I went so far as to tell you all that. Please let me."

The Female Paladin: "Well....."

The Demon King: "Of course I'll be taking the Chief Maid along. In the interest of self-protection, I'll take two people."

The Female Paladin: "Really now."

The Demon King: "I've left what needs to be done in this World in a collection of books. You know about the potatoes and the agriculture."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, leave it to the Holy Order."

The Demon King: "I've also contacted the Union about the herring. The windmills and new compasses have been paid for and contracted, we can rely on the Union to deal with it from now on. If there's anything important, you may still contact me."

The Female Paladin: "I understand."

The Demon King: "The Chief Maid will brief you about the details. Oh and..... I'm leaving the Hero to you."

The Female Paladin: "I understand, — you can count on me, this sword belongs to you."

— The Village of wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, the Study

The Demon King: "Well."

Elder Sister Maid: "Yes."

Little Sister Maid: "Yes."

The Demon King: "Do you more or less understand?"

Elder Sister Maid: "I understand."

Little Sister Maid: "I don't."

The Chief Maid: "Just listen to what your sister tells you to do everyday."

Little Sister Maid: "Yes—!"

The Chief Maid: "Don't needlessly lengthen the ends of your sentences."

Little Sister Maid: "Y, yes."

The Demon King: "Well, don't be down."

The Hero: "So you'll really be gone for a long time?"

The Demon King: "The Chief Maid still has more investigations to do, but, there are many stubborn people among the Demon Race. There are also those who see the Human World as a large gold mine..... These elements have to be pulled out at the roots....."

The Hero: "I should really come with you."

The Demon King: "I will go alone."

The Hero: "....."

The Demon King: "Don't make that face. No matter what, this is part of my job as the Demon King. If I wasn't the Demon King, maybe I wouldn't have to do this. But since it's in my contract, I do."

The Chief Maid: "I will protect the Demon King."

The Demon King: "Yeah, the Chief Maid will be there."

The Hero: "....."

The Demon King: "More importantly, I'm worried for this world. While the Southern United Kingdoms have stabilised, and the agricultural revolution is proceeding smoothly, I've been hearing talk about unrest in the Kingdom of White Night."

The Hero: "It seems that way."

The Demon King: "You are the person I trust most in this world. After all, you are my owner."

That is why I am confident of leaving this place to you. Previously, you went to the Demon World and left me here. In that time, I achieved an agricultural revolution and technological innovation over here. However, this time is different. You know that the issue with the City of the Gate cannot be settled simply with a warrior. You still need me. That's why, I'm leaving this place to you."

The Hero: "..... I understand."

The Demon King: "And, Elder Sister."

Elder Sister Maid: "Yes."

The Demon King: "Keep this for me."

Elder Sister Maid: "A ring?"

The Demon King: "Yeah, it's from my friend the Earth Fairy. It's nothing big, but she's casted a hologram illusion spell on it, it creates a hologram of myself on you. It doesn't come with sound, so you'll have to pretend to be me."

Elder Sister Maid: "What's it for?"

The Demon King: "If merchants come with bills or guests come to visit, I can't always be there, right?

I'm fairly certain that the Hero can deal with it, but if it's really too important, then using this ring, you can be my substitute."

Elder Sister Maid: "I understand. Please do not worry and do what you have to do."

Little Sister Maid: "Mistress!"

The Demon King: "Yes?"

Little Sister Maid: "A present♪" *Passes a lucky charm*

The Chief Maid: "What's this!"

The Demon King: "Ahahaha. You've really picked this out."

Elder Sister Maid: "I prayed for your safe return."

Little Sister Maid: "We prayed!"

The Demon King: "Hmm, at best I'll be gone for three months, at worst, half a year."

The Chief Maid: "Don't sleep while you're full, alright?"

Elder Sister Maid: "Goodbye."

Little Sister Maid: "Bye♪"

Teleports away

— The City of the Gate, Outside the City

Teleports in

The Demon King: "Your teleportation magic sure is convenient."

The Hero: "I'll count on you to help with the moving."

The Chief Maid: "You've got a lot less stuff to move than the Demon King."

The Demon King: "Ahh, it's been a long time since I was last in the Demon World!"

The Chief Maid: "Yeah, that green sun sure is nostalgic."

The Demon King: "This is— hmm, just outside the South of the city."

The Hero: "That's right. We'll get to the South Gate once we go down this hill."

The Demon King: "Right. Then we'll part ways here."

The Hero: "I'll send you all the way to the city."

The Demon King: "No, you shouldn't get close to the city."

The Hero: "What?"

The Demon King: "I, in any case it's forbidden..... I won't let you meet up with your mistress that Fire Dragon Lady....."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "Hey, Hero!"

The Hero: "Yeah?"

The Demon King: "You're so fluffy!" *Rubs hair*

The Hero: "Don't do that so suddenly!"

The Chief Maid: "Well, well."

The Demon King: "What, it's just some fuel for my heart."

The Hero: "— Are you alright?"

The Demon King: "You worry too much. You're supposed to be a man."

The Hero: "People have said that."

The Demon King: "I'm alright, you've given me the energy after all. I have no intention of losing to my predecessors."

The Hero: "?"

The Demon King: "We've made it this far. I can already feel the bright air from the City of the Gate, a city where Humans and Demons live together. I can already see the top of the hill."

The Hero: "Yeah, that's right."

The Demon King: "Go— my Hero."

The Hero: "Go— my Demon King."

The Demon King and the Hero: "We will meet again, very soon."

— The Village of Wintering, Early Autumn

Small Villager: "Hey! Hey!"

Middle Aged Villager: "Hey, good afternoon."

Wool Tailor: "Good afternoon!"

Small Villager: "We've squeezed a lot today."

Wool Tailor: "Yeah, it's already autumn. We've got to start making the cheese."

Small Villager: "Yeah, that's right, so what are we making this year?"

Middle Aged Villager: "How about we add some almonds into it."

Wool Tailor: "Good idea, we've got a lot of milk. We should really make one with almonds in it. Maybe it's because they've eaten so many clovers, but the milk this year is really sweet."

Small Villager: "That's right, I've heard lots of good things about it."

Middle Aged Villager: "Will you trade them for barley or potatoes?"

Wool Tailor: "Of course. I don't mind silver either."

Small Villager: "Oh that's right, we can use silver now."

Middle Aged Villager: "That's right. I've been burying mine."

Wool Tailor: "That's good, one can never be too careful."

Small Villager: "I've been spreading ashes and fish scum over my potato fields."

Middle Aged Villager: "Spreading it?"

Wool Tailor: "What's fish scum?"

Small Villager: "The Order taught us to use them as fertiliser. When the Blessings of the Earth get too weak, you just spread a bit over and it gets much better."

Middle Aged Villager: "But that's got to be expensive."

Wool Tailor: "Yeah."

Small Villager: "Well, it's not that expensive. The money I get from selling the potatoes from the Templar is a lot more. It's a real sin how good they are to us."

Middle Aged Villager: "That's probably true."

Small Villager: "More importantly, if I don't spread it, the potatoes get sick quite easily. We've already decreased the number of wheat crops we've sown, so if the potatoes get sick we'll be in real trouble."

Middle Aged Villager: "I see, I see. I should probably sow some too."

Wool Tailor: "I'll save the herring for my own stomach then."

Small Villager: "Ahahaha! Let's get some buttered herring down at the bar."

Middle Aged Villager: "Yeah, that sounds great!"

Wool Tailor: "Maybe I can even sell some cheese there."

Small Villager: "Let's do it!"

— The Holy Capital, the House of Nobles, in a Secret Court

Gavel bangs

Military Nobleman: "— The City of the Gate was abandoned—"

Rich Nobleman: "To retreat— so brazenly—"

Bishop: "The Spirit— would—punish—"

Military Nobleman: "As expected—weak nobleman—"

Rich Nobleman: "Illegitimate—"

Bishop: "Kingdom—Millions—"

Military Nobleman: "The punishment—"

Rich Nobleman: "Capital punishment—Crucifixion—"

Bishop: "Salt—Impaling—Burning—"

Gavel bangs

Military Nobleman: "The sentence is—"

Rich Nobleman: "No, this time— Martial Court—"

Bishop: "Appropriate—Inquisition—"

Military Nobleman: "Running from the enemy—Dereliction of duty—"

Rich Nobleman: "Betrayal of the Kingdom—Aiding the enemy—"

Bishop: "Heresy—"

Commander: "No! Leaders of the Kingdom! Clergy of the Holy Church of Light! I would never never betray this Kingdom!"

Military Nobleman: "What are you saying! Do you know how much blood is going to be spilt because of you allowing the City of the Gate to fall!"

Rich Nobleman: "Two years! Two years of preparation time, and an inordinate amount of military expenditure. Not counting the expenditure for maintaining our conquest, you've turned this Second Crusade into nothing!"

Bishop: "It was the intention of the Spirit of Light to spread the Church to the Demon World. You are a disgrace to the 9,500,000 faithful adherents to the Spirit."



Ash and Fish Scum: "When trees and grass are burnt, the resulting ash contains a high amount of calcium, and is hence useful as fertiliser. Fish scum is produced from grinding fish and extracting the fish oil, the resulting scum is then rich in phosphorus and nitrogen.

Martial Law: Armies have their own courts to deal with offences committed by their own members.

These include offences like disobeying orders, dereliction of duty, violence towards civilians and other military offences.

Inquisition: Even churches have courts to deal with infractions committed by their followers. Heresy (unorthodox religious teachings) is especially not condoned, and some of the most tragic punishments could be dealt, like cruxifixion.

Commander: "No! Th, th, that's! W, we didn't run away. Th, that's right. We went as reinforcements! We definitely didn't run away!"

Military Nobleman: "Shut up, you coward!"

Commander: "At that time, the City of the Gate was attacked by a scary enemy. Making decisions on the battlefield was my duty as a Commander."

Military Nobleman: "Hmph."

Bishop: "So what kind of enemy was it?"

Commander: "That's..... There was water, and smoke..... shadow, monsters of death....."

Military Nobleman: "You saw him?"

Commander: "It was not one of those enemies you can see. He struck in the dead of night with powerful and mysterious force, taking down my men one after the other! He destroyed what command I had over my men, and any fighting spirit too. It was not a situation I was able to control. Th, that's right! Rebellion! There were rebellions!"

Military Nobleman: "Hoho."

Commander: "The Demons were rebelling. My 10,000 soldiers fought hard against them. We fought and fought and fought! My bloodstained sword killed lots of summons! It was really a death zone. The odds of us making it out of there were 10 to one. I knew, that the Spirit of Light would rather lose the city than lose the treasures of the Holy Kingdom, the Holy Crusaders to the enemy!"

Military Nobleman: "Ahahaha!"

Rich Nobleman: "Hahahahaha!"

Commander: "Stop laughing! What's so funny!"

Military Nobleman: "There were 9,000 men stationed at the City of the Gate. You appeared at the Isle of Light with 9,000 soldiers, not even one thousand missing. What sort of death zone is it when you don't lose any military strength in it? You sounded a retreat before you even lost 500 men."

Commander: "—!"

Military Nobleman: "Have you no shame?"

Commander: "But! It's because we appeared that the Conquest of the Isle of Light was able to be successful! Before we came, the Human Army was losing quite badly! We played the biggest part in the Conquest of the Isle of Light!"

Rich Nobleman: "According to both military and church intelligence, at the moment of your approach, the citadel on the Isle of Light was already surrounded by the Army of the Southern United Kingdoms, and were only waiting for the final victory."

Your army appeared at the end of the entire battle, when whatever was left of the Demon Army was trying to escape, and your only contribution was to allow them to escape."

Bishop: "And even then, you still managed to lose 2,000 out of 8,000 soldiers!"

Commander: "We were protecting a wasteland out in the badlands of the Demon World, we were really tired of this. With the nightmares and the raids, there was no way to protect anything. It was a real crisis!"

Military Nobleman: "I've heard enough from you."

Rich Nobleman: "Hmph, it's so pathetic to hear the barking of a depraved dog."

Commander: "The East Fortress Base Commander! It's him! He was conspiring with the Demons to betray us! Have mercy! Please just give me one more chance! I'm the commander who knows the Demon World better than anybody! We have to bring that barbaric region to its knees for the Holy King!" Y, y, you must!"

Military Nobleman: "What do you think, bishop?"

Bishop: "To forgive a single one of your sins today, is a sin against the 9,500,000 faithful adherents of the Church. My heart is torn apart by this tragedy. I believe crucifixion to be an appropriate punishment for this sick dog."

Commander: "Wait! Pl, please wait!"

Military Nobleman: "According to Military Law, there's no way you can avoid this sentence."

Commander: "The East Fortress Base Commander! That son of a bitch! That useless mercenary! Can't forgive him! We can't forgive him!"

Rich Nobleman: "You're crazy."

Bishop: "You're completely insane."

— The Kingdom of Winter, the Royal Palace, the Office of Financial Administration

Merchant's Son: "Phew, I'm so busy. How is this happening?"

Seneschal: "Are you alright?"

Assistant: "I'm going to go drown myself in tea."

Merchant's Son: "Forget about the tea! Don't run away! Sort it out!"

Assistant: "Whaaaat. My eyes are glazing over."

Merchant's Son: "You make me want to cry. You think kids like you are special! Do your work!"

Assistant: "My gooooooooood——"

Seneschal: "He really gives no mercy."

Merchant's Son: "The Lone Winter King entrusted this to me..... How could I show any mercy."

Seneschal: "I see."

Merchant's Son: "Look at this mountain of journals!"

Books fall off the mountain

Seneschal: "But, since you've been here we've been six times more efficient. His Majesty has been busy dealing with the stragglers from the Conquest."

Merchant's Son: "It's like he doesn't care at all about the economy of his Kingdom!"

Seneschal: "Well, he's well-known for that too."

Merchant's Son: "Is that so..... Well he does preserve the rule of law."

Assistant: "That's right! His Majesty is so cool, isn't he?"

Merchant's Son: "That may be, but what a disaster."

Seneschal: "Well, it wasn't like this before the Tripartite Economic Union and the Conquest of the Isle of Light. In that time, the bookkeeping got way too intense."

Merchant's Son: "Do you have any solutions for this?"

Seneschal: "What do you mean?"

Merchant's Son: "'Don't think about the problem, think about the solution.' That's why my teacher loved to see. Can we talk for a bit?"

Seneschal: "Of course."

