



AN ARCHDEMON'S DILEMMA:HOW TO LOVE YOUR ELF BRIDE

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“Ah...”

Decarabia couldn't even let out a scream and was swallowed by the dragon's jaws. The sorcerer known as Decarabia was truly consigned to oblivion in a single bite, just as Foll had said.



The girl had a single older brother. He was awkward, a little crafty, but nevertheless, he was an older brother who was only ever kind to the girl.

The siblings had no relatives and lived a life where they scrounged for food in the garbage they found in the alleyways of the city. But even so, her brother was educated. He could read. He even taught her how to read just a little and gave her a picture book that he stole from somewhere as a present.

The picture book became her treasure. She would read it aloud proudly to the other homeless children, and the girl immersed herself in the world of the picture book.

And on a certain day, her brother became a sorcerer.

He lost an eye, and had a creepy artificial eye in its place, but her brother was still kind. He got her pretty clothes, fed her delicious meals, and even gave her a house to live in. She was even able to clean herself and was given the happiness of a 'normal' person.

However, for some reason she was never allowed into her brother's room. She was no longer able to go meet with the children she grew up with in the streets, but even so, she was grateful to her brother. Once in a while, the children who were worried about her would come to visit, so she wasn't lonely. They laughed at her saying that she looked like a completely different person though.

However, after that passed for some time, her brother became strange. He would shut himself into his room, and there were times when he wouldn't show himself before her even when she called out to him. When they met once in a while, he would start scratching his right eye to the point where he drew blood, and a nasty scent came from his room that stunk of corrupted gold and blood.

Unable to bear it any longer, the girl waited for her brother to go out and entered his room. What she found... was hell.

An entire wall was smeared with rotten blood and meat. There was a massive bed in the middle of the room with indescribable tools scattered all around it.

And on the bed were the bodies of dead children with anguished expressions still on their faces. She could tell that these were the waifs who came to visit her. And just then, her brother came back. The girl ran away screaming in tears.

However, her brother chased her.

She escaped into the nearby forest, but was caught.

“Even you would betray me?” Her brother screamed.

He tore apart her clothes and assaulted her.

‘Aah, so my life ends here,’ she thought.

And just then, a single young man showed up. He glared at her brother like he was filth, and mercilessly killed him as if swatting away a bug. All that was left of her brother was the lower half of his body leaning over her. Her brother had left this world. And then...



“...Geh, yucky.”

Foll spat a human body out of the black dragon’s mouth, and Zagan gently stroked his beloved daughter’s back.

“Hey, is your stomach alright? Don’t put weird things in your mouth.”

“Zagan, so overprotective.”

Foll then spat something else out from the black dragon’s mouth. What rolled on the ground with a light sound was the artificial silver eye.

“Foll, did you break down just the curse inside the black dragon?”

“Mm. This is a curse to begin with, so I thought it could maybe eat just the curse... But, it’s really yucky.”

“...That’s pretty amazing... but you shouldn’t do it anymore.”

“I also don’t want to.”

Zagan looked down at the human spat out by the black dragon. He had lost his silver eye, his mantle was gone, and the ominous bandages wrapped around him were undone. It even looked like his body was a size smaller than before. But nevertheless, it appeared that he was alive, and broke into an intense coughing fit.

“Ugh... ah... Za... gan...?”

Nevertheless, he called out to Zagan the moment he noticed him. So Zagan gently brushed Foll’s head.

“Well done. You did great, Foll. Seems he regained enough of his mind to have a conversation.”

Having said that, it was suspicious whether he was even aware of what just happened to his body. After being praised, Foll smiled broadly just like a child and gripped Zagan’s hand which was petting her. She then rubbed it against her head even more.

Is this maybe the first time I’ve seen Foll so happy?

After petting his beloved daughter, Zagan finally noticed the irregularity before him.

“Huh? Could this guy be...”

Decarabia’s body shrunk. Zagan thought he was somewhat dissolved within the black dragon, but that wasn’t the case. His naked body was dainty, and his waist was slender. Above all else, he now had breasts that shouldn’t have been present on a man.

Decarabia was actually a girl?

Zagan immediately denied that thought. Even he could tell the difference between sexes at a single glance. Decarabia’s lanky skeletal frame was that of a man, and he had an Adam’s apple in his throat. Sorcery could change one’s muscular structure quite a bit during reinforcement, but it wouldn’t make breasts go away or anything. In other words, the Decarabia that Zagan defeated and the one collapsed here were physically different people.

“What’s going on? Does the curse of that artificial eye even change one’s sex?”

A curse was a calamity that couldn’t be measured on the simple scales of sorcery. It could even change someone from a child to an adult and vice versa, so it wasn’t all that weird to be able to change one’s sex, but at this point the only commonality was the color of their hair. There was far too much change here.

No... maybe the artificial eye itself is what created the sorcerer known as ‘Decarabia’ to begin with?

In that case, it would explain how the bandit that Zagan killed showed up before him once more. But then who was this girl? At the very least, she wasn’t the bandit Decarabia that Zagan killed before. However, when he went to take a look at her face, he couldn’t see it clearly because of the saliva and dirt which stained it.

“Huh...? Hang on...”

But precisely because she was so dirty, Zagan felt like he recognized her. And so, he spoke in a tone like he couldn’t believe it himself.

“It can’t be... are you... Stella?”

It was the name of one of the waifs who hung out with Zagan and Marc. However, that’s what convinced him too.

Both me and Stella learned arts from Marc...

It was inevitable then that their styles would be similar; Zagan didn’t know of anyone else who learned those arts.

The girl looked up at Zagan with an empty gaze.

“Ste... la...? Ugh...” She pinned down her head and squirmed about. “Stella...? Me...? Then... my brother...? Who... am I...?”

“H-Hey! Stella! Keep it together!”

Zagan was left completely confused.

Brother? Sister...? It couldn’t be... Decarabia and Stella were siblings?

But in that case, who was the Decarabia who was standing before Zagan moments ago? A daughter...?

Stella stretched out her hand as if imploring him for something.

“Zagan... save...”

And just as he was about to grasp her hand...

“My my, as expected of the Archdemon Zagan! Even the one who defeated Archdemon Andrealphus is nothing before you, huh!? Mm! I totally believed that you would win!”

The one giving completely barefaced praise while clapping his hands in an exaggerated manner was none other than Michael. Stella reflexively looked over to him and suddenly cradled her shoulders while trembling.

“Ah... A-A-A-Aaaaaah... No way... Teacher...”

