

One Piece 311

Chapter 311 - 311: Volume 2 – Chapter 213: There Are Too Many People Who Want to Kill Me—You're Just One More

This bastard!

Seeing the unrestrained grin on Daren's face, Marco felt an inexplicable chill run down his spine.

If their last encounter had shown him Daren's ruthlessness, then this incident at the auction laid bare the man's outright madness!

Even Shiki—a Great Pirate on par with his own Oyaji—Daren had dared to plot against without hesitation!

And not only that—he had effortlessly wiped out Shiki's invincible flying fleet!

This Marine was terrifying.

In terms of strength, cunning, composure, foresight, and his grasp of the situation, Daren far outclassed anyone Marco had ever met.

Once someone like that had you in his sights, even sleeping peacefully would be a luxury.

"Damn it..."

Marco gritted his teeth and shot Daren a vicious glare. Blue-green flames erupted from his hands, transforming into blazing wings as he soared into the sky.

King also cast a long, wary glance at Daren. A flicker of unease flashed deep in his eyes before he, too, shifted into his Pteranodon form. His wings ignited with crimson flames, and with a powerful flap, he took off.

The two figures streaked across the clouds and quickly vanished into the distant horizon.

They knew full well—if they didn't retreat now, once Sengoku and Borsalino finished dealing with the remaining pirates, there wouldn't be another chance.

Daren watched them flee without making a move.

Not that he could stop them even if he wanted to.

Just now, unleashing his Devil Fruit ability to obliterate the port and sink every pirate ship had completely drained the last of his strength.

At this point, staying upright was already a struggle.

His body was on the brink of collapse.

The move "Electromagnetic Entanglement: Ten Thousand Cannons" had an immense area of effect and overwhelming power, instantly annihilating Shiki's fleet. But the cost to his body was massive.

And much of its effectiveness relied on the unique terrain of Coin Island. It was a move that couldn't easily be repeated.

"Well... looks like it's just about over."

Daren withdrew his gaze from the sky and swept it across the battlefield, finally locking eyes with Shiki, still floating midair in the distance.

By now, most of the pirates had been dealt with, and the remaining ones were being taken down one by one by the Marines.

Especially under Borsalino's full-area "clean sweep" attacks—even pirates with bounties over 100 million couldn't survive a single laser blast.

When that guy wasn't slacking off, he was actually pretty reliable.

The ground still burned with scattered flames, thick black smoke billowing into the sky.

Within several kilometers of the auction house, everything had been reduced to scorched earth. Pirates groaned and screamed in agony, lying sprawled across the ground.

"Shiki, it's over!"

Sengoku had reverted to human form, panting heavily as he stared coldly at Shiki.

He took a step sideways, blocking Shiki's murderous glare from reaching Daren.

Borsalino also materialized beside him, raising a finger with a mocking smile as he pointed lazily at Shiki.

Shiki's expression twisted unpredictably.

He glanced at Bullet, still wreaking havoc in the distance, then let out a low chuckle.

"Well, well... Sengoku, I never expected the Marines to produce someone like this."

His bloodshot eyes—seething with malice and murderous intent—seemed to pierce through Sengoku and Borsalino, locking straight onto Daren.

"You think you can protect him forever?"

Sengoku's heart sank.

He knew Shiki's personality all too well.

Cruel, bloodthirsty, completely insane... and worst of all—he never let go of a grudge!

"Threats mean nothing to me..."

Daren suddenly let out a cold, mocking laugh.

"There are already too many people who want to kill me. You're just another name on the list."

Grinning provocatively, he even raised his hand and started counting on his fingers.

"Byrnni World wanted to kill me—he's already dead."

"Gol D. Roger tried to take me out—but he lost his pants."

"I blew up Kaidou of the Beasts' base, so yeah, he probably wants to rip me apart and feed me to his beasts."

"As for Whitebeard, I chopped off the arm of his sworn brother and nearly sank the main ship of the Whitebeard Pirates. And yet, I'm still alive and kicking..."

At first, Sengoku stood beside him with a proud expression, but the longer he listened, the darker his face grew.

Had this brat Daren really gone and pissed off every notorious Great Pirate on the sea?

"And you, Shiki..."

Daren was still sneering, acting like a cocky delinquent, his attitude so infuriating Sengoku nearly reached out to cover his mouth.

"Forty pirate ships, nearly fifty thousand crew—your flying fleet was blasted into fireworks in an instant. So what can you do to me?"

"And then there's the Moa Moa no Mi..."

He raised his hand.

The ground in front of him suddenly writhed, then split open like a mouth.

From it emerged a Devil Fruit radiating a mysterious aura, which floated gently into Daren's hand.

"...In the end, you couldn't even lay a finger on me."

Shiki's eyes instantly turned blood-red.

"You little brat—looking to die?!"

With a sudden wave of his hand—

Boom!!

The ground beneath him surged upward, forming three colossal lions, each hundreds of meters tall. Their gaping jaws roared open as they came crashing down toward Daren!

Shishi Odoshi: Gosho Chimaki!

"Daren, you bastard, can't you ever shut up!?"

Sengoku cursed, furious, as golden light burst from his body.

Borsalino sighed and spread his arms with resignation.

The next second—

A massive explosion ripped through Coin Island, shaking the earth and splitting the sky.

...

No one knew how long it took for the chaos to subside.

Smoke and dust billowed across the ruined land. Corpses were strewn everywhere.

Sengoku, covered in dirt, patted the dust off his clothes. Looking at the empty, desolate ruins ahead, he quietly let out a breath of relief.

"He got away... What a shame."

Countless photons gathered beside him as Borsalino's figure reformed, speaking slowly in his usual laid-back tone.

Sengoku rolled his eyes at the man's spotless uniform, clearly annoyed.

He glanced into the distance.

What remained of the battlefield was a crater-riddled wasteland filled with the corpses of pirates. As for Douglas Bullet—he had vanished.

Clearly, he had taken advantage of the chaos Shiki stirred up to slip away unnoticed.

Just then, a heavy thud echoed behind him.

Sengoku turned to see Daren collapsed on the ground, limbs sprawled, gasping for breath with a face pale as ash.

The Commodore looked up at Sengoku, worn and drained, and gave a faint smile.

"Didn't expect him to see through it in the end."

Sengoku shook his head and dropped to the ground beside him, slumping without care for his dignity.

"That Shiki is too crafty. Sure, it looks like he took a huge hit this time—his fleet completely wiped out—but honestly, it doesn't hurt him that much... He's always seen his subordinates as nothing more than tools."

"Trying to provoke him into an all-out fight right here? That's easier said than done."

And if it really had come to that... I'm not sure I could've kept you safe, Daren.

But Sengoku didn't say that last part out loud.

Daren gave a tired chuckle.

"Nothing wrong with trying... But at the very least, we achieved our goal this time, Admiral Sengoku."

Sengoku paused, then broke into a smile.

He looked around at the scorched and broken land, the countless pirate corpses, the wreckage of airships still falling from the sky...

Not far away, the skull-and-crossbones flag of the Flying Sky Pirates was burning to ashes in the flames.

"Yeah... You did damn well, Daren."

Sengoku clenched his fists tightly.

To defeat Shiki's entire aerial fleet single-handedly, and with zero losses...

He could hardly believe it. Once this news reached Marine Headquarters—no, once it spread across the seas—it would shake the world to its core.

An unprecedented military feat!

This might very well be the greatest victory the Marines had achieved since the legendary Battle of God Valley!

Sure, the raid on the Beasts Pirates' base had been a huge success—but compared to the threat posed by Shiki?

There was no comparison.

"Daren... there's no doubt you'll be promoted this time."

Sengoku said with deep emotion—but there was no reply.

He turned to look and saw that Daren had fallen fast asleep at some point, already snoring.

A faint smile tugged at his lips, as if he were having a pleasant dream. He even mumbled in his sleep:

"Toki... you're so beautiful today..."

Sengoku couldn't help but smile. This brat really lived up to his "scoundrel" nickname... Even now, he was dreaming about women?

"Mmm... Gion, you're beautiful too."

Sengoku: "..."

His smile froze. His face darkened.

"Ahem, we didn't hear a thing."

Borsalino chimed in with a grin.

The nearby Marines paused, then all nodded vigorously.

"Yes, yes! We heard nothing!"

Sengoku's eye twitched. He clenched his teeth, tempted to smack Daren awake and give him a serious scolding.

But when he looked at the injuries covering the young man's body, and remembered the incredible achievement he had just pulled off...

Sengoku took a deep breath and forced a stiff smile.

"Yeah... just dreaming."

...

That day, Commodore Rogers Daren of Marine Headquarters single-handedly destroyed the legendary Great Pirate Shiki's invincible flying fleet...

His name echoed across the world!

Chapter 312 - 312: Volume 2 – Chapter 214: The 80-Point Threshold

"Man... that was a great nap."

