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Putting the icing and cherry on the chikubi - est 2015.


クソゲーオンライン仮
2
バグで妊娠したけどなんの問題もないわ！
つちせ八十八
イラスト：にろ・東雲太郎
MF文庫J

Kusoge Online (BETA)

Volume 2

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Color Illustrations


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2巻のハイライトシーン
※イメージです。実際の文章とは異なる場合があります
フュリー
アリス
ササラキ
アズラエル
リズナ

From right to left:

Fury, Lizna, Azrael, Sasaraki, Alice (As if you couldn't've guessed...)

Top-Left Sign

Volume 2's Highlight Scene

*Product of imagination. Actual sentence may differ from the illustration at hand.


初心者歓迎!
優しく教えます♥
「しょ、しょ、初心者熱烈歓迎中……です……っ!
宣伝のため、宣伝のためだもん、
恥ずかしくないもん……っ!」
立入禁止
工事中

Sign:

Beginner Reception!

I'll teach you kindly❤

(Probably, kanji in second line are hard to read)

Azrael:

"T-T-This is just a passionate beginner reception...!

It's promotion, it's just promotion,

there's absolutely nothing embarrassing about it...!"

Barrier Tape:

No Entry

Barrier:

Under Construction

Chapter 1:

There are Nothing But Problems in this Game

第一章

このゲームには
問題しかない

THE
JUNK!
Kuso Game Online 2

The sound of surge was echoing beneath the orange sun.

It was the sound of the sea with the sea scenery spreading beneath Sasaraki's eyes. Though, it was a small sea, about ten kilometers into every direction. In it were a bunch of islands. On one of them desert and pyramids. Next to that, another one with a gigantic castle on it, covered in ice. Between those islands was a vortex, preventing travel between them.

All of those had been set up by our youth, Sasaraki.

For he was a gamemaster.

The creators of this virtual world, 'Sword & Magic Online,' its absolute rulers.

Why a boy would be a gamemaster? Because all the devs had run away.

This game was a kusoge.

They'd advertised that it'd have 255 floors, yet only one floor had actually been implemented. Sasaraki had filled in for the developers who had left this kind of kusoge behind and determined himself to become a gamemaster for the sake of his comrades— Lizna and Azrael.

"Hmm... I'm done arranging the islands at large, but..."

Sasaraki mumbled looking at the monitor in front of him while seated on a chair-like travelling device, called 'Air Master.' The implementation of the second floor, 'The End of the Endless Ocean,' was more or less going according to plan. He was about 50% done.

"But... I guess I'd like to see some more 'enjoyments' there."

Such were the teachings of the mysterious girl, Alice, the one who had appointed him gamemaster.

And one of the most important teachings of her was...

"The 100 Rules of Being a Gamemaster, rule number 4— You mustn't unravel the secrets of the game!"

If the players would see its secrets— that is, if they'd understand the game in its entirety, they wouldn't be able to enjoy the game anymore. Obstacles they'd come to understand - a world they'd come to understand - would be boring. Which is why they needed 'enjoyments.'

"Yeah, I kind of want a monastery at the shore, though it's got no real meaning behind it."

[Understood.]

Popped up on the 'Master Screen' which opened itself in front of Sasaraki.

Thereupon, an island shifted. Smoke arose on the icy one.

And all of a sudden a small monastery had appeared on its shore.

Able to alter the world in the blink of an eye, such was the power of one of the main function of the 'Master Screen,' the 'Creation Mode.' It could spawn all kinds of buildings, events, quests, monsters; your imagination's the limit.

"Ah, wait a minute."

[Waiting a minute.]

"The doorway seems to be stuck in an ice wall and can't be entered."

[Is that so?]

"I'd like you to fix that."

[Eeh? That'd be a pain in the ass.]

"....."

It could do anything.

But the actions it undertook were only vaguely faithful, and on top of that whimsical, too.

According to Alice, *"A fairy's in there,"* but that fairy was doing things way too half-assedly. And because of that, this kusoge became the kusoge it was. Who programmed this pointlessly sophisticated AI? It didn't appear to have been Alice—

"Please! Nobody will be able to enter it like this."

[Would you like me to wreck a wall?]

"Of course not!"

[Master sure is demanding, Jeez...]

He was the one who wanted to say 'Jeez' here. Thanks to that vague 'Master Screen,' the implementation of floor two was painstaking. If he ordered it to do something, it would somehow comply, but the way it took his commands to action was incredibly half-baked.

"...By the way, how's the clearing of floor one coming along?"

[Understood, displaying floor one...]

He was creating the second floor of this virtual world right now. If someone were to clear the first floor, the game was programmed to let everyone move on to the second floor. It hadn't been long since the leading raid guild messed up floor one's boss, so there should've been time still.

The display shifted and showed floor one's final dungeon.

In front of the dungeon were three players.

"Alright! We're gonna clear this dungeon with just the three of us—!"

"B-But can we do that...? Even a raid group couldn't, right...?"

"I've got some intel, we'll be fine! There's hardly any trash mobs left, it's just the boss!"

"Our preparations are flawless. There's no reason to be hesitant, Sousla."

"Y-Yeah... if you two say so, I'll... do my best..."

It appeared to be a determined party of three .

"Ooh, I wonder whether they can do it."

[That is considered impossible.]

"...Eh? Why?"

[Look for yourself.]

When the girl, Sousla, touched the switch to the hidden dungeon entrance...

BOOOM.

The three of them exploded.

An explosion as violent as a fireball's took place and almost set loose an avalanche in the mountains.

Sasaraki watched it in a daze, seeing the death notifications of all of them pop up on screen.

[Player Sousla Died. Reason: Touched Forbidden Land.]

[Player Douglas Died. Reason: Touched Forbidden Land.]

[Player Gogoss died. Reason: Touched Forbidden Land.]

".....The hell just happened?"

[Fury-san did some work on it.]

Namely, that any player touching the switch to the hidden passage would explode.

"WHY?!"

"Eh? No particular reason☆"

Suddenly, the few decimeters tall fairy, Fury, appeared.

"What have you done?!"

"You see~, didn't Master say so himself?☆"

"What?!"

"That this game needs enjoyments—☆"

"That's just you enjoying yourself, isn't it?!"

Thereafter, he fought it out with the 'Master Screen' and somehow fixed the switch.

—This game's a kusoge.

The biggest of reasons being that the implementations were way too half-assed.

And those had been brought upon them by evil-minded developers.

* * *

After implementation in general had been done, Sasaraki returned to the debugging room.

The debugging room, an impassable area surrounded by jet-black walls. A girl was in one of the corners. Sitting on a chair tall enough for her feet to not reach to the ground, she was surrounded by numerous screens waiting on her, while she was playing a stare-down game with the text displayed and a frantic expression on her face.

Sasaraki and Lizna were watching that Azrael's back together.

"Azrael-san, what are you doing?"

Lizna asked, bewondered.

"I'm developing a 'divorce system.'"

Azrael was this game's programmer. She could change the rules of world to her heart's content— her imagination and skills were the limit. Her imagination was above average, her skills, though, weren't. Actually, she was an amateur.

But she was a hardworking person.

Which is why she tried to read the code carefully as much as an amateur could...

"I-I-I can't lose here...!"

...to implement a divorce system. More precisely, to arrange her own divorce.

"...It's a really... awful bug, isn't it?"

Sasaraki looked at his left hand. A silver ring graced his ring finger. It had 'Sasaraki & Azrael' engraved in Japanese. The same ring should be on Azrael's finger. Uselessly detailed craftsmanship, indeed.

They were newly weds.

The reason was a bug, for the most part. And the developer's ill intentions.

And so Azrael tried her hardest to develop a divorce system.

"Mhm, mhm, so that's how it is?"

Lizna nodded beside him as if she'd understood something.

"That's why Sasaraki's watching Azrael with that gentle expression of his which says 'no need for you to do all that,' right?"

Sasaraki fell off his chair.

"NO, I'M NOT?! I WANNA GET DIVORCED TOO?!"

"Azrael's cute when she's desperate, isn't she? I'd alos love to watch her forever like this~"

Lizna said, turning a deaf ear.

"But is this okay, I wonder? We don't have much time left, right?"

She took a paper from the desk close to her.

Written on it was 'End of Service Notice.'

"It's two more weeks until the end of service and we have to take measures."

"Fufu~ You've to think the other way around, Lizna."

A voice said from behind. When they turned round, it was the gamemaster girl, Alice, with her silver hair fluttering. She expressed a pointlessly confident smile. Sasaraki knew that smile all too well. Basically, it was a smile signalling that she wasn't thinking anything good.

Alice pointed at Lizna sharply and shouted...



"IF THERE'S STILL TWO WEEKS LEFT, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU WASTE A DAY OR TWO!"

"Nonono!"

When Sasaraki thought that that'd been worse than expected, Alice chuckled.

"I'm just joking. A divorce system wouldn't be a waste."

"But it's only Azrael and I who've been married here, you know?"

Thanks to the patch of a former malicious developer, for a whole hour, this game had turned into a world where people would get married just by holding hands. Only two people should've been affected by that. That only those two people would go all out to get divorced couldn't be helped.

"Look, there are much more other things we need to do."

Ten thousand active players. This was the condition for the game to continue. And the current player count was 10255. Approximately 20 players quit per day, and if this kept up, they had 13 more days until game over.

They had to improve the game somehow and make the players stay. For that sake, they were doing two big things: Implementing the second floor, 'The End of the Endless Ocean' as well as adding new components; and at the same time crushing critical bugs (a lot of them there to crush!) which were the cause for the end of the world.

"We're the ones implementing the second floor, not Azrael, remember?"

"But there's a lot of bugs left, you know?"

In this game, laws of physics like gravity or attraction were computed by extremely half-assed algorithms and so if players performed just a bit of an unforeseen action, they'd break the heaven and earth. There'd been a case where it rained 'long swords' instead of water before, which went down as 'The Bladerain Incident.'

"It's fine, that one didn't make too many players quit."

"Everyone's already used to that kind of stuff, right...? But we can't leave things like this."

The habituated players aside, new players would immediately stop dropping by.

It was unlikely that there'd be people who'd want to come to a world where all of a sudden swords come falling from the sky killing them without knowing what to do.

"Wouldn't it be better if we had Azrael focus on fixing bugs?"

"Sasaraki, that's naive."

"How so?"

"An amateur can't fix bugs in a VRMMO."

"Did you just negate Azrael's whole meaning of existence here?!"

"Listen to people until they're done talking— especially if they're a gamemaster."

Alice laughed a "Fufun," and looked at Azrael.

"A divorce system is pretty complicated to make, you know? Managing the player relationship flag established by the wedding ring, the item sharing, or Youth Protection Code connections... if she can tackle this kind of complicated system with that passion, Azrael will soon be an amateur no longer."

In other words, she probably wanted to say, 'If you've got the motivation, learning's a piece of cake!'

"Plus, I've things to do, too."

"What things?"

"I've to make a roadmap on how we plan to improve our game, and prepare the application papers for the 'Neo Virtual World Funding Organization' financing offline, and— Well, boring stuff. Let's have Azrael master programming in the meantime."

If it's that..., Sasaraki also agreed.

Then Azrael mumbled...

"Alright... so this is the romance parameter... I got that much—"

Azrael raised her hands and stretched.

The revolving chair turned around. She met eyes with Sasaraki and the others.

"Ah, you were all here?"

"You didn't notice? That's some amazing... concentration..."

Sasaraki lost his words along the way; because a squall blew all of a sudden. Even though it was a closed room. Azrael was wearing her usual black mini skirt, and so the skirt was swaying and fluttering in the wind.

Hence, if we were to put it frankly— he saw a white, tri-angled piece of cloth.

"—KYAAAAAAAAAA—?!"

She panicked and pulled down her mini skirt to conceal it.

"Wai—... Wha— D-D-Did you see 'em—?!"

Wow, what should I say now... but white, huh? Those were unexpected but they do suit you, do you actually wear white in real life too, they made my heart skip a beat, no wait, if I tell her those, Azrael will kill me, anyways I need an excuse fast—?!

"I didn't see anything! Nothing white for sure, alright—?!"

"So you totally *did* see them—?!"

"Waa~h! A standard lovers' quarrel, isn't it?!"

"Wind's nothing unpredictable here. You should've taken a harder look."

Lizna and Alice voiced their discontent and absurdities.

"Why—?! Why's there wind blowing indoors—?!"

"There's a reason to that."

Alice answered in a calm tone.

"If you're wearing a mini skirt within the test area, the squall chance increases by 20%."

"WHAT KIND OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT FEATURE IS THIIIIIIIIS—?!"

Azrael groaned while holding down her mini skirt.

"Wait, this was sexual harassment just now, wasn't it?! Fury! Fury, where are you—?!"

"Aye-aaaye☆ I'm Fury-chan, your fairy savior☆"

The moment Azrael had shouted that, the small fairy in her dress appeared in the air. Her name was Fury, an AI acting as the contact for players to voice their complaints and bug reports. One of her duties was to bomb players who sexually harassed others, actually that was the sole duty she really made an effort to see through.

She just couldn't resist the pleasure she felt when killing players.

"Sadly, Fury-chan didn't see any sexual harassment here☆"

Fury giggled and winked at Sasaraki in a cute pose.

"Sasaraki peeked at my panties, you know—?!"

"That's no sexual harassment☆"

"Wha—?!"

"After all, in the system you both are registered as newly weds~☆"

She pointed at Sasaraki and Azrael alternately.

Then her cheeks blushed and she concealed her mouth with her hands.

She said as if telling a secret...

"You can do those 'various things' listed in the Youth Protection Code Violations, you know?☆"

"Va—?!"

"rious—?!"

Fury chuckled while Sasaraki and Azrael's voices overlapped.

"Fury solved your problem, didn't she? I'll excuse myself, then☆"

She spun in a circle and her figure disappeared.

Left were Azrael and Sasaraki, looking at each other simultaneously.

—You can do those 'various things'☆

Fury's words from now rang in Sasaraki's ears.

Mostly out of reflex, his gaze went from Azrael's breasts, to her hips, to her thighs.

Various things— picturing that, his cheeks flared up.

"Wai— Hey! What are you looking at?! Stop eyeing me, no fantasizing—!"

She said, hiding both her breasts and thighs, and turning deep red.

"I-I-I'LL DEFINITELY MAKE THAT DIVORCE HAPPEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEN—!"

* * *

And so Azrael was as eager as ever to implement a divorce system. Sasaraki and Alice were in the middle of preparing the second floor, 'The End of the Endless Ocean,' set for release in two days. Lizna had taken on the role of the tummler who'd get the crowd excited and tell the players about its discovery, she held the script and mumbled her lines like an actress waiting for her appearance on stage.

In the middle of this chaotic debugging room...

Alice jumped on top of a mandarin box.

"Well now, we've to pull ourselves together!"

She sharply pointed at Sasaraki and shouted.

"LET'S STATUS-QUO-CHECK, SASARAKI!"

"Ah, yeah... Should we have a look at floor two's situation, then?"

As of now, Sasaraki was in charge of gamemaster-related matters. Alice was the 'General Management Assistant Goddess,' in other words, all she did was advising. Sasaraki had been nominated as the meeting's facilitator, but substantially, Alice - as the most knowledgeable one present - was the chairman.

He thought that Alice should be the supervisor then, but it seemed like she wouldn't yield there.

"Currently, we have a bunch of problems with the second floor."

"What problems?"

"First of all, this is the entrance."

Alice showed floor two's entrance on the debugging room's main screen. It was an island with waves surging on the beach. In the center of it gaped a huge hole and a steel-made spiral staircase led downwards. That was the structure allowing players to go up after beating floor one's final boss.

"The settings of this spiral staircase bugged and its duration's only 3."

"Meaning?"

"If someone attacks it, it'll collapse in a flash and no one will be able to move on to floor two."

"Game breaking as always, these bugs, aren't they?!"

This game was more or less game breaking in every way. Things could break instantly, people could die instantly, the economy was collapsing...

And yet there were still players enjoying this game.

People who still had faith in this world and lived on in it, more than ten thousand of them.

What could they do to make the world they lived in go on?

"What do you think we should do, Sasaraki?"

"Hmm, give me a second."

From the beginning, Alice had always asked Sasaraki for his opinion first. He thought that if she'd just decide it all, they'd obviously be faster and more efficient, but she seemed to have the ideology that, 'You shall be more independant as a game master!'

Somehow, she seemed to feel a duty to raise Sasaraki.

"How about an anti-gravity field that'll let people float up or something? I think there was something like that in the geography chip, wasn't there?"

"Mhm-mhm, sounds like good thinking. Then let's try that!"

For now, the three of them (Azrael decided to stay behind) teleported to the place in question.

Sasaraki gripped the pendant dangling from his neck and booted up the 'Master Screen.' He commanded, "Map chip, spiral staircase for exchange anti-gravity field," to the huge screen that had appeared in front of him.

[U n d e r s t o o d , M a s t e r . T e r m i n a t i n g . . .]

In front of him, the spiral staircase disassembled into electrons.

Instantly, an 'anti gravity field' in the form of a pentagram was placed on the floor of the dungeon.

"Heeh~, so it looks like this? I'll try it!"

Lizna said and jumped on the 'anti gravity field.' The next instant, Lizna was shot into the sky with absurd velocity. Seconds later, they heard the acoustically-delayed shockwave like a jet breaking through the sonic barrier. When Sasaraki looked up dumbfoundedly, a 'GAKON!' sound echoed in the skies at last. Lizna came dropping down and crashed into the 'anti gravity field,' which bounced her up again. Rinse and repeat.

[Player Lizna Died. Damage: 680. Reason: Fall Damage]

It said above Lizna's corpse.

A short silence. Finally, Alice sighed...

"Maybe we should prepare parachutes."

"That's not the issue here?! Wait, why did Lizna deactivate the Invincible Barrier?!"

"Eh? Because a world with no one dying's boring."

He heard Lizna's voice, who was supposed to be dead. A special gamemaster privilege.

Thirty seconds later, Lizna revived and returned.

"Looks good! Let's keep it like this!"

"This is like those traps that are aiming for the lot who's careless after clearing a dungeon, isn't it?"

"We don't need those, okay?! Let's just do something normal, alright?!"

In the end, they went with Lizna's idea and made it into a rock-climbing challenge.

"Honest work, making stairs is honest work~♪"

While Lizna was singing an enigmatic song, they put rocks on the wall. It were adjustments to make it into a rock-climbing scaffold. They could leave it to a fairy by using the 'Master Screen,' but the fairy's work would be half-assed, so there'd be hardly any testing or adjusting.

The gamemaster tools were one example of many of how half-assed this game was.

"I wonder whether this kind of work will become easy-peasy once Azrael-san did her best?"

"Actually, wouldn't it be better if we left it to adults, to begin with?"

As Alice had said already, Azrael and they, too, were beginners, after all.

He felt that within the player base there should be people a bit more resourceful than them.

"Sasaraki... unfortunately that's impossible.

Alice expressed a desolate smile. It was the smile of an adult.

"Why?"

"If an adult with decent judgement works as a developer in this world, they run away after three days in average."

"Isn't it plain sad that I totally understand?!"

"Also, if we hire an adult, we'll have to pay them, right?"

Will we be fine, though...? Well, at least we're not fussed about money.

"Well then, leave this to us, you have different testing to do."

"Yeah... Ah, it's about time, anyway. I'll go back to the debugging room for a bit."

In this game, a married man shan't talk to girls other than his wife for too long. A violation led to account deletion. According to Fury, it was an anti-infidelity measure. The developers had been true weirdos, indeed.

Alice winked and waved her hand.

"Please be gentle to Azrael, okay?"

"The way you're putting it is the worst!"

"You're also happy to have been able to marry that girl, aren't you?"

"This isn't a matter of me being happy or not, it wasn't mutual, it was a bug!"

"You think the bug was the only reason?"

"Heh?"

"Fufu," Alice chuckled and expressed a smile heavy with meaning.

"A love you embraced once doesn't easily vanish, you know? Even if—"

Alice extended her hands and said as if she talked to the whole world.

"—it was an incident within a kusoge, right?"

* * *

"Ah, she's still on it."

Once he'd returned to the debugging room, he saw Azrael still typing away on the keyboard.

Since she'd taken off her usual cloak, her body line was well-perceivable.

He'd been thinking this since the day they met, but her body was absolutely stunning.

"Not good, I can't become conscious now—!"

Sasaraki shook his head. It had been a mere misunderstanding that led to Azrael and him getting married, there'd been neither romance nor love involved. Fury said that since they were married they could do 'various things,' but—

Suddenly a question came to his mind.

In this kusoge world, where you'd get married by just holding hands—

How far might those 'various things' be implemented?

"T... That even this kind of thing's digitalized... No, that's probably only natural, but...!"

He could hear Azrael speaking to herself.

It appeared she was typing on the keyboard to process something.

"This is bad, seriously bad, if I don't get divorced, my chastity will...!"

Her voice sounded like she felt a serious thread coming at her. Her shoulders were trembling.

"...Azrael, what's wrong?"

"HYAUN—?!"

She jumped up like a surprised hamster and turned around immediately.

Her cheeks blushed a deep red, making a panicked face like a child who had their secret peeked at by their parents.

"N-N-N-N-Nothing at all—! Close your eyes for now, Sasaraki!"

"Heh...? My eyes? Why?"

"Just do it, hurry—!"

Then Azrael accidentally bumped her elbow against the console behind her.

It looked like she hit some kind of switch, the main screen started up.

And on it— was something unexpected.

"No, Wai— Stupid! Idiot! Don't look! Look away—!"

He didn't even notice Azrael's figure who wildly waved about with her arms. On the screen was amazingly detailed data. Azrael's data. Height: 156cm. Weight: 49,8kg. Three sizes: 88-57-83—

"Wait, what is this data?!"

"DON'T LOOK, PLEASE DON'T LOOK, STUPIIIIIIIIIID—!"

Azrael shouted, drew 'Magical Sword Gram,' and threw it at Sasaraki with all her might. 'Magical Sword Gram' came flying at Sasaraki spinning like a helicopter, deflected off of his Invincible Barrier, bouncebladed (*A phenomenon where

one's own blade comes bouncing back to oneself. A frequent happening in this game.), and killed Azrael instead.

".....Uwaah..."

While Sasaraki was being speechless, Azrael revived and returned.

"WHY'S MY INVINCIBLE BARRIER NOT WORKIIIIIIIIIIIIING—?!"

"That's the difference in master ranks, you kno~w?☆"

A bright, explaining voice. Before they knew it, Fury had appeared at their sides.

"Fury, what's a master rank?"

"Those are the ranks among gamemasters☆"

Fury pressed a button and the picture on the main screen changed.

It showed a pyramid diagram, divided into layers.

"The world of gamemasters is a strict hierarchical society☆ Starting from the bottom, the ranks are: 'Associate,' 'Coordinator,' 'Administrator,' 'Wizard.' And currently, Azrael is an 'Associate'☆ In other words, she's an underling, so her Invincible Barrier's useless in the face of her superior☆"

"Wha—?!"

"Eh...? But Azrael can alter the code without issues, can't she?"

"That's because Master granted her the ability by his 'Wizard' authority☆"

Fury pointed at the 'Immortal Pendant (Imitation)' dangling from Azrael's neck.

"It's no problem to grant temporary privileges☆"

"Eh...? W-Wait a sec!"

Azrael hugged her own body tightly.

"Are you saying that I wouldn't be able to resist if Sasaraki turned on me—?!"

"Ah, it'll be fine, if something were to happen...☆"

"...You're going to save me?"

"...I'll make sure to videotape it☆ As a momento of your first time☆"

Azrael grew speechless. As did Sasaraki. *thumpthumpthump*. *Even if it's just a virtual world, this is going way too far— Well, as long as I control myself, we'll be fine— Yeah, we'll... be fine, right?!*

"C-Can't resist if..."

Azrael blushed and glared at Sasaraki, mortified.

Poor Azrael, Sasaraki thought and decided to ask...

"Hey, can't you put Azrael's privileges on the same level as mine?"

"There can be only one 'Wizard' in this world☆"

"No way..."

"Ah, there's one method, you know?☆"

"Namely?"

"If Master would delete his account, that'd work☆"

He took a deep breath.

"That's what my former master did and the privileges could be transferred, right?☆"

"That's..."

Account deletion. In this world, it held the same meaning as death. Sasaraki would disappear as a player. As long as you weren't banned, you could make a new account, but under the pretext of something like 'to avoid the creation of fraud accounts,' there was a restriction that wouldn't let you create another account for at least a month.

One month. At that time this game would've already ceases service.

"Uuuuuuh..."

Azrael grumbled frustratedly.

Not good. I've to get her to accept our situation.

I can't delete my account now, I've to make sure the game goes on.

"Hey, Azrael, I won't do anything."

"...Says the imposter who tricked me into marriage..."

"Ugu—!"

That one still stung. Although she, in a way, had reaped what she sowed, it was the truth.

Azrael stared at Sasaraki for a while.

Finally, she sighed.

"—Swear it."

"Heh?"

She said that.

"That you won't do anything weird, swear by something precious to you."

"...Err, you want me to promise it?"

Even if he did, there was no system in this game that'd make sure he kept his promise.

Azrael nodded and glared at Sasaraki.

"C'mon, just do it already."

"Y-Yeah, alright, alright. Err— by something precious to me—"

Precious.

Asked that, the first that came to mind were the faces of those two girls. Lizna, who had invited Sasaraki with a carefree smile when he first logged in and was all alone. And the girl who had been waiting on top of the castle walls with her cloak fluttering in the wind, looking like the heroine in a tale—

"—Azrael."