Michael stuck up his index finger while shaking his head.

“Oh? I don’t think I ever had a cute little girly like yourself as a student or an attendant or anything, you know? But whatever, it’s the duty of an Archangel to guide such lost maidens too.”

A sharp metal ringing suddenly reverberated in the air. Michael had drawn his Sacred Sword before anyone noticed, and its blade was now vibrating in the air. Zagan had repelled it with his fist. After throwing down his clothes onto Stella’s shoulders, Zagan was suddenly wearing his usual robes.

It was the same sorcery he had used when he was turned into a child. He then stood before Stella and Foll as if to cover them.

“Foll. I’ll leave her to you. It just may be that she’s someone precious to me right behind you and Nephy.”

“...Mm. I’ll do my best.”

After verifying that his daughter gave him a reassuring nod, Zagan glared at Michael, who simply shrugged his shoulders without showing a hint of timidity.

“Hey now, cut the jokes will you? Didn’t I tell you already I have no intention of tangling with you?”

“Shut it. Just how long do you plan on keeping up that shameless farce, Michael? Or should I call you this instead... Archdemon Andrealphus?”

“Wha...!?”

Several surprised voices rang out at once. The Angelic Knights were all frozen with shock, and Chastille was shaking her head like she couldn't believe it at all.

“Please wait, Zagan. There's no mistaking that this man is Archangel Michael. I guarantee it.”

“I bet he is then. However, this guy has another title.”

“And you're saying my second title is Archdemon?” Michael said with a chuckle, “Don't be stupid. There's no way a Sacred Sword would pick an Archdemon, right? Besides, Andrealphus was killed by Decarabia over there, right?”

“Give me that kind of ridiculous excuse only after you've put some effort in hiding it.” Zagan thrust out a finger at Michael. “After Marchosias died, you became the head of the twelve Archdemons. Did you think I would forget your face after seeing it when I inherited the Sigil of the Archdemon?”

“Hmm. I see. You're just as bold as ever. I feel like you've gotten even gutsier since becoming an Archdemon.”

Just as Michael replied, suffocating mana flooded the area. And on Andrealphus' right hand was a Sigil of the Archdemon, just like Zagan's.

“No way... Impossible...” Chastille groaned despondently.

“Claiming something is impossible is simply abandoning any thought. It's negligent to use such a word as one of the Archangels who form the counterparts of the Archdemons, Chastille.”

“If I loosen my guard, I'll get killed.” The moment Chastille's instinct told her that, she held her Sacred Sword at the ready. There was an overwhelming pressure here that felt like it could cover the entire island. Zagan however simply ignored it as something boring and lightly swung his fist as if batting away an insect.

And with a sharp clang, the pressure over the island dispersed. The light had

vanished from both Andrealphus' and Zagan's sigils.

"I thought I told you to stop your shameless farce, Andrealphus."

"...Hey now, you just spoiled all my effort in putting on a big dramatic atmosphere here." The overwhelming pressure vanished completely, and in a complete turn, Andrealphus simply scratched his head as if this was all simply tiresome. "Well, don't be so angry. Lemme just tell you now that I haven't lied at all okay? Indeed, I didn't plan anything, since it was all too troublesome. It's also true that guy killed the one who was acting as the Archdemon Andrealphus."

Zagan squinted his eyes.

"A homunculus?"

"Bingo."

Just as he wondered how one person could hold the title of both and Archangel and Archdemon, it turned out the role of the Archdemon was left to a homunculus he made as a duplicate of himself.

Though it seems the one I met that time was the real deal.

Nephteros bit down on her lips. It wasn't enough to completely shake her, but it surely wasn't something she liked listening to.

"There's about a one in a thousand chance that some mutation will occur when you make a homunculus you see? So there are cases where one is born with an ego. Well, I left the role of the Archdemon up to him, but it seems Decarabia's discipline was out of his reach... he was actually quite talented too."

It was complete nonsense that an Archdemon would seek retribution for another, but the fact that this man chased Decarabia may have been about revenge in a certain sense.

"Tch, so you're saying you had no intent to antagonize me? Then why did you bring Decarabia here?" Zagan replied.

Decarabia didn't possess any sorcery to leap over space. However, no ships came anywhere close to the island. Zagan had already checked that nobody was present on this island when he arrived. So in that case, just how did Decarabia

arrive?

“Oh come on, how did I end up being the one who brought him over? My ship got sunk and I ended up drifting here too you know?”

“And I didn’t hear anything about who else was on that ship.”

His boat was the only one to draw near to this island other than the one Zagan’s group used. And so, Andrealphus shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

“Oops, guess I forgot about that. I was the only one moving the ship, but I feel like maybe there was someone else riding along.”

His roundabout phrasing irritated Zagan. It was certainly true that this man hadn’t lied, but he didn’t tell them the whole truth either. He was the same as Alshiera in that regard.

“You bastard...”

“Hang on now, it’s not fair that you’re the only ones getting to ask questions here. Haven’t you heard of paying respect to your elders?” Andrealphus then turned to Foll. “By the way, little dragon. You guys had a fishing competition, right?”

“We did. What about it?”

Andrealphus then put on a sociable smile.

“I started late, but I’m participating too. My catch was that Decarabia over there. How was it? Don’t you think I fished up the best prey?”

Foll turned to look at Stella behind her, and after pretending to think it over it for a while, she returned a small nod.

“It really was the most... horrible tasting one.”

Andrealphus nodded in satisfaction.

“So, that’s how it is. Doesn’t that mean I have a right to the prize too?”

“Hmm. So what do you wish for? Just try saying it.”

Zagan knew full well what his answer would be; there was no need to ask, but he did nonetheless. And Andrealphus put on an impudent smile as if anticipating that.

“I’d like you to return my disciple over there to me. I’ve spent quite a bit of time on her.”

I see, not a student or an attendant... but a disciple.

It was certainly true that he hadn’t lied. Students and disciples were similar, but disciples implied that they were being taught one’s characteristic sorcery. Zagan gave a glance over to Stella who started trembling violently with a start, then replied with a smile.

“I refuse.”

“...Thought so...”

That was the last they had to say, and also the signal for the battle to begin. Zagan clenched his fists. Andrealphus gripped his Sacred Sword. And the two Archdemons stepped forth.



A metallic echo rang in the air continuously. It looked like the two Archdemons were simply glaring each other down without moving a muscle. But even so, blinding sparks were constantly flying about between them.