Daren opened his drowsy eyes and gave a big stretch.

He looked around and found himself still lying amidst the ruins of the auction house, a thin blanket casually draped over him.

"Commodore Daren! You're awake!"

A young Marine soldier rushed over, saluting with excitement. His eyes were filled with raw admiration and awe.

"Hmm? How long was I out?"

Daren smiled as he glanced at the soldier, whose face was still smudged with blood and dirt.

"Roughly an hour and a half, sir. We're still cleaning up the battlefield."

Daren looked around. Not far off, Marines had organized into teams—slapping Seastone shackles on surviving pirates, escorting prisoners, clearing corpses, and assisting civilians.

He nodded with a smile.

"Good work, everyone."

"It's nothing! Commodore Daren, what matters most is that you rest and recover!"

The young Marine's voice was practically trembling with enthusiasm. His eyes sparkled with reverence.

After all, Daren had single-handedly crushed Shiki's airborne fleet. His strategy and sheer force had nearly wiped out every pirate on the island, and he even secured the Moa Moa no Mi...

In all his years of service, the soldier had never seen a commander like this.

Even without the final tally, just the feat of annihilating Shiki's pirate fleet was enough to earn the respect and admiration of any Marine.

Rest and recover?

Daren checked his own condition and chuckled softly.

His wounds had been stitched and bandaged. After that nap, the cuts were already scabbing over and starting to itch.

As for stamina... after a good sleep, he felt nearly back to full strength.

Ever since his Physique stat crossed the 80-point mark, his already monstrous recovery rate had jumped to a whole new level.

If it kept climbing, Daren figured once he hit 90 or so, he might reach the kind of regeneration that awakened Zoan-type Devil Fruit users were known for.

With that thought, he calmed his mind and activated his innate perception to check his current stats:

Physique: 86.312 (Steel Body)

Strength: 75.513

Speed: 74.711

Fruit Ability Development: 81.211 (Island-Wide Coverage)

Armament Haki: 50.035

Observation Haki: 37.117

Conqueror's Haki: 53.301

Not bad at all.

A faint grin tugged at the corners of his mouth.

Fighting strong enemies really was the fastest way to grow stronger.

It was just a bit... life-threatening.

From this one battle, his Physique, Strength, and Speed had each risen by about 0.8 to 1 point.

If he had tried to train those stats the normal way, it would've taken at least a month to see those kinds of results.

At his level, even gaining one full point was a massive challenge.

Especially once a stat surpassed 80 points—the difficulty spiked dramatically.

It really did feel like 80 was some kind of clear dividing line.

The Fruit Ability Development stat was proof of that. If not for the Seastone suppression training he'd undergone recently, he wouldn't have broken through the 80-point threshold. Without that, he could never have pulled off "Electromagnetic Entanglement: Ten Thousand Cannons," manipulating metal across an entire island.

"So... maybe I should focus more on Strength and Speed now?"

Daren muttered, furrowing his brows thoughtfully.

Once a stat passed 80, leveling it up further got exponentially harder.

So the smarter path to boost overall power might be to bring all the lower stats up to 80 first. Once they crossed that line, each would undergo a qualitative leap.

"You brat, finally awake."

A gruff voice snapped Daren out of his thoughts.

He turned to see Sengoku approaching, drenched in sweat from the workload. Daren smiled.

"Yes, Admiral Sengoku."

With a blank expression, Sengoku replied,

"Good. Then get your butt up—there's still plenty of work to do."

Then, with a scowl, he turned on his heel and walked off toward a crowd, putting on a warm smile as he soothed the civilians.

Daren: "..."

Man, that was cold.

Not even gonna ask how I'm feeling?

I've bled for the Marines! I've earned my keep!

"What's up with him? Who got on his bad side?"

Daren asked the nearby Marine, looking genuinely puzzled.

Normally, Sengoku would be singing his praises—pretending to stay calm, but secretly thrilled.

The Marine's eye twitched.

"Uh... Commodore Daren, I'm not entirely sure."

"M-maybe Admiral Sengoku's just in a bad mood?"

Daren rolled his eyes and muttered,

"Win a battle and he's still in a bad mood? Tough guy to please."

Suddenly, shouts rang out nearby.

"Quick, get someone over here!"

"Where's the medic!?"

"We've got an injured Marine here!"

"Dammit! Where the hell is the doctor!?"

Daren blinked. A dozen or so Marines rushed toward the commotion, looking panicked.

"What's going on?"

The soldier shook his head.

"No idea, Commodore Daren."

"Let's check it out."

Daren stood up and headed in that direction.

...

"What is this...?"

"It won't budge!"

"Damn it... what the hell is this thing?!"

"Arthur!!"

A group of Marines had gathered, their faces filled with anxiety.

Before them stood a massive pink wall—solid and unmoving.

Trapped inside it was a young Marine, encased as if in crystal-clear amber. He looked lifelike, frozen mid-motion.

"This is... candy made by Charlotte Perospero!"

"No good! We can't break it!"

One of the Marines desperately swung his sword at the wall, but even after chipping the blade, he couldn't leave so much as a scratch on the rock-solid candy. All it did was spark harmlessly off the surface.

Daren stepped closer and instantly recognized the figure sealed inside.

It was Arthur—that same young Marine he'd taken a liking to earlier.

Inside the candy, Arthur's hands were locked around his sword, his youthful face set in a look of unwavering determination. He remained frozen in a fearless pose, charging forward even now.

Chapter 313 - 313: Volume 2 – Chapter 215: He Admires You

Looking at the way the young Marine was encased in candy, Daren could picture the scene clearly in his mind:

Just as Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku had tried to flee amidst the chaos, Arthur—stationed on perimeter duty—must've crossed paths with them.

Driven by a strong sense of justice and the resolve to wipe out pirates, Arthur had charged in recklessly, much like a young Dragon might have done. He'd tried to stop the two escaping pirates head-on.

He must've known he stood no chance against the Charlotte brothers—but still, he'd raised his blade and rushed forward with everything he had.

All to uphold the justice in his heart.

Daren let out a quiet sigh.

You just couldn't bring yourself to dislike someone like that.

He reached out and touched the candy wall, then, after a brief pause, turned to the flustered Marines nearby.

"This candy has incredibly high durability and resilience. What you're doing won't work. The only way to melt it is with high temperatures."

"Allow me."

A calm, almost lazy voice suddenly came from behind.

Daren turned to see Borsalino had quietly walked over at some point, a surprised look on his face.

Meeting Daren's puzzled expression, Borsalino smiled and raised his hand.

A golden glow slowly spread across his palm, and the surrounding air shimmered with the sheer heat radiating from it.

"Take it slow, Rear Admiral Borsalino..."

Daren's heart skipped a beat. He couldn't help but warn him.

Borsalino's Devil Fruit was too destructive. If he miscalculated even slightly, Arthur could be reduced to cinders.

But Borsalino just smiled teasingly.

"Relax. I'll make sure not to melt him along with it."

Daren: ...

The surrounding Marines: ...

That tone's not exactly reassuring, you know.

As everyone held their breath, watching with nervous tension, Borsalino gently pressed his glowing palm against the surface of the pink candy.

There was no violent burst, no blinding light...

Everyone's eyes slowly widened in disbelief.

The heat from his hand radiated outward at a steady, controlled pace. No scorching flare, just a gradual rise in temperature.

And then, like ice under the sun, the wall of candy began to soften and melt, syrup trickling down to the ground in rivulets visible to the naked eye.

Daren's pupils narrowed slightly.

Seeing Borsalino's utterly relaxed expression, he couldn't help but feel a jolt of awe.

He knew better than anyone how terrifying Borsalino's Devil Fruit really was.

Even a casual shot could punch straight through a red mangrove hundreds of meters tall.

Yet here he was, channeling that destructive power with such delicate precision...

To control such intense energy with that level of finesse—that took not only exceptional Devil Fruit mastery but terrifying control over one's own strength.

To step on an ant... without killing it.

That kind of precision was beyond belief.

...Just how strong was Borsalino, really?

Daren's eyes narrowed in deep thought.

In under two minutes, the massive candy casing had completely melted, pooling around the ground in a sticky syrup.

"It worked!"

"Hurry! Get the medic over here!"

"How's Arthur?!"

"He's not breathing—damn it!!"

As the last of the candy dissolved, the Marines rushed forward and gently laid Arthur out on a flat surface.

But no matter how they called his name or tried to rouse him, he remained unresponsive.

Not even a sign of breath.

The medic moved in quickly, checking his condition. His brows gradually furrowed.

"Doctor—how is he?!"

Sengoku had arrived in a rush, worry etched across his face.

The military doctor looked at Sengoku with a troubled expression and shook his head.

"Admiral Sengoku, Lieutenant Arthur has stopped breathing, and there are no signs of life. I'm afraid..."

