

Chapter 169 - It seems I was summoned

Renya finished the dismantling of the ancient dragon, gathering all the usable material and burying all the unusable part in a hole. Then he returned to the dragonoid's city while taking Shion along. Because of her huge body, it was impossible for Rubydra to enter the city, and thus she had to wait outside the wall all by herself.

Albeit not many, the city possessed a facility that could be called inn for travelers so far as it goes, but probably because it hasn't been in much use, its quality wasn't all that great.

However, if there's only one facility that can be referred to as inn, Renya has no other option but to lodge there. Feeling rather reluctant, Renya had that inn almost to himself.

The city of the dragonoids has many stone buildings, just like human and beastmen cities. However, for some reason one could catch here and there sight of a Japanese taste that seemed to base on a subtle misunderstanding, causing Renya to be somehow unable to settle down.

Renya has no dragonoid currency in possession.

On top of there being almost no exchange between the different races, the dragonoids don't like interacting with the humans and beastmen anyway. Because of that the currency used by the dragonoids doesn't circulate to the human continent almost at all, but the value of magic stones seems to be everywhere the same. Instead of coins, Renya hands over magic stones to the inn owner as payment.

If possible Renya wanted to get his hands on dragonoid coins by selling what can be sold, but the situation didn't allow for it.

After all there were no dragonoids who would try to do business with a human, coupled with the fact that it's a time of war.

"Man, I'm on the verge of wanting to return to Klinge as soon as possible once we took custody of Albert." (Renya)

Having received a key from the unsociable inn owner for a room, Renya went to what has now become his room, and spit that complaint out as soon as he closed the door while sighing at that. Shion, who had followed him with the feeling that things will work out one way or another, smiles bitterly.

Of course Shion had been properly assigned a private room as well, but she apparently thought that it would be too boring to return to that room with almost everyone from Renya's party being out.

Hero Albert basically falling under Kurz's command in his position as the human hero was logical. Going by the fact that Leopard and Grün are already acting together with Kurz, there's no reason for Albert to be forced to participate in the dragonoid's battle.

However, Renya expected the dragonoids to be unwilling to hand over Albert.

There are two reasons for that.

First, the humans currently don't possess the power to invade the demon's territory.

Same can be said about the elves and beastmen, who do have the combat forces but cannot shift towards offense thanks to the circumstances. Under such conditions the dragonoids can insist on there being no reason that the heroes have to be gathered in one place.

Second, the dragonoids themselves are currently being invaded.

Letting go of a hero, who's a tremendous combat asset, asks for a worsening of the war situation which is already difficult.

"We were able to confirm the hero's safety, so it's also possible to go back home for the moment..." (Renya)

"Makes sense. We also defeated quite a few of those evil dragons. If Emedra and Rubydra cooperate with the dragonoids, I think they will be somehow able to at least force the enemy out of the occupied areas." (Shion)

Renya thinks that he will even go to directly talk with the Four Great Dragons or whoever, if he feels like this situation is one that basically doesn't concern them. He would likely be stopped by Emedra and those around her, but there's no reason for Renya to hesitate, if that were to be the best move to break down the current stalemate.

"In the first place it should be a disadvantageous situation for the demons, seeing as they are fighting on four fronts, and yet why are we being pushed back?" (Renya)

"I think it's because the demon's power that allows them to command monsters is capable of overturning the difference in military might. That's a story limited to after the demon king's appearance, though." (Shion)

Monsters usually don't pick the prey they're going to attack.

Although they might be demons, they would be repeatedly attacked. This has become the reason why the Miasma Forest is regarded as natural bulwark between the races, but as consequence of the demon king's appearance, the circumstances change.

The monsters end up following the orders of the demons.

Due to this the demons obtain a huge military force, and even if it would develop into a total war against the four races, they won't lose because of being outnumbered.

The reason for that is considered to be unknown, but Renya, who is aware of the background circumstances, immediately comprehended that reason.

Normally, if it develops into a conflict between races with all five races in the mix, exhaustion would occur within each of the powers.

Therefore the Miasma Forest plays the role of dividing the different powers in normal times. When the supervisors' game was started, the forest changed into a troop supply for the demons, who have the most enemies to begin with.

To the bitter end it has been regulated so that all powers can fight with all their might only when the demon king appears.

"They came up with a detestable system." (Renya)

Renya feels a light killing intent towards the system that doesn't spare even a single thought towards the residents of this world.

Seemingly because those feelings showed on his face, Shion covered with a start.

"Ah, sorry. I just remembered something slightly unpleasant." (Renya)

"I see...just now you thought something like 'I will definitely kill you', didn't you?" (Shion)

"There's no way that I would think something so dangerous. I just recalled some guys whose necks and bodies should be ripped apart a bit." (Renya)

"Who's next!? Who are you planning to finish off, Renya!?" (Shion)

Renya shrugged his shoulders and said, "Even if I say so, they aren't in range of my katana, you know?" to the panicking Shion, but then shifts his attention to the footsteps approaching from outside the room.

The owner of the footsteps seems to be greatly panicked, too. Due to the sound of them coming closer in a jog, Renya held back Shion who is trying to draw near, and turned his eyes in the direction of the door.

