



Supana Onikage

Illustrator: Youta

6

Lazy
Dungeon
Master



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"NOW THEN,
LET US BEGIN
OUR PRAYER.
ONE SHEEP
OVER THE
FENCE."

High Priestess (Vampire)
REI

BEDDHISM
A RELIGION WHICH HOLDS PEACE, HARMONY,
AND PLEASANT REST ABOVE ALL ELSE.





Mysterious Nun
LEONA

"NOW THEN,
LET'S BEGIN
OUR GAME!
YOUR GOAL
IS TO SAVE
THE CAPTURED
PRINCESS!"

Succubus
SUILLA

Dungeon Master
KEIMA MASUDA

CHALLENGING A GAME
SHOW THEMED DUNGEON!

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Prologue

Heya, everyone! It's me, your friendly neighborhood Dungeon Master, Keima! This is a bit sudden, but I am now the pope of a rapidly growing religious sect.

"Greetings, everyone. Today is a perfect day for afternoon napping. *Oyasuminasai.*" I heard cries of "*oyasuminasai*" from the crowd in front of me. It was a word I had thought up to be the "*amen*" equivalent of my religion. Indeed, my religion. The one I invented myself.

...And yet, everyone was chanting it with a deadly serious expression on their face. I don't get it. *I'm a Dungeon Master, alright? Dungeon Masters are supposed to manage their dungeon from the shadows, staying out of sight and out of mind. Why am I a pope now?* Thinking about it, a full year had passed since I was first summoned to this world. I had arrived with a godlike being rejecting my quest to pass my time sleeping and declining to give me a cheat skill. Rokuko, at that time known as just Dungeon Core Number 695, had summoned me through rolling some kind of gacha to fight back the bandits that had taken up residence in her dungeon. I got rid of them, beat Rokuko's elder sister Haku in a Dungeon Battle, had a friendly scuffle with a neighboring dungeon, fought against a Hero, and drove away the High Priestess. Not too long ago I won in a team Dungeon Battle and received a reward from the "father" of the Dungeon Cores.

...I'm getting pretty tired of counting the days that've passed since I got here. I don't really miss my old world that much, and I've already resigned to living here until I die, so... Oh. Right, I'm just avoiding reality here.

I looked around the church that I was inside. Warm sunlight poured through the stained glass windows and there were desks with partitions for privacy in place of where pews would normally be (the partitions could be put up and down at will). One wall on the side had a bookshelf with thick books that nearly put me to sleep just by looking at them. They were covered in vinyl to prevent drool damage. There was a fan on the ceiling to prevent heat from building up,

which kept the room cool. At the back end of the room—that is, where I was standing—there was a podium. From it hung a religious symbol with a design inspired by a coin with a hole in the middle. Beneath it was a needlessly fancy tabernacle; within was the Divine Futon, which I would temporarily borrow from Rokuko just for this.

This was the main chapel of the church I built. The sixty desks I had prepared were all taken by followers. There were so many people here that some were sitting on the floor and standing by the walls to participate. Since today was a day off, the equivalent of a Sunday, we were holding mass three times—morning snooze, noon nap, and evening sleep. But that was only on days off. Normally, we held mass once every two days. Apparently, in a world without games and computers filling up everyone’s time, life was so boring that mass at church was considered a top tier way to spend time. *Tch, stupid pious followers with too much spare time.*

“Uhhh... Okay, morning snooze will now begin. This week I will recount the bedtime story of... The Racing Rabbits.” I opened up our Bible and randomly picked a parable that espoused the importance and nobility of sleeping. Naturally, I had written this Bible myself. It looked thick from the outside but the bulk of the pages were blank, and those that weren’t I had just scribbled random stuff on. I could reuse the same parable for a whole week, but I needed to think up a new one each week. The church was so packed today because this was one of those days I told a new parable.

It was hard to describe how much I regretted making this a weekly thing instead of a monthly thing. I had no doubt that I would be forced to continue this until the Bible of Beddhism, a religion founded to “find the thickness for a pillow,” had every page filled. *Christ, I hate this.* Incidentally, last week’s parable was that of a turtle bullied by children retreating into its shell to sleep to bore its attackers into leaving. It was something I basically thought up on the spot, but my optimistic believers interpreted it as a splendid tale that taught the value of sleeping to let suffering pass.

“...And so, the rabbit energized by its sleep sped past its rival, who was as slow as a turtle due to its exhaustion. He won the race and earned his carrot prize. The end.” The crowd began clapping after I finished. *I just don’t get it.*

These are supposed to be bedtime stories, why's everyone getting so pumped up about them? Just go to sleep.

"Now then, let us begin our prayer." Mass ended with a prayer once the bedtime story was over. I shut the Bible and faced my followers before starting the holy chant.

"One sheep over the fence."

"One sheep over the fence," chanted the crowd.

"...Two sheep over the fence."

"Two sheep over the fence," chanted the crowd. My believers counted with me. They shut their eyes tightly and it kind of looked like more than a few of them were getting pretty emotional about the chant. To them it was a chant with profound religious symbolism, but in reality, it was just counting sheep. It wasn't a real chant or anything, and it definitely didn't have any magical effects. Though the simple work of counting did kind of make you sleepy, so...

I took Siesta like always and poured mana into it while chanting. Siesta, the Blade of Afternoon Naps, was already famous among followers of Beddhism as a divine tool of ritual. A sleepy miasma engulfed the chapel. Naturally, I felt sleepy too, but stayed strong. By turning on my sleep resistance, I wouldn't fall asleep no matter how intense my sleepiness got... *Fwaaah, so tired.*

I stifled my yawns while counting up to seven sheep, listening to my believers chant in turn while stifling yawns of their own. But the majority of them were falling asleep and over time the chanting got quieter. *Let's see... Sounds like over half of them are asleep now. I'll stop the chant at about ten sheep.* The way things work here is that people just nap in between masses. If they wake up, they can go home if they so choose.

"...Ten sheep over the fence." I waited a bit but all I heard in reply was loud snoring. I had said "I'll stop the chant at about ten sheep" earlier, but really, that was just for effect. I knew that nobody was ever awake after counting to ten. Siesta's just that powerful. I'm pretty tired myself. *Normally I'd fall asleep first as I'm the one holding it, but yeah.* I sheathed Siesta. That stopped the flow of sleep miasma, but that didn't mean my existing sleepiness went away.

“May you all be blessed with divine rest. *Oyasuminasai.*” I looked at my peacefully sleeping followers out of the corner of my eye as I left the main hall and went to my personal room, which had nothing but a futon within it. I then threw off my pope outfit and collapsed into bed. Another day, another successful mass.

...I think I'm gonna sleep until noon mass. I turned off my sleep resistance and let my intense sleepiness consume my waking mind.

Every day was busy as a pope. My workload was dramatically larger than what it used to be when I was just a town chief (although I was still sleeping more or less the same amount each day). Which wasn't good, since I still had my town chief duties to take care of. *Why are there so many believers...? What is compelling them to worship this nonsense? I can tell there are some people not from our town mixed in the crowd, too. One of the people sitting in the front row was definitely a noble traveling incognito. They were so clean and well-groomed that their disguise didn't matter at all.* I sighed. How did things come to this? I just wanted to legalize my constant napping...

Chapter 1 - Day 28 of Year 2

With our third Dungeon Battle ending in a safe victory, we all returned home to our own dungeon, the [Cave of Greed]. Rokuko seemed the most hesitant to leave, but it had to happen at some point. And as expected, it felt great to be home. I had visited daily while preparing for the Dungeon Battle, but still, my focus had been elsewhere.

It was time to check up on the situation. I summoned Rei, who had been watching over the dungeon while I was gone.

“Okay. Bring me up to speed.”

“Understood, Master.”

I was curious about a lot of things, but the dungeon came first. As usual, D-Rank adventurers and below were using the upper floors as practice while C-Ranks were going in deeper to hunt Iron Golems or pushing themselves in search of a Magic Blade (Golem Blade). Rin had destroyed the puzzle area, but it was still quite the task to descend the spiral staircase beyond and reach the storeroom area. *Wait... There are more traps in the spiral staircase now. I see some spears ready to launch out of the walls here and there.*

“Oh, an unexpectedly large number of adventurers were making it to the storeroom area, so I strengthened the staircase.”

“Nice. Good call. We don’t want too many people leaving with Golem Blades from there.” Apparently, Rei had increased the number of traps herself. That was some solid thinking. It would go a long way in holding adventurers back.

“How many got into the storeroom area?”

“Eight parties. Out of those, one was eliminated on the way back up the staircase, four left after observing the experimental golems, and three left with Magic Blades. We lost six blades in total, three made of stone and three of iron. No party has advanced beyond the storeroom area.” *Everyone in one of the parties died, huh? Rest in peace, and thanks for all the DP. But let’s see here...*

We're sending out Golem Blades at a rate of six per month, huh? That's not bad. I'll have to remember to replace them later. Since nobody's made it to the coliseum or Phenny's floor, I'll skip hearing her report on those.

Okay. Time to lower the priority a little.

"How's the inn?" I double-checked after getting back, but the illusion skill Rei had strengthened herself with cost most of the 50,000 DP I had given her. That and the traps had probably used all of it. How had they managed without a new monster to help?

"There have been no developments of note in your absence. Of course, a month's time isn't enough for our customer base to change that much."

"...Uhhh, how'd you manage without hiring help?"

"Oh, but we did. We hired a part-time worker." Rei responded with a broad, confident smile. *They hired... a part-time worker...?*

"Uh. Like, you hired someone who wasn't a servant to our dungeon?"

"Yes. Is there a problem with that?" *There's nothing but problems!*

"Not necessarily, I'm just surprised. The part-timer isn't a... slave or anything, are they?"

"No. They are a normal adventurer. I received permission from Lady Rokuko before hiring them, to be clear." *Seriously...? I gotta have a long talk with Rokuko about this...*

"Okay, well. Did you have any problems working with someone not from our dungeon?"

"They're merely assisting with the inn, and we hired them through the Adventurer's Guild as a brief part-time job. Nothing problematic has occurred with them over the past weeks." *Then... I guess it's fine?* "If a problem does occur, we can report them to the Guild, or if it involves our secrets, we can simply eliminate them. Neither situation poses us any notable risk."

"You really thought this through, huh? I'm impressed." Rei was very valuable to our dungeon thanks to how severe she can be. I was trying my best to be harsh as was necessary, but I couldn't help but go easy on people sometimes.

For example, I gave Rei 50,000 DP to summon help, but in the end she just used it to strengthen herself. Though it would have been much harder for us to win that Dungeon Battle if she hadn't.

I adjusted my sitting posture. Next.

"How are Kinue and Neruneh?"

"Kinue's cooking repertoire has grown somewhat. Neruneh is absorbed in her magic circle research as always. She's still exceedingly excited about that magic tool you brought her." Kinue had been using her DP and money wages to buy recipes, while Neruneh lived each day to the fullest both when researching and when chatting with Kantara about magic circles. Rei herself seemed to be fairly pleased handling the work I had given her. *I like how devoted she is.*

"Alright. Thanks for your report. That's all for now."

"Yes, sir! Please excuse me, Master."

I had asked Rei everything I wanted to know from her, so I went to see Rokuko. To ask about the part-timer, that is.

"Hey, Rokuko! We got something to talk about."

"What could it be, I wonder? Do you want to use the Divine Futon?"

"Well, yes, but actually, no. It's about the part-timer."

"Wait, the one we hired, like, a billion years ago?" It was old news to Rokuko, but I was hearing about the part-timer for the first time today.

"We just hired one normally through the Adventurer's Guild. Rei suggested it. She's pretty smart."

"But our dungeon's filled to the brim with secrets that'll get us or them killed if they found out," I said. Rokuko tilted her head cutely.

"Well, you don't normally talk to part-timers about important things, and there's nothing suspicious in the inn itself. Right?"

"You're forgetting the golems."

"The only ones in the inn are the normal... um, standard-type Clay Golems. We're making it look like they have an actual mana source rather than taking it

from the dungeon air, so there's nothing suspicious about them."

"What about the food?"

"Kinue's cooking it all now. We barely buy food with DP now, and although we do buy the ingredients like that, it's all in storage rooms and {Storage}, so nobody will notice."

"The onsen...?"

"The part-timer's just working as a receptionist and waitress. Cleaning's done through {Purification} if Kinue doesn't handle it, and we're passing off the hot water as being produced by a magic tool specializing in that kind of thing. Same for the register at the reception desk." *Wha? Rokuko's actually talking me down here. I can't think of a single argument. At this point, I don't have any problem with the part-timer. I'm even starting to think it might be a genius way to let me focus on the dungeon.*

"By the way, the pay's lower than average, but we offer a hefty bonus if they don't make mistakes. We need to pay the Guild a little for insurance, but even when combined with the handling fee, the money's nothing compared to how much we're earning. So? Still have a problem?"

"...Nope, not at all." *Rokuko... She's really grown lately, huh. Seriously.*

"Though I gotta ask, did you interview them or something?"

"Uh-huh. Rei, Ichika, and I all did. We actually wanted you to join, but you were asleep." *Oh yeah, I remember Rokuko coming back here for something while we were preparing for the Dungeon Battle. She tried to talk to me about it, but... yeah, I was asleep. Can you blame me? I was busy making a whole new dungeon.*

"Anyway, you should know who they are, Keima. It's Gozou's partner, Roppe."

"Oh, Roppe? Yeah, I do know her." Gozou was basically your standard adventurer living here in Goren Town, and Roppe was his partner. Gozou was a dwarf, but Roppe was a human. Word on the street was that Roppe was even more of a drinker than your average dwarf.

“The pay really isn’t that much for a C-Rank adventurer, but she’s doing her job well. Really, she’s been a big help. Speaking of which... Today’s pay day. Would you mind taking care of that, Keima? We could pay through the Guild, but she’s definitely in the bar right now, so.” Rokuko handed me a bag presumably filled with Roppe’s pay.

“Sure, alright. See ya.” I took it and headed to the bar where we assumed Roppe was. Although I was town chief, my role in the inn was that of Rokuko’s secretary. That was something I forgot all the time lately.

* * *

I went to the bar located beside the Adventurer’s Guild branch office and saw Gozou and Roppe inside, drinking like normal. *It’s pretty early in the day, too. They sure like their beer.*

“Hey, Roppe. I’ve brought your pay for working at the end of the week.”

“Oh? Heya, town chief. Been a while since I’ve seen ya. They finally beat you awake or something?”

“Yeah, something like that. Here. Count the coins if you want.” I handed over the bag and Roppe held out a quest slip. I just had to sign that I had paid her. Once I finished that, Roppe put the bag into her breast pocket without even looking inside.

“You’re not gonna check them?”

“Course not, I trust ya. Plus, I mainly just took this job for the free food, so you’ve basically already paid me. Gettin’ paid on top of free food makes this one of the best quests I ever did do. Gotta thank God for it, yeah.”

“Huh. Alright, then.” The words “thank God” reminded me of the Dungeon Core’s “father.” *Thanking him, huh? Mmm... Something’s definitely off about that.*

Suddenly, Gozou interjected. “Hey, Keima. That God talk reminds me, what’re we gonna do for the Ivory Goddess Festival? This town ain’t got a church, but we’re still gonna do it, right?”

“Ivory Goddess Festival? What’s that?” I asked, causing Gozou to tilt his head

in confusion.

“Whoa, now, don’t tell me ye don’t know about the Ivory Goddess Festival. Keima, ain’t you a citizen of this here empire?”

“Uhhhhh... Yeah, well, screw you too. I don’t know about it. What kind of festival is it?”

“You gotta be messin’ with me, man. What kinda adventurer doesn’t know about the festival...” Gozou was looking at me with a comically exaggerated look of shock.

“Alright, alright, I get it already. I’m a dumbass. Just tell me what it is.”

“Y’see, the Ivory Goddess Festival is...” And so, Gozou told me about the Ivory Goddess Festival. Apparently it was a festival celebrating the goddess of adventurers, the Ivory Goddess, that was taken quite seriously in the Empire. The day before, the day of, and the day after were spent celebrating from dawn to dusk... or actually, non-stop for the entirety of the three days without any sleeping. What inspired such intense celebration? Well, the festival was celebrating the founder of the Empire itself, Haku Laverio the Ivory Goddess.

...As an aside, around this time last year I was having a scuffle with Ittetsu. I really had no idea this festival existed. *Hold on, Haku gets a whole festival for herself? I knew she was called the White Winged Goddess, the Ivory Goddess, etc., but this is the first time I’m hearing that she’s considered the goddess of adventurers.*

“Yer saying yer not a member of the Ivory Church, Keima? Color me surprised. Ye’ve met the divine Ivory Goddess herself, haven’t ye? I ’member her comin’ to town.”

“Yeah, I mean, she’s a regular here.”

“And yer still not in the Ivory Church...? I was thinkin’ ye were the top adventurer in this dungeon ’cause ye had the Ivory Goddess’s protection.”

“Sorry, but I’m a Beddhist.”

“Beddhist?” Gozou twisted his thick dwarf neck in my direction. “Never heard of it. What kinda church is that?”

“You know the futons you can find in the dungeon, right? That’s bedding. Thus, Beddhism. It’s a religion that worships peace and rest. Though I’m the only believer right now.”

“So that’s what’s with those futon things! Which means this Beddhism stuff is special to this dungeon, huh?”

“Yeah, I guess.” Gozou stroked his beard and chugged from his mug.

Anyway, I had to do something about the Ivory Goddess Festival. It was well-known enough that holding a festival here was necessary, and really, I knew people would go berserk if I didn’t. This was the Laverio Empire, after all. The people here expected to spend three full days partying.

“I’ll leave the Ivory Goddess Festival prep to you and vice chief Wozma. Good luck.” I was just a chief for show and I wasn’t even a member of the Ivory Church. It would be better for everyone if I left the festival prep to people who knew what they were doing.

“Hrm, me and Wozma, huh...? Alright. I’m good, ’slong as there’s beer and food. Lemme borrow Kinue for the festival, yeah?”

“I’ll ask Rokuko.” *Okay, that’s settled... Wait. They’ll need money for food and stuff.* “Right, I’ll just go ahead and cover the expenses. Will ten coins be enough?”

“Yeah, proolly? If it ain’t, I’ll just get Dyne to cover a bit.” I stuck a hand in my pocket and stealthily withdrew ten coins from my magical Space-Time {Wallet}. *This should be enough.*

“Okay, do what you can with it.”

“Yeah, you go—bwooh! Cough, cough! My God that’s too much! Ye should know I was talkin’ about silvers, a single gold’s more’n enough! Not a chance I’m takin’ all this!” *Oh, really?*

“Okay, just one then. Tell me if it’s not enough.”

“I’m tellin’ ye, even that’s too much... Gah. Fine. We’ll go a bit fancy and say it’s yer treat.” Gozou took another chug. *Aaanyway... Just to be safe, I’ll tell Wozma about this. Don’t wanna put all my eggs in a single drunken basket.*

“HEEEY! I’m leaving all the Ivory Goddess Festival stuff to you and Gozou, alright?” I shouted from the table. Wozma nodded from behind the counter while making a cocktail. *Perfect.*

“Goodness, Keima’s handling money like a rich man now. Almost like he’s a Hero or somethin’,” said Roppe, making a cold sweat run down my back. But I couldn’t help it. There was just too much about the world I didn’t understand. I still knew how to respect money!

“Nothing wrong with going overboard for a festival like this, right?”

“Ye right. Man, now yer one town chief worth workin’ under.”

“A figurehead’s gotta shine for his people,” I said, emphasizing the “I am a figurehead” subtext. Gozou snorted.

“Heh. Statements like that are why yer our leader.”

“Pfff. Whatever. I’m outta here.” Having given Roppe her pay and Gozou funds for the festival, I chose to go back to my room and sleep.

* * *

But first, I asked Ichika about the Ivory Church. *Teach me, Ichika! Your reward will be curry rolls!*

“And that’s how I ended up approving the Ivory Goddess Festival, but I don’t know too much about the Ivory Church. Would you mind telling me?”

“Wha? Yo, my dude, it’s been so long you’ve asked me about something obvious like this. I totes forgot that you have zero life experience here. Okay, so first of all, the Ivory Church is a big ol’ religion. Duh. They have a God, you pray to God, you get benefits. Super simple stuff.”

“Yeah, I mean, I figured it was a religion.”

“So like, the Ivory Church worships the Ivory Goddess. That’s Haku. Their main creed is ‘If you want something, fight for it.’ Since Haku’s the Grandmaster of the Adventurer’s Guild and an adventurer herself, lots of people call her the goddess of adventurers. It, like, totally wouldn’t be overkill to say that basically every adventurer is a part of the Ivory Church. It’s gotta be like, eighty percent, easy.” *Makes sense. That does sound like what I’d expect from a religion about*

Haku.

“Does that include you, Ichika?”

“Nopers. I was a C-Ranker before all this slave jazz, but I’m all about worshiping Ishidaka the God of Food. Most chefs belong to the Food Church and they’ll give you some free food if you tell ’em you do too. Bonus!” *That sounds like having a coupon.* “Well, it’s kinda an official thing, but really it’s just bros being bros. You know how you sometimes give out free purins? It’s basically like that, dude.”

“I see. It’s like giving extra food to a regular.”

“To be real, I was always max worried about whether I should be in the Ivory Church, the Food Church, or the Dice Church... It’s hard, man.”

“You couldn’t be a member of all three at once?”

“Huh? Worshiping lesser gods of the same church is one thing, but you always gotta pick just one God to worship as a main gig kinda thing. Though, like, people say Ishidaka works for Haku, so there’s this “Ivory Food Church” faction that’s all buddy-buddy with the Ivory Church. ‘Specially since the Ivory Church is doing so well.”

“Makes sense. By the way... Isn’t it a little weird to worship a real, living person?”

“Uh, dude? All gods are real people. Well I mean, Ishidaka died a long time ago, but they left behind all sorts of recipes and disciples, so yeah. There’s plenty of reason to worship them.” *Oh, I see. Gods are real in this world. It’s not “Do you believe in God?” here. It’s “There are gods all over the place, which do you want to worship and benefit from?”* And those benefits were as useful as they were immediate. It wasn’t just metaphorical benefits earned through decades of meditation. I could see why religion was so common in this world. It made sense to worship a god that offered actual, valuable rewards, like a tripcode user on a certain imageboard dumping quality art... But wait.

“That, uh, Dice Church you mentioned. Does it have any benefits?”

“...People good at gambling are usually members of the Dice Church!” *Isn’t that just pretending bad gamblers don’t exist? I can’t really say that’s an actual*

benefit.

“So, what kind of god is... the God of Dice? Does he exist too?”

“Sometimes, we gamblers feel some divine guidance. He’s, like, behind that? I dunno, really. But he’s got real churches!” *Oh. I guess not all gods have to exist. Whiiich means... I was just joking about it before, but I guess there wouldn’t be any problems with a Beddhist Church? Beddhism... It sounds good to me. Sounds like sleeping all day and night.*

Day 29 of Year 2

Right. Let’s build a church. Of course, not a church for the Ivory Goddess, but a church for Beddhism. *I thought so hard about this last night I’m kinda sleep deprived, but believe me, I’m serious about this. How many years has it been since I got so into an idea that I couldn’t even sleep? The more I thought about Beddhism, the better it sounded. After all, if I make the prayer ritual for Beddhism be “taking a nap,” I could sleep all day under the guise of being pious! Hey, I’m just a loyal believer taking my religion seriously here!*

Nobody could criticize me for sleeping in or taking afternoon naps if I was doing so for religious reasons. *This is the most amazing discovery I’ve made in years. For the sake of my health and sleep I need to build the church! I need to build it. I have to build it. This has to happen! I’ve come this far, I might as well build a splendid church for Beddhism. I’ll fill it with my love for sleep!*

...Or so I thought, but after some reflection I realized there wasn’t any space for it. That is, there was space on the outskirts of the city, but I wouldn’t want to walk that far every time. *Well, whatever. I don’t have any experience building churches, may as well start with a smaller one.* I decided to blueprint a smaller church with plans to someday make a really big one. I took a pen, some paper, and got to work in my office.

The exterior came first. My personal mental image of a church involved white walls and a blue ceiling. That should work here. *I could use... plaster for the white walls? Shells and lime should do the trick. The blue could be... What are*

blue roofs made from, anyway? Copper? Verdigris? Ehhh, it doesn't matter, I'll just make it from whatever and paint it blue. I wanted windows that warm light could stream in through. Glass was very valuable in this world, but it was cheap for me since I could just manipulate empty potion bottles with {Create Golem}. Time to add a crapload of windows.

That was enough for the exterior. Next, the interior. Mainly the chapel. I'll add desks so that everyone can sit next to each other while praying... right, while falling asleep. Sleeping is praying in Beddhism, after all, and there's just something about desks that inspires sleepiness. I'll add in partitions so you can sleep without worrying about who's sleeping next to you. Just gotta make it so they can slide down into the desk, and... good. I can just fix them if there's any problems. I'll add a ceiling fan to keep the chapel cool and easy to sleep in. One made of wood that moves slowly, keeping the air moving at a good rate. Ventilation's important since things will get stuffy with all the people otherwise.

Naturally, the object of worship before the shrine will be a futon... Wait, wait. A five yen coin swaying like a pendulum might be better. It's metaphorical for gradually falling asleep. A five yen coin will be especially good as a simple symbol like the Christ cross. Sounds go—Wait. That'll make it a religious symbol, not an object of worship. Okay. Our symbol will be a five yen coin and our object of worship will be a futon. Perfect.

...Buuut a literal five yen coin would be a bit suspicious, so I'll go with a normal coin with a circular opening in the middle. I'll stick a string through it and use it like a pendant. Okay. Our holy symbol will be a pendulum with a five yen coin, or rather, a coin with a hole in the center. The pendulum swaying might make it seem like a fancy clock, but whatever. It happens.

As for the futon... I wouldn't mind using my own here, but if I were to prioritize divinity, then I should borrow the Divine Futon from Rokuko.

Next up is a pulpit for the preacher to stand behind. Long speeches can bore people to sleep, so yeah. Speaking of boring people to sleep, I'll have some bookcases filled with thick books. The only book I know of in this world is "Intro to Dungeonology," but I'm sure the Dyne Company will be able to get me some random books. They have the cash.

“Yeah, it’s looking like a pretty good chapel to me.” I gave my blueprint another look over. *Yep... Now this is a church. Just need to add a chalkboard by the holy coin or whatever and it’s perfect. It can be used for, uh, Sunday school? Something like that.*

As for other rooms in the church... Oh, I know. Maybe I should add a repentance room for confessing sins? I’ll keep this one simple. And I’ll add some small bedrooms for believers to sleep inside... Right as I finished a rough draft of my design, someone knocked on my door.

“Do you have a second, Keima? Someone’s asking if they can borrow Kinue for the festival.”

“Oh, Rokuko. Come on in.”

“Uh-huh. So, I think we can give her a special festival shift. We can have her cook food and put it into {Storage} ahead of time so th—Wait, what’s that?” Rokuko was looking at my church blueprint.

“Oh, I was thinking about making a church. This is the blueprint for it.”

“Neat. Are people going to worship Haku there or something? That’s what this festival is for, right? She’s the goddess of the Ivory Church or whatever.”

“Nah. This is for the Beddhist Church.”

“Beddhist?” Rokuko tilted her head in confusion. *Oh yeah... I haven’t mentioned this to her.* “I’ve never heard about that. Is it a religion from your old world?”

“Nope, I made it up myself. Or rather, I’m gonna be making it now. No surprise you don’t know about it.”

“Well, yeah, duh. But, um... Can you just up and make religions like that?”

“Haku’s treated like a goddess in the Ivory Church, so I figure there’s nothing wrong with me making my own.”

“Are you sure about that?” *Yep, totally sure. It’s just a new religion. Since when has starting a new religion caused any problems?*

“What’s it going to be about?”

“It’s gonna be a peaceful religion that focuses on relaxation, peace of mind, and pleasurable sleep. We pray by sleeping, which is a simple thing you do every day anyway, right?”

“It is. But it’s not so simple to sleep sixteen hours every day.”

“No worries, my church will only ask for normal sleeping hours with some naps thrown in.” *Though... If you ask me, sixteen hours a day is pretty reasonable. Anyway, I’ll just go ahead and write down “sleep = prayer” so I don’t forget.*

“By the way, it’ll be possible to practice Beddhism as a sub religion.”

“A sub religion...? What’s that?” According to Ichika, in this world it was standard for one person to worship only one god, which meant that as it stood those who were already a member of one church would have to leave it to join the Beddhist Church. Which naturally would sow the seeds of war, a clear violation of Beddhist doctrine. “So basically, people will still worship the Lux Church and the Ivory Church as their main religion. The Beddhist Church will accept that, and still allow people to practice Beddhism. It’s that simple.” In video games terms, it’d be like a sub-job. A warrior learning monk skills on the side. An Ivory Church worshiper practicing Beddhism on the side. Of course, anyone would practice Beddhism as their primary religion as well.

People could pray to their primary god when in search of happiness, and they could give Beddhist prayers when in search of peace. It wouldn’t be a big deal. Just go with the flow. Like Japanese people tend to do with religion. *‘Cause I mean, back in Japan, some people would lump in foreign gods with the Seven Gods of Fortune. This is nothing compared to that.*

“Are you sure this is okay, Keima? I’m not super informed on religions, but I’ve never heard of anything like that.”

“It’ll be totally fine. If people are that invested in their religions, it just means not many people will join Beddhism. No worries. And hey, you get to be worshiper number two.”

“Wha? I obviously want to be Number 695. I’ll be waiting to join, so do your best spreading the good word.”

“U-Uh, alright.” *That sure is a lot of people... Guess I’ll go ahead and add Niku and Ichika in too. Better leave spot 89 up for Haku in case she wants it.*

“Hey, Keima. Shouldn’t you make up, like, some kind of mythology for this or something?”

“Hm? Good point... I’ll just half-ass some stuff. Stories that preach the importance of sleep, mainly. I’ll go ahead and treat mosquitoes as demons since they suck.” *I’ll preach the existence of an unseen evil threatening the peaceful sleep of innocence with itchiness and buzzing: King of Devils, Moskito. His one weakness? The Holy Blade Bugspray! Oh, I just invented a Holy Blade. I should make Siesta a Divine Blade that saves lives through inspiring sleep in those near it. Man, I should be writing this stuff down.*

“By the way, am I gonna be treated as a witch or heretic for not needing sleep?”

“Nah, what matters is that you *can* sleep. To take things further, anyone who just takes breaks to rest is qualified to practice Beddhism, even if they can’t literally fall asleep.”

“That’s pretty loose.”

“Futons are gentle beings that embrace all those who choose to lay upon them... They are beyond good and evil, the embodiment of truly equal love. Our holy mother is a futon... But mosquitoes, you can eat shit. At least stay on the ground.” *Yeah, that sounds like it’ll fit right into the Bible. I should be writing all this down. Let’s see what else I can make up...*

A lack of sleep is horrible for the skin. I should be able to appeal to women by bringing that up.

One cannot fight without rest. For the sake of future battles, use the now to rest. Uh-huh. Warriors need to take breaks too.

Do not panic. Calm down, and sleep. Mmm... Not as catchy, but I might grab some monks with it.

Sleep well, lest your body fail you when it matters most. Good. Laborers will appreciate that.

Thou art a fool for whom thinking is a waste of sleep... Wait, that's just insulting people.

"Sleep is all, and all is sleep... Perfect."

"Keima, are you sleep deprived? Is your head okay?"

"Don't sweat it. This is all great stuff." Okay, now I just gotta make the actual church and start gathering believers. Once the religion grows I'll be able to nap whenever I want. Whenever I want! I mean, I'm already doing that now, but still! I won't get disrespect for it anymore! Soon, nobody will insult me for napping in the middle of the day! In fact, they will praise me for my piety! Bwahahahahaha!

"Oh yeah. Maybe I should offer a gift of a dried bean-filled pillow (inedible) to new believers in hopes of drawing adventurers in?"

"Ichika would love that, definitely." I mean, it's technically edible if you really try, but, uh... Be sure to eat it before six months are up. Don't wanna eat bugs in it or something. Though {Purification} might make them last longer.

Day 30 of Year 2

"Alright, perfect." It was early morning. I had accidentally stayed up all night and could feel the sleep deprivation hitting, but I had finished building the church. To answer your question, yes, I was the masked man Narikin, a mysterious sorcerer who specialized in construction. I've gotten pretty used to using construction magic (read: {Create Golem} and nothing else) to make stuff. If I have the materials, I can make something this big and grand in a single night.

The bookshelves were still empty, but I could fill them in later. Within the chapel were sixty desks, five rows of six on either side of the central path. Someday these seats would be filled with believers drooling as they snoozed. The stained glass windows from which warm light streamed through depicted white futons. I was pretty proud of those windows, to be honest. Faces were beyond me, but I managed the futons well. I mean, to be fair, it was kinda sorta

extremely hard to tell what they were, but I was confident that some percentage of people would understand. What else could they be?

Incidentally, I built the church some distance away from the inn, toward the tunnel. It was pretty close to where people were living. With a location that good, there was no doubt that both villagers and traveling merchants would end up dropping by for worship.

...Speaking of which, I'm pretty sure someone told me that our population's been shooting up as villager adventurers bring their families over here to live and word of this place spreads. The vice chief had me sign some kind of plan to expand the residential district of the town. I went ahead and signed it since it looked fine at a glance. Beddhism might have a pretty bright future ahead of it, ahahaha.

"Fwaaah. Morning, Keima. You already built the church? But it's so early in the morning... Did you stay up all night?"

"Sup, Rokuko. Didn't I tell you to call me Narikin when I'm wearing this mask...? Well, whatever. Take a look at this. It's the first church for Beddhism. Pretty impressive, right? Hahaha!"

"Very nice, but it's time for bed. You can use my lap as a pillow."

"Huh? Ow, what? Don't pull on me. Good idea, though. I can work lap pillows into the bible for sure. Let's do it, Rokuko." Rokuko took my hand and pulled me into the library. She asked if there was anywhere to rest, so I told her about the individual rooms with futons in them. We entered one of those together. I then took off my mask and healed my tired head on her lap pillow.

...When I woke up, I regretted my actions a little, and also questioned why Rokuko was actively patting my head hours later. On top of the futon. *Yeah, Haku's gonna kill me. It's not even a question anymore, just a matter of time.*

"Feeling better, Keima? I was worried about you the moment you said you were going to make a church. Were you already sleep deprived back then?"

"...No, I don't think so."

"That means I put you to sleep right before things got bad this time. Eheh, nice going, me." *Uh, being sleep deprived isn't really that big of a deal. I... I*

think? Anyway, I sat up. It hurt to leave Rokuko's lap pillow, but I couldn't stay within its soft embrace forever.

"Well, uh. Thanks, Rokuko. I'm all better now."

"You're welcome. So, what now? You've already built the church and everything."

"Good question... I think it's time to start spreading the word of Beddhism. Got any ideas? Like, anyone worshiping Beddhism gets a discount on the tunnel fees."

"If you do that, people will figure out there's a connection between the Beddhist Church and the tunnel dungeon. Are you sure you're not still sleep deprived?" Rokuko patted her lap. *Welp... She's right.*

"Seriously, Rokuko, you're way smarter than you used to be. At this rate you'll basically be a wise sage in a year's time, I'm not even kidding." *Okay, maybe that is a bit of an exaggeration. It's as silly as saying "If it keeps getting hotter, by December it'll be over 100 degrees Celsius!"*

"A-A sage? D-Don't compliment me like that, you're gonna embarrass me," said Rokuko while smacking the bed, looking pretty pleased with herself.

"Okay, how about any Beddhist who sleeps in the inn gets a free purin?"

"That sounds pretty good. Really, people might go crazy over it. Oh, right, by the way. Is there any ritual new followers have to go through to join the church?"

"Ah... Nah, that sounds like a pain. All you have to say is 'I believe in Beddhism,' and that'll be good enough. We can sell our holy symbol, a coin with a hole in the middle, to those who want one."

"That's pretty lax."

"I don't want to bother doing anything fancy. I'd rather just use that time to sleep." Incidentally, I would make the opened coins out of a copper. Those would cost five coppers to buy, silver ones a single silver, and gold ones a single gold. Basically, I was trying to make them accessible to encourage those who wanted peaceful sleep to buy them. Also, strings and chains were sold

separately. My ideal was for them to be used as keychains and straps too, not just necklaces.

“That’s a plain-looking coin.”

“I couldn’t think of any design for it. Hmm... Maybe I should carve in things that believers will want to see in their dreams.”

“You sure that’ll be okay?”

“I’m making the rules here, so sure. Anything goes. If you’ve got any requests, now’s the time to ask.”

“It’s not really a big deal, but there is one thing.”

“Yeah? What’s that?”

“Who’s going to manage the church? Surely not you, since you’ll just sleep through everything, right?”

.....

Crap! I completely forgot! Building the church isn’t enough, this is like a store without a guy behind the counter! We need nuns and priests, sisters and brothers! Definitely a cardinal or bishop thrown in there!

“Haaah. Looks like you didn’t even think about that. Well, it’s not like this can’t be solved by summoning monsters.”

“Th-That’s right. I just need to summon monsters that’ll pass themselves off as humans.”

“...But I don’t know about entrusting a new hire with work this important.” One line of logic was that it made sense to hire new people for a new job, but... If they messed up bad enough, the town might find out our secrets. We wanted a monster used to dealing with people.

“This is a simple problem to solve. Summon a new monster to work in the inn and leave the church to one of our top administrator monsters.”

“Uh-huh. So, who are we gonna summon for the inn?”

“...We’ve got three choices: a Vampire, a Silky, and an Apprentice Witch.” We had originally summoned Rei, Kinue, and Neruneh as samples to see which

types of monsters were the most skilled and intelligent. Judging by their work ethic and whatnot, this job was best left to...

“It’s gotta be a Silky.”

“A Silky, definitely.”

Rokuko and I agreed completely. Well, if this were about researching magic or working in the dungeon, things would be different, but when it came to work in the inn, a Silky would be perfect.

We went to summon one right away, moving location to the Master Room. It was a white room as large as a gymnasium, but it was pretty messy, filled with mined stone and earth for making golems, along with various items mostly taken from dead adventurers.

“Okay, let’s do it.”

“Look, Keima, look! There’s a Silky Set in the Catalog now! It’s a little more DP efficient!” Oh? I took a look at Rokuko’s opened menu. Indeed, there was a Silky Set. You could buy three Silkies for 80,000 DP. Since a normal Silky cost 30,000 DP, it was indeed more bang for your buck. *Perfect. Let’s go with this.*

As an aside, there was no Vampire Set or Apprentice Witch Set. *I wonder why not...? Maybe stronger monsters don’t get sets. Or maybe it’s because Silkies are maids. You really do want to have an entire platoon of maids, not just one.*

“Okay, summoning time! Come forth, Silkies!” I spent the DP and a large magic circle spread out. Subsequently, three Silkies appeared in the middle of it — *Wait, aren’t they a little small?*

“We have answered your summons and arrived, Master.” *Oh man, all three of them spoke at the same time.*

I took another look at them. They were clearly younger than Kinue. Middle schoolers at best, really. And their faces... I couldn’t tell any of them apart. They were triplets.

“Aren’t they a little small compared to Kinue?”

“Well, that’s the price we pay for saving on DP, I guess.”

Their similarly light green hair was cut short, covering their ears but not much

further. They were wearing the classic green Silky maid outfit, though with chests considerably more flat than Kinue's. Honestly, it was pretty surreal looking at them. That was fine, though. Anyone would believe that they were related to Kinue. And it wouldn't be a lie to call them family, technically.

"Uhh, greetings, Silkies. Your job is to mingle with the humans and work at an inn. You will cook, clean, and work as receptionists. That you work for a dungeon is top secret."

"Understood, Master. Your wish is our command." The three of them answered at exactly the same time, their voices combining into one. *Heh... Rei was so stunned her jaw dropped when I told her she would be working at an inn, but these three didn't even blink. Silkies are something else.*



“Alright then... Uhhh, Rokuko, call someone over.”

“Mmm, let’s see, who’s not on shift... Okay, I’m calling Ichika.” Rokuko blinked hard and Ichika suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

“Gyaaah?! Oh, wait, this is the Master Room. I totes thought I just fell into a pitfall and died.”

“Hey, Ichika. Teach these three how to work in the inn for me.”

“Mmm? What, summoned more newbies, huh? Sure, bro, didn’t expect this, but you got it. Wait a sec... They’re triplets?”

“We’ll be in your care!” The three Silkies bowed politely together. They really were in sync. *Sure, it’s fine to think of them as triplets. I did summon all three of them at once, after all.*

“Looks like we’ll need to switch the shifts up. By the way, Keima, are you going to do another naming ceremony?” asked Rokuko, reminding me that I had held an elaborate naming ceremony when giving Rei and the others names. It sure would be anno—Rather, now wasn’t a good time for that. Right.

“Ceremonies are only for our administrators. Ichika, feel free to name these three.”

“Wha? Me? Uhhhh... ‘Kay. Hanna, Nicole, and Pio.” She pointed at them and named them one by one without a second of thought. *Aaand I still can’t tell them apart.*

“...I’ll give them hair ornaments. White for Hanna, red for Nicole, and yellow for Pio.”

“Thank you very much, Master!” I bought three hair ornaments for 150 DP each. The triplets happily accepted them and put them on. That should help distinguish them.

Incidentally, all three of them were indeed on our list of Named Monsters. Monsters were automatically added once I accepted the names, it seemed. *I wonder what’ll happen if I try to change a Named Monster’s name. I’ll experiment later.*

“Now then. I shall repeat my orders. My Silkies... Work at the inn!”

“Understood, Master!”

“Their boss has gotta be Kinue. Ichika, you can be like their support, teaching them the ropes and all that.”

“You got it. And, uh, Master? I’m totes getting a bonus for this, right?” asked Ichika, rubbing her hands together.

“...Ichika, you are a slave, remember? Don’t you feel any urge to work for free?”

“I’ve got such a bro Master that I kinda forget that sometimes, to be real. And don’t you wanna give your cute little slave a reward?” *I dunno about “little” with those melons, but yeah, I actually was planning to give her a bonus.*

“One curry roll a day, for a total of seven a week.”

“Good ones, from the Bakery Series!”

“Sure. Ask Kinue for them, I’ll give her the DP.” Ichika was a slave and not an actual member of the dungeon, so she couldn’t use DP directly. She could only use the menu temporarily for controlling golems when Rokuko or I made ours visible. Which meant that if she wanted something from the DP Catalog, she had to ask someone else. At the current moment, only I, Rokuko, and the administrators Rei, Kinue, and Neruneh could use DP.

“HEEEECK YEAAAH! You know what’s up, Master! I love you! Ravish me!”

“Yeah, yeah, whatever.” I gave Ichika a pat on the head and sent her to the Silkies.

“Wow, Boss, your face sure is red.”

“Shut it, Hanna! We’re getting straight to work! Rokuko, do your thing, girl.”

“Uh-huh, I’ll send you all to the break room.” A bright light enveloped Ichika and the others from the bottom up. Then, they vanished. Rokuko had “placed” them into the employee break room.

...Oh yeah, that reminds me, I gotta expand the employee dorm. Looks like it’s already time for the construction sorcerer Narikin to return.