The air grew heavy in an instant.

"Damn it!!"

Sengoku clenched his fists, his face clouded with anger.

He had high hopes for the young Arthur. Whether in training or actual combat, the kid had always excelled.

His innate sense of justice and sincere loyalty to his comrades had made him well-liked throughout the ranks.

And now...

"Let me try."

Daren suddenly stepped forward.

"You have a plan?" Sengoku asked in surprise.

Daren shook his head.

"I'm not sure. But doing something's better than nothing."

He crouched down beside Arthur and raised his hand.

A faint arc of electricity began to crackle between his fingers.

"An electric shock?" The medic's eyes lit up.

"You think it'll work?" Sengoku asked, curiosity tinged with concern.

Daren didn't answer.

Carefully controlling his power, he pressed his hand against Arthur's chest, right over the heart.

The Jiki Jiki no Mi's main ability was magnetic field manipulation, but it could also generate small electrical currents.

Not strong enough to injure—but maybe just right for this.

He'd never tried this technique before. This was all on instinct. Whether it would work or not... was up to fate.

"Electromagnetic CPR!"

With a sharp breath, Daren drove his hand down.

A jolt of electricity surged into Arthur's body.

His frame jerked violently.

Everyone held their breath.

One second. Two. Three.

No response.

Gritting his teeth, Daren went again.

A pulse of blue electricity flashed through Arthur's chest.

Another tremor.

One second. Two. Three...

And just as despair began to set in—

Arthur suddenly coughed hard, syrup-like fluid spilling from his mouth and nose.

"It worked!!"

"He's alive!!"

"Arthur! Are you okay?!"

Tears filled the eyes of the nearby Marines as they rushed forward, hugging their revived comrade tightly.

Sengoku finally let out a long, relieved sigh.

...

An hour later, aboard the returning warship.

Daren and Borsalino lounged comfortably on beach chairs, sipping glasses of chilled watermelon juice.

"Rear Admiral Borsalino! Commodore Daren!!"

Arthur jogged over, his young face flushed with emotion. He bowed deeply, voice trembling.

"I'm deeply grateful to you both for saving my life!"

Borsalino shrugged.

"I didn't do much... That was all Commodore Daren's doing."

He gestured toward Daren.

Daren smiled.

"How's your recovery?"

Arthur straightened up and gave a crisp salute.

"I'm good as new! Ready for action anytime!"

Daren chuckled.

"Don't be so reckless next time. Those two are officers from the Big Mom Pirates. You're not ready to take on enemies like that yet."

Arthur's face turned red with embarrassment. He scratched his head and said awkwardly,

"I just didn't want to let you down, Commodore. You said it yourself—we were going to wipe out every pirate on the island."

Daren blinked.

That was just for show, you hot-blooded rookie... you really took it to heart?

"..."

He let out a long sigh and waved a hand.

"Back to work."

"Yes, sir!"

Arthur saluted again, then jogged over to the ship's gun deck. He pulled out some paint and began meticulously maintaining the cannons, his focus sharp, expression dead serious.

"You can tell he really looks up to you,"

Borsalino said with a quiet chuckle.

Daren watched Arthur for a few moments in silence.

Then, without a word, he downed the rest of his juice and stood up.

"Tell Admiral Sengoku I've got something to handle. I'll be back soon."

Borsalino raised an eyebrow.

"Need a hand?"

Daren shook his head, eyes narrowing toward the distant sea.

"No. Arthur is my subordinate."

With that, he summoned Enma and launched into the sky, vanishing into the horizon in a streak of light.

Borsalino sipped his juice and smiled.

"Where's Daren headed?"

Sengoku walked over, frowning.

Borsalino raised both hands, feigning innocence.

"No idea... But right before he left, he did say something like, 'Arthur is my subordinate.'"

Sengoku froze—then realization dawned, and his face darkened.

Daren... He's going after the Charlotte brothers!

Wait!

A sudden thought hit him.

The Charlotte brothers were Big Mom's blood relatives. If Daren really killed them...

A cold sweat trickled down Sengoku's forehead.

That brat's on a mission to offend every Great Pirate on the sea!!

Chapter 314 - 314: Volume 2 – Chapter 216: Flying Swords!?

A desolate, uninhabited island.

Deep within Yellow Island, dense jungles spread like a thick green curtain, with towering trees standing tall. Along the jagged shoreline, waves pounded against the rocks, spraying white foam into the air. A simple raft made of candy bobbed gently in the surf.

"Let's take a break here."

Charlotte Perospero leapt off the candy raft, steadying himself with a newly reformed candy cane. He glanced over the island's surroundings and nodded in approval.

Then he looked back at Charlotte Daifuku, who was limping off the raft behind him.

"You're in no shape to keep going. I've stabilized your fractures with candy, but your internal injuries are still serious. We should rest for a few days before moving again."

"I told you... I'm fine, Perospero Nii-san," Daifuku rasped, his lifeless eyes glaring defiantly.

Perospero sighed.

Though they'd followed Mama through countless campaigns across the New World, helping expand the Totto Land empire, they'd rarely faced true top-tier fighters.

The New World may be chaotic and dangerous, but for massive pirate crews like the Big Mom Pirates, there was an unspoken understanding among major powers.

They rarely trespassed on each other's territory. A delicate balance was kept.

Large-scale conflict between great powers was avoided. Instead, expansion efforts were directed toward disorganized, neutral islands and weak nations.

And when faced with the overwhelming might of Charlotte Linlin—Big Mom herself—those nations crumbled like paper. Either they knelt in humiliation, or they surrendered willingly and sought alliance through marriage.

It had been far too easy.

The Charlotte family's string of one-sided conquests had bred arrogance in all of them. Everyone, Daifuku and Perospero included, had come to believe they were unstoppable.

That the Big Mom Pirates were invincible—the strongest force in the sea.

But this time... this mission had shattered that illusion.

One blow.

Just one strike from Admiral Sengoku had completely crushed years of hard-earned pride and self-confidence. Their lofty ideals evaporated like a dream.

If Perospero hadn't reacted in time, creating a candy barrier to absorb part of the shockwave, Daifuku wouldn't have just been left with a dozen broken bones—he might not be alive at all.

The memory of that colossal golden Buddha and its terrifying pressure still lingered in Perospero's mind. Before that palm, he, who once considered himself powerful, had felt like a fragile insect—ready to be squashed at any moment. A shiver of fear flickered in his eyes.

"Don't push yourself, Daifuku."

He licked his cracked lips, then casually sat on a large rock. From within his coat, he pulled out an Eternal Pose and checked their bearings.

"We'll stay here for two, maybe three days. Then we'll move."

"This island's already close to Whole Cake Island. No way the Marines follow us this far."

Daifuku clenched his jaw, his dead-eyed glare flashing with killing intent.

"Those damn Marines... trying to wipe out all the pirates on the island!"

"Sengoku, fine—but even some no-name Marine lieutenant dared to come after us? Tried to hold us back? Unbelievable!"

"I should've just twisted his head off!"

He growled, his tone sharp and cold.

Perospero glanced sideways at him.

As the eldest son of the Charlotte family, he'd always felt the weight of responsibility. Sharp-minded and tactically skilled, he'd long taken on the role of strategist in the Big Mom Pirates.

He knew Daifuku's temperament all too well.

Cold, ruthless, decisive. He'd never known what it meant to lose. Now, the bitterness of failure was eating him alive.

"Relax, that Marine brat's done for. Wrapped up in my candy like that, he'll die even more painfully."

Charlotte Perospero patted Daifuku's mochi-like shoulder, a cold sneer curling his lips.

Daifuku said nothing, his mouth pressed into a tight line.

Perospero shook his head and pulled out a Den Den Mushi, preparing to contact Whole Cake Island and report on their mission.

As he looked at the device, he took a deep breath, as if steeling himself. A flash of fear passed through his eyes.

Mama's orders must not be disobeyed.

That was an ironclad rule in the Big Mom Pirates—unbreakable by anyone.

No matter who failed her mission, the punishment was always severe.

Soul Pocus.

At best, years of life would be taken. At worst, instant death.

Even though the failure this time wasn't entirely their fault, even Perospero, the eldest son of the Charlotte family, couldn't suppress the chill crawling down his spine.

Their mother's violent mood swings, unstable mental state, and terrifying tendency to lash out without distinction during her episodes were deeply etched into the hearts of everyone in the Big Mom Pirates—never to be forgotten.

Beside him, Charlotte Daifuku also seemed to realize the danger. He swallowed dryly, his face pale as he gritted his teeth.

"Perospero Nii-san... if Mama punishes us, we'll face it together."

Perospero forced a smile, raised his hand, and reluctantly dialed the number.

"Brrru... brrru..."

The ringing of the Den Den Mushi echoed like a death knell, hammering at their frayed nerves.