Merchant's Son: "Hey, assistant. Fetch some tea."

Assistant: "Yes! Umm, can I get some for myself too?"

Merchant's Son: "Yes, and for the Seneschal as well."

Assistant: "I'll be right back!"

Runs off

Merchant's Son: "What an eager fellow."

Seneschal: "He's cute."

Merchant's Son: "Though he needs to work seriously, because that is killing me."

Seneschal: "Well, that's true....."

Merchant's Son: "Let's continue where we left off."

Seneschal: "Right. Where should we begin..... I'm not sure if this will work, but, for example, the Southern United Kingdoms doesn't allow noble demesnes."

Merchant's Son: "Is that so? But the books indicate that titles like Baron and Marquis are being given out, aren't they?"



Noble Demesnes: Within Kingdoms, the nobility often control part of the land, known as their demesne. Within this demesne, the nobleman has the responsibility to administer the citizens and collect taxes for the King. This almost functions like a miniature country within a country. During the Edo period in Japan, these were known as *hans*.

Seneschal: “No, it’s a bit hard to explain, but the King only gives out Honorary Titles.”

Merchant’s Son: “I’ve heard about this in my lessons. So they have titles which don’t mean anything?”

Seneschal: “That’s right. The Southern United Kingdoms are both poor and have long winters. We’re basically poor countries. In the beginning, barely anyone stayed here. A long time ago, it was even worse than it is now. There weren’t even enough rooms to keep the people warm.”

Merchant’s Son: “Mmhmm.”

Seneschal: “That’s why, even though we call ourselves a country, we’re not exactly a very centralised polity. And we don’t have a lot of people. The King may be a King in name, but as a landlord-type figure, he is barely seen around the Kingdom. We only have a smidgen of useable land, most of it is completely unarable forests, wastelands and mountains.”

Assistant: “Hot tea is here!”

Merchant's Son: "Ohh, thanks..... Right, continue."

Seneschal: "That's why, while we do have titles, they don't mean what they mean in the Central Continent. In the Central Continent, titleholders are those who receive land from the King, most of the time, they are powerful warlords or regional leaders."

Merchant's Son: "Mmhmm."

Seneschal: "Of course, the land you receive belongs to you, and the produce from the land you work— or rather the land serfs and settlers work for you, belongs to you as well. Things like transit taxes are also free for noblemen to impose. Corvee labour can be drawn from the serfs at will as well. This is why noblemen who control the rivers or the ports are the richest."

Merchant's Son: "I see. That's why even in the same country, the tax regime can differ from place to place, and you can even be subject to multiple taxes from different regions."

Seneschal: "That's right..... From the perspective of the King, the area under the direct control of the King is controlled in the same way as the noblemen. In this area, the land cultivation and the tax is also set by the King. Apart from this, he also receives taxes from the noblemen which are in his realm. In addition, he also gets contributions from merchants and the Church. Which is why there are so many levels to the income and it's a lot more complicated to handle. There is a lot of tax to handle, and lots of ministers in charge of them.

If you come over to the Southern United Kingdoms, the land is not suitable for farming, and hence there is no land to give to the nobility. In the Southern United Kingdoms, a title is just for the prestige or for the privilege to appear in court."

Merchant's Son: "Is that way we do not have enough ministers? If production increases, then tax revenue increases and the population is likely to increase as well. However, there is no system of nobility in place to administer this increased population."

Seneschal: "In addition to this, we've also got the upkeep of the military to deal with."

Merchant's Son: "Eh? What does this have to do with taxes?"

Seneschal: "Well, in the Central Continent, the King, of course, has his own soldiers, but this is usually not a large number. Right..... Even for a large country like the Kingdom of Mist, he might have only 700 soldiers in his retinue?"

When a King wants to fight a war, he sends a mustering order to all the noblemen. Since the nobility have accepted land from the King, it is their duty to answer this mustering call. The noblemen then call on the knights and soldiers under their command. In this way, the military is formed, and this military can be ten or more times larger than the King's personal retinue. Such a method of mustering an army, needless to say, will take a lot of time. Again, there is also a chance that the nobleman will refuse to supply the King with enough soldiers so he does not have to bear such a large burden. However, the merit of this is that it does not cost a lot of money."

Merchant's Son: "Why? Isn't money important in a war?"

Seneschal: "The food that the Army consumes will be paid for by the noblemen. In other words, the noblemen have to finance the war for the King. All he has to do is pay for the soldiers under his direct command."

Merchant's Son: "In other words, when the King orders it, noblemen have to supply money for supplies and armament along with the soldiers themselves. Doesn't all of this occur at a loss to the noblemen?"

Seneschal: "No, it doesn't. If the war ends in victory, the King can bestow more land to the nobility."

Merchant's Son: "Ahh, I see. So bestowing land is a circular exercise."

Seneschal: "That is correct. This is why it isn't strange that there are so many noblemen hungry for war with the Demon World."

Merchant's Son: "In other words, the noblemen are betting aren't they. If their liege wins, then they win as well. Taking land from the enemy is the most common way of settling wars after all."

Seneschal: "That is correct. The Demon World is huge. And on top of that, highly prosperous."

Merchant's Son: "I wouldn't exactly call it prosperous, would you?"

Seneschal: "No, what it's prosperous in are people and settlers. When you are bestowing land to people, it's quite meaningless to give them uninhabited wastelands or mountains. It's much more meaningful to bestow land where people live, in other words, land where people can collect taxes from."

Merchant's Son: "Is that so?"

Seneschal: "They may be Demons but they're still useable, so many noblemen want to hold one or two Demon cities."

Merchant's Son: "And how is the Southern United Kingdoms any different? I mean, without nobility, it follows that we have far fewer soldiers."

Seneschal: "The difference between the armies of the Southern United Kingdoms and that of the Continent is that the Southern United Army is a standing army."

Merchant's Son: "Yeah, I've heard about that in my lessons. But since it was a military issue, I didn't really pay much attention....."

Seneschal: "The primary goal of the Army of the Southern United Kingdoms is to defend against an invasion from the Demons, isn't it? If we relied on mustering calls to rally the troops together, that would be far too slow, since the Demon Army could arrive at any time."

Merchant's Son: "Of course."

Seneschal: "That's why we need a standing army. In other words, an army that is 'standing ready' at any given time. Every soldier is under the direct control of the King and is either on duty or training every day."

It's an occupation, so even if we don't call them up, they're more or less ready. Even during the harvest time, they can't just lay down their arms and go back to their villages to help. I'm a member of the Standing Army."

Merchant's Son: "But surely there are many demerits to this system, aren't there? It's true that a standing army is much faster to mobilise, and since they're conditioned to the military life, they should have far fewer complaints. However, isn't this situation the same as having a protracted conflict? They'll require a lot of food supplies, and definitely a substantial amount of monetary upkeep."

Seneschal: "That's right. This is why one major disadvantage is that it relies on the aid money from the Continent."

Merchant's Son: "Yeah, I've heard the Scholar say that before as well."

Seneschal: "Is that so?"

Merchant's Son: "....."

Seneschal: "Do you understand?"

Merchant's Son: "More or less."

Assistant: (It was difficult, but I understood as well!)

Merchant's Son: (But, this means.....)

Assistant: "In other words, our army doesn't go campaigning in the Demon World, but rather stays to protect us here, right?" *Beams*

Seneschal: "That's right." *Nods*

Merchant's Son: (That's right..... It's a force for self-defence. If we put up money to sustain this, of course we'd be able to fulfil our objective of preventing a demon invasion, but..... The Southern United Kingdoms would never be able to achieve that 'desirable gift' of land in the Demon World for itself.....)

Seneschal: "What's up?"

Merchant's Son: "No, I was just thinking."

Seneschal: "I'm happy that you consider issues of such importance to our nation."

Assistant: "Did you finish thinking?"

Merchant's Son: "Yes."

Seneschal: "Eh? Really? In such a short time?"

Merchant's Son: "Yes, my teacher really taught me a lot. I have many things I want to say, but firstly I feel there are other flaws with the Central Continent's system of nobility."

Seneschal: "What sort?"

Merchant's Son: "It's that one section of the nobility may collude with others—whether they be landlords, merchants, industrial leaders, or even mercenary leaders—to set unfair taxes. Noblemen have the freedom to set taxes, right? That's why if they were to collaborate, they could set highly unfair taxes. Let's assume that a nobleman colludes with a merchant. If the merchant pays the nobleman an annual bribe, he could attain concessions like the sole right to transport his goods along a river. He could even conspire to sabotage or alienate rival merchants."

Seneschal: "Yes, that's right. I've heard a lot about rural Southerners being enticed to go the big cities and then getting ripped off for every last penny they own. We people of the South always get ill-treated in the Continent, and they get away with it with bribes....."

Merchant's Son: "Another thing that almost resembles bribery is connections."

Seneschal: "Connections?"

Merchant's Son: "That's right. Using connections, if you needed something to be done, if a government official or someone with official responsibilities had blood relations with someone else, then they could easily be bribed by those people. To become a government official is to benefit from a great salary, among other things, so to climb that high, people may be willing to use their blood relations as stepping stones to success."

Seneschal: "Well, I've definitely heard a lot about that. Many people are proud of their relatives in the big cities because of their influence. I'm the son of a settler, and even then this carries bearing in my town."

Merchant's Son: "While bribery and connections may appear to be the same, the fact is that they are clearly different. Bribery is a corrupt government official abusing the privileges he is afforded with illegally. If this continued, it would cause severe inefficiencies. Monopolising and abusing one's position will have the effect of causing severe future economic inefficiency, which extends beyond the instance of corruption and can cause the whole system to become corrupt."

Seneschal: "Hmm, I've never thought that far, but if I think about it it's true indeed."

Assistant: "It's the difference between not having anything to eat, and not making anything to eat!"

Merchant's Son: "That's the answer."

Seneschal: "?"

Merchant's Son: "Don't you get it? In other words, in the Central Continent, there is a tendency that 'hard work and ability are insufficient to make you succeed in life'. If you want a high governmental position, you need to secure connections. That's why the Southern United Kingdoms will answer as such."

Seneschal: "!"

Chapter 9: "I Like to Touch this Hair"

Merchant's Son: "Our government officials will be drawn from the people, not the nobility. And they will be paid according to their ability and hard work. I'll have to think up of a system to do away with bribery as well."



Government Officials Drawn From the People:

This basically refers to a bureaucracy. Instead of a system which relies on old blood and land ties to decide who should govern an area, the government is selected based on specific skills necessary for governing the country.

Bureaucracies have their own disadvantages as well, but compared to a government run on hereditary feudal blood ties, it's a lot better

END OF CHAPTER 9

-- Extra Scene!!!! :D

"So Demon King, do you have some sort of personal reason for not inventing a weighing machine?"



"What!? That's, that's because I don't want the Hero to leave me because I'm fa-.....! Wait! No! Weighing machines are secret, complicated machines which are much, much harder to construct than compasses!"



— The Village of Wintering, early Winter, the Diary of the Little Maid Sister

It's the third winter since I've come to the Mansion. This is the first snow of the year. The sky got lower and lower and the clouds rolled across the sky. I thought it would surely rain, but it snowed instead. It snowed really heavily.

Without the Mistress and the Ms Spectacles, the house has gotten a lot quieter. Sis and I take turns to make dinner now. I can relax about the cleaning now, so I work hard to make a great dinner.

Today, I went to the pub to learn how to cook properly. I learnt how to make roast rainbow trout today. Sis found a cookbook from among the huge pile of books that the Mistress has. It was dirty, and I was afraid it would become blurry and I wouldn't be able to eat the delicious food in it, so, now, I'm writing it all down again. It's the first time that practicing how to write has been so convenient!

Pie is such an interesting thing. It seems you can wrap anything up in bread and then bake it. I'd like to make some pie. Since the Mistress hasn't been around, the Hero has probably been really lonely, I'm sure he would like to have some pie.

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion of the Demon King, the Guest Room

Little Maid Sister: "P, please come this way—"

Young Merchant: "Ohh, young lady. Don't be so nervous, now."

Little Maid Sister: "I, I'm not nervous."

Young Merchant: "You're swinging your right foot and your right hand at the same time when you walk."

Little Maid Sister: "T, that's okay!"

Young Merchant: "Ahahaha. Sure."

Opens door

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Little Maid Sister: "P, p, please come in here!"

Young Merchant: "I'll just take a seat then."

Little Maid Sister: "Then, I'll go and call Sis..... No, I mean, the Mistress to come down. Please wait just a momer."

Young Merchant: "A momer?"

Little Maid Sister: "Ah. Ahh!" *Sobs*

Young Merchant: "Ah, don't cry, don't cry!"

Little Maid Sister: "Sis! What should we do?"

Elder Maid Sister: "We've got no choice. Let's use the ring the Mistress gave us."

Little Maid Sister: "Y, yeah....."

Elder Maid Sister: "Make some tea."

Door opens slowly

Elder Maid Sister: "I apologise for the long wait."

Young Merchant: "It's been a long time, Scholar."

Elder Maid Sister: "Indeed it has, you haven't changed."

Young Merchant: "Yes..... Business has been smooth recently."

Elder Maid Sister: "....."

Young Merchant: "....."

Elder Maid Sister: "Then, today."

Young Merchant: "I've come to bring the designated reports, receipts, invoices and inventories over. I usually send it over on a ship that's heading in this direction, but I thought that'd I'd come personally since I missed your splendid figure. I've come all this way just to see you. It's a bit embarrassing."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Elder Maid Sister: "That's umm..... I don't know how to answer."

Young Merchant: "Well. Yes. That being said, Scholar, what do you think about redyeing?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Sorry?"

Young Merchant: "No, no. The Conquest of the Isle of Light was successful. The South-West trade route has really picked up and the number of ships plying the route have increased as well. As you can expect, there are all kinds of goods entering the Kingdom of Winter."

Elder Maid Sister: "Y, yeah."

Young Merchant: "As far as merchants like us are concerned, having a sharp eye is extremely important. Goods like wheat absorb water and hence increase in weight when they are being transported across the sea. In order to make them lighter and cheaper to transport, there are those who use inferior wheat. Merchants who ship these sort of things are second-rate merchants. When I was just a beginner, my father would often beat me up if I tried to ship things like that. It's embarrassing. Ahahahahaha."

Elder Maid Sister: "..... Th, that's."

Young Merchant: "Well then."

Door opens

The Hero: "Elder Maid Sister, that's enough."

Elder Maid Sister: "Y, yes. B, but."