Heaven’s Scale was already wrapped around Zagan’s fist, and each time sparks went flying in the air, his fist appeared hazy. Zagan’s fist and Andrealphus’ Sacred Sword were continuously clashing.

Andrealphus brought his Sacred Sword straight down at Zagan, and Zagan used the back of his fist to strike the flat of the sword. Zagan then aimed his fist right at Andrealphus’ face, which was quickly blocked by his sword.

Having struck Heaven’s Scale twice, even the Sacred Sword had cracks running along its edge. However, it consumed the mana around them to immediately restore itself. Andrealphus moved to strike with a horizontal sweep once more, and Zagan blocked and returned the strike in kind, once more sending sparks flying into the air.



Both of them were simply scoping the other out, only using a single hand to fight. That was exactly why it looked like they weren't moving to those watching them. And with their exchange of offense and defense still going on, Andrealphus let out a bored voice.

"Hey Zagan. This is what we call pointless repetition. It'll never end like this you know?"

"You've already seen the hands I have to play while I haven't seen anything yet. I'll be somewhat careful about it."

"Oh, you're right, aren't you? But it's not like I set Decarabia on you 'cause I wanted to see what you could do you know? How 'bout I show you one of my hands as an apology?"

Andrealphus brought his attacks to a stop and gripped the blade of his own Sacred Sword, causing blood to flow along the blade.

"Now then, it's been quite some time. Sing to your heart's content."

Zagan put his fists up at the ready.

Is that the Sacred Sword's spiritual power?

Just like how Chastille could manipulate light, and how Raphael could manipulate flames, this man was also capable of releasing the Sacred Sword's power. And so, just what extent of power could an Archdemon draw from a Sacred Sword? Zagan vigilantly put himself on guard, and was left completely dumbfounded in the next instant.

"Angelic Confession — Zachariel."

Black light surged out of the Sacred Sword. The trembling blade gave off a sound like someone playing a wind instrument. It should have sounded rather ominous, but it was a melody which was somehow calming to the heart. The black light didn't assault Zagan, but instead wrapped around Andrealphus' body.

"Take a good look, Chastille. It's been two hundred years since this has been used in this world. Even Raphael wasn't able to reach this stage. This is the final form of the Sacred Sword."

What eventually manifested was a sinister yet beautiful set of armor adorned with wings. It's size easily doubled that of Andrealphus himself, who was quite tall to begin with. Its gauntlets looked large enough to grasp a human body in each hand, and it was gripping an enormous spear made of light. Its form seemed somehow female. The set of armor made of light appeared transparent and overlapped with Andrealphus' body.

Andrealphus pulled a striking wooden box out of his Anointed Armor. It seemed that he filched it from their luggage without asking. It was a new box of wrapped tobacco. He took one out, crudely bit off the end and spat it out, put it in his mouth, lit the tip with sorcery, and let out a satisfied puff of smoke.

"There's a lot called seraphs locked up inside each of the Sacred Swords. Well, they're basically something like a living pillar."

"Seraphs...?"

Even Zagan had never heard of such beings.

But that may just be the secret behind the power of the Sacred Swords...

Even when Nephy carved the same Celestial words that were on the Sacred Swords, she was unable to bestow anything with as much power as the originals.

"There are monsters in this world that we call demons, you should've fought against them once or twice already now. They're a lot that someone at the level of an Archangel can only just defeat by trading their life. You ever wonder why the world hasn't ended yet despite that?"

"Are you saying those so called seraphs have been fighting them?"

"Seems so? At the very least, that's what old man Marchosias said."

Hearing the preceding Archdemon's name once more, Zagan squinted his eyes.

Marchosias again? That name's been following me around ever since I came to Atlastia...

Although, if Marchosias had said that, then as the one who was involved with demons one thousand years ago, it was likely the truth. Moreover, Zagan had

faintly felt that was the case. There was *something* paranormal in this world like the gods and devils of legend. Demons, which were befitting of the image of devils, truly existed. In that case, there should have been something out there which conformed to the image of gods.

It was truly vexing that all who knew about it, be it Marchosias or the Wise Dragon Orobas, were all already dead before he could ask them.

“But why is there no record of seraphs ever existing? If they possessed such power, there should be some sort of record of them.”

“Aah, about that...” Andrealphus replied with a look of exasperation and a bitter smile, “Old man Marchosias obliterated them down to their very roots.”

“What!?”

“Seems he had quite the grudge. He completely and utterly wiped them out until there wasn’t even proof that they existed left anymore. That’s why I can’t really answer you if you ask me what exactly these seraphs are either. I’m not lying, you hear?”

Even if he can’t answer me precisely, he must have a clue...

He wanted to ask, but as long as Andrealphus was talking about it the way he was, it was plain as day that he would just dodge the question. Andrealphus simply laughed to imply that he had no intention of telling Zagan any more.

“Oops, my bad. We went off topic there. Anyways, this Sacred Sword has a seraph locked inside it. What we call Confession is the ultimate form of the Sacred Sword where an Angelic Knight dons the seraph itself.” After explaining that much, Andrealphus flicked away his still lit smoke. “Now then, that’s enough downtime. You better not kick the bucket from this as an active duty Archdemon, you hear?”

And the seraph brought down its spear of light. Zagan grasped his mantle with both hands and looked up at the seraph in admiration.

“I see... You don it, huh? That seraph or whatever you call it may unexpectedly stretch out to the same point that sorcery does.”

The spear of light came down, and that black light came to a stop but a hair

away from Zagan's head.

"Heaven's Scale Western Sky."

Zagan's left arm was wrapped in a massive gauntlet made of mana. It extended from his shoulder and was about the same size as Andrealphus' Confession. It was a left arm made entirely of Heaven's Scale. That left arm had grabbed the Confession's spear and brought it to a stop. And since this spell took on the shape of a left arm, there was obviously another...

"Heaven's Scale Eastern Sky."

A massive gauntlet made of mana took shape on Zagan's right side.

The completed form of Heaven's Scale is Dragon Form, but it's too exaggerated a technique to use against an individual person.

The power discharged by Dragon Form was too grand. Just destroying a single target would also destroy everything in the vicinity. It wasn't well suited for destroying a small target. Above all else, it wouldn't be able to keep up with this man's speed. This was a form of Heaven's Scale that Zagan devised for fighting exactly such opponents. The Western Sky blocked the spear. As such, the Eastern Sky was free to act.

"Here we go, don't you die on me either, you hear?"

The fist of the Eastern Sky came crashing in. Andrealphus let out an amused whistle and held up the Confession's left arm. Black light gathered around it, taking on the shape of a shield, intercepting the Eastern Sky. And so, the destructive power they were capable of was...