"Brrru!"

The call connected.

The Den Den Mushi's face transformed into that of a woman—long pink hair, thick lashes, crimson lips.

"Mamamama... My dear sons, did you get the Moa Moa no Mi?"

A raspy yet commanding female voice came through, radiating the overwhelming presence of a conqueror.

The instant they heard her voice, both Perospero and Daifuku stiffened.

Perospero took a deep breath and said hoarsely,

"Mama... the mission failed."

"Sengoku led the Marines into action, and Shiki showed up at Coin Island. We weren't able to seize the Moa Moa no Mi. Please pun—"

Before the words even finished leaving his mouth, both he and Daifuku's faces suddenly changed.

They completely forgot about the Den Den Mushi still in their hands.

A wave of bone-chilling cold surged down their spines, locking up every muscle in their bodies.

A sharp, piercing screech ripped through the air!

A black shadow tore across the sky at an unbelievable speed—then stabbed into the earth with terrifying force!

What the hell was that!?

A flying sword!?

Their pupils shrank to pinpricks in an instant.

"Candy Wall!!!"

Boom!!

In the very next moment—

A thunderous explosion rocked the coastline. A sweeping shockwave blasted outward, sending a massive wave towering dozens of meters into the sky.

Chapter 315 - 315: Volume 2 – Chapter 217: You Can't Escape

Boom!

A wave of dust exploded across the coastline, spreading out like ripples.

As the wind swept the dust aside, a thick candy wall—five meters tall—stood firmly in front of them. Charlotte Perospero pressed a hand to the wall, his entire right arm having transformed into solid pink candy.

When the two finally saw what had attacked them, their pupils shrank in unison.

A sharp, menacing blade had embedded itself deep into the candy wall, shrouded in a swirling aura of killing intent.

Crack... crack...

Fine fractures spread outward from where the blade struck, crawling across the surface of the candy barrier like spiderwebs.

The dark Haki slowly receded from the blade, revealing a gleaming silver sheen beneath.

That sword...

Both Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku stiffened in shock.

They recognized it instantly.

It was one of the weapons auctioned off earlier—one of the Fifty Skillful Grade Meito, Kariumi—sold for over 100 million Belly to the mysterious guest in VIP Box 3A.

And the one who had won the bid for this famous sword... the man behind the 3A VIP box...

Perospero and Daifuku exchanged glances, seeing the unease mirrored in each other's eyes.

Commodore Rogers Daren.

The Navy monster who had created 10,000 supercannons and, in a single instant, reduced Shiki's sky fleet to ashes!

"You're quick on the draw..."

A low, cold voice echoed from the distant sky.

There was a pause... followed by a sneering edge of mockery in the tone.

"So how about this one?"

Before they could react, a sense of creeping dread seized them.

They saw nothing. No sign of an attack. But something made the hairs on their necks stand on end, like they were being locked onto by a monstrous beast—or targeted by a superweapon.

Their hearts pounded wildly.

"Shoot them... Enma."

Silence.

A streak of dark light suddenly carved across the sky.

Like a bolt of black, demonic lightning—everything in its path was torn through.

Clouds parted, the air split, the sea sliced down the middle. It moved too fast for the eye to follow. Even with Observation Haki, it was almost impossible to detect. It was already there.

"No!!!"

Perospero's mind reeled.

The moment that black flash locked onto him, he felt an overwhelming sense of death, like his soul itself was being extinguished.

The world around him seemed to vanish—all color drained, leaving only a suffocating black.

Eyes bloodshot, Charlotte Perospero clenched his teeth and raised both hands, unleashing a torrent of golden candy.

Whoosh!

In a flash, an enormous golden Iron Maiden statue slammed into place before him.

"Candy Maiden!!"

"Block it!!"

He roared, voice hoarse with desperation.

The next instant—

The black flash struck.

For half a second, everything went still.

Then—BOOM!!!

A deafening sonic boom shattered the silence. A towering shockwave blasted outward.

The sheer force obliterated everything it touched. The earth within hundreds of meters crumbled into massive fractures.

The island itself shuddered. Off the coast, the sea exploded into a storm of towering waves, crashing like enraged dragons.

Dust billowed across the battlefield.

Several seconds passed before it finally began to settle in the sea breeze.

Where the massive Candy Maiden had stood was now nothing more than a melted pool of gold—a half-solid heap of sugary wreckage.

"Perospero Nii-san!"

Charlotte Daifuku was still gasping in shock when he instinctively looked to his brother—only for his face to go deathly pale.

A severed arm lay bloodied on the ground.

Charlotte Perospero clutched the bleeding stump at his shoulder, his face ghostly white. Not far behind him, a long black blade, wreathed in eerie purple-black flames, was deeply embedded in the earth.

The blade's path had cleaved a terrifying, thousand-meter-long gash straight through the island's jungle.

"...Cursed blade..."

Perospero staggered for breath, voice hoarse as blood gushed freely from between his fingers, pooling rapidly beneath him.

But he paid it no mind. His eyes remained fixed, full of unease, on a spot in the sky.

"Daifuku... When I give the word, don't look back. Get on the candy raft and escape."

"This island's close to Komugi Island. If you're quick, you'll reach it in about half an hour. Find Katakuri... I'll hold him off."

Daifuku froze at his words, instinctively shouting back, "No! Not on your own—"

"Shut up!!"

Perospero cut him off sharply.

He turned abruptly, red eyes glaring with the authority of the Charlotte family's eldest son. His voice was resolute.

"If you stay, you'll die too!"

"This isn't the time for arguments. That guy's power... it's monstrous. I doubt even Katakuri could handle him one-on-one."

"He hasn't even shown himself yet, and he's already taken my arm—just with those two swords. And we're both injured..."

Perospero's grim truth hit Daifuku like a lead weight, sinking straight into his gut.

"Think you can run?"

That cold, emotionless voice returned—closer now.

Both brothers snapped their heads up toward the sound, eyes widening as their expressions darkened.

A towering figure slowly emerged from the clouds above, aura heavy and ominous.

No ship, no flying device—he simply hovered in midair. The snow-white cape of the Marines billowed behind him in the wind.

He made no move, but on the island below, two blades suddenly tore free from the earth.

The black and white Meito swords shot through the air, slicing across the coastline. In a flash, they reduced the floating candy raft to a storm of fragments.

Perospero and Daifuku stood frozen in place—shocked and silent.

Their last escape route... gone.

The blades spun through the air and returned to the man's side, their tips aligning once more—this time, aimed squarely at the two of them.

"You're not leaving this place."

Daren looked down at them from the sky.

"Charlotte Perospero. Officer of the Big Mom Pirates. Bounty: 210 million Belly."

"Charlotte Daifuku. Officer of the Big Mom Pirates. Bounty: 180 million Belly."

"I am Commodore Rogers Daren of Marine Headquarters. In the name of justice—"

He narrowed his eyes.

"I officially declare your execution on the spot."

Chapter 316 - 316: Volume 2 – Chapter 218: I Have a Proposal

"...your execution on the spot!"

The cold voice of the Commodore thundered in Perospero and Daifuku's minds, sending a jolt through their hearts.

"Damn Marines! How did you find us!?"

Charlotte Daifuku stepped forward, his bloodshot eyes locked onto Daren in the sky, gritting his teeth.

The New World was vast; even the World Government and Marine Headquarters couldn't possibly have complete information on this sea. How did this Marine locate them so quickly?

"Our retreat route was clearly—"

Before he could finish, his pupils contracted.

Without any visible movement from the Commodore, two sharp Meito swords, one black and one white, shot out again.

Like twin silver bolts of lightning, they pierced toward the two men.

Daren attacked without warning, giving them no chance to catch their breath or react!

As for how he found them, it was actually quite simple.

Although the seas of the New World were complex and the weather unpredictable, there were only three routes from Coin Island to Whole Cake Island.

Considering that Charlotte Perospero and Daifuku were both seriously injured and fleeing in a panic, they would undoubtedly choose the fastest one.

Daren only needed to follow that route and use his magnetic field perception to catch up with them!

"This bastard!"

Charlotte Perospero cursed under his breath, shocked by the decisiveness and ruthlessness of this Marine.

However, as the eldest son of the Charlotte family, he had much more combat experience than Charlotte Daifuku.

The moment Daren made his move, Perospero slid sideways without hesitation, his remaining arm drawing a semicircle in midair to create a solid candy barrier in front of them.

"Candy Wall!"

Clang! Clang!

The black and white swords sank into the thick candy wall, stuck there, their tails shaking violently.

Shattered candy exploded into countless fragments, scattering like sparkling stars and obscuring their vision—a beautiful yet deceptive sight.

"He blocked it!"

A hint of joy flashed in Charlotte Daifuku's eyes.

"That's because he didn't coat his weapons with Haki... Don't underestimate him!"