Day 31 of Year 2

With the employee dorm expanded, I got to work on my religion again. Gathered at the church with me was Rokuko, Rei, and Niku. I had chosen them for their assistance in case something unexpected happened. I would have liked to have Ichika there with me too, but she was busy training the newbies.

...Rokuko was just there because she insisted on being with me, saying “I’m lending you my Divine Futon, so we’re in this together!” She was my ultimate weak point so I really would have liked her to stay inside somewhere safe, but I didn’t want to shoot her down and kill her enthusiasm.

“So, what are we doing here?”

“I got some books from Dyne, so now we just gotta make up a bible and spread the good word. I’m not really planning on this church getting too big, so feel free to be pretty lazy about it. Just do whatever.”

“Wow, talk about being lame. You worked this hard to make a church, why not put a little more effort into it?” The church that had appeared from nowhere was already the talk of the town (not to mention the employee dorm that had expanded overnight). However, I really had no intention of gathering a huge number of followers. Reason being, the church existed solely to give me an airtight excuse for sleeping in and taking naps. If too many people joined the church, I’d be too busy to sleep.

“The bible’s pretty much entirely blank, as you can see. I can make copies of it using {Create Golem}, so I’ll just pass it off as a magic tool that writes itself over time.” At the moment, it was just a super thick notebook. I had made it myself using leather, gold coins, and paper bought with DP. It was especially heavy, with the idea being that you could use it as a pillow when you were tired.

“So, Keima. What should we be doing? Are we nuns?”

“Pretty much. But I have a special job just for Rei.”

“What? For me, Master?” Rei tilted her head. I grinned and plopped my hands on her shoulders.

“Rei. Basically, you’re the High Priestess.”

“Um?!”

The High Priestess. Such a role wasn't vital to a church, but it was better to have one than not. The High Priestess became the symbol and representative of a religion. Rei's dignified appearance was a key point for me choosing her. And to be real, if Alca could manage as the Church of Lux's High Priestess, then there was no reason that Rei couldn't be a fantastic High Priestess. To a certain degree. Just enough to get a few followers here and there, please.

“Don't sweat it, Rei. You're a divine High Priestess that can perform miracles at will: massages that don't hurt. That'll spread the word of Beddhism really well.”

“Err, are those really miracles? I do them all the time at the inn.” *Don't think too hard about it. We're just going with the flow here.*

Rei's massages were incredibly popular due to how they mysteriously didn't hurt whatsoever. I knew that it arose from her lack of attack power materializing in odd ways, but it was a fact that they felt so good people fell asleep during them constantly. So, she was perfectly qualified for being the High Priestess of Beddhism. From now on she would be giving her massages in rooms within the church, for a fee.

“Now that that's settled, I'll give you a special ruby on your coin to signify your holy position.” Crimson symbols were perfect for vampires. I worked a thread through an open coin and handed it to her. I gave her a nun outfit too while I was at it. Only 200 DP with the hat.

“I-I shall do my best to serve you... I am... a High Priestess... The High Priestess... is me...”

“Actually, Keima, aren't Vampires undead-type monsters? Should she even be stepping near the church?”

“I was thinking more demon-type... Not that those are much better for churches. Well, whatever. It's not like anyone knows she's a Vampire.” *I can just pass it off as a Beddhism tenent stating that even the undead deserve peaceful sleep. Yeah.*

“So, Keima, what about mine?”

“Rokuko, your holy symbol will be this pretty wild thing that’s a mixture of hihi’irokane and adamantite on an orichalcum base. I put extra effort into it since the idea is that the church is super grateful that you’re lending the Divine Futon to it.”

“Woow! You’re right, it is pretty wild! It’s like a solid rainbow!” I had just haphazardly mixed stuff with {Create Golem}, but the result ended up looking pretty good. The base was a reddish platinum color, but it was kind of iridescent? It changed colors kind of like a soap bubble. The fact the colors changed regardless of the angle you were looking at it from probably had something to do with mana.

It was probably cheaper to make it that way than to use pure orichalcum. I couldn’t think of anything to do with it, so I just went ahead and made it into an opened coin. The weird colors gave me the impression it wouldn’t be great for armor. I had used a bit of the orichalcum that Father gave me, but between you and me, the rest of it I had just bought with the 10,000 DP we saved from buying the Silky Set.

“You really don’t mind us borrowing your Divine Futon?”

“Definitely. Just be sure to sleep with me again, okay?”

“Ph-Phrasing... And also, maybe in a normal bed? The Divine Futon kinda scares me.” *We’re talking about divine punishment here, after all*, I thought while handing Rokuko her nun outfit.

“Master, what should I do?”

“Niku, you can just be a normal nun. Your coin will be iron, since iron is this town’s main export,” I said, handing over the coin and a nun outfit. It was child-sized but the price was the same. *Well, worst come to worst, Niku can just beat the crap out of anyone who comes to the church looking for trouble.*

“...Actually, given your age, you can be more like a nun in training.”

“Understood.” There wasn’t any job in particular I wanted her to do. At most, she could be our bodyguard. Not that I honestly expected someone to come to a church with armed diplomacy.

Incidentally, I was wearing a priest outfit. I was the one who knew the most

about the Beddhist Creed (work in progress), after all.

“Alright, let’s get this show on the road. Beddhism has officially begun.” With our preparations complete, I went to open the door, and... Inside were two older dwarf dudes.

“Eh, Keima? What’s with that outfit then? Ye a priest now? I’m guessin’ ye were behind this building, huh?”

“Keima! What’s with this building? I’m gettin’ some crazy vibes from this place!”

One of them was the representative adventurer on the Town Council, Gozou, and the other was the dwarf blacksmith, Kantara.

“Looks like our first visitors are Gozou and Kantara. Not off to a great start. What are you two doing here?”

“Didn’t ye hear? We’re here to check this place out, y’know, fer ourselves. Err... This is a church, yeah? Right?” Gozou looked around the chapel.

...Yeah, it’s a church. Do churches in this world look a lot different from this? I asked Ichika and she didn’t have any problem with this one.

“Don’t look like no Ivory Church building to me. Guessin’ it’s a part of that Beddhist Church you were talkin’ about, Keima?” Kantara seemed especially interested with the opened coin and the stained glass windows.

“Yep. I had it built on a whim.”

“On a whim? Keima, really now? Ye know the town’s gonna stir up a fuss if a building comes outta nowhere. Tell us this kinda thing ahead of time, if ye would be so kind.” *Oh right, I forgot I’m technically town chief here. I probably should have informed someone about this.*

“My bad, my bad. I’ll be more careful.”

“See that ye are, this kinda fuss ain’t good for my heart. Ye ordered these books from Dyne, didn’t ye? Huh... I heard this placed popped up overnight, but good grief, this is one fine building.” Gozou beat a hand against the walls and door. *Don’t break them, please.*

“I used some pocket money to hire that one sorcerer specializing in

construction. He expanded the employee dorm while he was at it.”

“Ah, so that’s who’s behind the third of Goren Town’s thirteen mysteries, ‘the inn that expands overnight.’ He’s that A-rank friend of yers, yeah?” *Huh, the last time I heard about those, there were just seven. There’s more now?*

“...Ehhh, built all this in an evening, huh? I gotta ask him how much this cost to build,” murmured Kantara, looking at the stained glass windows and the ceiling fan. *Yeah, ask him and not me. That’ll be convenient for me since I haven’t thought up a price.*

Oh, right, that’s enough small talk. Time for some proselytizing.

“Since you came all this way, wanna join the church? I’ve got some holy symbols.”

“Nah, I’m in the Ivory Church. Ye really think I’d convert just like that? This is some serious stuff, man.”

“Aaah, and I be worshiping the God of Smithing, so...”

“Don’t worry about it, you can worship Beddhism as a sub-religion.”

“Sub-religion?” Both the dwarves blinked in confusion. Guess I had to start my explanation there. Thus, I gave them a rundown on sub-religions and how they were basically nothing but good. If they joined Beddhism, they would just have to give simple prayers and rest well, with the only serious rule being “Do your utmost to not disturb another’s sleep.” Of course, I didn’t forget to mention the free purin.

Also, you didn’t need a holy symbol to become a believer. As a sub-religion, it was perfectly fine to carry around your primary church’s symbol. All you had to do was keep love for sleep in your heart.

“...I get it. So yer saying I can join Beddhism while still worshipin’ the Ivory Goddess?”

“I won’t force you to join if you don’t want to. A core tenant of Beddhism is to sleep rather than forcing other people to do things they don’t want to.”

“Now, that, I like. The Holy Kingdom’s Church of Lux gets so up yer ass about joining I jus’ can’t be bothered.”

“Yea, it was rough when their High Priestess came here last year.” *Good times... Wait, the High Priestess actually talked to people to get them to join her religion? That’s pretty funny.*

“Eh, alright, I’ll join. Iffin’ I can do it on the side, why not?”

“You don’t mind?”

“Yeah. I’d take some fried food over the purin, though.”

“...Sure, alright. I’ll pass that on.”

“Thank ye!” Gozou grinned. *Ahhhh, I get it. The food reeled him in.*

“What about you, Kantara?”

“I... ahhh, I’ll have the purin.” *Oh, he’s already decided to join. Guess the purin’s all he cares about. That’s fine. I got me some believers.*

“I’ll make what free food you get an option. Sound good, Rokuko?” I looked at Rokuko, who had been sitting silently in a nearby pew (desk).

“Bwuh, me? Sorry, I was so left out of that conversation I wasn’t even paying attention. If that’s what you want to do, Keima, it’s fine with me.”

“Yer too kind. Wait, yer the owner, ain’t ye? I thought yer were just a nun. Ye joined Beddhism too?”

“Well, something like that. Keima invited me. Everyone that works for our inn is Beddhist now.”

“Ahhh, ye, I see that Rei and Kuro are wearing nun outfits too. Eh... Keima, what’s gonna happen to the inn?”

“I hired three of Kinue’s family members, so it’ll be fine. They’re triplets. Seriously, it’s wild,” I said, nodding. Gozou replied, “Should be fine then.” *Yep. It’ll be just fine.*

“Here, since you two are important to the town, I’ll give you these cheap copper holy symbols for free.”

“Whoa now, ain’t this the kinda time you’d give us the best ones ye got?”

“The best one I have is what Rokuko has, so no. It’s not for sale.”

“What, this one?” said Rokuko, taking the holy symbol out from behind the chest of her nun habit to show the dwarves. Kantara’s eyes shot open upon seeing it gleam like a rainbow.

“...’Scuse me for a second. This... This metal is...?!”

“Isn’t it pretty? Keima gave it to me.”

“I got it in the dungeon,” I followed up to hide my true involvement. That wasn’t a lie, either, since I made it using metal earned from a Dungeon Battle and metal bought through dungeon functions.

“...Keima. Yer saying ye found this already in the shape of Beddhist’s holy symbol?”

“More or less, yeah.” He was probably trying to ask if I had modified it myself. Since I had just mixed the stuff and let it harden into the shape of the holy symbol, I hadn’t really “modified” it. Still safe.

Immediately, Kantara knelt before the symbol in prayer.

“...Oh Lord! Oh Tatara, God of Smithing! I thank ye for blessing me with this meeting! I thank ye for guiding me to Beddhism!” Addendum. He prayed from the bottom of his heart with utter sincerity.

“Keima, please baptize me! As soon as possible! Ahhhh, what a fantastic day it is!”

“U-Uh, Gozou. What happened to Kantara?”

“...Keima. I’m not a blacksmith, so I dunno the details... But this holy symbol is somethin’ else. Somethin’ unbelievable. It’s a new type of metal, one that takes after orichalcum,” said Gozou, making Kanata shoot up and spin around.

“Wrong, Gozou! This ain’t a new type of metal... It’s an alloy! A combination of metals using orichalcum! In all of dwarf history, no blacksmith has ever managed to make an alloy out of the perfect metal orichalcum! It’s the mystery that’s eluded our race for all of time! Ahaha, can ye believe it? The metal beyond orichalcum is before our eyes! We have witnessed the birth of a new era of metallurgy!”

“Wha? S-Seriously...?! That’s... friggin’ serious stuff! Ye gods!”

Well... I didn't really follow all that, but basically, the holy symbol I gave to Rokuko was "friggin' serious stuff" to dwarves.

"I'm not going to give it to you."

"...I want it so bad I can feel every part of my body turning into tentacles, but right now my head's just full of thankful prayers for this miracle."

"Keima. Ye found this in the dungeon, yeah? Could you tell us which floor? If we gotta be baptized first, sure, we'll do anything. I'll leave the Ivory Church if I gotta."

"Calm down, you two! Seriously. Calm down! Okay?!" I made the dwarves take deep breaths.

...A-All better?

"Rokuko, we've gotta seal that holy symbol. And uhhh... My dwarf friends. Would you keep this a secret?" *I'll just... give Rokuko a ruby symbol like Rei's. She can stick to showing that one to people.*

"...I'll keep quiet if you let me touch it."

"Can we see it a bit more, too? Please, Rokuko! We're begging you! Let us see and touch it!"

Okay, now they're just sounding like perverts... Anyway, I agreed to let them borrow it for ten minutes. They had their fill of it and finally calmed down, letting out long satisfied sighs.

"So, what do we gotta do to be baptized? I'm guessin' you can do that yerself, since all the girlyies joined?" asked Gozou, his breathing still a little rough. *This is a guy who generally can't care less about anything but beer, too. I can't believe he's getting this crazy about something... I better hide this orichalcum alloy stuff. Yeah.*

"Alright, repeat after me. I am a Beddhist."

"I am a Beddhist!" Gozou and Kantara both replied at the same time, so forcefully they were practically shouting.

"Okay, you're now Beddhists, disciples of the sleeping creed. Sleep well, my friends. Oyasuminasai."

“...Ain’t that a lil’ too simple?” *Huh? Seems fine to me. What else would you need?*

“Kinda don’t feel like we’ve joined the church, y’know? Ye sure there’s nothin’ else?” Kantara also looked stunned.

“What do other churches do?”

“Errr, they chant some holy words and throw holy water around? Some of’em wash your feet. Ye ain’t got nothin’ like that?”

“...Hmm.” Alright. This didn’t feel enough to them. I figured that simple was best, but it seemed that believers wanted some kind of fancy performance to really feel like they had joined the church. In which case, I should probably think up a ritual based on the Beddhist bible...

“Then let us pray. Rokuko, Rei, Niku. Take a seat and participate by repeating my holy chant back at me. Now seems like a good time to use Siesta.” Siesta, the Blade of Afternoon Naps, was a Magic Blade that Uzou and Muzou had given to me not too long ago.

“This is a holy blade that blesses us with sleep. When filled with mana, it induces sleep in those around it.”

“Got it. We need to resist the sleep and focus on prayin’?”

“The opposite. You don’t need to resist sleep. The point, in fact, is to sleep. That’s what Beddhism is all about.”

“Makes sense,” nodded Gozou.

I stood before the front row of desks where the five of them were sitting.

“Now then. I will chant a prayer from the Beddhist bible. Please close your eyes and repeat after me. Ah... Wan shep ova za fens.”

“Wan shep ova za fens.”

“Too shep ova za fens.”

“Too shep ova za fens.”

I started counting sheep, slurring my words, and the five of them repeated after me word for word. *I wonder if they’re just straight-up hearing the*

Japanese sounds I'm making. Did I just find a flaw in the automatic translator?

"...Hey, Keima. What's this prayer about?"

"Think of it like a spell for having peaceful sleep. You see, 'shep' means 'creature that brings about sleep,' and generally they take the form of... sheep. The first word counts how many there are, and then 'ova ze fens' indicates their righteous journey from the land of waking to the land of sleep. Generally you keep counting until you fall asleep, but this time we'll end after counting to ten. Feel free to chant with words easier for you to say, as long as it means the same thing. You can even just count normally." I quickly thought up a mostly nonsense answer to Gozou's question. *I've gotta remember to write about these shep in the bible, which is still 99% white pages.*

"Sheep, huh... Those things be real fluffy."

"I see... Guessin' the chant continues like 'three shep over the fence, four shep over the fence,' then..."

It was about time to use Siesta. I thoroughly poured mana into it, and... *Fwaaah, so sleepy. It's already doing its work.*

"K-Keima. I'm gettin' kinda tired..."

"Go ahead and sleep. I'm tired too... Fwaaah... Feev shep ova za fens..."

"Five shep over the fence... Six shep over the fence..."

"Nzz..."

"Zzzzz..."

I continued counting the shep-not-sheep. Rokuko and Rei had already fallen sleep, using their arms as pillows on the desks.

"Perfect. Very, very good. Oyasuminasai." I congratulated the two of them.

"Keima, what's 'oyasuminasai' supposed to mean? That's the second time ye've said it." *Wait, what? The automatic translator wasn't catching that? I guess because I was saying it in a really dramatic, preachy tone.*

"Oyasuminasai is a bedtime farewell and a word of prayer. It means 'rest well,' basically."

“I get it...”

“Since it means two things at once, you can use it both when praying and when going to bed.”

“Sounds like prayin’ each day won’t be too hard, then... Welp. I’m at my limit. Oyasuminasai.”

“Oyasuminasai... nzzz...”

Oh, Kantara and Niku fell asleep too. *I wanna sleep too, but I gotta stay up during the ritual... Once Gozou clocks out I’ll go to bed too.* I stealthily turned my sleep resistance on. I still felt sleepy, but I wouldn’t be falling asleep with it on. *Actually, isn’t that basically hell? Being sleepy but not being able to fall asleep? Man, {Sleep Resistance} sure is an awful skill.*

“Nine, shep... over... ngh...”

“...Oyasuminasai.” *Sweet, Gozou fell asleep. Seems like not even a skilled adventurer can last ten seconds in front of Siesta. Anyway... I’m gonna sleep.* I took a random seat and turned off my sleep resistance. All I had to do then was let the irresistible sleepiness take me over.

Warm light streamed into the Beddhist church. It was a comfortable place to sleep, which made sense given I had built it from the ground up to be that way.

Okay, goodnight. Zzz.

A Normal Adventurer’s Perspective

On a particular day, a conversation like this occurred between adventurers drinking beer in the Goren Town bar.

“Hey, Ares. Didja hear? That weird building thing’s a church of Beddhism.” The talk of the town was the church that had appeared overnight. A member of the council, Gozou, and his friend Kantara had gone to investigate yesterday. Their findings involved words he had never heard before.

“Beddhism? I’ve never heard about that. Have you, Roa?”

“Nope, it’s news to me. But word on the street is, Keima’s a member of the church. Apparently even Gozou joined.” That made Ares blink in confusion. He remembered that Gozou was a member of the Ivory Church, as most Empire citizens and adventurers were.

“Wait, so he left the Ivory Church?”

“Nah, seems like he’s in both that *and* Beddhism now.”

“The hell? Pretty sure most people just worship one god.” He was completely thrown off. It was common sense that worshiping a second god would result in less favor from your first god, and thus most people only joined a single church. Why would Gozou join a second one?

“He said something about it being a sub-religion. No problem practicing it on the side. Apparently all he has to do is not bother other people’s sleep and say ‘oyasuminasai’ as a goodbye or something. And even that’s not a required thing.”

“...That sounds pretty easy. If Gozou joined, I think I might too.” The Ivory Church didn’t require fervent prayer or anything, but if Gozou was joining the church on the side, Ares thought it might be smart for him to do the same. With restrictions as loose as saying a certain word every now and again, it was basically like picking up a copper off the ground.

“Anyway, about that church. The town chief found the bible of Beddhism in the dungeon and had his construction mage friend build it overnight. Using his own pocket money, too.”

“Bibles in a dungeon...? Maybe Keima’s the top dungeon explorer here ‘cause he’s a member of Beddhism?”

“Sounds likely.” He said that as a joke, but thinking about it, that would explain a lot of things. Joining the church might actually be a good idea in more ways than one.

“Hey, Roa. All this talk of the town chief got me thinking, where’s all this town’s funding coming from? I heard Keima’s paying for this year’s Ivory Goddess Festival. The town’s not gonna go under in debt or anything, yeah?”

“Now that you mention it, we’re not being taxed or anything... I guess we’re

just kinda staying here on our own? Well, we are adventurers.” The Adventurer’s Guild was taxing transactions it processed, but that money was all going to the Guild. None of it should be going to the town’s funding. Where was the town chief getting all the funds to keep the town going? Was it all his pocket money too?

“...Yeah, I’m thinking we should join Keima’s church. My family’s worshiped the Agriculture God for generations, but I don’t mind switching boats here.”

“Same here. Plus, I hear joining the church gets you free fried food or a purin each time you eat at the inn.” Immediately, Roa heard the sound of almost every adventurer in the bar abruptly standing up. That was to be expected. A single purin or a single plate of fried food cost fifteen coppers individually. They were that expensive, and yet free every day.

“I’m gonna go join the church.”

“Me too.”

“C’mon, hold up, you guys. I’m joining too but I’m not done talking here yet.” Emotionally speaking, he wanted to go straight to the church to join as well, but he stopped them.

“What’s with you? I wanna go eat a purin right now.” Roa smirked at Ares’s impatience and told him something he knew he’d love.

“Seems like Rei was selected as Beddhism’s High Priestess.”

“...Rei... is the High Priestess?! Oh man, Rei was already cute enough, but now that she’s a priestess she’s at least twice as cute. But doesn’t that mean I won’t be able to casually ask her for massages now?!” There were many citizens in Goren Town whose greatest pleasure in life was getting a massage in the inn after visiting the onsen. A girl that beautiful put her all into squeezing their bodies. It should be obvious why everyone loved it so much.

“Seems like she still gives massages, but in the church and for a price. In fact, I heard she was selected as the High Priestess specifically because she gives ‘miraculous massages that cause no pain and inspire peaceful sleep’ or something.”

“Huh, so those massages were a Beddhist miracle.”

“Rei being a miracle... Yeah, I’m on board with that.”

“What, Rei’s the High Priestess? I’m definitely joining then.”

Even more adventurers became interested in joining Beddism. That was to be expected. If there was a ranking of all the most beautiful women in Goren Town, then Rei would be near the top for sure.

At that moment, Gozou, an existing member of the church, walked into the bar.

“What’s all this then? Ye lads are lookin’ pumped about somethin’.”

“Gozou! Good timing, we were just talking about Beddism.”

“Ahh, Beddism, huh? That stuff’s great, I’ve never slept that well in me life.”

“You like the sleeping? Not the purin?” Someone shouted that Gozou was more a fried food guy than a purin guy, but regardless, a lot of people let out shocked cries at the fact that a dwarf like Gozou who spent all his spare time cramming food and beer would talk about liking sleep.

“Yeah. Ye know how ye pray in Beddism? By sleeping. Eh, the idea is that ye sleep well when ye gotta sleep, but the church is so comfortable it’s easy to slip into sleep. They even lend ye beds.”

“Wow! Consider me interested.”

“We were talkin’ bout using the church as a rest spot during the Ivory Goddess Festival, if ye all are interested, go check it out.” Everyone was getting more and more interested in not just going to the church, but joining Beddism entirely.

“Plus, that’s not all.” Gozou waved his hands and stopped the adventurers, which just pumped them up more. “The Magic Blade Keima’s got is a real Holy Blade. It’s called Siesta and just being near it is enough to get sleepy. I was knocked out before I could count ten shep.”

“You what now? The blade spreads sleep? What the hell is a shep?”

“Yea, just bein’ near it is enough to fall asleep. It’s some miasma thing. Shep are a divine beast that brings sleep to people, they look jus’ like sheep. In the church you chant before sleep. ‘Wan shep ova za fens,’ like that.” Gozou

proudly said the chant. He had been thoroughly dyed in Beddhism's colors.

"Oh right, but don't go around forcin' people into it, hear? Beddhism's not about forcing itself on people. If you've got the time to shill, you've got the time to sleep, he says."

"Now that's pretty good." The adventurers laughed as they recalled how hated priests from the Church of Lux were due to their incessant proselytizing.

"I'll pass the word on if ye all want to join."

"Hey, what kinda offering do they need?" Indeed. Most churches required an offering of some degree to join. They would probably have to pay a lot to cover the church having just been built. Just how much had Gozou paid? As he was the representative of the adventurers, all they could hope was that they didn't have to pay as much as him. However, their question just made Gozou blink in surprise.

"...Now that ye mention it, I didn't pay anything. Didn't hear about any needing any offerings neither. Ye can buy holy symbols, but ye don't need 'em. The cheapest one's made of copper and costs a copper."

"...Seriously? We can eat purins every day for just a single copper? I'm definitely joining." Incidentally, as stated, it would normally cost fifteen coppers to buy a single purin. Getting a holy symbol was overwhelmingly the cheaper choice. By that point, there was no reason not to join.

"Do you all mind if I join in on this conversation?" A merchant spoke up.

"Oh? Yeah, go ahead. Ye interested in Beddhism too, merchant?"

"Indeed, or rather, I have already joined," he said, taking out a coin with a hole in it from behind his shirt. He must have splurged a little, as it was made of silver.

"Ohoh, a Beddhist brother, huh?" Gozou took out his similarly silver holy symbol and clinked his against the merchant's, as if sharing a toast. The other adventurers watched on with jealousy, wishing they could participate as well.

"Why'd ye join Beddhism, merchant? Are there other towns with churches that let ye eat purins there?"

“No, I learned of the Beddhist Church for the first time coming here. I imagine this town is the sole beneficiary of the institution.”

“Then why?”

“You see, the Dyne Company ordered books from Tsia. When I delivered them, I went to the church with Dyne. I was interested in what fellow had ordered such a large quantity and variety of books.”

“Ah, I remember somethin’ like that.” Gozou thought back to Keima saying something about books one time.

“And so, when given the books, the client put them into bookshelves on the side of the church. I asked him why he was putting such expensive goods in a public place where anybody could touch them. He answered, ‘I bought these books for anybody to read if they want. Why would I hide them out of sight?’”

“Talk about bein’ a good guy. Just what I’d expect from Keima.” Books were valuable and it wasn’t uncommon for a single volume to cost a full gold piece on its own. Who would casually put books in a dangerous place where anybody could steal them? Only a giant idiot, or a heroic man so great in spirit that he did not fear losing books of that great a value.

“He did not even appear to have plans to charge money for reading them.” In a world where knowledge itself was extremely valuable, many people attempted to monopolize it and profit thereby. Yet, Keima was putting his books in public for free, allowing anyone to read them. They were a bit different in scale, but even the libraries in the capital city of the Empire charged high entrance fees.

“Hey, Gozou. I might be misunderstanding somethin’ here, but is it just me or is the town chief a bit weird in the head?” Keima’s magnanimity was so great that it would make a lesser man dizzy, but Gozou just snorted.

“Bit late to be realizin’ that.” Very true. Everyone agreed with Gozou instantly. If Keima was around he probably would have argued, though.

“I decided to make this town a regular part of my route and before I knew it I had joined the church. Aaah, and that purin certainly was splendid.”

“Right?! Purins are the dang best!” And thus, everyone there went to the

church to join Beddhism.

“By the way, what kinda god does Beddhism worship?”

“It seems that Beddhism does not worship a particular god. That is why it is possible to practice it as a sub-religion.”

“...Does that make Keima the pope?”

“Beddhism does sound like something Keima’d be all over.”

“Alright, the town chief is the pope! Let’s get some worshiping going on!” And so, the new religion Beddhism gained momentum with Keima as its pope.

Ultimately every citizen of Goren Town joined Beddhism and Keima panicked while baptizing all of them. Subsequently, Wataru visited for the Ivory Goddess Festival to get drunk and ended up joining Beddhism as well, but nothing went wrong and everyone in town enjoyed purins and fried food. Even passing merchants could join the celebration if they showed a holy Beddhist symbol.

Side Chapter - The Ivory Goddess Festival, Wataru the Hero, and Beddhism

Today was the Ivory Goddess Festival. Or to be more specific, it was the first day of the three day long festival that was anathema to peaceful sleep. Personally I could have lived without holding the festival, but my townsfolk were excited enough for it that it wasn't in my power to stop it. On top of that, I had to manage the church since I was keeping it open as a rest spot. What a pain. Such a pain that I didn't even bother saying the full "What a pain in the butt."

"Heya, Keima! Excited for the festival?" In the midst of all that, the Hero of Debt Wataru came over looking unreasonably excited. *I bet this jerk came over specifically 'cause he knew we'd be busy.*

"I heard in the inn that you would be over here. I'm surprised to see a new building here. Nice church."

"Yep. I ordered it from Narikin, the master of construction magic. Looks pretty nice, huh?"

"...Er, you're still going to pretend that Narikin exists?" *The heck does this guy think he's saying? Narikin is the mysterious masked magician. How could he... Ahhh, wait, I introduced Narikin as Rokuko's partner to him or something. Whatever.*

"Anyway, why'd you come all the way to this backwater town? I'm guessing the capital city is really lit up right now."

"Well, despite appearance, don't forget that I'm an S-Rank adventurer and a Hero. The Ivory Goddess Festival is for adventurers and the capital city just goes way too crazy over S-Ranks like me. I wouldn't get the chance to enjoy the festival, so I ran away and came here. There's some adventurer called Suzuki over there. I'll leave it to him." *Now there's a name I haven't heard in a long time. I forgot all about him. Dragon Suzuki, was it? I'm pretty sure I have him*

buried alive in a dungeon wall somewhere... Oh, right, Haku brought back a fake Doppelganger.

“That Suzuki guy is a real shut-in, though. I’m pretty sure Haku said he’d never go out in public or something.”

“Oh, really? You sure know a lot about him.” Wataru scratched his cheek. It didn’t look like he cared much. To be honest, neither did I.

“The thing is, I wanted to spend my festival with the person I like, so... Here I am,” said Wataru, shyly.

“I get it. You have a crush on me, huh? Sorry, I’m into girls.”

“So am I! You’re not a bad guy, Keima, but I don’t swing that way.”

“Don’t even think about touching Rokuko. Unless you want Haku to personally murder you, that is.”

“No! Seriously, I was only acting back then. It was complicated.”

“What?! That just leaves Niku, I mean Kuro! So it’s true that Heroes love slave girls, and beastkin just turn Heroes into beasts themselves...”

“Where did you even hear that?! No, no, that’s all wrong!” *Yeah, I know.*

“I’m pretty sure Neruneh’s working at the receptionist counter right about now.”

“Yeah, and I came over here so I wouldn’t get in the way of her work. She’ll be off tomorrow and I’m planning to spend the day with her. So here I am, passing today talking to you.” *Uh, y’know, I’m kinda busy managing the church right now. You don’t mind getting in the way of my work?*

“Well, I’m just glad Haku didn’t come...”

“Naturally, this entire festival would go off the deep end if Haku visited. This is a celebration in her honor, after all. She really wanted to come, but managed to restrain herself,” said Wataru, grinning. *Man... I bet she’s gonna kick the crap out of him for coming here on his own without her. He’ll deserve it, too.*

“Oh right. Keima, I heard that you’re the pope of Beddhism and that this church is a Beddhist church. What kind of religion is that?”

“Its core tenant is to hold peace, harmony, and rest above all else. Want to join?”

“Ahhh, sorry. I’m an actual Buddhist, so... I’m not planning on joining any of the religions here.” *Oh yeah, he’s a Japanese person. I was technically a Buddhist too, or at least the kind that would normally call myself an atheist despite my ancestors being buried by local shrines.*

“I won’t force you to join, since we don’t do that in Beddhism. But it’s a sub-religion, so you can practice it while keeping Buddhism as your main religion.”

“That sounds kinda like the job system of an MMORPG.”

“Also, Neruneh is a very passionate believer in Beddhism. I remember her saying that if she started dating someone, they’d have to be a Beddhist.”

“So it can be just my sub-religion, right?”

“Welcome to the church, friend.” By the way, he bought an expensive golden holy symbol. It didn’t detract anything from his debt, of course.

“Wait, what?! A Hero joined the church?!”

“Holy cow! Beddhism’s crazy!”

“Man, both the town chief and a Hero are Beddhists! That’s amazing!”

...Those inside the church kicked up quite the stir after a Hero joined. *Man, I messed up. How am I gonna get any sleep now?*

“Great, now this place is loud as crap. Let’s go outside.”

“Oh, okay.” I went outside with Wataru. However, that was another mistake in a long string of mistakes.

“Oh look, it’s Wataru the Hero... Wait, whaaaa?! That’s a pretty cool necklace! It’s the holy symbol of the Beddhist Church! Heeey, everyoneee! An S-Rank adventurer just joined the Beddhist chuuurch!”

“Holy cow! Beddhism’s crazy!”

“Ohoooh, I gotta drink to that! Hyahaha, eat, eat! Drink, drink!” People had pulled tables out by the church and were drinking beneath the sky. In no time at all, word had spread throughout town that a Hero had joined the church. The

inertia was high, with every citizen having joined and now a Hero as well. Wataru and I were surrounded before we knew it and taken to the center of the festival, the plaza by the church.

Before my eyes was a mountain of food. Kinue had put her all into making a feast and it showed. There was delicious-looking fried food, french fries, boar snout steak, cooked pig, roast rabbit, and so on. Huge bowls of noodles and rice balls... There were even chunks of meat still attached to bones. It was like something you'd see in a comic book.

"...Well, all Beddhists can eat as much as they want today. Here, there's some udon we made out of the flour we have stored for winter."

"Oh, udon, huh? I'll have some... Wow, this stuff is pretty hard. Feels pretty bumpy too... Right?"

"Be sure to chew a lot, it sticks in your stomach. People love it for that since it fills you up."

"...Isn't udon supposed to go down easy?" *Well, udon that isn't made out of bread flour, yeah. This is pretty good for like, boiled udon.*

Suddenly, I saw Gozou walking toward us. He must have heard that Wataru was here.

"Heya, Wataru! I heard ye joined Beddhism. Here, take out your holy symbol. I'll teach ya how we greet other members of the church."

"Ah, Gozou. Sure. Like this?" Gozou and Wataru clinked their holy symbols together. I had no idea what they were doing.

"Wow, that's kinda neat."

"Yup, gold sure sounds special."

"Heeey, Hero, greet me too!"

"Me next!"

Hey, I have a holy symbol too, why isn't anyone trying to greet me?

"Well, 'cause you're the pope, Keima."

"Feels kinda disrespectful."

“Plus we might catch your always-sleepy disease.”

“You guys... Want me to knock you all out?” In any case, I joined in on the greetings with my mithril holy symbol. It was surprisingly fun. *With a greeting like this, maybe I should hollow out the inside and make them ring like bells. But I hadn't actually expected a greeting like this to develop on its own. I guess things are going well?*

“Oh my! A Hero has joined the church... That is incredible. I am merely a passing merchant, but may I join as well?”

“Sure! Beddhism's all about accepting everyone! Right, town chief?”

“Y-Yeah... We accept anyone who doesn't disturb the sleep of others.”

“Holy cow! Beddhism's crazy!” *Okay, who the hell keeps saying that?*

“Hahaha! Looks like we're gonna be staying up all night partying!” *Please, anything but that. You're right by the chief residence where I sleep... I don't want the noise keeping me up all night. I've sound proofed the room, but that has its limits.*

“...I'll warn you now, but I'm gonna get super pissed if you make a lot of noise right outside my room all night.”

“Oh right, we better not get the pope mad. You got it, we'll go crazy in the bar overnight.” *Good.*

“Man, Keima, you're acting just like a great pope.”

“Wanna get smacked, Wataru?” That said, I had no idea how to escape this crowd of people. I fell into thought about how to get away when suddenly Wataru spoke up.

“You know, I know the perfect way to escape crowds like this.”

“Yeah? Let's hear it.”

“Okay... Heeey, everyone, clear some space! Keima and I are gonna have a training dueeel!”

“Wait, what?!”

“Ahahaha!” *Oh crap, this guy's super drunk. When did he even get that beer?*

“Heeey, clear some space! Wataru the Hero and Keima the town chief are gonna have a duel!”

“Seriously? Keima’s gonna die!” The crowd stirred and opened up. *Can’t back out of this now...*

“Don’t woorry, Keima! I meaaan, hey, let’s say I lose if I take even a single step, okaaay? Go ahead, take the first swing!”

“Oh, really? Let’s do it then.”

The duel ended in my win. *Too bad, Wataru! You might have noticed what I was doing if you weren’t drunk.*

With victory in hand, I managed to escape the plaza. *Haaah. Finally. Oh, and how’d I win? I used {Create Golem} beneath him, of course. Got a problem?* Wataru apparently spent the second and third days having a ton of fun with Neruneh. They mainly talked about magic and went so in depth on the subject that nobody around them could keep up, which gave them some alone time together. How nice.

And me? I was busy managing the church. I ended up avoiding work yesterday and Rokuko punished me for it. But that was fine, it was quieter in the church than the rest of town.

“Oh right, Keima, the whole town is talking about how the Beddhist pope beat a Hero in a duel! Isn’t that great?”

“C’mon, Wataru, give me a break...”

“Hahaha! I may have been drunk, but you definitely beat me! And the truth is, I dueled a ton of other people after that under the same conditions, but nobody beat me except you. Kuro was a pretty tough fight, though.” *How...? Why didn’t anyone beat him...?*

“You’re the only one who trampled over the festive mood and pulled a dirty trick. Just what I’d expect from you, Keima.” *H-Hey! I was the first one you dueled, there was no festive mood yet!*

Chapter 2 - Day 40 of Year 2

Okay. So, my plan was to take some nice naps once the Ivory Festival ended, but at some point I became a real deal pope. I don't get it. Like, yeah, I founded the religion. So what? Does this world consider all founders of religions to be popes? I told them I just found the bible in the dungeon, didn't I? How did this happen...? I just wanted to justify my napping...

...What, there was a birth? Someone gave birth in the town for the first time? Congratulations. Wait, what? You want me to baptize them in the Beddhist church? Uh, sure, lemme just sprinkle some water on them... You want a protective charm too? Sheesh, you sure want a lot of things. Uhhh, here, have a holy symbol. Don't worry about paying, this is the town's first child. Consider it a gift from me, the town chief. Have an iron one. I get the feeling a baby sucking on copper would be pretty bad, but iron is good for the blood. I think that's how it works? Yeah. Get healthy, kid.

(From that day onwards, it became a tradition for the church to gift newborn children an iron holy symbol, but that's another story.)

You want me to name the kid too? Uhhh... It's a boy? Alright, let's go with Netaro. This name comes from a story told in the Beddhist bible, that of Sannen Netaro. No, not Netero, I sai—Ah, whatever, go with Netero.

Basically, all sorts of things happened. The number of children in the town increased and every day was busy for the pope of Beddhism. The Silky triplets had gotten used to working in the inn and it was operating more smoothly than ever. The church was doing great too, thanks to the High Priestess Rei's miraculous massages. For some reason, people were even donating us offerings.

However, I didn't just have my pope duties to take care of. I was still the town chief. Despite unloading the work onto everyone else, there was still a lot of paperwork that I had to sign myself to keep the flow of red tape going. To avoid causing any problems that I would have to personally resolve, I was indeed

looking over the work before signing it. Anyway, I was plugging away at paperwork, stamping my signature on one after another when Wozma—my vice chief—said something pretty out there.

“Keima, shall we open a brothel?”

“...Come again?” A brothel. In other words, a place where customers pay to have sex with professional prostitutes. That wouldn’t be a good place for children to be around. Please, think of the children!

“Shall we open a brothel?”

“Nah, I mean, I heard you. By brothel you mean, uh... That kind of brothel, right? The kind of place where adults do adult things?”

“Yes, that kind of brothel.”

“Do you want to die, Wozma? Don’t forget who’s propping up this town... Or rather, who’s propping up the inn’s owner.” We had some cushions separating the town from the one propping it up, but someone could still figure it out with a little investigation. And Wozma was actually one of Haku’s subordinates already, so yeah. No matter how stealthy Haku’s manipulation could be at times, she sung Wozma’s praises as a skilled administrator. No way he didn’t know what was up here. Haku doted on Rokuko endlessly, and it should have been clear as day that she wouldn’t want a brothel anywhere near her.

“Although the Ivory Festival was a day of great relief to all, there are many men who became restless after the recent birth of a child. There are few women in this town, and if I may be blunt, with every passing day more men become sexually dissatisfied. A brothel will be necessary to control that. At this rate, worse case scenario, your employees will be attacked.”

...Well, it’s true that this is basically a town for adventurers, and most adventurers are guys. Most of the cute girls in the whole town worked for our inn. And now there are three more of them.

“Aaah... I kind of want to tell them to just go to Tsia. Is that too much to ask?”

“This is in heart a mining town. It is more rare for these to lack a brothel than to have one.” *Mining towns want brothels, huh? I guess cause digging holes makes you want to dig into other holes. What perverts. Well, the mine here is a*

dungeon, so nobody actually digs holes.

“The truth is that brothels are institutions that lessen crime and increase stability.” He put some documents on my desk. *He went out of his way to make these for me? Man, he’s pretty passionate about this. It may be my imagination, but his eyes look fairly bloodshot.*

“Too bad. The answer’s still no. Go to Tsia, we have roads.” I stamped Wozma’s brothel plan with my rejection stamp.

“That is unfortunate. To tell the truth, I was thinking of establishing a foot massage course specifically for you, town chief.”

“Ngh! Gah, ngh, uuuh... N-No. The answer is still no. Bring it up with Haku.” I stamped it again for emphasis. That was close.

“Unfortunate.” Wozma let out a sigh. *Yeah, he definitely wanted one for himself. All I have to say to that is go to Tsia, my man. The roads are paved and it’ll only take a few hours by carriage. By the way, are those foot massage courses held in Tsia? Not that I want to go or anything, I’m just asking. This is the kinda thing that, uh, town chiefs just need to know.*

“I didn’t expect you to propose something like this, Wozma. Did something happen?”

“Not at all, it was merely suggested to me by a variety of people. Nothing in particular inspired this.” *I hope not. But huh, people are asking for a brothel?*

“...What do you think about taking the people who suggested the brothel and going to Tsia with them? Take a break from the bar and all. Kinue can take care of it for you while you’re gone, I’m sure she’ll be fine for three days or however long it takes.”

“That won’t be necessary. The bar is in many ways my reason for living. I appreciate your concern, Keima.” To be straight, I was a little interested in the idea, but I cared a lot more about sleep than sex. I knew that wasn’t true for everyone, but still, a brothel just wasn’t going to happen.

* * *

That night. I was sleeping in bed with Niku as my dakimakura like always, but I

was having a weird dream. For some reason, it took place in our inn's grand suite room, and I was sleeping in its bed. *Well... Far from me to complain about what I do in dreams, but why is there a pink-haired loli in bed next to me? I don't recognize her, and she's not even wearing clothes. Her skin's smooth and white as eggshells. Anyway, my main concern here is why am I having a dream like this? I'm not a lolicon.*

"Heya, town chief."

"...Who are you?"

"Ahaha, who indeed? I could be anyo—" I kicked the loli out of my bed. "Wh-Why would you do that?! I'm such a cute girl, too!"

"Dang, sure seems cold out there. That sucks. Anyway, goodnight."

"Hold on, hold on! Wh-What's going on here? Was I just not acting shy and vulnerable enough? Hold on, please, let me try again!" I rolled in bed, turning my back to the naked pink-haired loli asking for a second try, and shut my eyes. Zzz...

"D-Don't just fall asleep. Let's have some fun together, okay?"

"Weren't you going to try again and act shy or something? Quit wasting my time. Out."

