

Chapter 171 - It seems to be the Defensive Battle of Klinge 2

The demon army that attacked Klinge on that day was structured around orcs as the main force. These monsters, which are more powerful and burlier than goblins, also eat even more repulsive things and have a stronger reproductive ability than goblins. Furthermore, their intelligence is somewhat higher than that of goblins.

Such uncontrollable monsters came rushing while riding on the backs of wyverns and sub-dragons. Moreover, as even the demons apparently put their backs into this battle, four demons had joined that army.

With just one being present, a human army would have been put into quite a bind. However, once it comes to several demons being present, it was unfathomable just how much of a combat prowess they would add to the overall strength of the monster army.

The ones who recklessly plunged into that army with its immeasurable combat power from the front were the soldiers of Trident's national army.

In addition, just the superiority of numbers on the demon army's side was 20 to 1, according to Frau's investigation.

That doesn't mean that they were completely helpless.

There were some soldiers who caused casualties by thrusting their swords at the enemy in order to show their pride as military men, but those people were in the minority, and the losses they caused couldn't be even called a scratch if comparing it to the whole enemy army.

Although almost all soldiers had readied their weapons, they were kicked down by sub-dragons, stabbed to death by orcs holding spears, ripped apart by the swords of orcs and the claws of wyverns, and turned into pulps of meat overflowing with blood in the twinkling of an eye. Those chunks of meat were crunched by the strong jaws of the wyverns, sub-dragons and orcs as food.

All that remained from the soldiers were broken swords and bloodstained, crushed armor parts.

You could call it a gruesome scene of carnage that didn't give the victims any time to raise anything close to screams or angry roars.

"What the hell were those guys?"

A male demon riding on the back of a sub-dragon asked quite mystified. Another male demon laughed while having the sub-dragon he's riding kick an iron helmet lying on the ground.

"Who knows. Weren't those suicide candidates?"

"Pointlessly wasting their already few soldiers...isn't that city's commander an idiot?"

Upon the words of another male demon, a female demon, who followed at the end of the line, frowned while chiding him,

"Pay attention. After all it's possible that it was some kind of strategy."

"A strategy that turned such a big number of soldiers into fodder? That would be a fairly extravagant plan. It would somehow be profane to regard the guy, who came up with it, as human."

"There's no mistake in that. If it's a plan that can give us even the slightest painful experience, I dare say that it's a way of thinking that's close to ours."

The female demon doesn't even try to hide her displeasure at the male demons who laugh all together.

The monsters, who literally devoured Trident's army in front of their eyes, immediately tried to rush towards their next prey, the city, but then stopped.

Due to not just the orcs, but even the wyverns and sub-dragons having ceased advancing, the demons turn a quizzical look towards Klinge.

The wall protecting the city in front of their eyes was covered so thickly with green vines that the stone beneath couldn't be seen, but as soon as they wondered whether a part of it had squirmed like an animal's tentacle, a single, cocoon-like cluster formed on a vine.

That cocoon, which stood out for some reason, slowly opened while gathering countless eyes on itself.

What stood up from within that vine's cocoon is a young woman boasting a tall, slender and well-proportioned body.

Her flaxen hair naturally spills down to her waist. A black apron dress covers her balanced body.

That woman, who bowed so gracefully that it even charmed the orcs, who shouldn't know anything about etiquette, began to speak with a voice that carried across the whole battlefield albeit not being overly loud.

"Let me warn you. This place is Klinge, the city where Margrave Kunugi, who was permitted to rule this land by the Trident Principality, resides. This city doesn't allow the existence of anyone who possesses even a shred of malicious intent. If you heed this warning and pull back, we won't chase you, but please resolve yourself if you don't."

Upon the woman's calm words, the demons dumbfoundedly gazed at her for a while, but before long they point at the woman and start slandering her while revealing crooked smiles.

"You're an idiot! I hate idiots!"

"You will overlook us if we pull back? Can't you see the reality?"

"Resolve ourselves, eh? Ooh, how scary, how scary!"

"Going by your appearance, you're are the pet dog of this city's lord, aren't you?"