The Hero: "No, that's enough. This guy's already seen through you."

Elder Maid Sister: "..... Th, that's."

The Hero: "You've indeed got a sharp eye. You've got a remarkable ability, like you said."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Elder Maid Sister: "Excuse me."

Opens door. Runs off.....

Young Merchant: "Ah, what a great technique. Was it an illusion?"

The Hero: "Yeah, it was. I didn't expect you to see through it straight away."

Young Merchant: "No, no, you've got it wrong. For this sort of thing, you need to use your instincts. It would be difficult to see through it with your eyes alone."

The Hero: "You're quite scary."

Young Merchant: "Ahahahaha. It's nothing big. More importantly..... It's been a long time, Hero."

The Hero: "Yes it has. It's been three or four years, has it not?"

Young Merchant: "Indeed. How nostalgic."

The Hero: "Ah—I'm pissed! I'm really pissed at you! You make me want to obliterate you with my High Impact Area Lightning Destruction Curse!"

Young Merchant: "Sorry? What do you mean?"

The Hero: "Didn't you cheat me back then!?"

Young Merchant: "Ehh!? What are you talking about. It was nothing. I didn't really cheat you."

The Hero: "You took 15 gold pieces from me!? You said you would invest it and it would become more than a thousand gold pieces!"

Young Merchant: "Ahh, that performance made me some money. Thank you so much." *Smiles cheekily*

The Hero: "You're impossible."

Young Merchant: "Didn't you pay me according to the terms of our contract?"

The Hero: "You made me consent to it when I was too young to understand!"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Young Merchant: "That's one way of winning a bargain." *Smiles*

The Hero: "Well, I guess it is....."

Young Merchant: "You were alive?"

The Hero: "Huh? Oh. Yeah, I'm alive and kicking."

Young Merchant: "Hmm....."

The Hero: "What are you thinking about?"

Young Merchant: "How to continue the rest of this conversation."

The Hero: "You are..... slightly different."

Young Merchant: "Really?"

The Hero: "When I saw you four years ago, you were a person with no connections, with completely nothing and nowhere to be, if I remember correctly."

Young Merchant: "Well, you seem to have become rounder over these four years. I should probably retreat into the shadows soon. Ahahaha."

The Hero: "But, I wouldn't like to be your enemy right now."

Young Merchant: "Oh my, what a coincidence. I've been thinking the exact same thing."

The Hero: "..... You're not even surprised to see me here."

Young Merchant: "No, no, I am surprised. But, I suppose surprising things like this have been happening a lot."

The Hero: "....."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Young Merchant: "If I have changed, it's probably because of that person. When you meet with an existence which completely destroys your personal common sense and the economics you've learnt up till then, what should you do? She taught me what it felt like to have my guts in a knot."

The Hero: "Her?"

Young Merchant: "That's right."

The Hero: "I see....."

Young Merchant: "'Those who act as intermediaries, collaborators and traders between light and darkness.' That's how she described the path which a merchant takes in his life. Truly words I had never heard before."

The Hero: "She did?"

Young Merchant: "That's right, when I first met her. So I had my hunches that you would appear over here as well."

The Hero: "..... Are you going to keep your end of the contract?"

Young Merchant: "Sorry?"

The Hero: "The contract from four years ago."

Young Merchant: "Well, I said it, but....."

The Hero: "That was a lie? You said when I came back you would throw a banquet for me!"

Young Merchant: "Ohh, that's right! You really remembered. That was indeed so. Alright. I shall uphold the contract. I'm free anytime."

The Hero: "Right, I'll hold you to your word then."

Young Merchant: "Yes, of course."

The Hero: "In that case, right now."

Both teleport away

— The Demon World, the City of the Gate, a Hill outside the City

Teleports in!

Young Merchant: "Th, this is....." *Gulps*

The Hero: "You've got teleportation sickness. Take a few deep breaths and you'll feel fine."

Young Merchant: "Was that..... a teleportation spell?"

The Hero: "Yep."

Young Merchant: "Where..... Where are we!"

The Hero: "For some reason, there are a lot of auroras over here. They say it has something to do with magnetic fields, but I don't understand what that means."

Young Merchant: "Amazing....."

The Hero: "Nightmare Thrush!"

Nightmare Thrush: "By you side." *Teleports in!*

The Hero: "Go to the Lady and get some wine. We'll be right here."

Nightmare Thrush: "I understand,"

Young Merchant: "A Demon.....?"

The Hero: "A summon. He's very convenient."

Young Merchant: "Don't tell me this place is-"

The Hero: "It's the Demon World."

Young Merchant: "!??"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "I wanted you to understand what I meant, so I brought you here."

Young Merchant: "Don't tell me, that person is....."

The Hero: "She's a Demon."

Young Merchant: "I had my suspicions....."

The Hero: "....."

Young Merchant: "Even the air here smells different."

The Hero: "Mm. Probably. But ports always smell like ports, and cities always smell like cities, don't they?"

Young Merchant: "What's that wall there?"

The Hero: "That's the City of the Gate..... It was a Human territory until recently."

Young Merchant: "Ahh, that's the city from which the Commander ran away and returned to the Demons."

The Hero: "The rumour is that once he left, the thousands of Human Merchants in the City of the Gate were slaughtered by the Demons."

Young Merchant: "Weren't they?"

The Hero: "They're still carrying out their businesses now."

Young Merchant: "Huh?"

The Hero: "Because the suburbs and wastelands around the Gate aren't completely stable yet, it's probably difficult to establish communications with the Human World, but the merchants from the Union are still over there."

Young Merchant: "For real!?"

The Hero: "I'm not kidding."

Young Merchant: "That's....."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "Hey, you've spoken to her, haven't you?"

Young Merchant: "Ah..... Yeah....."

The Hero: "Then you know what she wants to see, right?"

Young Merchant: "Hero....."

The Hero: "She bought you, didn't she?"

Young Merchant: "....."

The Hero: "She's a worthy adversary to the Human World, eh. I'm not her, I don't know how to plan or to speak like her, I can't outline the structures of loss and profit like she does either. But, I definitely don't like to leave her. How do I put it. I feel..... Umm..... Lonely. Going back to being just the Hero is— Lonely."

Young Merchant: "....."

The Hero: "That's why, I'm showing this to you. This is the City of the Gate. This is the only city in the universe in which Demons and Humans live and interact together.

Of course, there are quite a few issues. There are small conflicts every day. It's true that there are reports of murders of Demons by Humans and vice versa, these are..... unavoidable. But there are those who have become close friends and acquaintances, who even go into business and commerce together. That's right. Without working together, even daily life becomes difficult.

There are approximately 32,000 people in this city. That's more than the Capital of the Kingdom of the Lake. Even the Demon King recognises the status of this city as a crossroads between our civilisations. It was declared a Free City, and is governed by a City Council. One third of the Council are Humans. The Council Chairman himself is a former Human General; the Councillors include powerful members and nobility in the Demon World....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "My husband—"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "Oh dear....."

Fire Dragon Lady: "My husband, I have come like you requested. I have been informed that you have requested a banquet. As a member of the Fire Dragon Race, we take pride in the hospitality we show to our guests, and in trying not to be disrespectful, I have begun to set up the banquet!"

The Hero: "Ah—I didn't ask for anything big, I just wanted some wine."

Young Merchant: "I've already had a lot, I think I'll pass."

Fire Dragon Lady: "No you won't."

The Hero: "Yeah, it's best that you drink. If a Fire Dragon hears you reject anything, you're in for a very tough time."

Young Merchant: "What!? That's unreasonable!"

The Hero: "It's the Demon World."

Demon Girl: "U, umm..... Sir Black Knight, please....."

Brings a platter of food

Young Merchant: "That's more than enough, please stop."

Fire Dragon Lady: "Man up, show your worth through your glass, don't say things like that."

Young Merchant: "What kind of place is the Demon World!?"

The Hero: "Oi, Merchant."

Young Merchant: "What, Hero?"

The Hero: "How are they?"

Young Merchant: "What do you mean?"

The Hero (*small voice*): "The boobs, the boobs!"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Young Merchant: "What!?"

The Hero: "You told me you what create a whole party of people with great boobs, the kind that make people squeal, if I agreed to go to the Demon World!"

Young Merchant: "Ah. Ahahahaha! Is that so? Ahaha. How terrible. I said I would, didn't I? Ah, m das as a young man, how unscrupulous I was."

The Hero: "How is this?" *Makes a serious face*

Young Merchant: "Yeah, that's a very official face you've got there." *Smiles*

The Hero: "Which one is better?" *Makes a serious face*

Young Merchant: "Hmmm, both of them will get you the Princess for sure!"

The Hero: "Ahahahahaha!"

Young Merchant: "Ahahaha. Ahh. How nice. It's been a long time since I've laughed like this."

The Hero: "The wine is great."

Young Merchant: "I'm a merchant, so I've tried wines from lots of countries. But this wine is really something special."

The Hero: "Oi, Merchant."

Young Merchant: "What is it, Hero?"

The Hero: "The auroras sure are beautiful!" *Smiles*

Young Merchant: "Indeed." *Smiles*

Fire Dragon Lady: "They're like children."

Demon Girl: "Yes..... But the wind sure is nice."

Young Merchant: "The auroras are great, but what sort of compromises have you made to get this far, Hero?"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "That person said this, 'A merchant is a person who seeks Permits'. Permits of use, permits for entry. A new land is a new market that can provide new goods. A place like this is a place of commerce."

Young Merchant: "Yeah."

The Hero: "And how is the market in this City?"

Young Merchant: "Well, it's as if..... gold pieces are fruits hanging richly from the branches of fruit trees."

The Hero: "I'll sell you a permit."

Young Merchant: "Is that alright?"

The Hero: "I don't mind."

Young Merchant: "What do you want in return?"

The Hero: "I'm not the same as that person. I do not know what an appropriate price is. I don't know what is balanced or what is unbalanced. I've lived up till now without thinking about these sorts of things at all."

Young Merchant: "....."

The Hero: "That's why it's hard for me to answer you about that. But, well..... As a merchant, I'm sure you've considered all the losses and profits."

Young Merchant: "Yeah."

The Hero: "How do I put this. Many people see merchants as monsters who are only motivated by profit and enlargement, but, the way she sees it, it isn't that way."

Young Merchant: "....."

The Hero: "A merchant, who, above all, lives to further his own gains, who earnestly calculates every loss and profit, is probably the first to see that the gains and losses in the world are something indivisible."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Young Merchant: "Hero....."

The Hero: "Perhaps, I ought to think more about this whole price thing. I'll probably be killed by that person later. But, I want to see that..... that indivisible thing."

Young Merchant: "Hahaha. What's that?"

The Hero: "Both she and I will need your support to achieve our goals then."

Young Merchant: "Yeah, that's right. What a foolish feeling! Ahh, I'm happy. I'm not sure why, but I'm happy."

The Hero: "....."

Young Merchant: "It's fine, I accept your proposal. If I become the head and leader of the Union, then I'll surely do my best to make sure that your dream happens."

The Hero: "I'm counting on you, then."

Young Merchant: "What a dawn."

The Hero: "?"

Young Merchant: "I've heard of the relationship between you and that person, but I didn't back down. To continue to fight on despite being at such a disadvantage, I'm such a stupid person." *Smiles*

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion's Stables

Horse whinnies

The Female Paladin: "There, there. You're a good boy."

The Hero: "You're truly a Paladin. You're very good at controlling horses."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Female Paladin: "What are you saying? If you can't ride him that would be a problem."

The Hero: "I think running would be faster though....."

The Female Paladin: "It's an issue of image."

The Hero: "I get it. Alright, have an apple."

Horse rejects apple

The Hero: "Wh, what is it doing!?"

The Female Paladin: "Act like an adult."

The Hero: "What's this horse doing!?"

The Female Paladin: "Are you angry?"

The Hero: "Hmph! Eat this apple? You cute, cute boy."

Horse rejects apple

The Hero: "Ugh! How rude! Eat the apple!!"

Horse whinnies angrily

Horse kicks around

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion's Stable

The Female Paladin: "Jeez, you even fought with the horse."

The Hero: "But....."

The Female Paladin: "You're the loser when you do something like this. Look, your horse has lost faith in you."

The Hero: "Not my fault."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Horse snorts derisively

The Female Paladin: "Here, look, you've got to take care of the horse."

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "No matter how much of a Hero you are, surely you've got to know how to ride a horse? If you join things like parades, you'll need a horse to look presentable."

The Hero: "That's true."

Horse whinnies and clops

The Female Paladin: "♪"

The Hero: "Peace sure is better than war."

The Female Paladin: "That's obvious."

The Hero: "That may be obvious, but why is that so?"

The Female Paladin: "I don't know, I'm stupid."

The Hero: "Ahh. When I'm with the Demon King I get hurt, but when I'm with the Female Paladin I get healed."

The Female Paladin: "What do you mean?"

The Hero: "What do you mean you're stupid?"

The Female Paladin: "Do you guys fight?"

The Hero: "No, no we don't."

The Female Paladin: "Damnit, when I'm with you, all you do is spew nonsense."

The Hero: "That's good too isn't it?"

The Female Paladin: "?"

The Hero: "It's good to do that isn't it? I guess you don't get it."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Hero: "That I like to spew nonsense to you?"

The Female Paladin: "Eh..... Well."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "..... Thank you."

The Hero: "..... That made my skin crawl. Go back to normal."

The Hero scratches

The Female Paladin: "What's up?"

The Hero: "No, my hair got in my eye."

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, it's really long."

The Hero: "Should I cut it?"

The Female Paladin: "Well, is it alright?"

The Hero: "Yeah, why?"

The Female Paladin: "Ah. No..... Nothing. It's nothing, but don't cut it."

The Hero: "Why?"

The Female Paladin: "Nothing..... That's right, make a circlet. You can keep your hair behind it, and it won't get into your eyes."

The Hero: "How troublesome."

The Female Paladin: "No, it suits you. It'll probably make you look pretty cool."

The Hero: "Oh! Really? It'll make me cool?"

The Female Paladin: "Yeah, let's make something that fits you."

The Female Paladin slices off a lock of hair

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "Wh, what?"

The Female Paladin: "No, I was just checking your hair. I think we should have a brass circlet with green gems. It'll look good."

The Hero: "Really?"

The Female Paladin: "Yeah. I won't be cutting it, but surely she'll let us do this much, right?"

The Hero: "Yeah. It's probably too early to cut it now."

