

## **Chapter 171 - It seems to be a Defensive Battle in Klinge**

The information about a monster army appearing from the Demon Forest was immediately passed on to Frau through Keith after he received a report from the soldiers he had sent out on reconnaissance patrols.

When she's told at the same time that the monster army is advancing at an abnormal speed, Frau clicks her tongue without even trying to hide her bitter smile.

"The army's composition has been revised ~no..." (Frau)

Until now the demon's army focused on monsters that are easy to gather in numbers but are low in individual combat strength such as goblins and orcs, which can be mainly categorized as infantry, for its main combat force. However, according to the scouts' reports, this time the demon's army is advancing at a yet unseen rate with its composition focused around fast monster such as wyverns and sub-dragons which can run at a fairly high pace and at the same time carry monsters on their back, albeit being unable to fly in the sky. On top of that they seem to be heading straight for Klinge without even sparing a single glance at the abandoned settlements along the way.

Frau hadn't expected for dragons to take part in this war.

After all she didn't know about the evil dragons having joined the demon king's cause.

"With this...it won't be in time ~no." (Frau)

Surprise dyes Keith's face due to Frau's fretful voice which he hears for the first time.

'It appears the information sent over by the scouts was too unexpected for Frau.

'If I assume that her obvious panicking is owed to some kind of preparation not being in time, it might very likely turn into a major issue in regards to Klinge's defense,' Keith assesses.

Keith supposed that he apparently has to resolve himself for the worst.

The 500 soldiers, who are going to take part in the defense, had struggled through Renya's training and then gone through another training regimen at the same level. In Keith's opinion you wouldn't find any soldiers on the human continent that would be able to match them. Or rather, they had been endowed with so much power that they would win against any other human soldier by leaps and bounds, but with the opponents being dragons, their prospects of victory were low, as one might expect.

'I wonder how much losses we will suffer, and whether we will be able to hold Klinge in the first place? No, we have to hold the city,' Keith prepares himself mentally. Meanwhile Frau mutters with a trembling voice,

"The preparation of the ball-shaped scent bags and crackers will..." (Frau)

"...Pardon?" (Keith)

While thinking that he might have misunderstood her or that his ears were not working properly as he couldn't believe the words that reached his ears, Keith asked Frau,

"What did you say just now?" (Keith)

"As I said, the preparation of the ball-shaped scent bags and crackers won't be in time ~no!" (Frau)

As Frau repeats her words quite mortified while stamping her feet, Keith dumbfoundedly realizes that he apparently hadn't misheard her.

"For what the heck do you plan to use those?" (Keith)

"I wanted to toss them at the demon army while shouting "Come close, and welcome to Klinge!" ~no! I wanted to turn the heads of the demon army into bloody pulp with a shower of crackers fully stuffed with lead shrapnels while they wouldn't be able to understand what's going on ~no!" (Frau)

"You know, you can't really call those crackers anymore then." (Keith)

Once Keith retorts like that as he cannot help to not do so even though he's fully aware that the part he should retort is a completely different one, Frau blankly looks at Keith and tilts her head, which she had roughly scratched until then, to the side in confusion.

"You can't ~no?" (Frau)

"No, you can't. In the first place, from where do you plan to hang down those ball-shaped scent bags of yours?" (Keith)

"Liaris-san and Dra-kun will be dispatched as..." (Frau)



"You can stop right there. Just what do you want to make a precious dragoon do?" (Keith)

"...the ones in charge of carrying the ball-shaped scent bags." (Frau)

"Ah...I see, I really can't stop you from finishing your words, can I?" (Keith)

Keith drops his shoulders in depression due to Frau finishing her sentence without any hesitation. At the same time he thanked god, who might be somewhere, that the preparation of those ball-shaped scent bags and crackers wouldn't be in time.

If those had been done in time, the dragoon's dignity would likely plummet to the ground on the very day she had been forced to really carry those bags with her dragon, even if they managed to successfully repel the demon army's invasion.