"Sorry! I'll do that now!" The world went dark as if a universal light switch had been flipped. When light returned, the pink-haired loli was in bed next to me again. This time she was wearing a white micro bikini. *Didn't I say I wasn't a lolicon? Oh, wait, I never said that out loud.*

"Th-This is what you like, r-right?" The loli blushed. Without a word, I kicked her out of bed. "Why?! I was perfect this time, wasn't I?!"

"Zzz..."

"Pretending to be asleep won't fool me! Come on, you love lolis and one of them is spreading her feet right in front of you. Do whatever you want with me, okaaaay? Go right aheaaad." I wanted to keep ignoring her, but man, it was really hard to sleep with her yapping in my ear.

"...Alright, I can do anything I want, yeah?"

“Yes! And this is all happening in a dream, so you can do this and that and all sorts of things, even things so cruel and perverted that every society to exist would curse your name for eons to come if your secrets were ever to be unearthed! I am but a receptacle for your endless lust!” The loli flashed a peace sign with her tongue stuck out a little.

“Got it. Let’s see... First, a rope and ball gag.” From thin air I conjured rope, a ball gag, and an eyemask for the heck of it.

“Wha? Um, where did you get all that from?”

“This is a dream, isn’t it? Why wouldn’t I be able to summon anything I want? That’s how dreams work.” *I’m used to this kinda thing thanks to all my lucid dreams.*

“Wow, you’re pretty experienced... Who in the world are you?”

“Just the pope of a rapidly growing religion. Now, sit still.” I put the blindfold on the obediently sitting loli. I then tied her with the rope such that she couldn’t move. Very tightly, too. No wriggling out of these knots.

“Ahn! S-So rooough...”

“Yeah yeah.” I sealed the sweetly moaning loli’s mouth with the ball gag. *And now it’s quiet again. Finally.* I laid down in bed again.

“Wait, you’re not going to do anythiiiiing?!”

“Tch, you got out of the ropes... Guess I’ll have to use tape next.”

“Uwaaah! This guy’s messed up in the heaad!” *Woah now. Did this mostly naked loli just say I’m messed up in the head? That’s just not right.*

“I dunno, I’m pretty sure I’d be messed up in the head if I actually did anything with a little girl like you.”

“But I mean, this is a dream! Where else are you going to release your pent up lust?”

“I’m good.”

“...What? N-No way, are you saying you’re already having plenty of sex in real life? Y-You’re a real pervert.” *No, I’m just getting plenty of sleep. I don’t think*

it's fair to call me a pervert for that, jerk.

“Um, it's getting pretty chilly out here. Do you mind if I get under the covers too?”

“Fine, fine. It's only cold cause you're wearing a skimpy outfit like that, y'know. Be more careful.” I let the micro bikini wearing loli into my futon.

“...Town chief, you're so waaarm!”

“Thanks. Now, oyasuminasai. Sleep tight. Kids who sleep a lot grow big and strong.”

“Okaaay.” I ignored her praise of dubious intent and patted the futon from above steadily. Soon enough, the loli began to doze off. Once I saw her close her eyes and fall asleep, I... fell asleep as well.

Day 41 of Year 2

Anyway, yeah, that was probably a succubus attack.

“Man, that sure was timely. All that business about a brothel has gotta be a plot by some succubi. What the heck is happening in this town?” I woke up and out of habit patted Niku's head. Her dog tail, sticking out from the covers, wagged as she slept. *Aaah... So wholesome.*

Also, there was a pink-haired loli sleeping on the other side of me for some reason. She wasn't naked or in a micro bikini, but suffice to say her outfit showed a lot of skin. I noticed because she was outside of the covers. *You wanna catch a cold?*

“...Looks like we've got an intruder. She must be pretty skilled if Niku didn't notice her.” *Weird, I'm pretty sure I locked the door. I wonder if she has some kind of special power related to infiltration.* In any case, while the loli was busy sleeping happily with drool leaking out of her mouth, I checked her dot on the map.

She was earning us 20 DP a day. That was about as much as a normal villager, but considering her status as a loli, it was relatively high. Though I didn't know

how much being a succubus influenced things. *Speaking of which, I just remembered that I can buy slave collars with DP. 5000DP each. Hm... You just have to put them on someone, right? No Contract Magic or something necessary?*

* * *

The pink-haired loli awoke beneath the blanket I had put on her.

“...Fwaah, mnnn, that was a nice nap.”

“Heya. Want some breakfast?”

“Yes pleaaase...” I handed her a sandwich that she immediately began munching on. Must be hungry.

“...Wait. I don’t recognize this room.”

“Finally noticed, huh? Didja like the sandwich?”

“Bwuh?! Who are you?! A kidnapper?! Wait... Uwaaah, the town chieeeeef?!”

“Hahaha. Good morning, mademoiselle. Did you know that trespassing is a crime? Oh, and don’t run unless you want to die.”

“Eek?! To die?!” I tapped my neck. The loli gasped and touched hers as well, finally realizing that she wearing a collar.

“Wh-What did you do to me?”

“I just put a collar on you. Right, Niku?”

“Yes, Master.” Niku slid up beside me and proudly touched her collar. That collar being a slave collar. Seeing that, the loli paled.

“P... PERVEEEEERT?! What do you plan to do with meee?!”

“Hahaha. Just saying, I’ve thoroughly soundproofed this room. Can you guess why?”

“Why...? N-No way!” Indeed: So I could sleep better at night. That was the one and only reason. Also, in case you were confused, the loli was wearing a simple mid-sized dog collar (10 DP). A slave collar needed the {Contract} skill to work, so I decided to roll with a bluff.



“So, why’d you sneak in here, little thief girl?”

“Thief? Eheh, I don’t steal things! I just came here to investigate you after hearing certain rumors, town chief! That means I am innocent and you have to free me!”

“Give me back the sandwich, then.”

“...I’ll wash dishes, clean, or do anything you ask! Just please spare my chastity!” *She’s concerned about her chastity? Maybe she isn’t a succubus.* Niku clung to my side, leaning onto me. I patted her head gently and for some reason that made the pink-haired loli panic even more.

“Anything but my chastity! Please, spare me from being defiled! I’ve sworn to give my first to the one I love! Oh, are you asking me to throw up the sandwich? Your goal here is my vomit, isn’t it! You’re a pervert that gets off to girl vomit! You’re planning to fap to the sour smell of a girl’s stomach fluids mixed with half-digested, chewed up food, aren’t you?! Or do you just want to see me tearing up while vomiting?! Is it both?! It’s both, isn’t it?!” said the loli before thrusting her hand into her mouth in an attempt to vomit. *Uh, please stop? And holy shit, this girl sure knows a lot about dark fetishes. Your average loli isn’t so informed on the erotic depths of a girl throwing up. She’s gotta be a succubus.*

“You don’t have to throw up. Just start by telling me your name.”

“Umm, m-my name is Michiru. I’m not tasty, so don’t eat me!” She spilled the beans on her name instantly. *Hmm. Michiru, huh?*

“I see. What were those rumors about me you were talking about?”

“...Well, um, that you’re a lolicon that loves little girls! There, I said it...!” *Huh. Someone bought those rumors and sent a loli succubus at me, then... They must have a pretty crappy information network.*

“Your objective?”

“...Ummm, well... They told me to get blackmail on you...”

“Why?”

“...M-My big sister wants to, um... I don’t know. She just told me to get blackmail. I’m begging you, please let me go. I’ll cry really hard if you don’t!”

That big sister is probably the mastermind here. I walked up to the pink-haired loli—that is, to Michiru. She bounced in fear and trembled. But all I did was smoothly take off her collar.

“Bwuh?”

“I’ll let you go for now.” Michiru looked between me and the collar, conflicted. She touched her neck to make sure it had no collar.

“...Heh, it seems you’ve already completely fallen for my charm! I’m amazing!”

“Yup. I’m so head over heels that if you don’t leave right now, I’ll probably lose control of myself and go wild.”

“Eek?! Th-Thank you for the sandwich but I must be goooooing!” Michiru threw open the window and hurriedly escaped. *Oh, she tripped. That’s embarrassing.*

“...Master.”

“Hm? What’s up, Niku?”

“Do you... like that kind of girl?”

“Nah. She seems kinda incompetent, so letting her go shouldn’t be a problem.” *I marked her on the map, too, so I can find her instantly as long as she’s in dungeon territory... Oh? She’s already gone outside of town. Well, I’ll notice as soon as she comes back.*

“...Master, I believe you are too lenient with little girls. Including myself.”

“I can’t deny that, but... Some people say children are a treasure, and anyway, she had a cute expression when she was sleeping.”

“Her expression?” Niku squeezed and rubbed her squishy cheeks while murmuring “sleeping expression” to herself. When I rubbed her head and told her she looked cute when she was asleep too, she wagged her tail.

Suddenly, someone knocked on our door.

“Um, Keima? I just saw a little girl wearing barely anything climb out of your window.” It was Rokuko. Explaining would be a pain, but I didn’t see any way

around it. At this rate she would pin me down as a pervert that kidnaps little girls. Was that Michiru's true goal? Naaah.

I went ahead and gave Rokuko the details on the girl.

"I see. So, to summarize, you tied up a little girl and put a collar on her."

"Yeah, that sounds pretty bad." It looked like she understood the situation, but... For some reason, she was kicking me in her loli form. It hurt. *At least do this in teen form.*

"Anyway, if that's what's going on, can't we just summon a Succubus of our own?"

"...Right. Fight fire with fire. We have enough DP to summon a Succubus right now, so let's do it." Time for the Catalog. I opened the DP Catalog from the menu and searched for a Succubus... *Wait, what? 30,000 DP? That's a lot cheaper than I remember it.*

"Well, whatever. Let's summon one. If all else fails she can work in the inn too, so yeah."

"I think we can expect a lot of good things from a Succubus. We might want to make her wear a butler outfit, like Chloe." And so, we moved to the Master Room to summon a Succubus.

I spent 30,000 DP and a magic circle spread out in front of us. Once it got to be about a full meter wide, a woman... did not appear.

"...Huh?"

"Did something mess up?" I closely investigated where the magic circle had been and found a ring lying on the ground. It was large and had a purple gemstone cut like an emerald fitted onto it. *Oh, is this gemstone a magic stone?*

"What's with this ring? I'm pretty sure it wasn't here a second ago."

"Oh, wait, Keima. That's probably the Succubus."

"...Uh. What?" *Succubus? This is a friggin' ring. It does have a magic stone, though. What's going on?* I picked up the ring, and...

"(Master. Hi!)" A cute voice echoed in my head.

“Hm...? Oooh, I can hear her. Is this the Succubus?”

“I didn’t hear anything.”

“Oh, excuse me. Hello, hello! I used telepathy at first there, sorry.” This time, the voice came from the ring. *Is this like a ring-shaped speaker?*

“Mhm, mhm. This is definitely the Succubus. Look, Keima, right here.” Rokuko showed me the Catalog. There I saw “Succubus (30,000 DP). Warning: Does not have a real body.”

I had completely missed that second part. How was that even possible? It was written in bright red text, too.

“...Well, cancel the plan to make her an inn employee, I guess. That sucks. I was hoping to get a good daily dose of Succubus feet each morning.”

“Okay, Keima, I’ll see you in my room later. Don’t expect me to go easy.”

“That’s fair,” said the ring.

What?! I don’t get it. Why?

Anyway, why doesn’t she have a body? How is she supposed to do anything if she’s just a ring? I don’t understand this at all.

“Er... So, what can you do? Since you don’t have a body, I mean.”

“I don’t have a body, so my main powers are possession and invading dreams. Though even a normal Succubus can invade dreams.” Which meant that possession was all she had that normal Succubi lacked.

“Possession, huh? So... Once you possess someone, are you stuck there forever?”

“No, I can free them at any time. The possession will end for certain once I, the ring, am removed from their finger. I can take over their body if I try hard, but if they resist me, I’ll only remain in control for about ten seconds on average.”

“Neat. Could you, theoretically, possess me?”

“Yes! Ah... Sorry. Your mana and dream power are so overwhelming, I won’t be able to possess you without your full cooperation!” *What the heck is dream*

power? Also, I can hear Rokuko murmuring about how turning me into a Succubus was a genius idea she hadn't thought of. The fool. A male "succubus" is actually called an incubus.

"Actually, you can possess men without any problems?"

"Correct. But if I possess a male, they turn into a femboy." *You know. I think I just heard a word I haven't heard in a long time.*

"Sorry, could you say that again?"

"Men possessed by me turn into femboys. That is, they turn into a cute boy dressed in girl's clothing." *I didn't mishear her... I'm surprised this world has the concept of femboys too.*

"In particular, you have such strong mana and dream power that if I were to possess you, there is no doubt that you would become a stunning world-class beauty. You would be attacked by rabid men if you were to walk the street, and even hiring guards would be fruitless as they would attack you too. You would be among the mightiest Succubi to ever live. You would be... invincible." *Uh... What about that would make me invincible?* Anyway, she could invade dreams without possessing anyone, so I decided to put off this whole experimental possession thing. Also, she remained a ring within her dreams, but apparently she could shapeshift at will.

"Alright, Rokuko, here you go."

"...Wha? I already have a ring. The one you gave me."

"No, I mean, let her possess you so we can see what happens."

"Lady Rokuko has... Oooh! Yet more splendid amounts of mana, dream power, and even lust... Geheh... Oh, ahem." *Yeah, I'm pretty sure I just saw the ring flash sensually somehow. That's a Succubus ring for you. It's basically a cursed item. Maybe letting it possess Rokuko isn't the best idea. Especially since I don't want anything happening to my Dungeon Core.*

"Okay, cancel that. Let's experiment with someone else."

"Hmph. Well, okay."

"Awwww?! But she would end up wearing a super slutty Succubus outfit if I

were to possess her! Master, don't you want to see Lady Rokuko wearing a slutty, sexy outfit?!"

"I'm good."

"I see, you are on such close terms that you have already seen every corner of her body. Excuse my rudeness." I got the urge to smack the ring, but somehow held it in.

Anyway, who would be best to put the ring on? Rokuko and I decided to just summon the higher ups in our dungeon group by group. *Sheesh... Rokuko, stop blushing so hard.*

First, we summoned the three monster girls.

"How about these three?"

"Hmm, the silver-haired Vampire has the highest affinity with me. But she is inflicted with a curse I have no power over... The other two are roughly equivalent. Neither are good matches for me. Do those two even have lust at all, hmmm?" Rei's attack power of zero would be unchanged even if a Succubus possessed her. And apparently the presence of lust was a factor in her compatibility with them. *Let's see... Kinue, the house fairy Silky devoted to doing chores, and Neruneh, the Apprentice Witch obsessed with her research. Yeah, neither of them seem too horny.*

"Master. I know that Vampires and Succubi are both creatures of the night, both assume the bodies of humans, and both attack humans! However! Vampires and Succubi are firmly different races!" Rei, having been told she had the highest compatibility with the Succubus, looked a little close to crying. There was a lot about that she wasn't too happy about. It probably felt like a wolf being called a dog.

"I know that. I was just having her check your Succubus compatibility."

"In any case, shall I try possessing someone? I would like to experiment with what I can do myself."

"...Well, you heard her. Any volunteers?"

"Yees, me pleaaase. Can you let her possess meee?" Oh, surprising. Neruneh

was the first to volunteer. *Well... Thinking about them as a group, maybe it isn't that surprising.*

I went ahead and gave the ring to Neruneh. She slid it onto the middle finger of her right hand.

"Possession!" With a woosh, wind enveloped Neruneh... and in the next moment, her lab outfit morphed into a small, white swimsuit that only a pervert would wear. It might have been my imagination, but it looked like her chest got bigger too. But my eyes were drawn to her legs.

"Woow, it changes my cloothes. Maybe we could utilize this to make magic that changes clothes in an instaaant?" Neruneh touched her body experimentally. Her touching was needlessly soft and sexy, her hands stroking her own body as if outlining its shape.

"My chest is bigger toooo. This might be good for body modification magiic? Ahaha, this is better than I thooought. It feels like my mana is being boosted toooo." *I knew it, her chest did get bigger.* "Mhm, this is really interestiiiiing."

"I guess we'll use Neruneh as the Succubus' conduit."

"Aaah, sorry. Can I end the possession now? I feel super drunk... Cancel!" *Possession can make her feel drunk? Seriously?* Before I could say yes or no, the Succubus ended her possession. Neruneh's outfit returned to normal. She was once again a fully clothed, bookish-looking cute girl.

"...Whew, I did my best! How was it?"

"What, is there a time limit or something?"

"Neruneh's brain processes things at such a scary high rate that, well, how do I put this. I'm pretty sure she has no lust at all, except a lust for knowledge..." *Huh, so Neruneh's the type that looks calm but is thinking super fast, huh...? Kinue's head is so full of recipes and cleaning and so on that I really don't know if she's horny at all.*

And with that, we gave up on possessing the three monster girls. Too bad about Neruneh's legs, but hey, there's always next time.

Next up was Ichika and Niku. We summoned them after the three monster

girls left.

“FWUOOOOOH?! What the friggin’ heeeck! Master, there’s a real goody heeere!” The Succubus let out a cry of glee and I could feel the ring shaking. *Uuuuuh... Is it Ichika?*

“This dog-eared slave girl is a natural succubus! Gehehehe, hey, little girl. W- Want to stick your finger into my hole? Come on, come on, just the tip.” The ring wiggled off my hand itself and rolled towards Niku.

...I had no idea! Why in the world is Niku a natural for being possessed by a succubus? Is it because of her name? Also, don’t say “my hole” like that. It’s not wrong, since you’re a ring, but still. And also, wow, that was some deft movement for a ring with no extremities whatsoever.

“What, dude, is this a succubus? Sorry my man, but she’s not gonna work with me. I’m more about eating than doing that other thing, if you catch my drift.”

“You have a nice body, however. I want to squeeze it. Two parts, specifically. Would you let me possess you so I can squeeze them? Well, all humans have some degree of lust, be it large or small, so we can make this work. Those other three girls were monsters so their relative lack of sexual desire made sense.”

“Isn’t Neruneh a monster descended from humans?” I think I remember Apprentice Witches, or rather Witches being humans who put magic stones into themselves or something like that.

“They have such a lust for knowledge and discovery that they became monsters... Heh, and they truly are monsters. I learned that not through hearsay, but through my body.” *Interesting, so they’re not just monsters in name only. And shut it, you don’t have a body.*

All that said, it didn’t feel right to let a Succubus possess Niku. I went to get the ring from Niku and...

“Very well.”

“That’s it, right there! That’s the stuff! Aaaahn! Possession!” A burst of light enveloped Niku. *Why would she do that? And holy crap, Neruneh didn’t flash with light like that.* Once the light dimmed... there was Niku, lying on the floor, wearing a black string outfit and aged to perfection, old enough to suit my

tastes exactly. Her bare feet were exposed and her knees were bent such that their soles were pointed in my direction. Her toes wiggled invitingly.

...My heart thumped so hard I could barely breathe. *What beautiful, oh so beautiful feet...! Ngggh!*

“Here she is! Succubus Puppy!”

“...What she said.” Niku gave an awkward smile. Her conflicted look inspired a strong urge to protect in me. *Ah, I want to hug her and lick her all over.*

“Oooh... Hold on, Niku... Aren’t you basically just Keima?”

“Wha? Dude, lemme stop you right there, Rokuko. No way does she look at all like Master, for real. I mean, she’s totes radiating a sexy aura that’s making even a max hetero girl like me get a little wet, but she’s still a little girl just like always.”

Rokuko and Ichika gave their thoughts.

...Hm? Wait, there’s some contradiction going on here. It feels like we’re all seeing three different things here. I mean, I haven’t looked at anything but her feet, but still.

“Hey, what’s going on here?”

“I’m sorry, I believe this is the {Charm} passive skill at work. Ichika is likely seeing the most accurate representation of Niku’s true self,” answered the Succubus. In short, Rokuko and I aren’t seeing the real Niku.

“Judging by your reaction, you are quite charmed by her.” *No, way... I’m being charmed? That’s impossible. All I’m thinking is that I want to rub my face against her feet and sniff them. Right now.*

“...Oh fuck, I’m totally charmed! Ichika, punch the shit out of me! That’s an order!”

“Aye aye sir! Hyah!” Thump! Ichika’s fist dug into my cheek. Just like that, I flew to the side and tumbled across the ground. I felt that resting upon the Master Room’s white floor helped clear my head.

Still on the ground, I sighed.

“Whew. I’m back to my senses.”

“Why would you even do that, Keima? I just don’t get it,” came Rokuko’s exasperated voice. *Ngh. I’ve never felt so humiliated in my life before.*

“Nothing serious, that was just the closest I’ve come to crossing the line that must not be crossed. Up we go.” I stood up and saw Niku wearing a black bikini. She hadn’t gotten any older. At most her cheeks were a little feverish and her pupils looked redder than before.

...Also, Rokuko was hugging Niku from behind and chomping on her dog ears. Pretty hard, too. She was really into it.

“Fhyaah! R-Rokukooo... That tickles... Mmmph!”

“Keima, haaah, your ears are so delicious. Nom nom.” Niku’s expression was a lot softer than normal, probably due to the Succubus possession. And Rokuko was embarrassing herself a lot more than I had.

“I see... So this is what a charm trance looks like. Good to know.” It was in fact true that if one became too sexy and alluring, even their allies would attack them. Sexually.

“Snap out of it, Rokuko. That’s not me. It’s Niku.”

“Haah, haah... So what? Aaah, Keima’s sweet sceeent, sniff sniff.” *Well... Nothing wrong with sitting back and watching this happen.*

Wait, crap, no. I’m getting charmed again. I pinched my punched cheek and focused on the pain to retain my sanity.

“Succubus, cancel the possession!”

“Y-Yesh shiir, aaah, Lady Rokuko, you’re sho good at thiiissh... Cansheeel!” With a flash of light Niku was back in her normal maid outfit. A few seconds later, Rokuko came back to her senses.

“Wha?! Wait, this is Niku. Why am I hugging Niku like she’s a pillow?”

“She charmed the heck out of you.” I said, which must have reminded Rokuko what she had been doing. She stepped away from Niku, adjusted her clothes, and coughed.

“...Succubi sure are scary, huh! I didn’t expect her to charm me too.”

“Yeah, their powers work on women too. That’s pretty intense.” Though actually, it didn’t do much to Ichika. *Maybe Rokuko just swings both ways? Now I really don’t know what to think. I mean, in the first place, if Dungeon Cores are just things that Father makes himself, gender shouldn’t even matter to them... There’s a big chance gender is just for show.*

...Ah! If they can change their age in a snap, maybe they can change their gender too?!

“Rokuko, turn into a guy for a second.”

“I didn’t know you swung that way, Keima.”

“Hey, don’t get the wrong idea. I’m just interested in your gender for tactical reasons. It’s not what you’re thinking.”

“Really?” Rokuko gave me a suspicious look. *Yes, really. Never once have I thought “It’s not gay if it’s a femboy, as long as they’re cute.” I’m a normal guy with normal tastes that’s into girls, plain and simple. I just have a little foot fetish is all.*

“I would need a magic drug to change my gender. I’m pretty sure a magic drug that works on humans will work on me too, so.” *Oh, sex change drugs exist in this world, huh? That’s fantasy for you.*

“If you’re more into guys, I can ask Haku for some so we can make this work.”

“No thanks. I love the way you are now, Rokuko.”

“L-Love? I’ll stay like this, then! And... By the way, Keima, what’s wrong with your cheek?”

“Don’t worry about it. {Healing}.”

I cast Restoration Magic on the bruise left by Ichika’s brutal hook. The pain faded in moments.

“You okay, Master? I hit you kinda hard, if we’re being real.”

“Yeah, and I appreciate that. Gotta say, I’m impressed that charm didn’t work on you.”

“Yo, to be straight, I was charmed enough that thinking about how you spend each night in bed with Niku was enough to make me hit you with some real deal anger, my dude.”

“My Succubus Puppy is pretty strong, isn’t she? Hmmm?” said the Succubus through the ring. “Gracious, I was only in her for a little, but I sure Succubused a lot there. Charming people is the bread and butter of a Succubus and I loved it! Master, Niku is the girl for me! I want to be good friends with her! So much so that I want to join bodies with her!” *Yeah, that’s not happening.*

“No. Succubus Puppy is too powerful, we can’t control her. She’d be our Helen of Troy, by which I mean, if we’re not careful she’ll start a war.” She would make a good trump card, but we couldn’t use her on a daily basis. *At last... Our dungeon finally has an ultimate weapon.*

“...That’s a little disappointing. I thought I would be useful this way...” The fact that my heart thumped a little at the sight of Niku’s tail drooping probably had to do with her Succubus scent still drifting in the air.

Anyway, so just what should we do with this Succubus ring... Ah, I should probably make it a Named Monster. We’ll be using her for defense purposes, so she needs a name for sure.

“Alright, Niku, go ahead and give her a name. It’d be annoying if we had to keep calling her ‘the Succubus ring’ over and over.”

“Oh, truly? Is this really happening? Niku! Please give me a cute name, if you would!”

“You want me to name her?”

“Ichika named the Silkies, so yeah. Have your turn.” *Yeah. I’ll save naming monsters myself for when it’s significant enough to hold a naming ceremony.*

“...What about Kosaki?”

“Sounds cute to me!”

“Like, Kosaki as in ‘ring sakibus’? That’s not very inspired. I can’t say I’m impressed, Niku.” *Rokuko... You named your Phoenix “Phenny,” you can’t talk. And I know you named the Jewel Turtle “Jewely” because it’s on the list of*

Named Monsters. As an aside, the “ko” part of “kosaki” came from the fantasy world’s word for “ring.” *Yep, I don’t understand this fantasy language at all.*

“So, Keima, if we’re not giving Niku the ring even though she has the most compatibility with it, what are we going to do with Kosaki? Are you going to carry it around? That’s fine with me, I’m fine with you being a Succubus.”

“...No thanks, I don’t want to turn into a Succubus.” Let’s say that I let Kosaki possess me and turn me into a femboy Succubus. I give myself exactly three seconds before Rokuko’s all over me, probably sucking on my ears. She didn’t even hold back when it was Niku being possessed. Yeah... I couldn’t blame Haku for killing me if that happened!

“But actually, thinking about it, isn’t she supposed to be your Succubus bodyguard? She needs to be around you as much as possible.”

“I mean, uh, yeah, that’s true... But uh...” Now that she mentioned it, yeah, Kosaki was supposed to be my bodyguard. We were dealing with Succubi here and they generally go after dudes, which meant I was the only person in our group they would probably go after... And it wasn’t like Niku was working as my dakimakura at all times.

It took a lot of long, hard thinking, but in the end, I decided to carry Kosaki around myself. I made sure to emphasize that she needed to be around to protect me from invading Succubi, and that under no circumstances was I going to let her possess me.

...Maybe I should morph this ring into a Beddhist holy symbol. No? You’ll die? Crap.

Day 48 of Year 2

A week passed since then, but no other Succubus attacked. We had gone out of our way to summon Kosaki as a bodyguard, but the opportunity for her to earn her keep never arose. Not that I wanted to be attacked by a Succubus again.

Anyway, with that said, I was just lazing around our Beddhist church without doing much. There was no mass today. And you know, I had ended up as pope somehow, but my initial plan was just to serve as a simple priest, showing up at most to offer a prayer at festivals or something. I didn't know why people started calling me the pope when I was just the founder of the religion and nothing more. They weren't wrong, but they kinda were too. Which reminded me. Why had I become a pope famous for bringing about the miracle of sleep? I told them that was just Siesta's powers, not mine.

Speaking of which, the bookshelves had gotten pretty full. *I should probably coat them with plastic to protect them from drool. Once again, it's time for {Create Golem} to shine. I can just reuse the plastic from curry rolls and stuff. Hamburgers are wrapped in paper, so they're out. It's gonna be a lot of work to coat every page in every book with plastic, but books are so expensive it'll be worth it. They're here for believers to read while falling asleep, after all...*

Suddenly, I woke up and realized that I had fallen asleep. The sun was already setting. Truly, our chapel was perfect for taking afternoon naps. I fell asleep without noticing it and had a great nap.

Alright, time to head home and sleep some more... I thought, before noticing someone else sleeping soundly in the church. They must have come inside and started napping alongside me. That wasn't too uncommon. Sometimes I even woke up to two or three people. *Well. I hate to wake them up, but I guess I should.*

"Excuse me, but it's closing time. Please vacate the... premises...?" A closer look revealed that the napper was wearing a nun outfit. But it wasn't Rei, Rokuko, or even Niku.

I shook their shoulders to wake them up and the nun hood fell, revealing glossy black hair. For a moment I questioned whether it was a Hero, but when they opened their eyes, I saw red pupils—something no Japanese person would have.

"Mmm... Aaah, it's already so late... Mmph, I haven't slept that well in a long time." The nun rubbed her eyes and soon we made eye contact. "Good morning, and hello. People call me Sister Leona. Yes, I'm seventeen years old."

For some reason, she tacked her age onto the end of her self-introduction.

“Nice to meet you. Is this a raid from another church?”

“No, no, that would be ridiculous. I’m a sister of the Beddhist Church,” smiled Leona. *Uhhh... What? She’s trying to call herself a Beddhist nun?*

“I heard that a new church for Beddhism had been built so I came as fast as I could.”

“Riiight.” Gonna have to doubt that. The only Beddhist nuns out there were those I appointed myself: Rei, Rokuko, and Niku. Anyone else would have to be a rogue nun acting without official sanction. This was the only church practicing Beddhism in the world, after all, and I was the only one who could appoint nuns.

Leona smiled and continued.

“However, I am not a sister of the Beddhist Church that you know.”

“...What?” *There’s a Beddhist Church I don’t know about? Did somebody make a Futon Church? Maybe a Sleeping Bag Church?*

“To avoid confusion, I will refer to it as the Old Beddhist Church. You are the pope of the New Beddhist Church, and I am a sister of the Old Beddhist Church. Okay? We on the same page?”

“Y-Yep.” She was claiming her church was the original, but that was fine. I should hear her out.

“The truth is, the Old Beddhist Church permeated throughout all of humanity and became so ingrained in society that it just ceased to be. All modern churches are branches of Old Beddhism, and the fact is Beddhism is the one true church—Oh, excuse me. Putting that aside for now. The Old Beddhist Church worshiped the now-forgotten Creator God and sought peace, harmony, and rest above all else. The bible you found in the dungeon is no doubt an artifact of Old Beddhism.”



“W-Wow.”

“All gods have their origin in the Creator God. Thus, it was acceptable to worship any god of one’s choosing, and the other gods did not interfere with this.”

...Can you summarize a little?

“To put it simply, Beddhism was a religion that worships the Creator God. It became so commonplace in human life that it faded away, until it was recently revived by none other than you yourself.”

“I see...” Yeah, she’s lying to me. I made that Beddhist bible myself after all.

I settled on the fact that Leona was just prattling about nonsense, but she kept on going anyway.

“As a sister of the Old Beddhist Church, I, Leona Godswalker, accept this church. The New Beddhist Church is the True Beddhist Church! Beddhism has been reborn, here and now! Oooh Creator God, O Mighty Oht, I thank you for this miracle! Oyasuminasai!” declared Leona, her hands clasped in front of her chest in prayer. *Alright... What’s her goal here? Is she trying to seize control of Beddhism? I have no idea why anyone would want to do that, but maybe she just thinks now is the best opportunity to do so since the church is in its infancy.*

“Are you really a Beddhist nun?”

“Indeed I am. You can see my holy symbol here.” She held out an iron coin with a hole, the one most commonly sold in Goren thanks to our Iron Golems. Either she made it herself or bought it off someone else. Maybe I should have imprinted serial numbers on them, though there is the possibility she just bought one normally.

“...Speaking of which, the bible had a passage regarding this holy symbol.”

“Oh? You’re familiar?”

“Indeed. I believe the bible described it as thus: This holy symbol with its circular nature represents smooth harmony. The gentle curves encourage peaceful sleep, and dreams rest within the hole.” Consider me surprised. I had written that exact passage yesterday. However, I had not yet publicized it, and

not even Rokuko had seen it. Why did she know about it?

“...How do you know that?”

“You confuse me. Is there anything odd about a nun knowing the contents of her bible?”

“Heh. I suppose that’s right.” Was it possible that there truly did exist a Beddhist Church in the past, and by sheer coincidence I wrote a passage that coincided word for word with one from its bible?

...No. I would lose my mind if this world had other bibles as full of made-up nonsense as mine. Leona was definitely pulling something here. I directed my mind to Kosaki, my Succubus ring, and sent my thoughts to her.

“(Hey, Kosaki. Have there been any Succubi sniffing around here lately? Yesterday and today, specifically.)”

“(Nope, not one. I don’t know about any non-Succubi though. It’s possible a Ghost could evade my detection, but well, you would be able to notice one of those yourself, right?)” She transmitted her thoughts from the ring. *Yep. Even an invisible Ghost would show up as an intruder on our dungeon’s map.* I kept the bible inside my {Storage} at all times, except when writing in it, using it as a pillow, or giving mass. When writing in it I showed Kosaki my map so she could keep watch. There was no chance anyone could spy on it.

...And yet, Leona somehow knew what was written in it. I didn’t know how, but she did. That was as good a reason as any to put my guard up around her.

“Now then, Keima. I would like to stay here for the foreseeable future. Would you be so kind as to lend me a room in the church?”

“...Hmmm.” I wanted to turn her down. I really did, but there was no reason for a Beddhist church to turn away a (self-proclaimed) Beddhist nun. In fact, I had even gotten carried away when building the church and included rooms for nuns, pilgrims, and so on. I hadn’t intended for anyone to ever use them, but well, here we are.

“You wouldn’t refuse me, would you? The Beddhist church preaches acceptance and compassion, remember?”

“...Of course not. Follow me.” Which meant that, despite her being incredibly overwhelmingly horrifyingly suspicious, I elected to let Leona stay in the church. At the very least, I’d rather her stay here than in the inn by the chief residence.

I returned to the chief residence to tell Rokuko about Leona.

“Heeey, Rokuko. Someone suspicious is here.”

“Seems so. You’re talking about that nun, right? Leona.” She had apparently been watching us through the dungeon’s monitor feature. That would save me some explaining time.

“What do you think we should do?”

“Figuring that out is your job, isn’t it? Well, if you ask me... It’s too early to say. Maybe just wait and see for now?” Agreed. We had way too little information.

“Time for some reconnaissance, then. Guess I’ll start by checking her daily DP income to get an idea of how strong she is.” I decided to look at Leona through the map function.

Let’s see... As a base value, a normal human adult gives 20/DP. Ichika the former C-Rank ranger gives 65/DP... Actually, it’s been 75/DP lately. Gozou the C-Rank adventurer representative is 120/DP, and Niku is 160/DP. Wow, Niku sure has gotten stronger. She started off at 0/DP and in just a year she’s gotten this much stronger... I’m getting scared of my own dakimakura.

Moving onto what might be considered the special category, Alca the High Priestess was about 250/DP, Suzuki the Hero was about 600/DP, and the black wolf slime thing Rin was 950/DP. Lately, Wataru’s been earning us 1500/DP. He was casually powering up too.

Okay. Now, how much was Leona?

“0/DP, huh...” *Well, that’s how much Niku was way back when. Hooray. Leona’s just a weak small fry.*

No, no, no. That’s not it. I know other cases of people earning 0/DP.

“Keima, that’s how much Haku and Chloe earned us too, right?” Indeed.

Dungeon Cores and monsters also earned only 0/DP. Rokuko and I were both earning 0/DP too, as were Rei and the other dungeon monsters we had.

“...Don’t tell me that Leona’s a Dungeon Master too. Is she a Core, or maybe a dungeon monster?”

“I’ve never seen her at the Dungeon Core gathering. Though I don’t have everyone’s face memorized, and there’s some Cores in human form I don’t know.” Which meant she could be a spy sent from another Dungeon somewhere.

“It’s possible she has something to do with that Succubus from earlier.”

“But that Succubus had DP income, right? They seem unrelated to me.”

“The Succubus could be helping out of her own volition, just like Niku helps us.”

“...I see. I didn’t consider that possibility. That’s pretty annoying.” *Mmm, yeah, I don’t know what to do here. Forcing her out blindly might make her antagonistic, which sounds like a pain. Hopefully there’s some peaceful way to get her to leave.*

“Anyway, let’s just keep an eye on her for now. Rei’s our High Priestess and won’t be able to avoid contact with her, but you and Niku should avoid her whenever possible.”

“Okay. I’ll bring Niku up to speed.” Rei and I would be the only ones to interact with Leona, and we would keep said interaction to a bare minimum. That was the best we could do for now.

Day 49 of Year 2

And so, the sun rose on a new day after the incredibly overwhelmingly horrifyingly suspicious Leona spent the night in the church. When I went to offer her a sandwich for breakfast, she smiled at me.

“Keima, would it be acceptable for me to preach today’s mass?”

“...What?” *Is she being serious? Wow, she might actually be trying to take over the church. In which case, I’m obviously going to shut her do—Wait.*

...Why not let her take over the church? That would be fine with me. More than fine, really, as long as she preserved napping as the main form of prayer, which was the reason I established the church in the first place. The Divine Bedding had inherent protection in that only Rokuko could use it, and worst case scenario I could just give it back to Rokuko for safe keeping.

I would be absolutely fine if she took over the church. It would actually be a big help, too. She’d be doing my job for me, and I always had the inn to make more money. *Seriously, this church grew way too big way too fast. It’s cutting into my sleeping time way too much.*

“Alright. Go ahead.”

“Leave it to me!” Leona winked a red eye at me with a mischievous smile on her face, then started preparing for morning mass.

* * *

Mass that day was a little different than normal. Reason being, it normally began with me, the pope, greeting the believers, but today a black-haired, red-eyed woman in a nun outfit was standing behind the podium. Leona.

As an aside, I was participating as a normal citizen, sitting in the furthest back row.

“Hello everyone, today is a perfect day for napping. Oyasuminasai,” said the nun, greeting the believers who did not recognize her. A stir ran through the chapel. Who’s that? Where’s Keima? Is he still asleep? Hey, he’s over here, in the back row! He’s skipping work! The stir grew louder.

Clap! The nun clapped her hands and drew everyone’s attention to her.

“I am Leona and it’s nice to meet you all. I’m a Beddhist nun that came from outside the city. Our leader, His Holiness Pope Keima, directed me to perform mass this morning. I pray that you will forgive my inexperience,” said Leona, bowing her head. Her vaguely alluring smile stopped the stirring believers in a snap. Very impressive.

“Now then, I will begin our morning nap mass. Today’s bedtime story will be... about the Beddhist Church.” Leona didn’t have the bible. She brandished her arms in the air and began speaking, gesturing as the story unfolded. “There was once only a single church in the whole world. It worshiped the one true god, the Creator God Oht, and it was the Beddhist Church of the past—Ancient Beddhism.” Leona was telling the same story she told me yesterday. The only difference was she said Ancient instead of Old.

“The universally known word ‘goodnight’ is actually a corruption of Beddhism’s prayer ‘oyasuminasai.’ They sound quite similar, don’t they?” I heard the believers nodding among themselves. It didn’t make sense to me thanks to the fantasy world’s language getting automatically translated, but hey, I guess coincidences happen. Maybe their word for goodnight was like ‘oyashinasaa’ or something. *Interesting. This is the kind of thing I could only learn from someone else.*

Leona continued to talk about Ancient Beddhism. The believers all listened to her with rapt attention.

“Ancient Beddhism lived on to this day through the impact it had on culture. The fact that His Holiness Pope Keima rediscovered the Beddhist Church and began rebuilding it from the ground up is unmistakable evidence that he is a true Servant of God. There could be no man more fit to be the Beddhist Pope. You would all do well to learn from His Holiness’s example. Let us all work hard and sleep harder.” The prayer kind of ended with a brown nosing about me, but once she was done the audience still clapped.

Okay. So far, so good. Just the prayer left. I wonder how she’ll do without my trusty blade Siesta. If she handles this fine, yeah, I’ll give her full reign over this place.

“Let us begin our prayer. Wan shep ova za fens.” Leona faced the believers and began chanting the holy prayer.

“Wan shep ova za fens,” returned the crowd.

“Too shep ova za fens.”

“Too shep ova za fens.” The crowd chanted back at Leona. This continued until five sheep (shep?), at which point Leona mumbled something. A wave of

sleep immediately pulsed out from her. I heard heavy thumps. The believers around her had all fallen asleep so fast their heads hit their desks.

Was that magic? Weird, she couldn't have chanted for long. She must have a sleep-related skill... One of those probably exists somewhere. Either way, I'm fine as long as people are being put to sleep. I think I'll just go along with them and snooze a little.

...Man, being a believer is so much easier than being the pope. I could get used to this... Zzz.

* * *

I left mass entirely to Leona and she managed to pull it off without a hitch. I decided to talk to her about it in the church conference room. Rei, who had been working backstage so to speak, came with me.

"That was a good mass."

"For you to say that, Keima, it must have been a major success." During mass she had been casually calling me His Holiness Pope Keima, but now she was back to just Keima. Well, that was fine with me. A grandiose title would just waste time.

I checked the Catalog after mass and found {Sleep}, a Low-Rank Darkness spell. With a spell like that it wouldn't be too hard to put the believers to sleep without Siesta's help. Which meant that... In other words... I didn't have to preach mass myself. Rei, Niku, Rokuko, or basically anyone could do it for me. Discovering that made this whole thing worth it.

"Let's just say I learned a lot from it."

"In that case, you will allow me to continue residing in the church?"

"...Yeah, sure. We have the space." It helped that I had no reason to refuse her. However, Leona didn't stop there.

"Incidentally, I am also willing to perform massages as a sister of Beddharma."

"Oh? You can give massages too?"

"Not ones comparable to the High Priestess's, unfortunately, but I have some confidence in them. Shall I assist the church there as well?" *No way, she can*

take care of mass AND give massages? She can do everything.

“Wait just a moment. I have something to say about that,” interrupted Rei, the High Priestess of Beddhism. “I believe it will be necessary to check her massages to make sure they are fit for our customers. Anyone can claim to have skills they lack.”

“Ahaha, certainly. Does that mean you volunteer to experience one of my massages, High Priestess?” Leona flicked her wrists, but Rei stood strong.

“...It does. Do your worst!” Rei headed to the massage parlor. Leona followed after her... and then said something out of the blue.

“I’ll warn you now... I love women too.”

“...Wait. Why would you say that now?” Rei stopped in her tracks. Her face was scrunched up.

“You won’t be able to judge my massage if you fall asleep midway, right? And if you fall asleep knowing my tastes... Well, I don’t think you can complain about what I do.”

“Um, what?! You don’t have to go that far! If I fall asleep during the massage, that’s just proof you’re fit for the job.” Rei looked to me for help. I avoided eye contact.

“Then there won’t be any problems at all. Now, High Priestess. I’ll massage you until you fall asleep, nice and cozy.”

“T-Ten minutes! We stop after ten minutes! That will be long enough for me to judge your massage and avoid falling asleep!” *No, Rei, don’t say it like that! You’re dooming yourself!* I thought while watching Leona practically drag Rei to the massage parlor.

Ten minutes later, Rei had fallen completely asleep. Bravo.

...Oh, don’t worry, I was standing guard. She didn’t do anything weird. It was just a normal massage. I didn’t see her use {Sleep} or any other magic skill. Yet here lies Rei, so deeply asleep that she’s drooling. She... She must’ve been pretty tired.