It came to him naturally.

"...Eh?"

Sasaraki smiled.

This world was beyond repair, but he had found something precious nonetheless.

Even just that alone was good enough to let him think this world had its worth.

"I swear by you."

"E-Eh—?!"

Azrael expressed surprise.

Sasaraki closed his eyes and slowly put his sword on the ground.

Imitating Azrael, who always did it like this, he kneeled formally.

"I swear by someone precious to me— I wager the name of Azrael that I absolutely won't do anything insolent."

"Eh? W-W-Wai—..."

Azrael's voice grew shrill for some reason.

"...Err, will this do?"

"Eh?"

Azrael busily shifted her gaze from left to right and back.

Finally, she shook her head, trembling.

"M-M-Me, someone precious...? E-Eh—?"

"Huh? Something wrong with that?"

"Not wrong, but, I, umm, that means..."

"Most precious to me is Azrael... as are Lizna, and Alice."

"Eh?"

Azrael's jaw dropped.

"'Cause, you know, you're the friends I'm playing this game with."

Azrael closed her mouth and stiffened for a bit.

At last...

"D— Don't put it so ambiguously, alright?! If you're talking about friends, say so from the beginning!"

"Eh...? What was ambiguous about that?"

"I don't care—! Idiot! Die from a bug!"

Azrael blushed and turned away.

She cast a sidelong glance at Sasaraki and said a few more words...

"B-But I'll believe it... that you won't do anything weird."

It appeared that it had had a bit of an effect, after all.

"Yeah, thanks... So did you come to understand something about how we can get divorced?"

When Sasaraki asked that, Azrael grew silent feeling seemingly awkward, "Uh~"

That was to be expected, but the progress seemed unsatisfactory.

"F-First of all, there seems to be a system called 'Tokimeki Points' (English: Palpitation Points)."

"'Tokimeki Points'... Somehow, this sounds like from some romance game, doesn't it?"

Azrael nodded.

"Looks like you can check up on them by tapping on the ring twice."

"Hmm. Have you tried?"

"It wouldn't work. Only boys can check on the girl's points."

"Sounds like a pretty unjust system."

"Wanna read the developer commentary? Seems like he holds a big grudge, you know?"

"I've nothing but bad feelings about it, but I'll read it anyway."

Azrael slammed onto a key on the keyboard.

A text appeared on the screen.

['TP' System Explanation

The TP system is a subsystem of the romance system. While visualizing fellow players' affection in the form of points, it strives to make riajuus (explode and die!) realize the truth that 'love = self-interest' by offerings merits.

You can gather TP by performing 'Tokimeki Actions.' What are Tokimeki Actions? Don't make me say it, you scum, die. Who was it that brought something as boring as love into a virtual world? Anyway, die. And don't revive. My bad. I'll continue with the explanation.

Also, by using TP, you can make miracles happen. Love can make miracles happen. Once performed, it'll disappear. Love's a consumable. Save it up again. Also, if you save up too much, you'll explode. Only your clothes. Love is explosions. Explode and die, you bastards, all of you, die a social death.

Girlfriend-less, 38-years-old Tanaka]

".....Amazing..."

"I know, right?!"

He certainly could feel the grudge. It went down his spine as a chill.

They had totally been made to clean up other people's outrageous mess.

"So, Sasaraki, let's check the points for now."

"Yeah. Our clothes might explode, after all..."

For the time being, he did as Azrael had said and tapped on the ring twice.

Thereupon, a window appeared above Azrael's head.

[Current TP: 250 Count: 00]

"It says we're at 250 right now."

"Is that a lot?"

"Aye-aaaye☆ Looks like it's Fury-chan's turn, doesn't it?☆"

Fury fluttered above Azrael's head.

He had a bad feeling coming at him right there. This fairy caused him nothing but bad feelings.

"First of all, there are TP criterions: Above 100, you're acknowledged as lovey-dovey☆"

".....Right..."

Azrael glared at him with quite the amazing look in her eyes. Scary.

"If you accumulate too much, you'll explode, but there's no limit as such. You can gather a million or fantastillion points even☆ Your love's infinite☆"

"Wouldn't that cause a system memory overflow...?"

"And when your TP are high enough, you have various benefits."

Fury continued her explanation with a smile.

"At 150, 'Fantastic Kiss' will unlock☆"

"I don't think I wanna hear it, but what does that skill do?"

"Kissing your partner on the cheek will grant you a buff that boosts your attack power by 50% for 30 seconds☆"

"…….Gu…"

Azrael's gazed at him with upturned eyes. Reflexively, his gaze got drawn in by her lips. Her pink lips. While he did his utmost best to suppress the thought that it certainly did feel like touching those lips would up his attack power, Sasaraki laughed a deceiving "Hahaha."

Azrael averted her gaze, too.

Right, Azrael and I are (married but) no lovers.

I shouldn't forget that!

"E-Enough with that. We won't *ever* use that! We'll never gather any more points!"

"E~h?☆ And here I thought that the 500 points skill would be super useful to you☆"

"Never ever! Gonna use that—!"

Azrael declared firmly while slamming her hand onto the console.

"By the way, what does that 'Count' thing besides TP mean?"

"Kya~☆ Master's such a lecher~ Oh you little, you~☆"

Fury put her hands to her cheeks and shook her head while wriggling with her body.

"It shows how many times you've loved each other, of course☆"

"That means—"

"The 'Direct Mucous Membrane Contact' count☆"

Fairy-san dropped the bomb.

"WHA—?!"

"WHA—?!"

"Ahahaha, did you two picture it just now?☆ You did, didn't you~?☆"

Azrael and Sasaraki had raised their voices at the same time.

"Ah, 'Direct Mucous Membrane Contact' means kisses, of course☆ Ehehe~☆"

You totally wanted *to make us visualize that, didn't you?!* Without thinking, he gazed at Azrael's face. The black-haired girl who had captivated his eyes seemed to suddenly realize something as her face flared up and she took a step back.

"Wai— W-W-What did *you* think she was talking about—?!"

"Nothing! I thought nothing—!"

"Liar! You obviously did! And here you promised something minutes ago, remember—?!"

"I said I thought nothing, really, alright—?!"

BING! They heard something which might as well have been a sound effect in a quiz show. Beside Azrael's TP it said [+10 Charming Lover's Quarrel]. Her TP rose to 260. Azrael's face broke half into tears.

"WHY WOULD THEY INCREASE BECAUSE OF THIS—?!"

"They're designed to increase when something's judged as a lover's quarrel☆"

"WHO'S DECIDING THAT—?!"

"I, of course☆"

"The worst jury ever!"

The three of them kept on arguing like that.

"W-We've wasted our time..."

Azrael took a deep breath.

"Anyways—! We've to divorce as quickly as possible, Sasaraki!"

"Ah, yeah... But what methods are left to try?"

"If we put it simply, it should be enough to just destroy the rings, right?!"

Azrael extended her right hand into the air. Her ring sparkled brilliantly.

"The marriage flag's ought to be controlled with this ring!"

"But the wedding rings are 'Indestructible Objects,' right?"

Indestructible Objects were, as the name implied, objects that couldn't be destroyed. Putting it the other way around, everything else could be destroyed. Floors, walls, ceilings, you name it. And so some of the first city, 'Start,' had been razed and was reminding of the post-apocalypse.

Right after they'd gotten married, Azrael had tried to strike at it with 'Magical Sword Gram,' but it hadn't yielded an inch.

"To begin with, wouldn't it be contradicting if an indestructible object could be destroyed?"

"You're naive, Sasaraki!"

Azrael wagged her finger, "Tsk, tsk, tsk."

"If it's this bug-infested game— we can force our way past contradiction!"

"Yeah... Right, you could say that, probably."

"Right? Right?!"

All of a sudden, another bing and +10 TP. Total: 270.

"WHY—?!"

"This was clearly a 'Charming Lover's Quarrel' right now☆"

Fury said and expressed a lovely smile.

"Ku... Aaa—h, I don't care anymore! C'mon, Sasaraki, we're gonna go look for it!"

"Eh? Look for what?"

"An item or skill that looks like it might be able to penetrate 'Indestructible Objects.'"

"So we're basically looking for a bug, aren't we?"

"That's right. Got a problem with that?"

"No, not really. It'll probably help with development, too."

Finding a way to break 'Indestructible Objects' was also necessary for their game development. If you want to know why, thanks to the half-assed flag settings, monsters out in the fields occasionally became 'Indestructible.'

So-called 'Immortal Monsters.' If you happened to encounter one of them, all you could do was run. Though according to Fury, *"It's a feature to spice the game up with a little more suspense☆"* If they could squish that one, going on an adventure in the fields would get plenty more normal.

But is there really a skill like that—?

"Of course there's something like that, Master☆"

"Eh—? Fury, do you know something?"

"Of course I do☆ Didn't I tell you? Love can make miracles happen☆"

Fury formed a heart with her hands while her cheeks blushed.

"The 500 TP skill is called 'The First Cake Cut'☆ As it's your first action in unison, you're allowed to cut up 'all objects' like a cake— that's the skill☆"

* * *

Their current TP were 270.

They needed to gather 230 more points, quick.

There seemed to be a limit to how many times you could get them through Lover's Quarrels, so repeating that wasn't an option.

"'Direct Mucous Membrane Contact' would get you 300 points, you know?☆"

Fury suggested and was shot down by Azrael immediately. However, other, similar activities were 'Take a bath together' or 'Warm each other's bodies in a snowy mountain cave,' all of them were, well, very telling of the developers' own desires.

They were terrifyingly funny in the head, for real.

"Sasaraki! Can't you do something about the parameters with the 'Master Screen?!'"

"N-No... Protection in the player domain's tight..."

The 'Master Screen' was an all-purpose tool indeed, but character or item data was strictly protected by some 'anti cheat' program or something. You needed a specific item to lift protection, but Fury had disposed of it.

Although they were supposed to be gamemasters, they couldn't fiddle with the data at all.

Because of that, no matter how long they'd try their best and what they'd do, this game'd stay a kusoge forever.

In any case, the activity they picked from the set at hand was—

"Sasaraki! Don't you dare! Don't you *dare* to turn around!"

"I-I got it already! I won't turn around, promised!"

They were at the upper reaches of floor one's final dungeon, 'Frostmountain' cavern.

Outside the cavern a snowstorm was roaring - that kind of place.

In there, the two of them were sitting on the floor, grasping their knees, while both of their backs were touching. By the way, their backs were bare. They were performing the Tokimeki Action 'Warm each other's bodies in a snowy mountain cave.' If they warmed each other's skin for 15 minutes, they'd gain 250 TP.

"T-This is the relatively lesser evil...!"

Azrael had said after she'd made her choice in mortification.

Certainly, if you compared this to the other 'Lovey-Dovey Activities,' which could only be described as 'stuff real lovers do,' then this one's description was still kind of okay-ish. In short, as long as they warmed each other's bodies, it'd be fine. 'If we don't have to hug from up front, it won't be embarrassing!' Such had been her reasoning.

And so he was back-to-back with Azrael.

Now that they'd been like this for a while, Sasaraki's state of mind said this:

—It was totally embarrassing.

"....."

"....."

While surrounded by the snowstorm, both of them didn't say a word. His consciousness was focused solely on his back as it was touching tightly with her's. Since 'Pain Reality Control,' which relieved one's sense of pain, did its job, he couldn't feel the cold. However, he could feel the warmth. The warmth of a girl.

And she was really hot.

Her blood seemed to have accumulated in her shoulder blades, the spot where they were in contact.

"...S-Sasaraki... how long since we started...?"

"Eh?! Err... O-One minute and 15 seconds."

"YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT—?!"

Every time Azrael said something, her back vibrated.

Just from that much, Sasaraki couldn't help but feel nervous.

How to put it— her back was warm, and he in unrest.

"...A-Azrael, maybe we should stop this, after all..."

Frankly, he didn't think he could endure this for another ten minutes and more.



"Never—! W-We have to hurry up and get d-divorced!"

And so on she said while also feeling pretty embarrassed with tears seeming to find their way into her voice.

"P-Plus, if we're able to bypass the 'indestructible' attribute, it'll help with development and all..."

"Well, but look, if we just took it slowly to gather points..."

"Then the service will be done for until we're done, right—?!"

"...That's also true."

To get divorced even a second faster, they 'Warm[ed] each other's bodies in a snowy mountain cave.'

Though, he felt that no matter how you looked at it, they had their priorities backwards.

"Uuuh... I-I definitely won't lose to this kusoge...!"

He could feel Azrael's body tremble through her back.

Since she couldn't feel the cold, it had to be anger and/or embarrassment.

"...Sasaraki, say something—!"

"Eh—?!"

"If you keep quiet, this'll get even more embarrassing, right?! Talk!"

Was her unreasonable logic, but being told such things by Azrael was his weak spot.

"Err... Sorry, it wasn't on purpose."

"What was?"

"The marriage thing."

A short while passed.

"...I know that much."

She said with a voice that'd gotten a little more composed.

"Okay."

"But I definitely won't forgive you."

"Eh—?!"

"Turning this Deathbringer Angel into an unvirtuous girl... I definitely, *definitely* won't forgive you."

She said in a pouting tone, behaving like a spoiled child.

Sasaraki gulped. Even he himself felt that he'd done something truly unforgivable.

"Azrael... I mean it, I really am sorry."

"I won't forgive you that you're apologizing."

"I'll take responsibility."

"Eh?"

Azrael stopped dead.

"I-I-It'd worry me if you took responsibility!"

"Ah, sorry, I didn't mean it like that, I'm going to take responsibility by getting us divorced."

"Ah—"

Azrael stopped dead again.

"S-So that's how you meant it... say so from the beginning... Stupid..."

"Sorry."

"All you do is apologizing."

Another moment of silence passed.

"...Do you really feel that sorry about it?"

"I really, really do!"

"I wonder..."

Azrael said in a low and discontent voice.

"Everyone's always saying that and it's all just words."

She continued...

"You're also... actually just making fun of me, aren't you?"

"Heh? Because of what?"

"Because of my roleplaying."

Azrael sniffled.

"Our former guild members were the same. They kept making fun of me, like, Death bringer Angel (lol), beta tester (lol), chuunibyou (lol). Lizna was the only one who really paid attention to me. Sasaraki, you're also just... making fun of me, right?"

She had a persecution complex.

Of course, Sasaraki wasn't making fun of her. They were living as adventurers in a fantasy world. From the time he first logged in, he'd strived to follow after Azrael's example, who was earnestly believing in this setting; and that hadn't changed.

But if he'd say this up-front now, she probably wouldn't believe him.

Because Azrael had grown timid right now.

"...Remember the time when Lizna died before?"

"Eh—?"

Azrael reacted with a puzzled voice. Sasaraki continued.

"You used your two swords to form a cross, right?"

"...I did."

"That was cool, you know? It felt like an adventurer custom."

"...W-Well, forming a cross is a basic, right...?"

Azrael's voice grew a bit more energetic.

"And that sharp sound when you draw your swords has a nice ring to it, doesn't it?"

".....W-Well, I practiced that a hundred times over, after all..."

Her voice grew even more excited.

"You've also got that habit of taking off your coat when you're going to fight seriously, right? That also creates a nice atmosphere."

"Ah, y-you noticed? That's right..."

Azrael seemed really happy.

"I've actually always been thinking that you're cool, you know?"

"...Umm..."

Azrael was hesitating.

"Um..... Umm, tha..."

That moment.

"Activity 'Warm each other's bodies in a snowy mountain cave' completed."

The robotic system voice echoed. It appeared that 15 minutes had passed before they knew it.

"A-Alright, we did it! Ah, don't you turn around!"

"Yeah, got it."

Right after he answered, the system voice echoed yet again.

"500 TP Breakthrough Commemoration. Taking screenshot."

""Eh?""

Their voices overlapped. *Shutter sound*.

"Screenshot taken. Arranging display, please have a look and confirm."

And such, a screen appeared in midair. The second he saw it, his heart was about to burst out of his chest. It had been taken from above facing Azrael sitting on the ground while hugging her knees. He could see her cleavage. He could see her big puffs. And he could see the tips, too. They were pink.

"Kya..."

A moment later, Azrael screamed...

"KYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA—! DON'T LOOK! DON'T LOOK! DELETE! DELEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEETE—!"

"Wai— Azrael, d-don't run around there or I'll see 'em! I'm gonna see them—!"

"Eh? Ah, NOOOOOOOO—! WHAT IS WITH THIS KUSOGEEEE—?!"

Sasaraki totally agreed. This was a kusoge world.

Wasn't it already an established fact that no matter what you did, it was bound to go wrong?

* * *

['The First Cake Cut' Explanation

This skill destroys any object in this game. 'Indestructible' objects are no exception. The miracle of two people in love is an unrivaled power which transcends even systems. It forces its way through any contradiction.

Love is almighty. Love makes miracles happen.

The goal is to achieve implementing that kind of bullshit riajuu delusion into the game.

And actually doing that took a shitload of time. Who thought this even up? Love should just die, seriously. I, Tanaka-kun, think that if we're putting something like miracles that force their way through contradiction and whatnot into the program they aren't miracles anymore. Period.]

They had finally managed to gather enough points, so the two of them went to the second floor.

Alice was still writing the application papers for the 'Neo Virtual World Funding Organization.' She made a presentation on how 'This game's an absolutely beautiful and perfect world.' Lizna wanted to come too, but Azrael had said, *"This isn't an exhibition we're doing!"* and shot her down.

So they were on the second floor, work-in-progress, in a monastery on a small island in the ocean. Within, Sasaraki had changed into a smart-looking, white suit. He was the so-called bridegroom. Fury had said it was mandatory to put the skill into action and sent him off to change.

She'd also changed into a bridemaid dress and quietly sat on a desk.

When she looked at Sasaraki, she put her both hands on her right cheek and smiled an unnatural "Kya~"

"Master looks so cool☆ As expected of a first-class marriage fraud☆"

"The marriage fraud was obviously *your* fault, you know?!"

"Eh? But Master doesn't exactly dislike it either, right?☆"

When Fury fluttered up, she drew close to his ears.

"If you like, why don't you just force Azrael-san down?☆"

"BU————————!"

He spouted out with all his might.

"WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, FURY?!"

"Fury-chan's just a faithful slave to Master's desires☆"

Fury formed a heart sign close to her big breasts.

"Azrael would hate me, so I refuse!"

"Ara, ara? I don't think Azrael would dislike it that much☆"

"Eh—?"

"After all, Master's quick-wittedness saved her from the abyss of death☆"

"No, that was just a mistake and misunderstanding."

"It doesn't really matter if you did it because of a mistake, does it?☆"

"It does, you know?! Doing something so important with her 'cause of a mis—"

"Ahahahaha☆"

Fury suddenly began to laugh.

"Master, what are you talking about? Mistakes are the truth behind this world, you know?"

"Wha—?!"

"Isn't..."

Fury opened her narrowed eyes wide and stared at Sasaraki.

"...The existence of this kind of kusoge world itself more or less a mistake?"

She declared in a cold tone.

"...Wha...?"

"Master, look at this black hole over there."

Fury pointed into a corner of the monastery. Over there, a black hole was hovering in the air. Just like a black hole you'd find in space, jet-black. It was born when the intersection of objects bugged out, a so-called 'Space Rift.'

If an object (players included) touched it, they'd be forcefully teleported.

It was one of the common bugs in this game.

"That kind of bizarre phenomenon just naturally exists— just about everything's a mistake in this world."

Fury smiled and continued...

"It's a world where life, death, love, everything of worth just disappears by mistake."

In the meantime, Sasaraki couldn't say a word.

"And we're living in this kind of world, our existence in itself is a mistake, you know?"

Fury gazed at Sasaraki with eyes that had no light in them. He couldn't take his eyes off of her.

The silence prolonged. Fury was smiling the whole time.

It was as if she was sneering at this world itself—

"—Just kidding☆"

Suddenly she returned to her usual narrowed eyes and smiling face.

"Master, don't worry about it☆ It's just one of Fury-chan's cute jokes☆"

"No... I kinda felt an awful shudder running down my spine there..."

Sometimes, he could feel a kind of cold madness coming from this AI fairy.

And it was similar to the madness he somewhat felt coming from Alice.

"It's fine☆ I gave up on brainwashing Master when the chance arises☆"

"So you had that plan before?!"

It felt like this AI might be way too scary.

Hadn't she said those hopeless words from right now in all seriou—

"Ah, Azrael-san is done changing☆"

The creaking monastery doors opened.

"Come, come, let's go and greet the bride☆"

"No, rather, about what you said earlier—"

He tried to poke his nose into Fury's business deeper.

But the figure of a snow-white bride caught his eyes.

"U... wah..."

He uttered reflexively.

And watched her in fascination.

It was Azrael. Not Azrael in her usual black clothes, but clad in a pure-white wedding dress. Pink hair ornaments put accents in her long black hair and— Sasaraki kept gazing at her figure like that. *Uwah— Uwaah, she's really, a real bride.*

Considering Azrael's nature, he hadn't thought that she'd just obediently wear it.

"Uuh... it's for the divorce, all for the divorce..."

Azrael's face blushed a little.

"...Sasaraki. What are you spacing out for?"

"Eh...? Ah, well, you know, I just thought you really look like a bride."

"Wha—?!"

Azrael's cheeks grew even hotter.

"D-Don't get some weird misunderstanding—?! This is no real wedding ceremony, alright?!"

"No, I understand that! I really do—!"

Sasaraki shook his head violently.

"You sure you understand that?!"

Azrael drew her sword with her right hand and swung it. The tip touched the 'Space Rift' Fury had pointed at earlier, and right after some kind of electric current had flashed, Azrael's figure was gone.

"Ah—"

SPLASH!

Soon after, he could hear the sound of water from outside. When he hurried and went outside, he could see Azrael in her wedding dress fallen flat on the beach. It appeared she had been teleported there. 'Magical Sword Gram' stuck in the sand beside her like a gravestone.

"WHAT'S WITH THIS KUSOGEEEEEEEEEE—?!"

Fury chuckled.

"See? This world's full of mistakes, isn't it?☆"

* * *

The wedding ceremony with the two of them and one fairy progressed without an(other) accident. Azrael had wiped her drenched wedding dress, while it was clinging to her skin (the game was only this detailed when it came to that kind of stuff), with a towel.

Sasaraki and Azrael were standing in front of Fury who was playing the part of the priest.

"Yes, let us move on to the exchange of vows right awaaay☆"

Fury said with a smile while linking her both hands in front of her chest.

"Bridegroom Sasaraki, do you solemnly swear to love bride Azrael even at times where you'll fight over rare drops, even at times where your house certificate gets lost due to a bug, even at times where your characters get deleted, even at times where you become rich due to a dupe glitch, and even at times where your items get lost due to a bank bug?☆"

I pass on either. But it does sound like a vow you'd do in this game.

"...I do."

In any case, he nodded. It was a ceremony necessary to use the skill, he had no choice but to clearly state his agreement.

When he sent a sidelong glance to Azrael, she looked away abruptly when their eyes had met for an instant.

"Bride Azrael, do you swear to love bridegroom Sasaraki even at times where he cheats on you with Alice-san, even at times where he cheats on you with Lizna-san, even at times where he cheats on you with Fury-chan, and even at times where he abuses his GM powers to sexually harass female players?☆"

"AS IF I'LL SWEAR THAT—?!"

"They're just examples, mere examples☆"

"Every single one of your examples is way too disturbing, you know—?!"

"Come on, do you swear it or not?☆"

"Gu..."

Azrael gripped the hem of her dress's skirt and looked seemingly vexed.

"I-I do..."

"Very well☆ You may now kiss the—"

"Wait."

"Stop right there."

Their voices overlapped.

"Eh? We have to do that, too?!"

"It's necessary for the ceremony, you kno~w☆ Go ahead and ask Alice-san☆"

"Wha—...?"

He exchanged looks with Azrael and felt his cheeks flare up.

Eh? Kiss her? I get to kiss the beautiful face of this black-haired girl in her wedding dress—?

"Wait, wasn't there that feature which will make her get pregnant when I kiss her?"

"That's right, isn't it?☆"

"THEN WE CAN'T DO IT, RIGHT?!"

Azrael shouted.

"But if you don't kiss, you can't get divorced, you know?☆"

"IF I GET P-P-PREGNANT THEN THE DIVORCE'LL BE MEANINGLESS, ALRIGHT—?!"

Azrael shouted with a beet-red face.

"Isn't it fine? Pregnancy's not that far off when you're married☆"

"IT'S NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNOT FINE AT AAAAAAAAAAAAALL—?!"

"Fufu, what's wrong?"

Fury stared at Azrael and winked.

"If you get married or even pregnant in this kusoge— how does it matter?☆"

"It does matter—!"

Azrael replied right away.

"N-No matter how much of a kusoge this is..."

She cast a sidelong glance at Sasaraki and continued...

"There are things you can and cannot do! Anyways, that's a no—!"

"Eh~? You're not going to do it?☆"

"Isn't there another way than kissing—?!"

"It's not like there isn't☆"

Fury's cheeks turned red.

"Other 'Direct Mucous Membrane Contact' than kissing's fine, too☆"

"Eh—?! Wha—, that's..."

"In other words, se—"

"KYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

Azrael thrashed around with her arms wildly and then blocked Fury's mouth.

"I can't believe it! What's with this sexually harassing fairy—?!"