The Hero: "....." *Scratches head*

The Female Paladin: "....."

The Female Paladin: "Hey, Hero."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "You belong to the Demon King, right?"

The Hero: "Eh. Yeah..... We've signed a contract."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so....."

The Hero: "Well, lots of things have happened. But that's how it is."

The Female Paladin: "And the Demon King belongs to you?"

The Hero: "Yes, well, it's reciprocal."

The Female Paladin: "So, if the Demon King does something terrible, you would protect her."

The Hero: "That's hard to say. But I'm the Hero, right? If someone tries to mess with her, I'll protect her."

The Female Paladin: "Well, that's easy to understand."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "I'm not sure why, but I feel a bit stressed and my heart is beating very fast."

The Female Paladin: "Really?"

The Hero: "I don't have any instinctive reason for it, but yeah."

The Female Paladin: "Rather than instinct, if you had the ability to read the mood of those around you, it would really help a lot."

The Hero: "What do you mean?"

The Female Paladin: "No, don't think anything about it. I'm being stupid. —But, it really is regrettable."

The Hero: "?"

The Female Paladin: "In other words, you'll protect her. You will only defend her. Well, that's tough on you too. There's something I want to give you."

The Hero: "Are you talking about the circlet? The sparkly one?"

The Female Paladin: "May I give you something?"

The Hero: "Mmhmm. A sparkly item— Well, if it's from you, of course I'll accept anything."

The Female Paladin: "Is that so? I'm happy you think that."

The Hero: "This is very weird—You're not behaving like yourself at all."

The Female Paladin: "Hero."

Kneels

The Hero: "What is it, Female Paladin?"

The Female Paladin: "Shut up and stand up."

The Hero: "Why are you kneeling down?"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Female Paladin: "I..... Have accepted the grace of the Spirit in the Kingdom of the Lake, and pledged my life to the service of the Light. During the course of our long trip together, I committed myself, the Female Paladin, and this sword, to the cause of the Hero."

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "My sword, my power, my body. Everything from my soul, to my loyalty, to my purity, belongs to the Hero. You are the master of my soul, you are the keeper of my hope."

The Hero: "Wait, Female Paladin."

The Female Paladin: "I can't wait. Hero, this sword is yours."

The Hero: "Stand up."

The Female Paladin: "I will not stand. Until you accept what I give you, I will not move."

The Hero: "This is such a childish thing to be doing."

The Female Paladin: "I don't care if I'm childish as long as I can offer this to you."

The Female Paladin: "I understand that you belong to the Demon King. There's nothing for it..... I was too late."

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "The Demon King is amazing. She's strong, and she has a truly noble dream to fulfil, she far exceeds me."

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "That's why I don't want anything like for you to belong to me. Since you belong to the Demon King, if I said there's nothing for it, then there really is nothing for it. Of course..... if the Demon King leaves some sort of gap in your relationship with her, then I will not hesitate to fill it."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

However, as it stands, I belong to me. At the very least, I want to offer myself to the Hero. Since I became a Paladin, I have never yet offered my sword to anyone, but that's not a very smart idea. If I were to offer my sword to anyone, it would be you. Once I offer you this sword, my master will never change. I am that kind of Paladin."

The Hero: "..... Do you really have to do this? Especially in such a place? Th, this is a really big thing, isn't it?"

The Female Paladin: "Wherever and whenever I do this makes no difference. I want to do this. If the Hero is to venture into the future beyond, I want to be somewhere close by. I..... I don't want to be left behind again."

The Hero: "I'm sorry, but....."

The Female Paladin: "You said you would accept anything I offered, is that right?"

The Hero: "Ah. Y, yeah....."

The Female Paladin: "Take up the sword, my master. It's alright, I will not betray you."

The Hero: "....." *Flinches*

Takes the Sword

The Female Paladin: "Right..... That's settled then."

The Hero: "Yeah."

Horse whinnies

The Female Paladin: "With this, my sword now belongs to the Hero. My heart, my body, all belong to the Hero. Yeah, this is a really fulfilling feeling!"

The Hero shudders

The Female Paladin: "How are you, Hero?"

The Hero: "No, I'm just a bit cold. Umm, umm, Female Paladin."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Female Paladin: "?"

The Hero: "Can I maybe return the good, or cancel the contract?"

The Female Paladin: "Do you think you can?" *Glares*

The Hero: "....."

The Female Paladin: "It's alright. I know what you mean when you say you're feeling cold. We're best friends after all."

The Hero: (Best friends ~!?)

The Female Paladin: "If you just tell me straight to my face, I'll understand."

The Hero: (Wh, why is she so strong-willed!)

The Female Paladin: "I will protect you."

The Hero: "No, seriously now."

The Female Paladin: "?"

The Hero: "Forgive me just this once."

—- The Village of Wintering, the Village Centre

Thin Villager: "Hey! Good afternoon!"

Middle Aged Villager: "It's cold."

Huntsman: "It really is. Ahh, that's."

Little Maid Sister: "Good afternoon!" *Skips about*

Thin Villager: "Good afternoon—!"

Elder Maid Sister: "Good afternoon everyone!"

Middle Aged Villager: "This is for the mansion. Good afternoon."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Huntsman: "I hope you're doing well. Good afternoon."

TL Note: MY GOD STOP SAYING GOOD AFTERNOON

Elder Maid Sister: "It's nice to say pleasant words to each other."

Little Maid Sister: "Eh? Really?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Not you."

Little Maid Sister: "Wha—"

Thin Villager: "How is everything today?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Umm, we're on our way to say hello to the Holy Order and the Village Chief. They've really done a lot for us."

Little Maid Sister nods

Middle Aged Villager: "What've you got there?"

Elder Maid Sister: "We've got a whole bunch of spring onions. It really helps to preserve other food products."

Little Maid Sister: "That's right. We've also lost some of the wild strawberry wine we were brewing."

Thin Villager: "That's a catastrophe!"

Huntsman: "I wish we could do something about that."

Little Maid Sister: "Oh my god—!"

Thin Villager: "?"

Huntsman: "Do you mean this?"

Little Maid Sister: "!"

Huntsman: "Calm down, calm down. You'll see them everywhere. This is just some wild fowl, mountain quail to be exact."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Elder Maid Sister: "Oh no, she's a real glutton."

Little Maid Sister: "Wild fowl? Is that different from quail?"

Huntsman: "Well, it's still a young mountain quail. It's delicious. Take it with you."

Little Maid Sister: "Alright!"

Elder Maid Sister: "Hey! I sincerely apologise. This kid always acts this way."

Huntsman: "It's fine, it's fine! From the beginning, we've been extremely grateful to the Scholar for everything she's done for us."

Thin Villager: "That's right. We've got the Scholar to thank for ensuring the entire village has paid its tax, and hence we can rest easy even in the Winter."

Elder Maid Sister: "That's....."

Thin Villager: "It's true. She taught us how to make soap, and how to make warmer clothing."

Middle Aged Villager: "Our wool clothing is a lot thicker now."

Huntsman: "That's right, that's right. All the settlers and even the serfs are really grateful to her."

Elder Maid Sister: "—"

Little Maid Sister: ".....What's wrong?"

Thin Villager: "Yeah, what's wrong?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Ah, nothing's wrong."

Middle Aged Villager: "We've been feeding the pigs clover like you taught us! Even in the Winter, the pigs are growing well. We forgot to extend our house, which means even inside, there's lots of oinking going on."

Huntsman: "Ahahahaha! There's no choice. It's your own fault."

Middle Aged Villager: "Damn."

Chapter 10: “Take up the Sword, my Master”

Thin Villager: “But we’re really grateful. We’re thankful to the Chief Maid and for you kids as well.”

Huntsman: “Thanks to the medicine she taught us how to brew, only four people have died this winter.”

Elder Maid Sister: “The Chief Maid—”

Little Maid Sister: “Ms Spectacles—?”

Thin Villager: “?”

Little Maid Sister: “I didn’t know she was doing something like that?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Y..... Yeah.”

Thin Villager: “Eh? Really? Did she not say anything about it?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Nope, nothing.”

Huntsman: “Really? I wonder why she would do that?”

Elder Maid Sister: “No, no. It’s just..... It’s excellent that everyone could keep strong and warm this winter.”

Thin Villager: “Thank you!”

Middle Aged Villager: “Mmhmm”

Elder Maid Sister: “Right, let’s go the Holy Order.”

Little Maid Sister: “Yeah.”

Thin Villager: “Have a safe trip!”

Middle Aged Villager: “See you soon!”

Huntsman: “I’ll bring you some deer next time!”

Sisters walk off

Little Maid Sister: “Lalalala! Potatoes, spring onions, how delicious — ♪”

Chapter 10: “Take up the Sword, my Master”

Elder Maid Sister: “The Chief Maid.....”

Little Maid Sister: “What’s up?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Nope..... Nothing.”

Little Maid Sister: “Really—— Mountain Quail ♪”

Elder Maid Sister: (..... I thought the Chief Maid really hated serfs. But, to go so far..... She’s changed.”

Little Maid Sister: “It’ll be delicious baked in an oven with butter — ♪Right, sis, wouldn’t it?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Definitely..... If we get some eggs, let’s make some as well, shall we? Don’t you like omelettes?”

Little Maid Sister: “Yep! I love them! Sis, I love them!”

— The Kingdom of White Night, the Palace of White Night

One-Eyed Commander: “Hey! Shut up! Shut up!”

King of White Night: “Hmph. Don’t panic.”

One-Eyed Commander: “Argh. My eye is so itchy. Servant! Wine! Bring some wine!”

Servant: “Y, yes.....” *Scampers off*

King of White Night: “I’d prefer it if you didn’t abuse the people in my Palace.”

One-Eyed Commander: “Shut up! My eye!” *Scratches eye*

King of White Night: “Haha, poor you.”

One-Eyed Commander: “That’s right, poor me.”

King of White Night: “— That was your sentence?”

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

One-Eyed Commander: "Yeah, I'm thankful though. You saved me from that dungeon just as I was preparing to die there."

King of White Night: "Hehe, that's right. From that pit of filth and uncleanness..... The one who pulled you out from far below the House of Nobles, from the bottom level of the Tower of Interrogation, where the River of Death runs so close you can almost taste it, was me."

One-Eyed Commander: "....."

King of White Night: "Do you remember it? That darkness?"

One-Eyed Commander: "The rats. The rats were crawling around, and they took my eye. My eye, my light..... Ugh. It's itchy. My eyelids. I can see it. That pitch black darkness. The darkness infested me. It hurts. My whole body hurts. I'll kill you, I'll kill you! East Fortress Base Commander! You disgusting Demon Race! You broke me, you made a fool out of me!"

King of White Night: "That's right, they made a fool out of me as well." *Glares*

One-Eyed Commander: "....."

King of White Night: "That brat from the Kingdom of Winter. He made a mockery out of me. What the hell is an ice floe? What the hell is an agricultural revolution? What the hell is productivity? What kind of jargon is he throwing around. How could the Spirit of Light recognise such a person."

One-Eyed Commander: "That's right, they're traitors. Traitors who want to see this world submerged in darkness. Rotten, disgusting, half-humans!"

King of White Night: "That sly brat is now reaping massive profits off the trade routes plying West. The Isle of Light was supposed to jointly belong to the Southern United Kingdoms. No, the blood that was shed on that Isle was mostly from the Kingdom of White Night! So why is it that that brat gets all the profit? Where is my profit?"

One-Eyed Commander: "Heeheehee, heehee!"

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

King of White Night: "And that Iron Fist King, that Queen of Ice and Snow, they're no heroes, they're nobodies, they're just volunteers clinging on to the coattails of the Kingdom of Winter. I have to endure the freezing winters of White Night, I have to continue living in such poverty, and yet, they mock me, they make me feel small and they steal the profits which are rightfully mine. How can the Spirit allow this to continue happening!"

One-Eyed Commander: "Ahahahaha! Leave it to me. I will do this even if I die. That unholy brat who does not know his place, I will cut off his head. Hahaha. Lend me an army! I will use them for this purpose! Chop, chop, chop them all up!"

King of White Night: "Wait a while more. Hehehe."

One-Eyed Commander: "Why....."

King of White Night: "I can kill those people at any time: just one drop of poison in their glass, or one thrust of a short sword while they sleep."

One-Eyed Commander: "Heeheehee." *Scratches eye*

King of White Night: "But, killing them would be far too lenient. I'm going to let them taste what I tasted, what a high noble like me tasted, that humiliation, but a thousandfold! How about that?"

One-Eyed Commander: "That's right! Humiliation. Let those treacherous backstabbers feel so humiliated they would want to bury themselves in the deepest depths of Hell!"

King of White Night: "Take a look at this document. Even His Eminence is my ally. With this document, I will drag the Kingdom of Winter to Hell."

One-Eyed Commander: "..... Eh? Haha. Ahahahaha! This is great! That's great! Ahahahaha!"

King of White Night: "Hehehe. King of Winter. All the treasures of your Kingdom will soon be mine. Ahahahaha!"

One-Eyed Commander: "Ahahahaha!"

— The Village of Wintering, the Holy Order of the Lake

Templar: "Ah! This is bad!"

Templar: "What's going on!?"

Templar: "Something horrible has just happened. I, it's really, really bad!"

Templar: "Drink some water and explain it clearly."

Templar: "Not right now. Where is the Grandmaster? Call the Female Paladin. No, look for her. We haven't got a minute to lose! Hurry up and find the Female Paladin!"

— The City of the Gulf, Merchant's Quarter, in a Large Office in the Chambers of Commerce

Shrewd Accountant: "Important news, Councillor!"

Young Merchant: "What is it, you seem very flustered."

Shrewd Accountant: "Something big has happened. Th, this is..... In any case, this report."

Throws report on table

Young Merchant: "..... Wh, what!? This must be because of the Election. We've been too careless. How could we let this development occur— Get a ship ready to leave as soon as possible!"

— The Village of Wintering, the Mansion's Kitchen

Little Maid Sister: "Hero, you've got to work more seriously—"

The Hero: "Oh, okay..... Ehh."

Elder Maid Sister: "Be gentler and do it properly, Hero."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Little Maid Sister: "Heeheehee ♪ Butter, butter ♪"

The Hero: "Why am I involved in this as well?"

Little Maid Sister: "No slacking off!"

Elder Maid Sister: "It looks like milk and it sure smells great."

Little Maid Sister: "Mmhmm, it's probably because the wheat flour is so fine."