Naturally, that meant Leona would be contributing massages in the future as

well. I would probably have to pay her a wage, then... How much should it be? The same as Rei's? Regardless, both her massage and her preaching were perfect. I had no idea who she was, but Leona was exactly what our church needed.

...Maybe I should let her handle managing Beddhism in its entirety? Hahaha.

Day 53 of Year 2

Now then. Since Leona ended up being a very competent individual who could bring a lot to the church, I thought it would be best to introduce her to everyone. Up until now only Rei—famous as the High Priestess of Beddhism as she was—and I had been interacting with her on the business side of things, but if she was going to be living with us as a nun for a long time, it would be important for her to meet with the other nuns, Rokuko and Niku, as well. To be honest, I wasn't that into the idea, but a simple meeting should be harmless.

...Ahhh, but it might be dangerous if she's after Rokuko. Though this would be a good opportunity to find that out in the first place.

And so, I planned to have the three of them meet in the church's conference room. To keep things under my control, I would be the one calling Rokuko and Niku over. The three of them would be meeting in the church regardless, so this way was more productive than calling Leona over to the inn.

"I haven't mentioned this before, but this church actually has two more nuns."

"The inn's owner and her bodyguard, yes? I'm looking forward to meeting them."

Seconds later, there came a knock on the door. Rokuko and Niku were here.

"I'm coming in."

"Excuse... me..." Rokuko was the same as always. But Niku, who came in with her, was obviously acting weird. *She's... nervous? Is Leona radiating a powerful aura that I can't pick up on? Maybe she's pretty dangerous after all.*

“I’ve heard about you. My name is Rokuko Labyrinthart and I own the nearby inn.”

“I’m Leona. Nice to meet you.” The two of them smiled at each other. Then, Leona walked over to Niku. It was hard to tell due to her dark skin, but she clearly looked unwell.

“...You’re Toi, aren’t you?”

“Ngh!” Niku trembled with a jerk. *Toi...? What’s she talking about?*

“I wonder what in the world you’re doing here, Toi. But regardless, long time no see?”

“Nnnn...! N-No, I’m not... not Toi...! I’m, Niku. Niku Kuroinu...!” Seriously, Niku was acting beyond strange. Fear, panic, and shock were radiating off her.

“Oh please, don’t hurt me like that. Don’t you remember how often I used to pat your head back then?” said Leona, stretching out her hand. But Niku slapped her hand away and keeled over. Sweat was bursting from her skin and I could tell from here that she was shaking, hard. Judging by what Leona said, they knew each other from the past. That said.

“Get away from her, Leona,” I stepped in between them. Regardless of the circumstances, it was clear I shouldn’t let her get any closer to Niku.

“...It seems I mistook her for someone else. I’m sorry for scaring her. She looks very much like an old friend of mine.” Leona took several steps back.

Niku was still shaking. I wasn’t dumb enough to see that and actually believe that Leona actually mistook her for someone else.

“Rokuko, go take Kuro somewhere to rest.”

“R-Right. I’m on it. Can you stand?”

“...Yes.” Rokuko lent Niku her shoulder. The two of them unsteadily walked out of the room. The meeting had gone in an entirely unexpected direction. To think that Niku would be the one to have a history with her.

“Alright, let’s hear an explanation for that. What was all that about Toi?”

“Toi is the name of my long lost little sister. Well, like I said, I had the wrong

person.” Little sister? She thought Niku was her little sister? That didn’t make sense. She was a human and Niku was a beastkin. Their skin colors were different, as were their eye colors. Their faces... well, it was hard to tell if they looked similar or not. They kinda did, but they kinda didn’t.

“You two look pretty different for you to mistake her as your little sister.”

“We have different mothers. Different fathers, too.”

“You’re saying she’s your little sister and you’re not blood related?”

“We’re of the same family, so we are blood related. Our black hair is proof of that, and why I mistook that girl for her,” said Leona, touching her hair.

“Our faces look quite similar as well. We both have two eyes, one nose, and even one mouth. Oh, and speaking of which, you have black hair as well, Keima. My long lost little brother!”

“Not in the mood for jokes.”

“What a shame. If you were my little brother, I would have liked to take a bath with you and wash your back,” giggled Leona, teasingly.

“Like I said, not in the mood for jokes. I’m being serious here. Also, I’m over 20 years old.”

“Oh my, but you look so young. So, is there anything else you want to ask?”

I got back on the subject.

“Let’s assume she’s Toi. Getting that scared isn’t normal. What did you do to her?”

“Who can say? That girl isn’t Toi, so her being afraid has nothing to do with me.”

“You honestly think I’m going to believe that?”

“The real Toi would have wagged her tail and peed herself with joy to see me, certainly.” *The hell? She’s not a dog, she won’t pee herself... Well, I guess she kinda is.*

“...She’s your little sister?”

“Yes. What of it?” *Yeaah... I’m not gonna get anything out of her. I’m just*

gonna ask Niku.

And so, I cut the conversation with Leona short and went to see Niku. She was lying on a bed in the chief residence, looking exhausted.

“How’s she doing?”

“She just calmed down. What in the world happened?” Rokuko gently stroked Niku’s head.

“No clue. All I could get from Leona was that she mistook Niku for her little sister named Toi.”

“Little sister? Didn’t she say she looked like an old friend?” *Wait... Yeah, I think she did. Things don’t add up here. Something’s not right about Leona, I knew it. Might have been a mistake to set up this meeting so soon.*

“Master...”

“Niku. Feeling better?” Niku sat up, her small body trembling. She still looked sick.

“...Can you explain to me what happened?”

“I’m not sure... The second I saw her, my whole body started trembling... I couldn’t move my legs... My head went totally blank...”

“If it hurts to talk about, you don’t have to force yourself.”

“It’s okay. I’m... fine. I think... this is because it happened before I became a slave.” Speaking of which, Niku had said her memories before I saved her were all fuzzy. She must have been pretty young if it was before she was enslaved in the slums.

Now that I thought about it, there were a lot of mysteries surrounding Niku. In this world it was rare for those other than Heroes to have black hair and black eyes. Putting aside her dark skin, those dog ears of hers proved she wasn’t entirely Japanese. And finally, although she was getting assistance from the Wearable Golems I made, she was a ferociously powerful fighter.

The easiest way to judge someone’s strength was by their daily DP income. Niku earned more than not just Ichika, a trained ranger, but a dwarf adventurer specializing in close range combat. That just didn’t make sense. The golem’s

assistance didn't factor into how much DP she earned. It was just her equipment; all golems I made with {Create Golem} earned only 0/DP.

And yet, a little girl somewhere around 10 years old was stronger than veteran C-Rank adventurers. That wasn't something you could pass off as simple talent.

"...Niku. Can you remember your past before you became a slave now? Any information would help here."

"Umm... Sorry. I can't remember."

"Well, that's fine." I rubbed Niku's head. She lowered her eyes in regret.

"Want a hamburger? You can eat as many as you want."

"...Yes please." Anyway, I wasn't trying to bribe her with food or anything. I just wanted her to cheer up as soon as possible. It was only after seeing Niku munching away at hamburgers that I could relax and assure myself that she was okay.

Rokuko and I left Niku to rest and went to my room to discuss things. Niku had fallen asleep and I was tired enough to want to sleep myself, but Rokuko butted in before I could.

"Niku can't be a nun as long as Leona's around. I'll have Ichika take her place."

"That sounds like a good idea. She should have just about finished training the Silkies by now. Kinue can take care of the rest."

"You should stay away from the church too, Rokuko. Rei and Ichika can take care of things." The church could operate with only three nuns, the same number I appointed initially. If we included Leona in that number, Rokuko didn't need to go herself.

"I hate to admit it, but the church will do fine as long as Leona's around." Really, I kinda wished that Leona was just a normal human.

"Did you ever figure out why she only earns 0/DP?"

"Nope, not at all." I had considered the possibility that she was a human-shaped monster like our own monster girls, but couldn't confirm anything.

Maybe I should try asking Ittetsu, the Dungeon Core of our neighboring dungeon the [Flame Caverns]. He was old and knew a lot about a lot of things.

“Oh hey, Keima, you have your {Ultra Transformation} skill. Maybe transforming into her will reveal something?”

“Oh. Nice thinking, Rokuko. Let’s try it.” I went ahead and used {Ultra Transformation}.

Day 5X of Year 2

“Uh... Hmm?”

“Ah! Keima! Keimaaa!” I woke up and Rokuko immediately hugged me.

“...Wait, Rokuko? What happened to me...” Ngggh. My head hurt. It felt like a split watermelon. *What is this, a hangover? I don’t remember drinking last night...*

“Don’t you remember, Keima? You exploded somehow. Then you slept a whole day.” Exploded? Slept a whole day?

“Hold up, hold up. What’re you talking about? What actually happened?”

“Ummm, there’s a recording. Hold on a second, I’ll show you.” Still clinging to me, Rokuko navigated through the menu. A clear window appeared in front of me.

“Oh hey, Keima, you have your {Ultra Transformation} skill. Maybe transforming into her will reveal something?”

“Oh. Great idea, Rokuko. Let’s try it.” The me on the screen used {Ultra Transformation}, shown from Rokuko’s perspective. My body shined briefly with light, and Leona’s silhouette became visible. The next moment my body exploded in all directions with only my clothes being left behind. The room was coated in the shower of blood and the video being painted pure red showed that the blood got in Rokuko’s eyes too.

“Kei...ma? Wha, I, what?! No way! Keima?!” Rokuko, in a panicked state,

looked at my scattered body parts. It was pretty grotesque. My ruptured heart was lying on the floor still beating. *This needs some mosaics... Eugh. I might have nightmares about this.*

“What just... happened?! No way, is he... dead?” The second after she said that, the remains of my body vanished in bursts of light and gathered all in one place. When the light faded, I was lying in bed. With my clothes still on the floor. I would normally be covered in blood, but the light must have cleaned me off. And yeah, I was naked.

“Keima?! You’re alive... Thank goodness... Thank gooooodness...” The video ended after Rokuko checked that I had a heartbeat. I hadn’t noticed until now despite her continual clinging, but Rokuko’s eyes were a little red and puffy.

“Rokuko?” She sniffed. Incidentally, I was wearing clothes now, probably because Rokuko put them on me. *I want to call her a pervert, but I don’t think now’s the right time for that. Yeaah.*

“...Keima. Do you feel okay? Are you hurting anywhere?” *Just a headache, nothing else... Oh crap, I’ve got some pretty bad muscle pain. But this is the kind of pain that feels like it’ll go away soon. It’s probably just happening ‘cause I spent a whole day in bed.*

“I’m not feeling perfect, but I’m fine. {Healing}.” A warm light embraced my body. My body’s pain disappeared, but not my headache. *Man... I’m hungry.* “Yeah, my head still hurts a little, but it should be fine soon.”

“I’m so glad... I thought you had died, and I... Sorry, if I hadn’t suggested that...”

“Don’t worry about it, nobody could have predicted that. You’d have to be a time traveler or something.”

“But still, sorry...” Rokuko squeezed me tightly. It hurt a little, but I still patted her head.

After a bit, she calmed down.

“...Hey, Keima. Do you remember anything?”

“Hmmm, let’s see.” I tried transforming into that nun, Leona, and... Right. I

suddenly felt an intense chill, then felt heat rapidly building up in my body. I probably died after that. Then I was brought back, thanks to {Ultra Transformation}. I could tell that somehow. *Jesus. If my {Ultra Transformation} wasn't Level 3, I would have died for good then and there.*

"All I know is that I died because I transformed into Leona."

"Why would a simple transformation do that? I don't get it." I didn't want to think about my death, but I could feel some malice in it. Maybe she inflicted a curse on me?

"...I don't get it either. Could be some kind of defense system."

"A defense against {Ultra Transformation}...? Isn't that a little too specific?"

"Not just that, but anything that 'identifies' her, so to speak. We should probably stop trying to look at her DP income. It's just zero anyway. Oh, that might be because of the defense system."

"Maybe." Rokuko nodded, still clinging to me. *Uh... Rokuko? It's kinda hard to move, could you let go of me already?*

"By the way, Rokuko. Mind if I ask something?"

"And what's that?" Rokuko replied, having finally let go of me after I gave her a melon roll.

"That video was from your perspective, right? Are you recording everything all the time?" Indeed, in order to record footage like that, you had to activate the recording function in the menu ahead of time. The dungeon didn't just automatically record everything we saw. As an aside, you could edit and delete saved footage.

"...Not everything. I only start recording when I'm with you."

"Uh. Why are you doing that?" *That kinda makes it sound like Rokuko is a stalker. All that video footage would take up a lot of space. I wonder how much space the menu even has in the first place. We might be nearing its limit already.*

"...You won't laugh?"

"Nope. You can tell me." If she was recording it for a weird reason, I could tell

her to delete it all.

“Well. You’re eventually going to die before me, right? You can tell just by looking at Haku that we Dungeon Cores live a lot, lot longer than humans. I’m... I’m preparing for when that happens.” *Holy crap that’s a lot more heavy than I expected! Geez. Rokuko’s thinking that far ahead...? I see, she’s not a stalker, she’s like a parent recording an album of her growing child!* “...Should I stop?”

“.....Nah, it’s fine. Feel free.” Rokuko burst into a bright smile. *How could I turn her down?!*

“So, so, I can record a lot more?”

“D-Don’t record too much, okay?!” *Crap... W-Well, I can’t blame her. Her lifespan is a lot longer than mine. Unless I become immortal somehow, I’m either going to die with Rokuko or die and leave her to live alone.*

“By the way, I wonder if Dungeon Cores can have children with humans? What do you think, Keima?”

“Ahhh, anyway, I wonder what’s going on with Leona and the others.” I blatantly changed the subject.

“...Umm, Niku went back to the inn. Leona discussed selling holy water with Ichika. It’s water mixed with a herb that encourages peaceful sleep.” *Holy water exists in this world too, huh? I wonder if it does damage to undead monsters like Zombies.*

“Rei drank some with herbal tea, so probably not.” Oh right... Rei was a Vampire, which were classified as undead. I forgot that all the time.

Day 56 of Year 2

In the end, we never figured out why Leona earned us 0/DP a day. And thus I decided to ask the gullimander (gullible Salamander) Ittetsu for his advice. As neighbors, when one of us was in trouble, both of us were in trouble. Though as it stood it was mainly just me asking him for advice and help all the time.

I asked to meet him in our shared secret meeting room and he agreed

casually. I then showed him Leona on the menu, talked about how she was earning 0/DP, and asked if he had any idea. While I was at it I mentioned that he and I were both 0/DP a day.

“What’s so fuckin’ weird about that? You’re only gettin’ 0/DP too, yeah?”

“Sure, but she’s a human.”

“Yeah? And what the fuck are you? You’re human too, ain’t ya?”

“That’s different. I’m a Dungeon Master.”

“Guess that means she’s a Dungeon Master too, huh?” A human Dungeon Master, or possibly a Dungeon Master hiding themselves in human form? That was possible, but not what I wanted to ask.

“Have you ever seen something other than Dungeon Masters or Dungeon Cores earning 0/DP? I was thinking you might know something about that since you’re so much older than us.”

“Ah... Sorry, but I’m just now learnin’ you can even see daily DP income like this. Between you and me, most of my DP comes from the fuckin’ Tsia Mountains. We don’t give too much of a shit about intruder DP. Though we can tell how strong they are.” For real? I hadn’t expected that Ittetsu would know less about dungeons than I did. “Eh, all I can say is, she’s probably got somethin’ to do with dungeons. Probably not a Dungeon Core though. I’ve never seen someone like her at the Core gathering, and... Wait.” Ittetsu, remembering something, put a claw on his chin and scratched.

“...Nah. Forget it.”

“C’mon, you gotta tell me now.”

“It’s nothin’, just something Core 5 was telling me. You know anything about Core 4?”

“I saw Core 5 and Core 6 recently, but not Core 4.”

“The hell are you doing? Ah, right. Core 695—wait, Rokuko now. She had a little fight there. Seems like she got a last name... You musta won then, huh?” I wonder what unrelated Dungeon Cores knew about our triple threat Dungeon Battle. I was a little curious.

“Yeah, we won.”

“Heheh, figures. Wouldn’t expect anything less from the team that beat me. The fuckin’ brats Core 5 had to deal with are one thing, but beating Core 6’s Core 666 is somethin’ else. Heh, good job, yeah.” Ittetsu’s lizard face broke into a happy grin. The idiot trio we fought were like little kids to him, it seemed.

“By the way, I suggested her last name.”

“Y’did? Let’s check it out with my name, alright? Ittetsu Labyrinthart. Pretty cool, huh?” His flaming lizard tail slapped the ground in amusement. *Uh... Sorry, I should have thought up a better name. It kinda feels like Lovelyhart when he says it like that and I hate it.*

“More importantly, what was all that about Core 4?”

“Right. I heard Core 4 has black hair in her human form. Core 5 was pissed about it ‘cause it’s like she’s a Hero. The thing is, though...”

“Yeah?”

“She only ever went to the gathering once. Before I was born, too, so we’re talking more than four, five hundred years ago. Rumors say she’s already dead.” Ittetsu was so old he forgot how many centuries he’s been alive? I guess one’s sense of time would go wonky if you were an immortal Salamander living with a Dragon.

In any case, if she hadn’t gone to the gathering in that long of a time, it wouldn’t be odd at all for her to have died. But Cores are immortal. It was possible.

“Know anything else about Core 4?”

“Ehhh, yeah. Consider this a gift, a’ight? Her last name’s the same as the one you thought up,” Ittetsu cackled. *I’m glad you’re enjoying this.*

“Seems that people called her Chaos.”

“Chaos...? Why’s that?”

“Who the fuck knows? Same reason Core 5’s called the Dragon King and Core 6’s called the Demon Emperor, I’d say. Cores with just one number all have second names.” Haku had two digits, but she was called Traitor by some. Did

that count as a second name? Or was it just an insult?

“Eh, anyway, I dunno. I’ve never seen her before.”

“Alright.” I gestured Ittetsu over. He leaned over the table so I could whisper into his ear (the side of his head?). We were the only ones in the room so we didn’t really have to do that, but hey, I appreciated him playing along.

“...I want to experiment a little with this DP income stuff. Mind helping?”

“Sure, I’m gettin’ interested in it myself. Just share the loot, alright?”

“Of course. Thanks, neighbor.”

“If you’re lying here... Uh, what’s that thing you do? Bite on a thousand needles?”

“The punishment for breaking promises passed down by Soldiers of God? That’s swallowing a thousand needles. It probably wouldn’t be too bad for a Salamander or a Dragon, given how you two can eat swords no problem, but a normal human would definitely die. In other words, it signifies that the person will keep their promise or die.”

“Seriously? Humans are hardcore.”

“Yeah, but there’s a loophole here. In Japanese, ‘a thousand needles’ is the name for pufferfish, so you can...” As we bonded over talk about how much Soldiers of God sucked, we performed a simple experiment. I didn’t want to swallow a thousand needles, so I told him the results in full.

By utilizing the door leading to the [Flame Caverns] in the [Phenny’s Playground] area Rokuko made, I learned that common monsters from other dungeons did in fact earn a slight amount of DP. However, monsters which had the power to use the menu went straight down to 0/DP. That was probably why Chloe from Haku’s dungeon only earned 0/DP.

“Huh. Goes down to 0 when they can use the menu, huh? That’ll be all, Burning Fire,” said Ittetsu, after which the Flame Spirit in our dungeon let out a puff of fire and returned home. Incidentally, Burning Fire meant “burning fire” in dragon language. The auto translator made them sound like the same thing to me, though, so Redra had probably named it herself. It looked like a floating

ball of fire. Maybe to dragons, there was some fire that... didn't burn...?

"Those guy's are real cheap and useful for our dungeon. They don't need food or nothing, you just gotta give 'em some magma to hang around."

"Interesting... They probably wouldn't be a good fit for my dungeon, though. Maybe I could put a few in Phenny's place." I checked my catalog and saw [Flame Spirit (400,000 DP)]. *That's expensive.*

"Yeah? Only costs 200,000 DP for us. Probably just 'cause I'm a Salamander, or whatever."

"Oh yeah, that could be it. Or maybe it's because your dungeon's most of a volcano?" Either way, Ittetsu was the Dungeon Core and the Dungeon Master was a Dragon. Their dungeon being in a volcano just strengthened their fire specialization. It was perfectly natural that Flame Spirits would be cheaper for them.

"Want to trade normal monsters so we can make extra DP?"

"...That ain't gonna work. Those normal Flame Spirits only give 20/DP, yeah? It'd take years to be worth it."

"That's true. And I can't even think of which monsters I would send over. Hm... Do you want about a hundred goblins?"

"HELL NO!" Ittetsu roared with laughter. *Well, at least now I know what makes someone worth 0/DP. Monsters sent to other dungeons stick out a lot. Those that can use the menu end up at 0/DP and those that can't barely give any DP at all.*

That said, not even Ittetsu knew about the daily DP income. It wouldn't be weird for someone to send a dungeon monster not knowing how obvious it would be. Which meant that indeed Leona could have been sent here from another dungeon. *I'll keep an eye on her and see if she tries contacting anyone on the outside.*

Day 62 of Year 2

Half a month had passed since Leona arrived. She had become a natural part of our church. She took her job as a nun seriously and the Beddhist faith was growing stronger with each day, spreading onto many of the merchants passing through town. Sure, she was insisting on Beddhism being a proper church with a long history, but that was fine. It had nothing to do with me.

Leona led mass and gave massages alongside Rei, but apparently she was so incredibly better at massages than Rei that she was becoming more popular. As of yet, she had not contacted anyone from the outside. Most of those whom she gave massages to were normal merchants and travelers. Though there were endless methods by which she could be secretly communicating with people. Long distance telepathy or something of the sort would fly completely under my radar. Nothing I could do about that.

...But honestly, I was scared of how much of a perfect nun she was. Rei was even learning the ins and outs of giving good massages from Leona... Wait, when did they get so close? Being a little friendly to avoid suspicion was one thing, but Leona posed a lot of danger to our dungeon. Rei better not be leaking any secrets.

The days passed uneventfully until an unexpected visitor arrived.

“Keima, I don’t know the details, but it looks like Kinue has captured that Succubus from before. The pink loli you bullied with the collar.”

“...Oh yeah, I forgot about her.” Our uninvited visitor had returned. *But wait, what does she mean Kinue “captured” her? She’s been poking around here and there, but I’ve been ignoring her since she never came close to the chief residence or the inn. Leona’s been keeping me too busy to worry about anything else.*

“How’d she end up, uh, capturing her?”

“I thought you’d ask that, so I called her over here.” Rokuko called for Kinue, and she came into the room with a bow. *Guess I’ll ask for the details.*

Michiru’s Perspective

Michiru, the pink-haired loli that invaded the town, had a job. That job was to get blackmail on the town chief. Information had led her organization to believe that the town chief was just for show and that the vice chief Wozma, owner of the local bar, had all the real power... but in reality, the town chief had ultimate authority and was capable of vetoing the vice chief's suggestions. Thanks to that blunder, the brothel documents her ally had engineered had been shot down, which ruined their plan to infiltrate the town by posing as prostitutes.

Which is why her new job was to get dirt on him. Research suggested that he was a lolicon down to the bone with a profound love for little girls, which is why this job fell on Michiru, the youngest and least developed of her allies. There were few foes as great to Succubi as lolicons, for in their passion they could easily detect when an adult Succubus was morphing into loli form for the purposes of deception. But as Michiru was a true loli, there was no deception to be seen through. They had thus sent her with great anticipation for success... only for her to solidly fail.

"...But I won't give up! I'll wrap that town chief around my thumb if it's the last thing I do!" said Michiru, clenching a fist. She had more than enough enthusiasm. But failing once and being sent fleeing into the forest put a shadow over her.

With a growl, her stomach grumbled. She had run out of food. There was a limit to how much food she could scavenge from the forest.

"Ngh... If only there was lust around, I wouldn't need food. Maybe I could try and find some animals..." But the town was a recently founded mining town of adventurers. No homes had any domesticated pets. There weren't even any Tamers who had monster familiars. And unfortunately, seducing an adventurer was too great a task for Michiru.

With her strength failing, she ended up wandering to the inn, but she was so depressed about her failure that she sat on the ground sadly. That was when someone found her.

"Oh my, hello young lady. What are you doing there?"

"Bwuh?" She looked up and saw a pretty, green-haired woman wearing a frilly outfit. That outfit... If Michiru remembered correctly, it was the uniform worn

by those working in the inn.

“Are you the child of one of our visitors? May I ask where your mother and father are?”

“Um, ummm... Ummm...!” Michiru began floundering. She was in enemy territory and had to watch everything she said.

But her body was honest. Her stomach let out a cute growl. Michiru blushed.

“Oh my, it sounds like you’re hungry. Would you like some of our leftover rolls?”

“A-Are you a goddess?”

“My my, I’m afraid not. I’m a simple maid.”

“Ah! But my sister says I shouldn’t go places with strangers...”

“Then shall we introduce ourselves? I am Kinue. I work at this inn. Who are you?”

“M-Michiru...”

“Michiru, hm? That is a nice name. Now we aren’t strangers anymore, are we?” The woman... Kinue smiled and held out her hand. Michiru timidly took her outstretched hand. The hand gently squeezed hers and helped her stand up. If I had a mother, maybe she would be like this, thought Michiru.

“Um... I’m not one of this inn’s customers. Is that okay?”

“My my, then I’ll treat you with food as a friend. Michiru.”

“Ah...! O-Okay! Friends! We’re friends, Kinue!” And so, Michiru followed the green maid into the inn and then into the cafeteria.

Keima’s Perspective

“And so, I captured the target. How did I do?” I took a look at the map and saw Michiru sleeping in Kinue’s room. Her sleeping expression was that of an innocent, pure child. Apparently, Kinue knew all that stuff about her sneaking

around due to her confessing everything while eating bread rolls and crying. *What an easy nut to crack. Anyway, what to do with her...*

“Shall I eliminate her for you?” asked Kinue. I froze in shock. *What did she just say, with a warm smile on her face?*

“I suggested that I eliminate her for you.” *I didn’t mishear?!*

“Wow, Kinue. I’m like a Core and stuff, but I’m still surprised you’d say that after calling her a friend.”

“I am a maid. I prioritize my job over my personal feelings at all times.” She was the epitome of an ideal maid and a shining example of a loyal monster, but man. I wanted Kinue to be more, like, soft! More gentle, more kind!

“...And what do you want to do with her, personally?”

“Ahaha. I would like to teach her to work and help her adjust to life here. She is my first friend, after all.” *Whew. My dreams haven’t been completely crushed.*

“But Kinue, don’t a lot of adventurers ask you to be their friends? Do they not count?”

“My my, Rokuko. Those men are not seeking friendship, they are in truth asking me to consider dating them. But my heart has already deeply fallen for housework, my one true love, and thus I turn them all down.” *Oh, really? Man, Kinue sure is popular, huh?* “I might consider their offers if they gave me a large building to clean as a wedding gift, however.”

“...I’m not giving you Keima, okay?”

“I am well aware, Rokuko,” said Kinue with a smile. *Man, I wonder if Kinue has a lot of affection points for me. I gave her a name in a grand ceremony, an inn to clean, a chief residence to clean, a dungeon to clean, and I’m letting her cook as much as she wants. Not to mention that I recently gave her three subordinates. Yaaaah... She definitely has a ton of affection points for me. I might just be on the Kinue route here.*

“Also, aren’t Rei and Neruneh your friends?”

“We’re friendly, but I feel that they are more coworkers than friends. We all serve the dungeon, after all.”

“That makes sense. You’re surprisingly dry about all this. Buuut anyway, we got off topic. Keima, what are we going to do with that little girl?”

“Good question.” Given our circumstances, I wanted to settle this as soon as possible. Which meant it would be best to contact the mastermind guiding Michiru from the shadows. I spoke to my ring.

“Hey, Kosaki, it’s time to work.”

“Okaaaay! It’s Succubus extermination time!”

“No, I just want you to protect me. In my dreams, I mean.”

“As a bodyguard? Why do you want me to do that?” *I’m just thinking I want to sit back and see what she does for a bit. Just a bit.*

Michiru’s Perspective

Michiru followed Kinue to the room where the town chief was sleeping. Apparently he had moved back to sleeping in the inn as a protective measure against Succubi. But that had ended up working against him.

“Th-Thank you, Kinue. You didn’t have to go this far to help me.”

“My my, aren’t we friends? Don’t worry about it. I’m glad to help you, Michiru.”

“Friends... Kinue, if you ever need my help, just say anything! I’ll be right there!”

“Ahaha. In that case, once this is over, would you mind helping me work in the inn?”

“Sure, I’ll help!” Michiru beamed a broad smile at Kinue, who smiled warmly back. She put a hand on the door, but it didn’t open.

“It seems to be locked. Whatever shall we do?” They were in trouble, but Michiru was unfazed.

“It’ll be okay! I’m a Succubus, so I can use my dream walking skill to sneak into his room! If I actually fall asleep my real body will end up in there, though.”

“Does that mean you intend to sleep on the floor? It’s not dirty thanks to our cleaning, but still. Wait one moment, I’ll bring a blanket.”

“Don’t worry, my body disappears while I’m dream walking. See you in a bit!” said Michiru before using her dream walking skill. Her body vanished into thin air.

Michiru’s vision shifted. She saw through doors, walls, and even the floor, seeing only people sleeping. It was vision that only those who walked among dreams, such as Succubi and Incubi, could ever have. The souls of those sleeping gleamed white and everything else was dark.

Since Michiru was a Succubus, the souls of men had a red border. That border signified dreams she could enter. (Though with some effort, she could also enter those without a red border.)

It was nighttime in an inn and she could thus see many people sleeping, but she ignored everyone except her target, the town chief. She passed through the door, unfazed by anything that did not reflect in her vision, and approached the town chief’s white soul. She caressed the red border and then plopped into his dream. Inside was the same extravagant bedroom as last time. And indeed, just like last time, he was sleeping soundly in the bed.

“...This time for sure, I’ll seduce him!” Michiru slid into the bed. It was such a comfy bed that she felt herself getting sleepy... but if she did fall asleep, she’d be banished from the dream and her physical body would reappear. (Though apparently she wouldn’t be banished as long as the one having the dream was watching her.)

Michiru resisted the bed’s comfiness and held her head over the town chief’s. With their bodies close together beneath the covers, she shook the town chief to wake him up.

“Town chief, town chief.”

“Mnnn... Ah! Y-You’re that loli from before.”

“U-Um. Would you like to... h-have fun with me?” She had worn fairly sexy clothes during her failed attempt, so this time she was wearing her normal clothes. Though the normal clothes of a Succubus still showed a lot of skin.

“Mmm, hell yeah. Love me some loli, haaah haah.”

“Kyaaaah?! T-Town chief?!” The town chief pushed down Michiru, looking aroused. She first renewed her respect for traditional succubus clothing, since it alone was apparently enough to seduce a man, but then found herself afraid of the town chief’s bloodshot eyes.

“U-Um, please be gentle... I’ll be fine since this is in a dream, but um, just to be safe, ummm, please?”

“Heheh. Leave it to me. I’m a gentleman lolicon.”

“Kyaah! Ah, n-not there... nmm! Kyaah, hyaaaah?!” The town chief began tickling the bottom of Michiru’s feet.

“Haaah haaah, loli feet, haaah haaah.”

“Kyahahahaha! Th-That tickles, ahaah! Hyaah, ahahahahaha!” And so, the town chief tickled the bottom of Michiru’s feet until he was satisfied. It ended up being pretty good exercise... Albeit dream exercise.

Keima’s Perspective

“It’s kinda hard to sleep with all this noise... I mean, I’m in a dream, but still,” I murmured to myself in my futon under the bed, listening to the loli laughing. Kosaki was taking my place in the bed. Succubi could freely change their shape within their dreams. I had Kosaki pretend to be me in a charmed state so we could later investigate our target. Basically, a common decoy strategy.

I would have to act like I was charmed after waking up, but Succubi generally only performed their seduction within dreams. She wouldn’t notice if I did some decent acting after waking up, apparently. That seemed fishy to me, but this plan failing wouldn’t be a big deal to me.

But anyway... Just what does Kosaki think I act like? She was going too far if you asked me. I would have liked her to be a bit more tame... or so I thought before Kosaki telepathically contacted me.

“(If I don’t go this far, it won’t feel like you’ve been charmed.)”

“Seriously...?”

“(Don’t speak, please. This will all be ruined if she finds you.)”

Yeah, we can just talk through pure telepathy. Just don’t go too far with her, please.

“(Okay, I’ll just have to act even harder! Do your best to follow this up, okay?)” said Kosaki through telepathy. The sounds on the bed then intensified. She was attacking Michiru harder than before.

“...You don’t mind me licking your feet, right?”

“Hyhiiih! P-Please, sto—... ah, I mean, I don’t dislike it, but... I-It’s kind of hard to breathe... Also, at this rate, I might pee myself... Among other things...”

“Lick lick lick lick lick lick liiiiick!”

“Nyaahiiih! Kyaah, hihaaah! Aaah, hyaaah!” I could hear Michiru breathlessly bouncing around on the bed above me. *Man... She and her whole organization are gonna think I did this, huh? I don’t know how I feel about that. I guess I’m just gonna put in ear plugs and go to sleep. Please... Please don’t pee so hard it soaks through the bed and gets on me. I’m begging you.*

Day 63 of Year 1

Thus came morning.

“...Ehhh. Feels kinda like I slept well, kinda like I didn’t... Whoa!” I woke up and looked only to see a pink-haired loli... Michiru in bed next to me. But her eyes were hollow, making it hard to tell if she was even conscious, and she would occasionally go into a fit of spasms. There were red marks beneath her eyes, indicating tears. Her mouth weakly hung open with drool dripping out of it.

Should I be worried about this? Uhhhh... Her eyes are open, so she must not be asleep, right?

“H-Hey?”

“Hyaaaahiih! Ah, ah, haaaah! I-I’m alive... Aaah, to think that just breathing could feel so wonderful!” *Oh, whew. She’s fine.* Michiru breathed in and out deeply. She then said “Okay!” to herself and looked around the room, eventually making eye contact with me.

“...Ah?! T-Town chieeef?!”

“S-Sup?” She immediately dashed to the wall, getting as much distance between me and her as possible. *Not sure what I should say here... Oh, right, I have to act charmed.*

“L-Last night sure was something else, huh, baby? I would do anything for you right now.”

“.....” An awkward silence. *Crap. That was way too obvious, I guess. Might as well just go for broke.*

“Whew. You sure are an attractive girl, Michiru. You’ve totally charmed me.”

“Bwuh?!” *Yeah, even I think this is kinda painful. But I mean, I’m definitely not gonna act like Kosaki did in my dream. Not a chance.* Just when I was about to give up on our plan, Michiru said “Wait, really?!” and peered into my eyes.

“You’re super cute, Michiru.”

“Eheheh...” At a loss, I complimented Michiru and she laughed shyly, looking pleased. *Did... Did she really fall for it?*

“S-So, you’ll do anything I say?”

“Yep, anything, ’cause you’re just sooo cute.” I said in a monotone, causing Michiru to beam.

“O-Okay then, spin around while waving your hands!” *Seriously?* I thought before spinning once and waving at her as requested.

“Yay! Now try doing a handstand!”

“Ah, sorry. I can’t actually do that.”

“Please, just try it!”

“...If I mess up and fall over, the shock might make the charm wear off. Hmmm.”

“Well, I guess you don’t have to do it, then.” *She’s really falling for it. I gotta say, acting charmed is a lot easier than I thought. Kosaki was clearly just messing around.* I glanced at my ring, Kosaki. It flashed a little, maybe in self-defense. *Well, no use crying over spilt milk.*

“So, what do you want me to do to you, Michiru? Some tickling?”

“Eek?! No tickling! Y-You can only play with me inside of dreams! Ah, umm. There’s somewhere I want to take you. But it’s, umm, outside of town.”

“Alright, let’s go.”

“Ah, but I’m hungry, so I request breakfast before we go!”

“Makes sense. How about a sandwich?”

“Okay!” She smiled a dazzling smile. *Uh, honestly, I’m starting to feel bad for tricking her like this. Wait... Am I feeling bad because she’s starting to charm me? I gotta get a grip.*

After Michiru polished off the sandwich I brought her, we stealthily left the inn and headed for the outside of town. That meant leaving dungeon territory, but I had my Wearable Golem on, and in truth, I was actually using {Ultra Transformation} to transform into myself. Seventy-two hours had easily passed since I exploded by transforming into Leona so I once again had an extra life I could rely on. There was a fair margin of safety here. Everything would be fine, probably.

The one problem with the transformation strategy was that my {Sleep Resistance} skill was weakened and I couldn’t use mid-rank spells, but with my ring Succubus Kosaki I would still be able to defend myself even if put to sleep and attacked in my dreams. Worst case scenario, I let her possess me and turn into a Succubus, but... I didn’t want to think about that.

The forest opened up into a clearing. Michiru had come this far without getting lost for a moment, but now she was standing in place and looking around. She hadn’t gotten lost, though. It appeared like she was looking around for someone she had planned to meet here. She put her fingers in her mouth and blew them hard, resulting in a “pbbhtth”-esque sound.

“Huh? But... When my sister did this it made a loud noise.”

“...Were you trying to whistle with your fingers?”

“U-Um. Please don’t worry about it.”

“Ahhh, yeah. I’ll just be glad I got to see another cute side of you, Michiru. Maybe you should just shout for her?”

“Good idea... Sisteer! It’s Michiru, I did iit!” Michiru shouted pretty loudly. It kinda hurt my ears.

After a moment, some nearby bushes rustled, an adult woman with a fairly curvy body and hair as pink as Michiru’s walked out. *Mmm, those are some nice legs. Her feet aren’t bad either... Gulp.*

“Sister! I did it!”

“Shh! You’re being loud. But regardless, you did well, Michiru. I’m so glad you’re alive... Everyone was worried about you. It’s been so long, we thought you had been killed.”

“S-Sorry. I just thought I shouldn’t go back until I succeeded...!”

“Yes, I know. You worked hard and I appreciate it. We’re all so proud to have a little sister like you.” The woman, wearing a skimpy outfit that made it clear she was a Succubus, stroked Michiru’s head. Michiru clung to her happily and rubbed her cheek against the woman’s exposed stomach like a puppy.

Guess this is that older sister Michiru kept mentioning. Which means she must be a Succubus too. Not that her outfit leaves any room for doubt.

“So this is the town chief? I had heard rumors about him, but I see he truly is young. Mmm.” The Succubus licked her lips.

“Nice to meet you. Might I ask your name?”

“Before that. Michiru, are you sure that he is charmed?”

“Yes!”

“Interesting... Then could you order him to prostate before me and lick my feet?”

“Of course! Town chi—”

“As you wish, my queen! Please allow me to lick your feet! If possible, remove

your shoes so I may service them directly!” I practically slammed my face onto the ground in front of her. My hands were tied here, I had to act charmed. *Aaah, acting is so hard. I can’t believe I have to grovel like this. It sure sucks. Suuure sucks.*

“...I see, he would actively obey a humiliating order from a woman who isn’t even his type. There is no doubt that he’s charmed right now.”

“Right? Eheheh.” My stunning performance tricked even the elder Succubus. *So, how about the feet...? Uh, I mean, nevermind.*

“You wanted to know my name, right? It’s Suilla. As you know, I am the older sister of your master.” *Master... Ahhh, she’s talking about Michiru.*

“So, what would you have me do, my queen?”

“Initially we were planning to make you agree to the brothel construction plans, but the situation has changed. But either way, this is fine. Michiru, could you bring him here again tonight?”

“Certainly, sister! Umm... Will the charm last that long?”

“It should be fine if you order him to act normal until night, then come here. Good luck, Michiru!”

“I’ll do my best! Ummm... Town chief. Please come here again tonight! For now, return to town and act normal!” That was a pretty vague order all things considered, but whatever. I nodded.

“Okay. No way I could turn down a request from the one and only cutest girl in the world, Michiru. Later, I’ll be back tonight. Probably around midnight so nobody sees me.” *Okay, back to base. I’ll expand our dungeon territory to cover this bit of the forest before I come back.*

* * *

Time passed and the sun set. It was pitch black outside. After getting Rokuko and the others ready in the Master Room such that they could provide backup in the event of something unexpected, I returned to the forest and the clearing within. Suilla and Michiru were waiting for me there.

“Congratulations, Michiru! It worked!”

“Yes... sniff, and now I’m finally, finally a proper Sucubuuuus!” *Sorry. I’m really sorry, but I’m not charmed at all.*

“Now then, there’s no time to waste. Would you two be kind and follow me?” asked Suilla before walking off with us behind her. *Man... I can basically see her entire bare ass. No pants at all.*

She took us back to town. To be specific, to the church. *Yeah, I was expecting this.*

Side Chapter — Dungeon Core Children

Ever since Leona started working in the church, I kept Rokuko far away from it as a defensive measure. As a result, Rokuko got bored enough that she began visiting the [Flame Caverns] with her Phoenix named Phenny in tow. She and Redra, in her human form, were drinking tea together when Rokuko casually dropped a question.

“Hey, do you have any kids, Redra?”

“Kids? Yeah, I got one! She’s a super cute girl that looks just like me!” Redra grinned broadly enough to show all her sharp teeth.

“Wow, really? Is she somewhere in your dungeon?”

“Nah, she left home like two hundred years ago! I sure hope she’s doing okay... But hey, it’d take a lot to kill a Flame Dragon!”

“A Flame Dragon?! That’s a higher ranked dragon than you, Redra!”

“That’s ’cause she’s my kid! I’m still stronger, though!” Redra cackled with pride. She was a Red Dragon, one that specialized in the fire element. If you took that specialization a step further, you would have a Flame Dragon. It would be fair to call them the physical embodiment of the fire element itself.

“So, is that Core 112’s kid?”

“Gr, Rokuko?! Are you thinkin’ I would cheat on him?!” Fire roared from Redra’s mouth.

“No, I was just wondering if Dungeon Cores could have children! Because I’m a Dungeon Core too, remember?”

“Oh, I see what you’re saying. Of course it’s Ittetsu’s kid!” Redra calmed down in a second. Rokuko took a sip of her tea. Incidentally, Redra’s human transformation was perhaps intentionally incomplete, leaving her tail and horns in place such that she still looked like a dragon. The fire breathing was part of that.

“Whew, it’s kind of hot. Be careful, I’m not strong like you are, Redra.”

“Haha, sorry, sorry. I jumped on ya too fast! Still, y’know, you and Ittetsu sure are different for both being Dungeon Cores!”

“That’s just how Dungeon Cores are.” Human-type Dungeon Cores and Salamander-type Dungeon Cores were as different as a normal human and a normal Salamander. They were entirely different species, with only their nature as Dungeon Cores connecting them.

“...Wait. Have you always called Core 112 Ittetsu?”

“Keima says it’s hard for humans to understand Dragon language, so I’m using it instead for now!” Redra once said Ittetsu’s name in Dragon language, but it always ended up like “grroohgghogoo.” *That would definitely be hard for humans to say*, thought Rokuko.

“Still though, you want to know more about my kid?! Alright! I’ll talk to you about her all night, she’s my baby! Proof of my love for Ittetsu!”