"If you do that, you won't get pregnant, you kno~w?☆"

"That's weird, right?! That's obviously weird—!"

"It really is weird, huh...? Actually, it's converse..."

"What are you so calm for, Sasaraki—?!"

"Well, how should I put it...?"

Without question, it made his heart pound just picturing to— with Azrael, but on the other hand, when he looked at Azrael getting flustered like this, it helped him to calm down instead. It felt like his disordered self and his collected self were coexisting. Azrael's every single reaction really was flashy and charming, after all.

He understood why Fury wanted to tease her.

"So, Fury. There's another way than se... I mean intercourse, isn't there?"

"Of course there is☆"

"Wha—?!"

He'd thought that, considering this fairy's personality, she might be hiding something.

"So what do we have to do?"

"But this is the last straw, you'll have to lick these candies together☆"

Fury took out two orange lollipops.

"It's 'Lover-Lover Candy' which will let you share your sensation with your partner."

"Say from the start that there's something like that, alright—?!"

"Fury's just a faithful manservant to Master's desires☆"

While they kept quarrelling like that, they both accepted the candy and started to lick.

The moment he licked it, an indescribable feeling overcame his tongue.

Shudder. *ShudderShudderShudder*. *nuzorinpererururushiija*.

"U-Uwah, what is this...?"

"The sensation of an indirect kiss☆"

"Uh... H-Hurry an' hinish it, Shasharaki."

Every time he licked, a strange sensation came from the candy itself. *Uwah, maybe this is... the sensation of Azreal's tongue...?* When he couldn't keep himself in check and dared to look Azreal's way, she was seizing her mouth and gasped erotically, "Nuuuuuh..."

Oh God.

This is really lewd.

His body and soul were colored an amorous pink.

Wait, isn't this practically even lewder than just a kiss?

Nurorun. *Rirorun*. *Rururun*. *Piroriroriin*.

In his head the sound effect of their TP rising kept ringing.

"Ah, you mustn't bite it☆ You've to like it until the end, okay?"

"Uuuuuh..."

Azrael and Sasaraki averted their gazes.

If I'm careless, this'll get even more embarrassing than when we were back-to-back in that ice cavern...

I-I've to clear my head...

This isn't a kiss at all, it's just a businesslike procedure to gain TP. Anyway, it's innocent. I'm just innocently liking it, this candy that tastes like Azrael, this Azrael candy— It tastes so good—

"Master's also becoming more and more of a perv, isn't he?☆"

"Are you reading my mind sometimes?!"

"Master and Fury-chan are just two of a kind☆"

This fairy really couldn't be trusted.

In any case, they were done with the candy after two or three more minutes. He hadn't felt any taste from that candy. All there'd been was the excitement he felt from the slippery gummi candy that had pulsated in his mouth and his desperate endeavour to suppress it.

Azrael seemed to have felt the same and was taking deep breaths to try to calm her mind.

"C-C'mon, the vow kiss is done!"

"Did it arouse you?☆"

"Not at all—! C'mon, hurry and prepare the skill—!"

"Aye-aaaye, setting up☆"

And five minutes later...

Sasaraki had summoned a gigantic wedding cake, almost as tall as him, with the 'Master Screen.' He and Azrael put their weddings rings on the cream. If they destroyed those two rings, their divorce was ought to be completed.

"Hey, Azrael... Couldn't we destroy something else than the weddings rings with this skill, too?"

"What a coincidence. I'm also in the mood to bury some evil fairy."

"You two are so cruel, aren't you~?☆"

Fury chuckled.

"If you kill Fury-chan, this world will really fall to ruins, you know?☆"

"Gu..."

It was true. Although this fairy truly was evil, she administered a lot of important things like account bans or the punishment of sexual harassment. If she were to disappear, this game would probably stop to function for good— and so, even though she was vicious...

"Let's put that off for later. Anyways, now it's divorce time, divorce time!"

"When you cut the cake, you'll be divorced. That'd be the fastest divorce ever, if we were in the real world, wouldn't it?☆"

"No doubt the developer wanted it to be exactly like this."

He couldn't see it any differently, considering the disdain the developer had put into this feature until now.

"Are you saying this was my former master's intention? That wouldn't be accurate☆"

"Eh? Is that so?"

"This world has always been 'like this,' you know?☆"

Fury chuckled and continued.

"The Reality Control System— in short, RCS. It's the system which controls our world to make it possible that our players can live safely, happily, and perfectly in this VR world that is 'wrong' in every sense☆"

"Safely aside, they're neither happy nor is it perfect."

"Because those two features are bugged☆"

"Do something!"

"Don't worry Fury-chan with such demands☆"

While saying stuff like that, he prepared the sword to cut the cake together with Azrael. Not a knife, a sword. Namely, 'Magical Sword Gram.' With its purple aura. More specifically, the aura which raised critical hit chance by 20%.

"Aren't we overkilling the cake?"

"We've to make sure that it'll be crushed to pieces."

"Looks to me like we'll bisect both the cake and the monastery."

He didn't know exactly how powerful the skill was, but they'd been told something like, 'The power of two people in love can slice everything,' so it was probably tremendously powerful. Plus, by increasing it with a magical sword's power on top, he felt that this wouldn't end well.

"Hey, wouldn't it be better if we used a normal knife?"

"I don't want to do it like on some ordinary wedding."

"But I'm having that bad feeling..."

Fury's words from before were crossing his mind. That this world was 'wrong.' That it had been designed this way, that it was controlled by a system. He felt like they might cause an outrageous bug if they didn't plan it out carefully beforehand.

Rather, he didn't think that things would go in their favor at all.

However, Azrael laughed once more, "Fufun."

"You're overthinking, Sasaraki. Why are you so worried?"

"...If I had to put my finger on it, it's because you're the one who came up with this."

"What do you mean by that?!"

I mean that the plan will backfire.

"No, well, yeah, let's give it a try."

I really don't have any decent reason to doubt.

Right, this world might be wrong, but that doesn't mean that everything's destined to fail. Maybe we're using a magical sword instead of a knife to cut the cake, but so what? Sasaraki calmed himself down like that and gripped 'Magical Sword Gram''s handle.

Azreal put her hand on top of his.

"Let's go, Sasaraki—! With this, our divorce is sealed—!"

"Who are you trying to get fired up with this? Well, not that I mind— EII—!"

Both of them swung the magical sword downwards and shouted...

""THE FIRST CAKE CUT!""

Right after...

A storm rose.

"Eh—?"

A torrent of light surged from the tip of the blade and the second it completely covered the monastery's interior, the light focused into a straight, vertical light pillar. It was like a gigantic sword beam that shot from the monastery's floor up to the ceiling and tore it apart; huge enough to even reach and pierce the sky. At least by rough estimation, it was a few hundred meters big lightning rift.

And then it shot at the wedding cake with a 'KIIIIIIIIIIIII' sound.

The floor crumbled. The wedding cake crumbled. The rings that had been put on it— flew off somewhere thanks to the storm. He didn't even have the time to think, 'Ah, we should've fixated them properly,' as the monastery itself was crumbling.

ZUZAAAAAAAAAAAAAAOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOON!

The vertical chasm destroyed everything. The monastery. The small island. The sea. It parted the sea like Moses in the bible story he had read back in the day. Then the water streamed back towards the rift - as broad as a man tall - that had been opened.


名死天使
永遠の愛を込めて

The bottom of the sea had been torn, too.

It'd lead to a ridiculously big chasm which looked like a waterfall now.

After a while of silence, Sasaraki looked up into the sky.

Aaah— the sky's purple— everything's as bugged as always, huh?

"Alright, enough escapism."

This world was wrong.

It certainly was as Fury had said.

"Wai... Eh? Wha—? Sasaraki, what are we gonna do about this—?!"

"Let's go and ask Alice, for now."

"Y-Yeah. Wait, why are you so calm?!"

"Well, I thought things'd turn out like this, anyway."

"WHY—?!"

"Master's gradually gotten used to this, ri~ght?"

Fury chuckled.

It was the incident which'd go down as the first 'Magical Sword Moses' soon after.

Chapter 2:

The Goddess Descends for the Kusoge's Divine Purge

第二章

クソゲーに降臨せしは聖なる虐殺の女神

THE JUNK!
Kuso Game Online 2

The next day.

Our four gamemasters and one fairy were in the debugging room. Alice ran a pen across the whiteboard. 'Sword & Magic Online Large-Scale Disaster Countermeasure Headquarters,' it said.

She slammed her hand on the whiteboard and turned towards the others.

"And so— we've got a fun state of emergency—!"

Alice flicked her fingers. Thereupon, a familiar scene appeared on the main screen, it was the first town, 'Start.' Though it looked vastly different from usual. The sky had cracked. And water was downpouring from said cracked sky like a waterfall.

Hit by the water, the town was being flooded.

"UOOOOOOOOOOOH?! WHAT IS THIS, WHAT KIND OF EVENT IS THIS?!"

"If you touch the water without specific items on you, you'll die instantly! Everyone, to higher grounds!"

"The sky... The sky's falling on our heads... (physically)"

They could hear the players' agonizing cries.

".....Au..."

Azrael murmured next to him, feeling seemingly awkward.

"...I'm sorry, Alice."

No matter how you looked at it, that hole was Sasaraki and Azrael's fault.

"No need to apologize. Rather, this is our chance!"

"Eh? Chance?"

"Yeah, here, look, there are lovely people trying to save each other!"

Alice pointed at the Main Screen.

"Oooi, are you alright? Do you need a 'Swimming Potion?'"

"You got a spare?! I'll take it, thanks!"

"That'll be three c-rank or one b-rank rare, then."

"Are you trying to squeeze money out of me at the time of a disaster, you devil—?!"

"Uwahahahahaha, business is booming, alright!"

Such were the players trying to save (lol) each other.

"And? Don't they look like they're having fun?"

"In some way, maybe?!"

"If this incident makes the news in the real world, we're going to get new players!"

"Popularity through flaming, huh?"

"This is more like popularity through watering, right?"

Clever.

"Here, a mail from Kirine."

Alice flicked her fingers and the mail appeared on the Main Screen.

The sender was Watarai Kirine, the company president of 'EastEnd Games,' this game's development studio.

[To Alice From Kirine (who has the feeling that she doesn't get life)

Hello, Alice. Are you doing fine?

I don't really know whether I'm doing fine or not, but I'm alive, for now.

Is it fun to be alive?

Ah, I'm sorry, questions of people like me don't matter. I'll start with my report.

The flooding of the first floor is a hot topic. Reactions of the 'Online Games for Young People' boards on social networks controlled by the government are: 'Another retarded incident lololol,' 'This game's way too fun (as long as you just watch) lololol,' and so on.

So the player count's rising temporarily. Just a bit.

Concretely, we've been gaining 20 new players since yesterday.

Ehe. Ehehe.

Kirine-san's really happy.

I'm so happy, I bought a can of joy.

Viva la flood!

Ah, but I can't lose myself in happiness.

The effect of this kind of event is just temporary, after all.

With everything flooded, people can't do quests or anything at all, so the player count will probably fall in the long run. So let's do something about the flood, first of all. Please do something. I'm sorry if I sound like I'm making it someone else's problem, I can't do anything but rely on you, Alice. I'm the worst. I'll go and die, after all. Eventually.

I'll be watching over you forever.

Please give it your best, Alice.

Go, Alice, go—!

- Kirine-san (Alcohol tastes good so I decided to live on)]

"As emotionally unstable and alarming as ever, isn't she?!"

Wait, she was obviously drunk from the second half on.

"She's pretty efficient even like this, you know? There's no one better at paperwork than her."

Alice continued with, "And she's the president, so she does it for free, right?"

"Back to topic, like I said there are good things about this, too. We'll have more players in swimsuits, etc."

She switched the screen and on it were a bunch of beautiful female players, taking a swim in their bathing suits.

"These female players naturally changed into their swimsuits. Sex appeal up!"

"Naturally...?"

Player count certainly did seem to increase as a result of this new sex appeal, but...

"But this will last for a day at best, right? They might grow tired of it before long."

"Stores, dungeons, and whatnot are flooded, so there's hardly anything people can do, right...?"

The flooded stores were more or less still functioning. NPCs in town were invincible, so they'd go about their business even underwater. However, the number of players who'd be able to get there was small. If they changed into swimsuits and used a swimming potion, they'd be able to swim to a certain extent, but there was a limit to even that.

"How about we provide free swimsuits for now?"

"Relief aid, huh? Should we let ten thousand school swimsuits rain from the sky?"

"That'd be a very unwelcome kind of shower, I think... Let's leave it to Fury."

"And we need some quests too, right?"

"Quests?"

"Quests instead of dungeon exploration, something that everyone can enjoy."

Alice winked.

"Sasaraki, can you think of something and implement it?"

"I don't mind, but what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to snap some swimsuit pictures of the players and turn them into a commercial."

Sasaraki thought that gamemasters really did just about anything.

* * *

Everyone but Alice went to the first floor.

'Start' had become a water metropolis. Since the town was situated in a basin, its castle in the central north part of town had been flooded almost up to its second floor. From the literally cracked sky above it, the ocean water still came gushing down.

Players couldn't swim. If they didn't have a swimming potion or -equipment with them, they'd instantly die when stepping into water of a certain depth. Hence, the players with neither potions nor equipment had climbed up to the roofs and were at their wits' end.

If they left things as they were, it'd certainly turn out badly.

"So if we want to make this an event, how exactly will we go about it?"

"We are able to address all players that are online more or less, but..."

By using the 'Master Screen,' you could project yourself onto the sky and speak to all the players. They could probably use it to act like a fantasy god and be like, 'I'm bestowing a task upon you.'

The problem was— if a mere boy like Sasaraki did that, they wouldn't buy it.

"This would be Alice's time to shine, but..."

She didn't really like the spotlight.

"Lizna kind of looks like a goddess, doesn't she...?"

"E-E-Eh? Really—?"

Lizna looked a bit embarrassed.

"But I'm not used to being a goddess, is that okay?"

"I think there's no one but Alice who's used to that."

"Wouldn't Lizna look the part if we dressed her accordingly? Sasaraki, get us something good-looking."

"Yeah."

Sasaraki operated the 'Master Screen' and summoned an item. 'Garment of Light' was its name and sounded worth the task. A robe out of silk, sparkling golden, appeared. The three of them went "Oooh~!"

"Amazing, amazing, amaaazing! I'll try it on—!"

Lizna said and began to strip her top.

"Waaait!"

"Hm? I'm waiting."

Lizna stopped dead upon Sasaraki's words.

She stopped with her arms crossed and hands on her top while she'd already pulled it up to her breasts.

"Lizna, what are you doing?"

"Changing."

"You say that so calmly, but you do realize that you shouldn't change in front of me, right?!"

He said while they were already at a point where he would've died if he weren't a gamemaster (due to Youth Protection Code Violation).

"Eh? But that'd be such a hassle..."

"LIZNA, HAVE SOME SHAME, WILL YOU?!"

Azrael shouted, obviously feeling embarrassed instead of her.

"Your normal get-up's already really revealing, but if you strip that too, you'll be in your underwear, won't you?!"

"Yeah, well, I'm fine if it's Sasaraki who sees it."

"Fine—?!"

Sasaraki's heart was close to detonating.

What was this defenseless, pink-haired girl saying?

"It's not fine at all?!"

"Eh? Why?"

Lizna inclined her head and asked.

"This is just a game... so why wouldn't it be fine? He'll only see my panties and bra."

"It's not! Not at all! As a lady, that's a line you must never cross!"

"I wonder... I think it's okay if it's Sasaraki-kun."

"Why do you keep saying it's fine as long as it's me?"

"'Cause you're only interested in girls with big breasts."

"That's some baseless defamation you've got there, alright?!"

"That's not true~" Lizna smiled cheerfully.

"Well, alrighty then. I'll go and change someplace else, okay~?"

She turned towards the other side of the roof and moved to a place Azrael and Sasaraki couldn't see from where they were standing.

While they were waiting, Azrael whispered something into Sasaraki's ear.

"Isn't that dress way too revealing? Who made that? So lewd."

"I don't think you're one to judge..."

Her mini skirt and cleavage were pretty revealing too and didn't make it easy on him to keep his eyes in check.

"D-Don't oggle me with those dirty eyes—! This was just the coolest-looking outfit."

He thought that rather than cool, it just had a lot of sparkling ornaments on it.

Anyway, they spent a couple of minutes talking about this and that, when...

"Okay, I'm done changing! How is it? Do I look like a goddess?!"

Lizna did a twirl with an energetic expression on her face and really did look charming.

She looked like the Goddess of the Lake who'd present them a golden and silver hatchet like in that fairy tale.

"Ah, that looks good, doesn't it? Can you spawn a 'Devil Axe' like 'Giant Ono' had, too?"

"It'd be scary if she had that with her, alright?!"

"Gods *are* scary, you know?"

And so on they talked while striking a plan for the players.

"So, um, I think we should go with this being a devil king's scheme."

"What's the big idea that makes him flood the first floor?"

"It looked like they'd beat the final dungeon, so he flooded it... or so?"

"I see, that sounds realistic."

Rather, it sounded like something they'd practically do.

"Then we'll make some adequate boss and say the flood will be gone if they beat him!"

Lizna said joyfully.

"So a kill quest, huh? But wouldn't the serious raid parties monopolize it?"

"So we're not making one, but a whole set of monsters."

"What kind of monsters could crack the sky and bring upon a flood?"

"Crack the sky... Cracking... Nutcracker...! Toys! Toy Soldiers!"

"That's so forced it's not good enough to be a bad pun even... Won't simple fish mobs do?"

The result of five minutes of (pretty silly) discussion was the placement of a thousand boss-type shark mobs, called 'Hyperspace Water Jaw (Naming by Lizna),' across town. Kill all these bosses and the water will retreat... was the idea.

It was Lizna's role to let the players know.

Lizna struck a triumphant pose and smiled.

Seeing that, Azrael expressed a dubious smile.

"...Isn't she lacking divinity for a goddess?"

She whispered into Sasaraki's ear.

"I was thinking the same."

No matter how he looked at her, she rather reminded him of a middle schooler at the performance of their drama club.

"But she's totally set on doing it."

"So all we can do is leave it to her."

They had their worries, but for the time being they nodded at each other.

And so the projection in the first floor's sky begun. Sasaraki tapped on the 'Master Screen,' a hymnal sound effect played, and Lizna's figure appeared in the sky. It was a gamemaster-exclusive skill, called 'Oracle of the Goddess,' which let one's voice reach all players.

"Ooh! What is it this time?!"

"Looks like a goddess, doesn't she?," "Looks like a goddess, huh?"

"I knew there'd be a server-wide event notice."

"You're all too noisy! Quiet down or I can't hear her!"

The players said.

Lizna cleared her throat with a cough and started talking with in a nervous voice...

"Can you hear me, everyone? I am talking to you telepathically right now... Um, like this?"

"Scratch that last part! Just go on!"

"Ah, sorry, Sasaraki."

"And don't apologize to me!"

"Yeah, umm, ah, I'll introduce myself first. I'm Goddess Lizeltna."

Lizna announced her goddess-ish name in a pretty ordinary fashion.

"Err, um, I'm a gamemaster, basically a developer."

"A gamemaster, she says."

"A cute girl like her?"

"Then I might be able to forgive them the item loss bug."

He heard the player's kind of grudge-y reactions.

"I have something to tell everyone: This flood is no bug."

"A feature, then, huh?"

"Of course it's a feature."

"After all, there aren't any bugs in this game, right?"

Such were their capitulating reactions.

"It's the doing of atrocious demons, called 'Hyperspace Water Jaw.' If you bring them to their knees, everything will go back to normal."

"A kill quest, isn't it?"

"It's just like this game that they don't even have any background story, isn't it?"

"Should we really just forgive an MMO that floods its capital without warning?!"

Crap, we should've thought up a background.

Although I don't think we could've come up with anything reasonable for this.

"There are a thousand of them, by the way."

"OMG—?!"

"OMG—?!"

"OMG—?!"

"Everyone, give it your best! I'll be cheering for you! Later, then!"

Goddess Lizeltna's figure disappeared from the sky.

Lizna wiped the sweat from her forehead with the back of her hand and expressed a bright smile.

"How was I?!"

What can I say...?

"...Next time we'll leave it to Alice, after all."

"EEEEEEEEEEEEEH—?!"

Of course they would.

* * *

When the three of them returned to the debugging room, they were welcomed by Alice who was sitting on a mandarin box.

"Well, it was fine for the most part, wasn't it?"

Alice nodded with a smile, seemingly satisfied.

That was fine? Seriously?

"We've to rely on Lizna here. I can't show my face in front of the players."

"Why?"

"I'm a more or less famous person overseas, it'd be trouble if they saw me."

Alice had claimed to be well-known game creator. While he didn't know whether it was true or not, due to this century's famous and infamous 'Virtual Reality Reconciliation Law,' conformity between one's avatar and real appearance was obligatory (violation led to a prison sentence of five years or below).

If she was practically famous, it would be troublesome if her face was seen.

That aside...

"I've found a way to fix the water leak."

"That was quick, huh...?"

"I'm a genius, after all."

Alice wagged her index finger and stuck out her tongue. Cute.

"If you arrange 20000 sandbags with the 'Master Screen,' that'll do."

"That's some heavy work, alright?! Wait, sandbags?!"

"Sandbags are the all-purpose item when it comes to disaster control, you know?"

She let her feet dangle in the air looking like she was having fun, "Funf~n."

"Well, wouldn't it be easier to just morph the terrain or something?"

The 'Master Screen' was equipped with a mode that allowed one to alter the terrain, called 'Creation Mode.' Mountains, valleys, oceans, just by making a wish to the fairy, you could create things as you wished; the power of a god, indeed.

"Sasaraki, think about it."

However, Alice winked and said...

"Our fairy's work is— reaaally sketchy."

Alice wagged her finger.

"And exactly because her work's so vague, it'll definitely end up with a water leak."

".....It really is as you said, huh?"

He'd gone through a lot of hardships just to set up a monastery on the second floor with the fairy.

He definitely wouldn't be able to do some decent disaster control with her.

"Okay. So would you spawn some sandbags for me on the second floor?"

"Why does it have to be sandbags?"

"'Cause they have the 'No Inundation' attribute."

"...So in other words..."

"Everything else could let it flood."

"Yaaay."

This world was as game breaking as ever.

* * *

"W-Well, but it's my duty to do something about this, right?!"

Sasaraki had refocused his spirit and gone to the second floor. Together with Alice. Lizna and Azrael were monitoring the quest they'd issued to the players. Right now, 20 of the thousand mobs they deployed had fallen.

In accordance with the players' progress, Sasaraki was filling up the gap on the second floor with sandbags.

It was terribly mindless construction work.

"3000 sandbags, please."

"Aye-aaaye."

Once he'd operated the 'Master Screen,' an absurd amount of gray bags came falling from the sky. Alice flicked her fingers and the bags lined up at the bottom of the sea which looked like in the Moses' Ten Commandments story again (since Sasaraki had parted it with the 'Master Screen').

"I wonder whether God created the world like this...?"

"I think God's got himself a lot of excellent subordinates, right? Angels and the like."

"Which we don't, right?"

"We've got Fury."

"Absolutely out of question!"

They only had that bundle of evil that this fairy was.

"Looks like it's all up to me in the end, huh...?"

"Looks that way. Your 'Master Screen' is our lifeline."

Alice pointed at the screen that had been deployed in front of him.

"After all, that's the tool that allows you to do anything without restrictions."

"Yeah. A big responsibility, huh?"

Terrain creation, dungeon creation, object creation... He couldn't alter character or item data, but that aside, he could almost do anything. It was Sasaraki's duty to use that tool to better this kusoge even if just a little.

"If I were unable to use it, it'd be pretty bad, huh?"

"Rather, it'd be total checkmate, right?"

Alice nodded.

"We wouldn't be able to create the second floor, to fix bugs, nothing really."

"We'd be screwed, right?"

"Yeah, we'd be totally screwed."

They laughed a "Ahaha" together for a few seconds, then stopped dead.

"Hey Alice."

"I know what you want to say painfully well."

He had a really bad feeling.

Wasn't screwing them over exactly what this game did all the time?

"I-I'm just overthinking, right? Yeah... Ah, gotta add another ten thousand sandbags."

And more sandbags came piling up.

"Feels like we're dead-set drifting towards the fail flag, right?"

"Don't jinx it, alright?!"

"Another 5000, please."

"Y-Yeah."

WHUMPWHUMPWHUMPWHUMP— Silence.

The sandbags stopped spawning.

Red letters appeared on the 'Master Screen.'

[Not enough 'G Points.' Out of order.]

".....Alice..."

Alice folded her arms and growled, "Fumu..."

"Sasaraki."

"Yeah."

"Gamemasters are ought to be composed at all times."

"Yeah."

"First of all, take a deep breath."

"Yeah."

Suu, haa, suu, haa.

"Have you calmed down?"

"Yeah."

Rather, he'd been calm from the start. He knew this would happen, anyway.

"Then let's think of a countermeasure."

"Yeah."

Such was their situation. And he thought, *This game's really a kusoge, alright.*

* * *

Once they'd returned to the debugging room, he read the 'Master Screen' manual.

"This is really some kusoge, isn't it?"

"It undeniably is."

"THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO BE CALM, YOU TWO—?!"

Azrael shouted.

On the Main Screen was this explanation...

[Regarding the 'G Points' System

This feature is a 'really fun' system which will be introduced with patch ver. 37.

As to how fun it is: It will make gamemasters cry tears of joy.