"Ah, jeez, I have no choice but to give up on what I don't have at hand ~no. Keith, have the soldiers assume their designated stations ~no." (Frau)

"Just as you have ordered before, I deployed 100 soldiers at various places in the castle, and assigned the rest to guide and guard the residents' evacuation in the city." (Keith)

"That's perfect, Keith ~nano. You've become a good butler ~no." (Frau)

"Butler, you say?" (Keith)

Keith asked back, wondering why a butler. But without answering him, Frau heads towards a room within the castle.

Following after her, Keith notices on the way that Frau's destination seems to be the audience room which had been created so that Renya could use it for official events and similar.

By the way, that room has almost never been used by Renya after becoming a Margrave. Within the mansion it's regarded as an useless, big room.

That was only natural, but after following Frau inside the room, Keith has his breath taken away upon seeing its interior.

Currently countless objects similar to transparent boards floated inside the wide room, which hasn't even been decorated reasonably (probably owed to Renya's character).

At the same time as Frau enters the room, each of those objects start to project completely different sceneries.

"The circumstances inside the city? Several spots on the wall...that's the situation inside the residents' shelter?" (Keith)

Ignoring Keith who mutters what's shown on the boards while comparing the scenes with his own memory, Frau heads into the deepest part of the audience room and jumps on the chair there, which Renya uses when meeting visitors.

"Deploy large screen. Display operating ratio of the defense devices." (Frau)

Once Frau quickly waves a hand, a huge, transparent board appears in the center of the room. Keith, who hurried over to Frau's side, realizes that a rough sketch of Klinge, including Renya's castle, is shown on the board.

At a corner of that sketch a small red 75 is visible.

"Deploy screen. Boot up Far-View Function." (Frau)

Keith groans deeply as soon as he sees the new screen.

What was displayed on that screen were countless airborne wyverns and sub-dragons, which were running across the ground while kicking up a cloud of dust.

"Distance 20,000. Encounter in around 30 minutes ~nano." (Frau)

"They've come so far already..." (Keith)

"No matter how nimble the scouts might be, they won't gain much distance on such an army ~no. That means we wouldn't have any spare time once the information reached us anyway ~nano."  
(Frau)

In the first place, Klinge is a city that's located around half day by carriage from the Miasma Forest. It's a distance which can be barely traversed in a day by someone with healthy legs if they keep walking during the day without any breaks. If it were to only be wyverns, they might have arrived much earlier, but probably because they are matching their speed with that of the sub-dragons, they are somewhat slow, if Frau were to be allowed to comment on it.

"Are you going to inform the principality's army?" (Keith)

"Too late. Their time's up ~nano. Since they didn't show any intention to cooperate with us up until now, we will have them exit the stage flashily here ~no." (Frau)

Keith felt a slight shiver run down his spine due to Frau's indifferent manner of speech.

The decision to readily discard the lives of around 1,000 soldiers makes him realize that Frau is no human to begin with, unlike her appearance that suggests it.

Around that time the principality's soldiers outside the city were about to fall into chaos.

The enemy's ground forces still hadn't entered sight, but they could confirm countless wyverns flying in the sky.

Them gathering the commanding soldiers and the army's high-ranking officials to hold a meeting was in plain view through the screen at Frau's place. Frau and Keith watched their situation in a disinterested manner.

"What do you think are they going to do?" (Keith)

"It's already too late for them to make an escape by themselves ~nano. They will be annihilated ~no. Even if they were to take refuge in Klinge...that has become impossible now ~no." (Frau)

Frau says as she glanced at another screen.

It's a small screen that's floating in the air. It displayed a brief message that all the entrances built into the wall that surrounds the city have been sealed off.

It's not just limited to locking the doors.

The entrances have been tightly fortified by the plant vines covering the wall.

If someone plans to open them without Frau's permission, their only option will be to destroy them including the wall.

"I guess the very best they can do is to run away while praying that the enemy will devote all their resources towards Klinge ~no." (Frau)

"How about surrendering?" (Keith)

"To monsters? You can prattle such nonsense when sleeping in your bed ~no." (Frau)

Even while all these things are going on, the monster army is shortening the distance. They are advancing at such speed and force that it makes one wonder whether they have gone completely berserk.