Charlotte Perospero's forehead was slick with cold sweat as he shouted.

Though he had blocked Daren's attack, there was no sign of relaxation in his eyes—only heightened alertness.

He knew better than anyone the toughness of the candy he created.

Not to mention ordinary swords and knives, even repeated bombardments from heavy artillery might not break through the solid defense of the candy wall.

But the Marine's move, without even using Armament Haki, relying solely on the sharpness and powerful momentum of the Meito swords, nearly shattered the candy wall Perospero had created.

Glancing down at the wound on his severed arm that was still bleeding profusely, Charlotte Perospero gritted his teeth.

He couldn't let himself be hit!

He had to strike first!

In that instant, Charlotte Perospero activated his Devil Fruit ability, forming a new arm of candy at the site of his severed limb.

Amidst the falling candy debris, he locked onto Daren's figure in the sky and assumed a bow and arrow stance.

Pink sugar liquid quickly condensed into a bow and arrow, and a rain of arrows suddenly whistled through the sky.

"Candy Shower!"

"Let's see how you dodge this move!"

A fierce, cold smile appeared on Perospero's lips.

But in the next second, the smile on his face suddenly froze.

The Marine Commodore had no intention of dodging, allowing the rain of candy arrows to strike him unabashedly.

Then... they all bounced off!

Except for a few small tears in his clothes, there wasn't even a mark left on his skin!

Daren narrowed his eyes, a mocking smile playing at the corner of his mouth.

"Even Haki is useless. Looks like you're the one who underestimated your opponent."

Before the words had fully left his mouth, his figure vanished.

Perospero and Daifuku's pupils shrank at the same time.

He's so fast!

A chilling sense of danger surged up their spines. Their Observation Haki flared instinctively, pushed to the limit.

"Your reactions are too slow."

A low voice rang out behind them.

A towering shadow loomed over the two instantly.

"No... more like your injuries are too severe."

A burst of fierce wind exploded behind them, sending a shiver down their backs.

A sonic boom!

This guy's strength is completely insane!

It wasn't just that his Devil Fruit had developed to the terrifying level of affecting an entire island—his physical strength, speed, and explosiveness completely overwhelmed them!

They couldn't believe it.

Back on Coin Island, they were too focused on "dealing with" Sengoku, the Marine Admiral, and only saw Daren as a Devil Fruit user.

Even when Daren blocked an attack from Shiki, they simply assumed Shiki hadn't gone all out.

After all, they hadn't fought him directly—the impact hadn't felt real.

But now, in this moment, they truly understood the overwhelming might of the Marine Commodore who had destroyed Shiki's flying fleet single-handedly!

"Damn it!!"

Perospero snarled, eyes bloodshot. In an instant, he yanked the unresponsive Daifuku behind him. As he turned, a suit of candy armor spread over his body.

"Candy Armor!!"

Reflected in his pupils, a blackened, three-fingered dragon claw came crashing down with a savagery that could tear through anything!

"Ryusoken: Dragon Claw!"

Crack!

The solid candy armor only held for a second before the indestructible claw shattered it with a thunderous impact.

The claw continued its assault, slamming brutally into Perospero's throat!

It felt like he'd been struck by lightning. His mouth opened reflexively, blood pouring out as his body bent forward violently.

"Damn it! Let him go!!"

Charlotte Daifuku's eyes nearly popped. He immediately activated the power of the Hoya Hoya no Mi, summoning a massive blue genie, as large as a small mountain.

"Majin Saidan!!"

The genie seemed to feel his master's fury. It let out a deafening roar and brought its naginata down in a furious arc!

Clang!!

A booming metallic ring exploded through the air, followed by a piercing soundwave that made their eardrums ache.

The naginata, powerful enough to cleave a warship, smashed into the Marine Commodore's broad chest—only to spark uselessly on impact.

"No way..."

Daifuku's already pale face turned ghostly white, filled with disbelief.

Even though he was seriously injured and far from his full strength, the result was still too shocking.

He couldn't even break through this guy's defense!?

Staring at the expressionless Marine before him, Charlotte Daifuku felt an icy chill surge up from the soles of his feet, racing along his spine and burrowing into his brain.

In that instant of stunned clarity, he realized—this Marine's oppressive presence... was nearly on par with Mama's!

"Daifuku... run..."

Blood gushed from Perospero's mouth and nose as Daren held him suspended by the throat. He forced out the words with difficulty.

But Daifuku stood frozen, as if he couldn't hear him, face ashen.

He was only 18 years old... and his courage had been utterly shattered.

Perospero clutched at Daren's arm with both hands, pink candy spreading from his fingers, crawling along Daren's arm—clearly trying to trap him using his Devil Fruit.

"Quick... run..."

"It's over."

Daren's eyes narrowed as he gripped Charlotte Perospero's throat and slammed him down with brutal force.

Boom!!

The ground within a hundred-meter radius collapsed again, forming a deep crater laced with cracks.

Perospero's bloodshot eyes twitched once before quickly going dull.

Charlotte Perospero, officer of the Big Mom Pirates, bounty: 210 million Belly... dead.

"You... you killed Perospero Nii-san..."

Blasted back several meters by the shockwave, Charlotte Daifuku landed hard, coughing up blood, his face filled with terror. He stared at Perospero's blood-soaked corpse, body trembling as he scrambled backward.

"Mama won't forgive you... Mama will never forgive you..."

Daren approached without expression, blood still dripping from his Haki-coated hands.

"Yeah, crossing Big Mom is a hassle, but too bad—you almost killed one of my men."

He stepped toward Daifuku, each slow footstep echoing like a death knell.

"I'm from the North Blue."

"Maybe you don't know this, but in the North Blue, being unable to protect your own subordinates is a mark of failure."

"And I'm someone who holds the rules of the North Blue in high regard... In this line of work, it's either you kill me or I kill you."

"...There's no such thing as 'the Big Mom Pirates can kill others, but no one's allowed to kill them' in this sea."

Seeing Daifuku still frantically crawling back, Daren curled a finger.

Enma and Kariumi flew toward him, piercing both his legs and pinning him to the ground.

"AAHHHH!!!"

Under the excruciating pain, Daifuku let out a demonic howl, screaming in rage,

"You're dead!! Mama will never forgive you!!"

"Yeah? I'll be waiting."

Daren kept walking forward.

Just then, a raspy woman's voice rose from the ground nearby.

"Mamamama... What an interesting little Marine. Are you really not afraid of me?"

Daren stopped and turned toward the sound—he spotted a Den Den Mushi.

He walked over, picked it up, and frowned.

"Big Mom?"

"Mamamama... That's right, I'm Charlotte Linlin."

A cold, eerie laugh came from the Den Den Mushi.

"You're the Marine who took out Byrnni World, embarrassed Roger and Whitebeard, and wiped out Shiki's fleet?"

Daren glanced at the barely breathing Charlotte Daifuku at his feet and said flatly,

"That's right."

"Mamamama!! How fascinating! Truly fascinating!! I'm very interested in you! I have a proposal—"

Daren shook his head.

"Not interested."

As soon as he finished, he lifted his right foot...

In Daifuku's horrified eyes—

Smack!!

His skull exploded like a watermelon under Daren's boot. Blood splattered everywhere.

Charlotte Daifuku, officer of the Big Mom Pirates, bounty: 180 million Belly... dead.

The world fell into a moment of eerie silence.

"But you didn't even hear my proposal..."

Big Mom's voice rang out again—not from the Den Den Mushi, but from... behind him.

Daren crushed the Den Den Mushi in his hand, face still expressionless, and slowly turned around.

Up in the sky—

A mature, voluptuous figure stood atop a black thundercloud, exuding a terrifying aura. She rested a massive blade on her shoulder, its sinister grin seemingly alive, and looked down at Daren with piercing eyes.

Her long pink hair whipped wildly in the blood-scented sea breeze, spilling out from beneath a hat adorned with pink polka-dot ribbons.

Blood-red lips curled slightly, dripping with seduction.

Big Mom licked the corner of her mouth, eyes glinting with greedy hunger as she gazed at the Marine Commodore, smiling with dangerous allure.

"I want you to be Charlotte Linlin's husband—my husband."

...

Chapter 317 - 317: Volume 2 – Chapter 219 She's Lusting After My Body

Daren froze on the spot.

She got here this fast!?

...That was the first thought that popped into his head.

This woman's insane!?

...That was the second.

And how the hell is Big Mom this damn hot!?

...That was the third.

In that moment, Daren stood there, staring at Big Mom atop the thunderclouds in stunned disbelief. His mind was flooded with too many conflicting thoughts to even figure out what he should be shocked about first.

The Big Mom in front of him had absolutely nothing in common with the monstrous, food-crazed crone he remembered from the original timeline.

Fiery red lips curled into a sultry smile, wild pink hair blazing like flames, and those large eyes held a commanding, seductive allure. She radiated the presence of a mature woman with a domineering, irresistible charm.