In the following, you will be given an overview and feature background.

Overview

Every time you use the 'Master Screen' to spawn objects, terrain, dungeons, monsters, and so on, it will consume 'G Points.' Should your 'G Points' be exhausted, you will not be able to use the 'Master Screen' anymore.

Feature Background

Since we had complaints coming from the gamemaster part-timers, 'This job's like stacking stones in 'The Children's Limbo'' or 'This is as tedious as searching for a rigged 10 yen coin in the desert,' we decided to introduce this feature which will add game characteristics to the gamemaster routine.

How to Get 'G Points'

You start with a thousand points. We plan to make it so that each time a gamemaster clears a quest issued to them, they'll earn 'G Points.' We also plan to introduce these quests in patch ver. 38.

(End of document)]

Lizna inclined her head.

"And where's patch ver. 38?"

"It doesn't exist yet."

"That plan's not been planned out yet, huh?"

Alice and Sasaraki nodded to each other.

"THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO BE THAT CALM, RIGHT?! WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT THIS?!"

Azrael panicked for them. *Yeah, this really isn't the time to be calm. We can't use our all-purpose tool, the 'Master Screen,' anymore. This is serious. As things stand, we can't prevent the flood leaking from the second floor; we can't do anything, really.*

"But, well, all will be fine somehow, Azrael."

"Sasaraki, why are you so calm?!"

"'Cause you're in such a panic... I guess."

"Eh?"

"You know, if everyone'd be panicking, we wouldn't get anywhere, so I've to pull myself together."

"Wha—?!"

Azrael looked a bit happy, but soon pursed her lips together looking ill-humored.

"D-Doesn't that make me seem like a kid?! I didn't ask for that!"

"Is that so?"

"That's so!"

She insisted with her hands and feet, it made him all the calmer.

Yeah, I've to stay calm and do my best.

"As expected of Sasaraki-kun!"

Lizna applauded him. He started to feel a bit embarrassed.

"So, Alice, did you come up with a plan?"

"Two even."

"As you'd expected from our genius."

"Number one: I, the genius, will somehow deal with it. Number two: The comrades of the genius, I, will somehow deal with it."

"...T-The lack of detail aside, that plan's perfect, huh?!"

Calm down, stay composed, Sasaraki. You gave your word to pull yourself together seconds ago.

"I've a good idea then!"

Azrael announced proudly.

"The long and short of it is that we'll be fine if we do something about those 'G Points,' right?"

Azrael let her coat flutter and laughed a "Fufun."

She struck a triumphant pose and displayed a proud expression.

All Sasaraki could see in that behavior was a fail flag closing in.

"What's with those eyes?!"

"No... You sure you'll be fine?"

She'd tried to fix the lag bug before - and ended up naked.

He was very worried.

"Ku—, I-I'll be fine! I did an awful amount of studying after *that*!"

Azrael insisted with a thick manual in her right hand.

"Even this kusoge... i-if we give it our best, it'll turn out decent, alright?!"

"I see... Yeah, that's it, huh?! Let's do our best!"

"What's with that gentle tone and look in your eyes—?!"

"Azrael-san! It's love!"

"Really?!"

"Eeh—?! No, it's not!"

"What else could it be?! Pity?!"

"If I have to say something, it's friendship... I guess?"

"Men and women can't be friends!"

"Eeeeh—?! Then what about you and me?!"

"We're in love, of course!"

"Where's the 'of course' in that?!"

It got more and more chaotic.

"Then, let's leave that part to Azrael."

"And what are you going to do, Alice?"

"I'll try and rig the news in the real world to help us get new players."

".....Good luck."

"You too, okay?"

Such was what they decided on.

* * *

Two hours later.

"I— I somehow did it!"

Azrael announced in apparent delight.

Did she finally succeed in programming...? Nothing like that, of course. She'd simply found the 'Data Cube' containing patch ver. 38. But anyway, she was delighted.

"Look, Sasaraki, you may praise me now!"

"Yeah. Good job, Azrael."

"This feels more like you're making fun of me, though?!"

"No, of course I'm not."

Frankly, he'd thought she was cute.

"But the problem's its contents, huh...?"

They decided to investigate the contents of patch ver. 38 for now. When they threw the red 'Data Cube' into the screen, together with a water sound effect, the cube sunk into it. Then its description showed up on the Main Screen.

[Patch ver. 38　Undeniably Flawless Gamemaster Training Program]

The name alone was full of bad omen, but they decided to read through it first.

It was a system that allowed them to gain 'G Points,' just as they'd anticipated. If they applied the patch, they'd be given an item called 'Master Ring' which allowed them to build an optional dungeon called 'Masters Hall.'

If players died a 'Happy Death' in there, they'd gain 'G Points.'

"Sounds like... Dungeon Keeper, huh?"

There were RPGs out there in which you'd be a dungeon keeper and repel the adventurers who dared enter it. It was fine to think of it as that kind of subgenre. Actually, a gamemasters duties were probably pretty damn close to a Dungeon Keeper's.

However— there was one unclarified issue.

"What's a Happy Death?"

It probably wasn't euthanasia.

Azrael folded her arms and sunk into thought, "Hmm..."

"Maybe it's good enough to kill them while they're happy?"

"...How?"

"Just make them happy!"

"Yeah, how?"

".....Thinking of a way to do that..."

Azrael pointed at Sasaraki with sweat running down her cheeks.

"Is your job, right—?!"

".....Yeah, right..."

It wasn't like he wouldn't ever be able to think of *something*.

Plus, it was true that it was his job.

"Making them happy... Basically, if I let them have fun, that'd work, right?"

If people had a 'good game' in shogi or sports, they were happy. And it was possible to let players enjoy themselves similarly in this game. Sasaraki had let that happen with his own hands several times already.

When he'd created a tutorial dungeon for Lizna and Azrael, for instance.

Or when he massacred the players in floor one's final dungeon.

"Hm... I think I got the gist of it."

"For real?!"

Azrael leaned her body forward.

"Yeah. I think I can do it."

Once he'd said those words, Azrael's face suddenly broke into a smile just like a child's.

A smile that made her look like a small animal, he suddenly wanted to pet her head.

"Yaaay!"

Before he knew it, he'd fixated his eyes on her.

"Hm? What's wrong, Sasaraki?"

"Ah, no, n-nothing."

Sasaraki shook his head to get rid of the temptation.

If he touched her head now, he'd be accused of sexual harassment again. And he'd sworn to not be subject to that again.

"Then let's hurry and create a du—"

Just when Sasaraki wanted to say that...

"But are there players who'll come around to try it?"

Lizna interrupted him.

"They're in the middle of eliminating a thousand bosses, you know?"

"Ah, right... Wait, we don't even have the space to build a dungeon either, do we...?"

The majority of floor one had been flooded and the players were fighting with 'Swimming Potions' in them which allowed them to move in water. There probably weren't many players whimsical enough to shove the quest aside and go out of their way to challenge a dungeon.

"What should we do?"

"I've a great idea."

Lizna laughed triumphantly, "Fufufu."

"A great idea, is it?"

"Yep. Sasaraki-kun, do it like this—"

Lizna laughed another "Fufu," and did an impression of someone taking a pull on a cigarette.

"What are you trying to say?"

"Be a spy!"

"Hah?"

"Be a spy and lure the players into the dungeon."

* * *

In the skies above the flooded first floor.

Sasaraki used his 'Master Ring' finger and pointed at a roof with no players nearby. The wooden roof transformed making *BOKONBOKON* sounds.

That appeared to be the entrance to the 'Masters Hall.'

"Looks like it's done, right?"

Lizna said floating next to him. Alice had locked herself in a room for the sake of 'media manipulation.' Azrael was trying to do something with her programming as usual. And so Sasaraki and Lizna were left for 'G Point' farming.

"Let's hurry and find us some prey... I mean, pitiable lambs!"

"What you corrected it to is way weirder, you know?!"

"Whom should we pick, I wo~nder—"

Lizna naturally ignored Sasaraki's words.

"Well, yeah, whatever floats your boat... Err, I think I already have some players on my mind that'd fit."

"I see. It's better if you know the players you want to make enjoy themselves, right?"

"I wished I could've taken you or Azrael as the subjects, though..."

According to the explanation's complementary, the gamemaster mustn't be recognized as such by the 'Happy Death' subject.

"But Sasaraki-kun has no friends at all, right? Will you be alright?"

"Lately, your cruelty comes like a second nature, doesn't it, Lizna...? I do have friends."

"But, you know, Alice-san really isn't a friend, she's just your master."

"I said I have friends, alright?!"

They weren't many, but they were there.

Sasaraki looked for her using the 'Player Search.'

This feature wasn't gamemaster exclusive, ordinary players could use it too.

"Ah, look, she's over there."

At the spot he pointed at was a girl with long blonde hair, fighting with a Jaw.

"Her name's Rigel. I met her some time ago."

"Hmmm? A great name for a minor character fated to die, isn't it?"

"Your first impression on her name's overwhelmingly weird, you know?!"

Sasaraki cleared his throat with a cough.

"A-Anyway, I'll pick them for our plan."

"Yep. We'll bash their heads in while they're losing themselves in happiness, right?!"

This girl's way to put things was really kinda weird. She was also wearing an awfully dangerous smile on her face.

"Sasaraki-kun, our target's forming a party, you know?"

"Looks like it, huh?"

It appeared to be a party of three. One melee wearing a robe and a witch hat, and one melee in light armor. How he knew they were melees? There was no magic in this game, so equipment was just for fashion's sake - they could only be melees.

"Those three are cute, aren't they? Really makes them worth to kill, doesn't it?!"

"Lizna, never say that in public, okay?"

That aside, he felt like he'd seen those two before. If memory served right, those two girls were called Seshiriko and Sarapi. Seemed like they were the ones forming a party with Rigel.

"Well then, Sasaraki-kun, good luck on making a move on them for the murder, okay?"

"I told you, your wording's plain weird... Huh? Wait, you're not coming?"

"I'm playing the goddess, wouldn't it be bad if I appeared?"

"Hm, I see... I'll call you when something's wrong, alright?"

"Yep, give it your best, cheat on them and do 'em in, Sasaraki-kun."

Lizna kept saying unreasonable things until the end with her whole face smiling.

In any case, he descended from the sky and landed on a roof a bit apart from Rigel's group. Then he glued on 'Ninja Shoes' he'd prepared beforehand. It was a rare item that allowed you to walk on water.

Why he glued and not put them on, you ask? Because their model hadn't been implemented yet, so they looked like potions, and you couldn't put your feet into potions. At best, your little toe could fit into them. Nonetheless, as long as they touched your feet, they counted as 'equipped.'

Back to topic.

He drew closer to Rigel, Sarapi, and Seshiriko.

A fierce battle was unfolding between the girls and a 'Hyperspace Water Jaw.' This shark-like mob, which Lizna had named, was about as strong as a group of five level 10 adventurers... the girls seemed to be at a disadvantage. All of them had their HP dropped to half already.

"What should we do?! We're in a pinch, Seshiriko-chan! Its shark teeth look so scary!"

"Calm down, Sarapi. I've a plan."

"Amazing, Seshiriko-chan! By the way, skip the part where you abandon me to run off, okay?!"

".....There goes my plan."

"You're so cruel, Seshiriko-chan! Where are you, my prince on a white horse, c'mon!"

"We're in water so he's got to be riding a dolphin. Triton maybe."

"I see! So, my Triton on a white dolphin, c'mon—!"

"You two! Stop saying stupid things and fight seriouslyyyyyy—?!"

Rigel and her group quarrelled.

While closing in on their position, he thought that those three always kind of made him smile.

"KSCHAAAAAAAAAAAAA—!"

"WAAAAAAAAH, HEREITCOMESHEREITCOMESHEREITCOMES! TRITON-SAMA, WHERE ARE YOOOOOOOOU?!"

"Now it's time to cut the escapism and embrace your death, Sarapi."

"No, you two mustn't embrace your death, alright?! Just dodge it, okay—?!"

That moment, Sasaraki finally arrived at their location.

He positioned himself right between the Jaw, who was already baring its malicious teeth at them, and the three girls.

"So for now— TEI—!"

His sword flashed once. A shockwave unleashed from 'Sturdy Sword Alondite,' a sword of the strongest class which had been lying around in the debugging room - although its model was still unimplemented so it just looked like an ordinary 'Longsword' - and bisected the Jaw. The glittering of the boss monster's vanishing effect played and the boss disappeared.

For the time being, he seemed to have saved the three girls. Sasaraki turned around.

The three of them stood there with their mouths gaping and stared at him.

"Oooh..."

Seshiriko voiced her wonder first.

"Sarapi. Our prince on a dolphin arrived."

".....Mu..."

Sarapi stared at Sasaraki's feet.

"What should we do, Seshiriko-chan? It's a prince with potions glued to his feet..."

"You shouldn't nitpick on other people's fashion sense. Though it's really uncool."

"No... Yeah, well, it really doesn't look cool, does it...?"

Sasaraki laughed a feeble "Hahaha..."

"Wait, is that you, Sasaraki?"

"Ah, yeah, long time no see."

Rigel addressed him, he turned towards her and raised his hand.

From here on it's the difficult part. I've to lure those three into the dungeon cleverly.

"Thanks, you saved me again. You're as strong as ever, aren't you?"

Rigel smiled. He suddenly choked on his words.

Yeah, well, I'm strong 'cause I'm cheating... He couldn't say that.

"Rigel, you know our Glued-Potion Prince?"

"What kind of nickname is that...? Yeah, I know him, he saved me on my first login."

"In other words, he was Rigel's first man."

"How romantic!"

Without a word, Rigel held her wooden staff aloft and threw it with all her strength.

It hit Seshiriko and Sarapi, bullseye.

It took them 30 seconds to instantly take off, die, and revive.

"Y-You're so cruel, Rigel-chan..."

"I'm against violence."

"Quiet. Sexual harassment is subject of the Youth Protection Code and leads to a ban."
"Hahahaha..."

By the way, the extend of what they'd said wouldn't trigger Fury. Actually, the way Fury handled the Youth Protection Code was super arbitrary, so she basically didn't budge as long as Sasaraki was involved.

According to Fury, *"In Master's case it's more interesting if there's sexual harassment involved☆"*

He thought that that fairy was just evil to her rotten core.

"By the way, Sasaraki, didn't the goddess say your name earlier?"

"IIH?! E-Err, there must be someone with the same name among the devs, huh?!"

Since he had to let them die a 'Happy Death,' it'd be bad if the truth came to light.

"Isn't it prohibited to name yourself after an already existing character? Though, there are people with names like Cloud2 and so on because of that..."

"It bugged so I could pick this name!"

"Can't be helped if it bugged, huh?"

He breathed a sigh of relief. In this game, the 'it bugged' excuse went for almost anything.

"By the way, are you and your friends free right now? Or are you busy maybe?"

"Rather than busy, we've nothing to do other than killing the Jaws."

"It's an absurd quest. What's the point of flooding the town?"

Seshiriko kept complaining, "We can't craft anything, we can't go into any dungeons..."

"...Will everything really go back to the way it was, I wonder...?"

These words Sarapi had mumbled without meaning any harm stabbed deeply into Sasaraki's heart.

The flood was the fault of Sasaraki (and Azrael) and it wasn't settled yet whether it'd go back to normal.

However, he shook his head to forget his guilt. He didn't have time to falter.

"So why are you asking whether we're free? Are you trying to make a move on us? Seshiriko, what do you think?"

"Eh? Hmm, his fashion sense aside, he's got a cute face, so I think it's okay if we go along with him."

"When my long-time friend was wanton..."

"You're the one who brought this up, though?!"

"...And? You aren't trying to pick us up, are you? Romance is forbidden in this game, to begin with. So what's the reason?"

"Yeah, you know—"

—Five minutes later.

The three were on the roof of a specific, flooded house.

"This looks more interesting than shark extermination, huh?!"

"Looks like something that's not something that's not interesting."

"Heeh? An entrance on a roof? This is unexpectedly charming of this game, isn't it?"

When he'd told them that he found a new dungeon, the three girls had joined him readily.

The fact that Sasaraki was a gamemaster mustn't be exposed to them. In the explanation it'd said, [Should the players come to know, the 'G Points' will be cut to half.] This was supposed to be some kind of difficulty setting for gamemasters.

In any case, the three girls peered down the stairs which were placed on top of the roof.

"Ho~? Looks like a stone maze down there, doesn't it?"

The girl with the witch hat on, Seshiriko, said.

"Well, this is just an ordinary house, isn't it? How can it be so spacious down there?"

"Rigel's still so innocent. Sarapi's moved."

"Distortions in time and space are everyday stuff around here."

".....Beyond hopeless, isn't it?"

And so on they talked while descending down into the gloomy cave.

Watching them from behind, Sasaraki forged his plan.

—I've to let them die a 'Happy Death.'

In other words, I've to let them have fun, then kill them.

What would be enjoyable for those three?

The killing's not an issue, I can kill them anytime, anywhere.

But practically, I don't know those three all too well, do I...?

I've only talked a bit with Rigel. She seems to be a girl with a straightforward common sense. Well, I'm comparing her with Azrael and Lizna here, since those two are a bit (more like, very) special, she's probably just a normal player.

But shouldn't there be things anyone has in common?

He recalled the game theory Alice had told him about.

Before he went to build the Master Dungeon, she'd told him briefly...

"Gaming fun is basically a combination of 'decision' and 'result.'"

"Decision— and result?"

"Yeah. I'll think of a simple example game for you."

Alice produced a figure and a dummy dungeon. The dungeon's path forked, the left path lead to a chest guarded by a demon and the right path to an unguarded chest. The adventurer-like figure was standing at the fork.

Alice held a 20-sided dice in her hand and fixated her gaze on Sasaraki.

"Okay, here goes the explanation. Sasaraki, you're the adventurer and your goal is to return from the dungeon with as much treasure as possible. There's 100 gold in the left chest. But if I roll the dice below a certain number, you'll lose against the demon— And here's the question..."

Alice winked, raised and bent two of her fingers alternately.

"Will you go for the left chest? Or the right one?"

"Eh—? Wait a second."

"I'm waiting a second."

"How much gold is in the right chest? And what's that 'certain number?'"

"Fufufu..."

Alice displayed a proud smile.

"Not telling~"

"Eh...? No, I can't make a pick, then."

"Of course you can't, right? That's why I'm giving you three hints."

Alice laughed another *"Fufu..."* and raised three of her fingers.

"First, the demon's huge. Second, you've fought one of those demons before, although of another color, and you were able to win hands down. Third, there's at least 50 gold in the right chest."

"Eh...? Hm..."

Able to win hands down, but of a different color. At least 50 gold in the right chest.

"Okay, your answer? You've to make your decision within ten seconds. Niiine, eeeight, seeeven..."

"Eh? W-Wait a second!"

"I won't wait this time. Siiix, fiiive..."

Sasaraki was pondering. Even if he'd been able to win over the demon before, she'd specifically told him about the different color, so it probably meant a difference in strength, too. If there were at least 50 gold in the right chest, he wouldn't have to take the risk of fighting. And, of course, he didn't have to compete with anyone, either.

"Errr, t-the right one!"

"Okay, the right one it is."

Alice opened the right chest. There was a good amount of gold and jewels in it.

"You get 100 gold and a bunch of jewels."

"Oooh!"

"By the way, the number's 19, so if I didn't roll a 20, you would've died on the left path."

"Eh...? Just a 5% chance?"

"Yep."

So the other path was basically the right choice to make.

Sasaraki heaved a sigh of relief and smiled.

"And the last question: Where was the game in what you did just now?"

"Eh? Err... When I chose between left and right?"

"I'll give you 25 points for that answer. It's the process of picking left or right, and the certainty that your choice was the correct one."

Alice raised a finger and continued with her explanation.

"First of all, you pondered whether you should choose left or right, correct? 'What's my primary goal, to begin with?' The process of comprehensive judgement— that's one of the main factors that leads to gaming fun, 'Decision.'"

"I see... And the other one?"

"Decisions always lead to results. It becomes apparent whether the action you took was right or wrong. This time I've told you the result of the other option, but normally the game's ultimate goal would be— to get the most gold by your judgement."

"And that's what games are made of?"

"I'd really like to explain in more detail... Like resource distribution and so on. But, well, yeah, that's what they're made of."

"Hmm... I think I kinda got it and kinda didn't..."

"Well, try putting it into practice as a gamemaster. Only good practice will lead to good games."

Alice rolled the dice around in her hand and chuckled.

"By the way, the definition of a kusoge is..."

She let go of the dice and rolled a 20.

She rolled once more - 20 again.

"That you can actually manipulate the dice like this, you know?"

".....I see."

You'd succeed no matter what you do. That certainly sounded like a boring game.

—Sasaraki started to ponder again while recalling that conversation.

In short— I've to let them make 'decisions of moderate difficulty?'

A simple problem— not a problem they'd be able to solve with just a little thinking, but a problem where they wouldn't know what the correct choice is

right away. And he'd have to let them know whether their decision was the right one in the end. Exactly that process chain would make the game, that's what Alice had taught him.

Sasaraki looked at the girls in front of him.

What kind of problem would make these girls think?

What sort of problem would these girls enjoy?

First of all, he had to come to understand that.

"Alright, then let's storm the dungeon right away! Here we go, Rigel-chan!"

Sarapi said, raised her arms overhead, and tried to run off.

"Wait right there, we haven't held our strategy meeting yet. Actually, introduce yourself first."

Rigel said while holding Sarapi back by her collar.

"GEFUU—!"

"Introduce ourselves...? Rigel's like the host of a mixer."

"What kind of example is this...? We're all party members going on an adventure together, so we should know each other, right?"

"Hmm..."

Seshiriko stared at Sasaraki with a poker face.

"Your name's Sasaraki, right?"

Seshiriko said in monotone. Quite like that.

"I don't really care who you are or anything, but..."

...And suddenly all cruel.

"What about you?"

"...If I have to pick one, then I'd like to know more about you."

"Why?"

"Err..."

He couldn't straightforwardly say that he wished to know how he could let her have fun.

After a bit of thinking, he said...

"Look, errr, I'd like to be closer with you."

"....."

Seshiriko stared at Sasaraki for about five seconds.

Then she turned around to Sarapi.

"What should I do, Sarapi?"

"What's wrong, Seshiriko-chan?!"

"My heart pounded real hard just now."

"I see! That could be love, Seshiriko-chan!"

"I think it was intent to kill."

"WHY?!"

"Making advances on a girl on your first meeting... Die, riajuu."

"Going by that reasoning, you're the one he makes his advances on, so you're a riajuu too, right?"

"...Ah..."

Seshiriko seized her own mouth as if to say, 'Crap.'

"Mumu... Then should we commit lovers suicide like close people do?"

"Your love went to the extremes right away, right?!"

"What kind of stupid things are you even talking about..."

Rigel said in surprise and went back to topic.

"This girl's Seshiriko. She's 14. As you can see, she's a weird one."

"I'm not weird. Actually, I'm normal. A normal magical girl."

"You really do look like a magical girl... Or more like a witch, right?"

Seshiriko was wearing a pointy hat and a robe, like a witch. Her hair was long.

However, she had an iron sword with her, no staff. There was no magic in this game, after all.

"Cool, right? Sasaraki, I, Seshiriko, will save you with my magical girl sword."

"Magical girl sword... Well, whatever. Thanks and let's get along, okay?"

"Sasaraki, you really know how to cope with all kinds of people, don't you...?"

Rigel said in a surprised fashion. Sasaraki smiled and nodded.

If you've been with Azrael and Lizna, you know how to deal with this girl, too.

"So, I'm Sarapi! Let's get along, Sasaraki-kun!"

She was wearing light green armor which made her look like a thief. Her hair was rather short.

"I like to one hit! I hate to run away! My motto is, 'I take back what I just said!'"

"I've no idea what you're talking about but let's get along."

"Wow!"

Sarapi's eyes sparkled while she clapped her hands together.

"What should I do, Seshiriko-chan?! He turned my max-power joke down?!"

"Sarapi, you're noisy. Calm down. Don't shout into my ears."

"I'm not noisy! Rather, I'm a calm and collected, unparallelled relentless cool-beauty assassin!"

It looked like Sarapi was going with an assassin scenario. He thought it was pretty absurd.

"Why are you with these two girls, Rigel?"

"Hmm, they invited me, and..."

Rigel smiled a bit.

"...They're two dunces, but when I'm with them, it's really fun for some reason."

"HOWATTSU?!"

Sarapi unleashed a mysterious shout.

"It's one of Rigel-chan's rare dere moments, Seshiriko-chan!"

"My heart pounded real hard just now."

"That's love, isn't it, Seshiriko-chan?!"

"Yeah."

"So you're into yuri, aren't you, Seshiriko-chan?!"

"Probably."

"...Real fun, huh?"

If those two girls were around, he could hardly imagine it getting boring.

"Now that we're done with introductions, let's move on to the strategy meeting."

Rigel directed them. Strategy basically meant to assign roles and decide on a formation.

As in most RPGs, being in the front row was dangerous. Reason being, you'd be the one to step into traps first... but most of all: Bugs hit the first row the hardest. The vanguard was quick to die for no specific reason.



And to avoid those bugs, you needed experience.

"Can we rely on you as the vanguard, Sasaraki?"

"Yeah... Ah, wait."

It'd be more convenient if he was last and could watch them from behind in order to let those three enjoy themselves.

"I'm not really confident I can. I'll watch our backs. Can't someone of you act as the spearhead?"