"So it's even..."

"...Seems so."

With the opening created by Zagan's right fist diving in, the spear of light slipped out of the Western Sky's grasp. Andrealphus' sword was replaced by a spear, and Zagan's fist was replaced with a gauntlet. And their previous exchange of clashes repeated. The speed was the same as before, but the scale of destruction was far greater. Nephy and the others were no longer able to stay near and retreated.

And just then, Andrealphus spoke out in a meddlesome manner as if to spur on Zagan.

“What a blunder. Or maybe it’s just incomplete? You went out of your way to shape it after a human’s hand, so you should’ve at least made a weapon too.”

Zagan’s right fist which was colliding with the shield was fine, but the left arm which was blocking the spear was starting to show cracks. Even the toughest armor would start to break apart if repeatedly struck by a sword. It was only inevitable for the Eastern and Western Sky to eventually break as long as they were just shaped to mimic arms while being assaulted by that spear. However, Zagan let out a snort as if all this was no big deal.

“Do you have holes for eyes? These are barehanded because they don’t need something like a weapon at all.”

It was true that the Confession’s spear was scarring the Eastern and Western Sky, but by the time the spear came in for another strike, the scar was already regenerated. The sorcery known as Heaven’s Scale was one which devoured all power in the vicinity ad infinitum and transformed it into a sturdy shield. The aura of a Sacred Sword was not exempt from this. The Heaven’s Scale was absorbing the Confession’s aura and regenerating itself.

Now realizing that his own power was being devoured, a look of delight flashed across Andrealphus’ face.

“Haahaa. I see. I get why Orias hesitated to make you an Archdemon now! So you can devour both Archdemons and Archangels, huh? Oooh, how scary.”

Even though Zagan was devouring both his mana and aura, the Confession showed no signs of weakening. On the contrary, the spear of light looked to be filled with even more power, and carved a massive fissure in the earth. Its tip could already reach all the way to the edge of the beach, and if he were to cast it into the water, it would send a wave blowing over like a second attack. This island would surely sink in no time if he were to do so.

“Are they both just goddamn monsters here...?” Barbatos groaned.

However, Zagan coldly replied.

“This is my domain. It would be a loss if this island were to sink. You don’t

mind dying already do you?”

“Don’t be that way. You may have forgotten, but my primary occupation is that of a sorcerer, you know?”

Confession was his power as an Archangel. This man had yet to display his power as an Archdemon. And just then, Chastille screamed out.

“Zagan, the ground!”

And Zagan finally realized it upon hearing her shout. Before he knew it, a massive magic circle was carved into the ground with Andrealphus at its center.

He drew a magic circle with the tip of his spear while attacking!?

He wasn’t just swinging around his black spear meaninglessly, its tip had drawn a large magic circle emitting black light.

But, sorcery I can devour.

That was supposed to be the case, but Andrealphus wagged his finger in the air.

“Whoa, can you really now?”

And Andrealphus’ sorcery activated. It was likely some grand sorcery appropriate to one named an Archdemon.

But I devoured it!

Andrealphus’ sorcery was broken down, became Zagan’s food, and was now wrapped around Zagan’s arm. He certainly felt that all happen...

But suddenly, Zagan’s chest split open.

“What... the...?”

He was unable to hide his discomposure.

Impossible... I really devoured it!

As proof of that, Zagan’s mana was amplified in proportion to what he absorbed.

“Oh? How mysterious. It worked. Maybe it wasn’t sorcery, huh?”

Hearing Andrealphus say that, both Nephy and Nephteros gulped down.

“It couldn’t be... Celestial mysticism...?”

“There’s no way. I mean, he’s human, right?”

Celestial mysticism was a miracle which could only be used by high elves. If humans were capable of using it, then Bifrons wouldn’t have created Nephteros in the first place.

Zagan then looked down at his own wound.

The wound itself... is from the Sacred Sword...?

Just how did it slip past his ability to devour sorcery and the Heaven’s Scale? Zagan pinned down his wound. He was using sorcery to heal it, but the wound itself wouldn’t close. This also happened when Chastille had cut him; the Sacred Sword’s aura obstructed sorcery from doing anything.

Blood splattered to the ground, creating a red pool at his feet. Zagan had no chance of winning unless he was able to unravel the secret before he fell to a knee.

The sorcery was woven by that magic circle at his feet, right?

Since it was carved using the aura of a Sacred Sword, simple sorcery would be unable to destroy it.

“Eastern Sky.”

Zagan used the Western Sky to shield himself from the Confession’s spear while driving the Eastern Sky down directly from above.

Heaven’s Scale can even absorb the Sacred Sword’s aura.

That was supposed to be the case...

“Whoa, I can’t let you do that—Zachariel!”

A black light poured out of the Sacred Sword itself and repelled the Eastern Sky.

So he can wield the Sacred Sword even while manipulating the Confession?

Moreover, there was the mysterious sorcery that he was unable to devour. It was like taking on three enemies at the same time.

“Now then, that’s all the time you get to think it over. Let’s continue.”

Zagan brought both the Western and Eastern Sky together as if to fortify his defenses.

It’s definitely sorcery, I really did devour something. The problem is the fact that I devoured it but it still activated.

“Take this!”

Andrealphus’ sorcery activated once more.

“Urgh!?”

And once more, blood spurted out of Zagan’s body.

Not yet!

His ability to devour sorcery was functioning normally. Heaven’s Scale wasn’t broken either. Or rather, both were filled with even more power.

So he’s coming in contact?

Andrealphus made a show of tapping his Sacred Sword against his shoulder.

“Isn’t it about time you give up? It’s pretty impressive that you took that attack twice and are still standing. You’re probably already the top of all current Archdemons when it comes to pure toughness, you know?”

The second strike deeply gouged the right side of Zagan’s abdomen. It was causing an even larger amount of blood to pour out than the first strike.

The first was a slash. The second... a thrust?

The fact that he couldn’t heal the wounds meant that it was something caused by the Sacred Sword or the Confession.

In other words, the sorcery itself isn’t a means of attack.

It was sorcery which induced an awfully troublesome phenomenon. And being given such a friendly warning, Zagan made a show of striking the wound in his abdomen.

“You’re being awfully gentle here.”

“Damn straight. Aren’t old geezers meant to raise the youngsters with

promising futures?”

“That’s unwanted consideration. I get the general gist of it.”

Andrealphus’ raised a brow.