She wore a cropped white shirt, tight enough to hug her figure, carelessly buttoned only at the bottom. Her cleavage was deep and endless, her waist cinched tight, accentuating toned abs and a firm navel.

Below, she wore white hotpants, with pale pink garter stockings squeezing against her thighs, leaving faint marks on her skin. Her body was curvaceous in all the right ways, dangerously alluring, with a devil's figure that burned itself into the eyes. Red leather boots added to her wild, untamed presence, highlighting those long, powerful legs.

And with her standing on a thundercloud, one hand casually resting a gleaming broadsword on her shoulder, she wasn't just sultry—she was fierce, exuding an awe-inspiring heroic aura that made her even more dazzling.

—It was impossible to reconcile this with the grotesque, terrifying, deranged hag she would later become!!

In that instant, Daren suddenly understood. He got why that skintight dress at the auction had sparked a frenzy among so many "gentleman" pirates.

He also understood why so many world leaders and powerful factions had been willing to marry into Big Mom's family.

Because the way she looked right now... was downright deceptive!

This was Sea Circle Calendar 1493. The 39-year-old Big Mom in her prime!

"Well, well, well... So? Marine-chan, do you accept?"

Charlotte Linlin saw Daren frozen in place and let out a hearty laugh, her red lips curled into a playful smirk.

Daren's mouth twitched.

Hell no, I don't!

Setting aside the fact that I'm a Marine and she's a pirate, there's no way in hell I'm getting involved with a woman who might snap and eat someone alive at any moment!

Sure, Big Mom looked damn good right now. That overbearing, older-sister vibe was enough to stir up a man's primal instincts.

But the impression she left on him in the original story? Way too traumatizing.

He only had to picture it for a second—that this smoking-hot bombshell in front of him would, in just a few years, turn into a meat-mountain lunatic—and immediately, every hair on his body stood on end.

Nope. Absolutely not.

Even for someone like Daren, who considered himself a shameless bastard with no real bottom line, this was where he drew it.

Some things, once you've seen them in the wrong light, are ruined forever.

It's like seeing a beautiful woman you once fantasized about... suddenly squatting to take a dump in public, digging her nose, and flicking the booger at your face. Whatever magic she had is instantly, permanently destroyed.

And there was... one more, admittedly minor reason.

Daren glanced at the nearly eight-meter-tall Big Mom. His eye twitched.

He could already feel a dull ache creeping into his lower back.

He was over three meters tall himself—already a monster of a man by normal standards.

But compared to this "non-human" tower of power...

Yeah, there was a very real chance he'd die.

Thinking this through, Daren took a deep breath. His expression hardened with unwavering resolve as he raised his hand in a firm "no" gesture and declared righteously:

"I refuse!"

"Oh?"

Charlotte Linlin arched a sharp brow and gave a carefree laugh.

"And why is that?"

She didn't act like some bashful woman—her presence was bold and commanding, a beauty that radiated power and confidence.

Daren remained expressionless.

"I'm a righteous Marine. You're a pirate—pure evil."

He pointed at the two corpses on the ground and sneered.

"Besides, I just killed two of your sons. Don't you want revenge?"

Charlotte Linlin paused for a moment, then burst into raucous laughter.

"Ma-ma-ma-ma... You killed Perospero and Daifuku. That really did make me angry."

"If it had been anyone else, you'd already be a corpse."

"After all, while those two weren't exactly the strongest, they were some of the more capable among my children. Their deaths definitely brought me grief..."

"But..."

A glint of madness and greed flashed in her alluring eyes.

She looked at Daren like a mischievous child eyeing a new toy—or like a collector discovering a priceless treasure. She licked her lips and murmured,

"You're different!"

"Marine brat... I'm not mistaken, your body—it's tough, isn't it?"

As Daren fell silent, Charlotte Linlin laughed with crazed delight: "The same unbreakable body as mine... strength rivaling a giant's... speed beyond reason... and an unbelievably powerful Devil Fruit ability..."

She spread her arms wide, her chest swaying boldly with the motion.

"If you become my husband—Charlotte Linlin's husband—our union will give birth to the strongest warrior this sea has ever seen!"

"Our bloodline could surpass even my own... the birth of a true natural destroyer!"

"He'll plunge the world into terror, annihilating all who stand in his way!"

"And he'll become king of all races, ruling over a Totto Land that's truly equal, free, and united!"

"Ma-ma-ma-ma!! So, what do you say, Daren? Be my husband!!"

Daren: "..."

The word stud slammed into his mind, leaving him dizzy and disoriented, the world spinning black for a second.

She's actually lusting after my body!?

Unbelievable!!

And that look in Charlotte Linlin's eyes—open, greedy, like she wanted to devour him whole—it sent a chill crawling up his spine.

It was as if bugs were skittering all over him. He felt utterly violated.

"Not a chance!!"

Daren roared, eyes bloodshot, as a burst of overwhelming force erupted from his body and surged outward in all directions. The sky seemed to darken under the weight of it.

He had unleashed Conqueror's Haki—without even realizing it!

"A king's spirit!"

Big Mom didn't flinch. In fact, she seemed thrilled. Her gaze toward Daren grew even more ravenous as she grinned wildly.

"You've awakened Conqueror's Haki! Ma-ma-ma-ma!! Just as I thought! You really are the perfect man for Charlotte Linlin!"

"Submit to me!"

An even greater and more terrifying wave of Conqueror's Haki exploded from her body, immediately overpowering Daren's aura.

Charlotte Linlin laughed wickedly as she leapt up from the thundercloud, her arm raised high to grab Zeus.

Zzzzzz!!

Violent purple lightning crackled across the sky like a massive web.

"You don't get to say no!"

She brought it down—

A colossal bolt of purple lightning tore through the heavens like a raging dragon, crashing down toward Daren!

"Raitei!!"

Chapter 318 - 318: Volume 2 – Chapter 220: I Will Get You

The sky suddenly dimmed.

A dazzling light exploded without warning.

Blinding purple lightning filled Daren's vision, bursting from the heavens like a rampaging dragon and swallowing him whole.

"Mamamamama!! With this kind of power, I should be able to bring you down—"

Charlotte Linlin curled her red lips into a smile. But the next instant, her eyes widened in disbelief, and she blurted out in shock:

"Why doesn't the lightning work on you!?"

Whoosh!

Daren burst out of the storm like a wild tiger, completely unscathed!

"Because I've got guts!!"

The lightning summoned by one of Charlotte Linlin's strongest Homies, "Zeus the Thundercloud" was incredibly powerful. But Daren was a monster who had been baptized by Momonga's Goro Goro no Mi. Naturally, he had no fear of Zeus's lightning.

After all, Big Mom's Soru Soru no Mi merely grants objects souls, allowing her to control lightning indirectly... It's nothing compared to the sheer elemental might of a true Logia-type like the Goro Goro no Mi!

In a blur, he vanished and reappeared above Charlotte Linlin, his speed ghost-like. His right leg raised high over his head.

His eyes burned with indescribable fury. His military boots, wrapped in fierce Haki, came crashing down like thunderous war axes, aimed straight at Charlotte Linlin's head!

This crazy woman actually tried to take his body by force!?

Daren couldn't accept that!

That kind of move was something he, a so-called scumbag, would pull—how dare she flip the script!?

Swish!

His boot tore through the air, triggering bursts of white shockwaves.

Charlotte Linlin's pupils contracted slightly.

Daren's speed and explosive power were far beyond what she had expected.

No wonder Perospero and Daifuku were wiped out so easily!

"Mamamamama!! Good—bring it on!!"

Charlotte Linlin laughed and swung her massive battle blade.

Clang!!

A sharp metallic crash rang out.

Boom!!

A blast of force erupted from the clash of boot and blade, surging in all directions and kicking up sand and debris like a storm.

The two clashed and separated in an instant, both flying backward.

Daren flipped through the air, using the power of the Jiki Jiki no Mi to manipulate his metal belt and boots, stabilizing himself.

Charlotte Linlin slid back dozens of meters, her long legs in red leather boots carving deep grooves into the ground.

"Mamamamama... Your body really is strong—almost catching up to mine..."

She steadied herself, then glanced at the distant Commodore, licking her lips with possessive glee.

"What a perfect physique and genes... In that case, there's no need to hold back."

She grinned and raised her hand.

Suddenly, a blazing sun shot out from the gloomy sky.

"Prometheus!!"

Orange-red flames swirled into a massive fireball, orbiting Charlotte Linlin like a loyal pet before revealing a sinister, human-like smile.

Prometheus the "Sun"!

Just like Zeus the "Thundercloud", he was one of Big Mom's most powerful Homies!

"Mamamamama!! Daren, let's see how long you can last against me!!"

Charlotte Linlin grabbed Prometheus and hurled him at Daren with all her might!