It's an army that doesn't seem to be properly commanded and led by demons at all. And then the principality's army makes its decision.

"They have started to form up into some kind of ranks." (Keith)

"They judged that they won't be able to escape...I don't want to believe it, but it looks like they intend to attack the monster army ~no." (Frau)

"For real? By the way, what's the difference in combat forces...?" (Keith)

"Just going by the numbers, there are 20 times more monsters. I don't even want to consider the disparity in quality ~no." (Frau)

For the principality's army the marching speed of the monster army was apparently outside their expectations.

They likely thought that they will be at least able to run away after catching sight of the enemy, but are now confronted with the reality in front of their eyes.

Annihilation is inevitable, if they advance.

And even if they withdraw, there's no way that the monsters will silently see off humans as they defenselessly turn their back on them.

They apparently planned to at least retaliate then, but in Frau's eyes that's nothing more than dying in vain.

If they had thrown their honor and shame to the winds and requested help now that the situation had become hopeless, even Frau could have considered it, but it seems that the principality's army's executive didn't feel like doing that.

They might plan to choose the option of fighting and dying like soldiers before disgracefully begging in tears to Frau, who looks like a child. However, that's a stupid plan that will spell the death of almost all the 1,000 soldiers. Frau had a little bit time left, but she hesitated whether she should open up a part of the wall and advise them to escape inside the city.

But, she immediately changes her mind, recalling that the protection of the city and its residents is her main duty and that the principality's soldiers, who didn't try to get inside the city until the the last moment, are outside the range of her duty.

"For the time being I won't think about this matter any longer ~no. It's a waste of time to do so ~no." (Frau)

The screen that displayed the principality's army's situation vanishes.

After staring at the space where it had disappeared for a little while, Frau shifts her eyes towards the biggest screen.

The number in the corner of that screen, which is showing a sketch of the whole city, had changed to 83.

"80% activated. The boot-up is a bit slow ~no. Stationing of personnel complete. Starting activation of City-Class Sorcery Array." (Frau)

Klinge's roads, which had been built up from scratch, had been designed by Emil and Frau in teamwork.

A part of the stone pavings of those roads begin to cast strong, white lights.

If someone with knowledge of sorcery were to look at Klinge from above, they might have guessed what those lights mean.

Light traces, which are running in straight and curved lines through the urban area of Klinge that had been designed as a beautiful circle, began to draw a sorcery array which engulfed the entire city in a single circle.

The actual event didn't reach Frau's and Keith's eyes as they were indoors, but as Keith watched a part of the pathways on the sketch in front of their eyes starting to shine with a white radiance, he asked Frau,

"Frau-sama, this is?" (Keith)

"This is the crystallization of Emil-ane-sama's and Frau's group work ~nano. The entire city can be regarded as one huge array with sorcery circuits drawn into its interior. Right now I'm in the process of getting it ready for use by passing mana through those circuits ~nano." (Frau)

Being no sorcerer, Keith doesn't understand the meaning behind the shape drawn on the screen. Even so, once he considers the city's size, he can somehow guess just how much mana is needed to cause what's happening in front of his eyes.

"From just where are you pulling this much mana...?" (Keith)

"Savings and squeezing ~nano. The squeezing part has been mostly covered by master ~nano." (Frau)

Combining the magic stones' mana, which had been squeezed out of Renya, with the mana procured through the hell furnace, which Keith hadn't seen, all of it is being spread throughout the entire city via the things called Putry-chan by Emil.

It's a sorcery array which is drawn while employing that mana.

No one besides the designers Emil and Frau knows just how much of a punch it packs.

As the circuits connect, the entire city starts to vibrate subtly.

Keith began to look around himself restlessly, seemingly feeling slightly worried.

Without minding him, Frau makes a rectangle screen appear below her knees.

Frau nimbly runs her fingers across that screen, which might be considered as a device similar to a keyboard from Renya's former world, while lifting the corners of her mouth into a smile.

"Now then, you may have a very close look at Klinge's defense capability ~no." (Frau)

The battle against the monster army was about to start in the Kunugi Margraviate, the territory of a rising noble of the Trident Principality.