“Hmmm. Doesn’t look like you’re bluffing. Okay, this time I’m not gonna hold back the slash, got it?”

Andrealphus replied as if implying that was a hint, to which Zagan replied with a strained smile.

“I’m telling you that’s unwanted consideration. Holding back is something the strong tell the weak.”

Zagan replied haughtily, conversely making Andrealphus smile happily.

“How nice. Youngsters needs to be at least that energetic.”

Andrealphus took the box of tobacco from his pocket.

“Whoops, that’s the last one, huh...? Hey, do you smoke?”

“No. I won’t smoke anything that seems like it’ll make my bride’s meals taste worse.”

“Well that’s unfortunate. You’re missing out on half of life here... You can just puff out all the bad feelings after doing some bloody work you see. If you win, I’ll hand this over.”

“I’m telling you I don’t want it.”

“Now now, just shut up and try it at least once. Here...”

Andrealphus tossed the box over. And at the same time, both Archdemons kicked off the ground. The magic circle at Andrealphus’ feet shined, and his mysterious sorcery activated.

The principle of devouring sorcery is drawing a magic circle identical to your opponent’s.

By weaving the exact same magic circle but a fraction of a second behind the other, it was possible to hijack the flow of mana. That was the principle behind Zagan’s power, and also the basic theory behind Decarabia’s ability to reflect sorcery. However, what would happen if it occurred too late? What would

happen if the original sorcery finished activating in that fraction of a second before he hijacked the flow?

That's why Zagan copied the magic circle even faster than before. He did so faster than what it would take to reflect the sorcery, faster than what it would take it hijack it. Faster even than Andrealphus himself. He stole Andrealphus' sorcery before even absorbing it. And so, Zagan and Andrealphus activated their sorcery at the same time.

"Wh-Wha...?"

When Zagan tried to speak, his voice wouldn't properly come out.

"Hmm. So you really saw through it completely after only seeing it twice. Pretty impressive."

He could tell this was telepathic communication. They were in a world devoid of color. And everything, the box of cigars in the air, Nephy gulping down, Chastille gripping her Sacred Sword looking for an opening, the fluttering foliage of the tree branches overhead, had all come to a stop. If there was one way of explaining this phenomenon...

"Time Stop... That's your sorcery!?"

And Andrealphus made a bitter smile.

"Well, it's not like it really stopped or anything. Time is still flowing, just a little at a time. It's the two of us who have been accelerated you see. One second's become half an hour for us, give or take."

It was a world which functioned at eighteen thousandths of a second. Zagan's ability to devour sorcery took one tenth of a second and would be too slow.

Andrealphus brought the Confession at the ready.

"Well then, let's settle this already."

"Agreed. I'm in the middle of a vacation here."

Zagan's Eastern and Western Sky were still functioning just like Andrealphus' Confession was. From here, it would be a pure match between sword and fist.

"So I say, but I don't like the idea of going second when it's my sorcery at play

here. Here we go!”

Andrealphus was the first to take action. With a single oppressive step, he split the earth even more than before. However, Zagan had also advanced by that time. He opened his fist and held the palm of the Western Sky in front of it. The Confession's black spear came straight at him and collided with the Western Sky, causing cracks to form in Zagan's defenses along with a dull sensation. The tip of the spear pierced through the Western Sky and closed in on Zagan.

Heaven's Scale was broken!?

This was the first time it happened since Raphael had done so. However, the Confession's spear also came to a stop.

“Not bad! But I still have this—Zachariel!”

A black light poured out of the Sacred Sword and came in with a horizontal slash.

However, it's not as powerful as the Confession!

Zagan directed the Eastern Sky towards it.

“Stop it, Eastern Sky!”

And even as the blade cut through the gauntlet, it managed to splendidly catch the sword.

“Tch, seriously?”

Even though he sounded perturbed, Andrealphus was still an Archdemon. He immediately let go of his Sacred Sword and once more called to the Confession.

“But now you're out of hands to play, do it—Confession!”

The Confession released the black spear and used its remaining arm wielding a shield to perform a ramming attack. With both his Western and Eastern Sky used up, Zagan was now defenseless, but nevertheless, Zagan had a smile on his face.

“You've chosen a poor move, Andrealphus.”

Now that the Confession was no longer holding the black spear, the Western

Sky was able to devour it in its entirety. And with all of its damage repaired by the aura it gained from doing so, it was able to regain all of its functionality.

“Capture that bitch, Western Sky!”

It was actually the Confession who was now defenseless. With the Western Sky coming in on its flank, it had nothing it could do to stop it. Andrealphus’ voice even had a tinge of admiration to it.

“Splendid. But, you’re missing the decisive blow.”

Even though Zagan broke through Andrealphus’ techniques, both the Eastern and Western Sky were now sealed. And this man was capable of manipulating the Confession while wielding his Sacred Sword; he was more than capable of fighting without either. He took a leap back out of the range of the Eastern and Western Sky.

“A decisive blow? I have one right here.”

Zagan replied fearlessly to Andrealphus.

You’re not the only one who can fight, you know?

Zagan exhausted both the Eastern and Western Sky to seal the Sacred Sword and the Confession. And in his hands was all the mana he had absorbed from devouring sorcery up until now.

“Guh!!”

Zagan left fist went flying in. Andrealphus’ Anointed Armor shattered like glass. The sensations of ribs breaking and entrails exploding was passed to Zagan’s hand.

“Ga... hak...”

And what awaited Andrealphus’ head, now keeled over and spitting out blood, was Zagan’s right fist.

“It’s been quite a long time since I did this seriously. You’re supposed to be the strongest, right?”

Zagan drove his right fist into Andrealphus’ face. Color returned to the world. The frozen scenery began moving again. Andrealphus went flying face up and

smashed through the trees of the forest.

Everyone who was watching the fight opened their eyes in shock, unable to understand what happened, as the foliage gently fell to the ground.

And as all that happened, Zagan held his right hand out into the air, right where the box of cigars fell. Zagan took out the last smoke, and imitated Andrealphus' actions in biting off the tip. He placed it in his mouth, snapped his fingers, and took a puff.

Red hot ash fell from the tip, and a violent stimulus ran through his chest as he inhaled the smoke. It was the first time he ever experienced such a stimulus, and it gave him a sense of exaltation that he found difficult to describe. And after enjoying that sensation for a while, he puffed out the smoke.

"I see. This isn't bad, but it really isn't something to have before meal."

And thus, things were settled between Zagan and the strongest Archangel, who also served as the strongest Archdemon.