What kind of cringey line was that!?

Daren cursed inwardly, but his body didn't slow. A coin suddenly appeared between his fingers.

He flicked it—cold metal spinning fast, reflecting Big Mom's stunning face.

The next instant—

"Heavenly Fire!"

"Railgun!"

Orange flames and blue electromagnetic beams blasted from their hands, tearing through the air and exploding into spiraling shockwaves that howled toward each other.

Everything in their path—stone, earth, vegetation—vaporized in an instant, leaving massive scorched trails across the battlefield.

They collided head-on!

BOOM!!

A thunderous explosion erupted, and searing heatwaves spread in all directions, whipping up towering waves across the sea. In the distant forest, countless trees were torn from their roots, lifted skyward by the storm.

"Mamamamama!! What a perfect body... I can't wait to taste you..."

Charlotte Linlin gazed at the towering explosion, her face flushed with excitement, body trembling slightly. Her red lips parted, releasing a breath of fragrant heat.

The stronger Daren became, the more thrilled and impatient she grew!

With genes and bloodlines like his—what kind of powerful offspring could they create!?

She could hardly imagine it...

"Give it up, Daren. If we keep fighting, I might lose control and accidentally kill you..."

Charlotte Linlin laughed loudly, her tone shifting—what was once "Marine brat" had now become the more intimate "Daren."

"I've got zero interest in being someone's plaything!"

Daren's furious roar burst from the flickering flames.

What kind of sick joke was this? Becoming Big Mom's husband meant being used up and tossed aside without a second thought.

This seductive lunatic had dozens of "husbands" throughout her life. There was no way Daren would accept that!

"Forget it, you crazy hag!"

The moment the words left his mouth—

"Shoot her down, Enma!!"

The surging sea of flames suddenly recoiled like a tide, sweeping away to both sides as if retreating from something terrifying.

Charlotte Linlin's pupils shrank.

Whoosh!!

A domineering black flash tore through the fire, screaming toward her heart at a speed faster than sound.

Spiraling purple-black waves of air coiled around the black light, leaving behind a trail of flickering energy as it ripped through the island's terrain.

"A cursed blade!?"

A chill ran down Charlotte Linlin's spine.

In the face of Daren's attack, she instinctively felt threatened.

This blade... could hurt her!

The moment that thought surfaced, Charlotte Linlin stopped laughing. She raised her arm and grabbed the massive sword with the wicked grin carved into its face.

One of the strongest Homies—Napoleon the Bicorne!

Charlotte Linlin drew a deep breath, both hands gripping Napoleon tightly, then unleashed a mighty slash with overwhelming force!

Boom!!

The slash landed squarely on the tip of Enma.

Purple-black and crimson-black shockwaves erupted wildly, unleashing a raging storm.

The earth beneath them crumbled layer by layer, and cracks spread across the landscape for nearly a kilometer in every direction.

"RAAAAAAAHHH!!!"

Charlotte Linlin's eyes glowed red. Muscles suddenly bulged across her slender arms as she brought her sword crashing down!

Swish!!

Crackling black-and-red lightning burst from her body, sweeping across the entire island.

Conqueror's Haki surged forth!

"Spear of Elbaph: Ikoku!!!"

BOOM!!

A massive wave of sword energy howled forward like a tsunami, tearing through everything in its path before crashing into the distant forest.

With a deafening crack, the ground split wide open, revealing a massive, bottomless chasm.

The entire island was split in two by Charlotte Linlin's full-powered strike!

Rumble...

Countless trees toppled, swallowed by the expanding rift.

The force of the blast shattered the clouds, sending plumes of smoke and debris into the sky.

In the next instant—

Charlotte Linlin, her eyes blazing with madness, burst out from the inferno like a giant. Her long pink hair was wrapped in flames, and under the howling winds and thick smoke, she looked more like a monster than a person.

She glared up at the sky, locking her gaze on the distant figure of the Marine Commodore as he disappeared into the clouds.

"DAREN!! I'm not giving up!!"

"Just you wait..."

Standing atop the crumbling island, Charlotte Linlin burst into wild laughter.

"One day, you'll be mine!!"

"Mamamamama!!"

Chapter 319 - 319: Volume 2 – Chapter 221: Ranking of Strength

The warship sailed steadily along its designated route, heading toward Marineford, the Marine Headquarters.

"Yes, Fleet Admiral Kong... the mission was a complete success."

"...Indeed. During this operation, Commodore Daren demonstrated overwhelming strength and sharp judgment..."

"Mm-hmm, yes, no problem..."

Sengoku hung up the call on the military Den Den Mushi, a satisfied smile forming on his face.

Standing at the bow of the warship, he gazed out at the endless blue sea ahead. He unconsciously spread his arms and stretched with a yawn, feeling completely refreshed.

The operation on Coin Island had been a resounding success.

For the Marines, this was their greatest triumph over evil since the Battle of God Valley—they had successfully wiped out the legendary flying fleet of the Great Pirate Shiki.

Although most of the credit belonged to Daren, and Sengoku himself had merely "assisted from the sidelines" as an Admiral, he was still the commanding officer of the operation, so recognition was naturally due.

"That rascal Daren... Always getting into trouble, but he's got real talent."

Sengoku chuckled and shook his head, a mix of amusement and exasperation on his face.

Thinking back, it had been Daren who broke the deadlock in several previous operations.

Byrnni World, the "World Destroyer."

Kaido of the Hundred Beasts...

And now, Shiki the "Golden Lion"...

No matter the opponent, Daren always managed to turn the tide with his brilliant strategy and precise judgment, earning the Marines a string of major victories.

In contrast, Sengoku often felt like he was just there for show—cleaning up after the fact.

Take Byrnni World, for example. He hadn't lifted a finger before Daren took him down.

During the Kaidou operation, by the time the main Marine force reached the Beasts Pirates' headquarters, Daren had already wrecked most of the military factory's production lines—they were just there to wrap things up.

And this time?

Sengoku's mouth twitched involuntarily.

"Well, not my fault. I can't fly, after all," he muttered to himself.

But just then, Sengoku stiffened.

"What the—!?"

He sensed something and suddenly turned around.

A figure dropped from the sky at terrifying speed, crashing straight into the warship's deck.

Boom!!

A massive hole was blasted into the deck, wood fragments flying in all directions.

"What just happened!?"

"Are we under attack!?"

"Get ready for battle!"

...

The sudden impact immediately put the Marines on high alert. They grabbed their weapons and quickly surrounded the smoke-filled area, approaching cautiously.

But the next moment, the sight before them left everyone stunned.

"Commodore Daren!?"

The Marine Commodore lay motionless at the bottom of a crater, face pale, a gaping wound torn across his chest. Blood gushed from it, soaking his uniform in crimson.

"Damn!!"

What a horrific injury!

The Marines collectively gasped, cold dread sweeping over them.

Chaos erupted across the deck.

"Doctor!! We need a doctor, now!!"

...

"It hurts..."

Daren groggily woke from unconsciousness, pain coursing through every inch of his body.

"The sword techniques of the Giants... That crazy old hag really didn't hold back."

He winced, rubbing his head as he slowly opened his eyes.

A circle of Marines surrounded him, and standing at the front was Sengoku, his expression filled with concern.

"...Admiral Sengoku."

Seeing Daren awake, Sengoku let out a breath of relief—only to immediately scowl.

"Hey, hey, hey, you brat... What's with that sour face?"

"Is that how you greet me?"

Daren fumbled around and pulled out a crumpled pack of cigarettes. He took one, bit down on it, lit up, and gave a weak grin.

"I was hoping I'd wake up to a hot, sexy nurse..."

As he spoke, he took a drag and glanced down at his chest.

His uniform had been undone, and the wound on his torso had been roughly treated and wrapped in a blood-soaked bandage.

Sengoku's eye twitched at Daren's remark.

Hold it... Just hold it in... This kid just pulled off a major victory.

Taking a deep breath, Sengoku forced a smile.

"What happened to you?"

Sengoku was very familiar with the strength of Charlotte Daifuku and Charlotte Perospero. He figured they were a notch above the elite Vice Admirals at headquarters—but still far below Daren.

And since he'd already heavily injured them, they shouldn't have stood a chance.

"Don't tell me... you ran into Big Mom?"

He eyed Daren's wounds suspiciously, his voice mixed with doubt and surprise.

Daren rolled his eyes.

"Who else but that lunatic?"

Sengoku's face froze.

This brat... he actually went and tangled with Big Mom!?

Ignoring Sengoku's stunned look, Daren sank into thought.

Big Mom's strength had indeed exceeded his expectations—he had clearly underestimated her.

By now, Daren had essentially gone head-to-head with all the major figures of the seas.

Byrnni World, Roger, Kaidou, Whitebeard, Shiki, Charlotte Linlin...