The Hero: "Well, the finer the flour, the more expensive it is. Wait, this has got to be really expensive? Is it really okay to throw money around like that?"

Little Maid Sister: "But in order to make good Pie Dough, finer flour is better. When you're used to it, we can try using different flours like barley or buckwheat."

The Hero: "Pie? We're not making bread?"

Little Maid Sister: "Nope, it's completely different."

The Hero: "You just put some flour, mix it around and bake it, right?"

Little Maid Sister: "You're really bad at baking....."

The Hero: "D, don't be stupid? I'm a Hero, so I'm sure I can do something like this heroically as well! It's just something stupid like baking....."

Elder Maid Sister is stunned

Little Maid Sister is stunned

The Hero: "Sorry....."

Birds chirping.....

Elder Maid Sister: "We can probably start baking the first batch."

Little Maid Sister: "Okay ♪ Let's try."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "This is really quite troublesome. Making bread dough is so much easier, you just mix it a bit and it's done right?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Umm, to make pie dough, the folding part over here to extend the dough is really important."

The Hero: "Really?"

Elder Maid Sister: "It says so here in the book. My sister is much more familiar with this part..... That girl has only ever read this book seriously before."

Little Maid Sister: "Yay ♪Yay ♪"

The Hero: "She's making a lot of happy sounds. Are she alright? She didn't hit her head, did she?"

Elder Maid Sister: "She's just really happy."

Little Maid Sister: "Alright! All done!"

The Hero: "Did you do it?"

Elder Maid Sister: "How is it, did it rise?"

Little Maid Sister: "Wow! It's pretty! It's all golden and sparkly!"

The Hero: "Wow, it really is. How pretty."

Elder Maid Sister: "Amazing. It looks like a sunflower."

Little Maid Sister: "Alright! Let's eat!"

The Hero: "Alright. Oh, it's hot."

Elder Maid Sister: "Hold it with a cloth, Hero."



Pie: A dish which is made from a dough made from wheat flour and butter, which is wrapped around a variety of other ingredients. Sweet fruits like apples can be wrapped within it. The special taste of the pie crust comes from the water content in the dough being trapped by the oil content from the butter and other ingredients, since the water cannot escape, the pastry becomes puffed up and soft.

Buckwheat: Despite its name, it is not a wheat, but a plant from the rhubarb family. The fruit can be ground to flour and eaten. Not only is it capable of growing on poor quality soil and in cold weather, the harvest times are short and can be harvested many times. However, compared to wheat, the same area of buckwheat only results in a third of the yields. In Japan, buckwheat is chiefly used to make soba noodles.

Little Maid Sister: “It’s just been baked, of course it’s hot.”

The Hero: “This girl! What’s inside? Potatoes and bacon?”

Little Maid Sister: “That’s right, it’s a potato and bacon pie ♪”

The Hero: “Delicious, this is slightly amazing, isn’t it? It has a very homely taste, but at the same time it’s quite complex and luxurious. Amazing! It really isn’t bread!”

Little Maid Sister: “I said it wasn’t anything like bread.”

Elder Maid Sister: “It’s good. You really did well, Sis!”

Chapter 10: “Take up the Sword, my Master”

Little Maid Sister: “Yayy ♪Yayy ♪”

The Hero: “You’ve really got talent. She’s really not bad, isn’t she?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yeah, full marks.” *Nods*

Little Maid Sister: “Ehehehe—” *Blushes*

The Hero: “Can I have another one?”

Little Maid Sister: “Of course!”

The Hero: “Yum, yum.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Well, if we used a lower grade of wheat to control the original price, we could really develop a great dish here.”

The Hero: “Original price?”

Elder Maid Sister: “Well, we’re using a really fine wheat flour and that’s very expensive, we’re also using butter and milk. If we’re trying to come up with something that’s not a royal dish, but a meal that anyone can eat, we’ve got to control the price.”

The Hero: “That’s difficult.”

Little Maid Sister: “Probably impossible.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Not impossible. It’s so delicious, after all. If you put your energy to it, I’m sure you could make it better.”

Little Maid Sister: “Really?”

The Hero: “Yeah, really. Let’s see what we can change the filling to?”

Little Maid Sister: “Hmm, well, herring, mushrooms or mutton should taste good. We could also introduce some sweet flavours, like plum or apples. We could even make it sweeter by adding jam. ♪”

The Hero: “Haha, I bet I’ll start seeing this at the bar soon.”

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Elder Maid Sister: "Yeah, you can just reheat it and it'll be good, and it even tastes better in a stone oven."

Little Maid Sister: "Hey, hey, am I a chef now?"

The Hero: "What? A chef?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Yep!"

Little Maid Sister: "Yayy! I'm a chef ♪"

The Hero: "Why are you so happy?"

Elder Maid Sister: "She's a glutton after all."

Little Maid Sister: "Ehehe, but this is work, right? I want to make food and become better at it so everyone will have good food to eat ♪"

The Hero: "Really?"

Elder Maid Sister: "....." *Nods*

Little Maid Sister: "Hey, hey? Is it good? Is it good?"

The Hero: "Delicious."

Elder Maid Sister: "It's delicious. Good job."

Little Maid Sister: "There's a lot! We made a lot!"

The Hero: "Huh. So you're a chef now, good job." *Smiles*

Little Maid Sister: "Yep."

The Hero: "And what would you like to be?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Eh?"

The Hero: "What would you like to be? — Perhaps a housewife?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Umm, I don't think I....."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Little Maid Sister: "Sis wants to become a Ms Spectacles ♪"

Elder Maid Sister: "Hey, she said she'd scold you if you called her that, right?"

Little Maid Sister: "—"

Banging on door

The Hero: "Eh? Who's that?"

Banging on door

"I apologise for the lateness! Is anybody there!? Is anybody at home!?"

— The Kingdom of Winter, the Winter Palace, the Audience Chamber

Hits table

Lone Winter King: "What!?"

The Hero: "Did you not hear? In that case, I will repeat it for you once again."

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Hero: "There is a scholar presently residing in the Kingdom of Winter known as the Crimson Scholar. With regards to this person, there are several doubts to her nature.

Firstly, she has been accused of taking advantage of the Holy Order of the Lake in order to encourage the cultivation of potatoes, an unholy fruit from the Demon World.

Secondly, the agricultural methods she has been propagating, whether about technology or fertiliser, goes against everything the Spirit has taught us. She is suspect of heretical teachings and collusion with evil."

Lone Winter King: (But it's her teachings..... That saved the people!)

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

The Hero: "Thirdly, in setting up a school and accepting numerous students, to establish a school without any form of sanction from the church is disgraceful and pollutes the minds of the students there.

Fourthly, at the Divine Academy at the Holy Kingdom, no records were found which indicate that anybody known as the Crimson Scholar has ever graduated from there.

As a result of the above report and accompanying discrepancies, the Crimson Scholar is considered to be a highly suspicious and dangerous element. Take her into custody immediately, and prepare to transfer her to us.

The Holy Church of Light, Bishop of the Inquisition

— — There, it's an official document from the Church."

Lone Winter King: "S, surely..... There must be some kind of mistake, Hero."

The Hero: "It's best that you watch what you say, your Majesty! Whether or not this is the truth, the Inquisition has been mobilised to conduct investigations. If these Bishops, who claim to preach the word of the Spirit of Light, find even one problem in a thousand, in ten thousand, then surely the King of these adherents should know about it as well?"

Lone Winter King: "....."

Butler: "S, such a thing....."

The Hero: "Of course, if the bishops are smart, they would have thought of this as well. I fear that your Majesty, and even the Holy Order of the Lake may be implicated into the treachery with the heretical Scholar, and become victims of this scandal."

Lone Winter King: "!"

Butler: "....."

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Lone Winter King: (..... This is the result of the jealousy of someone in the Central Continent. Or maybe someone from the Southern United Kingdom with connections to the Continent. The Holy Kingdom, the Holy Church of Light! Is it so wrong for her to want to free the Southern United Kingdoms from poverty? Even if she used methods that weren't completely orthodox.)

The Hero: "What will your reply be, your Majesty?"

Lone Winter King: "....."

Butler: "....."

The Hero: "Do you understand what it means to oppose the Church in this world, young King? The religion is Light, the Church is the World. To go against that, to become an apostate, is to become an enemy to all mankind."



Inquisition: A court established by the religion to identify and charge people suspected of being opposed to the official religion. During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Inquisition trialled and executed many Christians accused of anti-Catholic practices using horrible punishments. This was common in many parts of Europe such as Spain and France.

Bishop: A high rank within the Church. Above the rank of a deacon, but below the rank of an archbishop. There are many within a country, and he is responsible for a fairly large area known as his diocese. Deacons and priests help him to fulfil his duties. During the Middle Ages, there were even bishops who held temporal power and ruled over entire countries and cities.

Chapter 10: "Take up the Sword, my Master"

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Hero: "The Holy Patriarch hasn't threatened to excommunicate you yet. However, he did say it was 'regrettable that believers and heretics could live together in one country'. We need to erase these doubts the Patriarch is having, your Majesty."

Lone Winter King: "Th, that's....."

Butler: "Young man....."

The Hero: "So?"

Lone Winter King: "Send out..... the Army. But, the Village of Wintering is really far, it'll take time to get there....."

The Hero: "Alright. But, be careful, your Majesty. If the Crimson Scholar manages to slip through your fingers, neither you, nor this country, nor even the Holy Order of the Lake may be able to avoid being charged for high treason!"

END OF CHAPTER 10

—- The Demon King Castle, the Lowest Level, the Palace of Death

The Chief Maid: "The slime has really begun to build up around here."

The Demon King: "There's no choice. We've left this place for close to two years."

The Chief Maid: "Ehh....."

The Demon King: "We've really let this place get wild, for all the spirits of the Demon Kings."

The Chief Maid: "Is the seal ready?"

The Demon King: "Hmm, it's not perfect, but it's somehow done. If I enter it, it should help to release my potential and purify me."

The Chief Maid: "Are you worried....."

The Demon King: "I'm sorry if I still have mixed emotions. In all the 150 years of my existence, I've never felt like my life would be at such danger before."

The Chief Maid: "....."

The Demon King: "It's not all that bad. It's only by going in here, that I can raise my combat ability."

The Chief Maid: "That's..... The successive generations of Demon Kings can impart their skills to you, and that will greatly raise your combat ability....."

The Demon King: "That's why the Demon King is the strongest Demon. Hehe..... I hear that there are Demon Kings in the past who would use the Palace of Death on a daily basis in order to keep their abilities boosted."

The Chief Maid: "I don't really want to see a Demon King with no limits whatsoever to her power."

The Demon King: "I want to see it. It's true that attempting to solve all problems with pure brute force alone may not be smart. Even repulsive. It's something a theoretical scholar would never be able to withstand."

The Chief Maid: "But you are more realistic than a theoretical scholar."

The Demon King: "In any case"

The Chief Maid: "....."

The Demon King: "So that I don't cause any earthquakes, I am going to isolate this space from the rest of the Castle. Is that alright, Chief Maid?"

The Chief Maid: "Yes."

The Demon King: "If the me that comes out of here isn't myself....."

The Chief Maid: "Even if it costs me my life, I will deal with that 'Demon King'."

— The Village of Wintering, the Demon King's Manor

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "....."

Butler: "If she left on a quick horse, she could be miles away by now....."

The Hero: ".....I understand."

Elder Maid Sister: "....."

Little Maid Sister: "Mistress.....?"

Lone Winter King: "But we need to detain the Scholar."

The Hero: "She said she would be gone for two months at least."

Butler: "Is that so..... They're not going to be happy to know about that."

The Female Paladin: "Moreover, it's the Church..... They only know how to preach the word of the Spirit of Light in all their full sophistry."

Lone Winter King: "....."

Butler: "But, as I hear, we have an illusory ring?"

The Female Paladin: "Old man. I told you that if you talked about it, you would be holding your head in your hands, didn't I?"

Butler: "But if I don't talk about it, who will?"

All sigh

The Hero: "....."

Lone Winter King: "I apologise....."

The Female Paladin: ".....How did it get to this."

Lone Winter King: "Hero..... I've heard all the details from the Old Man. I originally wanted to celebrate your return to life with a nationwide festival, but..... Oh Hero, I apologise for the calamities that seem to hound me. All of this happened because the Lone Winter King, the Kingdom of Winter, the United Southern Kingdoms, are so powerless."

Butler: "Young man....."

Lone Winter King: "I apologise. It is because of my inadequacy that our benefactors are involved in such a terrible mess. All of this started because I wanted to free the Southern United Kingdoms from the overlordship influence of the Central Continent and nurture a spirit of independence. I never the situation to develop to such a bad state."

The Hero: "Okay, stop with that speech. I don't even want to think about it."

The Female Paladin: "....."

Elder Maid Sister: "Umm, I..... I could....."

The Hero: "I won't allow it."

Elder Maid Sister: "But-"

Lone Winter King: "..... Hero, but-"

The Hero: “Your Majesty, if you even think about it, I will destroy you with lightning. If she was here, this would probably be how it would end as well.”

—- *Perhaps we could arrange for Demons to attack the village as well.....*

Elder Maid Sister: “But.....”

Little Maid Sister: “Sis-“

The Hero: “However, I’ve thought about this before, but as the King speaking out against this is your responsibility. Moreover, this spirit of independence is a noble idea.”

Lone Winter King: “.....”

Butler: “Hero.....”

Lone Winter King: “However, I have the responsibility to protect the citizens of the Kingdom of Winter. For this reason..... For this reason.....”

Butler: “.....”

The Hero: “Well, I suppose I should do something about that.”

The Female Paladin: “..... Hero?”

The Hero: “It’s going to be troublesome, but you’re going to need to arrest the Elder Maid Sister.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes.”

Lone Winter King: “That’s.....”

The Hero: “When she leaves the Kingdom of Winter, I’ll rescue her at an appropriate point in time. The Inquisition will dispatch its Courier Squad, won’t it? I’ve heard there’re about 100 of them. They shouldn’t be a problem.”

The Female Paladin: “But, still!”

Butler: “.....I’m sorry, Hero. I apologise.”

The Hero: “If they arrest her and take her out of the Kingdom of Winter, then the Kingdom won’t face anymore blame, will it? The responsibility will be with the Courier Squad. That solves many problems.”

Butler: “Hero..... But, Hero.”

The Hero: “Yeah, well..... I might have to hide my face, but there’s no choice. We can’t have me betraying the Church, after all.”