"Sarapi-chan magnificently refuses, assassins shouldn't stand out!"

"The law dictates magical girls to be the middle guard."

"So that leaves me, huh...? Well, it's okay."

...But in the end, Sarapi became the vanguard, after all.

Next was the assignment of roles. Though this game was all melee with no magic. Battle strategies amounted to nothing more than 'zerg them down.' Therefore, all that was left to decide was 'who's taking on the attacks?' In other words, who would shield the others? Also known as 'tanking.'

Although dying was bread-and-butter in this world, there weren't many people who wanted to die deliberately.

"We can leave the tanking to you, right, Sasaraki?"

"Yeah."

"Wait right there!"

Sarapi interrupted them all of a sudden.

"I want you to leave the tanking to this splendid assassin going by the name of Sarapi!"

"...Aren't your defense, level, and evasion rate below Sasaraki's?"

Sarapi pointed at Sasaraki sharply and puffed up her (small) chest in pride.

"I shall show you my magnificent backflip-style tanking!"

"No, nonono, you can't do that."

Rigel refused flatly.

"Seshiriko. You say something too."

"You know..."

"Hm?"

"I've high expectations for Tank Sarapi."

Sarapi struck a pose ready to high-five.

"Understood—!"

A satisfying sound echoed and the two girls wished each other the best of luck.

"Wha—, WAAAAAAAAAIT—?!"

"Now that it's come to this, Sarapi won't listen."

"Um, but, you know, we've to keep efficiency in mind, right?"

Rigel kept at it tenaciously.

"Even if we bother with efficiency, it won't get us nowhere in this kusoge."

"Uwaah..."

That certainly was the case, but what blunt things this girl dared to say.

"Seshiriko. That's not true."

Rigel declared strongly.

"This game really is a kusoge..."

"Yes. This world is an unparalleled kusoge."

"But is it okay for us to just accept it?"

Rigel beat against her own chest and continued.

"A great man once said— The game's over when you give up!"

"...So you were a competitive sport kind of person, Rigel?"

"Kind of fits her image, doesn't it?!"

"Even if this is a kusoge, we've to give it our very best at all times!"

"Heeh...?"

Sasaraki felt his chest heat up.

He understood that Rigel was proactively and earnestly trying to enjoy this game.

"Hmm..."

Seshiriko put her hand to her chin and sunk into thought.

"Even if you say that, the world would rather end before we'll be able to persuade Sarapi"

"It's that bad?!"

"Once she's decided on something, she won't budge even if it kills her. 'Cause she's an idiot."

"Let's try it at least."

"It's futile. I'll proof it."

Seshiriko drew her sword, gripped it with both her hands, and swung it down on Sarapi with all her might.

ZUGAGIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIN!

Sneak Attack and Critical Hit. Damage: 80.

[Player Sarapi Died. Reason: Player Seshiriko's One-Hit Bisection]

30 seconds later, Sarapi revived (the respawn was right next to them).

"What are you doing, Seshiriko-chan?!"

"Sarapi, won't you reconsider? You died, you know?"

"Why are you asking me *after* you killed me?! I've no intention to reconsider at all now, you know?!"

"See?"

"What are you looking so proud for, Seshiriko...?"

Rigel put her hand to her forehead and sighed.

"Rigel. Think about it differently."

"Differently how?"

"We are not playing a kusoge. We, this party of four, *are* the kusoge."

"You know that thinking like that doesn't resolve anything, right?"

"A kusoge *is* a game that doesn't resolve anything."

Rigel heaved a very deep sigh and showed a tired expression.

"...Got it, I got it... I'm an idiot for hoping you could be efficient."

In the end, Rigel was the one to yield and Sarapi became the tank.

Rigel heaved a shocked sigh.

I think I kinda understand their relationships with each other...

And Sasaraki thought that it was pretty relaxing to have Rigel do all the tsukkomis when he was with her.

* * *

And hence Sarapi became their vanguard for the dungeon exploration. Looking through the protruding window, they saw stairs leading downwards. They climbed into it while bending their backs and descended down a dark, wooden passage. Sasaraki thought to himself...

So... how can I make these girls enjoy themselves?

This time it's different from the tutorial dungeon. This dungeon's layout should've already been established. Even I don't know its setup. Let's spawn some traps, chests, and demons to let them have fun while I check up on the contents (though they'll be kuso-tastic, anyway).

With these thoughts in his heart, he went down the entrance stairway and... reached a deadend.

"Nonono!"

No matter how you looked at it, there was no continuing.

"Could there be a hidden door, maybe?"

"No trace of that!"

Sarapi replied while knocking on the brick wall.

"Hm," Seshiriko nodded and suddenly raised her hand.

"So this is it, right? Thanks for your work!"

"We cleared the dungeon in three seconds, didn't we?! A new record!"

"Nononononono!"

It would've been problematic for Sasaraki if they'd cleared the dungeon at this point.

Wai... What is this?!

"Sasaraki-kun, can you hear me?"

Lizna's voice echoed in his head. It seemed like she'd sent a message.

She'd been watching Sasaraki and his group from within the debugging room's monitoring room.

"I looked into the dungeon and it seems like there's nothing but an entrance."

"What are we supposed to do now?!"

"Alice-san said that Sasaraki-kun should just go ahead and build something."

"Another new and fresh impossible task I'm asked to do, huh?!"

"Give it your best! I believe in you!"

There were limits to what one could achieve by giving it their best.

"Even so... I've no choice but to try, I guess..."

The three big 'U's in this game were unimplemented, untested, and unfixed. This extent of unimplementation was absolutely commonplace. And if he was to lose to this extent of unimplementation, it was doubtful he'd ever be able to touch this kusoge up.

"You know you've got a tool for dungeon construction, right?"

He looked at his hand when Lizna said that to him. Right now, Sasaraki was holding a graph paper notebook you'd know from math classes. It was an item introduced with patch ver. 38 and exclusive to gamemasters, the 'Super All-Purpose Imagination-to-Reality Device.'

With this, you'd apparently be able to create dungeons by just mapping them.

As always, a development tool so vague, all you could do was laugh.

When he flipped the notebook open, stairs appeared in one of the graph paper's boxes.

And besides those stairs, the paper was completely empty. A sea of white nothingness.

"Sasaraki, let's go back. We had no luck this time."

Rigel said to him. However, he couldn't go along with them this time.

"W-Wait a bit! Just a bit!"

"Why?"

"You know, we might find a hidden path or something after all, if we just keep looking for a bit!"

"He's a die hard kind of person— so isn't he the protagonist?"

"Surrounded by three heroines sure makes him look like one, right?!"

If you talked to these girls, the conversation was bound to derail.

"Anyway, let's look for it, everyone! The first to find it wins!"

"Wins what? Just... what...?"

At any rate, he appeared to have successfully deceived them (albeit forcibly).

While pretending to look for a door, Sasaraki traced over the graph paper to create a map. For the time being, he extended it by ten boxes northwards starting from the stairs. Thereupon, *GOOOOOOOOOOOOH!*, the earth shook tremendously and the wall in front of Sarapi parted sideways.

"Oooooh! Hidden path GET! Sarapi wins!"

"...No, well, did you do anything right now, Sarapi?"

"She made a dumb face and spaced out, right?"

"So the trigger was to make a dumb face?"

"Why's everyone so cruel all of a sudden?!"

Alright, kinda forced, but we're clear!

While sweat ran down his back, Sasaraki secretly struck a triumphant pose.

Let's go with this!

Proceeding along the simple brick structure, he wracked his brain as if his life depended on it.

"First of all— I've to buy some time!"

I've to secure some time for dungeon creation. Maybe a demon for now? No, it'd be suspicious if I wouldn't take part in the fight. That'd occupy my hands. In the meantime, Seshiriko kept advancing forwards.

"F-For now... a trap, I guess?"

He placed a pitfall in front of them for the time being.

Writing 'Pitfall' on the graph paper was all he needed to do.

Right after, *BOSHUN*.

"FUGYAUN—?!"

Sarapi's shriek echoed. She'd gotten buried up to her hips in the ground.

"A trap, huh...? Couldn't you sense it?"

Rigel said in surprise.

Sarapi was an assassin. Sensing traps was supposed to be her strong suit.

"I-It's not my fault! There wasn't anything but normal path ahead!"

"Sarapi, how unsightly."

"I said it's not my fault—?!"

Sarapi cried and creeped up.

...Ah, that might be good.

It hurt his heart, but— at the same time, it felt kinda pleasant.

How to put it, it felt like he'd done something tabooed.

Wait, I've no time to think into this too deeply, now that there's an opening I've to..."

Sasaraki scribbled away on the graph paper.

"My, Sasaraki, what's that?"

"GIKUU—?!"

He jumped in surprise being called out to by Rigel.

"W-Well, I'm mapping the dungeon."

"Heeh... I see, should I take care of it?"

"It's fine, I'm used to it."

I'm totally used to lying by now, ain't I...? He admired himself.

Anyway, they helped Sarapi out of the trap and advanced further. Saraki kept drawing.

Errr... a normal dungeon... would probably be boring, huh...?

Now he had the chance to freely create a dungeon.

So he wanted to make a special one just for them.

Sasaraki recalled the earlier settings of these three girls. Assassin. Magical girl. Rigel didn't really think up any specific setting for herself, but her 'Main Skill' was related to dragons. Couldn't he maybe make a quest which would specifically utilize these three—?

The moment he thought about that, the graph paper started to shine golden.

[As you wish, Master.]

"Eh...?"

[Implemented quest.]

It appeared the fairy who dwelled within the graph paper had understood Sasaraki's intentions.

Right after, Sarapi shouted an, "OOOOOH—!"

"Everyone, I've discovered a jail! It reeks of event! Who wants to be imprisoned?!"

"Not me."

"I'll pass on it, too. Apparently, someone's already beaten us to it, anyway."

Rigel pointed at the inside of a cell separated from them by iron bars. A skeleton was inside. Hovering above it hazily was a bluish-white, half-transparent ghost. It

looked like a man in leather clothes. It didn't appear to be hostile towards them and just groaned away, [Oooh...]

Sasaraki had his doubts, what was going on— he himself didn't even know.

This tool was awfully wooly and just implemented whatever it wanted.

There was probably an AI resembling Fury inside.

"A ghost! Let's beat him to death!"

"You can't kill what's already dead."

"Then let's beat him half dead!"

"I see, a brilliant plan!"

"C'mon, stop that thoughtless blabbering and listen to his story, alright?"

He was really thankful that Rigel had a normal reply for them.

When Rigel and the others drew closer to him, the ghost stared at Rigel.

And then he began talking about something.

[You... You all... I would've never thought that the living would come here...]

"Who are you? Where are we?"

"Those are the standard questions, right?! And next—"

"Sarapi, be quiet."

[I'm a member of the assassin guild... and this is the assassin guild's abandoned castle...]

"What?! It exists! The assassin guild really exists!"

"Sarapi, shut up."

"...So, why is it abandoned?"

[An evil witch riding a dragon... utterly destroyed our guild...]

"What? There really are magical girls?"

"Nonono, wait a second!"

Rigel said in a surprised fashion.

"What's this forced 'n half-assed setting?!"

"That's to be expected in this game!"

"Hahaha..."

Sasaraki forced a dry smile.

Not good. It's my fault, I've stated my wish poorly.

And thanks to the tool's ways, it had apparently become a mix up.

[Please, appease our grudge... and destroy the magical girl and dragon within our castle...]

"What?! Exterminate a dragon?! The royal road of fantasy!"

"An evil magical girl... She's my enemy, no doubt."

"I don't get it anymore... I wanna go home already...!"

Rigel put her hand to her forehead and looked up at the ceiling. Sasaraki basically felt the same.

"B-But we can't do that either, let's just advance further for now, okay?"

[Ooh, I'm grateful... If you kill them, we shall offer you a reward...]

"What reward?"

[A dragon's horn and claw...]

Rigel showed a response and twitched.

"...Eh? You mean the raw materials for smithing horn and claw?"

[Of course... The good stuff you hardly see pop up on the market, ya know...?]

What an awfully kind ghost.

Rigel twitched even harder.

"H-Hmm, I see, I see..."

Her body was somewhat trembling restlessly.

"Alright, everyone, let's get a move on."

"It's Mercenary Rigel."

"So lovely, isn't she?! I love you, Rigel-chan!"

"KYA! Wai— Don't cling to me, hey—!"

"Hahaha..."

Sasaraki expressed a smile. This time a genuine one.

It had been an absurdly hard installation, but anyway, it seemed like they were enjoying themselves now.

* * *

In the time he'd talked with them, Sasaraki came to understand what kind of adventure they were wishing for.

Sarapi wanted new thrills, Seshiriko chaos, and Rigel something logical.

And so he tried to put each respectively into practice.

"Uoh, a new monster, Seshiriko-chan!"

"It's a Pig Human Fighter in a different color, isn't it?"

"Amazing, right?! I'm impressed!"

Sarapi was especially easy to handle.

"Uoooh, it's firing beams out of its pig eyes, Seshiriko-chan!"

"Hooh, very interesting."

Seshiriko was pretty simple, too.

"Uoooh, it says, 'If you don't strike my weak point, I won't die,' on its forehead, Rigel-chan!"

"It's firing beams from its eyes, so... perhaps its eyes are the weak point?"

"TEI, EYE CRUSHER! *Woosh*, Uooou, it exploded?!"

"Hooh, very itneresting."

"Fufufu, thanks to me."

Rigel was just as simple.

Anyway, they spent thirty minutes like that.

And now they were consulting in front of the boss room (or rather, the room Sasaraki had set as the boss room).

"Now then, as the tank, I'll charge in first! Follow after me—!"

"Wait."

Rigel grabbed Sarapi by the collar.

"You know, it was enough for the trash, but not for the boss. Leave it to Sasaraki."

"Eh—! Don't wanna, don't wanna, don't wannaaaa—!"

"We don't know what level the dragon will have, do you want to die?"

"If I have to pick one, I'd rather not!"

The death penalty in this game consisted of a small chunk of XP cut and a small chance of item loss.

The XP aside, losing your items was something everyone hated.

"Then..."

"But I don't wanna."

Sarapi wore a serious expression.

"I gave it my best until here! I want to stick with tanking until the end!"

"Sarapi, there's nothing sticky about tanking."

"Either way, don't wanna!"

"Hmmm."

Being at a loss, Rigel cocked her head in puzzlement.

Sasaraki didn't know what to do, either. Rigel's reasoning was sound.

However, he also understood how Sarapi felt. She didn't care about logical dungeon clearing.

One of them had to compromise—

"What do you think, Sasaraki?"

"Hmm..."

After a bit of consideration, he said...

"I'll tank."

"Eeh—?! Why?!"

"Well, when we discussed who's supposed to tank earlier, Rigel gave in, right?"

"Rather than giving in, I gave up, though..."

"But it's no good to give in all the time, you know?"

He looked straight into Sarapi's eyes and continued...

"Friendship— should be about giving and taking, that's what I believe."

"Hooh?"

"Hohe?"

Seshiriko and Sarapi simultaneously showed surprise.

"Eh...? W-What's wrong?"

"I admire that you're a boy with his own opinion."

"I thought you were just some tag-along loser!"

"You guys are way too rude to him, alright?!"

"Yeah, but I get what he wants to say!"

Sarapi put on a bright smile and pointed sharply at Sasaraki.

"We're friends, right?! This time, I'll leave it to you, Sasaraki-chan!"

So now they'd added '-chan' on his name. It made him a bit happy.

"Let's work out a strategy, then. First of all, Sasaraki, use all the buff potions you have and charge in. While you focus all the aggro on yourself, Sarapi and Seshiriko attack from the flanks. In the meantime, I'll look for a chance to summon my dragon with my main skill."

"Dragon versus dragon! How romantic!"

"But won't I get caught up in their fight and burned to cinders by their blaze?"

"I'll give you a signal right before I summon it, fall back then."

"Got it."

Their strategy was complete. Rigel laughed a "Fufu..."

"Fufufu, I'm getting excited."

"Amazing, isn't it?! Such an impeccable strategy!"

"Apart from not taking into account that this is a kusoge, it's perfect."

"You guys... Ah, whatever! Sasaraki, everyone, let's go!"

"Alright! CHAAAAAAAAAAAARGE!"

"Why are you giving the order?!"

Following Sarapi's order, Sasaraki plunged into the dragon's room as the vanguard.

—And as he'd anticipated, they were wiped out.

* * *

We're jumping 30 minutes ahead.

After their adventure, Sasaraki headed to the flooded teleporter. To return to the debugging room. If he'd use the 'Master Screen' he'd be able to teleport immediately, but even that'd use 'G Points,' so he had to resort to the aforementioned unknown and unpopular method.

In the middle of that, Sasaraki uttered a, "Hmm..."

"They seem to more or less have had some fun, huh...?"

When he took a look at his 'G Points' on the 'Master Screen,' it said 500. He didn't know who and how they were calculated, but apparently he'd fulfilled the task of letting Rigel and her group die a 'Happy Death.'

But had that really been alright?

With doubt in his mind he arrived at the magic square.

The scene in front of his eyes shifted and he returned to the black room— the debugging room.

"I'm back."

When he returned, Azrael was facing the console and programming, as always.

Lizna was lying down and seizing her own nose and mouth.

"...What are you doing?"

"Eh? Just suffocating myself."

"...Why?"

"Don't they say that suffocating feels good?"

Sometimes, he got worried whether Lizna really should return to reality.

"No, scratch that... By the way, where's Alice?"

"In the monitoring roo~m."

"Got it."

There were a whole bunch of small rooms connected to the debugging room. One of them was the monitoring room, a room the size of an average bathroom from which you could watch the active players. Alice was in there quite a lot.

Sasaraki opened the hidden door and entered.

Alice was surrounded by sparkling displays.

She sat on a chair and stared at those displays, smiling.

And looked like she was enjoying herself, awfully so.

"Nfufufufufufufuhehe..."



It was a sloven voice you normally couldn't even imagine coming from her.

When he peeked at her face, she was drooling.

"Fu-nya?"

Her eyes who were staring at the displays in ecstasy focused on Sasaraki.

And the spark of intellect immediately returned to them.

"Ara, if it isn't Sasaraki. Welcome back."

"...Yeah, I'm back."

She's fast to throw the switch, huh? He'd thought while giving his reply.

"So? How did it go?"

Alice asked with a smile.

"We wiped."

Sasaraki replied, also with a smile.

They'd been reduced to cinders by the dragon's blaze since it'd been at level 30.

Their decision back there hadn't made any difference at all. What a kusoge.

"But... well, looks like they had fun."

After they'd been burned to death, the three girls had earnestly cursed this game. Especially Rigel. Like, *"Balance this game already,"* or *"Why do they put a level 30 dragon on the first floor?!"* or *"Weren't out strategy meetings all useless?!"* She'd been really mad.

While he had felt incredibly sorry, he asked them what they thought of their adventure just now, and Rigel said...

"Hm? Right— Apart from the finale, it wasn't bad."

She'd turned towards him and winked.

"It was fun going on an adventure with you."

So she'd said.

"I see! Congratulations!"

Alice applauded, *clapclapclap*.

She let her feet dangle in the air and was apparently enjoying herself.

"Have you come to understand it, too?"

While explaining the details, Alice winked again.

"Once you know a person's nature, you can let them have fun by offering an adventure that gets them what they're looking."

"Yeah, that's right, huh?"

Those three had been especially easy to read, though.

Surely, if it was something intended for a bigger audience, he'd also have to try and read all of them.

"So what have you been doing, Alice?"

"Hm? The same you were doing."

"The same I was doing...?"

Looking around, Alice was surrounded by thousands of displays.

"I was watching players enjoying themselves."

Alice smiled.

"Ehehe. That makes me really, *rea~lly* happy, you know?"

"That so?"

"Yeah. You enjoyed going on an adventure with Rigel and her friends too, right?"

"Yeah, that's right, I guess."

"And I've been having 3000 times that fun."

"Eh—?"

"You know, since I was watching 3000 players."

Alice spread her both arms.

"Everyone's enjoying themselves in the game I've made— Is there a greater joy than this?"

"....."

Alice didn't seem to be acting or lying.

Somehow— he became jealous of the girl in front of his eyes, who was smiling so happily.

It'd been a lot of fun to see Rigel enjoy herself. Alice appeared to be having even more fun.

"You'll understand that happiness soon, too."

"Is that so?"

"That's so."

As always there was no basis whatsoever, but strangely, for him Alice's words were always extremely persuasive.

"So would you mind letting me hear the details?"

Alice asked, and he began explaining their adventure's particulars. Starting from when he'd met the three girls, over to how he'd fused the magical girl, assassin, and dragon part into a cryptic dungeon, up to how they'd finally rushed into the dragon's room to beat it.

"...Was the last decision the best, I wonder?"

"You mean when you made Sarapi compromise? Why?"

"I'm just wondering whether there wasn't a better option."

"Hm, hm..."

Alice folded her arms and put a hand to her cheek.

"This is a good opportunity, so— want to hear about player tiles?"

"Player tiles?"

Alice flicked her fingers and the screen shifted.

It showed a graph with an x and y axis, the x axis said 'RP' and the y axis 'Efficiency.'

"I get efficiency, but... RP?"

"Roleplaying— it's the abbreviation for acting out a character."

Alice jumped on the desk and put on some spectacles.

"What's that?"

"My explanation glasses."

"Is there any point to them?"

"Yeah, it's roleplaying, you know?"

He was told with a smile.

"In other words, acting out a character— is a question of whether you deem the emotional aspect important or not."

"It's an RPG, so doesn't everyone feel that it's important?"

"It totally differs from person to person. Like how Azrael and you judge its importance vastly different, right?"

I certainly can't immerse myself into a game like she can.

"And so, take a look at the graph. Let's name them for convenience's sake, we'll call the group of people who're low on both efficiency and RP 'Casuals' (lit.: 'Enjoy Group'), the group who's scoring high in efficiency 'Core Gamers' (lit.: 'Serious Group'), the one's who're scoring high in roleplaying 'Roleplayers' (lit.: 'Acting Group'), and the one's who're scoring high in both are the 'Perfects' (lit.: 'Ideal Group')."

"I get the others, but what's with 'Perfects?'"

"It's English for 'People who're personifying the ideal.'"

"The ideal, huh?"

"Yeah. After all, being able to enjoy both worlds is the best, right?"

"...Now that you're mentioning it..."

RPGs had those two ways of enjoying oneself.

And being able to utilize both sides probably was the best.

"By the way, according to my own investigation, the players in this game allocate like this."

Alice flicked her fingers again. A pie diagram popped up.

Core Gamers:	8
Casuals:	9830
Roleplayers:	698
Perfects:	0

Zero, huh?

"Yep. After all, there couldn't be ideal players in a kusoge, right?"

"Aren't we done for?!"

"We're the ones who're going to do something about it."

We're clearly done for.

"Well, that aside, you seem to have gained some 'G Points,' right?"

"I've suddenly grown tired, but... yeah, I've gained some."

"Azrael, Sasaraki's given it his best for us, you kno~w?"

Alice flicked her fingers. A wall disappeared and the room connected to yet another room.

In there was Azrael, facing a desk. She met eyes with us; and looked kind of tired.

"...How did it go over there?"

"Over there means you, Azrael."

"Uh..."

Azrael was supposed to find a way to deal with the flood through programming.

Apparently, it didn't go too well.

"I-If you wanna laugh at me, then laugh already... Say it, 'You goof-off,' 'You worthless angel'..."

She'd grown awfully timid. What had happened?

Alice moaned while folding her arms, "Hm."

"Seems like her depression's still going strong, doesn't it?"

She mumbled to Sasaraki silently.

"What should we do?"

"It's a gamemasters' job to do something about it."

"It's a gamemasters' job to do just about everything, isn't it?"

"I'm glad you understand."

Not even sarcasm worked with this girl.

Nonetheless, it seemed like *he had* to do something about it.

Sasaraki walked closer towards Azraels who'd stretched her upper body out on the desk.

"Azrael, I'm going to go and fix the flood now, why don't you come with me?"

"Don't wanna."

Shot down right away.

"I see, too bad... And here it would've been reassuring to have you with me."

"Eh—?"

Now was his chance to give her the push.

"If you're with me it'd be much easier to deal with unforeseen bugs and all."

"Eh...? But it doesn't have to be me for that."

"(After Alice) You're the one who understands this game the best, you know?"

He really did think that - probably. Azrael was the one who'd faced the most disasters in this game.

"So, please."

And finally, he bowed deeply.

Azrael smiled, feeling a bit awkward.

"H-Hm, if you're begging that much, it can't be helped, right—!"

"Oooh~!"

Alice voiced her admiration. She applauded in a tiny gesture.

"Sasaraki, you're really good at steering Azrael into the right direction, aren't you?"

"Don't put it like I'm some kinda car, alright?!"

* * *

On top of the castle in the innermost part of the first town, 'Start.' Sasaraki and Azrael were looking up at the cracks. Various of those black cracks were

spreading across the blue sky and like a waterfall, water kept gushing down from them. It was a sky chasm.

They were already done with piling sandbags on the second floor. Now they were planning on filling the holes they couldn't reach from there. And to do that, they had to somehow get right next to them.

—How?

In this game, the sky acted as first floor's ceiling and border, and stood 300 meters tall. The tallest building in the game, 'Arc Start Castle,' stood 50 meters tall. Actually, those 250 meters of distance could instantly be closed by teleporting or flying.