Through direct confrontations, he could more or less rank their "raw power."

The weakest, undoubtedly, was Byrnni World—the first legendary pirate to fall by his hands.

In truth, Byrnni World's physical prowess wasn't particularly high. His title of "World Destroyer" was closely tied to his Moa Moa no Mi ability.

As for the strongest...

Daren exhaled a long plume of smoke and narrowed his eyes.

That was hard to say.

Roger, Whitebeard, and Shiki all gave off the same overwhelming pressure—their power was nearly unstoppable. Unless he could step into that same legendary tier himself, there was no way to judge who was truly the strongest.

And at their level, the outcome of a battle could be swayed by a dozen variables.

Physical condition, weather, mindset, spur-of-the-moment decisions...

Any shift could change the entire flow of a fight between them.

As for the remaining two—Charlotte Linlin and Kaidou...

Daren let out another breath.

Because of the way the Wano Country arc played out in the original timeline, he'd misjudged Charlotte Linlin's strength.

While both she and Kaidou were part of the Rocks Pirates, their standings in the crew had been vastly different.

Kaidou had still been a trainee, while Charlotte Linlin was already a commanding officer.

And at this point in the timeline...

Kaidou was only 30 years old, still in his prime growth phase—far from the peak strength he would later show in the Wano arc.

But Charlotte Linlin was another story.

Big Mom was already 39, at the very height of her power. In swordsmanship, hand-to-hand combat, battle experience, and even the intensity of her Conqueror's Haki—she outclassed Kaidou by a wide margin at this stage.

It was no wonder Daren had underestimated her—Big Mom's current appearance was far too deceptive.

Chapter 320 - 320: Volume 2 – Chapter 222: The World is in an Uproar

Honestly, he felt a little mentally shattered...

Who could've guessed that Big Mom actually wanted to have a baby with him?

Daren's mouth twitched, his face full of exasperation.

Beside him, Sengoku frowned deeply, then asked after a moment's hesitation,

"So what exactly happened?"

Daren replied casually,

"I killed Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku. Then Big Mom showed up... and we fought."

Sengoku: "..."

The surrounding Marines collectively gasped, eyes wide with shock.

Commodore Daren actually killed Big Mom's two sons right in front of her!?

"Don't just stand there!"

Sengoku suddenly stood up, voice sharp as he issued commands.

"Accelerate immediately and return to headquarters!"

"There are too many prisoners on board—we need to get them to Impel Down as soon as possible!"

Startled by his tone, the Marines snapped to attention, saluting in unison.

"Yes, Admiral Sengoku!"

The warship surged forward, its engines now clearly operating at full power.

Sengoku stood at the bow, staring out at the vast, endless ocean. The peace and satisfaction he'd felt earlier had completely vanished.

"Staying in the New World..."

He muttered, face darkening,

"Doesn't feel safe anymore."

...

Somewhere in the New World.

A figure engulfed in blue-green flames swooped down from the sky, wings beating as it landed steadily on the massive Moby Dick, which loomed like a white whale on the sea.

"It's Marco!"

"Marco's back!"

"Hahaha! Did you get it?"

...

"Diamond" Jozu, "Flower Sword" Vista, and the others walked over smiling, crowding around Marco with curiosity.

Covered in dust from his journey, Marco brushed the soot from his hair and shook his head with a sigh.

"I didn't get the Moa Moa no Mi."

Facing Whitebeard's questioning gaze, he still looked shaken as he explained,

"Both the Big Mom Pirates and the Beasts Pirates made a move. King and Charlotte Perospero were there. And besides them... Admiral Sengoku and Shiki were on the scene too."

That revelation left everyone stunned.

"Shiki!? That guy's been missing for ages—he's back in action?"

"Well, I guess that's no surprise... it's the Moa Moa no Mi we're talking about."

"Wait, Marco—don't tell me Shiki ended up getting the fruit?"

"If that's true, we're in serious trouble..."

The crew broke into heated discussion.

Even though Sengoku was a formidable Marine Admiral, Shiki was notorious for his unpredictable and ruthless tactics. No one believed the Moa Moa no Mi would've ended up in Marine hands.

"No..."

Marco shook his head.

Recalling the terrifying sight of that storm of cannon fire, he swallowed hard and said hoarsely,

"Do you guys remember that Marine Commodore we ran into before?"

Everyone blinked in surprise.

"The 'King of the North Blue'?"

"I think his name was... Rogers Daren?"

"The one who took down Byrnni World?"

As if all remembering at once, they turned to look toward the stern.

There, Kozuki Oden—who had been drinking heavily and calmly polishing his sword—suddenly stood up. The haze of alcohol vanished from his eyes, replaced by razor-sharp focus and fierce fighting spirit.

Marco glanced at Oden, then nodded.

"Yeah, he was there too."

"He used his Devil Fruit power to manipulate all the metal on the island..."

He paused for a beat, then dropped a bombshell that sent a chill through every soul on deck.

"He destroyed Shiki's flying fleet—by himself."

Silence fell over the Moby Dick like a heavy curtain.

The pirates stared at Marco, stunned, their faces filled with disbelief.

"Wait... Marco, you're joking, right?"

"There's no way..."

"That's Shiki's invincible fleet we're talking about..."

...

But as they took in Marco's serious, grim expression, their skepticism began to fade.

An indescribable sense of shock—and even fear—crept into the depths of their eyes.

An entire fleet of dozens of warships, carrying tens of thousands of pirates... gone, just like that?

Kozuki Oden stood frozen, as if struck by lightning.

He knew better than anyone that Shiki the Golden Lion was a pirate of legend, on par with Whitebeard in strength—an unstoppable force.

And now, that towering figure... had actually been "defeated" by a Marine?

...

The New World, Wano Country

Kuri District, Military Factory Zone.

A black Pteranodon burst through the clouds and dove from the sky, landing squarely atop a military factory.

King shifted back into his human form, knelt on one knee before the figure seated at the edge of the rooftop like a demon, and spoke in a low voice.

"Kaidou-san, the mission failed."

Kaidou didn't respond immediately. He picked up a jug beside him and tilted his head back, gulping down the liquor in great swigs.

The strong, fiery alcohol dripped from his beard, splashing onto the rooftop, filling the air with an overpowering scent of booze.

"The Moa Moa no Mi... I'm guessing it ended up in Shiki's hands, huh?"

Kaidou slammed the jug down with a loud bang, his crimson-glowing eyes narrowing as his deep voice rumbled.

"That power-hungry bastard Shiki wouldn't pass up a Devil Fruit like that."

"It's fine, Arbel. This wasn't your—"

"The Moa Moa no Mi ended up in Marine hands," King cut in suddenly, interrupting him.

Silence.

"Impossible!!"

Kaidou spun around, eyes wide in disbelief.

King let out a quiet sigh.

"The Marines were involved too. Sengoku led the operation himself..."

Kaidou's voice was incredulous.

"Sengoku's strong, sure—but there's no way he took the fruit from Shiki!"

King lowered his head slightly.

"Rogers Daren was there."

"He used his Devil Fruit to manipulate all the metal on the island... and destroyed Shiki's flying fleet."

Kaidou froze in place.

At the mention of that name, veins of bloody red crept across his sclera, his eyes twitching with barely restrained fury.

"That damned Marine brat!!"

He threw his head back and roared, an explosion of Conqueror's Haki erupting from his body. The violent shockwave stirred a storm like hell unleashed, shaking the very sky.

Under the weight of Kaidou's unleashed Haki, slaves and laborers working below the factories collapsed on the spot, eyes rolling back as they fainted en masse.

Black and red lightning crackled furiously in the air.

Still kneeling, King clenched his teeth, forcing himself to withstand the devastating pressure.

He knew this rage all too well.

Ever since that last encounter, Kaidou had harbored a deep hatred for Daren. When drunk, he would often scream the Marine's name in fury—and then take it out on Queen.

"So... the Moa Moa no Mi ended up with that Daren punk?"

Kaidou's voice came out low and guttural, eyes glowing red with murderous rage.

King gave a stiff nod.

Kaidou was silent for a breath, then abruptly pulled out his massive black kanabō and leapt off the rooftop.

A furious roar echoed across the Kuri District.

"QUEEN!! GET YOUR ASS OUT HERE!!"

What followed were waves of screeching wails and agonized screams.

...

And just like that—

The "Coin Island Incident" hit the world like a bomb tossed into still waters, sending shockwaves through the entire sea.

Countless factions, nations, and pirate crews were finally forced to take Commodore Rogers Daren seriously.

If before, they had dismissed the "lucky brat" of the Marines, now they were fully aware of the overwhelming force behind the "King of the North Blue."

A true monster of Marine Headquarters!

He had single-handedly destroyed Shiki's legendary flying fleet.

Every living "legendary pirate" on these seas... had suffered bitter losses at his hands.

The world was in an uproar.