"Renya, are you in there!?"

The one who opened the door without even knocking, was Rona in her priestess garb.

"Great, you're here, Renya. Postpone the secret affair with Shion for a bit. I need you to come with me." (Rona)

"We have no secret affair though..." (Renya)

"Rona, now's not the time. If I don't interrogate him closely here, someone's life will be in danger!" (Shion)

After comparing Renya's expression that shows his annoyance, and Shion's expression that's clad in seriousness, Rona clearly informs both,

"Please postpone either. Right now I'd like you to come with me for a bit." (Rona)

Without allowing refusal, Rona grasps Renya's wrist and Shion's hand, and took them along as if dragging them across the floor.

Renya, who didn't put up any resistance, couldn't help being pulled along. Shion, who resisted lightly at first and thus ended up having her balance thrown off, was taken along by being literally dragged. The destination was a large building located in the central part of the city.

Watching the buildings that had collapsed all over along the way, Renya thought, 'They had been done in quite badly until we came,' but Shion and Rona harbored completely different impressions. At that point Shion had a bad premonition, but unable to ask Rona on the spot, she was taken along to a wide room of a building that appeared to be a conference room. The ones waiting there are a white-haired old man in a gray robe, and behind him, a group that included all age groups from young to middle-aged men.

Only one table has been set up in the center of the room. The old man is sitting next to the seat of honor while the group is standing behind him.

At the side of the entrance, in a place slightly separated from the group camping the room's inner part, the four heroes, Croire and Kaede are standing stock still, having also huddled up into one group.

With all of them wearing clouded expressions, it wasn't a good atmosphere, but Renya lightly greeted Albert, the one he spotted first among them.

"We have been awaiting you, Margrave Kunugi-dono."

Being called out by the elderly dragonoid while having the seat opposite of him offered, Renya sat down as suggested, and Shion and Rona lined up behind him.

"I am the chairman of the Dragonoid's Witenagemot, Veylio Greybunarl. Pleased to make your

acquaintance." (Veylio)

Only the manner of his speech is polite. The elderly dragonoids bows his head slightly. However Renya perceives something like discomfort, albeit only faintly, mixed into those words. Once he shifts his look to the group standing in the back for some reason or another, Renya realizes that the gazes turned upon him by the dragonoids aren't overly welcoming. 'That's a bad omen,' but Renya only thinks that in his mind without changing his expression in any way, and continues to ponder, whether this is a situation he should bring to a close quietly or not, and about the question just what that Witenagemot is supposed to be.

"I cannot fully express my deep feelings of gratitude for your timely assistance in our time of emergency on this occasion." (Veylio)

"It was convenient for our side as well. You don't have to particularly mind it." (Renya)

Renya generously replies to Veylio's courtesy. The looks turned at Renya by the group behind the old man become even more severe. 'I guess they can't stomach my attitude,' Renya thinks for a short moment, but he has no intention to correct it.

"That's very appreciated. But..." (Veylio)

Veylio squinted a bit.

"...don't you think that the damage to the surroundings has been a little bit too drastic?" (Veylio)

"It's better than it having turned into a massacre, right?" (Renya)

There's no hesitation to be found in Renya's response. In order to make the other party fully understand that he's believing so from the bottom of his heart, he doesn't avert his eyes from Veylio and there's no fluctuation in his voice either. Due to that exceedingly upfront way of talking, the group in the back faltered a bit, but Veylio laughs deeply without any change to his expression.

"This is certainly so. It's a truly severe view." (Veylio)

"It's a fact. If you didn't want for things to develop this far, you should have done something about it by your own strength." (Renya)

"That's a harsh opinion. However, say what you like, even I, as someone who leads the dragonoids, am in no position allowing me to hold back from asking you whether this hadn't been horrible." (Veylio)

'It looks like the Witenagemot is an organization corresponding to what-is-called government or congress', Renya estimates according to his own knowledge.

"Chairman-dono." (Albert)

The one who cut into the conversation while looking as though he couldn't bear it any longer is the

dragonoid hero, Albert.

"I cannot let this pass after all. That's not how you should talk to His Excellency the Margrave who provided us his help." (Albert)

"Be silent, Albert. To begin with, if the monster army hadn't pushed us back up to here while you were there, this time's situation wouldn't have come to pass either." (Veylio)

"That's because my lack of ability. If you're going to blame someone, it would be best if you blamed me." (Albert)

"Even if I blamed you, there would be no benefit at all. Step back!" (Veylio)

Albert chews on his lips as he's threatened.

Renya, who watched that situation with a totally disconnected expression, somehow manages to guess the reason why he had been dragged here.

"Ah, I get it. You're saying that you want to demand compensation and an apology from me?" (Renya)

"I guess you can sum it up as us wanting to request a compensation for the damage caused due to a situation caused by you, a human noble." (Veylio)

"Hmm? Time out for a little strategy meeting." (Renya)

"Wha-?" (Veylio)

Renya turns around to Rona and Shion while still sitting on his chair and beckons his other friends. After waiting for everyone to gather around him, Renya spoke up.