Butler: “Again, this old fool isn’t comfortable with letting you go alone..... I won’t let you go alone on your journey.....”

The Hero: “Yeah—I won’t, I won’t. This time, I’ve got the sisters, and the Scholar will come back. The Female Paladin, Grandpa, your Majesty, you can’t show yourselves, but..... We will meet again, won’t we?”

The Female Paladin: “Of course we will. We’re coming along with you.”

The Hero: “Then who will aid and support the settlers?”

The Female Paladin: “..... If it’s that much, then we can leave it to the Holy Order.”

The Hero: “Well, this place..... It hurts that all that revolution, new crops and various inventions will now be rendered useless. But I won’t sit there and let the Elder Maid Sister die, I’d rather be called a heretic than that. She said that she’s willing to die for all of this, but I’m the Hero after all, I can’t just leave her to die.”

Butler: “So the Hero is going to bear this whole burden by himself again.....”

Lone Winter King: “He goes for the soul of the whole Human World. I only wish I could be the one to offer my body in exchange-“

The Hero: “Don’t be so down. That’s how it is.”

The Female Paladin: “Then, I guess we’ll have to leave this village.”

Little Maid Sister: “Sister, are we moving?”

Elder Maid Sister: “.....”

Little Maid Sister: “I said I was going to teach the innkeeper how to make pie.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “.....”

Lone Winter King: “.....”

Butler: “Y, young man, you have the responsibility to protect this country. Don’t get any second thoughts.”

The Hero: “That’s right, just laugh it off. That’s your responsibility!”

The Female Paladin: “Hero..... With you, we could easily take on the entire Holy Kingdom’s Army.....”

The Hero: “I’m sorry, but that’s a method which my owner would never allow. Besides I’m already bored of that. I fight and I win and I seize that’s how it goes..... That’s why, I don’t really have the intention to seize anymore.”

—— The Kingdom of Winter, Gossip in an Unknown Village

What? The Scholar?

No way, how is that even possible!

I heard it from some people of the Church while I was on the road.

The Church? Not the Holy Order?

Yeah, the Church has come, with some pretty weird people.

Don’t tell me the Scholar is a heretic? How.....

Well, that’s what they’re saying.

They’re saying the potato that the Scholar brought an evil, Demonic food.

But what will we do without it?

If the Scholar wasn't here, my grandsons and granddaughters would have been dead.

Surely there's some sort of misunderstanding

But..... If they take the Scholar, what will we do?

Hey! Hey! Hey!

What happened? Why are you so panicked, did the sheep run away?

No, in the forest road. There's! There's!

Eh?

There's some strange army taking the Scholar with locks and chains through the forest road.

Eh? Really!?

It's not our Kingdom's army, is it?

Don't tell me, the Kingdom of Winter is being invaded by some other Human Kingdom?

Let's call for them to release the Scholar!

But if the Scholar really is a heretic.....

If, somehow, she is. The Spirit have mercy on us all!

All shake head

What is going to happen?

I came all this way to live here, because I thought it would be a good place to settle down.....

What is going to happen to this country.....

The City of the Gulf, the Merchant's District, in a Large Study in the Chambers of Commerce

Shrewd Accountant: "..... That is all."

Young Merchant: "Is that so....."

Shrewd Accountant: "Yes."

Young Merchant: "Ehh, so the Holy Patriarchal election has ended. This Patriarch, like the ten Patriarchs before him, is one of those fanatical religious types. I fear the Church will begin to clamp down hard on unorthodox elements. At the rate this is going, they are probably preparing for the Third Crusade."

Shrewd Accountant: "That's going to be troublesome for the Southern United Kingdoms, who've been trying to restructure their Kingdoms."

Young Merchant: "That's right. The attacks by the Demons around here have really dulled. No, instead of dulled, they're non-existent. Because of that, the Southern United Kingdoms has been able to achieve tremendous economic growth. As a result, the influence of the Central Continent has also weakened considerably."

Shrewd Accountant: "That King of White Night, who was benefitting from the Central Continent's influence in the Southern United Kingdoms, is now a sorry state after taking the blame for the previous defeat."

Young Merchant: "On top of that, without significant assistance from the Central Continent, the Lone Winter King and other Heroes have appeared and hold the hearts of the people in their hands. Especially with that mysterious Scholar's teachings, various agricultural reforms and advances have been made such that the wasteland that the South used to be is slowly becoming a place to grow a sizeable population and produce ample food crops."

Shrewd Accountant: "Food is something the Central Continent has always been able to hold the South Hostage with."

Young Merchant: "..... The Central Continent needs to have some sort of military victory over the Demons if it wants the Church's power to be flexed again. However, even then, they wouldn't want the Southern United Kingdoms to achieve independence from them. That's what is happening now."

Shrewd Accountant: "Yes....."

Young Merchant: "....."

Shrewd Accountant: "Councillor, how will the Union respond?"

Young Merchant: "At present, I do not think we will."

Shrewd Accountant: "....."

Young Merchant: "We've got to come up with something. Let's prepare a ten-man Council..... Is that guy around?"

Door closes

Middle Aged Merchant: "Ohh, I thought it was about time."

Nobleman's Son: "I apologise for the intrusion, Young Merchant."

Young Merchant: "No, no, we welcome you anytime."

Nobleman's Son: "I thank you for allowing me to come. Ahh, that's right. This is the payment from the Queen of Ice and Snow."

Shrewd Accountant: "Let me take that."

Young Merchant: "And how is the Queen?"

Nobleman's Son: "She is deeply troubled by the present state of events. She expressed clearly that the leader of the Tripartite Economic Union is the Lone Winter King, and hence the events befalling him are a tragedy for us all."

Young Merchant: "Is that so?"

Middle Aged Merchant: "Right then, where should I go?"

Young Merchant: "To the Central Continent."

Middle Aged Merchant: "And this young man?"

Young Merchant: "Well?"

Nobleman's Son: "The Queen said that, even if she stayed in the Palace of Ice and Snow, she probably wouldn't be of much use. It's a nice time of the year, so she intends to go to various countries and sample their meatbuns."

Middle Aged Merchant: "Is it alright to be so relaxed about things?"

Nobleman's Son: "The Kingdom of Ice and Snow is also known as the Land of Poets. Minstrels come from far and wide and artists find their inspiration there. There's even a place for a good-for-nothing like myself. It's the sort of country, where if you can't relax, if you can't enjoy a dance or a poetry recital, then you'll find that you don't belong."

Young Merchant: "Then, will you accept my offer?"

Nobleman's Son: "Which one?"

Young Merchant: "To join the Union's Council of Ten."

Nobleman's Son: "That's"

Middle Aged Merchant: "Hey! This guy is an outsider!"

Young Merchant: "There's no such thing as an outsider. If it comes to the exchange of goods and services, there isn't a single person in this world who is an outsider. That is a result of this world, did you not know?"

Middle Aged Merchant: "....."

Nobleman's Son: "What will my responsibilities be?"

Young Merchant: "I want you to control the rest of the Councillors."

Nobleman's Son: "With whatever way I see fit?"

Young Merchant: "That's right, I'll leave it to you. If you need help, you can look for this Middle Aged Merchant here."

Nobleman's Son: "We need time, I take it?"

Young Merchant: "When it comes to profit, I think we're good. But time is of the essence. Both to me, and to your teacher."

Nobleman's Son: "I understand..... The Queen will be departing on her vacation soon. I'm not good with accounting or with wars. All I can do is keep up with Palace gossip, dance and make merry, but....."

Middle Aged Merchant: (This young man.....)

Young Merchant: "Well, well, the place you're headed to now, could well become a sort of battlefield, couldn't it?"

Nobleman's Son: "Yes, I understand. But, if that's the case, as my friend would say, I would like to 'die with a serious face'."

Young Merchant: "Then it's decided."

Middle Aged Merchant: "..... I understand."

Young Merchant: "Let's not rock the boat just yet. Carry on with things as usual."

Middle Aged Merchant: "What should I do?"

Young Merchant: "Show him around. Take him on the ship and introduce him to the relevant parties. There's no need to lend him a hand with that. Of course, you should introduce him personally, but it's best to let him do the talking."

Nobleman's Son: "I have just one request." *Smiles*

Young Merchant: "Really? I'm just a poor merchant, though."

Nobleman's Son: "Is there a place that serves good wine around here?"

Young Merchant: "I understand..... Well, let's go then."

Nobleman's Son: "Yeah, let's go. Ahh, how fun. I wonder what the new dance at the Central Continent is like!"

Closes door

Shrewd Accountant: "-- Well then."

Young Merchant: "Yes."

Shrewd Accountant: "I'll let you handle the explanation to the Council of Ten."

Young Merchant: "They'll all be trying to guess at who the other Councillors are. Since the Religious Faction is probably going to be fairly strong, it's best to strike while the iron is hot."

Shrewd Accountant: "Which Councillors are you referring to?"

Young Merchant: "None in particular. But those who did not benefit from her will surely scorn that person."

Shrewd Accountant: "What should I do?"

Young Merchant: "..... Hmm"

Slaps table

Young Merchant: "Help me do some financial research."

Shrewd Accountant: "Huh?"

Young Merchant: "Do up a brief survey of the Liquid Assets of every member of the Union, and the financial profile of each Merchant."

Shrewd Accountant: "Basically, all the Capital.....?"

Young Merchant: "That's right. To put together the Holy Crusaders will require a large sum of money, and we must be prepared for the next direction that the wind will blow, it could decide the fate of the world."

—- The Kingdom of Winter, the Palace, the Room where the Scholar is Being Imprisoned

Roar of the crowd outside

The Hero: “There sure is a big crowd outside.”

The Female Paladin: “That’s right. The Demon King was really popular among the peasantry.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes.”

The Hero: “Even though she had such an arrogant attitude.”

The Female Paladin: “Really? There were many among the Templars, the Settlers and the peasantry who considered her to be a living goddess, weren’t there?”

The Hero: “For real!?”

The Female Paladin: “Ugh..... If only I had a larger cup size.....”



Liquid Assets: Assets which have physical form, but are relatively easy to convert into cash. Hence, this does not include assets which are difficult to sell such as property or real estate; but rather things like expensive electronics, cars or stocks and shares. However, permits and rights do not have physical form and hence are not assets.

Elder Maid Sister: “—- When my sister and I walk along the village roads.”

The Hero: "?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Everyone always smiles and waves at us. They always talk to us chirpily while smiling happily. 'We harvested lots of potatoes this Summer.' 'The wheat crops this Autumn are growing well.' They would give us berries or eggs to take back to the manor. They would even give us quails. That manor was always filled with things the villagers gave us, there was never a day when the pantry was empty."

The Hero: "Is that so?"

The Female Paladin: "..... Sounds like that village."

Elder Maid Sister: "Everyone was really good to us, they would always say that my sister and I were cute. Or that the Mistress was really helpful. Or that they were grateful to us for our help and wished they could help us more in return. Or that they were thankful for the potatoes. Sometimes, they would bring their babies to the manor, so small they felt like leaves in our hands. So that they would grow up to be smart and kind, they said. They even said that the Mistress had managed to turn me from a serf into a real lady."

The Hero: "....."

Elder Maid Sister: "That was a really great village. The place we ran away from was a neighbouring village that never treated us as well. In the Village of Wintering, the settlers, the landlords, even the serfs all worked as hard as they could. Everyone was strong and healthy. They would sing the songs they learnt from the Holy Order as they harvested the wheat fields at dusk, no matter how late it got, you could still hear them singing."

The Hero: "Yeah."

Elder Maid Sister: "..... It will be sad to leave that village."

The Female Paladin: "You'll definitely find great people at the next place you live in."

Elder Maid Sister: "..... Yes."

The Female Paladin: "Is the King on his way?"

The Hero: "It seems the exchange will take place at the centre of the plaza."

The Female Paladin: "He wants everybody to see." *Grits teeth*

The Hero: "That's a..... pragmatist."

Roars from the crowd

The Female Paladin: "I will have to go soon too. If the Holy Order of the Lake is to remain here, I'm going to need the approval of that despicable man. How unclean."

Elder Maid Sister: "Umm"

The Female Paladin: "?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Have a safe trip."

The Female Paladin: "Elder Maid Sister. I count you as my friend. Do not worry, everything will be fine."

Runs off

The Hero: "..... Alright. I'd better disappear as well. You might think that I'm not there, but I will be watching you from nearby. Are you alright?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Yes."

The Hero: "You'll be fine. If you ever feel scared, just remember that I will surely save you within two days. Please endure just a little bit longer-- I'm sorry I couldn't do more for you. But protecting the people of this Kingdom is the responsibility of me, the Female Paladin and the King."

Elder Maid Sister: "Yes....."

The Hero: "What is it?"

Elder Maid Sister: “No..... I”

The Hero: “?”

Elder Maid Sister: “No..... It’s nothing.”

The Hero: “.....? Alright, I’ll be going. I will always be watching you.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Yes.”

Runs off

Elder Maid Sister: “.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “I.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “.....”

Elder Maid Sister: “Why am I so useless.....”

—- The Palace of Death, the Depths of Darkness

Ghastly wailing

The Demon King: “I..... really don’t want..... to show this place to the Hero.....”

Kill! Kill! Kill all the Humans! Break down the Gate! The world belongs to Demonkind. The world belongs to Demonkind!

The Demon King: “That’s wrong..... you just want the world to become..... yours.”

Is that so wrong!?

Is that bad!? These are the fruits of the victories which I seize with my own two hands. With my sword and my shield. The winner takes it all! That is what has been going on since ancient times! That is the rule of the land!

The Demon King: “How vulgar..... since ancient times? In that case, I will create a new..... a better..... system for the world. How annoying.....”

And how will you do anything with those pathetic powers of yours? The world has no need of such a weakling.

The Demon King: "There are..... Many types of..... power....."

In the end you're just making excuses for your weakness. My power, my unparalleled Demon power, you have come here seeking my invincible, battlefield-destroying abilities, have you not? Fine, I will give them to you, and take your soul as well!

The Demon King: "Stop right there..... I am..... Already sold."

Bwahahahahaha!

That's right, Demon King. New Demon King! You have someone that you like, you really are just a girl. But even if you love him, how will you stop your love from being ripped apart? You are the Demon King, and he is the Hero!

The Demon King: "Such issues are outdated, and caused by the previous generations. All you knew how to do was kill or be killed. I will get rid of this problem."