“I wouldn’t mind that, but there’s something else I want to ask about first.”

“Mmm? What’s that?!”

“Well.” Rokuko took a deep breath, then sat up straight. Redra, seeing that, sat up straight as well.

“How do you make children?”

“Bppph?! You’re asking me that?!” Rokuko’s question made Redra sputter with surprise. “Uh, that’s the kinda thing you should ask your parents! Why ask me?!”

“I don’t have a mom.” Dungeon cores only knew of their Father, so it was fair to say that they didn’t have a mother.

“I have an older sister, but Keima said I should never ask her this under any circumstances, so... I’d really appreciate it if you told me Redra.”

“O-Oh, huh... Sorry for bringing up bad memories.”

“No worries. It’s the same way for all Dungeon Cores. So... Would you tell me?”

“Ah, right. Ittetsu doesn’t have a mom either. Wait, does that mean you’re Ittetsu’s little sister?!”

“I guess you could say that. But really, would you tell me? I don’t have anyone else I can ask about this,” said Rokuko, looking up at Redra with puppy dog eyes. It was a request from both a friend and a sister in law. Refusing her would be the act of a truly despicable woman.

“Alright! I’ll tell you! I am a mother, after all!” Redra thumped her chest confidentially. To Rokuko, she looked like someone who could really be relied on.

“Thank you!”

“Yeah, no problem! Uuuuh, so y’see, you just, uhhhh...” Redra folded her arms and fell into thought. The question was how much she should tell Rokuko about baby making. How many of the ancient secrets she should reveal, the secrets that embarrassed her to think about. Even Redra, resistant to heat as she was, blushed bright red thinking about explaining said secrets to Rokuko. What had she told her daughter, again? Oh. She hadn’t. Anyway, Redra just said the first thing that came to mind.

“First, you gotta... kiss him! It all starts with kissing!”

“Kissing! It starts with kissing, okay!”

“That’s right! A big smooch! This is important, don’t forget it!”

“Got it!” Rokuko engraved on her heart the importance of kisses. Her strategy so far had not been mistaken. “And after that?”

“...Then, uhhhhh, y-you gotta make them kiss you too!”

“They have to kiss too!”

“Yeah! They’ve gotta kiss you back!” Rokuko nodded. Up until now, her attempts at kissing had been one way.

“What comes after that?”

“Well, y’see! Uhhh, eer, uhhh! Err, aaah...” Redra began to awkwardly fidget, unusual behavior for one as energetic and straightforward as her. Rokuko was confused.

“Redra, you really did have a kid with Core 112, right?”

“I-I did! But y’see, ahahaha, weeeelll, how to put this, it’s crazy embarrassing to say this kinda thing to a friend...”

“Embarrassing, hm... I can understand that.” Rokuko nodded. She always felt embarrassed when kissing Keima, too. But Redra had gone even further beyond and actually made children. She was a wise master compared to her.

“Well, you know! Once you start kissing each other, you’ll just know what to do next! Instincts! Just trust your instincts! Your body knows what to do!”

“Instincts! My body will know what to do!” Redra’s statements were pretty out there, but Rokuko believed them all in full.

“That’s right! Instincts! Feel it in your bones! Don’t think too hard, and by the time you’re thinking about making kids, you’ll already have one! Basically, kissing makes babies!”

“Kissing makes babies...!”

“That’s right! Kissing makes babies!”

“Kissing! Makes! Babies!” Rokuko repeated Redra’s words like a chant. For some reason, they high-fived each other.

“Now I can have kids with Keima!”

“Feelings are everything! Get close with him!”

“Got it!”

“Take good care of your kids!”

“Yes ma’am!”

“Don’t turn in bed and crack your eggs!”

“...Um, what? Did you crack your egg?”

“J-Just a few tiny cracks is fine! Just cover them with magma so it’ll harden!”
Magma is probably only good for the eggs of a Red Dragon, so I shouldn’t follow this advice thought Rokuko as she scribbled on her internal notepad.

“Heya, the fuck you two talking about, huh?” Ittetsu came to check in on

them since they had been making such a fuss. Upon seeing her four legged husband walking in their direction, Redra beamed a full smile.

“Ah, Ittetsu! I was just telling Rokuko how to make kids!”

“Er... A-Alright, nice. Just, uh, don’t go too far, alright?” He was relieved that they hadn’t been fighting, but now he had to question whether he should tell Keima about this. In front of him Rokuko and Redra faced each other and shouted “OKAY!” with enthusiasm.

“Later Rokuko, good luck!”

“It’s gonna happen!”

“KISSING MAKES BABIES!” they shouted in unison, high-fiving for the second time. Ittetsu was glad Redra had such a good friend, but now he really didn’t know what to tell Keima.

“...You sure that’s a good enough explanation?” Ittetsu tilted his head, his heavy neck cracking.

“It’s fine! But we gotta demonstrate to her first! I’m gonna bite ya!”

“Demonstrate... bite... kiss?! R-R-R-Right here, r-right now?! That’s so bold!”

“Wait, Rokuko! We’re not gonna actually make babies in public! We’re not, right?! I mean, if you want to Ittetsu, I could do it! Wait, what are you making me say, jerk?!” Redra slammed her fists against Ittetsu, bright red. He hadn’t made her say anything in particular, but Ittetsu stood there and took her (fairly painful) blows without complaint.

“...Y’know, humans and dragon’s aren’t so fuckin’ similar biologically speaking, so don’t take her advice too seriously, alright?” said Ittetsu just to be safe, but Rokuko was blushing so bright red it was hard to tell whether or not she was actually listening.

“...Good fuckin’ luck, Keima...” Ittetsu quietly prayed for Keima’s future. Despite thinking that his prayers would probably reach no one.

Chapter 3

The Succubus took me to the Beddhist church. Then, to Leona's room.

"Lady Leona! We have successfully charmed the town chief!"

"Oh, really? Bring him in, then." At this point, it was completely safe to assume that Leona was behind everything. Hard to say I didn't expect that. Or that I hadn't figured all that out the second I saw the church.

I entered the room and saw Leona lazily sitting on her bed.

"Hm..." Her red eyes peered into mine. The Light magic tool brightening her room made her eyes look like they were flashing red. "Well, he's definitely sane. I've never seen someone less charmed in my life." *Dang, she saw through me in a second.*

"No way! But I confirmed that he was charmed! Are you saying that groveling was all an act?!" Suilla fell into a panic. My impressive acting had fooled her completely.

"Suilla. This is an embarrassing failure. Get on the ground, all fours. You too, little one."

"Ngh! Ah...!"

"S-Sister...!" Leona snapped her fingers. Immediately, Suilla and Michiru fell to the floor on all fours, as if pushed by an invisible force. Leona sat on Suilla's back as if it were her natural right to do so. Then, she spoke to me like nothing had happened.

"My my, Keima! Staying up all night is a violation of Beddhist rules, what brings you here so late?" Her tone was bright, as if nothing really had happened. Despite where she was sitting.

"Yeah, drop the act. We both know these Succubi are your lackeys. Depending on what you say here —"

"My my my. Beddhism worships sleep above all else. It follows, then, that it

should coexist with the demons of dreams, Succubi. After all, a Succubus is not much different from a normal person beyond their power to enter dreams and eat sexual energy. Or are you saying these living creature look like mere chairs to you? They shouldn't be a problem then, either."

"...Nnn, fwaah...!" Leona spoke while stroking Suilla's ass. She then continued, with the Succubus's moans as background music.



“Feel free to sit on that other chair beside you. It may be small, but I’m sure it will be comfortable,” said Leona while pointing at Michiru. I glared at her, still standing. “It seems that these poor Succubi are homeless. Shall we give them shelter in this church? You’re such a kind man, Sir Pope, that I have no doubt you will agree to watch over them. After all... You did the same for your Vampire High Priest and Silky cooks, no? I believe that was an Apprentice Witch at the counter as well, hm?” I felt a chill run down my spine. To think she had seen through me that far ahead.

“I see that you are a fine gentleman who extends your welcome hospitality beyond the borders of race. Mmm, truly splendid. Right?”

“Mind if I ask something?”

“And what might that be?” asked Leona, tilting her head cutely. But her eyes were not smiling.

“...Do you have an identification skill? I’m guessing that’s how you read the bible.” That was one of the things I had thought long and hard about. How had Leona known the contents of the bible I wrote? If she hadn’t spied on me writing in it, the next logical explanation was using an identification skill to see inside of it.

“My my! To not just identify a book but read its contents as well would require a legendary skill only held by Heroes, {Ultra Identification}, at level two or above to unlock the citation effect! Are you suggesting that I, a lowly nun, would have such a skill?”

“You could’ve saved us both time and just said yes, y’know.”

“Then yes, I do have an identification skill. Keima Masuda.” In other words, she had identified me as well. How much had she learned? I didn’t know what she meant by citation effect, but it must have let her further identify the initial identification results, if that made sense.

“Don’t look so grim, now. I can only see the truth, so you have nothing to fear, hm? Or shall we say I merely know what knowledge Beddhism guides me to?”

“Who are you? A Hero?”

“Aaah! There it is! I’m glad you asked. Mmm, you have no idea how long I’ve been waiting for that question. Who am I, hm? Ahaha. I am no nun of Beddhism. My true name is Reona Shishidou. That’s right, I’m Japanese! Godswalker was just a cool fantasy name, and Leona just fits this place more than Reona!” Leona grinned and pointed at herself.

“...Your eyes are pretty red for a Japanese person.”

“Oh, are you saying Japanese people have to have black eyes? You would be right, if not for that fact that skills can change eye colors. Indeed, my Hero skill {Ultra Massage} has the {Piercing Eye} effect!” she said while emanating a pitch black aura so thick it was visible. If she was trying to prove she was a Hero, well, it kind of had the opposite effect. And what was that about {Ultra Massage}? They seriously have to stop putting Ultra in every Hero skill.

“...Wait, wasn’t your skill {Ultra Identification}?”

“Oh, didn’t you know? Heroes can get new skills by destroying Dungeon Cores. I thus have many different Hero skills.” Multiple hero skills. That meant that she might have a skill related to subterfuge, which would explain her 0/DP a day.

“To go a step further, I am also a Dungeon Master!”

...She’s also a Dungeon Master? A Hero and a Dungeon Master. One that had multiple Hero skills. *Wait... Is she just a straight-up better version of me? It’s possible, but she lies so much I can’t take anything she says as true up-front.*

“I suppose I’ll have to prove I’m Japanese first. Aaah, sushi, sukiyaki, tenpuraaaaa. Ask me anything you like and I’ll answer.”

“...What’s the tallest mountain in Japan?”

“What else but Mount Fuji?”

“What’s the surface area of Kyushu?”

“Now that’s asking for a bit much. I’m not a geography expert.” Incidentally, it was about 36,750 square kilometers. I figured that she wouldn’t be able to answer it on her own and was testing to see if she would use {Ultra Identification} to deduce the answer from an outside source somehow. *How do*

I know the answer? I just remember reading about it somewhere.

To be honest, though, I didn't care whether or not she was Japanese. The important thing here was her ownership of Hero skills. And hey, if she was answering any question, I might as well ask her about them.

"Tell me what skills you have."

"That would take all night. If I keep it to just Hero skills, I have {Ultra Alchemy} level 9, {Ultra Identification} level 9, {Ultra Massage} level 8, {Ultra Subterfuge} level 7, {Ultra Chanting} level 9, {Ultra Awakening} level 3, {Ultra Strengthening} level 5, {Ultra Resistance} level 9... Hmm, what else did I have? Sorry, remembering all of them is kind of a pain. If only this world had status windows. I could use identification on myself, but it's the kind of skill that has limited usages per day, sooo."

"Wait, wait, wait."

"Yes?"

"...You've gotta be lying, right? That's way too many skills."

"It's all true. Oh, are you not using a lie detecting Magic Skill? Not that it'd matter anyway, since {Ultra Subterfuge} can fool those all the way down at level 3," said Leona with a smile. *She's gotta be lying. Please, tell me she's lying.* "Just think. If you went to a new world and there's a fun skill system in place, one where you can gather all sorts of powerful high-level skills, wouldn't you want to, mmm... collect them? I'm sure a Japanese person such as yourself would understand the appeal of collections, Keima." I could understand that. She was making a point and I understood it in full. But according to her, her cumulative skill level was over fifty. How many Dungeon Cores had she destroyed?

"Next comes proof that I'm a Dungeon Master. Mmm, let me buy something from the Dungeon Point Catalog. Maybe a magic stone, or better yet, a Dummy Core! Here." She must have bought it immediately, as a Dummy Core appeared in her hand from nowhere. It was a real Dummy Core, albeit one pulsating with a grotesque purple light. The Catalog's usual magic circle had even appeared over her hand.

Incidentally, this might just be an unexplained feature, but Rei and the others

couldn't buy Dummy Cores despite having the power to use the Catalog. Only I as the Dungeon Master and Rokuko as the Core could.

"That was fairly easy to prove." Indeed it was. In short, Leona was both a Hero, and a Dungeon Master.

"...By the way, how old were you when you came here?"

"Sixteen. I suppose that was about five hundred years ago. I became immortal when I turned seventeen and stopped counting the years after that. That answers your question, right? Oh, and I do drink alcohol. The legal age here is fifteen, so... Oh my, don't make a lady talk about her age, Keima. Don't you have any delicacy?" *Yup, she just said five hundred years, hahaha. I wonder how old she is now.*

"I'm not that interested in your age, don't worry about it."

"Okay, okay. I expected as much from a hardcore lolicon who only cares about real lolis. Oh wait, I suppose that was fake information meant to counter Succubi, given how you weren't actually charmed. I'm impressed." This world had fake information spread explicitly to counteract Succubus attacks, huh? Famous people here must have it rough.

...But really, five hundred years. That explains why she knows so much and has so many skills.

...Man, what am I gonna do about this? She's clearly a superior version of me, and not by a small margin either. There's no contest here. She knows a lot about everything thanks to her identification skill and she has an actual collection of friggin' cheat skills. And she's a Dungeon Master on top of that? Seriously? There's strength in history, and she has a hell of a lot of history. Maybe... Maybe I should wag my tail and show her my stomach?

"By the way, wasn't the warring states period five hundred years ago, or...?"

"Oh, that. It seems that regardless of this world's time frame, all people summoned from Earth come from the same four to five year period. All from Japan, of course, but not everyone is Japanese. I've seen some Americans, for instance, like the founder of Wakoku."

Honestly, this was getting to be so much information that I was having trouble

parsing it all.

“...So, Leona. What faction do you belong to? Why did you come here?”

“Faction? I’m independent. I have many objectives, but hmm. Let’s just say I came here to scout you.”

“Scout?”

“That’s right. Or should I say, came here to scout you and Rokuko, the winners of the recent Dungeon Battle. Did you know that the Dark God contacted me? He told me this dungeon battle was won by Cores 89 and 695, and that their names would now be Haku and Rokuko. They would also be permitted to use the last name Labyrinthart.”

...Yeah, looks like Father really is a Dark God. The Dark God? Gaaah, this is too much information to handle. I guess this is what Ittetsu was talking about. Should be safe to say that Leona’s the Master of Core 4.

“Hey, mind if I leave for a bit? I need some time to process all this information.”

“What’s the need for that? You need only agree to become mine. Submission comes with a free chair, you know,” said Leona before giving Suilla’s ass a nice slap. *Oh right, I had forgotten all about her. Leona’s been sitting on a Succubus this whole time.*

“Why me?”

“At first it was due to sweet little Haku favoring you, but now that I’ve met you, I have a new reason. But putting that aside for now... {Call Succubus}.” Leona activated her magic skill. Magic circles appeared on either side of her. I looked around and saw one behind me as well. A Succubus appeared from each of the three circles.

“...No need for a chant. You can do the same, can’t you, Keima? I imagine you’ve noticed by now, but a chant is unnecessary if you understand the magic words. Especially the names of the spells.” *Yeah, I’ve noticed. I do it all the time myself. I can use {Create Golem} without even saying the name now.*

“When making translation magic, magic words were more of a struggle than

anything else. They more than any others conflicted with normal words, but... I suppose that doesn't matter right now." *I didn't know that. More new information... Gah, it feels like my head's gonna explode.*

"Incidentally, these cuties are the latest Succubi I've formed contracts with. They were expelled from their homes and went on a journey to find a new place to live." More useless information. What was Leona trying to pull here...?

"Yeah, I don't care about all that. It doesn't matter. What I want to know is why you want to scou —"

"It does matter!" Leona stood up while giving a hearty slap to a nearby Succubus's ass. The Succubus let out a "Hykyaah?!" Leona then grabbed my shoulders tightly. "You're the only one I can talk about these things to. Who else could I talk to? Heroes? Dungeon Cores? They're both my enemies! Or would you have me talk to mob commoners and monsters? Don't be ridiculous, that's like talking to animals. You and I are like bats, strange creatures foreign from the world, and even after five hundred years we will remain foreign. There are borders between our languages, our species, our ideals, and our worlds! Aaah, I've finally found another ally, another person like me! You are my one and only comrade in this entire world, Keima!" She squeezed her fingers so tightly it felt like my bones were going to crack. Ouch.

"Oh, forgive me. I didn't mean to squeeze so hard." Leona released her hands. At the same time, light fluttered down and healed my pain. She could use Restoration magic without a word.

"...Well, that's how it is, Keima. Would you come conquer the world with me? I'll give you half once we're done, aha." Leona invited me to conquer the world like she was inviting me for a walk. Which helped me finally understand what she was doing here.

"Haha, yeah, that's the kinda offer that'll put me at level one if I agree. Sorry, but world conquest sounds like a huge pain. I just want to relax and take naps."

"Aaah, I'm so glad you can understand my references. But that's a no, isn't it?" Leona glanced at a Succubus. *Riiight. I'm surrounded.*

"(You sure didn't think ahead there, huh, Master?)"

“(I’m kinda overwhelmed right now. There’s too much information here.)” I talked with Kosaki. Even if she knocked me out and Succubi attacked me in my dreams, I could escape being charmed by having Kosaki take my place. I got the feeling that if I used {Sleep Resistance} to avoid passing out, they would probably end up beating me to death by accident. Though beyond all that, we were safely within dungeon territory, so Rokuko could withdraw me into the Master Room at any point.

“...You look like you have a plan to escape. What if I do this, then? {Call Slave}.” Leona chanted a magic spell and a new magic circle appeared in front of her. And then... Niku, who should have been waiting in the Master Room, appeared.

“Why heeello, Toi. Have you been doing well? It’s been so long since we’ve seen each other, I was worried about you.”

“Ah...?! Wh-Why...” Leona clung to Niku, who stiffened up.

“Hey! What’re you doing with Niku?!”

“My, what a splendid name. But let me tell you something interesting, Keima. This girl is my doll. Or perhaps I should say granddaughter, since I made her from my daughter’s womb. I know every inch of this girl’s body. I’ve had plenty of fun playing with her already.” Leona’s hands caressed Niku’s body all over. Daughter? Granddaughter? What did she mean, she had her fun already?

“There was a time when I tried to mingle with the world too, you know. I had my children then, but she didn’t become the comrade I sought. So I tried making them instead. Using the power of a Hero and a Dungeon Master, I created this doll. But not even a Hero’s granddaughter, a clone, a being born of a Dungeon Core became my true ally. It is a little difficult for my body to bear children, but I made them anyway and experimented on them with {Ultra Alchemy}. I tried fusing them with Dungeon Cores, rare ores, monsters, and babies. That became quite fun for me at some point. Over time my objective shifted to creating the ultimate life form... and the result of that was Toi. I seem to recall those experiments continuing on until just recently.”

...That was horrific research that desecrated the dignity of life. Science that bordered on blasphemy. I didn’t know everything she had done, but in short,

Niku was born from those experiments.

“What are... you saying...?”

“To put it simply, I created you, Toi. Doesn’t it make sense? It’s harder for you to get tired and pain is not that severe for you, but I suppose that’s hard to understand without a frame of reference. You’re stronger than an average adventurer, react faster, are more adaptable... Your lack of hesitation toward killing is a part of it, even.” That all sounded familiar to me. And it seemed it was familiar to Niku as well.

“...I’m not... a real... person...?” choked out Niku, her voice trembling.

“No, no, I used common stones turned into Philosopher’s Stones with {Ultra Alchemy} quite liberally, so you are as close to a person as can be. You can be crushed, sliced, and cut into steak just like any person. I can guarantee that you are very real. Though as evidenced by the lack of a barcode on the back of your neck, you are a failure and I got rid of you. Really, I’m impressed you survived the process. Normally I melt the bodies of my children to reuse them later. I must have thrown you into the trash can rather than the body pile by mistake. Whoops!” Leona giggled. In contrast, the life drained out of Niku.

“...You’re fucked up.”

“Oh? But we Japanese people do the same thing in elementary school, don’t we? Competency is rigorously selected and weak garbage is thrown out.”

“That’s just video games! Don’t mistake games for real life!” I shouted, causing Leona to tilt her head.

“My, what kind of peaceful bubble did you shut yourself into? There are endless such cases in reality, such as the back rooms of pet shops being breeding facilities. Don’t you know that racing horses are intentionally inbred to strengthen the seed if possible, despite the failures it results in? Life is so wonderfully immoral. Ahahaha, it’s silly that humans think they are any different,” said Leona while rubbing Niku’s restrained thighs and chest sensually and licking her cheek. “I just believe in equality. This world has legal slavery, did you forget? It’s fine to treat humans like animals here. You pretend to have adjusted to this world, but you’re still hopelessly Japanese.” Not that I dislike that, Leona added silently with a wink. Her eyes were warm, like a proud adult

praising their child.

“Not to mention, we’re Dungeon Masters. Humans, monsters, and even Heroes are our prey. The only meaningful difference between them is whether they’re feral or domesticated.” I could understand what she was saying. It was impossible not to. After all, I was killing people in my dungeon on a regular basis, and I was even using a Hero as a living DP tank. Plus, since I was a Hero, Dungeon Cores were my prey as well.

Predators and prey. If looking at the world through a lens of nature, she and I were enemies of all living creatures.

“I get what you’re saying, but that doesn’t make it okay to touch my dakimakura. Give Niku back.” I said firmly, making Leona click her tongue. Had she been plotting something? Brainwashing or something of the sort. It wouldn’t be odd for her to have a skill like that.

“Listen, Keima. I’m willing to trade a successful creation for this failure.”

“Quit joking around! Niku is my... my dakimakura!”

“Master...!” Niku trembled. Light returned to her eyes.

“Oh, have you grown fond of each other? I’m afraid my artistic nature won’t allow me to let an incomplete failure such as Toi keep running around... ah! Then I need only complete her! Ah, that would fix everything!” I got a really bad feeling about that. “Meanwhile, you can use these Succubi in her place. As you would expect, they are a much better lay than this girl. Incomparably soft and all that. They might even be better than Toi when completed, to be honest.”

“No. Niku’s mine, don’t touch her.”

“Master... Master...!” Niku reached out to me with Leona still hugging her.

“...Very well. Shall we play a game, then?” *Game?* “A game where I am the DM, if you will. I will give this girl back if you win. Aaah, and don’t worry. This isn’t a game that puts your life at risk, as long as you follow the rules properly. I’ll give you about one hour to prepare. See you then. {Teleport}.” said Leona before disappearing along with Niku and the Succubi.

“Gr... Where’d they go? Outside of the dungeon! Crap! Niku...!” I punched the

wall. I could have potentially saved Niku if I had charged Leona down. And yet I... just stood there and let her go.

“Um, er, town chief. What should I do?”

“What?” I turned around and saw the pink haired loli Succubus, Michiru. *Uh... Why was she still here?*

“Oh! She’ll be contacting us in one hour! I’ll wait with you!”

“Er, alright...” *Anyway... Guess I’ll talk to Rokuko about this.*

* * *

“Welcome back, Keima. What’s that you have there?”

“Something Leona forgot.” In any case, I returned to the chief residence. With some unnecessary baggage.

“Ummm. What should I be doing right now?” asked the unnecessary baggage, Michiru, with a regretful tone. But I had no answer to give.

“Kinue, it looks like our guest is tired. Take her to the onsen and give her a sandwich or something afterward.” I snapped my fingers and Kinue appeared from nowhere.

“As you wish, Master. Come with me, Michiru, if you would.”

“Wha, K-Kinue? Okay, but where?”

“To the onsen. The warm waters will soothe your exhaustion.”

“Oh right, someone may come to contact her, so bring her back within the hour.”

“Understood. I will bring her back not a second later,” said Kinue before leaving with Michiru. *Okay, now I can relax and have a proper meeting.*

“Okay, Rokuko. I figure you saw all that in the Master Room. Whaddaya think?”

“...A magic circle swallowed up Niku out of nowhere and before I knew it, she was in Leona’s arms.”

“I see...” According to Rokuko, Niku had been kidnapped by a magic circle

right out of the Master Room. If not even the Master Room could protect her, then I might end up having to put her into {Storage}. Though I didn't know what would happen if a living being were to be put into {Storage}. It would probably work since seeds and stuff went in fine, but I was a little too scared to experiment.

Well, either way, it was safer to assume that Leona's magic couldn't be avoided. Which meant that our only choice was to get Leona to willingly give Niku back. Or in other words...

"...Guess we've gotta play along with Leona's game."

"Seems so." Leona said that Niku's life wouldn't be at risk if we followed the rules she set. Judging from what I knew of her personality, that was likely true. "Well, at least we don't have to worry about her killing Niku."

"Wait, Keima. How can you be so sure of that?"

"Huh? I mean, judging from what I know about her personality..."

"Why, judging from her personality, are you so sure of that?"

"Why? Come on, I mean..." *I mean... Uh... What? Now that she mentions it, why was I so confident?*

"As far as I can tell, she doesn't seem like someone who cares too much about whether others live or die. She lied about being a nun and lied about pretty much everything else too. So why would you think everything she said there was true? Why would you be so sure that she would keep her promise?" Rokuko was completely right.

"...Sorry, I wasn't thinking straight. Got caught up in Leona's pace a little there."

"Kosaki, is Keima really okay?"

"Ummm, w-well, probably, maybe, I think! I mean, Leona's so much infinitely stronger than me in every way I can't be totally suuuure, buuut, ahaha..." The ring gave a wavering reply. *C'mon, seriously. This game may not be life-threatening, but I doubt any game Leona has in mind won't involve some psychological attacks.*

“In any case, it all depends on what kind of game Leona’s talking about. Is it going to be one I have to tackle alone, or will I be able bring all of you along? Who knows, maybe it’ll be a game where I sit things out and you do everything, Rokuko.” We lacked too much information to say anything for sure.

“Rokuko. Do you know where Niku and Leona are right now?”

“Umm... They’re not in our dungeon territory, at least. Should we send the rats to scout the forest?” Oh, right. With all the rat races I forgot that we sent some rats to the forest too. We were sending them regular food deliveries, but still, the rats of this world sure had long lifespans. Maybe being born from the dungeon had something to do with that?

“Yeah, have them scout for any suspicious looking places.” There was the distinct possibility that they were nowhere close to us, but still, that was better than doing nothing.

...*One hour, huh?* That was far too short of a time to do much of anything, but considering Niku’s safety, it sure felt like a long time. If I had known something like this would have happened, I would have had put Niku under the control of the dungeon... though I wasn’t sure if that was possible for beastkin, or any non-monster for that matter.

In the end, we searched for an hour and found nothing.

“Fwaaah, that was amazing... Here I have found paradise itself.” Despite our unease, Michiru returned with a blissful expression on her face. She was holding hands with Kinue.

“Hm? Hey, Michiru, what are you holding there? A letter?”

“Bwuh? Oh, this. I didn’t even notice... Oh, it says ‘To Keima’ on it.”

“Give it to me.” I stole the letter from Michiru and opened it. As expected, it was from Leona and it read as follows:

Dear Keima Masuda. I’ve actually forgotten how to write proper Japanese letters by now, but anyway, my subterfuge skill is set to deactivate once you open this letter so come pay a visit to my impromptu dungeon if you would. I’m waiting with a delightful variety of athletic games. Later.

“Keima! The succubus Leona was using as a chair just popped up on the map.” I took a look and found her in the forest. She was right in the clearing where we had first met. I looked through the monitor and saw a staircase where there had been nothing before. Her subterfuge or whatever had likely deactivated, as the letter suggested.

“...Looks like there’s a bit more to the letter. ‘P.S., there may be three participants only. I do not guarantee the safety of any further invaders.’ Let’s get this settled fast.”

“I wonder what she means by athletic games. Do you have any idea, Keima?”

“...Yeah. They probably won’t be life-threatening games. Just a bunch of stamina sucking carnival games.”

“Stamina sucking... Like drain spells?”

“Nah. Just simple exercise. Which means a lot of moving around... Normally that’d mean bringing Niku along for sure, which makes this hard.” First of all, I would have to go. My knowledge would probably be necessary for getting past her tricks. I could use my Wearable Golem to compensate for the stamina suck. Rokuko was out of the question. Which left... through the process of elimination, Ichika and Rei. They were just about the physically strongest of our team, so to speak.

“Hate to do this so late, but wake ’em up for me.”

“I already woke them up when Niku got kidnapped. Well... It makes sense that I wouldn’t go along with you.”

“I’ll bring Phenny with me, you can watch through him. He won’t be a player so she may try to pull something on him, but he’s a Phoenix. Should be safe.” We needed to get ready and leave as soon as possible.

“Um, what about me...?” asked Michiru timidly. *Oh whoops, forgot about her again.*

“You probably won’t be too safe as the fourth person, but you can come along anyway if you want.”

“I’ll stay here!” I could leave Michiru to Kinue.

I grabbed my completely unused adventurer stuff and my trusty blade Siesta before heading off to Leona's dungeon. Although we supposedly wouldn't be at risk, it was best to be prepared when entering a dungeon. Though I had never used Siesta in an actual fight yet.

"Okay, you two ready?" I asked Ichika and Rei as we stood in front of the dungeon entrance, a square staircase like you would often see in a certain RPG series.

"Really dude, that's what I wanna ask you. Maybe you shoulda brought a normal weapon?"

"I also must question whether I was the best choice for this. Need I remind you that my attack is zero?"

I had a normal Golem Blade with me too, and Rei could do some damage with her Golem Bowgun, so it should be fine. As an aside, Phenny was standing at the ready on Rei's shoulder.

"Alright, looks like we're all good. Let's go." I went down the staircase with the two of them. Or to be more precise, Ichika took the lead and Rei guarded our rear. Did I consider myself a failure of a man for that? No. Absolutely not. They both had quick reflexes—Ichika was a slave, and Rei was a dungeon monster. Them protecting me just made sense.

Upon reaching the bottom of the floor, we found an ornately decorated set of doors. They honestly looked like the doors to a school gym.

In front of them stood Leona. Beside her was a cage, wherein Niku was chained and wearing a lustrous red dress.

"Niku!" I called out to her, but she did not answer. She was unconscious. "What did you do to her, Leona?!"

"I merely knocked her unconscious. Oh, and changed her clothes. Here is her old outfit." A succubus brought out Niku's neatly folded maid outfit, her knee socks, and finally her underwear. Ichika took them. *Look like Niku doesn't have her Golem Maid Outfit's assistance anymore.*

"Her panties tasted quite nice, I appreciated the mana flavor!"

“What the absolute fuck?” Her panties did have mana since I turned them into a golem, but still. The flavor? Did Leona lick them or something? Jesus. I came here all tense for some serious psychological trials, but this is just... I dunno.

“Yooo, Leona, I never woulda thought you’d betray Master like this.”

“Indeed. I had thought that we could be friends, Leona.”

“Why hello, Ichika, Rei. You didn’t expect this the moment you saw me?” Oh yeah, I forgot all three of them worked as Beddhist nuns together.

“Okay, you got me dawg, I totally did. And I only joined the church ’cause Niku got knocked out, so yeah, I’m totes just joking about being torn up here.”

“...Regardless, I sincerely respected your skills as master masseuse.”

Ichika was pretty indifferent and Rei looked sincerely regretful.

“Don’t worry! I don’t care about either of you at all!”

“Oof, I can tell you mean that, dude. Talk about harsh. We even ate from the same pot of soup, that’s the kinda bond that should last a lifetime. Not that I care. Hard to say how many times I ended up fighting my adventurer bros back in those days.”

*“Ngh! Am I the only one who finds fighting with a former friend tragic?!”
Hm... I wonder if Rei got infected by Leona during all that time they spent together. Nah, I’ll just roll with Rei being that pure of heart. She’s a good girl.*

Leona clapped her hands together.

“Now then, let us begin our game! Your goal is to save the captured princess! Aim for 99 points! Fight, fight, ooooh!” declared Leona with a smile.

“Hold up. I wanna be sure about something first. You’ll give Niku back safe and sound if we beat this game, right?”

“Of course. I’ll even set it in stone with an oath skill. Which is a good idea, now that I think about it. Let’s set the rules of this game in stone with a skill. That should assuage your fears, no?” *Making an oath with a skill, huh? You can do that kind of thing?* “Are you familiar with the skill {Trinity}? It’s a ritual skill that enforces vows and oaths. It ensures that promises between two parties are kept, in a way. An oath made through {Trinity} cannot be broken by anyone

other than the creator god. Reason being, this is a skill enforced by the creator god himself.” I recognized that name. It was the skill the Holy Kingdom’s High Priestess used.

At the time, judging by what I had heard the priestess say and what had happened afterward, it sealed our dungeon functions for seventy-two hours and, upon failure, prevented her from entering the dungeon for some time. Though according to Haku, its effects differed depending on who used it.

“Why was the Holy Kingdom’s High Priestess capable of using it?”

“The Holy Kingdom... Ah, the Church of Lux? It was likely a limited time enforcement effect. The Dark God and Light God have exchanged multiple oaths between one another already, so I imagine she enforced one of those.”
Alright, I see how it works... But wait, since I’m part of the Dark God faction, I’m subject to oaths he made before I even came here? And I don’t get any say in it? Oh man, what a pain.

“You know, feel free to use {Trinity} here yourself, Keima. Give me a second, I’ll make a scroll for you. Since I imagine you haven’t learned it yet,” said Leona before picking up a small stone on the ground. “{Ultra Alchemy}, {Ultra Alchemy}, {Create Scroll: Five Star Wildcard}. Okay, done.” The stone became a red stone, then a scroll, which then had an extremely elaborate magic circle drawn onto it. Everything only took a few seconds.

“I imagine you can read its contents, given your nature.”

“...God-Rank Contract Magic. Oath, Vow Binding... Looks like it’s real.” I looked over the scroll and didn’t see any oddities in the magic circle. Though I had never seen a real [Trinity Scroll] before, so who knows.

“Go ahead and use it.” At Leona’s urging, I used the scroll. The magic circle spread out, snapped, and flowed into me. Soon, I knew how to use {Trinity}. It had indeed been a real scroll. And just as she had said, it was a skill related to oaths.

“Seems like the rules will be locked in place if we use this. Alright, let’s do it. Let’s decide on the rules and conditions of this game. There’s gonna be a discussion here.” Since I was using the skill, she wouldn’t be able to slip in any sneaky rules or anything.

“I’ll go first with my own rules.” Leona suggested four rules:

- 1) Points are earned for each room of the dungeon conquered.
- 2) Upon earning enough points, Toi (Niku Kuroinu) will be returned.
- 3) The participants are Keima, Ichika, and Rei.
- 4) As long as the rules of each room are obeyed, the participants will not be harmed.

“Each room has different rules?”

“Indeed, as each game has different rules. If in one room you play poker and in another you play blackjack, how could the rules not be different?”

“...Alright. Here are my rules.” I requested five rules:

- 1) No games can be impossible to beat.
- 2) As long as the participants do not give up in the process of clearing rooms, it must not be impossible to save Niku Kuroinu.
- 3) Do not hide any rules.
- 4) The Game Master’s team cannot interfere with the participants beyond explaining the rules.
- 5) If the Game Master breaks the rules, Niku Kuroinu must be returned safely.

“Mhm, those are fine with me. Go ahead and use {Trinity}, if you would.”

“Yeah.” Incidentally, she forced me to add “as long as the participants do not give up” to the second category. That was a shame, since we could have given up and demanded that she still be saveable despite our surrender. Too bad.

With both of us agreeing to the terms, I activated {Trinity}. I spoke the rules one by one and Leona agreed to them.

“...And thus is the agreed upon oath. I swear upon the Creator God Oht that this oath shall be enforced — {Trinity}.” A magic path formed between Leona and I with a loud snap. The skill worked, which meant that the rules were finally in place and the game was ready.

“Okay, now we can actually begin. Have fun in the next room, everyone!”

Leona left it at that and disappeared into a magic circle with both Niku and her cage. *Teleportation, huh?*

And so the three of us finally started our invasion of Leona's dungeon.

The first floor contained a sudden slope. It was pretty steep and water was rushing down it. At the top I could see a door connecting to the next room. That, and a Succubus standing at the ready with a microphone.

...Yep. They look even hotter from below.

"...Keima?" Oh crap, Rokuko just contacted me and she sounds frosty. Let's focus on the game.

"Now then, your first challenge is... The Slope! Will our challengers be able to reach the top of the slope and the door to the next room?!" It seemed that the microphone was a sound amplifying magic tool. Her loud voice echoed throughout the room.

"You couldn't think of a better name than that?"

"We were rushed to make this in a single hour, so... We are accepting suggestions for better names, if you have any ideas!" *Well, can't blame her if she had to rush and finish all this in an hour.*

"Okay, whatevs, it's a slope. What kinda challenge is this?"

"Oh, right. Here are the rules of this room." Ichika went ahead and asked for clarification. The Succubus looked down to the notepad she was holding.

"I will now read a letter from Lady Leona. Ahem. 'As you can see, this slope is very slippery. Sorry to all you armchair philosophers out there, but this slope is very! Very! Slippery!'"

"Yeah, I guess an armchair philosopher would be intimidated by this..."

"Um, Master, might I ask what philosophy has to do with slopes? I do not see the connection," asked Rei, tilting her head. The words themselves had been conveyed, but it seemed like the concept of "slippery slopes" was new here.

"Where we're from, a slippery slope is the name for a common logical fallacy."

“I see, so it’s a pun from the world you came from!” Rei nodded, looking sincerely impressed.

“Ahem. ‘And the bottom of this slope is a pitfall! Oh man, rest in peace, armchair philosophers! You get an immediate game over if you fall. Which means a punishment game!’”

“A’ight, I get it. If I’m following you, that ‘pitfall’ is probably another philosophy joke! A double pun!” Ichika crossed her arms, similarly impressed.

...There was nothing in the world less funny than a joke that had to be explained. Yeah, there’s still a kinda rough language barrier here. I can understand how Leona feels.

“Ahem, ahem. ‘Do your best to avoid the pitfall and climb the slippery slope for the sake of all armchair philosophers across the world! Also, a punishment game does not prevent you from advancing to the next room! It will not put you in real danger, so fear not.’ And that’s that.”

“By the way, what kind of punishment game is that?”

“Sorry, it’s not written down.” *Doesn’t that break the rules about not hiding rules...? Actually, I guess not. The type of punishment game doesn’t affect the rules of this room. Since it wouldn’t put us in “real danger,” it probably won’t interfere with our progress too much.*

“Alright. Let’s get started, then.” I took one step onto the slope... and slipped, hard.

“Wha?! Huh?!” *This isn’t water, it’s lotion!* I flailed around, but the goo covered my body. The slope itself was soft like foam.

Woah, woah, woah! This is just way too slippery, this is impossible—gaaaah, the pitfall, GAAAAAH! The bottom of the pitfall was made of a soft material, so despite falling I wasn’t injured.

“Two challengers cleared the stage, which means 4 points. Your goal is 99 points. That means 95 points left. You may proceed to the next room.”

Incidentally, the punishment “game” was getting hit on the butt with a foam bat. *C’mon... I just didn’t think that it was lotion and not water.*

“Are you okay, Master?”

“Ahaha! Classic Master. You gotta apologize to all those armchair philosophers now!” Yeah, Ichika may have been my slave, but she showed no mercy at all. Not that I minded.

“Anyway, how’d you even beat that so fast, Ichika?”

“You already pulled the same trap, dude. Not like I’m gonna get owned by a trap I’ve already seen.” *Oh man. I had no idea Ichika was this competent.*

“I merely copied what Ichika did.” *Rei managed to clear it too, so...* I used {Purification} to clean the lotion off us... me... and moved to the next room. There was no time to rest!

* * *

The next challenges were Tarzan rope swinging, rock climbing, and one of those bits where a wall with a posed silhouette marches forward and you have to pose to get through it. But we passed all of those easily. I stumbled on the first one, sure, but with Golem Assistance by my side I could mimic what Ichika did to win! As an aside, I realized I could order my Wearable Golem to mimic Ichika only after needing to pose for the wall. *Man, my butt hurts. {Healing}.*

And so, once again we faced a new bizarre challenge.

“...A steaming hot bath, really?” Indeed, within a clear container was water so hot it was steaming. A literally steaming hot bath. We needed to get inside of it for thirty seconds to pass. Thankfully, our host was gracious enough to have a mountain of ice stacked up nearby.

“That is quite a lot of steam. I can only imagine how hot the water is.”

“Hey, let’s just be glad it’s not boiling.”

“Ummm, ‘Now then, enjoy this steaming hot bath to your heart’s content!’ That’s the whole letter. This time, we will demonstrate,” said the Succubus, after which Suilla appeared in a bikini as the representative of the Succubi. *Alright... This is just some fanservice for those watching at home. Can’t say I’d expect anything else from a variety TV show.*

“Nnn, why must I suffer through this...”

“Please bear it, Suilla. This is all for the sake of the Succubus race.” Suilla was probably a fairly important figure in Succubus society, though it was hard to imagine that given what I had seen earlier. She timidly stood at the edge of the transparent bathtub.

“I don’t like this... But I’ll do it. Hyah!” She steeled her resolve and jumped into the tub.

“Gaaaah! Hot, too hot! I-I can’t take iiit!” She tried to jump back out in a matter of seconds, but the microphone-holding Succubus held her down.

“Mmm, please be careful, it doesn’t count unless your shoulders are submerged all the way.”

“Gah! So hot! Stop, gaaaah! Do you have a grudge against me?!”

“No, I am not jealous at all that you get to keep Michiru all to yourself.”

“ALRIGHT, YOU DEFINITELY AREEEEE!”

After flailing in the water for fifteen agonizing seconds, the Succubus let go of Suilla and she charged right into the ice.

“...And that is how this game works. I hope the demonstration was helpful.”

“Yeah, very.” Incidentally, Rokuko pecked me with Phenny each time I tried looking at her feet. Thanks to that I managed to keep a cool head.

“Aaah, guess I’m gonna have to change clothes... Master, got any swimsuits?”

“We have prepared a change of clothes ahead of time. Please use them. Incidentally, certain swimsuits will earn more points.” With a flourish, she pulled in a tall cart from which various types of swimsuits hung. There were some string bikinis that looked like actual pieces of strings, a swimsuit with the head of a proud swan protruding from its crotch, and... Well, you get the idea. There were some swimsuits for men, too.

“Alright, I’m gonna go with this.” Ichika grabbed the swan head swimsuit without a moment’s hesitation. *Impressive.*

“...I wonder which I should pick. Perhaps the same kind I wore at the beach not too long ago?”

“Nah, hold on. Let’s try to aim for points here. I’m guessing the ones worth the most points are the one Ichika picked and this one.” I pointed at a school swimsuit (white).