"Well then, what are we going to do?" (Renya)

"Are we going to do it here?" (Lepard)

Renya looks slightly doubtful at the wryly smiling Lepard and then turns his eyes towards Veylio's group that still cannot keep up with the situation.

"I don't really mind even if they hear us." (Renya)

"Their point is that they have to put up with the damage caused if it has been caused by the heroes, since it's the heroes' duty to fight the monster army. However, Renya, you're just a human noble. There has been no need for you to wield your power at that point in time. In their eyes you probably have the duty to compensate the damage you caused." (Rona)



"It wouldn't be such a wrong point, unless you take manners towards the person that helped you into consideration." (Shion)

Shion states her thoughts of Rona's explanation.

Of course, since they don't lower their voices, the dragonoids can hear everything.

"Even in regards to the part of being helped, saying something like 'We haven't requested help in that situation' is kind of difficult." (Croire)

Croire declares bluntly while turning a scornful look in the direction of Veylio.

"But Renya, please hold back on using that breath in the elven country. The forests would disappear."

"Ah, ok. I will take that into account." (Renya)

Being overpowered by Croire bringing her ghastly face close to his after she removed her eyes from the old dragonoid, Renya nods.

It seems she believes that he's quite capable of doing it if she doesn't give him a proper warning in advance, but as expected, even Renya hasn't considered hurling such fire into a place surrounded by trees that burn well.

It's because he didn't know how much the fire would spread through the destruction by the flames and the wind.

"Well, even if Renya forgot and did the same in the elven country, it wouldn't turn out like here."

"I agree with that as well."

Grün nodded while whispering.

"The beastmen wouldn't say such shameless things either." (Lepard)

Albert shrinks away next to Lepard who powerfully throws out his chest.

"Since about everything is decided by strength for the beastmen, they are a race considering it disgraceful to say this and that after the fact, if they were to be shown such an overwhelming power." (Kaede)

Kaede says with her hand hiding her mouth while glancing in the direction of the dragonoid group.

"Margrave-sama, are those people a nuisance?" (Kurz)

Kurz asks innocently.

"Eliminate? Eat? Can I eat them?" (Kurz)

"Stop it, Kurz. They will give you a stomach ache. Those will definitely lead to food poisoning." (Renya)

Once Renya says so while caressing Kurz's head after having drawn close, Kurz dons a slightly disappointed expression whereas the expressions of the Witenagemot folks, who don't understand the situation, become grim.

They might be thinking that they are being looked down upon, but they don't realize that their lives had just been saved at the last moment by Renya.

"Your Excellency...I shall swallow my pride." (Albert)

Seemingly having finally recovered, Albert, who had hung his head in shame next to Lepard, lifts his face.

"No matter how things are going to develop, it's a truth that there has been large damage to the city's buildings and that the fertile soil around the city has been burned, causing any farming to be in vain. I have been blind to my own lack of power that couldn't bring the situation to a close before things turned out like this. I'm well aware that it's shameful to speak it out, but I'd like to be granted your backing by all means, Your Excellency." (Albert)

"So you say, but unless the cocky geezer over there isn't the one to tell me such line, things won't end, will they?" (Renya)

After glancing at Albert, who entreats him while desperately weaving his words together and placing his knees on the floor, and moreover prostrating himself by putting his hands and forehead on the floor as well, Renya points at the group around Veylio who are glaring in their direction.

"Renya, that's probably impossible." (Shion)

Shion says.

"They are calling themselves Witenagemot, aren't they. Even though they aren't all that wise. They aren't a bunch that can request something from others by lowering their heads."

"Now that you mention it, it's quite an embarrassing name, Witenagemot, isn't it?"

"Something like being unable to ask for help by bowing their head once, even though they can give themselves such an embarrassing name...the dragonoids are fairly stupid, aren't they?"

"As expected, it's a name even we would hesitate to use quite a bit."

After Shion, Rona, Croire, and Kaede said whatever they wanted in turns, they all burst out into laughter. Albert, who was prostrating himself on the ground, lifts his face that bears an indescribable expression. The atmosphere around Veylio's group freezes.

"Are you intending to mock us?" (Veylio)

Once Veylio asks with a calm voice, seemingly in order to not put any emotions into it, Shion and the others look at each other, and begin to whisper among each other.

"I'm surprised. He realized that we're making fun of them."

"I see, so that's why wise men..."

"Being only good at guessing insults is a really useless ability, though."

"For everyone to get upset by this much...I'm sure they have never been treated like this until becoming this old. They should have been brought up like little princesses. Their fragile hearts might break like thin twigs due to all this backbiting. I cannot hold back my laughter here...ah, no, it's nothing." (Kaede)

"You bitches, I will give you..."

Seeming unable to bear the malicious gossip which Shion and the others spread so that it could be heard, several dragonoids that waited behind Veylio step forward, but then immediately stop their feet.

In front of their frightened looks, Lepard is grinning broadly, Grün has gently placed his hands on the hilts of the two katana hanging at his waist, and Kurz is glaring at them with somewhat glazed eyes.

While watching the dragonoids drawing back in low spirits after being completely overwhelmed by the pressure, Renya leaned back on his chair, and pondered what's actually to be done.