Epilogue

“This King’s Silver Eye is something I created, you see,” Andrealphus said as he picked up the artificial eye Foll spat out. “Well, I’m sure you already have a clue, but this is a replica of something I was researching, and a failure of a magic tool.”

Zagan held his hand out in front of his face.

Silver eye... huh?

The Silver-Eyed King, and the King’s Silver Eye which rivaled the power of the Sigils of the Archdemon. The commonality between the two was the color of the eyes.

Is this also related to Marc?

And how did chasing after Marc connect to Azazel? Zagan endured this haze of thoughts with a sigh as Andrealphus looked over to Stella.

“Well, since my research failed, this thing got considerably cursed, but a couple years ago one of my subordinates stole it and ran off. And I have no clue how it happened, but it fell into the hands of a bandit named Decarabia.”

“And he was killed by me.”

Precisely because he was nothing more than a novice sorcerer, it was easy to see why he would only look like a bandit. Andrealphus nodded at Zagan.

“But, that only made the curse in this thing more troublesome. Maybe because he was swallowed by the curse, or maybe because his broken mind surpassed the curse itself, the artificial eye ended up absorbing Decarabia’s personality.”

Zagan looked down at Stella’s face. She had Zagan’s yukata on her shoulders. Her face was covered by her bangs, but he could still see her right eye was missing entirely. Andrealphus looked at her with pity and continued his explanation.

“The artificial eye took hold of that girl and began to remake her body into that of Decarabia’s... Well, this is something that began with my failure. I thought I had to do something to fix it, but all I could do was slow down the encroachment of the curse.”

That was surely what the eye-patch and bandages were for. There was likely none other than the Archdemons who could seal a massive curse that approached the Sigils of the Archdemon in power.

“Well, those are the circumstances here. The curse suddenly got worse when I was out of the castle, my body double got killed, and I ended up here while chasing Decarabia. Coincidentally, I heard about you breaking through some nasty curse yourself. So I thought if luck was on my side, you’d be able to somehow do something about it.”

How impudent.

Andrealphus would have grasped onto the fact that Zagan was cursed around the time he went to Orias for help. A meeting between two Archdemons was a threat which could shake the foundations of the world. He was likely monitoring Zagan’s movements since then.

In any case, they may have been too late in undoing the curse. Stella was still blankly staring into space, and she wouldn’t react in any meaningful way when they called out to her. Andrealphus looked down at her with a heartbroken expression, and tilted his head to the side.

“So, those are my circumstances. Anyways, why didn’t you kill me?”

There was a pitch black fist mark in Andrealphus’ face, but Zagan didn’t go as far as killing him. It was entirely possible in that situation for him to send Andrealphus’ head flying.

“How did it go again...? Oh yeah. Pay respect to your elders, was it? You held back plenty against me, so all I did was pay respect to that.”

Andrealphus had plenty of time to move all he wanted in that frozen world. There was no need to stop at a single slash like he did. It was entirely feasible for him to strike Zagan down the first time he activated his sorcery.

“Man, you really aren’t cute at all, you brat.” Andrealphus paused, then put

on a serious expression and said, “But, you get it now, right? Your ability to devour sorcery is too convenient. You’ll get defeated by means you shouldn’t lose to, you know?”

What a meddlesome ass.

Devouring sorcery was a power that could be practically considered as invincible against sorcery, but it also meant that he devoured sorcery before he learned what it was. Zagan’s ability to see through the structure of another sorcery in an instant and imitate it should have made it possible for Zagan to steal the sorcery itself. Just like how he stole Andrealphus’ Time Stop sorcery.

Andrealphus went out of his way to stop at a single strike each time just to teach him that. And just how did Andrealphus interpret Zagan’s expression just now?

“In truth, this kinda thing is supposed to be taught to you by your teacher. But you became a sorcerer through sheer effort. That’s terrifying in its own sense, but there’s a limit to what you can gain on your own. That’s why I advise you get a teacher now while you can.”

“And are you saying I should become your damned disciple?”

Zagan glared back at Andrealphus, who simply raised his hands in the air in surrender.

“I’ll excuse myself from taking on a troublesome disciple like you... Although, this in itself might just be unneeded meddling from me after all this.”

Andrealphus cast his gaze over to Gremory and Barbatos.

Well, creating new sorcery with others wasn’t all that bad either...

They may not have been teachers, but he had people with him learning sorcery at his side. Andrealphus put on a slightly strained smile, then looked over to Stella.

“I already have a demanding disciple in my charge here you see. I don’t have the leisure to take on more.” And of all things to do, Andrealphus bowed his head. “That’s how it is. Sorry, but could you return my disciple to me? I promise I won’t treat her poorly.”

“...You’re not screwing with me... right?”

If he was, there was no way an Archdemon would lower their head.

Zagan was left at a loss.

Of the three brats who hung around each other, one became an Archdemon, one holds some sort of secret, and one became the disciple of an Archdemon...

Just what was happening between the three of them? Stella was a clue to all of this.

Above all else, she’s something like an older sister to me.

If Marc was his older brother, Stella was his older sister. There was no way he could abandon her.

Zagan knelt down in front of Stella.

“Stella, can you tell who I am?”

“Za...gan...”

Her eyes were still hollow, but she certainly did say his name nonetheless.

“Then do you know about Marc? That guy who hung out with us when we were brats.”

“Ma...rc..”

Stella pinned down her head in pain.

Even Nephy’s mysticism can’t repair the heart...

Zagan had no way of saving Stella as he was now. And with his gaze still fixed on the pitiful girl, he addressed Andrealphus once more.

“Andrealphus. Are you able to save her?”

“I don’t know if you’ll even believe me, but I took her as my disciple for precisely that reason.”

“...Got it. Come on Stella. Try standing.”

Zagan stood her up, then brought her before Andrealphus.

“Take care of her.”

“I promise I will.”

It wasn't clear if Stella could even tell where she was at the moment. Just as he let go of her hand, for some reason, she came to a complete stop.

“...? What's wrong?”

Zagan cocked his head to the side, as Stella once more grasped his hand. And then, she slowly spoke as if searching for the right words one at a time.

“So...rry... Zagan... I said... something... cruel... to you...”

And that finally lined up the scene in Zagan's memories. It was some time ago, when the girl that Zagan had saved disparaged him. If the bandit Zagan killed at the time was Decarabia, then just who was the girl that was there at the time?

Zagan let out a sigh.

“...Huh? So that was you? You were so pretty that I didn't realize it.”