But, while you're in this darkness, I have the power here. Bwahahahahaha! How will someone like you, who's shaking like a leaf on a tree, protect herself from me? Bwahahahahaha!

The Demon King: "That's..... Ahh..... That's..... Definitely....." *Coughs*

Suffer! Leave your body to me. I will give you my power, the ability to cleave the lands and split the seas.

The Demon King: "Hehe."

What's so funny, New Demon King?

The Demon King: "Ahaha..... *Cough cough cough*..... At this rate, I don't want..... to let the Hero see me..... I've become..... repulsive..... and I'm no longer cute..... or appealing..... At the very least..... I'm impure....."

*What a pointless attitude! This is what it means to be swallowed by the darkness!
The Demon King is nothing more than a vessel for the previous generations of
Demon Kings!*

The Demon King: "..... Then..... The remains of this vessel..... will rise up against
your will..... *Cough cough cough*..... from..... within..... Do you understand.....?"

Forget it! Forget it! You will have no soul!

The Demon King: "..... Hero, your black hair..... is so fluffy..... Ahh, it's warm. I
always want to..... feel it....."

The Kingdom of Winter, Court of Justice and Royal Parade Square

Mumbling among the crowd

Butler: "What a huge crowd."

Seneschal: "It seems all the neighbouring villages came to give their support."

Butler: "I hope they don't start anything....."

Seneschal: "Shall I increase the security?"

Butler: "Please do."

Mumbling among the crowd

Don't push, don't push. Look, on the stage?

Is that the King? No, look carefully, our King doesn't look so poor. Is that the Hero?

Don't tell me the Scholar really is a heretic? I won't believe it.

Anyone else but the Scholar.....

Ah! Look! The King, the King has come!

Lone Winter King: "..... Ladies and Gentlemen, justice will be served today."

Grand Inquisitor: "Your Majesty, as we agreed, did you arrest her?"

Lone Winter King: "Hand her over."

Security Trooper: "Please step over there."

Elder Maid Sister: "....."

Scholar! It's the Scholar! Really, it is!

That's right, my son learnt farming techniques from her.

That's right, I learnt how to properly raise the pork from the Scholar as well.

She's the one who took care of my sick sister..... Are they sure?

Could the Scholar really be a heretic! Holy Spirit have mercy on us all!

Grand Inquisitor: "Mmhmm, there's no mistaking it, is there? There's no point using a substitute. There are many people here who know and recognize the Scholar, it is clear that it is the Crimson Scholar in the flesh."

Lone Winter King: "Are there any objections?"

Grand Inquisitor: "None. Bring out the accused!"

Inquisitor: "Yes!" *Shoves*

Inquisitor: "Do not resist!" *Shoves*

Elder Maid Sister: "....."

Lone Winter King: "....."

Grand Inquisitor: "Right then, Lone Winter King, Female Paladin. The Church thanks you for your cooperation. We understand that you have no relationship with this heretic, we are impressed by your generosity of spirit and your devotion to the cause of the Holy Church."

Lone Winter King: "We are greatly obliged."

The Female Paladin: "..... Yeah."

Grand Inquisitor: "Heh. What an admirable attitude. That is good. There is nothing that can damage the strong relationship between the Southern United Kingdoms and the Central Continent. Our cooperation against the Demon Race will remain ever strong and powerful. Is that not right, your Majesty?"

Lone Winter King: "....."

The Female Paladin: "....."

Grand Inquisitor: "Heh."

Grand Inquisitor: "Inquisitors, bind this heretic. I want her in chains and in cuffs! Let's take her to the Holy Capital."

Inquisitor: "Yes!"

Butler: (Yes, please do that. Young man. I'm sorry, to have to do this to an innocent girl..... That's the sort of world we have to live in today.....)

Inquisitor: "Let's go, manacles!"

Elder Maid Sister: "!"

Grand Inquisitor: "Are you resisting? Truly the eyes of a heretic. What do you have to say for yourself, you betrayer of the Holy Spirit, you user of Demons!"

The Scholar..... That must be a lie, right? How could she be a heretic? Her skin is all parched and she's bleeding..... Spirit Above..... My sister owes her life to her, right? What wrong has she done? I, I can't watch any longer.

Elder Maid Sister: "I would like..... to speak to everyone, as a person with a soul."

Crowd mumbles

Elder Maid Sister: "..... I was born..... into a family of serfs."

Serfs!? Really!?

I wouldn't have believed she was a serf!?

Elder Maid Sister: “The life of a serf was really difficult..... Of course, it was different from what landowners and noblemen experience, but at the very least, my childhood was extremely tough. I was the third among a family of seven children. My brother broke his wrist while working in the fields, and was thrown aside despite his pain and suffering. My sister was summoned one day by a group of nobles, and she never returned.”

Crowd mumbles

Elder Maid Sister: “One clear winter morning, my youngest brother, did not wake up. My sisters had also contracted smallpox. I couldn't do anything to help them. In the end, all that remained were my two youngest sisters and myself.....

One day, I ran away on a cart with my sisters, that was a flash of destiny, that held so much hope..... But at the same time, I was extremely troubled.”

Elder Maid Sister: “All this while.....”

Crowd murmurs

Elder Maid Sister: “Destiny has been warm and kind to me. That was the first time I could say such kind words and mean them. —- Don't worry. Everything will be fine.”

Elder Maid Sister: “But, everyone. Noblemen. Soldiers. Settlers. Serfs. I must reject the kindness that you are showing me. Even though these are the hands which have shown me kindness. Even though you are kind to me. Because you are kind to me. I must reject it.”



Crowd murmurs

Elder Maid Sister: “Because I am a Human. — I do not have confidence in myself. Doesn’t the blood of a pathetic serf flow through these veins? Am I not a human being who is worth just as much as an insect? Such thoughts and impressions are surely in your heart somewhere. But, especially because of that, I want you to know that I am a Human. I fulfil every condition that comes with being a Human.”

Elder Maid Sister: “When the sun shines through the clouds on an early morning day, and your eyes are bathed in its warm glow, do you not feel warm in your heart? Are you not thankful for the kindness and blessings the world has shown to you? That is proof that each of us are the beloved children of the Spirit of Light!”

Grand Inquisitor: “Heresy!”

Elder Maid Sister: “I do not care if you call me a heretic. I am a Human, I have received the blessings of the people of the Village of Wintering, my friends and comrades.”

Elder Maid Sister: “Everyone..... Hope. Believe. Think. Do not cease to work. The Spirit..... The Spirit will continue to bestow miracles onto us all, and charge the land with his blessings, he will give freedom to our fragmented souls.”



Smallpox: A disease transmitted through the air with a high death rate. It is a scary disease that leave pock marks on a person’s skin even after he has recovered, that last for a life time. During the Colonialisation of the Americas, white people brought smallpox to the Native Americans who had never developed a resistance to it, resulting in the near annihilation of their race.

Freedom?

Elder Maid Sister: “That’s right. The freedom to do good things. The freedom to be better people. The Spirit created humans capable of doing good, and the freedom to work hard every day, for the things we want to achieve. I am — happy for this.”

Elder Maid Sister: “That is why we must work hard and never give up! We are all gifts from the Holy Spirit of Light, even if you are the King! Even if you are the Church! Each and every one of us is a Holy Treasure!”

Grand Inquisitor: “Heresy! Shut that mouth of yours!”

Elder Maid Sister: “I will not. I am a Human. I am a Holy Treasure of the Spirit. I will not go back to being an insect. No matter how hard it is, how much suffering I have to endure, I will hold on my treasure and I will never again return to that dark slumber. Because there is light! Because I will do good things!”

Grand Inquisitor: “Stone this heretic! Do something! Citizens, stone this heretic and shut her mouth! All who do not, are traitors!”

Crowd murmurs

Elder Maid Sister: “Stone me if you feel like it. In this world, to protect your families, to protect yourselves, sometimes you have to stone people. I will bear this responsibility. Because I am a Human just like yourself.

If there are any among you who wish to stone me to save yourself or others, then you should. This freedom of choice is again something that we humans possess. I bleed just as you will bleed, and I will bear the burdens on my body.”

Lone Winter King: “..... Hehe.”

Elder Maid Sister: “But those who will stone me, because they have been instructed to stone me and for no good reason! You are just insects. You have no free will, you have given the gifts bestowed upon you by the Spirits to somebody else. Those who do not think for themselves are just insects.

No matter how easy it is to take such a route, those who give their gifts away are just insects. I despise insects. I will not become an insect. Because I am a Human!"

Stone

Stone!

Stones flying through the air!

Grand Inquisitor: "Stop! You're supposed to stone that disgusting heretic! You uncontrollable peasants! Damn you! Arrest them! Arrest everyone here! Inquisitors! It's obvious now that she's a Heretic! This woman! Chop off her head!

A, ahh. The Scholar. What the Scholar said is.....

Elder Maid Sister: (I'm sorry, Hero..... I said I would leave it to the Hero, but..... I cannot any longer. Chief Maid. I had hoped to call you..... Just one time..... 'Teacher'.....)

Blocks with sword

Lone Winter King: "I won't allow any of that."

The Female Paladin: "....." *Sword flashes* "Can you stand?"

Elder Maid Sister: "Yeah..... Yeah....."

Grand Inquisitor: "What is the meaning of this!?"

Lone Winter King: "I am the King of this land!"

Grand Inquisitor: "!"

Lone Winter King: "But, I stand before you as a Human. I was the ruler of a Kingdom that was merely the dog of the Central Continent, a dog that was chained and tied up, in enduring this suffering, this pain, and without intending it, along the way, my heart became that of an insect.

..... But, this girl has taught me something. I was just scared. And I will become a source of pride for the people of my Kingdom!"

Lone Winter King! Lone Winter King! Lone Winter King!

Long live the King! Long live the King! And the Female Paladin!

The Female Paladin: "I am one who has devoted her life in service to the Spirit of Light, Grand Inquisitor, I am ashamed of your behaviour. And of the behaviour of the Church of the Central Continent. The Spirit of Light once said, "Do right what you have done wrong." That is why he gave each of us the freedom to make mistakes....."

Grand Inquisitor: "What are you trying to say, you fools!?"

Lone Winter King: "My Kingdom of Winter will officially protect the Crimson Scholar."

The Female Paladin: "The Order of the Lake will declare the Crimson Scholar a saint."

Grand Inquisitor: "!?"

Crowd roars

His Majesty, His Majesty is going to protect the Scholar!

I knew the Scholar wasn't a heretic!

The Templars have said it, she's a saint!

Go back! Go back! Go back to your country, Grand Inquisitor!

Stones flying everywhere!

The Female Paladin: "Please leave, Grand Inquisitor."

Lone Winter King: "If this is a scheme of the Church, then..... I trust we will see it again in another form. But for now, you will leave."

Grand Inquisitor: "Oh! I will remember this! This heretical nation! Those who betray the Spirit of Light and His Church in the Central Continent, will not long exist on this earth!"

— Epilogue

A Game of Life which is intertwined with the future

A Cellular Automaton of hope and disappointment

Where every ray of light seems to fade into the dark, she endures excruciating pain. The pain is more like regret than the pain of loss, as her limbs are bound by the curse of the darkness she writhes in.

Lives will be made and countless will be lost.

The Demon King and the Hero, they will save the descendants of life! The world is massive and overflowing, and life comes in many forms. That which is beautiful will stay beautiful, that which is strong will stay strong. In order to preserve this balance, who knows how much blood will be shed?

While she was gone, the world has changed.

While she will probably save the world, she has also ripped the world as we know it apart.



Game of Life: This is a computer model created in 1970 by the British mathematician John Conway, it attempts to simulate the rise, fall and alterations of a society of living organisms. It is a type of cellular automaton.

Cellular Automaton: A cellular automaton is a type of computer model which lays down a set of simple rules along a large grid of cells by which a virtual object is created or destroyed, in an attempt to simulate what would happen in real life situations. This is particularly useful to Mathematics, but is also applied to Biology and Chemistry.

Is this an unforgiveable sin? She will have to bear the responsibility of her actions.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry....."

Apologies can be ceaseless, and this chain of apologies, were more like curses one makes against oneself.

A long time has passed. She cannot tell, but she has already forgotten the feeling of that black hair against her finger tips, the warmth of her love.

Those who forget what it means to live, are not actually living. Those who forget their original objective, even if they keep going forward, even if they continue every step, they forget pain, and just keeps on walking. Occasionally, they come across a familiar scene, but they do not remember what it is.

If they do recall the scene, the pain is enough to make them stop their steps. To keep on moving forward, to carry on with your life, it is best to forget.

She was no exception. She forgot.

The words they exchanged, the feeling of him against her finger tips, the strong gusts of wind from the wide open air.

She no longer understood the responsibility she had for the people in the World below. This soul born in inky blackness knew only to move forward, and to destroy things in her way.

As her limbs were bound, her soul clutched on to an idea, all that was left of her original consciousness, and she simply prayed. "Save the people of the world" "Restore balance to the Universe".