However, Sasaraki, as he was now, couldn't freely use his gamemaster powers. Flying would use 1 'G Point' per second, and teleporting would cost him 100 points. He had gathered 500 'G Points' before. A number that had been barely enough to spawn that huge amount of sandbags he'd needed. He had to preserve them.

And so the action Sasaraki and Azrael took was—

"What's with this load of potions, Sasaraki?"

Azrael voiced her complaint with a huge amount of potions stuffed into her backpack.

"I've bought them earlier."

"Why?"

"We'll climb up to the sky with them."

"Climb up... What are you talking about?"

"Well, you can freely place objects in this game, right?"

"Right."

"And potions are 10 centimeters tall, right?"

"Right."

"And if you're piling them up, you need 2500 of them to bridge 250 meters, right?"

"...In other words?"

"We're going to build a potion tower right now."

"See? like this," Sasaraki said and started stacking potions. After he'd stacked about ten of them, he'd built a tower big enough to reach his hips. Then he jumped up on it.

Sasaraki balanced on top of it like a circus actor on top of a pole.

"Waitwaitwait?! Isn't it absurdly hard to keep balance like that?!"

"It's fine, the potion has more ground to stand on that it might look."

He answered and smiled. Practically, they didn't even topple either.

An item which had been placed once, basically wouldn't move.

Utilizing that characteristic made this kind of acrobatic possible.

It put a bug Sasaraki had discovered a few weeks ago to practical use.

"...In other words, we're using potions as blocks to climb up?"

"Yeah. Other items would be fine too, but potions are easiest to supply ourselves with and all that. There's no decent physics engine in this game that could make the tower collapse, so it's okay."

You could place objects in any way. Even a dumbbell on top of a standing needle.

"Doesn't feel like it's okay, though."

"It's okay since there's nothing okay in this game to begin with."

"So it isn't okay at all!"

Azrael complained, but she had no better plan either.

And so they moved on to their task.

Putting potions on top of potions. And then some more of that. Azrael was handing the potions to Sasaraki, and Sasaraki stacked them up. After about 30 potions, he couldn't reach the top anymore, so he clung onto the potion tower with his left hand.

And that work - same as stacking stones in 'The Children's Limbo' - went on. 2400 potions left.

"Sasaraki... what are we doing...?"

Azrael asked with wettened eyes while holding onto the potion tower.

"Gamemaster things, of course."

"So a gamemaster's job is to stack potions to the high heavens?!"

"I also feel that that's kinda wrong."

"Not 'kinda,' it's obviously wrong!"

"Uuh," Azrael teared up.

This sort of work really didn't seem to tickle her fancy.

"But, well, we're the reason we've to do this to begin with..."

"Hau—!"

Azrael's movements stopped.

"I-I do feel responsible, but... we do have to get divorced!"

"Yeah... Well, and that's my fault, right?"

"Right—!"

She glared at him with scornful eyes.

Then she hugged her own body as if to hide it.

"O-Only people who mutually love each other can marry!"

"Yeah, that's right, huh?"

Though marrying in a kusoge was more like playing house.

Nonetheless, it appeared to bother Azrael extremely.

"Uuh... How am I gonna explain this to mama and granny..."

"Well, it'd be fine if you simply don't."

"No way! It's important to inform the family, right?!"

An unexpectedly zealous family person, indeed.

After an hour of this and that, and a lot of Azrael's grumbling...

They finally reached the black hole which gaped in the blue sky.

"Fuwa... This view... really is impressive, right?"

Vast grassfields and a tiny town spread under their eyes.

The flooded houses sparkled.

And Azrael was fixing her eyes upon this vast scene.

—*Beautiful,* he thought.

Looking at her like that, something suddenly occurred to him.

"Hey, Azrael. Do you want to try plugging up that hole?"

"Eh—?"

"If I share the privileges with you, you could do it."

Azrael looked up into the sky. A 5m² big, black hole was gaping in it, and water kept flooding out of it like a waterfall. The initial plan was for Sasaraki to stuff it up with sand bags. It should've sufficed if he spawned about 5000 of them.

He was supposed to do it, but he thought about leaving it to Azrael.

Using the 'Master Screen,' he could transfer the item spawn privileges to her.

"Is there a point in doing that?"

"There isn't."

Sasaraki smiled.

"An angel plugging the hole in the sky— don't you feel like that'd make a good painting?"

Once he'd said that, Azrael blinked in a daze.

It appeared she was chewing Sasaraki's suggestion over in her mind.

At last...

"H-Hmm? Well, it's not like it wouldn't interest me... I guess?"

It does interest you extremely, right...?

Azrael's eyes were sparkling.

She reminded him of a hamster holding its treat, really cute.

And Azrael was standing on top of the potions. On her toes. Sasaraki looked at her like that from the side. From a transparent acrylic plate he'd tucked between two potions. Azrael looked like she was chanting something.

[...O spirit thicker than twilight...!]

Her voice sounded like she was really having fun.

Where did she get that incantation from...?

[Restore the world— through my hands! TAAH—!]

Azrael slashed with her sword.

At the same time, she operated the 'Master Screen' that Sasaraki had handed her with her right hand. ゴゴゴゴ (read: "GOH-GOH-GOH-GOH," sound effect for something ominous happening/dull rumbling) sounds came from the dark crack

from which water had kept dripping and it grew narrower. Finally, the big crack above Azrael's head closed up.

Their task— the first stage of it— was complete.

"I did it, Sasaraki—! Ah—"

Immediately after...

A tremendous shockwave hit them. It was probably a backlash from the closed crack. It had no effect on the potion tower. But it did have an effect on Azrael, it lifted her up and made her look like an angel.

And made her fall.

250 meters deep.

Azrael couldn't fly, so she hit the ground.

Plus, if you fell more than five meters deep, this game inflicted '(meters fallen) x 10' fall damage to the player.

While recalling all that, Sasaraki heard a *pam* from below.

[Player Azrael Died. Reason: Fall Damage]

"....."

Sasaraki didn't feel like saying anything and just took on the laborious task of climbing down the tower. Once he'd made it down, the revived Azrael was already waiting for him. Her cheeks were flushed, she grinded her teeth and felt seemingly embarrassed.

When their eyes met and he didn't know how to react, Azrael was the one to break the ice.

"That went as planned."

She laughed a, "Fufun" (and sweat ran down her cheeks).

"You wanted it that way?"

"Yeah. An angel loses its wings once its task is complete."

"I see."

"I'm serious."

"Yeah, I got it."

"I said I'm serious!"

"I said I got it."

He more or less got it.

Well, you could go from this particular case to how things were going in general: Azrael was just like this.

And he thought that that was nice; just like the fact that he was part of this story.

* * *

The fun potion-tower-building-and-climbing job was done, and Sasaraki and Azrael returned to the debugging room. Alice was watching the flooded town on the monitor with her arms folded and mumbled a "Hm, hm..."

"Hm? Ah, you're back, huh? Thanks for your work."

"Yeah, we managed to get it done. What's next?"

"You've plugged all those holes, so next is draining the water."

"Sounds like we're in a bathtub..."

Sasaraki said and looked at the Main Screen. The players were looking at the sky and said things like, "The sky is back! Just a bit more!" or "So when's the water going to disappear?" The latter was what *he* wished he'd knew too.

"By the way, how's the 'Hyperspace Water Jaw' hunt going?"

"Great!"

Lizna answered, and in a flash she displayed their current situation on the screen to his right.

"Umm, so 668 Jaws have been killed. 3820 players died. The kill ratio's about 6:1 (six players killed for one Jaw fallen), this is really making feel me giddy with excitement♪"

As always, this girl had an awful lot of fun when talking about players dying.

"But going by this pace, won't they be able to kill all the Jaws before we drained the water?"

"Hmm, I see... Then I'll give them a small boost, okay?"

Lizna did a twirl and changed into her goddess get-up.

Then she operated the 'Master Screen' and her image appeared in the sky.

"Everyone, it looks like you're all trying your best, right?! Two third of the Jaws have fallen!"

"Ah, it's Goddess Lizeltna, isn't it?"

"Don't get fooled by her smile, she's a dark goddess."

"She's a klutzy, black-hearted, yet cute goddess."

Apparently, the players had gotten that kind of image of her.

"Just keep this up— is what I'd like to say, but we've got a bit of a problem!"

"Problem? Isn't this game the problem?"

"What's the point of these Jaws, anyway?"

"I'm sure there is no point, dude."

They were harsh. And they were right. That was the worrying thing about it.

"Umm... right! The Jaws will be ten times stronger from now on!"

"Why?" "WHY?!" "What da...?"

A bunch of tsukkomis.

"Eh? Why? The Jaws, umm, are on fire to get revenge for their killed friends!"

"No, they're not on fire." "There's no fire, right?" "They're aquatic, after all."

A(nother) bunch of tsukkomis.

"A-Anyway, everyone, please give it your best—! Lizeltna out—!"

"She gave up on arguing." "She threw it." "The Goddess of Capitulation."

woosh.

Lizna cut the transmission and breathed a sigh.

"How was I, Sasaraki-kun?!"

".....Yeah, you tried your best!"

He didn't even want to tsukkomi anymore.

"Umm, then the next problem to tackle is... our drainage strategy, right?!"

Azrael and Lizna nodded at each other.

"How are we going to do this?"

"It'll be enough if you just do the same as before."

Alice said.

"Meaning?"

"Get some TP, go to the first floor's bottom, and cut the ground open with 'The First Cake Cut.'"

"...Eh?"

He exchanged glances with Azrael and they both blinked in puzzlement.

Then their faces flushed simultaneously and their cheeks flared up.

"Ah, w-wait a sec!"

"I'm waiting a sec."

"Can't we only use it once?!"

"There isn't really any such restriction. You can use it as many times as you want."

What's the meaning of 'The First' (the first*), then?* The naming itself was buggy already.

Although, the lack of consistency between a skill's name and effect was more than common in this game.

Azrael's jaw dropped.

"The bottom of the first floor... And it's okay if we just open up that spot?"

"It is. By design, data that's going through the bottom of the first floor will reappear on the top floor."

"What's with this old NES-like feature...? And the top floor is?"

"Here."

Alice pointed at the debugging room's ceiling.

"So it's OK as long as we make a waterway that'll direct the flood right into the shredder."

"I see... In that case, it does sound like it'd work, but..."

He sent a sidelong glance at Azrael. His heart started to race. So he did have to do those kinds of things with Azrael again... Well, it's not like he hated the idea.

However, Azrael seemed to. After that one incident, she'd been really out of sorts with him.

"And with that: Azrael, change into a swimsuit."

While Sasaraki had still been in thought, Alice demanded another nonsensical thing.

"How did we arrive at swimsuits?!"

"We don't have enough TP as of now, right? If you two do a swimsuit date while going to the bottom of the first floor, you can get a lot of points."

Alice flicked her fingers and a whole bunch of mannequins grew out of the floor. It were female mannequins. Each of them wearing a different swimsuit. High leg, bikini, black, white - a whole array of them.

"Which one do you like?"

"Why ask me?"

"Eh? You know, if she doesn't wear something you like, the points will get cut by half."

"Who programmed such a pointlessly sophisticated system—?!"

"Fury-chan's former master, of course☆"

He was the worst as always, her former master.

"So, Sasaraki-kun? Which one will it be?"

"Eh? Wait, well... errr..."

He faltered being urged on by Lizna's smiling face.

"Just be honest with Lizna-oneesan, okay?"

"E-Even if you tell me to be honest..."

"It's got to be a bikini after all, right? Since it puts the most emphasis on the boobs. Or maybe the innocent one-piece? Or maybe anything that shows a lot of

skin goes? How about the color? A sweet pink? Mature black? Energetic yellow? Or maybe silver?"

Lizna showered him with questions. *Wait, you're close. Too close!* *thumpthumpthump*.

"No, I— How to put it—"

He averted his gaze from Lizna and looked around. Then, one particular mannequin struck his eye. It was wearing a smooth and white one-piece. For a moment, he was paralyzed. What if Azrael were to wear this—? It'd surely make his heart pound hard.

"I see, the white one-piece it is, right?"

"Aah—!"

She got him.

"So, Azrael-san, if you would."

"'If you would' what?!"

"Provide some swimsuit service, of course."

"I won't, alright?!"

"Hmm..."

Lizna continued, the same smile from before still on her face.

"Then we can't do the Cake Cut, and the first floor will remain flooded, huh?"

"Gu—!"

"A~ah. That's so terrible. Everyone will stay drenched, huh~?"

"Guu—!"

"Hey, Alice-san, who again is responsible for all of this to begin with?"

"Without a doubt Azrael, right?"

"Hauu—!"

Azrael trembled with her eyes tearing up.

"I-I-It really is my responsibility, but...!"

"Yeah, then off to that date with you two, okay?"

"And while you two are at it, go that that deepest part of the first floor and open up a hole."

"Auuu..."

Azrael looked at the swimsuit feeling seemingly embarrassed and imagined herself wearing it.

"And Sasaraki?"

"What?"

Alice sharply pointed at him.

"Be more upfront and voice your thoughts during that date."

"Eh—? Why?"

"You have to put your feelings into words, so you'll be able to take a step back and get a clearer image of your thoughts, and like that..."

Alice expressed a complacent smile.

"...it'll be reaaally fun, you know?"

* * *

In any case, that's how it'd come to this.

The two of them were now on top of the first floor's castle gate. Apparently, there was supposed to be a jail on the castle's lowest floor and beneath that, the bottom of the floor. Naturally, since everything was flooded now, they had to swim there. And so, of course, they were in swimsuits— Were all these things

now really 'matters of course?' He started to doubt his recent change in thinking what's natural and what wasn't.

"Uuuuh..."

Azrael hid her big chest and looked at Sasaraki feeling embarrassed. However, there was no hiding it. It was just that big. Furthermore, her swimsuit was a white one-piece. We're talking about Azrael who was never wearing anything but black or dark clothes, but strangely, white did suit her.

Her legs were long and slender.

And her bare toes were trembling.

Putting it frankly— Yeah, she was incredibly beautiful.

"Wai— D-Don't look at me that intently..."

"No... I-I'll keep looking, yeah."

Sasaraki brought his throbbing chest under control and recalled Alice's words.

"Be more upfront and voice your thoughts."

He didn't know what she'd been meaning with that, but... it was *Alice* who'd said this.

There was bound to be some meaning behind it. Anyway, he decided to try it.

"I... I-I think..."

thumpthumpthumpthump.

"You think?"

"I t-think... I don't... dislike it... at all..."

"Hah...? What are you even talking about?"

'I think you look stunning,' was what he'd tried to say, but couldn't do it.

He heaved a sigh in his mind.

I'm a wimp, really.

"I wouldn't wanna be disliked by... N-No, nothing."

Azrael abruptly turned her head to the side.

"It's not that I dislike... you... either..."

"Eh?"

"Ah, d-don't get me wrong! It's not that I like you!"

"Which is it, then?"

"It's neither! Forget it!"

Azrael insisted while she stiffened.

Her both arms were trembling extremely.

"Ah, d-don't look at me!"

"I-I'll be discreet! You don't have to tremble so much!"

"I'm not... Aaah, enough! I've had it already! Why are men so lewd?!"

"D-Don't ask me!"

It had gotten chaotic.

"Hello~, can you two hear me~?"

Lizna's voice echoed in his head.

"You see, you're on a date, so you have to lock arms, you know~?"

"Wha—?!"

"Whaaa—?!"

"Give it your best, okay~? Ehehehe~"

And then she cut the transmission.

After Azrael had been standing there trembling for a while, she suddenly opened her eyes.

"Sasaraki!"

"Here!"

"You've to absolutely, *absolutely* not get conscious about this, do you understand?!"

"Eh? Not get conscious...? Of what?!"

"O-Of all kinds of things!"

He thought that it'd already become an impossible task with this, but for the time being, Sasaraki simply nodded.

* * *

In any case, their date continued.

Diving into the water together with Azrael in her swimsuit, they headed for the castle. They entered the broken stained glass window by swimming through it. Soon they reached the spacious throne room. The red carpet was spread over a distance of more than a hundred meters, and at the end of it was the throne.

There was nothing else in there. Since everything had been stolen by players. And while we're at it, there were no NPCs either. The players rumored that, 'The devs got sloppy and didn't place them in time.' Rather than a probability, that was the absolute truth, without doubt.

However— there was one secret kept in this room.

"Alice said that there'd be a set of hidden stairs behind the throne."

"How cliche is that...? Anyways, let's look for them."

With their arms still linked, the two of them swam to the back of the throne.

From time to time, his elbow hit something soft. It was probably the thing Azrael had told him not to get conscious about. Even though it was virtual reality, no, exactly because it was virtual reality, it was awfully soft and smooth.

Frankly, he was on tenterhooks.

How's Azrael...? He looked at her.

She watched the throne intently with serious eyes. Squatting, she knocked on the throne here and there.

It made her look like a small, cute animal and made Sasaraki chuckle.

Azrael seemed to get aware of his gaze.

"...What are you looking at?! Sexual harassment!"

"Eh? No, I didn't mean to..."

"Then what did you mean to?!"

"Well... That was somehow, err, charming and..."

"So sexual harassment, after all!"

No, that wasn't it. Sure, she was pretty and her breasts big, she made his heart pound, but that wasn't the point right now. Just, how she was looking for the hidden passage made him feel like looking at a hamster in seach for the exit.

And if he said that to her now, she'd get angry with him, so he didn't.

While doing this and that, they reached the back of the throne.

"How are we supposed to look for the passage?"

"Anyways, let's do it systematically."

Sasaraki checked the floor, Azrael the throne.

"A switch, maybe?"

"I don't see one... Maybe we have to move the throne... Ah, there's a hole in it."

"Really?"

When he swam next to her, a long and narrow black hole was there. It might as well have been just an ornament. When he thought about what to do with that, Azrael appeared to have hit on a good idea.

"I bet we've to put an item in there that's been passed down by the royal family!"

That did sound like an RPG concept, indeed.

"...Royal family? Was there something like that...?"

There was no background at all for the first floor's castle.

Nobody even knew whether it was a king's castle or just a simple attraction, to begin with.

"If we don't try it, we won't find out!"

"So what do we do?"

"Fufufu, I've got an idea."

Azrael drew 'Magical Sword Gram.'

"It looks like this sword would fit it perfectly, right?"

"Surely looks the size of it, but..."

"It's intended to only let the one who possesses this legendary sword enter the underground world!"

"Underground world? It's just a dungeon, though... Wouldn't it be way too inconvenient in that case?"

"Enough sweating the details!"

Then again, it was already weird for a dungeon to be beneath a throne.

Well, this really was a game where you shouldn't mind the details.

"Here I go— O eternal sword of mine, release the seal that obstructs my path—"

She began to chant some incantation. *Well, there aren't any other hints, so I'll leave it to her—* He thought, when he spotted a yellow-ish button at the end of the armrest. Looked like they were supposed to press that.

"TAAH—!"

Azrael thrusted 'Magical Sword Gram' in.

Two seconds passed. Five seconds passed. But nothing happened.

"....."

Sasaraki resolved himself and pushed the yellow button.

Thereupon, *RUMBLERUMBLERUMBLE*!

"KYA—?!"

Stairs leading downwards came to view beneath Azrael.

After her face showed surprise, it soon changed into delight.

"Hey, see that?! You see that?! I was right!"

"Eh?"

"Ha-haa, good job, me! I'm a great detective, aren't I?"

"Eh?"

Sasaraki thought for a few seconds, then he smiled.

"...Yeah, you are!"

"Eh? What's that understanding smile of yours for?"

"No, nothing, really."

"Muu?"

Azrael looked puzzled, yet a bit happy too.

She really was funnily cute when you looked at her.

* * *

The flooded underground prison got illuminated brilliantly by torchlights.

Why torchlights underwater, you ask...? Azrael and Sasaraki, at least, had given up on retorting.

That was just the kind of world they were in.

In any case, he kept on swimming in that water world while holding hands with Azrael.

"Tokimeki Points Event 'Go on a date while holding hands' Completed."

The system voice said.

Apparently, the date had been judged as complete.

Azrael heaved a sigh. Air bubbles came out her mouth.

"C-C'mon, the fake date's over!"

"Ah, yeah..."

"What's with that disappointed tone of yours?"

She glared at him with scornful eyes.

"...You thought something lewd, after all, didn't you?"

"No, well, I didn't mean to..."

It wasn't like he could definitely deny that. Azrael was really pretty. Her breasts in this one-piece swimsuit were bulging luxuriantly and her long legs and hips were snuggly firm. It was impossible to ask of him not to be conscious.

"Sorry, I did for a bit, maybe."

"Wha...?! D-Don't admit it so straightforwardly, you stupid, stupid—!"

Azrael hid her body even more.

"...So what's with the TP? How many do you have now?"

"The action just now barely got you 120 points, you kno~w?☆"

Fury's voice resounded from the right.

Looking there, the fairy was wearing a green bikini for some reason.

She was swimming skillfully in the water while fluttering with her wings.

"Fury-chan will always be behind Master's back, waiting (to stab him)☆"

"That's rather scary, though?!"

This fairy was more or less always evil.

"So we still don't have enough points, right...? Should we hold hands again?"

"Ah, that won't do~. Doing the same thing over and over again gets you stuck in a rut and you won't gain TP."

"Another prudent yet useless feature..."

"But I've got new ways to get points for you~"

Fury spread her both arms and a screen appeared in the water.

"In short, you'll need mucous membrane contact."

"Well, we already did that before too, right?"

They'd borrowed the powers of the 'Love-Love Candy.'

"Ah, that was mouth-to-mouth related. But if you do it with other parts, cou'll be fine."

"Other parts...?"

"Like with the bees and the flowers, you'll—"

"KYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA?!"

Azrael screamed grandly.

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PERVERTED FAIRYYYYYYYYYYYY—?!"

"Huh?☆ Huh, huh?☆ I wonder what you were imagening~☆"

"Fury... That's really not going to happen..."

Sasaraki's chest grew a bit hot, too. That was just... you know... too much, under any circumstances.

"Jeez, Master and his friends are so pure☆"

Fury chuckled, and for a second, her eyes sparkled with a cold glint.

"This is a game, a fake world, right?"

And then she expressed a full-face smile.

"Master, you can do anything. You're the absolute ruler. No matter what you do, it will be permitted☆"

"Wha—?"

"Let's do a lot of lewd things to Azrael☆"

"Wai—?"

Being told that, he instinctively looked at Azrael.

Azrael looked back at him with startled eyes.

For a second, he felt like he'd become a horrible criminal.

"...Fury..."

"Yes?☆"

"It's not like that."

"What is~?☆"

"Even in a game, there are things that you can and cannot do."

"Although you're violating monsters without second thought, you can't do it to players?☆"

"That's not the reason... Azrael's... my friend."

"Hmm?"

"Even ingame, friends are friends, I can't do horrible things to them."

"If you aren't friends, you will, right?☆"

"I won't."

Sasaraki smiled like Alice.

"All players are my comrades."

"A~ah☆"

At last, Fury chuckled like she was having fun.

"Master's a really boring man, right?☆ Please work harder and get closer to chaos☆"

"No, I won't become what you're hoping for..."

Fury did a twirl and extended her arms.

It appeared she'd given up on persuading (or tempting) him.

"Ah... Umm..."

Azrael said something after having stared at Sasaraki.

"Y-You won't do anything cruel to me, right?"

"I said I won't. We're friends."

"I-I see..."

She heaved a sigh of relieve and seized her chest.

"Thanks... Wait! More like that's a given!"

She smiled innocently, having regained her vigor.

This expression suited her much better than fear.

"So, what are you going to do, Master?☆ You'll need mucous membrane contact one way or the other, you know?"

"There are a lot of other mucous membranes than the oral ones, right?"

"Hoo?☆ Are you going to lick her ear?"

"That's it!"

"That's *not* it, okay—?! Didn't you say you wouldn't do anything cruel?!"

"I don't think licking your ear's cruel."

"Are you kidding me?! Idiot, die—!"

However, she had no better idea.

Azrael lined her clenched fists up in front of her breasts and started to tremble.

"Well then, prepare yourself, Azrael-san☆"

"Uuuuuuuuuuh..."

She was still trembling.

It appeared that having one's ear licked was really embarrassing.

But she didn't reject him. With teary eyes she turned her ear towards Sasaraki.

"E-Err... C-Can I put it in, then?"

He said with his heart racing. Sasaraki was extremely tense, too.

To think that I'm going to lick this white ear of hers, even if it's just virtual reality— No, keep it together, Sasaraki!

"Don't put it in such a lewd way—!"

"Sorry!"

Azrael glared at him with her teary eyes.

"W-Wait a second! I've got to come up with a scenario!"

"Scenario?"

"Umumumum..."

He could almost hear the gears that were revolving at full speed in her head.

"Deathbringer Angel Azrael's body— has aznium!"

"Aznium?"

"And when someone's given that substance of life from me, somehow, they gain tremendous strength!"

"Tremendous strength?"

"So this isn't lewd at all, it's just an amazing ritual!"

"Amazing ritual?"

"GOT IT?!"

".....Yeah. Got it."

If he were to object, she'd probably start crying like 'UEEEEH,' so there was nothing but nodding for him.

Then Azrael put her hands above and below her ear, and struck a pose as if she was releasing her ki.

"...What now?"

"I-I'm releasing my aznium!"

".....Right..."

He did his best not to grin.

"Err... I-I'll start to lick, okay?"

"You can't!"

"Heh?"

"You're absorbing! Just absorbing!"

He didn't get her persistence, but he simply nodded.