The Stella in Zagan's memories was always covered in dirt. In contrast, the girl who was assaulted at the time was dressed up beautifully and looked like nothing but some noble princess. They were so different that he never figured they were the same person.

No... maybe I really did realize it already.

It may have been that he just never wanted to think about the girl he thought of as an older sister rejecting him like that. Ever since that incident, Zagan had stopped thinking of Marc and Stella to an unnatural degree, after all.

Stella continued to plead to him with tears falling down her face.

“I wanted... to thank... you... I had... to... but...”

Zagan had no idea what Stella's perception of him was at the time. But if by some chance, she did realize who he was, and he had just stolen the life of her family like he was just a bug...

She may have been the one who was more hurt than me...

Zagan gently hugged the crying girl like it couldn't be helped.

“I get it, don't cry. I'm quite happy just knowing you're still alive.” With that, he rubbed her forehead. “...Go already. Also... if possible... don't get involved

with sorcery. Be happy. That's my wish."

He wasn't sure whether his words got through to her, but it felt like Stella nodded, if only ever so slightly. And after separating from him, both she and Andrealphus vanished completely.

I should have apologized too...

But even so, he wouldn't apologize for killing the sorcerer known as a Decarabia. If he were to apologize over such a thing, Zagan would have to spend the rest of his life continuously apologizing. That was one reason, but he also felt like stealing Stella's one reason for resenting him away would be far too cruel.

After confirming that Andrealphus' presence was completely gone, Zagan let out a forced sigh.

"My goodness. This turned out to be quite the vacation."

"Um... Master Zagan... Can I ask you something? Who... um... was that just now...?"

Nephy questioned him timidly with anxiety in her voice, to which Zagan replied with a slightly worn out smile on his face.

"Family. From before I was a sorcerer. But that's all."

He had completely forgotten about it until now, had never even tried to remember. Having it weigh on his mind now after all this time was surely far too convenient for him. That's why Zagan held his hand out to Nephy.

"Shall we go back?"

Right now, he already had a family. There was no value in digging up the pains of his past.

"I also want to go back to the castle already," Foll added.

"Is your hunger alright now?"

"I've had enough of this weird diet. I want Raphael's food."

Well, looks like she got enough mana from these snacks, so it should be fine.

Zagan pet Foll's head.

“Then let’s go home. Back to our castle.”

No matter how much he dug up the past, that was his home.



A girl stood still in a windy, grass covered plain. In her hand was a single white flower that she had plucked from somewhere or other. And sitting on the horizon were a great number of swords sticking out of the ground. They were grave markers.

One could tell that these were the graves of Angelic Knights who had fought here. They hadn’t been there very long, yet not a single one of them was pristine and undamaged.

It gave a glimpse to just how fierce the fighting here was. The girl walked through the grave markers before coming to a stop at a certain spot. What stood there wasn’t a sword, but a grave marker made of a wooden cross. It was simple, but nevertheless, it could be seen that the one buried here was treated with more courtesy than the others.

However, there wasn’t a single blade of grass around it. The girl listlessly looked over the grave marker, and before long, she opened her mouth with a whisper.

“It has been a long time, my dear brother.”

Just how long had it been since they’d met like this? One of them was forever asleep, and these siblings would never again have the chance to exchange words.

“You have changed quite a lot haven’t you, brother...? Or perhaps, you haven’t changed at all.”

Behind her words was a helpless tone. And as if to punish him, she flicked the grave marker.

“...I met those children. They’re just like we were, truly, they are.”

She closed her eyes, and recalled them as if it were just yesterday. That person was there, and so was another, there was her brother, and a girl. They were happy days. But also, a broken memory. The Wise Dragon fell, and the

Eldest passed. These were memories that only remained within this girl. And yet, they were memories she couldn't allow to be forgotten.

“Those children have also begun chasing after Azazel.”

The girl put her hands to her chest as if to pray. As if to wish that they do not arrive at the answer.

If they do, they'll meet the same fate as me.

And after praying, the girl let out a small sigh and laughed.

“Oh my, now that I think of it, just who does the Night Clan pray to? Alas! How comical.”

She then gave a red kiss to the flower in her hand, and placed it at the grave.

“No matter how much I long for it, I cannot go to that side. All I can do is disappear from this world. But...”

I survived.

It was a comical word for the undead to use. Nevertheless, her golden eyes were certainly filled with determination.

“Yes, I understand. I do not know how much time is left for me, but I will show you that I can protect them.”

The girl pinned down the sides of her chest. Just that portion of her black dress had gotten wet. Even though blood should not have been flowing through her body, it was as if her life was spilling away. However, that pain was proof that she was here in this world.

“I am here. I am here, Azazel!”

So please, please ignore those children.

Her lamenting prayer reached none, and vanished in the wind.

Afterword

Long time no see. I've come to bring you 'An Archdemon's Dilemma: How to Love Your Elf Bride' volume 7. My name is Fuminori Teshima.

The beach! Swimsuits! Yukata! Is it not the very essence of love power to betray one's teacher and come running over? Granny Gremory is truly beginning a battle with her life at stake. Yet what is it that awaits her at the beach in a foreign country?

Anyway, that's how our summer arc (though it's set in winter) starts up.

This time around, we've got an old man who's our first new Archangel in a while, and a bit of a punk sorcerer whose delusions have gone a bit too far. How stuffy. But we've got everyone in swimsuits and yukata, so it paints a nice and pretty picture anyway. Please do not worry. Also, you can't smoke until you're over 20, okay?

Last time, the story was a bit serious, so... I guess, maybe it wasn't this time? I tried to have everyone get really into the summer event. And when it comes to summer events, we start with endless worrying over a trivial encounter! Actually, this is the first time those two are being put front and center like that.

At any rate, we had Granny Gremory going wild all she wanted throughout the whole volume, so the words were practically spilling out of me as I wrote. Even I was quite surprised. My editor was telling me, "Even if you write it that fast, we can't do nothing with it, ya know!?" as he gave me a bitter smile."

Having said that, it seems this series will go on for quite a while, so we had a few important meetings to get things setup and put in some foreshadowing for upcoming volumes. Though, rather than setting things up, it was more like flipping over hidden pieces of paper from a while ago.

Even the new character who got named here was someone who was talked about back in volumes 1 and 2. But, when I do foreshadowing without being able to really reveal anything, it gets quite difficult because things have to be

left so vague.