“This is the swimsuit that Misha wore, was it not?”

“It’s the same design, yeah. The points are probably assigned based on Leona’s tastes. And her tastes should value this one highly, probably.”

“...In terms of lewdness, wouldn’t this string bikini be worth more?”

“She’s gotta be used to seeing Succubi wearing those.”

“I see,” Rei nodded, convinced. *That’s just what my gut tells me, though.*

“What’re you gonna pick, dude?”

“It’s gotta be this one.” I grabbed a white fundoshi, known to many as a sumo strap. I couldn’t imagine anything else being worth more points in a game like this. *Well... I’ve never worn one of these before, gotta make sure it doesn’t slip off.*

Incidentally, I forgot that “Don’t push me, definitely don’t push me” was for some reason translated as “Please push me,” so I got knocked straight into the tub. Leona laughed pretty hard and gave us ten points, so it all worked out in the end, I guess.

* * *

“Hyaaah! Did that just move?! Bro, it definitely moved! C’mon, what’s in this thing?! It’s gotta be alive!”

“Aaah, sorry, the rules say we can’t tell you anything. Good luck, Ichika!”

“We can’t even give hints? Ngggh, Ichika! I believe in you!” said Rei as Ichika flailed with her arm stuck inside a box she couldn’t see the contents of. One side of the box was made of crystals such that Rei and I, sitting on the opposite end from Ichika, could see inside. This room’s game was guessing the contents of various boxes.

Incidentally, her box had a pear inside. It didn’t move, it just rolled around, which happened a lot.

“It’s a lizard! No, a frog! Gotta be a frog!”

“I’m sorry, but that is incorrect! It’s actually a pear!”

“Guuuh, you gotta be kidding! It friggin’ moved! Back me up here, Master!”

“It’s time for the punishment game. Bend over.” A Succubus walked into room wearing a needlessly tight black body suit. She looked pretty sexy since it showed off all her curves, but the large foam bat in her hand stole the show. She stood next to Ichika, then swung the bat hard. “C’mon! Gaaah!” The bat hit Ichika’s butt hard, sending a resounding “thwap” through the room. But for all the noise, it didn’t actually cause that much damage. The Succubus left immediately, her job completed. “Ouch, ouch... M-Master, that was kinda hot. I think I mighta just awoken to something here...”

“Okay, next challenger please.”

“Ah! I’ll go next, Master.” Once Rei was in place, they swapped out the contents of the box. This time it had an orange.

Rei patted it. She must have judged from Ichika’s attempt that hesitation would bring only failure. A calm investigation was naturally more fruitful, so she made the right call.

“I have it. This is an orange.”

“And we have a winner! The prize is points, and the orange. Feel free to eat it.”

“Right out of the box?! Ichika, please peel this for me.”

“Do me a solid and gimme half. Oh, guess it’s Master’s turn now.” Rei got the answer right without anything funny happening. Which meant that indeed it was my turn. I stood in front of the box and waited for the contents to be switched. But once they were, I didn’t stick my hands in the box.

“If I can guess what’s inside without touching it... How about we get 50 points?” As it stood, we had 53 points. At this rate, the sun would rise and we would collapse from exhaustion. Thus, I decided to gamble.

“What?! Don’t be silly, that’s clearly in violation of the rules.”

“Leona’s watching this from somewhere. This is a suggestion, a request for an

additional rule. That's not breaking the rules. So, how about it?"

"But regardless, how could you answer without knowing anything about the... Oh? Ah. Understood. She said she'll accept that rule. But if you lose, y-you will be... Th-Thai Kicked, I believe she said?" *Ngh, figures. But I'll have to risk it. I'm running out of brainpower here. Let's just think of it as a wake up call if I lose.*

"Alright. That's fine with me."

"Now, give your answer!"

"...A head. If I'm right about this, Leona's head is inside this box!"

"Ah!" The Succubus gasped.

"Alright, spit it out. Do I get 50 points or do I get Thai Kicked?"

"...That's, the... Your answer, is..."

"Correct! You never fail to impress, Keima!!" said Leona from within the box. "Heh. I have to say, I really didn't expect you to get it right... Open the box."

"O-Okay," said the announcer Succubus, who opened the box to reveal Leona's head within.

"These kinds of games always have to end with a human head! Keima, I'm so glad you understand me here!"

"...How are you even talking?" There was nothing else in the box, not even a hole in its bottom. It was slightly... extremely horrific.

"My my my. Don't look at my cross section, if you would. You'd have nightmares. Ahaha." The Succubus picked up Leona's decapitated head. *Yeaah, she's basically not even human anymore.*

"Don't worry, I didn't actually cut my head off. I'm just teleporting my head elsewhere using a [Magic Ring], okay? I promise. Would you understand if I compared it to the kind of gate the Dark God uses?" *Oh, whew. There's a trick to it. That's good to know, for my mental health.*

"Incidentally, I can do the same thing with walls, such that only my upper or lower half is protruding from them."

"N-Neat. Good to know." *But why? Why would you do that, Leona?*

“Okay! Sure, it’s a common gag, but as a reward for having the guts to make that gamble I’ll give you 100 points, just this once!” *A hundred points?! I did not expect that. Our goal is just 99 points total, so I guess that’s enough to win.*

“So you’re gonna give us Niku back, right?”

“Nope, first you gotta reach the second milestone. 255 points,” said Leona casually.

“What is the meaning of this, Leona? Did you not say that you would return Niku after we earned enough points? I believe we have a contract.”

“Goodness, Rei, do you have 0 INT as well? Nobody said that the initial point goal was the final goal for me giving her back,” declared Leona without a trace of shame.

“...Doesn’t that break the rules?”

“The rules say I have to give her back after you store enough points, but I don’t recall either of us stating how many points that would be.”

“That breaks the rule I introduced about not hiding rules.”

“Rude, I wasn’t hiding this, I simply forgot to make a decision. That doesn’t make the challenge impossible, either. I intend to give her back after you gather enough points, and you can keep gathering more points as long as you don’t give up,” elaborated Leona. *Uh... Isn’t that still practically impossible?*

“Decide on a final point goal now, then. How many do we need before you give Niku back?”

“Mmm, let’s see. Maybe 9,999? No, no. I say 100,000! That sounds good to me! No argument here, right?” Leona casually decided on 100,000 points.

“Hold it right there, buster! Don’t think we’re gonn—”

“Shut it, Ichika! That’s fine. 100,000 points.” I stopped Ichika. We couldn’t turn down her suggestion. If we did, that would be considered giving up. A clear point goal had been defined and with enough time, we could gather that many points. It was fully possible.

“...A-Ah, I totes didn’t think about that. Sorry dude.”

“Don’t sweat it. I should’ve seen this coming.”

...Crap. I forgot to consider how long the game might last. Should have defined the point goal back when setting up the rules. At this rate, it’ll take months to clear this game. We’ll need to earn these 100 points a thousand times over. In theory, we could take on bonus challenges with special rules like I had just done to score major points, but...

“I can raise the difficulty and rewards if you want. But higher difficulty means losing points sometimes too. How’s that sound?” It was at that moment I realized something. The point rewards were based entirely on Leona’s whims. It wouldn’t be against the rules for her to award us a tenth of a point for things. In which case, we were at her mercy! She could make the game take months, no, years!

“You can give up at any time, remember?” whispered Leona, having returned to her full body at some point.

“...You won’t give Niku back if we give up, right?”

“Well, I’ll give back a completed version of her, and I’ll throw in some bonuses too. Giving up will net you one piece of that Divine Bedding set floating around. This one’s revered as the treasure of the Succubus race and if you give up, it’s yours,” said Leona while digging through her {Storage}.

Divine Bedding. Is Leona saying that she owns a piece of bedding on the same level as Rokuko’s Divine Futon?!

“Behold, the real Divine Futon!”

“Yeah, give Niku back.” Leona took out a familiar looking, but well used futon with a divine aura. *Idiot. I’ve already got one of those. Well, Rokuko does, but still.*

“So cold! Ahaha, I see you’ve grown a little too fond of that fake copy.” *Sure, let’s put it that way. I’m a little past being shaken by Divine Bedding. And anyway, didn’t Leona see the Divine Futon we already have? Wait, that’s what she’s calling a fake. That’s possible. She did call her own copy the “real” version, after all.*

“Well, regardless. I’ll let you check up on Toi as a reward for reaching 99

points.” Leona snapped her fingers and a halfway transparent monitor appeared in the air. On screen was Niku in chains. But she was surrounded by a bunch of basketball sized pink balls... Slimes.

“Ahaha, do you recognize what these Slimes are?”

“What’re you planning to do to Niku?”

“Don’t look so worried, I’m just going to use her as a guinea pig in an experiment. One involving these slimes, of course...” Leona cackled with amusement.

“I made these children with my alchemy skill. They are the ultimate life form, sought by scientists for ages... Slimes that melt only clothing!”

“...Try and think of some better jokes.”

“Well, they still sometimes melt the wearer of the clothes too by accident, but they’re like ninety-nine percent complete. A little melted skin never hurt anyone! Too badly, I mean... Look. She’ll be fixed up when you get her back, so don’t worry about it. Anyway, how about we get back to our games? The next room is a hot potato challenge! Better hurry or your princess is gonna be in a sticky situation! That was a pun!” said Leona before disappearing along with the monitor showing Niku.

“So, what’s the plan, Master?”

“We’re taking a break. I need to think for a bit.” I sat onto the ground. It was unlikely that Leona would ever give Niku back no matter how many challenges we beat. Or rather, she would give Niku back, but who knew how many years that would take. For better or worse, as long as we didn’t break the rules, our lives weren’t at risk.

“...I suppose that at this rate, we may be unable to save Niku.”

“Yeah.” We couldn’t deny the possibility that she returned Niku unharmed, but dead from starvation. All she had to say was “I didn’t do anything to her, and I didn’t feed her either!” Our situation was about as bad as it could possibly be. I should’ve made her agree to more rules biased in our favor.

“Keima. What are you doing? You better not be giving up.” Rokuko contacted

me. Naturally, I had no intention of giving up whatsoever. Which is why I was thinking.

“...Rokuko, if you’ve noticed something, I’m all ears. Got anything?”

“Hm? Well... It looks like this is actually working like a Dungeon Battle, so I can see all the rooms you’ve gone through on my map. Can you see them too?”
Dungeon Battle? Now that she mentioned it, I could see that being true. It could be a modified ruleset where one team focuses purely on invading the other team’s dungeon, like our battle with Ittetsu. That wasn’t unheard of.

I opened the menu. Yep, I could see the map. “Plus, Keima... You three have been circling through the same four rooms in a loop. Does that help at all?” I checked my map and indeed saw that there were only four rooms. We were playing games while looping through them. Thinking back, the passageways forward had all felt like they were bent to the left.

“So basically, Leona doesn’t have a straight shot of games planned out, she’s just reusing the same four rooms. But I’m not really seeing how that’ll hel—”
...No, wait. I can use this.

I started thinking up a plan.

Leona’s Perspective

Within the dungeon there was a room. A room with Leona and a chained up Niku. One of the pink slimes was getting close to Niku, so Leona grabbed it and casually tossed it aside.

“I’m bad. Whewee, Keima’s just the best, messing with him is tons of fun... Don’t you agree, Toi?”

“.....”

“I know you’re awake. You may be a failure, but not even you are *that* weak.”
said Leona, to which Niku replied in a quiet, defeated voice.

“...I’m, Niku... not... Toi...”

“So stubborn. But either way, it doesn’t matter. You’re just bait to make Keima do his best.” Leona was holding several clear red gems in her hands. “Eat them. Don’t worry, I have a contract with Keima. They aren’t poison.” She ate one with Niku watching. “If you don’t want to eat them with your mouth, I can just use another hole. It’s all the same to me.”

“.....” Niku opened her mouth a little. Leona replied, “Good girl,” and stuck a gem into her mouth like putting coins into a piggybank. It was sweet like sugar candy and melted in moments.

“Ngh!” Niku’s body shook like it was being electrocuted. But not out of pain —it felt more good than bad. Which in turn made Niku feel unbearably disgusted. She wanted to spit the gems out, but they had already melted.

“Don’t worry, there’s plenty more where that came from.”

“What, did you... make... mgggh!” This time, she shoved several into her mouth at once. The gems that didn’t fit inside fell to the ground. They melted as soon as they touched Niku’s mouth, filling it with the candy flavor. Leona held her hand over Niku’s mouth so the liquid could seep into her body without leaking out.

“Ngggh!” Niku flailed and even managed to bite Leona’s hand, but not even drawing blood with her sharp canine teeth was enough for Leona’s smile to falter.

“Do they taste good? Of course they do. It’s food I made myself, after all. They’re [Philosopher’s Stones] with a high rate of purity, though admittedly I made them from some rocks lying around. Oh, maybe I should have made them from wet garbage instead? They would be more meaty that way, like a garbage bread roll.”

The philosopher’s stone. Regarded by many as the pinnacle of alchemy, the philosopher’s stone was fruitlessly sought by alchemists for centuries. Leona could make multiple of them through various substances using her {Ultra Alchemy} skill. The most fundamental use of {Ultra Alchemy} was creating philosopher’s stones, which were then used to create other substances. She was using the most valued treasure of alchemy like water, a mere means to an end.

At some point, she realized that philosopher's stones taste quite good. And since {Ultra Alchemy} has no daily limit like Keima's {Ultra Transformation}, she can make as many as she wants. Which led to her treating philosopher's stones like red candy gems she could make on the spot.

"Okay, I've got it. I'll make them out of your waste next time. That'll kill two birds with one stone since I don't have to find rocks to use. Feel free to pee yourself as much as you like." Leona let go of Niku's mouth after confirming that all the gems in her mouth had melted. She licked her hand where Niku had bitten her and the wounds were already gone.

"...Mmm, tasty," said Leona while groping Niku. Niku felt disgusted at how nice it felt and tensed up to hide how she was feeling.

"Feel free to moan if you want. I know how good my massages feel."

"This is just... the, worst..."

"No need to act tough. Your body's honest." Leona pinched Niku and her body reflexively jerked. It felt as if her body wasn't hers anymore and it was honestly a little scary.

"Here, take a look at this. Keima's taking a break. Maybe he doesn't want to save you?" Leona called up the monitor, which showed Keima sitting down.

"Master..."

"Still, what a waste. The next room is a hot potato challenge. At this rate they're all going to cool down," said Leona, looking completely unperturbed by that. In fact, she actually seemed amused by it.

Suddenly, Keima stood up.

"There he goes. I wonder what he has in store for us?"

"{Summon Gargoyle}." Keima cast the spell without a chant and summoned one Gargoyle. However, he didn't stop there.

"{Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}..." A gargoyle appeared for each time he said the words.

"Wait, wh-what's he doing? What's his goal here?" Leona, confused, watched

Keima continue his chanting.

“{Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}...” He summoned a full room of Gargoyles. “Alright! Here we go!” Keima and his team burst off running in one direction while the Gargoyles ran in the opposite direction.

“...Ah! No way! He’s going to destroy the game rooms?!” It was at that moment she realized something. She had only built four rooms. Instead of making new ones, she was just reusing the old ones. But with Gargoyles in the rooms, that is, with invaders in the rooms, she couldn’t make changes. Dungeon rooms could not be modified at the cost of DP with invaders inside of them. It was possible that he planned to destroy the existing games and prevent new ones from being made.

“I suppose his plan is to destroy the games and then claim I broke the rules by presenting an impossible challenge. That’s no fair... Wait, that isn’t against the rules!” Although Gargoyles were merely as strong as Stone Golems but with magic, there were so many of them that the Succubi alone would be overwhelmed.

Leona hurried out of the room to deal with the Gargoyles. As Niku watched her go, she gave a smug grin, proud of her Master.

Keima’s Perspective

“{Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}... Bwahaha! The most basic Dungeon Battle strategy is power through numbers! {Summon Gargoyle}, and a {Summon Gargoyle}, and one more {Summon Gargoyle} for the road!” I filled the room with Gargoyles. *Alright!*

“And now, charge!! Stay here, Phenny! Everyone else, we’re going to the next room as fast as possible!”

“Kay, let’s do this thang!”

“Understood, Master!” We quickly reached the next room.

“Welcome, ladies and gentleman, to the hot potato chal—”

“Go, Ichika!”

“You got it! Urryyaaaaah, so hot! B-But this is nothing! Nom, nom! A-All done! Ghahaaah!” We finished the potato challenge before the Succubus could even explain the rules. I knew what it would be before it started.

“Good job! {Healing}!”

“What?! Um,” stammered the Succubus, “You finished eating it which is worth 9 points.”

“To the next room!” We ignored the Succubus and charged to the next room.

“Th-This challenge is jumping across crumbly stepping stones over water.”

“I’ll take the punishment game!” I interrupted her explanation and declared that I would take the punishment game. That meant I could go to the next room. Reason being, Leona had accepted an additional rule for all rooms that we could proceed after taking the punishment game.

“What?! U-Um, okay... U-Ummm...”

“Hurry! Or can we move on without the punishment game? Don’t tell me you’re breaking the rule about not interfering outside of the game’s rules!” Using the rules as a shield, I forced the Succubus to raise a trembling hand.

“N-Ngggh! Hyah!”

“Thank you?! {Healing}! Alright, next room!” I took the slap on my face with a grin and headed to the room. Whereupon I found...

“...My my, Keima. I didn’t expect to see you here so soon.” There stood Leona, in the process of removing the Gargoyle corpses. There was nothing around her. In other words, this was an empty room with no game prepared within it.

“Alright, Leona. What challenge does this room have?”

“...Sorry, it’s under construction. Please wait for a bit.”

“That’s not happening. It’s against the rules, even. Stalling like this is pretty

much objectively interfering with us outside of the game's rules."

"Well, that's fair. I suppose I don't have any choice in the matter... But may I ask where your companions are?"

"Ichika's waiting two rooms behind me and Rei in the one directly behind me. What of it?" Indeed. I had left Ichika in the potato room and Rei in the room we ignored with a punishment game. Reason being, there was no rule that said we couldn't stay in a room after completing its challenge. And I was in this room, while Phenny the immortal Phoenix was in the final room.

"My, my. That's a problem." We had put invaders in every single one of the four rooms. Which meant that Leona could no longer use dungeon functions to make games. Or in other words, there were no games possible to play and win, which meant Leona was breaking the rule that she had to prepare games that could be completed. We were on the verge of beating her.

"I'm afraid you didn't think this through, however. Let's see... This room's challenge is playing rock paper scissors with me. But it has an extra rule that three challengers must be present."

"...Figures." But naturally, Leona had some countermeasures. First of all, she could just make up a game that didn't require much preparation. She could also make rules requiring multiple challenges, such that one room would be opened up.

"Not to mention, the room past this one has an invader that's not a challenger, so eliminating them won't be against the rules." That was the second problem. Phenny, despite being capable of infinite revival, was not a challenger and thus could be removed. She could just capture him and lock him up wherever Niku is.

"So, Keima. What will you do?" My answer was obvious.

"I quit. Which means we win."

"...What?"

"Don't understand? Alright, let me explain for you. I quit. Which means there are only two challengers. With only two challengers, it's impossible to gather all three challengers. So, essentially..." She broke the rule that she couldn't

prepare games that were impossible to complete.

Leona heard my explanation and agreed.

“Okay, then I change the rule to all challengers rather than three challengers.”

“Hey now, it’s too late for that. You already made a game that can’t be completed.” I said, setting up the rest of my plan.

“It’s not too late. This was just a simple mistake.”

“Nope, it’s too late. You broke rules. We win. It’s that simple. Now, give Niku back.”

“.....” Leona fell into thought, attempting to figure out if continuing the games here would violate the {Trinity} contract. *Perfect, here’s my chance.*

“Fine, fine. Let’s make a compromise. I’ll suggest a game, and if we win, we get 100,000 points. Then you can lose fair and square before giving Niku back. Sound good?”

“Oh, you would do that?”

“Sure. I’ll rejoin as a challenger, too.”

“But of course.” ...*Alright, it’s working!* Naturally, if Leona felt that she had lost unfairly, then she could just try to kidnap Niku later. The best plan here was to beat her in a way she would accept. If she had accepted her defeat with a smile, I would have taken Niku back, but otherwise it would be too risky. I needed to beat her solidly in a way that couldn’t be questioned. Which is why I guided the conversation toward one final game settling everything. Thus sums up my plan.

...Though in the end I barely managed to position everyone in the four rooms in time, and I ultimately just barely caught her in a technicality. *Whew, that was close. I would have had to think up a Plan B if this failed.*

“So, Keima, what kind of game are you going to suggest? Naturally, it will need to be a game worthy of 100,000 points. I won’t accept any old boring game.”

“...Alright. How about this: I put a paper balloon on your head. If it gets crushed or popped, we win. Sound good?”

“That’s fine with me. It’s very worth 100,000 points.” Oh crap, maybe I should have thought harder about the game. Starting low with simple ones and working my way up might have been the better call.

“Now then, I’ll go prepare a somewhat larger room for this. A door leading to it will appear in one of the other rooms.”

“Alright. I’ll go get ready for it.” *I’m gonna need to go in fully prepared.*

* * *

The challengers were me, Ichika, and Rei. Also Phenny.

“Which brings us to here. We need to crush or rip the paper balloon on Leona’s head.”

“Huh... Something tells me that’s not gonna happen, dude.”

“It’s gonna be hard, but we’ve gotta do it. Better than fighting her up front at least.” We just had to pray that she held back and made some mistakes. In the meantime, we needed to prepare some long ranged attacks. Leona should be fine with us shooting some arrows at her.

“Um, will my attacks be meaningful here?”

“You can provide some long range support with your bowgun.” Rei didn’t stand much of a chance breaking the balloon with her zero attack power, but her bowgun could do some work, and it wouldn’t take much to pop a paper balloon.

“I want to help too. Can I control Phenny?” asked Rokuko through dungeon chat.

“Sure, that shouldn’t be a problem. We can consider Phenny as my weapon, since I’m technically a Tamer.” That should work.

“Also, Kosaki. Can you put her on just in case, Ichika?” I removed Kosaki the Succubus ring and handed her to Ichika.

“Dude, are you telling me to be a Succubus?”

“We might need Succubus powers and I’m not gonna be the one taking that fall. Rei doesn’t have much affinity for them. Which leaves you, Ichika. You

probably won't need to transform, though, since I doubt charms will work on Leona." *Anyway... Let's go.*

We headed to the inner room Leona had prepared. Leona was waiting inside with the paper balloon on her head.

"Welcome, welcome."

"Can you prove that balloon on your head can be popped?"

"Only if that won't count as me losing."

"...I'd rather we use a paper balloon I make myself."

"Then I'll be at a disadvantage if you put gunpowder or something inside of it. Hmm... How about this. You win as long as you can touch the balloon." *Yeah, there's pretty much zero chance that balloon's poppable.*

"I was thinking of popping it with arrows, magic, and so on. Do those count as touching it?"

"Okay, attacks will count as touching it. Even if those attacks don't do any damage," she said, looking at Rei. *Alright. She knows Rei has zero attack power. Good to know.* Rei sighed in relief.

"Oh, and have a gift from me. I'll let one more challenger join the fray." Leona snapped her fingers. Out of nowhere, Niku appeared wearing a dress.

"...Master!" She ran in my direction, unchained.

"You sure about that?"

"I'll take her back if you lose, of course. In that case I'll have plenty, plenty of fun with you while you slowly build up 100,000 points," said Leona with a broad smile.

"Alright, let's double check the rules. All the universal rules from before apply. Within this room, you can attack at will. This continues until we give up."

"Oh, I can attack?"

"Yep. That way, you can't complain when you lose."

"That's certainly true. The rules we defined with {Trinity} will apply here as well, yes?" *Yeah... I should have mentioned those first. Whoops.*

“Yep. Okay, now that Niku’s with us again, I want to hold another strategy meeting. That cool with you?”

“Of course. Feel free to leave and have one heck of a strategy meeting. You can even go get some weapons and equipment if you want. But waiting will get pretty boring, so take thirty minutes at best. Any longer than that and I’ll consider it you giving up.” *Well, guess we can’t just run away then.* “Anyway, I’ll be waiting here. The game will begin the second you step in this room again.”

* * *

We returned to the empty room to think up a plan. Though to be honest, it’s not like we had formed any special plans last time. Just a couple of combination attacks.

“Forgive me for being caught, Master.”

“It’s fine. That girl’s a monster, you couldn’t do anything.” Niku avoided Leona as much as possible but got summoned right next to her. You can’t get much more unfair than that. I patted Niku’s head, but she remained depressed.

“Anyway, we don’t have much time here. You can do hit and run tactics on her while we fight.”

“Understood, Master. Leave it to me.” Niku gave a firm nod. I didn’t include her in any combination attacks because I honestly had no idea if she would be able to fight Leona properly. She was fine now, but I remembered how scared she had been. Who knew what she’d end up like in a fight. She’d be the strongest out of all of us if she kept a grip on herself, though.

I took out Niku’s Golem Maid Outfit from my {Storage} and gave it to her. She started changing clothes without any hesitation. I quickly turned around and waited for her to finish. *Actually, is she wearing underwear right now? I didn’t get a good look, but I don’t think she was.*

“How are you feeling?”

“Fine. Better than usual, maybe.”

“Alright. Don’t push yourself, okay? And... That’s it. Let’s go.” I handed a Golem Blade to Niku.

* * *

And thus, we returned from our strategy meeting. Not much had changed. Mainly just Niku getting the ring instead and her joining us on the offensive. Also, I had gulped down some mana potions to boost my mana back up. Everything was ready. We were going to put our all into this challenge.

“Alright. Let’s go.” After checking to make sure Leona was still in the room, I took a single step inside. She immediately charged in my direction with the paper balloon still on her head.

“Not even waiting a second?!” The few tactics I had thought up were mainly useless now. The only one that remained was basically just thinking on our feet and reacting to what happened. *Gotta give it our best shot and hope something hits by chance.*

“Ahahaha, the best defense is a good offense! By the way, I cast {Protect} on this paper balloon, so it won’t pop just from me running! But don’t worry, I weakened the spell enough that an arrow will still pop it!” explained Leona while running, the balloon on her head not even shaking from the impact of each step. It was possible that had we not changed the rules to touching it, she would have strengthened the protection so much that not even a head on war hammer blow could break it. Or at least, it would have taken two or three hits, just to keep things interesting.

Screech! The sound of metal hitting metal filled the air.

“Mmm, not bad.”

“.....” Niku had blocked Leona’s blow with her Golem Blade. I had been worried that Niku would be too afraid of her to do anything, but... Wait. Why is her foam bat making metal sounds? Is there a metal rod inside of it?

“I think I might have made this a bit too hard. But if it were too soft, it’d just get sliced up. I gu—Back off.”

“Guh!”

“Oof!”

Rei and Ichika tried touching the paper balloon and Leona punched them both

hard, sending them flying. *Christ on a bike, that got them down in one hit. They better not have died from that.*

“Ahaha, that was a nice attempt at a combination strike. Is it your turn now, Keima?”

“I’m basically a mage, so I usually stick behind, but... If you wanna get close to me, I’ve got this.” I drew my beloved sword Siesta from its sheath on my hip.

“You think that will work on me? I have {Ultra Resistance}, you know.”

“Ngh, I forgot about that...” I said while swinging the blade normally. I had my Wearable Golem helping me out.

“Oh...? That certainly is some trained movement for one who knows no sword combat skills.” Leona leaned back while standing in place to dodge the side swipe, in what was known as a sway in boxing. I left control of my body to the golem while beginning to chant.

“{Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}!” Three Gargoyles appeared as I kept swinging. “These came from my magic so they count too! Go on, get her!”

“They count, but no number of weak peons will help you,” said Leona, and within a single second crushed all three of the Gargoyles’ heads. Their bodies collapsed to the ground with a thunk. *Uhhhhhhh. Is it just me, or is Leona a bit overpowered?*

“Only the safety of the participants is guaranteed, so I can kill them as I like.”

“How about this?” Niku threw a chunk of Gargoyle at her.

“Weak.” Leona dodged with an exaggerated backstep. Naturally, the corpses of the Gargoyles I had summoned counted as well. Which means my next move was to—

“Nope!”

“Guh?!” Leona slammed her bat against my butt. I crouched to the ground, holding my rear end. “If you get so close to the ground like that, I might just step on you.”

“Ngh?!” Leona shot a kick toward me. Not even the golem assistance would

get me out of the way in time. I was hit and flung away faster than a roller coaster. Pain shot through my side and I saw a wall speeding toward me. If I hit it, I would die. But just as my life flashed before my eyes, a clear green wall gently enveloped me and slowed me down.

Still, I slammed into the wall and dug a ways into it. I took less damage than I thought, but... I had some broken bones. Especially the ribs she kicked.

...However, light rained down upon me and made the pain vanish.

"I went ahead and cast {Protect} and {Healing} on you."

"...Thanks."

"You're welcome. I don't want to break the rules about killing challengers, so." Leona had cast the Restoration spell on me herself. *At least she follows the rules... Ah, crap, my Wearable Golem died.*

"Don't... touch... Master!"

"You're up next, Toi. And I mean up!" Niku charged forward to save me and got kicked straight to the ceiling. That saved me from a follow up attack, but now she was getting air juggled with a flurry of kicks.

...Which bought me the time I needed. I cast my next spell. This time without a single word. I wasn't used to silent casting, usually saying the name of the spell, but I remembered what Leona said. Magic was all about your internal image of the spell. In which case altered magic should work even without a chant. I would surprise her with a chantless spell she never saw coming. I knew the Water elemental spell {Water}. I only had to change it a little!

"(O Water, become small droplets and rain down... {Water})!" I felt mana leaving my body. Immediately, rain fell from the ceiling.

"Alright, that should do it!"

"Do what, I wonder?"

I blinked and saw that the paper balloon on Leona's head was completely dry. It was a wind barrier. Not a single droplet of water had gotten past the wind to land on the balloon.

"{Air Barricade}. Not even a shot arrow can get past it. Naturally, nor will

{Mist} type spells.” Leona kicked the now unconscious Niku toward a wall and smiled.

“...Isn’t that kinda unfair?”

“It’s a reasonable precaution. But a chantless {Rain}, hm? That’s clever, I’m impressed. Hyah!”

“Nguuuuh!” Leona poked my forehead. Her finger hit me like a hammer and my head shot back in pain. For a second I thought I had been decapitated, but it was still attached. *Thank Christ, that was cl—*

“Hyah, and a healing poke!” She poked me again. This time my entire body was knocked back. It felt as if an entire log had been slammed into me. But I felt only the impact and no pain. She must have healed me as she hit me.

“But does Keima know {Rain}? I don’t believe I saw that in his list of skills... Ah, maybe he learned it before coming here.” My head was spinning so much that Leona’s words went in one ear and out the other.

“Well, I suppose it doesn’t matter. I wonder how many times I’ll have to hit him before his spirit breaks?” *Ah, crap. This is gonna be one of those “beat the crap out of someone while healing them to keep going” moments. Guess I’m gonna have to pull out all the stops.*

“LEONAAAA!” shouted Ichika. “I’M OVER HEE—Guh!”

“If you want to surprise someone, try not to shout about what you’re doing. Follow Rei’s example. Aha.”

“Ah, ngh!”

Ichika distracting Leona while Rei attacked from the opposite direction was one of the combo strats we had thought up. But seeing through that was like child’s play for Leona. She kicked Ichika away and flicked back the arrow Rei shot, which flew right into her leg.

“Sorry, but keep buying time for me! {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}, {Summon Gargoyle}...!” I climbed onto one of the Gargoyles I summoned and flew into the air. I then continued to summon more Gargoyles.

“Toi, well, you’re doing the best out of them.”

“Ngh... ngaah!” Niku, having woken up, launched another attack with Ichika. Leona casually grabbed her by the throat and held her in the air, squeezing tightly.

“Of course, you are just a decoy. Obviously.” Phenny charged at the paper balloon and got poked into oblivion. *Oof... It'll take a full minute for him to revive from a death that thorough.*

...But everyone buying time was starting to show its benefits. A throng of Gargoyles covered the ceiling. They were everywhere. Leona probably couldn't even see me anymore.

“Impressive. Destroying all of these at once might lead to a stray block hitting the balloon.”

The situation was a bit special, but this was still the same thing as a Dungeon Battle. Which meant there was power in numbers, to a degree. Sending waves of troops to their deaths was an effective strategy at times. The map was already so filled with Gargoyles that you couldn't distinguish anyone on it. But I had no doubt that Leona could easily defeat all of these Gargoyles without a scratch being laid on her balloon.

...I didn't want to have to do this, but I had no choice. I took two Record Golems, put them on a Gargoyle, and sent them on their way. One of them chanted {Summon Gargoyle} while it disappeared into the crowd. I silently chanted at the same rate to keep things balanced.

Once there were more than enough Gargoyles, I sent the signal.

“HERE I COME, LEONA!” said the other Record Golem. I silently used {Ultra Transformation} to turn into... a Gargoyle. My already dead Wearable Golem ripped to shreds and fell down. That meant I was naked in a stone body, but that was just the price I had to pay. It would be far too easy to distinguish me from the other golems if I was wearing clothes. Which would ruin the entire point of this plan.

My last-ditch plan was simple: Trick Leona into killing me while I was transformed, and thereby make her break the rule about guaranteeing the

safety of the challengers.

Leona's Perspective

"...I suppose I might have played around too much. This is a little gross to see." Leona looked at the throng of Gargoyles, not only covering the ceiling but now steadily filling up the entire room. It would be impossible to physically destroy so many of them up close without their corpses hitting the paper balloon. She would have to kill them all at once with a decisive blow.

Leona had wondered what strategy Keima was cooking up as he bought time, but to think he would ultimately just try to use numbers to force a win. There was indeed an impressive number of Gargoyles, but she had fought them countless times before.

"HERE I COME, LEONA!" yelled Keima. Leona turned her back to where the voice came from and built up mana within her, planning to hit everywhere but there. She concentrated so much mana inside of her that it hummed before she released it all with a chant.

"...Consume all, {Dragon Breath}!" Dragon Breath was a Fire spell that had strength rivaling a Red Dragon's own fire. Leona knew even more powerful spells than that, but had determined that they would run the risk of hitting Keima by mistake. She was holding back.

Fire shot out from her like a flame thrower, but infinitely more hot. The Gargoyles evaporated where they were. That alone was enough to heat up the room, but Leona silently cast ice spells to keep the challengers from dying. She only had to kill the majority of them. She would stop her {Dragon Breath} once most of them were gone.

But before she could, she saw a Gargoyle trying to run into the flames. It clearly wasn't flying. Almost as if it couldn't fly. Leona quickly activated her {Ultra Identification}. It was level nine, but its level was also the limit to how many times she could use it per day. She couldn't use it recklessly, but in this case it was good that she did.

Identification Results: Gargoyle (Keima Masuda)

A monster made of stone. Can cast magic, has high defense. But not enough defense to matter at a high level. (The result of Keima Masuda using his Hero skill {Ultra Transformation: Level 3}. Has limited uses.)

Weak points: Head, chest.

Status: Normal. ({Ultra Transformation}.)

Threat Level: B.

Stats: Attack D, Defense C, Speed D, Intelligence S, Wisdom A, Luck D.

Skills: {Stone Body}, {Gliding}, {Fireball}, {Stone}, {Water}, {Blind}, {Light}, {Wall

—

“What?!” She didn’t have time to read it all, but she did see “Keima Masuda.” She immediately guessed Keima’s plan after thinking about how the Gargoyle was moving.

Indeed. Keima’s goal was to be hit by the area of effect magic she had cast to clean up the Gargoyles. Leona had researched {Ultra Transformation} in the past. Level 3 and above meant that he could revive after death once per day when transformed, but Leona knew she couldn’t let that happen. It would be hard to say that she had kept the participants safe after killing one.

Leona canceled the spell, but the fire would keep going for at least a second. She immediately shifted the direction the fire was shooting in.

All of this happened in a fifth of a second. Which is why she didn’t notice a key fact. It slipped by her that Rei, who had fled to the corner of the room to remove an arrow from her leg, was the product of illusion magic. She did not realize that the real Rei had slipped into the horde of Gargoyles to wait for a good chance to touch the paper balloon, right where Leona was redirecting the fire.

It all happened in the next tenth of a second. The fire consumed all and evaporated everything it touched.

“Ah...! Well, I’ve really done it now.” Out of respect for the fellow nun she had

worked alongside in the Beddhist Church, Leona took out her holy symbol necklace and made a divine circle gesture in the air.

Keima's Perspective

The raging fire Leona shot out just barely didn't reach me. That left me only one choice. I had hoped that she would kill me in an instant before realizing anything, but at this point I had no choice but to charge forward an—

“What?!”

The moment after I steeled my resolve and charged forward, the fire suddenly changed direction. And then disappeared.

“Crap, it didn't work.” We were screwed. Well, there was still the chance that I could send all the remaining Gargoyles at her together with me mixed into them. She might kill me by accident, or maybe one of the gargoyle corpses will hit the balloon.

“I lose,” said Leona out of seemingly nowhere. *Come again?* I suddenly got a very bad feeling. I hadn't died. The paper balloon was untouched. And yet, I knew we had won, thanks to the effects of {Trinity}.

I ended my {Ultra Transformation}. I changed into the clothes I had put into my {Storage} ahead of time and Ichika dashed over to protect me.

“What's up, Master?”

“Looks like we won somehow.”

“Wha?”

I didn't know why, but we had won. And for some reason, I couldn't feel happy or celebratory at all.

“Where's Niku and Rei?”

“Niku's knocked out by Leona. Rei... Should be using her illusion magic to hide somewhere.”

“Then she should be fine coming out now. Hey, Rei! Where are you? Rei?” I

called my summoned Gargoyles back. But Rei was nowhere to be seen. She must have been using her illusion magic still.

“Rokuko! You can hear me, right? Where’s Rei?!”

“...Keima. Rei’s... not on the map. She disappeared.” *She disappeared from the map? Does that mean she teleported away?*

“Haaah... Sorry, but I killed poor little Rei. That’s against the rules, no doubt about it. I lose,” said Leona with a casual shrug as she walked over.

“...Wait, really...? Rokuko, she’s joking, right? She must have just teleported.”

“I was watching through Rei’s eyes until Phenny came back. So... I saw the whole thing. I saw the fire hitting her.” My throat dried.

“That can’t be true. Rei, dead...? If that’s a joke, it’s not funny.”

“It’s true. That girl has a weird curse on her, right? Zero attack power? I couldn’t sense that she was there since I didn’t feel any danger. Check your menu if you don’t believe me. If a monster’s Named, their name on the Named Monsters list should gray out after death,” she said, reminding me that the Named Monsters list existed. Last time I saw it, Gobsuke’s name had been grayed out at the top.

...I hesistantly opened the menu. There, on the Named Monsters list... I saw Rei’s name, grayed out just like Gobsuke’s.

“Leona! You killed Rei!” I tried to punch her, but she easily avoided the blow.

“What’s the big deal, she was just a monster. You don’t care about me killing all those Gargoyles, do you? If you’re going to use monsters, you gotta be ready for this kind of thing,” she said, flatly. There was no room for argument.

I fell to my knees weakly. It was true. Gargoyles were monsters under my command too, and although Rei was a Named Monster, that didn’t mean it was okay to kill Gargoyles and not her. Did it...?

“But you worked with Rei!”

“We spent time together, but in the end, she’s just a monster. Wait, whoa, why are you crying? Um, ah, what’s wrong?!” I touched my cheek. It was wet.

“Aaah, don’t cry! Want some candy? I have candy!” Leona, panicking, held out a red gem toward me. But I just swiped it away. There was a hole in my heart and I found myself just crying, too sad to do anything else. The sense of loss was so great it felt as if I had regained the humanity I lost after becoming a Dungeon Master. The death of a friend felt... much, much worse than I had ever expected.

“And anyway, since she’s a Named Monster, you can just revive her!”

...*What?*

“Oh, finally, you stopped crying. Why do you look so surprised? Don’t tell me you didn’t know that.”

“...You can revive Named Monsters?”

“Yep. I’ll even pay the DP cost to show how sorry I am... Mmm, judging from my {Ultra Identification} logs... She’s worth 80,000 DP. So it’ll cost 800,000 DP to revive her. Here, hold out your hand.”

“Wait, what? Whoa! H-Hold on, whoa!” Leona took my hand and I felt an electric current run through me, like a gentle massage. It was about eighty shocks in half a second. I checked my menu and saw that I indeed had 800,000 more DP. *Didn’t know I could exchange DP like that too.*

“Just double tap the grayed out Named Monster name.” *I also didn’t know that you could double tap.* I did as she said and a message popped up: “Revive Named Monster Rei: 800,000 DP.” I pressed “Yes” without any hesitation and a sparkling, golden magic circle appeared. Rei then popped out of it.

“That’s Rei! It worked, Keima!” *She really came back...?*

“...Wha?! I died?! Wait... Is this the afterlife, then? I didn’t expect there to be an afterlife for Vampires. Maybe it’s because I joined Beddhism. Oh, but I was technically part of an evil organization, so perhaps this is Hell where I must sleep in a small room where the neighbors hit the wall three times per hour... Plus one that feels musky in the summer, chilly in the winter, and bugs from the King of Devils Mosquito fly around with no Holy Blade Bugspray to kill them! Ngh, what a horrible fate!” Oh right, I forgot that I had spread that if you did evil acts while alive then you would go to Beddhist Hell.

“R-Rei. Are you the real thing? Do you have a pulse?”

“Wha, Master?! Why are you here?! Did Leona kill you as well?!”

“The opposite. I revived you.”

“Goodness! That must mean this isn’t Hell! This is a world where I can sleep in nice beds, then?! Oyasuminasai!” *Uh. When did Rei get so infected with Beddhist teachings?*

“...She actually revived, right? She’s not just a very similar copy, right?”

“I-I’m, I’m the real thing, definitely!” stammered Rei. *That’s kinda suspicious.*

“...Say something that only you and I know.”

“U-Ummm... I’m wearing red underwear today!”

“I didn’t know that, so it doesn’t really mean anything... Why did you think I knew that?”

“Just look!”

“That won’t change anything! Stop!”

“W-Wait, Rei?!” interjected Rokuko. “I’m glad you’re alive, but what are you doing?!” Rei was taking off her clothes to show the red bondage suit beneath. *That doesn’t count as underwear! And why are you wearing it anyway?! It’s perverted!*

“...Ahahaha! AHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!” Leona suddenly burst into laughter, holding her stomach. “Don’t worry, her {Ultra Identification} page is the same. Just with ‘Times Revived: 1’ added onto it. But seriously, I’m pretty sure it’s common knowledge that you can revive Named Monsters. At the very least, there’s not a single Core from the first batch that doesn’t know. One to one hundred. You didn’t know even though you’re buddy-buddy with Core 89, sweet little Haku?”

“...Well, Rokuko?”

“N-Now that she mentions it, I think I remember hearing about reviving monsters in one of the Core meetings...” *Uh. Rokuko?*

Leona crouched to the ground in laughter. She shouldn’t have been able to

hear what Rokuko said, but she must have guessed what we were talking about from my expression.