The female demon snatches a spear held by a nearby orc.

Being too late in letting go, the orc was lifted up alongside the spear and then blown away while screaming once the female demon wielded the spear.

"Go and redo your studies from the basics of how to speak in the netherworld!"

The female demon, who fixed her hold on the spear after making it revolve once in the air, immediately throws it.

The orc spears originally aren't meant for throwing.

It's a weapon that won't have much of a penetrative force and range if thrown by someone without taking its length, weight and center of gravity into consideration. Once that spear left the female demon's hand, it flew in a straight line towards the apron dress-wearing woman with a sound of cutting the wind.

The spear had such a momentum that it would doubtlessly drive itself into the woman's body up to

the shaft if she didn't put up any kind of defense.

Anyone, who saw that spectacle, imagined the woman being drenched in blood while the spear handle was growing out of her chest.

Anyone besides a few humans, that is.

"That's a truly tasteful reply. On top of being easy to understand, it's quick."

The spear's pointed end was suddenly stopped in front of the woman's chest as if it had stabbed into something.

The spear handle shakes intensely as if to display its stabbing force, but the spearhead doesn't advance even the slightest bit forward from there.

While the faces of the demons are dyed by surprise, the woman presses her index finger against the pointed end of the stopped spear.

With just that, the spear crumbles away as if several hundred years had passed all at once, and vanishes.

"I'd love to give you a return gift, but I don't have anything besides this."

What the woman retrieved out of her apron's pocket was a butter knife that doesn't even have a blade.

It's not even a weapon.

The woman lightly swings the butter knife, which won't become any kind of threat even if thrust at someone else, and brandishes it like a throwing knife.

The butter knife that left her hand just like that turned into a single flash that flew with a speed going beyond the imagination of the demons.

Even the demons could understand that it had been thrown at them, but there's quite a distance between the woman and the demons.

It's a distance the heavy spear traversed exactly because it had been thrown with the physical strength of a demon.

There should be no way that a light butter knife would reach after being thrown with the power of a human, but the butter knife that had transformed into a flash stabbed the forehead of a single man among the demons, who had been careless as he believed that it wouldn't get this far. The knife's end protruded out from the back of his head after passing through his skull.

"Eh?"

The male demon, whose eyeballs flew out apparently because of the impact at the time of being stabbed and who exposed a hole from his forehead to the back of his head, raised an awfully stupid sound. With those apparently being his last words, he feebly fell backwards to the ground.

With a slight delay, blood and some kind of fluid that's no blood gushed out from the gaping hole on his forehead.

The remaining three demons needed several seconds to comprehend that he had just lost his life.

Moreover, they needed another ten-odd seconds to accept the reality that it was caused by a meager, metallic tool like a butter knife which normally shouldn't be capable of piercing them.

"No way..."

"Now that we have literally crossed swords, I guess it's time to start the battle, everyone."

The woman in apron dress puts her hands on her chest and performs a courteous bow.

"Please reflect upon having ignored my warning. Please regret having turned this Klinge into your enemy. And, it's very likely His Majesty the Demon King who ordered you to make a move on the city of my master Renya Kunugi, but please curse His Majesty for your doom."

Even while forming a smile with her mouth, an indignation that makes everything that looks into her eyes freeze is oozing out of her.

The woman in apron dress smoothly informs them,

"It will likely result in you guys realizing today how deeply compassionate an instantaneous death in itself might be. How gentle death might be. And you will probably understand wonderful it is to be granted death even without asking for it."

"What are you saying..."

The woman's words sounded like a resonant song.

The female demon, who started to open her mouth to ask as she didn't understand the meaning, notices how the fingers of the previously stabbed male demon move with a twitch, and turns pale.

"Y-You d-don't say..."

In front of the female demon, who tries to strongly deny the words which popped up in her mind, the man, who should be dead, raised a scream.

"Ouwwwwch!? W-Why!? Why am I not dead!? Even though the knife is still stuck in my head!? Even though it hurrts so much! Why haven't I died!?"

"Something like that...it should have been a fatal wound..."