Thanks to all that, we had to rush out the character design for someone seeing that the manga adaptation was hitting one of those foreshadowing scenes, so I had to trouble COMTA and Itagaki to work things out together. But thanks to their work, I think that the manga has a great setup for volume 7 now.

So please take a look at Elf Bride's manga version too, courtesy of Comic Fire and NicoNico Seiga! (Sudden advertisement!)

Now then, back to the story. We were hoping to put a grin on people who recognized the foreshadowing. I was planning to stop if my editor yelled at me, but we kind of just went along with it without telling anyone. None of it really means anything to a brand new reader, so it's just there to please my fans.

Phew, I guess that's about it. It's been a while since I've had so many pages for an afterword, so I got to talk about the content more than usual.

As for my current status as an author... Well, there's nothing particularly important to report. We can't really go out and announce things just because a manuscript for something is done in this business. So if you look at it from the outside, I might just look like a NEET fiddling with plastic model kits...

Oh, speaking of plastic models, I got an honorable mention in a contest the other day! I made my modeller debut with a rookie of the year award! I seem to be linked by fate to honorable mentions... But I am doing my job too, okay?

As for the next volume, well, if everything goes well, it should come out next spring. Maybe I'll be able to announce something more interesting in that one.

Now then, let's get to thanking everyone.

To the one I'm always so deeply obliged to, K. To the illustrator COMTA, who I burdened with all these new clothing designs for swimsuits and yukata (Everything was fantastic! Even the draft!). To the mangaka Hako Itagaki, whose updates I look forward to so very much. To the chief editor at Comic Fire. To everyone who took part in the cover design, proofreading, publicity, and such. To Kirio and Rikka, who invited me out to an event. To my children, who go shopping with me even now. And to you, my dear readers, who are holding this book in your hands.

Thank you very much!

Next time! Zagan is hunting for clues on his old friend Marc. But as a shut-in, he has no idea that a special date for couples is approaching... Christmas!

November 2018: On an evening where I dragged out the kotatsu — Fuminori Teshima

Bonus Short Stories

A Size too Big

“Come now, little lady. Put this on.”

Due to certain circumstances, Foll ended up growing to about Zagan’s normal size. And since she was no longer able to wear her usual clothing, she wound up borrowing clothes from Gremory.

“Thanks. Your clothes look all frilly and fun. I wanted to try them on.”

Even though her body was bigger, Foll was still the same as usual on the inside, so she was holding up Gremory’s clothes in amusement.

“Hnngh, the little lady is playing with my clothes. What beautiful love power! But we must hurry. If Lady Nephy finds us, it’ll all be over.”

“Mm. Nephy’s scary when she’s angry. I’ll change right away.”

Foll began tossing off her torn clothes in a hurry and picked up Gremory’s outfit.

“Gremory. I don’t know how to put this bra on.”

“What!? Uh... so it’s fine if I’m the one who teaches you, right? Won’t Lady Nephy get mad? No, wait, we don’t have time. This is just an act of god! We have no other choice!”

Gremory began huffing from her nose as she took her bra in hand.

“Gremory. That’s embarrassing. Do it properly.”

“Okay... Um, first, slouch over. Yes, like that. Next, line up with the cups. Now, if you just fasten the latch on the back... Th-The latch on the...”

WH-WHAT...!? It won’t reach?! Is this girl bigger than me? To think that such an innocent little girl would surpass even me... What love power!

There was no way the bra would fit with her current size, so Gremory put her

sorcery to use to somehow succeed at getting the bra to latch in place.

“Gremory. It’s too tight.”

“Grrrrr... I’ll look for something that fits better later, so put up with it for now.”

“Okay. Oh...”

The bra wasn’t able to bear her mass, and the latch on her back pitifully broke apart.

“Gah! I’ll tie it together with string! That way, it’ll hold for at least a few hours. Anyway, get changed quickly, little lady!”

Foll picked up some more clothes after being urged on by Gremory, but for some reason, she suddenly pressed her face into them.

“...Smells like Gremory.”

“Hnngh! Lady Foll... can you put on the rest yourself? That was... wonderful love power...”

Gremory sank away into a sea of her own blood.

Later on, Nephy gave them a terrible scolding, but for now, she was happy.

Snow and the Beach

“Hey, Miss Nephteros! This is, like, super tasty! You should totally have some!”

The one on the sandy beach of the uninhabited island with a huge smile plastered on their face was the siren Selphy. Even though Nephteros looked annoyed, she took the bowl into her hands.

“What is this? Noodles...? Or not. Did you put syrup on snow or something?”

The bowl had what looked like a mound of snow in it with a red sauce poured over it. Seeing Nephteros look at it like a completely mysterious object, Selphy’s eyes shot open in surprise.

“It’s shaved ice. You’ve never had any?”

“I’ve never even seen anything like this before... You can eat it?”

“Of course! I made it for you to eat!”

Nephteros picked up the spoon and scooped some up easily. And as she brought it to her mouth...

“C-Cold!”

It was also sweet. And yet, it melted away the moment it went in her mouth. The tips of Nephteros’ ears instinctively quivered at the piercing cold feeling accompanied by the rich sweetness, leading Selphy to put on a broad grin.

“Eheheh. Guess you like it, huh?”

“...Is it that fun to look at my face?”

“Well, yeah? It, like, makes me happy to watch someone enjoy something I made, okay? Your face is totally telling me it’s super tasty.”

“Am I really making that sort of expression?”

Nephteros herself intended to maintain her usual composure.

“It’s delicious... Is snow also this soft and sweet, I wonder?”

“Nope. If you don’t put any syrup on, it’s got no taste all.”

“So you’ve tried...” Nephteros replied in shock, which made Selphy tilt her head to the side.

“Huh? Hey, Miss Nephteros, have you never seen snow before? A lot of people try when they first see it...”

“I haven’t ever had the chance to. Well, it’s not impossible to make some with sorcery, but...”

“It’s not any fun to just make it with sorcery. Oh, I know! Why don’t we, like, watch it snow together the next time it happens! It should be winter by the time we get back to the castle, so we should have the time.”

Unable to beat Selphy’s carefree smile, Nephteros simply accepted the bait and smiled back.

“You’re right. So, next time it snows, let’s enjoy ourselves.”

“Yaaay! This is the first time you said you’d play with me!”

“I didn’t say anything about playing... W-Well, whatever.”

And so, Nephteros continued eating her shaved ice as the sun beat down on her.



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An Archdemon's Dilemma: How to Love Your Elf Bride: Volume 7

by Fuminori Teshima

Translated by Hikoki Edited by DxS

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