“Ahahaha! Are you trying to distract me so you can touch the balloon? Or are you trying to kill me with laughter? Pfffh, ahaha... This is just hilarious. I’m satisfied now. You can have Toi back, I don’t need her for anything now.” A magic circle appeared around Leona. It was probably teleportation magic. “This was tons of fun! This is the kind of thing I can only do with a Japanese person, just like I thought. People of this world just don’t understand what I’m talking about, and only a Dungeon Master like you can really understand me. Aaah, this was just great. I’m sure we’ll meet again someday.”

I never wanted to see her again, but Leona left with a pleased smile on her face. Leaving behind both the dungeon... aaaand her Succubi.

“Um, what should we do now...?”

“...Didn’t she tell us we belonged to this game dungeon now?”

“Right, and I think she mentioned that this dungeon would become part of theirs after she was done. Which means...”

The left behind Succubi scooted up close to me with apologetic looks in their eyes.

“What are you going to do with them, Keima?” asked Rokuko.

“I dunno. What do you think, Rokuko?”

“I say we just leave them here. Not like they’re working for Leona anymore.”
Yeaah, Succubi are pretty expensive to buy with DP, no point in wasting them. Not to mention that since they’re apparently not dungeon monsters, they give stable DP income by existing here. They weren’t literally under the control of the branch dungeon Leona made here.

“...Alright. If you listen to what I say, I won’t force you or anyone under the dungeon’s control and I’ll see to it that you’re all taken care of.”

“Okay! Should we strip?”

“Is it time for sex?”

“How many babies?”

No, not now, and none.

“...Rei, look over them in the church. Succubi work pretty well with Beddhism all things considered. Just consider them as normal nuns or whatever.”

“Understood, Master!” And so, I now had five Succubi to take care of, including the loli Succubus not present.

...Succubus nuns, huh? That sounds like something you'd find in a porn game... Eh, whatever.

Side Chapter — The Church in my Town

The name's Robbo. I'm your every day adventurer, living in Goren.

I came to the town winter of last year with my eyes set on profit after hearing you could find Iron Golems in a nearby dungeon. Before I knew it, I had a plot of land to look over and I was a permanent resident.

For starters, I was the fifth son of a farmer and always wanted my own land. My eldest brother took over the whole farm I grew up on. It was either be treated like a slave tending his fields or become an adventurer. Back then I never woulda thought I'd one day own my own land to farm, not to mention high quality land right next to a dungeon.

Almost brings a tear to my eye. Whoops, there's some weeds growing. Crops grew faster near a dungeon, but so too did weeds. Dungeon farms took constant, thorough upkeep. Heh... I sure am sounding like a farmer now, huh? I couldn't help but grin.

Ever since getting my land, I had started hunting more for Goblins than for Iron Golems since they were better as fertilizer. At most I partied up with some other villager adventurers to hunt Iron Golems when I wanted some extra money.

I finished my daily chores and, having nothing else to do, looked over my field with a grin. It wasn't long before Zun and Dokko walked up to chat.

"Heeeya, Robbo. Grinning at your field like a creep again, I see."

"Why dont'cha marry your field if you love it that much?"

"Shut it. I see you two looking at your fields the same way. And I'm already married to my field, we're in love." The three of us laughed together. These two had gotten fields in Goren just like me. We partied up together fairly often. I liked them a lot.

"Hey, we were about to go hunting for Iron Golems. Want in?"

“We wanna drink a lot today and go wild, y’know? I’d feel a lot safer down there with you around.”

“Sure. Got nothing better to do. Who’s bringing the cart?”

“Zun. All you need is your own equipment.”

“Got it.” I headed back home and got out my equipment. Thanks to keeping up on repairs, I was ready in no time.

“Gonna pray first?”

“Duh.” We always went to a certain place before heading to the dungeon. A divine building with white walls and a blue roof. Indeed, the church.

The Beddhist Church was now an indispensable part of the town, ironic considering how it simply appeared out of nowhere one day—according to the town chief, he asked a construction magic specialist he knew to build it.

Rumor was that praying at the church increased your chance of finding Iron Golems in the dungeon.

Rumor was that saying the holy prayers within the church cured insomnia.

Rumor was that the nuns were so cute they somehow healed all visitors of their horny moods.

The church was especially good at curing insomnia, to the point that even a noble somewhere had joined the church. It seemed that the waves of Beddhism were spreading throughout the world with Goren at the center of it all.

Naturally, I worshiped Beddhism. My main church used to be the Ivory Church like most adventurers, but thanks to a sub-religion system or whatever it was, I practiced Beddhism on the side and through daily prayer it eventually became what I truly believed in. Especially since its prayer was just saying “Oyasumi” before bed. And that was optional, too. Not to mention that just grinning at my field counted as praying to Beddhism somehow. Honestly, it was the perfect church for me.

We passed through the church doors. Warm light shone through the colored glass windows, lighting up the pristine, comforting interior. The air was just humid enough to feel soft and refreshing. A breeze stirred the air within the

chapel and kept our bodies at the perfect temperature. It was hard not to yawn on the spot. There were several believers in the church already, some reading books and others sleeping.

...I still can't believe this place lets us read books for free. I heard Keima donated them or something? My thoughts were interrupted by an approaching nun. It was Suilla, head nun. Her pink hair swayed as she walked and just by approaching I could smell her nice scent. She was wearing the chaste clothes of a nun, but they couldn't hide her shapely body, and honestly only served to make her look even sexier. There was a slit in her skirt to enable more freedom of movement and the way her bare legs peaked through them was incredibly hot. Though my eyes were always drawn to her boobs, which bounced with each step. And man, did I want to grope the hell out of her shapely ass...

Ah! Crap, crap. What am I, a pervert? The town chief must be rubbing off on me.

"My my, hello Robbo, Zun, and Dokko. Have you come to pray?" Her voice was so smooth it felt like she was stroking our backs just by speaking. To be honest, there were more than a few people who worshiped Beddhism just to get closer to Suilla. Though there were other nuns than just Suilla, and all of them were attractive. All of them women, and all of them attractive. Were nuns supposed to be young and sexy? Regardless, we believers were happier than not to have eye candy nuns around the church.

"Yes, Sister Suilla. We're here to pray."

"Sister Suilla, you're as pretty as ever today!"

"Here, I've brought an offering to the church. Consider it yours." Dokko took out a bundle of vegetables from his field and gave them to Suilla.

"My, these carrots look delicious! Thank you very much." Suilla blushed, rubbed the carrots lovingly against her cheeks, and kissed them. It was nice to see your hard grown food be so loved. She would definitely have a good time eating them. I would die to be those carr—Er, never mind. *Hey, Dokko, why are you leaning forward? I mean, I can't blame you, but c'mon.*

"It seems that you are on your way to the dungeon, which must mean you are praying before work. Shall I keep today brief, then?"

“Yes, thank you.” We each handed a single copper to the nun. The church didn’t require that you offer money, but we felt that it was the right thing to do. Gods were more likely to help those who paid than those who didn’t, probably. *Wait, I think Beddhism doesn’t have a god... Meh. Whatever. I got to touch Suilla’s hand when giving her the coin. That’s good enough for me.*

“Now then... We work now so that we may sleep later, oyasuminasai.”

“Oyasuminasai,” said all three of us in unison, repeating the holy chant as Suilla clasped her hands in front of her chest. It was a brief prayer, but hey, that was what we asked for.

“Go forth, then, brave adventurers.”

“Yep, we’ll be back!”

“Gonna make lots of money!”

“I’ll bring back a gift for you, Suilla.” It was nice having a nun see us off. It was very nice. Reason being, it kind of felt like the church was our home and the nuns our family. The three of us headed to the dungeon with our moods bright.

* * *

And so, perhaps thanks to the effects of our prayer, we bagged an Iron Golem. Selling it at the Guild and splitting the profit by three put some weight into our pockets.

“Things always go well when we pray, heck yeah!”

“We’ve got plenty of money to play around with now.”

“Still gonna tend the fields, though.”

Farming was our life’s work. If it came down to adventurering or farming, we would pick our fields. But right now we were happy to keep up both. *If only I had a wife...*

“Alright, I’m gonna go pray at the church.”

“Same. It’s thanks to Beddhism that we bagged an Iron Golem today, so yeah.”

“We know you just wanna see Suilla again, man.”

“Shut it, Dokko! I just want to pat Michiru’s head, that’s all!”

“Are you a lolicon, man?”

“No! My love for Michiru is platonic! Like a father’s love!” *I dunno about that.* But either way, we headed to the church again. It was evening. The church closed fairly early since night was for sleeping, but it should still be open.

“Oh, hellooo?” We were greeted by the smallest nun of all, Michiru. Speaking of which, her nun outfit had a slit in its skirt too. *I heard that the town chief bought these clothes for them, so... Yeaah... Keima never holds back when little girls are involved. Honestly, at this point, I kinda respect him for it.*

Zun patted Michiru’s head and gave her an especially large eggplant. *Where the hell were you hiding that, Zun?*

“Wow, so biiig!” said Michiru as she clung to the eggplant and rubbed her cheeks against it. *Uhhhh, huh. I feel like something profound is blooming within me. This must be that fatherly love Zun was talking about. Yeah, definitely. Yeah.*

We handed over our offerings to Michiru and gave a short prayer. It kind of felt like giving an allowance to our niece, in a way. Very healing.

“Alright, time to hit the bar. You coming, Robbo?”

“Nah, I’m gonna stay here a bit more. I wanna read some.”

“Cool. I’ll be there if you change your mind. Not that I’ll be waiting or anything,” said Zun before leaving with Dokko. They were good friends, easy to hang out with.

I took a book about agriculture from a shelf and sat down. I wasn’t the most literate person in the world, but since adventurers had to know how to read quest listings to survive, I could read simple descriptions. Not to mention that this book was written by an adventurer, judging by the “Translation: Ichika” on the front page. It was pretty easy to read.

Let’s see here. Fertilizer, in field, crush shells into powder... Huh, I didn’t know seashell powder could work as fertilizer. Not just goblins, then. Might have to ask a merchant for some the next time I go to Pavella.

I worked my way through the book. Each page taught me something new, but I must have been tired from days of work, as I slowly started drifting off before finally...

...Ah! I accidentally fell asleep. I hurriedly cast {Purification} on the desk and book to get my drool off them. The book got clean real easily, maybe since it had some extra protection somehow. *Whew... I couldn't pay damages for a book.*

I sat up and a blanket fell off my back. It seemed someone had put it on me while I was asleep.

"I see that you prayed quite fervently today, Robbo." Suilla, sitting next to me, gave a gentle smile.

"...Er, did you put that blanket on me, Suilla?"

"Yes, so as to ward off a cold. And... You looked cute while asleep." She must have looked at my face while I was asleep. I was used to that kind of thing due to my history sleeping outside on adventures, but with Suilla involved it felt kind of embarrassing.

The sun had already set and night had come. It was long past the time the church should have closed.

"Sorry for keeping you up this late. I should get going."

"Why, it's not a problem at all! In fact, feel free to sleep a little longer if you'd like," said Suilla with a somewhat regretful expression. She resembled a child who had their hand slapped right before they could gorge on cookies... *Wait, no, what am I thinking? That's gotta be my imagination. No way would Suilla try to play a prank on me or something.*

"...Speaking of which, did you know that this church has bedrooms in it?"

"It has... bedrooms?" I asked, and Suilla smiled gently.

"Indeed. There is a section of the church that resembles an inn, equipped with rooms such that individual believers can offer solemn prayers in private... and of course, by that I mean they sleep. Rest assured, the rooms lock from within," explained Suilla with a smile.

She then brought her face up close to my ears and whispered quietly. Naturally, her voice tickled my ear and made my brain tingle sweetly. “By the way... If you would donate two silvers to the church, we can offer a special prayer in the room alone together, just you and I.”

“Wha...?! T-Two silvers, s-special prayer?! Alone together?”

“Ahaha. What do you say? I’m only suggesting this because it’s you, of course... I respect how fervently you prayed today.” *Because it’s you.* Hearing those words made me swallow. Suilla smiled sensually. Her smile exuded a sexy aura that didn’t match her nun outfit at all. My wallet... had enough! I nodded without hesitation.

Suilla gave a quiet giggle. *C-Cute!*

“Follow me, then...” I gave her the silvers and she took my hand, guiding me to a bedroom. Inside was a narrow but respectable futon and nothing else. It was indeed a room that existed solely to sleep within. Once inside, Suilla...

Suilla let me use her lap as a pillow. *Huh? Er, I mean. This isn’t what I expected, but it’s still pretty good. Honestly, it might even be better. I really shouldn’t have expected to, uh, go all the way with Suilla for just two silvers. That’d be ridiculous. Hahaha. Haaah...*

“Feel free to fall asleep. I will leave the room afterwards, but your prayer will remain utterly undisturbed.”

“A-Alright.” She stroked my hair. *Oh man, this feels good... And holy cow, she smells amazing. She smells so freaking good. Is she wearing some kind of special Beddhist perfume or something?*

“Close your eyes, relax... Yes, just like that. Take deep breaths... I’ll be following after you, don’t worry...”

“.....” As Suilla spoke, sleepiness pushed against me.

And so, I slept soundly all the way until morning. Suilla was gone when I woke up, but between you and me, thanks to her lap I had an amazing dream where she and I went full on lovey-dovey.

...And also between you and me, I cast {Purification} reflexively as soon as I

woke up. It was the first wet dream I had ever had since growing up.

In any case, I left the room feeling refreshed and ran into Suilla doing some morning cleaning.

“Oh, good morning, Robbo. You were certainly as tasty as I expected—I mean, you certainly fell asleep early last night. How do you feel now? Is everything okay?”

“Thanks to you, I feel amazing. Never been better. Ahaha.”

“I am glad to hear that.” Suilla gave me a warm smile.

“Should I keep last night a secret?”

“Mmm, no, you can talk about it to those you trust. But there are only a limited number of rooms here, so not every believer can be catered to at once. We also refuse such service to those who are violent with the nuns.”

“I see...”

“...By the way, if you wish to have another nighttime prayer later, we also offer a service where we sleep in the same bed for three silvers.”

“I’ll come again!” I said firmly, clasping Suilla’s hands. She blushed and looked away shyly, glancing back in my direction before glancing away again. Eventually, she squeezed my hands back.

“...It’s a promise, okay? You’ll come again no matter what, right...?” *Ngh, she’s too cute! I’m gonna fall for her at this rate.*

Anyway, I’ve gotta tell Zun and Dokko about this. They’re probably passed out drunk in the bar right about now. But I headed for my field first. Had to make sure it was doing alright.

Epilogue? — Day 64 of Year 2

“And that’s what happened. It was pretty rough, honestly.”

“For fuckin’ real? That Leona girl was a Dungeon Master and a Hero, huh? Black hair? Red eyes?”

“Yep. She had black hair, red eyes, and a messed up head.”

I told Ittetsu everything I knew about Leona. Did I hide anything? Nope, nothing. The more people knew about her, the better. *WOOHOO! SHARING INFO ABOUT MESSED UP DANGEROUS PEOPLE! IF YOU RECOGNIZE HER, GET THE HELL OUT OF THERE! I OWE A LOT TO ITTETSU AND I’M GONNA MAKE SURE HE KNOWS WHAT HE’S DEALING WITH!*

“Be careful, Ittetsu. She’s a real monster.”

“But ya won, didn’t ya?”

“Under some strict conditions. Same as the way I beat you. If she and I fought on equal footing, she’d grind my bones to dust before I could open my mouth.”

“That’s fuckin’ scary. If she drops by my place I’ll take Redra and get the hell out of here.”

“That’s the best you can do.”

“...Not even Redra could beat her?” asked Ittetsu, scratching his cheek. *Yeah, I can understand him worrying about his wife’s strength. Dragons are supposed to be the strongest. In their language, “enemy” means “prey to be crushed and devoured.” But I know for a fact she’d lose.*

“Not even Redra. Not even ten normal Soldiers of God could give her a decent fight. A dragon would be dead in no time. She used a skill called {Dragon Breath} like it was nothing, so yeah.”

“Surprised you fuckin’ beat her, shit.”

“We won cause she accidentally killed one of us. That may as well be a loss.” I had brought tea with me. I took a sip. *Mmm, Japanese tea tastes good.*

“Gimme some of that, Keima.”

“I dunno if a Salamander will like it that much.”

“Heat it up as much as ya can.”

“I’m using heat resistant teacups here, so heat it up as much as you want.” I poured tea in a teacup and placed it in front of him. He breathed fire on it like a human would blow on hot tea to cool it down. Which was a poor analogy since those are opposites, but still. Once he was done, he gulped down the boiling tea. My mouth burned just watching him.

“Nmm, really drives a shard through the ol’ noggin. Drinking water’s not so bad some of the time.” It’d be hard to realize this if he were in human form, but boiling hot water was basically like ice water to Salamanders. *Also, uh, drives a shard through the ol’ noggin? I guess that’s kind of like brain freeze. That alcohol I gave him a while ago must have been like ice cream to him too.*

With that diversion over, we got back on topic.

“Right, back to Leona. You said something about Chaos. I’m starting to think that Leona might be Core 4’s Dungeon Master.”

“Whoa, whoa, one of the fuckin’ Single Numbers, huh? Good job surviving that... Keima, maybe I should start callin’ you Boss, huh?”

“I’m telling you, I basically lost here. Give me a break.”

“Gahaha, I’m kiddin’, just kiddin’.”

And so, I had a good long talk with Ittetsu about how dangerous Leona was.

Right, I better tell Haku about this too. The thought crossed my mind as I started to head back to my room.

Oh, whoops, my hand slipped and I put myself outside the mountain. Well... May as well walk back.

Before I knew it, I was in the forest. *This is weird. Am I lost?* Maybe, but I decided not to worry about it. Worst case scenario, I could order my Wearable Golem to take me home. Codename: Golem GPS.

But man, the sun’s already fallen, huh...? Just as I was about to use my Golem

GPS, I saw a cave up ahead. *That's light coming from inside of it, right? Somebody must be inside it.*

I walked up to the cave. There were burn marks around it and some small fires still burning. It was probably a cave that had been formed through a powerful blast of incredible magic.

Inside was my destination. Yep, I knew it deep down. I had come all this way to see what was inside the cave.

I peered inside and saw... Leona sitting and waiting on top of a spread-out futon. *Why is she here?! I gotta run away! Wait, no. This is fine. Wait, what?! My brain is telling me both to run and to stay?! What's going on?! I-I, what?! I* faltered with confusion.

"I've been waiting for you."

"Ngh...!" Leona spoke to me and I held my head. I had transformed into myself as a precaution before meeting Ittetsu, so I would be fine. I had an extra life. Calm down.

"I had a lot of fun earlier and I wanted to express my gratitude. So, I used this thing to call you over," said Leona, patting the futon.

...The Divine Futon. Not Rokuko's, Leona's. *Alright, I understand everything now. Seems like I was charmed by the Divine Futon's holy aura. Like a moth to a flame. But who could blame me?*

"I'm sure there's a lot you want to ask me, right? Well, since I'm in such a good mood, I'll answer any question you have!"

"...You sure? You're not gonna ask for any favors later, right?" This was a good opportunity for me if it was legitimate, since Leona had been in this world for so much longer than me.



“I’m sure, uh-huh. This was the most fun I’ve had in a hundred years. I’ll spill the beans on anything. How to easily level up Hero skills? Sure. How to kill and trick gods? Yup. How to steal Authority? Uh-huh. Even anything about the Divine Bedding. What’s up first?”

“...What do you mean by Authority?” I first asked about a word I didn’t understand her usage of.

“Authority is, well, the power of gods I suppose. It’s what gives them authority and power over certain things. Hence, Authority. If you visit a god with Authority over love they can boost your luck with girls, stuff like that.” A more simple example would be one with Authority over rain could make it rain whenever they wanted. “By the way, you’re already starting to earn Authority over sleep, Keima.”

“...Huh? Why?”

“You’re the pope and founder of Beddhism. Authority is born from the faith of many people, but since Beddhism doesn’t have a god, well...” All the power went to me instead. *Religion sure is silly here... Guess I’ll try to gather more followers.*

“The reverse is true, too. Less faith means weaker Authority, and weak Authority can get stolen or disappear, which means an end to godhood. It’s not too hard to kill gods like that. Oh, I guess I just explained how to kill gods too.” In the blink of an eye I knew how to kill gods. *I’m guessing gods try to kill anyone who figure this stuff out... I’ll pretend I didn’t hear anything.*

“As for stealing Authority, well. Think about it like giving a subordinate of yours some power, but then they end up more popular than you, and before you know it they’re the boss. It’s kind of like that. You’ll be fine as long as that subordinate keeps worshiping you, though. Oh, and the Creator God is worshiped by the God of Darkness and God of Light, so even if all the people of the world forgot him, he’d remain on top forever. Sorry, Keima, but he’s out of your reach! Too bad!”

“Uh, I wasn’t trying to pick a fight with him. Why is that too bad?”

“Oh. The Creator God has Authority over sleep. I thought you were picking a

fight with him for sure.” *Yeaah... I think I’m gonna start worshipping the Creator God. So please don’t kill me, Lord.*

“Okay, next. The simple way to level up Hero skills... Have you figured it out yet?”

“...Elaborate.”

“Like I said, the simple way to level them up. You get experience for breaking Dummy Cores, and breaking actual Dungeon Cores will either net you a new skill or level up an existing skill. Incidentally, if you max out a skill and can’t level it up any more, the experience gets stored. You knew all this, right?” *Nope. Except the bit about leveling up by destroying Dungeon Cores.*

“So, since we’re Dungeon Masters and part of the God of Darkness faction, we can level up as much as we want. Are we on the same page?”

...Wha?

“Even Dummy Cores we buy ourselves earn skill experience.”

“W-Wait, hold on. Does that really count?”

“Why wouldn’t it?” *That’s some insane info out of nowhere. Dummy Cores are only, like, 5,000 DP. That would have been an insane amount in the past, but it’s nothing to me now with my current DP income. Which means...*

“Doesn’t that mean we can level them up as much as we want?!”

“It does.”

Getting EXP for our skills was like eating at a buffet—we could stuff ourselves as much as we wanted. Which meant I could get my {Ultra Transformation} to level 9 in no time.

“Be careful, though. It’ll take ten, a hundred Dummy Cores to level up your skills once they get high enough. I can’t give hard numbers since it differs per skill. Like, my {Ultra Massage} skill leveled up super fast.”

“Still, that doesn’t change how leveling up skills is super simple, huh?” *I’ve gotta get on that once I’m home.* I thought, right as Leona snapped her fingers as if remembering something.

“Oh, but if you level them up too fast your soul will get corrupted by the God of Light, so keep it down to three levels per year. Honestly, all things considered, maybe you’d have been better off not knowing about this.” *Wait. What?*

“What’s all this about my soul getting corrupted? That sure came out of nowhere.”

“Did you think getting ridiculous skills like Hero skills would be a simple process? They need to harmonize with your soul’s strength and all that. If you don’t have the soul of legend, you’ll have your hands full getting one or two levels a year.” It seemed that skills were literally carved into our souls. First time I was hearing that. “So, once your soul can’t take it anymore, the skills start corrupting it. Since Hero skills are the God of Light’s domain, well... I think you understand by now. Level up your skills too fast and you’ll end up as a Soldier of God too.” *Jesus, what? That’s scary. Would I get sick if I didn’t conquer dungeons or something?*

...Anyway, I’ll hold off on leveling up anymore this year. I’m probably already near my limit. My first Hero skill went straight to level 3, after all.

“Well, usually it takes a year to conquer a dungeon or two, so this is mainly just inconvenient for we cheaters. The only Heroes conquering more dungeons than that are already full on Soldiers of God junkies, so it doesn’t affect them too much.”

“...Er, have you ever been corrupted before?”

“Not me, but someone I know. I had them break a ton of Dummy Cores as an experiment. Once they were corrupted, that was it. Decades passed and they never got better, so watch out. They had {Ultra Transformation} just like you, so yeah.” *Hm. That’s good to know. Though I still don’t know if she’s lying or not.*

“By the way, you tried to transform into me, didn’t you? I remember you suddenly disappearing for a whole day, and not due to procrastinating for once. You transformed into me and died, didn’t you?” *Oh yeah, that did happen.*

“...Yeah, that happened. What was that all about?”

“Ah, I knew it. Well. You see, I’m a liiittle bit cursed. I’m doing fine since I have

{Ultra Resistance} and {Curse Absorption}, but if you transform into me, the curses will hit you too. Well, a part of them, anyway.”

“Come on, how many people have you pissed off?! I died instantly! I exploded!” If that was just a part of the curse, what would happen if all of it hit me? I didn’t even want to think about it.

“Do you remember how many breads you’ve eaten in your life? I don’t. That’s all there is to it, really. Ahahaha, the whole world is cursing me. I’m in so many people’s thoughts. How delicious.” Which means she’s pissed off so many people she can’t even remember them all.

“You sure are popular, Leona.”

“People don’t call me the God of Chaos for nothing. I’ve got five hundred years of hatred for me built up. Though some of it’s gone away thanks to your noble sacrifice.” *God of Chaos? Another name I’m hearing for the first time. Does that mean she has Authority over Chaos or something? I wonder what that lets her do.*

“By the way, I can create all sorts of things that introduce chaos and disorder, like drugs that mess up gender. Basically, I can make Hermaphrodite potions. That’s small time compared to how I mixed up the barrier between languages and made translation magic, though. But really, thanks to my {Ultra Alchemy} I can mix up basically anything.” *Messing up gender and the barrier between languages...? I can’t keep up with this.*

“...So you are connected to Core 4, right?”

“Oh, you know my number? I’m impressed.”

“I heard Core 4’s gone missing. Do you know where they are?”

“Well, how couldn’t I? They’re doing fine, right in front of you.”

...The only person in front of me is Leona.

“{Ultra Alchemy} and Chaos go super well together. Oh... Did I not mention? I’m a Dungeon Core too.”

“...Yeah, you just lost me.”

“Take a Dungeon Core in one hand and a Dungeon Master in another, and...

{Ultra Alchemy}! You've got a mixed up being with one body and soul, a Core and a Dungeon Master that also happens to be a Hero. That's me!" *Chaos indeed. She's such a mixture of everything, it kinda makes my head hurt.*

"You fused yourself... with your Core? Why?"

"I forget the reason, but probably because it sounded fun. Or maybe because I was half-dead after failing to conquer a dungeon. Either way, I ended up immortal. And I got rid of my main weak point, the Core back at home. You should try it out too, Keima. I bet it would feel amazing to melt and fuse with Rokuko, getting your bodies and souls all mixed up."

"...That's gonna be a no."

"Oh, okay. I wanted to experiment and see if you'd be fine mixing with a Core since you were a Hero before a Dungeon Master, but that's fine. You're too rare to waste on an experiment like that." *Wait, what? She's treating me like a rare item? Gaaah, I wanna run away.*

"By the way, Core 4 was a Chimera. The God of Darkness was experimenting with making Cores and mixed together monsters, plants, and even rocks to make a being truly fit to be called Chaos. Most of the Single Number Cores were experimental in one way or another, but Core 4 was the most experimental and out there of them all," said Leona, casually. *I guess even gods need to experiment with things. Oh, and why does she keep dropping huge revelations after just a casual "by the way"?*

"I'm changing the subject here, but wow, I was surprised to see people eating rice in Goren."

"Huh? You can't make rice?" *Weird. If Leona's also a Japanese Dungeon Master, I don't see why she can't just buy rice with DP.*

"I can, but I have to use {Ultra Alchemy} several times for each grain of rice. That's too slow to share, I have to work forever just to make enough for me. I tried making seeds but they didn't grow very well, so I gave up on making other people eat rice about four hundred years ago." It seemed that if Leona wanted to eat rice, she had to make it grain by grain, putting each one into {Storage} until she was ready. *Does that mean she can't buy them with DP? Alright, I'm gonna keep quiet about this.*

“How do you get your rice, Keima? I don’t think you had any alchemy skills in your list.”

“Business secret, sorry.”

“...Sure, okay. Guess I won’t be sharing any more info with you,” said Leona, wrapping up the conversation. I took a sack of rice out of my {Storage}. It was still there from when I was carrying sacks to the inn for use in the kitchen.

“You still haven’t talked about the Divine Bedding. I’ll trade you five kilograms of cleaned rice for the information.”

“Sure, that’s fair.” The fact she agreed immediately showed that she really wanted to keep talking.

“There’s seven parts of the Divine Bedding: The futon, the mattress, the pillow, the nightcap, the quilt, the pajamas, the underwear, and the alarm clock.”

“That’s eight.”

“The alarm clock was broken by the Creator God and became underwear instead.” *It’s true that although alarm clocks are a key part of bed sets, they actually disturb sleep rather than improve it. I can imagine that the Creator God got pissed after being woken up one morning and smashed it to bits. I can imagine, and sympathize.*

“By the way, if you gather all seven parts of the Divine Bedding you become an immortal demigod. This is something I know from my {Ultra Identification} by the way, nobody’s managed that before.” *There’s that “by the way” again. But... Immortal, hm. Consider me interested. If I become immortal I can sleep as much as I want, plus I won’t have die of old age and leave Rokuko behind.*

“Also, there’s a set of Divine Equipment, a set of Divine Cutlery, etc, so if you’re aiming for godhood you can look for those too.”

“Seems like it’s not so hard to become a god here.”

“Demigods and lower ranked gods aren’t impossible to kill. They give lots of DP when they die. And they level up your Hero skills, too.” *Alright, not even gods are safe from her. Also, is it just me, or is leveling up Hero skills by killing*

gods kinda messed up? Maybe Dungeon Cores are demigods too. That would make sense given that they're the God of Darkness's children. Wait... Rokuko, a god?! That can't be right! I'm just not thinking straight.

"Okay, I think it's your turn to talk for a bit. Who's your favorite girl out of your whole harem? Is it Rokuko the Core, the safe choice? Or is it the fruits of my labor, Toi? Or maybe Rei? The other girls are nice too, I bet they all moan like cuties in bed at night. Oh, if you make any babies, can I have one?"

"...What are you even talking about?"

"Oh...? Hold on a second. {Ultra Identification}, {Ultra Identification}, {Ultra Identification}." Leona stared at me with suspicious eyes and used {Ultra Identification} three times in a row. She was probably identifying the initial results in what she called the "citation effect" earlier.

"...Hold on, is this a joke?" *Uh. What did she look at?* "...Keima, are you gay? I mean, I swing both ways so I can understand you, but still."

"What are you talking about? I'm normal!"

"Okay, you're just a loser virgin then."

"Wh-Where's your proof?!"

"Honestly, I didn't even need to use {Ultra Identification} on that... Want me to give you some courage? Don't worry, I'll be gentle. {Ultra Resistance} will keep us both safe, too." Leona patted the Divine Futon and pulled her shirt down a little. I could see her collarbone and plenty of her cleavage. But she was underestimating me. I couldn't see her feet in that pose, which meant it did nothing for me. And either way, I would never accept her invitation. She would mess with my brain somehow for sure.

"No thanks."

"Oh, you're turning me down? Strange, the futon must not be working then... But it did bring you here, so it must be. Do you have some kind of resistance to it...?"

...I get the feeling staying here any longer will be a little dangerous.

"My heart is tempted by the futon, but I'm leaving!"

“Mmm, I don’t think so.” Before I knew it, long pieces of cloth had wrapped themselves around my hand. I looked down them and saw them connected to Leona’s hands. *What the hell? I can’t get them off. Are they tentacles or something?* She pulled them and I landed on top of the futon with a plop. Leona then straddled my hips.

“Don’t worry, just count the tiles on the ceiling and this will be over in no time. Oh wait, there aren’t any,ahaha.”

“Wh-What are you doing?! STOOOP!”

I yelled in fear and fell unconscious.

Epilogue — Day 6X of Year 2

I woke up. Pain shot through my head.

Wh-What happened? I think I was... Wait, what? This is a room in the inn? The grand suite, even. Didn't Leona catch me in her trap or something? Wait, what happened after that? Ngh, my memories are blurry, just a big chaotic mess. Let's see... Leveling up Hero skills, Authority, Core 4... Yeah, I remember most of what Leona told me.

But I don't remember why I'm here. Am I just forgetting? Or am I in a dream right now? My thoughts were interrupted by a knock on the door.

"Who's there?"

"It's me, Niku." It sounded like Niku, too. I started to say she could come in, but checked how I looked first. I was naked. In the futon. Which was for some reason the Divine Futon. That didn't make sense. The grand suite's bed had a feather mattress.

Also, I felt something heavy on me. I looked down and saw Rokuko clinging to me in her loli form, asleep. *A-At least she's wearing clothes. That means this is fine, right? Right.*

"Hold on, Niku. I'm gonna ask some questions. Answer through the door, if you don't mind."

"Okay."

"...How many days ago did we fight Leona?"

"It's been three days." *Wait... What? I went and told Ittetsu about Leona the day after we fought. That means there's a one day gap here. That's... Very, very scary. I wish I could say that I'm just blanking out, but it's a lot more likely that Leona did something to me.*

I looked down at Rokuko, who was happily drooling on my stomach. It hurt, but I had to wake her up.

“...Hey, Rokuko. Wake up. C’mon.”

“Keimaaa... Shlp shlp, nom nom.”

“Bah! Don’t lick my belly button, that tickles. And stop wiggling, please, you’re making me feel weird! Just wake up already, please.”

“Bwuh?! Ah, Keima! Are you back to normal?!” said Rokuko immediately after waking up, which just worried me even more. *Just what did Leona do to me?!*

“Yesterday was crazy, Keima, you were completely out of your mind. But don’t worry, only Niku and I saw you like that.”

“...Uh, what did I do?”

“You suddenly hugged me and started whispering romantic lines right into my ears. I mean, I was pretty happy hearing you get so passionate, but it just didn’t feel like you. So I brought out my Divine Futon and put you to sleep.” In other words, she used the Divine Bedding’s healing power. *Actually, does it cure status effects? I only remember it healing mana and stamina.*

...Wait. Hold on, wait. This is actually really bad. The Divine Futon’s supposed to curse any non-couple that sleeps in it. What about the divine punishment? Does this mean it considers us a couple? Seriously? Rokuko and I are a couple in the eyes of the gods?

“Hey, Rokuko.”

“Yes, Keima?”

“...Are you and I—Wait, first, why am I naked? Please, let me put some clothes on.”

“Ah, right. I’m so glad you’re back to normal. You stripped your clothes off before getting in the futon with me. They should be on the ground over there.” Indeed, my clothes were on the ground. I hurriedly put them on.

“.....” *Er, please don’t stare at me. I’m changing clothes, it’s embarrassing.* I finished changing my clothes while Rokuko, sitting on the edge of the bed, watched.

Okay, time for questioning. I sat down to the left of Rokuko.

“Err, well, uh. Rokuko. I have a question.”

“Mhm. What’s that?”

“...Are you and I a couple?”

“Bwuh?” said Rokuko, stunned. *What’s that “bwuh” supposed to mean?*

“Bwuuh?!”

“Please, Rokuko. Be more clear.”

“...Um, well, I mean. We’re partners, right?”

“Don’t look away, Rokuko.”

“...Okay, we’re a couple, then.” *What’s with the “then”?*

“...We’re not a couple, right?”

“We’re not, I guess...” said Rokuko, hanging her head with a grim expression.
Yeah, I didn’t think so.

“...This is bad. This is the Divine Futon here, even gods are afraid of it. What’re we gonna do, Rokuko? I might die here.”

“Bwuh?! Ah, th-that’s what you’re worried about? I thought you just didn’t want to be a couple with me... Ummm. Well, I think you’ll be fine. I gave you permission, so it won’t curse you.”

“Wait, really? You can mess with the settings like that? Because you own it, I guess?”

“Ahhh, ummm, sure. I just realized that recently.” *Dang, that’s great. She should have mentioned it earlier.*

...Speaking of which, I somehow slept in Leona’s Divine Futon without any issues too. Guess Leona must have given me permission too. Or maybe me losing my memories is part of the divine punishment? Ngggh, my head. I just can’t remember...

“Um, Keima? What kind of, um... What are we, really? We’re... not a couple, right?”

“Tough question. We’re definitely not married. We haven’t signed any paperwork or done any of the steps.”

“And why haven’t we? Keima, do you not want to marry me...?” said Rokuko, looking at me with tears in her eyes.

I mean... I wouldn’t mind it. I didn’t dislike Rokuko or anything. Really, it was hard to imagine anyone being my partner but Rokuko. Well, there is Niku, but she’s a literal child. And she’s busy being my dakimakura. Which just leaves Rokuko.

But if I said we were a couple here, Haku would kill me twice. Once to break my {Ultra Transformation}, then a second time once I was out of extra lives. She wouldn’t stop until I was gone for good.

“So, Keima. You wouldn’t mind marrying me?”

“...I wouldn’t, but uh, it’s only been a little over a year since we met. I think it’s a bit early for that. One year is just too short.”

“You think so? I thought humans would marry super fast since they have such a short lifespan.” Rokuko put a hand on her chin and fell into thought. *Maybe that’d be true for me if Haku didn’t have a knife against my throat.*

“...Some people are like that, yeah. Some marry the day after they meet and sometimes political marriages happen before the two involved ever meet. But I like taking things slow, personally. One year feels too short for me.”

“Okay... So, in that case, what kind of relationship do we have?”

“Ehhh. I don’t really think we’re lovers, so... Aren’t you fine with us just being partners?” We were pretty close to being lovers, but if I admitted that, Haku would kill me on the spot. I didn’t want to die, so I got the feeling it would be smarter to push our relationship under the ambiguous title of “partners” rather than “lovers” or “husband and wife.” I survived this long doing that, anyway.

“...Okay, but I’ll get super pouty if you start dating anyone else but me!”

“Pouty? You won’t try to stop me?”

“I don’t think you would do that unless you had a really good reason for it, so I wouldn’t be against it. But I would get SUPER pouty. So pouty that it’d take three fresh melon rolls just to calm me down a little.”

“Well, I don’t think that’ll ever happen, but if it does I know what to do.”

“I’ll forgive you, then!” I patted Rokuko’s head. She gave a big smile. Since she was in loli form, it warmed my heart quite a bit.

“Ahhh, uh. Should I stop sleeping with Niku?”

“Hm? Why would you need to stop? She’s just your dakimakura.” I didn’t understand where Rokuko drew the line. But well, I was pretty used to using Niku as a dakimakura by now, so I didn’t want to push the point and suffer for it.

“That reminds me, I told Niku to wait outside. Niku, you can come in.”

“Yes, thank you.” Niku entered the room. She then approached me and checked up on me. She hugged me and smelled me. For a second I worried that I smelled like sweat, then remembered that the Divine Futon got rid of that.

“...Are you back to normal?”

“He is,” said Rokuko, answering for me. Personally I didn’t know if I was back to normal, since I didn’t remember being not normal, but alright.

“I heard I was acting pretty weird yesterday. Sorry for the trouble.”

“It’s fine. I’m just your dakimakura, Master,” said Niku with a bow. I did feel a little weird about her saying that too, but this ship has sailed. I patted Niku’s head. Her hair was soft and felt nice. She wagged her tail. But then, she hung her head weakly.

“Hm? What’s wrong, Niku?”

“This all happened because of me. I put you through so much trouble since I let Leona capture me...”

“Don’t worry about that. We just got together to get my dakimakura back, that’s all. Right?”

“Uh-huh. Keima would never abandon his favorite dakimakura,” Rokuko pinched Niku’s ears and pulled. Niku let out a tiny woof and fell forward, right into Rokuko’s gentle embrace.

“...Really, don’t think you’re ever getting away from us. Nom.”

“Hyaaahn! U-Understood, Rokuko...” said Niku as Rokuko gave her dog ears

love bites. *Wait, when did they get so close? Should I lend Niku to her tonight? Or maybe every night I don't use her? Only if she's okay with it, of course.*

"Oh, whoops, I've kinda gotten addicted to this ever since that Kosaki incident... Her ears just taste too good. Want to try, Keima? They're soft and nice. Look, her other ear's open for biting."

"Nfffh. G-Go ahead." Niku pointed her other ear my way while still held tightly in Rokuko's embrace.

"...Maybe next time." I honestly might have said yes if we were talking about feet here. That was close.

"Well, um, goodbye." Niku left after Rokuko had her fill of dog ear. She looked a little floaty... Hopefully she didn't have any problems at work later.

"...Oh yeah. What's happening with the Succubi?"

"Right, right. It's only been two days, but they're doing their job just fine. Nobody's getting suspicious. They replaced Leona at the church without any fuss." The Succubi had once worked for Leona, but it sounded like they weren't causing any problems here. Which makes sense, given that I used {Trinity} to bind them to my will while they're in town, saying that they could leave if they didn't want to follow my orders. We get more DP per day, the church has more workers, and gears were turning smoothly. *I guess if you ignore the horrible series of events that led to this, things ended up pretty alright? This is basically the definition of "all's well that ends well."*

"By the way, Keima. You and I are, um, partners... Right?"

"Yep. Partners." Rokuko and I had found an anchor to ground our once-ambiguous relationship, although the anchor was a bit ambiguous as well. Maybe I owed Leona some thanks since she was the one who led me to sleeping in Rokuko's Divine Futon in the first place. *Actually, never mind. This is Leona we're talking about here.*

Still, to think I'd end up pushing our relationship into the partner category. The me of just a few months ago never would have considered doing that. Rokuko and I, or maybe it was just me, might have been worrying a bit too much about specific labels, like whether we were a couple or not, married or not, and so on.

“So, what can partners do together?” *Uh oh.*

“We can go on dates together, right? We can hold hands? Sleep in the same bed? A-And, wh-what about, um, kissing?! Can we kiss?!” I didn’t want to lay out specific ground rules like that, since I wouldn’t be able to make excuses to Haku if she found out. *But well, I guess it’s a bit late for that anyway.* “Kissing must be okay! Wh-Which means, well, um. Want to kiss? Do you? Let’s kiss, okay...?” Rokuko leaned against me. She was breathing heavily. I could tell that she had been holding herself back for a long time. Which maybe, uh, was making her a bit desperate here, like something inside of her had snapped.

“Rokuko. Calm down. Haaah... Alright, alright. I get it already. Don’t move.” I said, placing my hands on Rokuko’s shoulders.

“K-Keima...? Um, what do you mean, don’t mov—” Before she could finish, I kissed Rokuko on her squishy cheek.

“—Khaawsedrftgyfujikolp?! ” When I leaned back, Rokuko was flapping her mouth with her eyes open wide, blushing bright red and failing to form any words. Steam was basically blowing out of her ears.

“H-Hey, are you alright?”

“Yeeesh! I’m okay! Ahaha, hahahahahahaha!” Rokuko stood up, holding her cheek, and left the room while laughing awkwardly to hide her embarrassment. *Man... Reacting like that over a kiss on the cheek? What a cutie.*

Aaanyway, I guess it’s time for Haku to kill me.

Extra Episode — Pretty Keima: “Um, is your head feeling alright, Keima?”

We were in the middle of our battle with Leona. This time, I was stuck in the Master Room alone.

“Ngggh. Keima’s usually in the Master Room with me when things go bad like this...” I couldn’t calm down. I just felt uneasy somehow. All I could do was watch Keima and the others enter Leona’s dungeon through Phenny’s eyes.

Her dungeon was very different from both our [Cave of Greed] and the other dungeons we had seen during Dungeon Battles. Nothing within was life-threatening. It was all safe and they were basically just playing games. An abnormal dungeon. One not like any dungeon I knew. Maybe it reflected what kind of things were bottled up in the heads of Heroes like Keima and Leona. There was definitely a connection there.