"Then I'll absorb aznium now."

"Exactly! That sounds good! Now hurry!"

"Y-Yeah."

He didn't get why it sounded good.

For now, he put his tongue out and licked. *Lick*.



"HYAAAAUN?!"

"WAH—?!"

"D-D-Don't put it in so deep right off the start, you idiot—!"

"That's some unreasonable complaint there?!"

"You two seem to be having fun, aren't you?☆"

Fury chuckled, enjoying herself.

"T-Then I'm gonna do it slower."

"Y-Yeah..."

Lick. *licklick*.

"Ha... Fuauuuu..."

"S-Sorry, are you okay?!"

"D-Don't shout like that! It's making me sensible!"

"I-I'll continue..."

With his tongue's thin tip, he tampered with Azrael's insides.

It was a virtual world, so it shouldn't have any taste, but it was so sweet, so sweet he couldn't stop.

In trance, he kept prying with his tongue. She started making noises like, "Fuan," "Hian."

So adorable. I want to give it to her more—

Wait, what am I thinking—?!

He shook his head to get rid of his worldly desires.

I'm not doing anything lewd at all, I'm just absorbing aznium.

Okay, Sasaraki—?

"Five more minutes, you two~"

While Fury's voice echoed, he kept on licking determinedly.

It was incredibly yummy.

* * *

The ear-licking, I mean, aznium absorption came to an end. Azrael was breathing heavily, her cheeks in a deep-red shade. She held onto a pole in the dungeon, trembling. Her nape was so red, it almost made you forget that they were underwater.

"W-W-We... got enough TP with that... don't we!?"

"You enjoyed that right now, didn't you?☆"

"Shut up and die, you twisted fairy!"

She swung her sword in tears, but Fury dodged splendidly.

"Ah, please stop☆ If that hits me, I'm really going to die☆"

"Eh?"

"The system treats me as a mob☆"

Fury said quite indifferently.

"Well, I've more than 30000 HP, so I'd be somewhat okay☆"

"Ah, I-I see..."

Fury kept on chuckling nonetheless.

In any case, they went on and proceeded through the dungeon until they reached a spacious hall. It was filled with water and a huge number of gigantic stone monoliths was lined up in it. They were covered in shining characters. An unbelievable number of shining characters.

"What is this place...?"

"The bottom of the world— 'Undercastle'☆"

Fury began to explain.

"These monoliths are gravestones for all the players."

"Gravestones...?"

"Yes. Every time someone dies, their name will be engraved here."

"Wouldn't that add up to an absurd number?"

"We have a total of about 1.200.000 lines so far."

It seemed these monoliths wouldn't be enough eventually.

"Why was this place made?"

"The credits start once the game's cleared☆ They'll also show the players killed in action☆"

"Seems like those credits would take an eternity..."

And then...

All of a sudden the whole stone maze started to rumble and shake.

"KYA—?!"

"W-What now?!"

"Those who have invaded the deepest of tombs... leave now..."

A voice, so awe-inspiringly deep it appeared to be everywhere, said.

"Ah, the entry event started, huh?☆"

Fury said in a carefree voice.

"The guardian mob appeared, give it your best, you two~☆"

Together with the sound of rocks crumbling down, a giant figure approached Sasaraki and Azrael. It was a golem, made out of shining black metal. It was *big*.

Its foot alone was as tall as Sasaraki. You could say it was as intimidating as a dragon.

Looking at its status, he confirmed its name being 'Nihility Stone Golem.'

Next to Sasaraki, Azrael laughed.

"I see. A boss mob, huh—?! Alright, here I go, Sasaraki!"

Azrael grinned and drew 'Magical Sword Gram.'

"Ah, wait a sec!"

"TEI-YAAAAAAAAAA!"

Not hearing Sasaraki's warning, Azrael kicked the ground and faced the golem. The counterblows rained down on, hit, and sent her flying. When she smashed into the ground, she died for 8200 damage.

"...I tried to warn you..."

"The 'Nihility Stone Golem' is a secret boss comparable to a boss mob on floor 200, after all~☆"

Azrael returned ten minutes later.

"WHAT IS THAT THIIIIIIIIIIIIING—?!"

"We don't have the Invincible Barrier right now, so maybe we should just ignore it?"

"Don't wanna! I'll beat it! Even if we ignore it and clear the dungeon, it'd be meaningless!"

"Hmm..."

Looking at Azrael insisting with tears in her eyes, it made him want to somehow grant that wish of hers.

We really did nothing but gamemaster stuff recently and no adventures.

"Hmm, then I'll attract his attacks and you cut it down?"

"Will you be alright?"

"Probably."

Sasaraki drew 'Sturdy Sword Alondite' and smiled.

"After all, I'm invincible with this sword."

He wasn't exaggerating, it had that kind of ability. This was the third-best weapon in the game. On top of its extraordinary attack power, it granted Sasaraki the evasion values of a sword master. That much should enable him to compete with the golem.

Azrael nodded and refueled her fighting spirit once more, "Alright!"

"Here we go, Sasaraki!"

"Yeah— I'M HERE—!"

"GUOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

The 'Nihility Stone Golem' reacted to Sasaraki and Azrael, and rained punches on them.

He was as fast as you might expect— However, thanks to his sword, Sasaraki's agility was boosted.

Using his sword, he stopped the golem's punch and—!

PAKIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIN!

"GOOOOOOOOOOOOOoooooooooooo..."

"Huh?"

Sasaraki let his voice slip unknowingly.

Stopping the blow with his sword— had been successful.

Rather, he had cut the punch in half.

But not only the punch, he had bisected the whole 'Nihility Stone Golem.'

"OOOOOOOOOoooooooo..."

The 'Nihility Stone Golem' crumbled down while raising a somewhat sorrowful cry.

Left were Sasaraki, with his eyes wide open, and Azrael, frozen in motion with her sword still raised overhead.

".....Sorry, looks like I accidentally destroyed it."

"WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAIT?!"

Azrael shouted again.

"Isn't this way too anti-climatic?!"

"Well, yeah, I'm really sorry..."

"Rematch! I demand a rematch!"

"Eh? Rematch? Is that even possible...?"

"The 'Nihility Stone Golem' respawns every five minutes, you know~?☆"

"So it is... Err, so, Azrael, want to try again?"

"I do!"

Five minutes of this and that later.

"Do you think you can beat me, invaders of the deepest of tombs...?"

"Err... Then I'll just dodge and you destroy it."

Sasaraki's total HP had been maxed when he'd become a gamemaster.

Even if he slipped up with the dodging a little, it wouldn't kill him.

"Yeah, leave it to me!"

And so the battle unfolded.

He dodged the golem's punches which came down on him from above with incredible force, while Azrael swung her 'Magical Sword Gram.' Maybe due to the golem's astonishing defensive stats, only critical hits did actual damage to it, but 'Magical Sword Gram''s power was to buff critical hit chance.

Finally, after a good few dozens of minutes, the 'Nihility Stone Golem' crumbled to the ground once more.

"We did it! We won, Sasaraki!"

"Yeah, that's right (although for the second time)!"

"Ahaha, as long as Master and his friends are having fun...☆"

Fury said while laughing happily.

"Yeah... Well, it was fun, so it's fine, I guess."

Although it was a fake fight, it was tense in a way.

We can enjoy even these kinds of adventure.

So, well, it had meaning in that sense.

"Now, Sasaraki, the finish! We just have to break the ground here, right?!"

Azrael held 'Magical Sword Gram' above her head once more.

"With this attack— I will sever all of fate's threads!"

"Ah, sorry, but Azrael? Please don't talk so much."

"WHY?!"

"Every time you announce something, it raises another fail flag."

"Aren't you really cruel to me lately, Sasaraki?!"

Azrael showed her discontent.

"It'll be fine, there's nothing to worry about. It'll just go as planned."

"You're really giving it your best to put those flags up..."

"You're just a worrywart. Are you saying something's gonna happen?"

"I think something *really bad* is going to happen."

"Then what do you want me to do?!"

"There's already nothing we can do."

"It's hopeless?!"

It certainly was hopeless. Rather, this game was hopeless. From the start.

No matter what they did, everything was apt to fail. He couldn't think of it differently.

"Aaah, enough! C'mon, let's do it! 'The First Cake Cut!'"

"I think it's not the first but se..."

"Shut your nagging already! TAAAAAAAAAAH—!"

He swung down 'Magical Sword Gram' together with Azrael.

Once again, the light torrent unleashed.

An intense beam, such that you often see in games, cut up the floor, cut up the ceiling, cut up the walls, and cut up the gravestones. Every single object that was in that place was swallowed deeply in the light released by the magical sword—and torn to pieces.

ZUGOOOOOOOOOOOOOOH!

A strong eddy was developing in the black hole that had opened up in the floor.

It appeared the water was draining through there.

"See—? We did it properly, didn't we?!"

"Wait."

"What now?!"

"Well, I just think something might happen."

"What is that 'something?!'"

"Something *really* bad."

Ten seconds later. Nothing happened.

Azrael put her hands on her hips and struck a triumphant pose, laughing a haughty "Fufun."

"See? Nothing happened!"

"...Right."

Maybe I do *worry too much?*

Maybe this game does reward you if try really hard?

Maybe I shouldn't abandon hope? Yeah— that must be it.

Was what he thought, when...

"Sasaraki! We got a problem!"

Alice's voice echoed across the place.

A hologram of her appeared in front of his eyes.

"The server's processing resources are being eaten up!"

"I don't really get it, but got it."

"What do you mean?!"

He felt relieved for some reason.

In this game, you really couldn't achieve anything by ordinary means, after all.

* * *

The two of them returned to the debugging room.

On the Main Screen was footage from the eddy that had developed within the castle.

Plus a lot of players who were screaming while being sucked into it.

"Those people aren't the problem."

"You're so cruel."

"Gamemasters are terrible people, you know? The problem is... this!"

She zoomed in on one part of the eddy. For some reason, the current that was sucking the players in with tremendous force was juddering. And so were the players who were getting close to that area.

"What's happening?"

"The rendering can't keep up with all these physical calculations going on."

"And why is this bad for us?"

Lizna asked a reasonable question and Alice was going to answer it.

"The server's processing resources will get eaten up."

"And then?"

"The game— will freeze."

A heavy silence engulfed the room.

"—Wai— The game can freeze as easily as that?!"

"Pretty easily."

"...Seems plausible."

Alice and Sasaraki nodded simultaneously.

It's possible. This game's physics engine isn't more than a piece of junk.

"So, what can we do to stop that?"

"We've no choice but to stop the water current somehow."

"Somehow, huh?"

Alice's solution was as vague as always.

"Ah, I've a good plan in that case☆"

"I don't really want to hear it, but go on..."

"There's a secret you could use at 1500 TP☆"

"THAT AGAIN?!"

Azrael shouted.

"Your feelings can make miracles happen— 'I Want to Go Back to Those Days,' a skill that lets you turn back time☆"

"I see... That could work."

"Wha— W-Wait a second—?!"

Azrael stopped them in a fluster.

"Onethousandfivehundred, how are we gonna get that many points?!"

"You can only get that amount by performing a special lovers kiss☆"

Both of them spit out at the same time.

"I'll get pregnant if we kiss, won't I—?!"

"You will☆"

"T-T-Then there's no way we can do that, right—?!"

"But this game is done for if you don't! It'll be the end of service!"

"DON'T YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN SAYING THAT, LIZNA?!"

In contrast to the shouting Azrael, Sasaraki remained quiet.

Kissing Azrael. Kissing the girl I'm always together with. Not good. I can't stop my heart from racing. My tension was already maxxed when I absorbed aznium but a real kiss— though thinking about it calmly I get the feeling it'll be way more preposterous than just a kiss...

"Sasaraki, what are you making that happy face for—?! Stop picturing iiit—!"

"Hah—?! I'm not! I'm not imagining your lips' sensation or tenderness at all!"

"SO YOU REALLY DIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIID—?!"

Azrael was trembling.

"A-Anyways, I can't go any further! No pregnancy!"

"Hm... Can't be helped."

Alice had remained quiet and now folded her arms.

"We really shouldn't pressure you any more than this."

"Yeah! Exactly—!"

"Then it can't be helped."

Alice produced a 'Data Cube.'

It was the cube from before, with the skull and crossbones on it

Alice smiled and said...

"—Lizna, mind marrying Sasaraki for a bit?"

For five seconds, time stood still.

"—Eh?"

Lizna blinked in surprise.

She altered her gaze between Alice and Sasaraki.

Sasaraki was blinking in surprise, too.

What's this weird gamemaster talking about this time?

"I'm going to apply that 'Death Game' patch from before, you'll be able to re-marry. If you then kiss, get TP, and use 'I Want to Go Back to Those Days,' we'll be able to dodge our current end of service threat."

"Eh—? Um, um, um, w-w-wait a moment, Alice-san!"

Lizna waved her hand in panic.

Maybe she'd just been making light of these kinds of matters when she hadn't been subject to them—?

"I-I-I can't do that! I definitely can't!"

"T-That's right, Alice! Having even more people marry—"

"Azrael-san's Sasaraki-kun's wife! They'll get divorced if we marry, right?!"

"That's your problem?!"

"Ah, it's fine. Bigamy's possible in this game, Azrael can remain Sasaraki's wife."

Lizna stared in puzzlement.

"Ah, is that so? I don't mind, then."

"That easily—?!"

She had consented in a flash. Lizna spun around and faced Sasaraki.

"Then let's get married and make some children, Sasaraki."

"W-W-W-Wait, Lizna, are you really fine with that—?!"

The dumbfounded Azrael interjected.

"Eh? I don't really mind."

"W-We're talking about getting married! With Sasaraki!"

"Yeah, sounds fun, right?!"

"Do you like Sasaraki?!"

"I do."

""Iih—?!"

Her reply'd come instantly, Azrael and Sasaraki both froze in place.

"Huh? What's wrong—? Ah, sorry, I like you a lot too, Azrael-san!"

"Nonono, not that kind of! L-Lizna, try and think about this!"

Azrael seized Lizna's shoulders and brought her face close.

"You're talking about friendship here, right?! Or are you saying you like Sasaraki as a boy?!"

"Eh? As a boy?"

"Does it make your heart throb when you look at him?!"

"Not really. He's a wimp, not manly at all, although, he's got a nice face."

"How cruel—?!"

"T-Then kissing or marriage is a no-go!"

"Hmm, is it really?"

Lizna gazed at Azrael in wonder.

She kept gazing— several seconds passed.

"—Ah, I get it."

Lizna said in a small, unrest voice.

She took a deep breath and stared Azrael directly in the eye.

"That's right, huh? If we're not in love with each other, we shouldn't kiss, right?!"

"Exactly. You shouldn't. You mustn't!"

"But... If we don't kiss, the service will end, so I'll kiss him."

"Eh?"

"Because I love this world."

Lizna expressed a smile as refreshing as a sunflower.

"If all I have to do is sacrifice myself so that I can let this world go on— then I won't hesitate."

"Wha—?!"

"Sasaraki-kun."

Lizna moved a seemingly deliberately noisy step towards Sasaraki.

"Now then— You may."

"I-I may?"

"It might cost me my chastity— but we have to do this to let the world go on, right?"

She moved another step towards him. Her face was close. Way too close.

"Wai— Don—"

"W-W-Wait! Wait a second, Lizna!"

"I won't wait. We've to save the world."

"Don't do it! You can't, you definitely can't do that kind of thing———!"

"Hmm. Then..."

Lizna chuckled.

"Would you do that special kiss with Sasaraki-kun in my stead?"

"I will! I will, so—!"

Right after, Lizna swiftly separated herself from Sasaraki."

"Is what she said! Aren't you glad, Sasaraki-kun?!"

".....Eh?"

"You'll get a kiss from Azrael-san!"

"Eh—?"

gringringringrin. Lizna was grinning away, looking like she was reaaally having fun.

Next to her, Fury was making a face full of respect, "This girl knows her stuff..."

* * *

The black-haired girl was standing in front of the pitch-black room. Her cheeks deeply blushed. Even up to her ears. She bit her lips, she appeared to be vexed,

just by looking at her, you got the feeling that they were doing something they shouldn't. It was only natural.

After all, those two were now going to do 'something they shouldn't.'

"YOU TRICKED ME, DIDN'T YOU, LIZNAAAAAAAAA—?!"

Thereafter, Azrael hat shouted that instantly when she'd realized, but it was already too late.

"Ehehe. A Deathbringer Angel doesn't go back on her word, was it?!"

"Ugu—!"

"Plus, it's true that the service will end if you don't kiss."

"Hauuuu—!"

"C'mon, give up. Sasaraki-kun, come here!"

—Which leads us to now...

"Uuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuh..."

Azrael groaned right in front of Sasaraki.

"I... I-I-I really can't do this!"

"'Lying's the most shameful thing'— was it?"

"Hauu—!"

Azrael started to tremble and looked downwards for a moment.

"C'mon, Sasaraki-kun, you have her consent, so hurry and do it, okay?"

"W-Wait, doing this through such a scam's really..."

"Azrael's lips are really soft, you know~?"

"Uuh—"

"They're so warm and feel so pleasant, you know~?"

"Uuuh—"

"SASARAKIIIIIIIIIIII—?!"

"UWAAAAAAAAAAAAH?! SORRY—?!"

He'd unintentionally pictured it.

"Uuuuuuuh....."

For a while, Azrael kept trembling, but at long last...

"C... C-C-Can't we at least do something about the pregnancy?!"

She was willing to compromise.

"Ah, if it's that, then we can, you kno~w?☆"

Fury answered.

She was holding a 'Data Cube' in her hands.

"This is the contraception patch☆"

"That name's horrible!"

"If you install it, you won't get pregnant from kissing~☆"

She said and handed the patch to Sasaraki.

For now, he threw it into the screen.

"I see! So we got all problems out of the way, right?!"

"...Ku—..."

Azrael took a glimpse at Sasaraki.

"S-Sasaraki!"

"Yes—?!"

She put her fingertips of one hand against the other hand's fingertips and said...

"This is to save the world! We're not doing isn'tanything lewd at all!"

"Y-Yeah!"

"And when we do it, no grinning!"

"Understood!"

"T-They're only gonna touch! Definitely n-no tongue or something!"

"Got it!"

"And, and... umm..."

"Azrael! We're running out of processing resources here!"

"Ku... I-I-I got it! Aaah, enough—!"

Azrael seized Sasaraki's cheeks tightly and brought her face in.

"HERE I GO!"

"Y-Yeah!"

It felt almost like a signal at the start of a football match, but he just nodded. With the force of a headbutt, Azrael brought her face close to Sasaraki's, her eyes shut. And— kept coming closer and closer. Then they kissed. *CLANK*!

It was an outrageous kiss with enough force behind it to make their teeth touch.

It didn't make his heart pound or anything.

Just Azrael with her eyes shut and her cheeks blushed close to him.

She's awfully— pretty, he thought.

"Mmh—!"

0.2 seconds later.

With only that much, Azrael separated from Sasaraki.

"Ku...—!"

Rubbing her mouth briskly, Azrael took a good distance from Sasaraki.

"Ku... H-H-How's that, are we done—?!"

"BEEEEHB☆"

Fury formed a big X with her arms.

"The kiss now hasn't fulfilled the requirements for the 'Special Kiss'~"

""EEEH—?!""

"I told you, no? It's not just an ordinary kiss☆"

Fury flicked her fingers (like Alice usually did) and something appeared on the Main Screen. It showed a male and a female mannequin. [Special Kiss Requirements: 1) Lips must touch for at least five seconds. 2) Tongues must touch for at least five seconds. 3) At least 5cc of saliva must be exchanged.]

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME————————————?!"

Azrael shouted with her face beet-red while looking at the screen. Sasaraki felt the same. *Saliva even. Well, even before that it already mentions tongue, so I guess they really want a French kiss from us... Wait, what am I so calm for?!*

"S-S-S-S-S-Saliva?! It says sa-li-va! No way, no way, no waaaaaaaaaay!"

"Azrael! We only have three minutes left!"

"WHAAAAAAAAT—?!"

Upon Alice's urging voice, Azrael moved her hands about in a panic.

"Lizna, stand in for me after a—"

"I can't, there's no time anymore!"

"No waaaaaay—?!"

"Azrael, please—!"

Alice bowed deeply and entreated her. Next to her Lizna was holding a video camera with her sparkling eyes seemingly saying, 'Hurry, hurry!' Fury looked like she was enjoying herself immensely, like always.

"Gugugugugugu... Aaah, whatever, I'll do it—!"

Baring her teeth, Azrael suddenly threw herself upon Sasaraki. It wasn't a smooch, it was more like something soft oppressing his lips. He couldn't breath. And his consciousness faded. Their tongues were licking each other.

Something's dancing on my tongue. Oh— so kissing feels like that kind of dance?

Sasaraki thought with his consciousness getting enveloped in white mist.

"————————PUHAA—!"

"Oka~y, we're good☆"

"Good for you, Sasaraki-kun! I properly recorded it all so you can treasure this memory, okay?!"

"Sasaraki, Azrael, two more minutes! Please do!"

"Aah, enough! Enough already!"

Azrael swung her both arms in some way and shouted...

"SKILL 'I WANT TO GO BACK TO THOSE DAYS'— INVOKE—!"

woosh.

Ten seconds passed but nothing really happened.

There was no sound effect, no graphical effect, nothing.

"WHYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY?!"

She was half in tears, or more like 70% in tears.

"Ah, sorry, it appears that 'I Want to Go Back to Those Days' still hasn't been implemented yet☆"

Something that occurred here quite often, indeed.

"Wai... W-W-W-W-What do you mean—?! I did all of this for nothing?!"

"Ku... Then I've no choice but to use that..."

Alice mumbled and took something out. It was a 'Data Cube.'

"What's that, Alice?!"

"It's a patch that will vaporize all water on the first floor!"

A moment later.

"IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING LIKE THAT WHY DIDN'T YOU USE IT FROM THE STAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAART?!"

Azrael seized her lips and shouted while now fully crying.

"If I use this, we'll have a little problem... but I can't worry about something like that now!"

Alice said and pushed the 'Data Cube' onto Sasaraki.

"Sasaraki, apply this!"

"I don't mind, but what's that 'little problem?!'"

He had a terribly bad feeling about this.

"Lizna! Tell the players that the quest's solved—!"

"Understood—!"

Lizna nodded and vanished.

The Main Screen showed the skies above the flooded first floor.

Lizna appeared in them, wearing her goddess dress.

"Everyone, can you hear me—? It's me, Lizeltna—!"

"Ooh, look, she's here again."

"What a cute goddess, huh—?"

"She's dark on the inside though, right?"

He could hear the players' voices.

"Thanks to everyone's efforts, the sharks are more or less defeated—!"

"More or less? We're going half-assed again!"

"So what kind of event was this supposed to be?"

"Don't waste your time trying to guess what the devs are thinking."

"And so I'll use my powers to vaporize all the water from the first floor~"

"What did she say?" "Seriously?" "How?"

"Alright, do it, Sasaraki-kun!"

"Eh? Ah, yeah."

He turned around and glimpsed at Alice.

"Alice, it'll really be okay if I apply this, right?"

"It will!"

"There won't be any problem whatsoever, right?!"

"There aren't any problems ever, so same procedure as every day!"

His anxiety underwent a sudden increase.

"What do you mean 'same procedure?!'"

"Sasaraki! Five more seconds—!"

"GAAAAAAAAH, ALRIGHT! GO—!"

Sasaraki threw the patch 'Data Cube' into the screen.

Right after...

Steam leaked out of all the players he could see on the Main Screen.

With terrific force, white steam blew out from everywhere.

[Player Tatakuru Died. Reason: Evaporation]

[Player Ellet Died. Reason: Evaporation]

[Player Kokoriko Died. Reason: Evaporation]

[Player El Died. Reason: Evaporation]

[Player Cloud Died. Reason: Evaporation]

Et cetera, et cetera...

A lot of those windows popped up. Sasaraki was still frozen in his cube-throwing stance. Azrael was watching the situation dumbfoundedly. Sasaraki calmy thought, *Oh, I see. Human beings are made out of water, too.*

After Lizna had been showing a mysterious expression for a bit— she smiled.

"Everyone, you've experienced a new way to die! You must be so happy—!"



—Later, this would go down as the 'Goddess of Atrocity Incident.'



STATUS

Name
フュリー
Fury

Level
1（固定）

Job 職業
システム妖精

Personality 性格
きょうき

Skill 能力

<死んじゃえボタン>
ボタンを押すとなんでも爆発します。
主にプレイヤーが対象です。

<エーテル消滅ボム>
プレイヤーのアカウントを問答無用で削除、
仮想世界から退去させます。

<自我（違法）>
自我があります。法律違反です。
政府に見つかったら存在を消されます。

フ

Status

Name
Fury

Level
1

Job
System Fairy

Personality
Insane

Skills
Die! Button: By the press of this button, you can make anything explod. Mainly targeted at players.

Ether Extermination Bomb: Deletes accounts with no use arguing about it, having players leave this virtual world.

Self-Awareness (Illegal): Possesses self-awareness. This is prohibited by law. If found out by the government, her existence will be erased.

Chapter 3:

I Got Pregnant Due to a Bug, But No Problem at All!

第三章

バグで妊娠したけど
なんの問題もないわ!

THE
JUNK!
Kuso Game Online 2

It happened the next day.

The Main Screen within the debugging room showed a mail.

The addressor, Watarai Kirine, (thirty-year-old) president of this game's development studio.