"And let us meet again—"

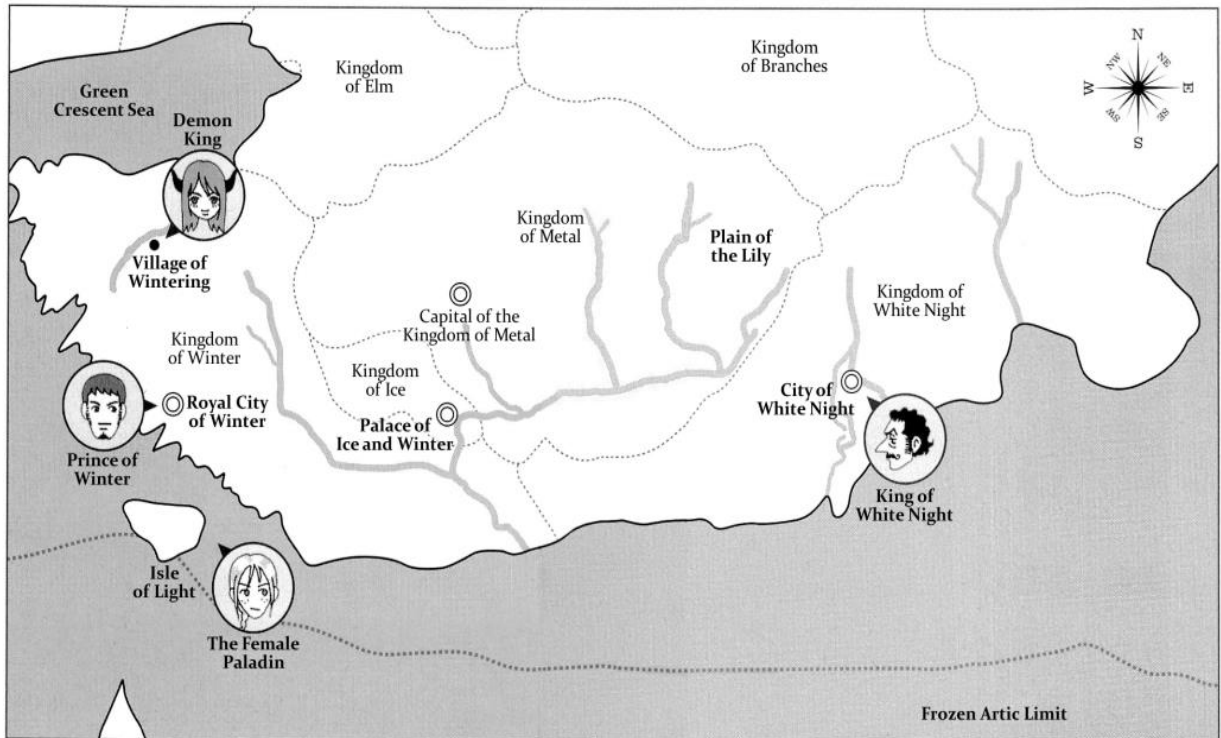
What she would say when they did meet again, what she wanted to say, more than anything else, was soon forgotten.

Chapter 11: “Because I am Human”

A green light flashed from time to time in this inky blackness, she curled up and writhed in pain, as her voice was drowned by the dark of the abyss.

To be continued in Maoyuu Maou Yuusha Volume 2.....

— The Stage of Danger, the Southern United Kingdoms



Firstly, the most important thing is to note that in this world, the South is colder and the North is warmer. In other words, it's similar to the Southern Hemisphere of our world.

The Southern United Kingdoms, the Stage of Danger, lies to the extreme South of the Continent, the coldest and poorest part of the land. A wide expanse of land, land is in good supply, but the population is relatively sparse.

Since the Demons invaded the Central Continent from the South, the frontline of the Humans have often been in this region.

The first snow usually falls in October. During this time, the temperature is comparable to January in Tokyo. From December to February, the average temperature is subzero, indeed a harsh winter.

Summer temperatures are not extremely hot. The average August temperature is comparable to May in Tokyo.

In this land, wheat is difficult to grow. Winter-resistant crops like barley and oats are common.

The Village of Wintering is to the north of the Southern Kingdoms, hence wheat cultivation is possible. In the area around the Winter Capital, wheat cultivation is next to impossible.

Food, especially wheat crops and other crops which are normally grown and bountiful in the North are sent to the Southern United Kingdoms from the Kingdoms of the Central Continent. This dependence is somewhat shameful.

However, the Summers in the South are beautiful, the flowers that were buried in the snow, spring forth their shoots at the same time and bloom all at once. The people cherish their short summer, and during this time, they work as hard as they can, celebrate festivals, sing and make love. This land of simple people, this is the Southern United Kingdoms.

— Explanation by Game Designer Masuda Shouji

My Encounter with Maoyuu

As the founder of the project to turn Maoyuu Maou Yuusha into a full Light Novel, I thought I should just write a little something in the first Volume. In any case, starting from the second novel, I will be bringing in various names from the entertainment industry to give some comments and explanations, so look forward to that!

Right then, allow me to give a simple explanation into the novelisation of Maoyuu.

We completed the novelisation in late April this year (2010). While we working on a certain game, we realised there were many points for improvement. This was not my responsibility, so I waited for that to be completed.

I had no interest in going anywhere, so, during Golden Week, my family went to see my parents-in-law and left me alone at home. Suddenly, I was completely free to do things.

Translator's Explanation

Golden Week: A series of public holidays in the Japanese calendar from late April to May consisting of Showa Day (April 29), Constitution Memorial Day (May 3), Greenery Day (May 4) and Children's Day (May 5). Most Japanese people take leave in the days in between in order to extend their holiday period, going on vacation to other parts of Japan or abroad.

Since there was nothing to do, I just surfed the web and the forums aimlessly. Suddenly, a series of comments appeared on my monitor:

Demon King: "Become mine, Hero"

The Hero: "I refuse."

Many people were making the same comments at the same time. I began to become curious as to what these comments meant.

Demon King: "Become mine, Hero"

The Hero: "I refuse."

Just what did that mean? Feeling curious, I did a quick search, and that led me to a Light Novel written on a certain forum.

When I started reading the novel, at first, it was just to kill time. Soon, I became absorbed by the horizontal lines of text which I scrolled past on my monitor. It felt like a skit, comprised only of dialogue. The characters didn't even have names. Moreover, there were spelling errors everywhere. It was incredibly difficult to read.

But, I couldn't stop.

"Oh my god, it's brilliant!!" — was what I thought as I read it during Golden Week.

All I needed to spread this amazingness around was to make it into a form which was easier to read, in other words, all I needed was to novelise it.

This novel had an idea and a content no one had ever seen before. Twitter was teeming with chatter, it was so interesting, people didn't need to say anything more than — "Read it!"

While it may have been a bit too late, one thought ran through my mind — "This has potential." I uploaded a few lines of a recommendation letter onto my blog.

I am always shocked by the speed and efficiency of modern technology. Two days later, I was contacted by the author on Twitter. I wondered, just what kind of fool would be capable of writing such a fantastical book.

And that's when I met the Editor. I asked him, "The only issue is whether or not you've made inquiries with publishers, isn't it?" It was true, that would solve half of our problems if we could secure a publisher.

The reply was immediate. "No, but I have secured some investors willing to publish independently." I was stunned by this reply.

Up to know, I had nearly forgotten why I had become so invested with this novel. Two days from that day, I was due to meet with publishers for "Kizudarake no Biina" and "Transparent Cat and Elderly Sister" (novels which I had written myself!!), yet I felt that more people would probably be interested in this work, and that it was my mission to show it to the world..... How free I was, eh? (LOL)

Moreover, during this time, I met up with my fellow game designers and the writers of many fantasy dictionaries, Yamakita Atsushi and the Hosoes; the Character Designer Mizutama Keinojou; and Main Illustrator toi8, and involved them into the project.

They would deny it, but apart from me, they were the most involved in the project.

Determination is truly something to be feared. Two days later, we met with our Publishers and were told, “It’s good to go.” It was like something from a dream.

An Epic Novel written in the Twenty-First Century

“My God, it’s amazing!!” — was my first impression.

Reading it all together as a full novel completely removed the sense of fragmentation that was evident in the original Maoyuu.

More than 99% of the book is written in dialogue, in other words, it’s an epic play. To a scholar of Ancient Literature or someone involved in the Theatre Scene, it may not really be so, but that’s the way it is.

The characters have no concrete or personal names, they are all known by their titles: the Demon King; the Hero; the Chief Maid; the Female Paladin.

To put it clearly, it would be difficult for an ordinary person to read.

To be perfectly honest, it is similar to a Kyougen or a Rakugo, or any other stage performance. In a Kyougen, the performer assumes the roles of stock characters, without personal names. In a Rakugo, the performer is speaking to someone who cannot even be seen..... Like the characters of Maoyuu, they have no concrete names.

Translator’s Explanation

Kyougen and Rakugo: These are traditional Japanese stage comedies typically performed by males. Kyougen is usually performed as part of a Noh performance and features stock characters, typically a Servant and a Master. Rakugo is usually

performed alone, and consists of a man sitting down for the entirety of the performance, delivering either a monologue or assuming two personas variously.

However, a work without names can be very interesting as well. This is because the character comes to represent the everyman, rather than a special character. This allows it deal with a wide range of topics. Such a format is not uncommon in other performances like Kabuki.

This is also the reason why this format has become obsolete. As media reports increase, people gain different hobbies and interests, and lose the idea of togetherness in favour of individuality. As a result, today's entertainment, led by Hollywood, favours a highly individual protagonist.

Then, why is Maoyuu written in this way?

That is probably because of its special beginnings on a forum on the Internet.

This is the fruit of the labours of a cadre of like-minded otaku, who worked day and night on the forums, with internet slang flying about. It was so bad, that a person who was not intricately familiar with anime, comics and video games would find the text nearly unreadable. In other words, it was specially catered for fans who enjoyed such a deep level of explanation, a deep conversation.

In such circumstances, Maoyuu was born.

Here, millions of people who shared the same vision naturally gathered in Japan, without making any grand, deliberate plans, we developed our own uniquely interesting culture and kept it alive for hundreds of years.

The large majority of the users of the forum were only interested in their own interests and their own gains, they had no interest in creating a work for the rest of the world. However, the miracle was yet to come.

As a novelisation, we also had to consider the foreign market, as we put together this Kabuki-like book. This was a hurdle much larger than one would face in a typical novel.

With the exception of correcting the grammatical errors, I attempted to keep to the original text as far as possible as I compiled this novel. There was a charm that could only be captured in maintaining the script of dialogues in the text.

Large chunks of exposition, character and setting descriptions and the names of characters were boldly removed. All that was left was a dense and highly intelligent novel. And above all, an engaging read which compelled one to follow the text at astonishing speeds.

It was perplexing until I got used to it, but when I began, I could never stop. This is Maoyuu.

Even if the Hero takes down the Demon King, the World will not be at Peace

“My God, this is amazing!!” — I said, for the second time.

From the epic tales of Ancient Greece to modern Anime and TV Games, in every age, in every media, Thrilling Legends have been repeated countlessly. The large majority of these feature a climax where the Ally of Justice (the Hero), having battled repeatedly with the Great Evil (the Demon King), finally takes down the Demon King and restores peace to the world, bringing a joyous and successful conclusion to the epic.

However, at the same time, as you watch TV and read the news, as you are fixated on online animations, have you ever considered this? Even if the Hero takes down the Demon King, the reality may not be as sweet. In fact, the world could be even more complicated. Since they reached the age where they began to doubt the existence of Santa Claus, even children know that Morality Plays may just be fairy tales.

Then, why are such lies still continuously being propagated? Why doesn't anyone try to describe the truth?

There are a few reasons for this.

The first is that, as I said before, Morality Plays are often necessary. They make people happy and they sell well.

The next thing to consider is something purer. There is something to be said for the vision of the author being a portal by which the world willingly deceives itself, in order to make reality easier to cope with.

If the idea was simply that the Hero and the Demon King joined forces, while they may go through long journeys and run into many difficulties, from an Entertainment Media perspective, there's no way it can sell.

Cornered on all sides, the main characters the Hero and the Demon King face the difficulties head on. The author of such a novel, is none other than Mamare Touno.

All three of them are fools. But because of these fools, we have five volumes. Before editing, we had at least ten volumes worth of material, anyone who had to read that would be hugging their head in pain and frustration at the length.

Moreover, the first challenges the Demon King and the Hero fought to overcome were things like Agricultural Revolution, Education and the Cultivation of Potatoes. (*LOL*) I had never before encountered such seemingly trivial conflicts in the world of novels.

However, perhaps due to the conversational format of the text, there was a certain speed by which things like the Agricultural Revolution seemed to take place, giving it an unceasing intensity that kept it a good read.

The dynamics of the story escalated dynamically. What began as economics grew in complexity to encompass elements of social, political and religious institutions.

In this manner, no matter how unbelievable the abilities which the Hero and the Demon King held were, these were not issues they could tackle on an individual basis.

It was real.

Because of that, when I first read the novel, I personally felt — “I am sold on how challenging the issues they face are, but this is where it ends.

Unfortunately, at this rate, this story is going to become anticlimactic. It is, after all, the work of an amateur.”

However, the true face of Maoyuu, the true plot, was just beginning.

The Feeling of Surpassing the Second and Third Lines

“My God, this is amazing!!” — before I say this for the third time, let me digress for a bit. This is a story about Soccer.

In the Golden Week which I began reading Maoyuu, the World Cup had just begun. Since I was so free, I watched the battles which were raging between the various countries of the war on my television.

The team I supported was the Netherlands. The way they played soccer was by using a brilliant defence as their greatest offence.

The forward was Robin van Persie. This was his first World Cup, but true to form, he was a brilliant athlete.

This guy was a true talent, but he was truly supported by his teammates. The true strength of the Netherlands’ football team were Robben and Sneijder, who could push the ball with an amazing speed through the second and third lines of defence.

They could basically just run through the defence. (LOL)

To leave their own positions and move closer to the goal in order to execute such a daring attack took a reckless and headstrong bravery. Watching this made my heart beat furiously.

Actually, I had the same feelings as I read Maoyuu.

Using a format comprised entirely of dialogue, with their names replaced by their titles, the main characters the Demon King and the Hero crossed the second and third lines of defence.

This page-flipping intensity led me to conclude — “Maoyuu is the real deal.” This wave of intensity, contrary to my early expectations, did not drop but rose from the second volume onwards. I was really looking forward to the next volumes.

Just like Magic!

After the long battle of reading through all five volumes of this novel, the story ends, as expected with — “And so the balance of the world was restored. And they all lived happily ever after.”

You feel good, and there are no loose ends left hanging: a real happy ending. It did not betray my expectations.

However, in seeing the Demon King and the Hero work hard to put the world back into balance, I realised that I had always expected Maoyuu to go beyond the standard Adventure Story or Heroic Story and betray those expectations after all.

Reality is not so sweet. There will always be embers left glowing.

There were many readers who pointed that out as well.

That’s why it seemed like the world suddenly became prosperous and happy, just like magic! I’m not sure if it was in the original novel, but I went and added it in on my own accord.

I don’t want to spoil what happens in Volumes 4 and 5, but please look forward to it.

28th October 2010

Project Leader and Translator : HandsomeBoh a.k.a Kai

Supervisor : Hantsuki

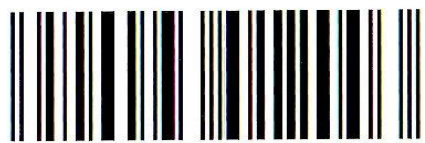
Editor : Rryw

Typesetter : Yon Devil Hands

Translation Group : NanoDesu Translations



9784047269330



1920093012003

ISBN978-4-04-726933-0

C0093 ¥1200E

発行：エンターブレイン

定価 本体 1200円 + 税