At some point, I ended up just having fun watching Keima and the others earn points in Leona’s dungeon. Though it wouldn’t be nearly as fun if I didn’t know that Leona was contractually obliged to keep them safe.

“Keima, is this what she meant by athletic games?”

“...Yeah, pretty much. They’re games where we gotta use our bodies to do challenges,” answered Keima, his breathing a little rough. Although he had the golem assistance helping him out, his body still had to move. There was no avoiding the stamina drain.

“Still, Keima, you sure got tired fast.”

“Yeah, ’cause I’m a mage. I stick to the back row.”

“Even people in the back need to be fit. Redra said that exercise is the key to living longer, so.”

“Redra’s a dragon! Though yeah, exercising a bit would be smart.” To be fair, dragons did have a much longer lifespan.

“I’m a Dungeon Master, so... All I need to do is sit in the Master Room and mess with menus.” *I would like for Keima to be next to me like that*, I thought.

“Well, just get Niku and hurry back. She’s your important dakimakura.”

“Yep.” I was a little jealous of Niku. Keima going this far to save her showed just how much he liked her. If I were kidnapped, would Keima try to save me too? He definitely would, right?

* * *

I watched Keima cry through the monitor. Rei had died. *Would Keima cry like that for me if I died...? Wait, that doesn’t work. If I die, Keima will die too.*

Those thoughts were on my mind even though Rei had died. I thought that I cared a lot about Rei, but maybe I didn’t. Maybe Dungeon Cores were built to not feel sad when monsters died. Or maybe I was just cold-hearted. *Ahhh, there I go again, thinking about myself. Can’t I think about anyone but me?!*

“And anyway, since she’s a Named Monster, you can just revive her!” Oh right, you could do that. I remembered hearing some other Cores talking about that once. *Right, I just didn’t cry because I subconsciously remembered that we could just revive her!*

Rei, once revived, tried to show Keima her underwear.

“W-Wait, Rei?! I’m glad you’re alive, but what are you doing?!” I tried to control Rei to stop her, but Leona just burst into laughter. She then teleported away, satisfied.

The remaining Succubi were sworn to compliance through {Trinity} and taken to our dungeon, or more specifically, to our church. Including that one Succubus that was close to Kinue.

In any case, as soon as everything was over, we all went to the church to talk about things with the Succubi. The monster girl trio, the Silky triplets, Niku, and Ichika all joined in by swapping shifts around. Reason being.

“And then, the noble Keima... cried over Mistress Rei, a mere monster!” declared a Succubus.

“I can’t believe that he would cry over a monster! Is he really a human?”

“No, he’s a Dungeon Master, remember? Aaah. I wish I had seen that too.”

“Weeeell, the truth iiiis, Rokuko stored a video of iiiit.”

“Neruneh, I would like to see that as well. I wasn’t able to before on account of being dead.”



...Under the guise of getting on friendly terms with the new members of the dungeon, we were all squealing in excitement while talking about Keima. Of course, I took the opportunity to unveil my secret footage of him! *Eheh, it sure feels great to hear people compliment my partner!*

“But it looks like he didn’t know that he could revive Rei.”

“Don’t be dumb, Hanna. That’s why this is so good. He’s not crying because it’ll cost DP to revive her, he’s crying out of sadness from the bottom of his heart! For a monster!”

“You are wise, Nicole. To think that you would notice what I, the great Pio, would miss. Truly, our master is a noble man.” *I’m just glad the Silky trio is getting more loyal with each passing day.*

“By the way, where did Keima go today?” asked one of the Succubi, who I think was named Suilla.

“I think he said he was going to talk to the Dungeon Core beside us about Leona. Buuut that was a while ago. He’s definitely late.”

“They must be having a fun time of their own.”

“That could be. Leona was a fun girl in her own way, even though she was kinda messed up in the head. By the way... Why were you all serving Leona anyway?”

“A gang war broke out in the red light district we lived in and ultimately we were driven from our homes. As we starved on the road, she found and saved us. Or well, it was more like she devoured us herself, but in Succubus terms we ended up with full stomachs so it’s all the same.”

“Hmm, I guess you’ve all been through a lot.” That reminded me of the fact that Leona was apparently a Dungeon Master slash Hero just like Keima, summoned to the world five hundred years ago. Which meant that there was a way for Keima to live for over five hundred years, right? In that case, I wouldn’t need kids to not be lonely!

“Okay! Time to find a way to help Keima live longer!”

“Oh, I think I can help with that. There exists a Divine Futon passed down

through our Succubus tribe. When I offered it to Leona, she noted that anyone who gathered all pieces of the Divine Bedding set and used them together would become immortal!”

“Wow, that is a big help! I have a Divine Futon too. What else is there? More details, please!” And so, I got so worked up with the conversation that I didn’t feel uneasy about Keima’s absence at all. It wasn’t until the next morning that I got uneasy.

“Keima never came home, Redra. Is he with you?”

“What?! Keima left yesterday when it was still light out!” I went to the [Flame Caverns] to ask, but Keima was nowhere to be found. Where had he gone?

Maybe... he had died? No no no, he had {Storage}, his Wearable Golem, and even the Magic Blade Siesta. Even if he got lost, he could check the map to get back in no time. He wouldn’t die so easily. {Healing} could take care of most wounds, so... *He’s not in our dungeon’s territory. Why? Keima, where are you?!*

Suddenly, Keima appeared on the corner of the map, deep within the forest.

“There he is!” I immediately moved to where he was; with dungeon functions, it only took a second.

“Welcome back, Keima!”

“Yep, it’s good to be back. Sorry for being so late, you must’ve been worried.” Keima looked unhurt and overall fine.

“What were you doing, seriously?”

“I just went on a little walk. Ended up lost so I slept in a cave with a futon.”

“Come on... At least tell me first. I was worried about you.” *E-Eventually.*

“Sorry, sorry. But I trusted you. Not like you cried without me there for just one night, right?” said Keima, stroking my head. *Hm...? This feels kinda weird. He’s actually like caressing my head, when he usually just kinda pats it.*

“Keima, did you eat something weird?”

“I think I ate a fruit I found in the forest. It was nice and sweet.”

“Do you still have any?”

“Nope, not a bit.” Keima shrugged, showing me his empty hands. *Okay, something’s definitely weird here.*

“Anyway, let’s get back to town. I’m counting on you, Rokuko.”

“O-Okay. Sure, leave it to me.” *Hmm... The map says he’s the real thing, but something’s off.* In any case, I took Keima back to town with me.

Once back, Keima immediately went to the chief residence to sleep. Or so I thought he would, up until the point where he went to the church instead. There he met with Rei and the Succubi who had just finished mass.

“Master! Welcome back, Rokuko was worried about you. As was I, of course.”

“Sorry, but thanks for worrying. Hopefully you can forgive me—I’ll be sure to give a heads up before I leave next time, okay?”

“Master Keima! Thank you for accepting we Succubi into your home. No amount of thanks could ever express the depth of our gratitude.”

“Uh-huh, I couldn’t bear to let cute girls suffer on their own out there. I’ll make sure you’re all taken care of,” said Keima with a shining smile. *Mmmmmm? I mean, he definitely looks like Keima, but still. Something’s just off here.* “By the way, did mass go okay?”

“Yes. I introduced Suilla and the others as our new nuns. The Succubi have skills that put their targets to sleep, so they were a great help during prayer.”

“That’s what I like to hear. I knew you could do it, Rei. You’ve never let me down and I love that about you. It’s so nice to have gifted subordinates I can trust. Good work to Suilla, Michiru, and the other Succubi too. I hope we can keep up working together.”

“W-Wow, gifted? Ehehehehe, well, just ask if you need me to do anything else!”

“Thank you very much!” Rei and the Succubi blushed shyly as Keima smiled and complimented them. *Weird... Something’s definitely weird here. Keima’s never this much of a chad. But it doesn’t look like Rei and the others are noticing anything. What’s going on here?*

“Where’s Niku?”

“I imagine she is in the middle of her usual training regime.”

“Alright. Sorry for interrupting, I’ll go check up on the others,” said Keima as he turned and left the church with a dashing look in his eyes. *Check up on the others...? He’s never done that before.*

“Master called me gifted... I have the strength to fight for another ten years now!”

“Haaah... I wonder why, but he seemed even more dashing than when I saw him yesterday at the dungeon.” Rei and the Succubi didn’t feel anything was off about him. *Do they just have like... an idealized image of him? I do think that when we were talking about him yesterday, we kinda glorified him a bit.*

Oh right, I need to follow after him. He’s acting weird right now. I feel like something bad might happen if I’m not around him.

He went to the inn next and I followed. But by the time I got there he had already passed the receptionist desk and was on the way to the cafeteria. Neruneh was behind the desk, but...

“Mwaaaah... So dreamy...”

“Wh-What? Neruneh, what happened? You’re grinning super wide.”

“...Ah, Rokuko... You know, I want to offer up my magic stone to Masteeeeer...”

“Bwuh?! Seriously, what happened? What did he do to you?!” Judging by the fact I had entered the inn moments after he did, Keima only had a few seconds to talk to her. What had happened in those seconds?

“...He took my chin, lifted it up... And said my eyes are pretty, like mystic eyes of charm enchantment...” *I-I don’t know what that means, but saying things like that must be the key to Neruneh’s heart. And Keima would normally never say those things. There’s definitely something weird about him today.*

“Wait, now’s not the time to be thinking! I gotta go to the cafeteria! Kinue, be safe!” I raced to the cafeteria.

“Where’s Keima?!” I burst inside and saw Keima eating a rice ball while chatting with Kinue, a warm smile on his face.

“Your food’s the best I’ve ever had, Kinue. I can feel the love in this rice ball. And it’s not just your food, either. Your cleaning and laundry has love in it that {Purification} just doesn’t have. There’s no one I want taking care of my home more than you.”

“Yes, Master... Please leave it all to me.” *I was too late! Honestly, I feel like this is entirely out of my hands now!*

“Hold it right there, Keima!”

“Heya, Rokuko. Is something wrong?”

“Don’t ask me if something’s wrong. You’re being weird today, Keima.”

“Weird? I don’t know about that... But if my Rokuko says so, I guess I must be.” *My Rokuko...? Did he just say, my Rokuko...?*

“Well, I mean, um. Yes. I’m your Rokuko, so I know what’s up. I can notice you acting weird in a split second.”

“That’s my Rokuko for you! You’re a partner I can trust.” Suddenly, Keima hugged me. *Wh-What?! What’s happening here?!*

“...I love you, Rokuko. You’re the world to me.” He whispered so close to my ears that it tickled. He left it at that and immediately let go of me.

I love you, Rokuko. You’re the world to me. I love you, Rokuko. You’re the world to me... His words spun in my head and a grin formed on my face... Wait, no. I slapped my cheeks. That was close. *I’m his trustworthy partner, I can’t let my guard down here!*

“Keima! Come with me, right n—Wait, where’s Keima?”

“While you were in a daze, he finished the rice ball and said he was getting back to checking up on the others.” *Oh no! How could I let this happen?! I chased after him and found the Silky triplets—Hanna, Nicole, and Pio—sitting on the floor in the hall, blushing deeply. Ngh, what did you do to them, Keima?!*

“Where’s Keima?!”

“Fwaah! R-Rokuko!”

“Um, ah, M-Master? W-We just saw him.”

“Righ! Eheheh... He said he was going to the bar.”

“Okay, thanks. And if you’re going to daydream like that, you should go back to your rooms first! You’re off today!” They had probably been cleaning for fun again. I left the daydreaming Silkies behind and went to the bar.

* * *

It was a normal day in the bar, with adventurers drinking while the sun was still high, when suddenly Keima of all people came walking in.

“Oh, town chief. Wanna come sit down for a drink?” called out Roppe. It was a casual invitation for him to drink with her and Gozou, one she expected him to decline like usual, but today was different.

“Sure, I think I have time for a drink. Having ale today, it looks like?” Keima casually sat next to them. That actually threw Gozou and Roppe off. The ice was broken by Keima first.

“...The truth is, I found some good looking alcohol in the dungeon. Want to drink it with me?” he said, unveiling a glass bottle wrapped in paper.

“Whoa, whooo! Is that sake, an ultra rare dungeon drop?! Hm... But y’know, it looks different from the kind we found before.”

“This isn’t just any sake, this is daiginjo sake, which is... Well, anyway, just think of it as better sake. I’ve never had any myself before, but let’s change that tonight, Roppe,” he said, taking out clear glass cups and pouring some in.

“Oh man, this sure is looking good... I get it now, this stuff’s so good that even you gotta have a drink of it. But these cups are nice too, they make the stuff look even better.”

“Hey, hey, Keima, you’re gonna let me drink some of that too, right?!” Gozou, frozen in surprise, snapped back to his senses at the smell of alcohol. Keima took out another glass and poured some more.

“But of course. However, ladies come first. Here you go, Roppe, have the special first drink.”

“You sure?! Eheheh, you trying to make me fall for you or something...? Too bad, I’ve got Gozou,” she said, taking a gulp of the sake. It was high quality with

a thick flavor. So high quality it even smelled of real fruit. She had never had such a fine gulp of alcohol before.

“...Mmmm! Holy crap, Gozou, this stuff is the best! I almost wanna cry. Ahhhh, y’know, Keima, come to my room later if you’ve got the time.”

“Whoa now, Roppe, it’s good enough to get ye saying that? And Keima, listen hear. I owe ye a lot, but if ye lay your hands on Roppe, I’m gonna... Holy shit, this stuff’s amazing! Hey, Keima, come to my room later if ye’ve got the time.”

“Hahaha, glad you two like it... Mmm, nice and fruity.” Gozou and Keima both drank some themselves.

“Ahhh, y’know, you’ve really screwed us over, Keima. How are we gonna live off cheap old ale now that we’ve had this stuff?”

“Ye can say that again. It’s too good.”

“Guess you don’t want the rest, huh?”

“Idiot! Like hell we wouldn’t! Give us more!”

“Hahaha!”

Eyes fell on their table as they laughed amongst each other. Naturally. Keima had brought top-class sake into a bar filled with people who like drinking enough to drop by at the middle of the day. They were all filled with the desire to have at least a sip, no, at least a drop of this legendary sake!

“Master! Let me have a glass, please, at least a glass! I’m beginning you!” There appeared Ichika in a flash of heroism. She had finished dumping all of her cash into the slot machines and thus moved onto begging Keima for free stuff without an ounce of shame.

“Sheesh, I get the feeling you’d do anything for a good drink.”

“No way! I’m only begging like this ’cause it’s you, dude! Don’t be mean, you know what’s uuup! Heeere, I’ll let you rub my thighs, ‘kaaay?”

“No need. Here, if you don’t mind drinking from my cup,” he said, handing his over half-full cup to Ichika. She replied “Eheh, I owe you one. This is why I love you, Master,” before gulping it down.

“Mmm! Oh no, this is so good I’m legit gonna cry! Mmmn, too good!” The surrounding adventurers saw that, and well. They were already at their limit.

“T-Town chief! I’m a Beddhist. Lemme have a cup too!”

“Hey, hold up! No rushing ahead! Gimme some too, I’ve got some cash on me!”

“That’s how you’re gonna play it?! I’ll pay two silvers, then! And I’m a Beddhist too! Actually, we all are!” The beer lovers crowded around the table. Keima held up a hand and they all fell silent immediately.

“...I’ll give each of you a cup. Of course, out of respect for my honorable Beddhists who have chosen to laze around in a bar despite the good weather, there will be no charge. Lucky break, huh?”

“HELL YEAAAH!” cheered the adventurers.

“But if you want any more than that... I’ve brought two more bottles. I’ll sell them to Wozma and you can all just buy from him instead.” Keima signaled Wozma with his eyes, who in return nodded with an exasperated, amused smile.

“Look at Keima go, he’s even got this bar’s best interests in mind!”

“What a god. Er, wait, he’s the pope. What a pope! Long live Beddhism! Oyasuminasai!”

“It’s drinking time! Oyasuminasai!” And so, chants of the Beddhist prayer “oyasuminasai” echoed throughout the bar.

* * *

“And that’s what happened! Maaan, Master was one helluva dude today!”

“Okay, in short, I was too late.” Keima was gone by the time I got there. I must have missed him on my way here. *Sheesh, how long was I in a daze there? It didn’t feel that long to me.*

“Do you know where he went?”

“Nmmm, it sounds kinda like... He’s gonna go for Niku next?” She was right, Niku was the only person he hadn’t seen yet. I told Ichika to keep the gambling

down and headed to the garden behind the inn, where Niku usually trained.

“Niku, did Keima come over... here...?!” There I saw Keima lying flat on the ground. What had happened?

“Ah, Rokuko... This is, um.”

“Did something happen?”

“...We sparred a little.” According to Niku, her hand slipped a bit. The fact that Keima was unusually drunk didn’t help, but apparently she had accidentally hit his chin after he moved in a way abnormal for him. It must have been a sweet spot as he fell unconscious from that single hit.

“...He was acting strange, so... I might have intended for this to happen, a bit.”

“Good job, Niku. That’s right, Keima’s been acting weird today!” I took Niku’s hand. *Finally, someone else noticed that Keima’s acting weird! I guess the key point is knowing him for long enough.*

“...But wait, aren’t you his slave? Doesn’t magic or something stop you from doing that?”

“It was a mock battle, and he said I could, so it was fine.”

“Right, the collar would squeeze if it wasn’t fine...” She might’ve even died if things went poorly.

“Anyway, let’s keep an eye on him. Hopefully he’s back to normal when he wakes up... Niku, help me carry him.”

“Okay. Heave, and... hm?” Niku sniffed after picking up Keima with her back.

“...He smells like Leona.”

“Bwuh?! Does that mean Leona’s transformed into Keima? With {Ultra Transformation} or something?”

“No, he also smells like himself... It’s like her smell has been rubbed onto him,” said Niku while sniffing. *I can get her smelling Leona on him, but I’m impressed she can tell it was rubbed onto him.*

“Maybe it got on him during the Dungeon Battle?”

“...It smells like it was put on him today.”

“That means Leona did something to him before he came back this morning! That explains why he was acting weird. Niku... What did he do to you?”

“Um, n-nothing much... He just said I always worked hard, and suggested we spar a little, while, um, stroking my tail,” It might have been my imagination, but her cheeks looked kind of red. *I see... But since Keima doesn't usually stroke her tail, I guess it makes sense that she would notice he's acting weird.*

“Okay, anyway, let's take him to the grande suite. I'll go ahead and use my Divine Futon too. It might help out here.”

“Understood.” *Well, if Keima's not back to normal when he wakes up now... Mmmm, that might not be too bad, but it still wouldn't be good. Normal Keima is best Keima! Sheesh, I can't believe everyone else doesn't get that.*

“...Which is why I respect you a lot more now, Niku.”

“Hm? What do you mean?”

“Oh, nothing, just talking to myself. Out of everyone else, I'm glad you're Keima's dakimakura.”

“...Rokuko, you're acting weird too.” *What? I don't think so... No way, is Keima's weirdness rubbing off on me? I guess I'll have to sleep in bed with him, then. Yes.*

“Ngh, where am I... Huh? The grand suite? I feel like has happened before.” Keima woke up just as I was putting the Divine Futon on the grand suite's bed.

“Oh, Keima. All awake now? Is your head feeling okay?”

“...Yeah, it's fine. Oh, wait, is this a dream? A Succubus prank? Huh?” Keima murmured to himself while kind of wavering in place.

“Well, whatever. Come on, Keima, let's sleep together. I've got the bed all ready here.”

“...Yeah, sounds good,” said Keima before starting to strip all his clothes right off.

“K-Keima? Why are you stripping?”

“Why wouldn't I? I don't want my clothes to get all wrinkly, so I'm taking

them off.”

“Okay, you’re definitely still acting weird, right?!”

“What’re you talking about? Haha, you’re the one being weird. I’m just doing what’s normal.”

No, you’re the weird one! You always sleep wearing clothes! Ah... But I might as well take this opportunity to get a good look at him. His body’s the real deal at least.

“S-So? Aren’t you going to take off your underwear?”

“...Nah, this may be a dream, but I think Haku’ll still kill me if I do that,” said Keima while getting in the futon. I didn’t think Haku would do that, though.

“Well, you’re still a little weird, but that’s okay. Goodnight, Keima.”

“Hm? Ah, yeah, night. Try to keep the teasing down... nzzz...”

And so, Keima fell asleep. Hmmm... “Keep it down” doesn’t have any hard limit, so he’s basically saying I can do whatever I want!

“Okay, Keima, I’m gonna get so much of my smell on you that Leona’s won’t even matter anymore! S-So, when you’re back to normal, I want you to, um, well...” *Nnnn! This is too embarrassing! I’m going to bed!*

Afterword

Let's party! As in, let's get this afterword going. Remember to have fun, everyone. This afterword's going to be three pages. Last time I used my fourth page to post a puzzle, but I promise, I can handle writing three pages. You can trust me. I just need to hold back a little.

Thanks to all you readers, we've made it to volume six. Which brings me to all the thanks I want to say here.

First of all, thank you to all readers of Lazy Dungeon Master, including those reading the web novel. I don't think I would be able to keep writing without all of you reading what I write. I want to keep writing up to two-digit volumes, but to be honest, that all depends on how much we sell and what the fan response is like.

Next, I would like to thank Youta-san the illustrator. The barely there Succubus outfits are super cute.

And finally, thank you I-san the editor and Proofreader-san. I'm sorry for finishing right before the deadline due to all the original content I wrote for this volume. N-No hard feelings, right?

And yes, I once again wrote a lot of new material for this adaptation. Things went a lot different here than they did in the web novel. In fact, characters were removed from the story entirely, but I don't think that's too uncommon. There were no adult circumstances at work here. I just wanted to structure the story in a different way and they were victims. The general structure of what happened here happened in the web novel, but it was different enough that they just had to go. Will cut characters return in Volume 7 and beyond? I will think about that in Volume 7 and beyond. Though whether or not those volumes will come out is yet undecided. I sure hope they come out, though.

The number of illustrations per volume encourages me to only introduce three or four major characters a volume, though. Which reminds me... Redra and Wataru still haven't appeared in any art. They popped up here and there in

this volume, but I wonder if they'll ever get a chance to shine in illustrations. Especially Wataru. Male characters always end up pushed to the backburner, really.

Now then, the names for mob characters were taken from volume five's puzzle (Japanese version) and the questionnaires. Roa, Robbo, Zun, and Dokko. Thanks for all the help. Ares, by the way, came from our very own Totsu Shuuta-sensei during a Nico live stream. Here's my special thanks to him. He's an actual high schooler writing published novels, kinda makes me want to make a hamfisted comment about youth.

Huh? There's still more space? Man, three pages sure lets me say a lot of things.

I've been kinda writing aimlessly here so it took a bit to reach this point, but as a warning, I'm about to talk spoilers for this volume and whatnot, so be careful if you haven't read the volume yet.

Actually, it was around this volume —right after the end of the third Dungeon Battle in the web novel—that I started work on the first volume of the light novel adaptation. For that reason, I kind of just did some poorly thought out things in the web novel to buy time, and those things ended up a little unpopular. The changes in this volume were less me cutting characters and more me removing those developments while simultaneously introducing Beddhism faster.

Really, it was kind of like being half-hearted with the web novel and focusing my thoughts on what to do in the light novel adaptation. Which means that yes, I'm reserving my full power to write the light novel. Let's roll with that, it sounds cool. Man, I'm smart.

Anyway, the characters cut from the web novel might show up in future volumes depending on what happens. They might not show up, too. But either way, this volume took us a big step away from the web novel. Names are different, inn employees are different, etc. This might get complicated... I intend to continue writing the web novel, but I might need to standardize the names at some point. In which case I will probably post an official explanation there, or otherwise have a mysterious event occur in-universe that changes names for

some reason.

Also, from this point on I plan on primarily writing new material for the light novel adaptation. It's going to be a different entity from the web novel. I'm reserving my full power to write the light novel. (Second time saying that in like ten lines).

I do have a disease that tells me to write a new series, but that's a different story entirely. I think I'll continue focusing on LDM as my main thing. And I imagine the number of readers will reflect that.

Okay, finally out of space. See you again next volume.

Supana Onikage

Bonus Short Stories

A Dangerous Plant (for Beddhism)

It was a bright and sunny day, save for the dark exchange going on behind the inn.

“Kinueee. Did you get the stuuuff...?”

“...Haven’t you had enough of this, Neruneh? I think it’s time for you to stop.”

Neruneh’s eyes were somewhat hollow as she asked Kinue for *the stuff*. Kinue, the seller, seemed hesitant to go through with the trade.

“Just take it out alreadyyy, Kinuee...” At Neruneh’s urging, Kinue took out a small wooden box. Inside was a dried plant that had been chopped into small pieces. Neruneh took a piece and sniffed it. The smell was intoxicating.

“Ooooh! This is high quality stuff... Sniff sniff, fwaaaah, so niiice.”

“I acquired this at your request, but I cannot bear to see you destroy your body like this any longer.”

“Whateveeer. It’s my body, I can do whatever I want with iit... Plus, this plant helps clear my mind, I get a lot more work done on magic tools when I use iit.” Indeed. One effect the plant had was to ward off sleep and enable one to work throughout the night. But naturally, that put a heavy load on one’s body, as evident by the dark bags under Neruneh’s eyes.

“Please, get some sleep! There’s... There’s bags under your eyes.”

“Meeeh, I’m already sleeping. Two whole hours a daaay, eheheh,” said Neruneh with a pleased laugh, but the revelation just made Kinue’s heart ache more. Two hours. Just two, despite the fact that their master Keima slept six times as much as that...

“But the recent stuff I’ve got have all been crappy, none of them worked muuuch... Ahaha, I owe you big tiiime.”

“I... There’s no way that’s good for your body! Take better care of yourself! Please, I’m begging you...”

“Researching magic tools is a job Master gave me, rememb~~ee~~er?” There was nothing Kinue could say to that. The Dungeon Master’s orders were final.

“Haaah, haaah... As long as I have this plant, everything will be fiiiine... Ahahaha....” She returned the plant to the box and started to leave, when suddenly...

“Stop right there, Neruneh! I have caught you red handed!” Rei’s voice sounded out, then she appeared out of nowhere, having been hiding herself with {Illusion}. Neruneh faltered. Impossible, Rei should have been working in the church. But thinking about that could come later. She had to hide *the stuff* first. Wait, no, it was already too late for that.

“To think that you would be addicted to that plant, Neruneh.”

“R-Rei! You have the wrong idea, I just need this for my researching.... Right, Kinueee?” Neruneh hurriedly turned to Kinue for backup, but she just shook her head with a defeated expression.

“Rei... Please. Put Neruneh to bed.”

“Kinueee?! Traitooooor!”

“Come with me and get in bed. This is for your sake.” Rei grabbed Neruneh firmly by the back of her neck. Rei had no attack power, but that didn’t mean she lacked the strength to pin someone down. Neruneh in her weakness had no means of escaping her.

“Let go of meee! I can’t let myself go to bed just yeeeet!”

“You’re coming with me! There’s a warm futon waiting for you!”

“I don’t wanna sleep, I don’t wannaaaa! My reseaaaaarch!” Neruneh struggled, but it was all for naught. She was taken to a room in the church.

“Neruneh... Come home clean, please. I’ll have a midnight snack waiting for you...” The air calmed with only Kinue and the small box Neruneh dropped left behind.

Aaand that's what Rokuko and I saw through the window.

"...Um, Keima. What are those three doing?"

"Having some fun playing make believe?" Neruneh's box contained tea leaves for black tea. Kinue had bought some just recently.

Naturally, tea was standard stuff in this world. It didn't have any addictive properties and it wasn't illegal. But like normal tea, it did have a side effect of making one's sleepiness go away, and if you got too used to the caffeine that side effect would weaken. Neruneh had stayed up working so late so consistently that she had black bags under her eyes. That was definitely unhealthy. But she had been taken to the Beddhist church, so she would soon fall asleep wether she wanted to or not. By nighttime she'd have as fresh a face as ever.

As an aside, Beddhism hasn't banned tea or other consumables containing caffeine. It even recommends drinking milk tea before bed. Sure, caffeine can make sleepiness go away, but I don't really care. The problem here rested in the fact Neruneh was so into her work that she was skipping sleep to speed things along. But her research wasn't so pressing that she needed to rush. I would have liked her to go slow at her own pace.

Neruneh had a tendency to focus so much on her work that she forgot to eat or sleep. It was bad enough that Kinue was getting sincerely worried for her. Unfortunately, since I was giving her helper Gargoyles and labor Golems to make things easier on her.

"...Guess I'll go tell Neruneh to get regular sleep myself."

"Lack of sleep makes it harder to think, after all." If she kept drinking all that tea she might have ended up making some kind of crazy weapon like the great Panjandrum.

The next day, I told Neruneh to make sure to sleep at least eight hours a day, but she didn't look happy about it. What a workaholic. Most people would kill to get more than eight hours of sleep a day. *I mean... Neruneh, you have to sleep, okay? It's for your health.*

Succubi and the Dirt on the Town Chief

Note: It's recommended to finish Volume 6 before reading this.

The Succubus Suilla had a mission, and to complete that mission she had infiltrated Goren.

“...I will corrupt those with power in this town and make them build a brothel to serve as our paradise.” The Succubi had been driven from their homes and sent wandering the world. A lot had happened and along the way a certain someone lent their assistance, but the Succubi still needed to build a home. They had agreed to serve that someone until they found a stable place to live. The individual in question had enough lust on their own to keep five Succubi fed, so things weren't that bad, but none of them wanted to continue burdening another. To that end, they needed to build a new place to live in this largely undefended, newly established town... Goren.

It wasn't that Succubi would die in days without lust to eat. If they lived similarly to a normal human, they could survive for half a year with little issue. But there was always a craving and they would like to satisfy that craving, to some extent at least. Lust was a luxury and one that extended their lifetime. If necessary they could consume the lust of animals to keep themselves alive, though that tasted quite bad.

Not to mention that this only applied when they were living equivalent lives to that of a normal human. If they had to use lust in place of food, their lifespan would drop dramatically without a constant source of it. Which was exactly why building a brothel and securing a stable source of lust was necessary for them. An alternative was merely living in homes normally and consuming lust from dreams, but that had its risks.

Brothels came with their own issues, of course. Humans had all sorts of complex rules for building brothels, and those in power had to approve the construction directly. What, then, should they do? Towns had town chiefs, of course.

“I'm telling you, Wozma the vice chief handles all the work around here. Don't drag me out like this, c'mon.”

“Relax, town chief. I’ll buy you a drink.”

“Nah. I wanna go home and sleep as soon as I can. I’ll knock the crap out of anyone who tries to stop me, no questions asked.”

“Something tells me you wouldn’t, heh, but alright. I’ll just drop by the church and donate a little. Oyasuminasai.”

“Sounds good, oyasuminasai.”

Suilla heard the prior conversation while on reconnaissance. It seemed that the town was in truth led by the one known as vice chief Wozma.

“Um, might I ask who this Mr. Wozma is?” she asked the villager, using a slight amount of charm magic.

“Huh, Oh, Wozma. He’s our vice chief and he’s great. I heard he used to work in the capital, but now he’s retired and running the bar here,” replied the villager, generously.

“What kind of women does he like...?”

“He doesn’t talk about women much, but probably ones with big boobs? And long hair, too.” If that was true, Suilla could seduce him in her own form. Target locked. She found the inn and invaded vice chief Wozma’s dreams that very night.

* * *

Suilla made him write documents pertaining to the construction of a brothel, but the town chief ended up shutting him down. It seemed that she had chosen the wrong target. But that just meant setting her sights on a new target. Having eaten her fill of lust last night, Suilla got to work gathering information on the town chief.

“Um, can I ask what kind of person the town chief is?”

“Oh, Keima? Sure, sure, ask anything... To sum him up, he’s lazy! Well I mean, he does stuff when stuff needs getting done, but yeah. He usually just sleeps.”

Just like that, she used her charms to gather information on the town chief’s taste in women.

“Between you and me... Turns out, the town chief is a lolicon.” That... That was a problem. Lolicons had picky tastes and high standards. Some would be satisfied with Suilla transformed into a loli, others would take one look at her and say they weren’t interested in an adult with a loli body. The former kind of people even had a tendency to see right through Succubi illusions. Suilla would have to continue her investigation to make sure he was a lolicon.

“Between you and me, the town chief is a lolicon.”

“Keep this between you and me, but he’s a lolicon. Oh, don’t tell him I’m the one who told you that.”

“Between you and me, he’s surrounded by little girls all the time. Not just sweet little Kuroinu either, I’ve heard he brings some blonde loli into his room sometimes.”

“What, him? Yeah, I know what he likes. Keep this between us, but he’s a lolicon. Got a foot fetish too.”

Suilla gathered more information to be safe, but everyone just said some variation of “between you and me,” then repeated that he was a lolicon. The information was so widely known she had to ask why everyone asked her to keep it a secret. Perhaps it was taboo in the town to talk about the ruler’s fetishes. Though that wouldn’t explain why everyone knew about them.”

“I suppose there’s no doubt that the town chief is a lolicon...” In which case, it wouldn’t be wise for Suilla to go after him herself. But as luck would have it, she had someone in mind – Michiru, a young and cute little Succubus that was like a baby sister to her. Michiru was a true loli and had no need to disguise herself. There was no one better to take on a lolicon. This would also be a good opportunity for her to gain experience. Suilla returned to her allies with the dirt on the town chief and a plan.

Niku vs The King of Devils, Moskito

There was no God in Beddhism. But there was a devil. Or to be more specific, there was the King of Devils, Moskito. He looked like a writhing black shadow and on closer inspection you would find that he was a thriving mass of flying

bugs stuck together. But Moskito was least threatening when in his combined form. What you had to watch out for was when the bugs split apart. They would corrupt water, the source of life. They would spread diseases and interrupt sleep. On top that, new Mosquitoes could be born from the corrupted water.

He was a fearsome devil hard to destroy even with the Holy Blade Bugspray. But one had to try, as Moskito sucked the blood out of living creatures, leaving wretchedly itchy blotches on their skin. The drug he injected to dull the pain of the bloodletting would promptly become itchy and torture the victim for many horrible moons.

“But yeah, basically, he’s a mosquito.”

“Keima, is it just me, or did you try a little too hard with this? It’s got five times as many pages as anything else,” said Rokuko while looking at the bible’s pages on the King of Devils Moskito. *She’s not wrong.*

“...Imagine a mosquito flying around while you’re trying to sleep. You’d hate it so much you’d want to kill it, right? Right.”

“You actually feel hatred for bugs?! Geez, Keima, I can’t believe you feel so strongly about mosquitoes.”

“Can you blame me? Just thinking about one of them being in the room makes it harder to sleep.”

“But you still fall asleep.” *I mean, yeah. Humans are built to fall asleep.*

* * *

Niku was excited to be Keima’s dakimakura tonight. Her face was as expressionless as ever, but she was subconsciously wagging her tail.

“Excuse me, Master.”

“Yeah, come on in... Sleep tight.” As soon as she entered Keima’s room, she got into his futon. Everything was ready for them to go to sleep... but there was an enemy in the room that night.

Bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

The sound of a devil filled the room. Keima’s brows furrowed with his eyes stilled closed.

“.....” Keima’s mood soured and in turn so too did Niku’s. The only sign of his presence was the sound, but there was no mistaking it. The King of Devils Moskito was in their room. “Excuse me, Master...”

“...Yep.”

Their voices were both low and tinged with anger. Niku left the futon and cut on the light, then focused her ears to probe for the enemy’s location.

Bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

It was like a high pitched humming. She turned to its source and saw the King of Devils Moskito.

“Hmph!” Smack! She swung her hand. It would be crushed. She felt... empty air. It had fled somewhere. Immediately, Niku heard the whining noise next to her right ear. She instinctively flung her hand in its direction. Empty air again. The whining filled the air.

“Ngh...!” A mighty foe to be sure. Adventurers and thugs were much easier for her to defeat. But no time to think. A small winged bug flew before her eyes.

“Ah!” It stopped on a wall, as if taunting her. Niku jumped off the wall near her with one leg and punched the wall. Moskito lazily dodged the blow. Smack! Smack! She launched a flurry of punches, but the bug dodged all of them by a hair’s breadth. She just couldn’t land a blow. It felt like he was playing around with her.

“Niku.”

“F-Forgive me. I will have it killed soon.”

“I’ll help.”

“Ah! I couldn’t ask you to get up for this...”

“The devil isn’t your enemy alone. He’s more my foe than anything. And hey, don’t worry. I’ve got magic. He won’t last a second.” Reliable reinforcements. Niku clenched a fist as she saw Keima begin his chant. Moskito didn’t stand a chance.

“...{Fireball}.” Three fireballs about two centimeters in diameter appeared above Keima’s palm. “Go forth and burn him to pieces!” Woosh! The balls

launched away from his palm and flew around the room for a bit... before heading straight to Niku.

“Ah?!” She reflexively slapped one away, making them explode in the air. She wasn’t hurt, but was panicking on the inside, questioning why her master had attacked her.

“O-Oh crap, are you okay?! I’m pretty sure I sent the fireballs after him, not you...”

“I’m fine.” Niku sighed in relief. He hadn’t attacked her at all. The fireballs had merely been misdirected. *That was easy to misunderstand*, thought Niku as she subconsciously scratched her arm. Ah. Niku realized what had happened.

...It was the worst possible result. She had been bitten.

“...Master.”

“Yeah. Guess we don’t have a choice...” Keima took out a porcelain pig with a wide open mouth. It was the sheathe of the Holy Blade Bugspray, known as the Pigmosquitocoil. To be honest, Niku didn’t really like Bugspray since it had a strong smell. It made her nose tingle. But it was her punishment for failing to defeat the devil herself.

As an aside, peace returned to the land once Keima realized he could use his room-wide {Purification} as an area of effect attack to kill mosquitoes.

Haku and the Festival’s Ritual

Haku Laverio was the founder of the Laverio Empire, the creator of the Adventurer’s Guild, and the Ivory Goddess. Today was the once in a year Ivory Festival, a day of celebration for Haku herself. For three days and three nights wild partying would occur throughout all of the Laverio Empire’s lands. Basically, it was a wild festival.

Naturally, as the star of the festival, Haku’s schedule was packed. She had people to wave to, parades to take part in, a feast to eat, a ritual to hold, a speech to give, and naturally, people to meet and greet at a night party. She had a mountain of work in front of her. The ritual in particular was fairly time consuming.

“You know, I would really just like to visit Rokuko in Goren.”

“It can’t happen. Your schedule is too tight.” Her beautiful cross-dressing butler put an end to Haku’s hopeless dream. As her aide, she managed Haku’s schedule and knew very well there wasn’t a single minute to waste within it. After all, it was an entire nation-wide festival celebrating her. It would be strange for her to have any spare time.

“Is this festival not held in my honor? I find it odd that I am not allowed to do what I want.”

“In truth, it is a festival for the humans who wish to celebrate you.” Haku shut her eyes. That was correct. For various reasons, she wanted to maintain her popularity with her citizen.

“...Well, I do know that I would cause quite a few problems by visiting Goren right now.”

“If you know that, then please restrain yourself, my lady.”

“Keima would cover for me somehow. And there is a former imperial official there, isn’t there? It would be fine, probably.”

“Wozma? Well, he is a skilled administrator, but he isn’t the best at negotiating better positions for himself. That’s how he ended up where he is now, as I recall.”

Haku sighed.

“I’ve come to want more freedom in my life.”

“I wouldn’t have much home for that. There is a tax to being famous and this is it. Not to mention, I believe that you already have quite a bit of freedom.”

“Funny that, I’m the one who uses taxes, not pays them. My authority allows me to do what I want, generally, but... Haaah. This is the weight that comes with authority. How annoying.”

In any case, first up was the parade from her villa to the church. Haku stood up to get ready.

* * *

Haku rode a white dragon to the church. It was time for the ritual. There were people to greet along the way, it wasn't that interesting. She just had to smile and wave. An important job to remind the citizens who rarely saw her that she was still alive and kicking, but still.

"Haaah... I know the ritual is important for preserving my power, I just wish it wasn't such a pain."

"Shall I have someone do it in your place, my lady?"

"Now that would be defeating the purpose of the ritual, and you know it. Goodness." Haku walked to the church's altar while quietly murmuring to Chloe. She was the Goddess of Adventurers, the Ivory Goddess, and her power changed depending on those worshipping her. The ritual proved through external means that Haku was the Goddess of Adventurers and that the prayers were arriving to her.

"Now then, shall we begin? Is everyone ready?" Haku sat upon the alter—or rather, upon the counter. On either side of the counter was rows and rows of onlookers. The rows stretched out of the church, even, and were filled with men and women of all ages... and all of them held flasks in their hands. Inside was beer, to be offered to Haku. Haku held up a beer jug.

"Very well. Cheers, everyone." Experienced adventurers passed their evenings drinking beer with the boys. Therefore, Haku's ritual was to have a drinking content for forty-eight hours straight. It was a simple ritual where she drank the beer offered to her—or at least, it was simple since she was a Dungeon Core that didn't need to sleep or excrete waste. Incidentally, don't tell this to Haku, but her feared image came in part from her managing this feat of excessive drinking without going to the bathroom even once.

"Here you are, Lady Haku."

"Yes, thank you. Nnn, gulp, gulp... Fwaah. Thank you." She gulped down the ale poured into her mug and up came the next person.

"Lady Haku! Please enjoy!"

"We'll see. Gulp, gulp... Oh my, this is quite good, actually. Next." He had apparently spent quite a bit on his offering. The beer had a nice, rich taste to it.

“It is an honor, Lady Haku. I offer you this wine today, the most expensive I could find.”

“Oh, this one’s poisoned. Death penalty.” Haku snapped her finger and the man who had presented her with wine poisoned by some kind of skill collapsed onto the ground. He was still conscious. The onlookers murmured among themselves, surprised that once again someone tried to poison Haku. Where was he from? Demon country, maybe? In any case, nearby soldiers dragged the man away in the blink of an eye. They were used to it. And all in all, it was part of the show. As was customary, the assassin would fight in the underground colosseum until he died. Haku’s subordinates organized the fights such that the prisoners would last about a year before reaching their limit.

The ritual was set upon by assassins acting tough each year, but poison didn’t work on Haku. Naturally, she could personally defeat anyone who attacked her from the front. Even when drunk she was fine and had Chloe there just in case. By defeating the numerous assassins without any trouble, Haku strengthened the people’s faith in her.

* * *

“...Fwaah. Another year, another ritual safely completed. I have to say, I’m feeling quuuute nice, ahaha.” Haku, having drunk alcohol for forty-eight hours straight, set down her mug with rosy cheeks. The crowd roared, just as they had every year for centuries. Haku stood up on shaky legs with Chloe’s support.

“Fine work, my lady. Next is the third day’s Grand Finale, the evening party. Are you feeling well enough to go?”

“A good adventurer does not like beer ruin their job... Hic!”

“Did you by chance actually drink all of that? I tell you every year, you can just stealthily convert it into DP...”

“What a fool you are, Chloe. That would be a waste of good beer!” Haku gave a divine smile fit for a goddess of her heavenly stature.

As an aside, once again fulfilling a yearly tradition, the rocking of the carriage made Haku vomit on the way to the night party.









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by Supana Onikage

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