[To Alice　　From Kirine - Wanting to Abandon Life

Hello, Alice.

This might be sudden, but did you know that the view from a hospital's roof is really pretty? Especially the cold gray of the asphalt below gives me the very refreshing impression of a color that'd certainly kill me. The only downer is the fence they set up on the roof.

Ah, umm, I'll give you my report now.

Cutting to it right away, the player count fell by one percent.

From tenthousandtwohundredeightytwo to tenthousandonehundrednintetyeight players.

Twohundred more people until the end of service.

The goddess of atrocity, such a cruel thing.

I'm so shocked I can't even write write numbers anymore, but pay it no heed.

So, the grace period for the end of service has been further shortened.

It had been twentyfour days before, but we fell to more days now.

Umm, in other words, we're in really big trouble.

Alice, there's no one but you I can rely on this.

Wait, there hasn't been anyone but you I could rely on from the start.

I'm sorry, but please, *please* save this pitiful world of ours.

I can't do anything, but I'll at least pray for the continuance of our world from here.

And I'll pray for the rooftop fence to disappear.

Yours sincerely,

Kirine - Who Decided to Live On After All]

Sasaraki gazed at those words for a while and finally sighed...

"...This person is always on the verge of dying, huh...?"

"She's always been on the verge of dying ever since I knew her."

"Must be fun around her..."

He heaved a very deep sigh.

The player count had been declined by one percent and the deferment was about ten days.

But that was still better than an immediate end of service.

"It's a hard blow that the player count fell by 1%, but it's less than I expected."

"It's a miracle that there's still more than 99% of players left..."

"W-Was my acting that bad, I wonder...?"

Lizna let her shoulders droop in dejection.

"Errr..."

Sasaraki couldn't really say that it hadn't been bad. Her interpretation of a goddess really hadn't been all too fitting.

"So we've got to think up a comeback immediately."

I get the feeling that, no matter what we do, it'll backfire...

"First of all, we should promote the second floor that we're going to release soon."

Alice flicked her fingers and a picture of Azrael in her swimsuit appeared on screen.

Taken from a pretty lewd angle.

"Wai— What's—?!"

"We'll advertise that a whole lot of NPCs with as much sex appeal as this are waiting on the second floor."

"That's pretty much fraud, isn't it?"

"WaitwaitWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAIT—!"

Azrael shook her head with her face deep-red, but got ignored completely.

"So let's use this advertisement and prepare the release of the second—"

"M-More importantly—! Our divorce! Let's hurry with the divorce!"

"I think it'd be better if you let it go already."

"You two go so well together! And you kissed, too!"

"Kuu...!"

Seeing how she couldn't rely on Alice and Lizna, Azrael turned around to Sasaraki.

"S-Sasaraki! The two of us will do something about this on our own!"

"But I do get the feeling that no matter what we do, it'll lead to nothing..."

"We'll do something! Got that?!"

"Hey, Azrael-san?"

Lizna put her face close to Azrael's in a quick, smooth motion.

She smiled sweetly and said...

"Wouldn't it be fine if you didn't worry about it so much either?"

"Wha—"

"It's just a game. Isn't it alright if you just went with this marriage thing for a bit?"

"It... It's not fine—!"

Azrael objected to Lizna's strangely persuasive words nonetheless.

"You can't marry just for fun!"

"We're here just for fun, so is it really no good, I wonder~"

"Try saying that after you've been forced to kiss, okay—?!"

"If it'd been me, I wouldn't really mind, though."

"Aah, enough! Anyways!"

Azrael pointed at Sasaraki sharply.

"In any case, a no is a no!"

"Hmm, still not honest with herself even though they kissed... What should we do about this, I wonder...?"

"Don't think about that, okay?!"

Lizna put her hand to her chin and struck a thinker pose, "Hmm..."

"C'mon, Sasaraki, we're going!"

"Y-Yeah."

Sasaraki got dragged by his hand in front of the console.

"Jeez, what is Lizna thinking...?"

"Well, in a sense, it's easy to guess..."

She wouldn't have minded to stand in for the marriage and kissing, and no matter what was happening in this game, her reactions were always somewhat

weird. The only time she'd acted as you'd expect from a normal person was when Azrael had had that chuuni derp a while ago. Maybe she just wasn't treating this game as anything remotely real anymore.

And the same was true for the majority of players.

Going by that, it was unique for a player type like Azrael, who was stressing on roleplay, to exist.

But...

Sasaraki sent a sidelong glance towards Azrael's profile.

He couldn't help his eyes being drawn towards her pink lips.

He really— liked her player type, the one brimming with this kind of romance.

"Anyways, let's make a divorce patch!"

Azrael announced vigorously and clenched her fists.

"I don't mind, but... how are we going to go about this?"

Destroying the rings hadn't worked. Gaining TP probably was out of question by now, too.

"I've a good idea then~☆"

"Nothing's farther from me than having a good feeling about this, but what is it, Fury?"

Fury took out a single 'Data Cube.'

"This contains the source code for a polygamy system☆"

"Sounds like a dreadful system, indeed, huh...?"

"But it's a patch related to marriage so it should be a good reference, you kno~w?☆"

"Okay, let's try that for now."

Azrael faced the console and began.

"Hey, Sasaraki, what do you think about using this to advertise?"

Alice ran her finger through the air and the screen was loaded with a dazzling skin-color.

"What I— WAWAWAWA?!"

It were Azrael's plump hips, taken from a low angle.

Her skin, with that white cloth eating into it, reflected the sunlight and became the thing that'd been dazzling.

"Should I make it public? I've to get the husband's permission at least."

"How about *my* permission first?!"

"You know, you belong to Sasaraki now."

"No, I don't—?!"

30 more minutes of this and that later.

"I... I did it—! A divorce patch!"

"Eh? Really?"

"Fufufu, I've gotten plenty used to this stuff by now."

Azrael laughed happily while holding a pink 'Data Cube' in her hands.

"This patch, you see, changes the polygamy system it had into a monogamy system."

"Hee...? And how does that help us?"

"You gotta listen until the end. It's a monogamy system, so if you find a new partner, it'll have you divorced with the former one."

"So I'd need a new partner."

"I couldn't do anything about that part..."

That was probably the curse Fury's former ill-natured master had put on them.

Azrael pointed at Sasaraki sharply.

"And so, Sasaraki, go and find yourself a new wife!"

"Don't be unreasonable."

"What? You don't know one or two girls who'd be willing to marry you?"

"Lizna?"

"You think she'd let us get divorced?"

"...Now that you're mentioning it..."

The two of them pondered on.

"What about you?"

"I don't have any male friends."

Whoooooosh.

We have two loners right here.

"Ah... Speaking of which, I more or less do have some female friends."

Rigel and those other two girls came to mind. They'd been on an adventure together and you could say they were getting along well.

"Then go and marry that girl. Now."

"Is that really okay, I wonder...?"

"If we don't get divorced as fast as possible, I might get pregnant, and I don't want that!"

In any case, that's how things were.

* * *

Why did have to come to this...?

The first floor. After the water drainage, the plaza had become parched.

There was supposed to be a water fountain in the center, but not a single drop of water was coming out of it. The earth was dried up, too. To put the cherry on the dry cake, the snowy mountain range in the north, 'Frost Mountain,' was now bald. After all, if you put the water out of snow, there'll be no snow.

He'd been wanting to use the 'Master Screen' to bring the water back, but the good old points system was still in place and he couldn't allow himself to use it unnecessarily. It looked like even floor one's capital would have to do with no water for a while.

Now then.

I've to find myself a new bride here.

Or else, Azrael will kill me.

"Well, all I can do is try, I guess..."

"My, isn't it Sasaraki? How are you?"

A long-haired, blonde girl called out to him. It was Rigel, just at the opportune moment. Then again, he'd heard that this was their rendezvous point, so it wasn't by accident. *Now I've to get her to agree to marry—*

"Wait, that's totally absurd!"

He'd gone out of his way to come here, but on second thought, there was absolutely zero hope in this happening.

"Hm? Is something wrong? Something troubling you?"

"I've enough things that worry me to pile them up into a mountain."

"If you're okay with me, I could give you a hand?"

She was a really, really good person. Totally different from Lizna and Alice (Sorry for that).

"No, I can't make you help me out or how should I say..."

"Ara, but we're already friends, aren't we?"

Rigel winked at him.

"Friendship's about giving and taking, and helping each other. Let me help you out from time to time, too."

Aaah... Such a good person...

Even in this kind of kusoge, such good people do still exist.

I'd really feel bad if I lied to her. I'll tell her the whole thing.

"Actually..."

"Yeah?"

"Something went wrong and I accidentally married and kissed a certain girl."

"——You're scum, huh?"

"I am scum, huh?"

The two of them nodded.

"Do you mean ingame? Or outside?"

"Ingame."

"Isn't romance forbidden here?"

"It's been possible for an hour due to a bug."

Any and each absurdity could be explained with bugs in this game.

"I see. You're scum either way."

"Yeah. I think I'm scum, too."

The two of them nodded again.

"And so, I'm looking for another girl to marry so that we can get divorced."

"You're the lowest of scum, huh?"

"I am the lowest of scum, huh?"

The two of them nodded yet again.

"So... why are you consulting me for that?"

"Well, I thought maybe you would marry me...?"

"You think I will?"

"Not at all."

"Exactly."

Right after Rigel had strongly swung her mace above her head, it landed on Sasaraki.

20 Damage.

"GUHA—!"

"Don't ask things of others that you know are bad!"

She was scolding him like she was his mum.

"...Sorry, you're absolutely right."

He bowed deeply and apologized straightforwardly. *Something must be really wrong with my head.*

"So, now that I know the problem... how did it come to all this?"

"Errr..."

He summarized the whole story while leaving out the gamemaster stuff.

"That's pretty stupid, huh?"

"That is pretty stupid, huh?"

This world was clearly ruled by stupid laws.

"But if this is how it got to be, wouldn't it be fine to leave things as they are? There's no real harm, right?"

"There is no real harm, but Azrael doesn't like it at all."

"Then make it so that she does like it."

"Meaning?"

"Make her fall for you."

"Don't be absurd."

"Absurder than proposing to someone you've met three days ago?"

Rigel smiled sweetly.

"It's not like you're hating the idea, right?"

"That's—"

He thought that Azrael was very often on his mind.

When he had seen her in her swimsuit, he couldn't stop his heart from pounding.

He couldn't stop himself from thinking that he wanted to play together with her more as a gamemaster, either.

But, he didn't see those feelings among the category of love.

If he had to put his finger on it, it was rather a 'I want to play together with her' or—

"Ah. Rigel and Sasaraki detected."

"Ya-ho~!"

"What are you two doing~?"

"Whatup?"

Seshiriko raised a surprised voice. Wait, 'Whatup?'

"I request an explanation."

"Blahblahblah."

"I see, so you want to get rid of the stigma from that marriage fraud."

It helped that they were quick on the uptake.

"But even if you get divorced after that marriage fraud, the stigma will still be there!"

"There's no way but to do it for real, right?"

"Why are you all going for that direction...?"

"Because Sasaraki-chan likes that Azrael-san, don't you?!"

"I don't know whether I like her or just think she's cute..."

"Cute = You like her!"

"I think that equation's a little too simple."

"Boo, you're so indecisive."

He thought of himself as being indecisive, too.

"Then I'll hypnotize you. You will like Azrael from now on... Like... Azrael..."

"There's no such skill in this game..."

In the end, he hadn't been able to settle a thing.

* * *

When he returned to the debugging room, it was just him and Fury.

"Huh? Where is everyone?"

"Lizna-san and Alice-san are in the middle of advertising, Azrael-san had to use the toilet outside the game☆"

"Ah, okay."

He hadn't been alone in a while (Fury didn't count).

Sasaraki let himself drop into the middle chair and heaved a sigh.

In the end, he hadn't been able to make progress in the divorce matter. Maybe they should try that 'The First Cake Cut' thing again. In that case, he'd have to perform those lover-ish acts with Azrael again. She probably wouldn't be willing to do that again.

It was a bit of a pity, but—

Wait, nonono, don't lose to your worldly desires, Sasaraki!

He didn't have that kind of relationship with Azrael.

"You know, Master...☆"

"Ah, sorry, what is it, Fury?"

"I'd like this rom-com to take the next step, so how about confessing now?☆"

"What's with that reasoning?! I don't have that kind of relationship with Azrael that'd allow me to confess or anything like that, you know?!"

"Fury-chan didn't say anything about confessing to *her*, though☆"

"Guu—! You obviously meant her going by the context, right?!"

"Hmm, you're so boring... Maybe I can do something about that☆"

Fury expressed a devilish smile.

"What's going on in your head all the time?"

"In mine? The wish to grant Master and his friends happiness☆"

"You're lying, aren't you?"

"In my belief, you're going to reach the pinnacle of happiness through this kusoge☆"

"I'll correct myself. You actually mean that, don't you?"

"You know, it's Fury-chan, you see, that's Fury-chan's belief."

Fury fluttered with her wings and landed on the armrest of Sasaraki's chair.

"Since the day I've been born, Fury-chan knows nothing but this kusoge world☆"

"Looks like it."

"So I want to believe that people can acquire happiness, no matter in how much of a kusoge they are☆"

"I see."

"So I have to turn this world into as much of a kusoge as possible☆"

"Wait."

So that's what she's been looking for, this evil fairy.

Fury looked up at Sasaraki and expressed her usual innocent smile.

"You know, Master☆ Please don't lose to this kusoge and achieve happiness☆"

"No... Let's just do something about this being a kusoge..."

"There can be no world that isn't a kusoge☆"

Fury declared.

From her perspective, there certainly was nothing but kusoge.

"Hmm... Nonetheless, I wonder what happiness in Master's case means?☆"

"I think I'd be happy if everyone would be able to enjoy themselves here."

"My☆ Then it's the same for Master and Fury-chan, right?☆"

"No, I think that's vastly different from you."

"It's basically the same, you kno~w?☆"

Fury announced with a sweet smile.

"Hmm, Master's happiness... For healthy young men it has to be romance, after all, right...?☆"

"Don't bother with unasked help..."

Fury sent a glance towards the debugging room's clock.

"Hmm, it's been three minutes since she left... I guess... she'll be back soon."

She mumbled something and smirked.

"Oh right—☆ Hey, Master, you wanted to get divorced from Azrael-san, right?☆"

"Yeah, that's right, so?"

"Then I've a plan☆"

Fury fluttered with her wings.

"If you get some TP, you could use 'The First Cake Cut' again☆"

"We could, but Azrael will probably not want to do such things again..."

She had been so embarrassed, she wanted to die after that aznium absorption.

"It's okay☆ We'll do a play Master can do on his own!"

"Play...? What kind of?"

He tried to ask with a very bad premonition.

"Put your heart into it and shout with more than 100 dezibel 'I LIKE AZRAEL!'"

It wasn't anything normal, as he'd expected.

"C'mon, let's try it right now☆"

"Well... That's pretty embarrassing..."

Shouting that he liked Azrael. That was embarrassing, even in an empty room.

"Isn't it a good thing if it's just Master being embarrassed on his own?☆"

"Isn't there a way that's a bit less embarrassing?"

"Let's see, how about whispering your partner's name while..."

"Yeah, we're on track."

"...doing lewd things with yourself."

"UWAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

zee-zee-haa-haa.

"I-I got it already... After all, it'll just be me, alone, embarrassing myself."

"He bit☆"

"...Fury, did you say something just now?"

"No☆ Then please shout now, with all your might☆"

Sasaraki looked around and verified once again that really no one was around, then he took a deep breath.

"I like Azrael!"

"Master, that's not loud enough☆"

"I LIKE AZRAEL!"

"C'mon, I can't hear you☆"

"S-Still more? AZRAEL! I LOVE YOU!"

"Oooh, you gained 1 point! Once again!"

"That's just one point?! A-AZREAL, I LOVE YOU—!"

Then Fury's eyes started to sparkle momentarily.

Her eyes were facing at the debugging room's entrance— the magic square.

"Once more just like you did now! Please give it your best, Master!"


フェリー

"AZRAEL————————————! I LOVE YOU————————————!"

"Kyaa~☆"

Fury smiled seemingly enjoying herself.

"Huu, haa..."

"Okay☆ You've gained 10 points with this☆"

"D-Doing this much and just 10 points... That's tough..."

"Ehehehe~☆ Thank you for your hard work, Master☆"

Fury fluttered with her wings and handed him a towel.

"...Hey, by the way..."

"What is it?☆"

"I realized that just now but it'd be quite an upset if Azrael or Lizna had seen this, right?"

They should be somewhere else.

Fury joined her both hands and put them on her cheek.

Then she said one line...

"—That would, of course, be quite an upset, right?☆"

* * *

And with still nothing settled, the next morning. Sasaraki was called to the first floor, to the top of the castle walls.

In front of his eyes was Azrael, her cloak fluttering in the wind and her cheeks flushed.

"...Is something wrong?"

"Don't ask me if something's wrong."

She sharply pointed 'Magical Sword Gram' at Sasaraki.

"I-I-I understand very well what you said."

"Eh?"

"I-I-I heard it clearly."

"Eeeh?!"

"However— I-I'm not such an easy girl!"

"Eeeh—?!"

He had no idea what was going on.

"F-First of all, training! I'll have you do chuuni training!"

"No before that 'first of all' of yours I'd like an explanation."

Azrael wasn't listening.

She did a twirl, let her long, black hair sway in the air, and announced...

"Your first training— Collect the 'Angel Wings' that are located somewhere in this world!"

"No, I'm a gamemaster, I can get any item at any time."

"Ah, t-that's right... No, do it yourself! Collect them by hand!"

"No, I'm a gamemaster, I'm busy."

"And that's more important than marriage?!"

"If you ask me to pick one..."

"Gunununununu," Azrael appeared vexed with her face deep-red.

"H-Hmph, you'd prioritize the mission I gave you, right...?! You did well, Sasaraki."

"I've no idea what I did well, though."

"However! I'm not a cheap girl you can make your wife by just a kiss—!"

"Make my wife? You already are my wife (pro forma)."

"Wha-Wha-Wha-Wha-Wha-Wha-Wha-Wha-?!"

Her face went red from her earlobes to the nape of her neck.

"A-A-A-A-Aaaaaaaanyways—!"

Azrael brandished her two swords and pointed them at Sasaraki, shouting in a loud voice...

"ON TOP OF WEATHERING MY TRAINING, YOU HAVE TO BEAT ME IN A DUEL—THOSE! ARE MY CONDITIONS—!"

"No, I already told you, what conditions are you talking a—"

The moment he tried to retort, Azrael obstructed her mouth with her hand.

"—Uuh—?!"

She sunk to her knees.

"Wai—, Azrael?! What's wrong?!"

"I-I don't know... I'm feeling a bit dizzy..."

"Dizzy?!"

The 'Reality Control System' should greatly restrain any features that give players discomfort. Could even the PCR be bugged? That'd be a far graver issue than the flooding of— He was thinking, when...

Bump.



"Eh—?"

Azrael grew fat all of a sudden.

Her belly inflated into a perfect sphere.

Rather than having simply grown fat, no matter how you looked at it, she—

"—Eh? You're pregnant?"

"————————————————————Hah?"

Azrael looked downwards at her own belly and her eyes almost popped out of her head. *Badumm*. For some reason you could hear that kind of sound coming from there. Her violet one-piece got pushed up. *Stare*. After staring at her own belly for a while, Azrael...

"WHAT IS THIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIS—?!"

...screamed.

"Nowaynowaynoway, this gotta be a joke, WHYYYYYYYYYYYY—?!"

"Eh? Ah... M-Maybe because we kissed?!"

"Didn't we put on a contraception patch—?!"

"Oh right... Errr, Fury—!"

He called the person concerned for now.

Puff, smoke arose and Fury took the stage.

"Aye-aye☆ You called, Master I-Suck-at-Romance?☆"

"Why so cruel all of a sudden?! Actually, forget that, Azrael got pregnant!"

"Heh?"

Fury raised her voice in rare disarray.

She stared at Azrael's protruding belly.

"Didn't we use a contraception patch—?!"

"Huh? Yes, why did she get pregnant— Ah, now I understand☆"

Putting her hand to her chin, Fury nodded deeply, "Yes, yes..."

"Master, it's the same as usual, you know?☆"

"Same as usual?!"

"In other words—"

Fury produced a billboard (she had for some reason).

On it, it said in big letters: [It's not a bug, it's a feature.]

"The patch didn't work too well— that's quite the frequent feature☆"

"UWAAAH?!"

That certainly does happen quite often, but...

What should we do? We went from getting married through a bug to getting pregnant.

"Well, there's no problem, right?☆ After all, Master loves Azrael-san☆"

Leaving that nonsense-spouting fairy alone, Sasaraki nervously looked at Azrael.

She was still dumbfounded. Looking at her own belly.

"————————————————Th..."

After a moment later, she shouted...

"THERE ARE NOTHING BUT PROBLEMS HEEEEEEEEEERE—!"

And began to cry.

"SASARAKI, D-D-D-D-D-D-D-DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIIIIIIIIIIIS?!"

"Uwaah, wai—, Azrael—?!"

She grabbed and shook him by the scruff of his neck.

"WHAT. ARE. YOU. GO. ING. TO. DO. A. BOUT. THIIIIIIIIIIIIS?!"

Even if she asked him what he was going to do about it, there was nothing anyone could do.

This world was just something, no one could do anything about.

"Ah, you shouldn't do that, Azrael-san, if you rise your hand against Master—☆"

That moment. A system window popped up, [Matrimonial Quarrel Prevention System]. Azrael was repelled from him like a homopolar magnet. And since they'd been on top of the castle walls, being repelled meant Azrael was in freefall down the walls.

"Ah—"

Wooosh. *Badump*.

[Player Azrael Died. Reason: Fall Damage *The baby will be unharmed]

An info window showed up.

Looking down from the castle walls, Sasaraki saw (pregnant) Azrael's corpse dissolving into sparkles.

Sasaraki stood there frozen for about five seconds. Finally, he mumbled...

"...Fury, what am I going to do?"

"There's nothing you can do, is there?☆"

That moment a message arrived from Lizna.

[Sasaraki-kun, is it true that you suddenly confessed to Azrael?! Congratulations! Tonight will be red bean rice, right?! I'll also get a celebration cake, so let's do an offline meeting! Ah, of course you'll get to sit next to Azrael-san—]

Extra Chapter

Kirine's Diary

An Avalanche of files crashed down in front of him.

That was after Sasaraki had opened a small room within the debugging room.

"Uwah. What are these documents?"

"Hm. Those look like project management protocols from Kirine."

Alice picked up a file with a blue binding and handed it to Sasaraki.

It certainly did say 'Schedule Draft #24.'

"But why archive schedules in such a primitive manner when in a virtual world?"

"They could've been entirely digitalized too, but if they have no substance at all, data tends to bug and disappear."

"Documents disappearing through bugs... That's why people mustn't do work in virtual space..."

In any case, he opened the schedule.

The first page was blank. Only 'It's already hopeless' was written in one of the corners with a red ballpen. He already had a bad feeling about this, but he tried turning the page for now. It was a table with particular tasks. All of them already behind schedule.

Comments were written here and there into the open spaces.

[Event implementation behind schedule. Takanaka-san is working on a day off to catch up. I'm sorry for all this.]

[Unforeseen bugs. It's hopeless, so I'll call them features. Bugs are cultural.]

[Earthquake. An already run-down harddisk fell and broke, but I restored it somehow. I'm not going to lose.]

All of these seemed to be hand-written memos by Kirine-san.

"Why is she putting comments on everything?"

"Isn't this a 'If I don't put my emotions out somewhere, I'll go crazy'-kind of thing?"

"That's a really unpleasant reason..."

"Ah, Sasaraki, this one's a diary."

"Is it really okay if I read it?"

"I've Kirine's plenipotentiary powers, so it's fine."

He'd gained permission, so Sasaraki opened the diary. The first day.

[Announcement. Kirine-san will give it her best as a developer. I'm not going to lose to bugs!]

The next day.

[I can't win against bugs, after all... I give up.]

"She's fast to give up, isn't she—?!"

"It's fine. Kirine's strong point is that she drinks the nights after she gave up and is back on her feet the morning after."

He tried to read more of the diary. Its contents nothing but desperation like the player count further declining, critical bugs being found, and so on. And on top of that an endless cycle of Kirine-san being dealt a downer and then trying hard again. It was a roller coaster that hurt to read.

"Hey, can I stop reading...?"

"Rest assured, the next page is the last."

She said to him, so he opened the last page.

[Something really good happened today.]

"Oooh—"

What could that have been? That's rare— He thought and read on.

[Takanaka-san, Suzuki-san, Satou-san, Kentahara-san, and the part-timers aren't coming to work.]

[Surely everyone wants to surprise me and are secretly preparing a party.]

[After all, today's my birthday. I didn't tell them, though.]

[It definitely has to be a party.]

[There's no way that everyone would just abandon the company and run away.]

[Just no way.]

[It has to be a party, so I went and bought champagne.]

[I did a dry run and had a glass by myself.]

[I'm ready. Ehehe. What is holding them, I wonder?]

[Kirine-san will always, aaalways be waiting for them.]

The diary ended there.

".....Uwah..."

"By the way, I returned to the company the day after."

"How was she?"

"She was hugging an empty champagne bottle and crying in her sleep."

"Kirine-san really has it tough, huh...?"

If I ever meet Kirine-san outside of this game, I've got to be kind to her— Sasaraki swore to himself.