"K-Kill me...please kill meeeee! I can't bear this paaaaain!"

The other three stare with widened eyes at the man who's rolling around while blocking the gaping hole on his forehead with his hands.

Each time the man turns over, blood and something muddy spill out of the open hole, but there's not the slightest indication for the man to be about to die.

The male demon writhes in agony while blood streams out of both eyes that have turned into mere dark brown cavities.

Without understanding just what's happening in front of their eyes, the demons shifted their attention towards the woman in apron dress. At that point they notice the faint, red light across the whole wall of Klinge behind that woman.

If anyone of the demon army flew right above Klinge, they would witness various repeatedly blinking diagrams being drawn across the streets of Klinge which was bordered by a crimson phosphorescence.

"There are three composed spells that make use of Klinge's City-Class Sorcery Array."

The woman says while raising three fingers.

"The first, a barrier. On top of possessing a strength that allows to cover the whole battlefield and that doesn't allow anyone get away, it's a barrier for the sake of not letting any of the internal circumstances leak to the outside."

The woman lowers one finger.

"The second, maintenance. The spell's name is <Temporary Immortality>. One cannot welcome death within this barrier. No matter what might happen, the soul will stay shackled to its body."

She lowers yet another finger.

"The third, alignment. It's a spell for the sake of preparing the same environment inside the barrier as the one I created in the basement of master's castle."

She lowers her last finger and tightly grasps her fist.

"Now then, you probably wonder just what I did, right?"

The woman opened her clenched fists, clapped her hands together in front of her chest once, suddenly spreads them, and asks while tilting her head to the side, but there's no one in this place possessing an answer to her question.

For a short while the woman waited for anyone answering while maintaining that posture, but once she realizes that there won't be any answers, she returns to her formerly upright posture while sighing.

"Time's up. Let's handout a punishment."

Suddenly several sorcery arrays appear on the surface of the wall emitting a red phosphorescence.

"A sorcery attack, huh!?"

The demons deploy defense magic at once.

Once the woman swung a finger without minding their reaction, the manifested sorcery arrays spit out countless light spheres.

Seemingly not possessing any considerable power, they were repelled or disappeared after touching the defense magic deployed by the demons, but the orcs, who don't own any decent measures against sorcery, have no means to defend themselves.

Orc bodies, which were directly hit, are torn to pieces. As flesh and blood continue to fly around, bewildered voices start to spread among the orcs.

The orcs, who were injured to a degree that they should obviously have died, continue screaming while exposing their wounds without dying.

"Pain, suffering, sadness and resentment. It's possible to easily use such negative emotions as mana."

With faintly blushing cheeks and an entranced look, the woman watches how some orcs roll over while scattering their intestines, how others wriggle like worms after having their limbs plucked off by light spheres, and how still-unhurt orcs let their eyes wander around looking for a way to escape while twisting their faces in terror.

"As it appears that the alignment of the environment went well, the Putry-chan below will be full of joy."

"What the heck..."

"It's fine even if you don't understand in particular. Now then, I guess I should welcome you all properly?"

The woman pinches the skirt of her apron dress and bows while depicting an elegant drape with the hem.

Her conduct is perfect and beautiful.

「いらっしやいませ皆様。私の餌場へ。
クリンゲ防衛機構のうちの一つ、
簡易地獄炉へようこそ」

エプロンドレスの女性は、
そのドレスのスカートをつまみ、
裾に優雅なドレープを描かせつつ礼をする。
その動作はあくまでも完璧かつ美しい。

「殺せ！ あの女を殺せーっ！」

号令と呼ぶには
あまりに悲痛な叫びが戦場に響き渡る。
その声に弾かれるようにして、
魔物の軍勢が進軍を始めた。



"Welcome, everybody. To my feeding grounds. Welcome to the simple hell furnace, one of Klinge's defence mechanisms. Come on, please dance, everyone. You will be alright until your soul dries up completely. We have plenty of time. After all you won't be able to die, even if you want to. You won't be able to die, even if you try to!"

Her smile changed into laughter.

Right now, right here a predation that reversed attackers and defenders was about to begin.