

Chapter 176 - It seems to be a Temporary Coming Together

"A supply of food and goods for the dragonoids? Umm, well, it's not impossible ~no. But, what are you going to do about the path to bring it in~ no?" (Frau)

"We will continuously use the transfer gate. The expenses will be covered by their side. It looks like they will be paying with the currency circulating on the dragonoid's continent. Even without being able to carry it in all at once, I think it will somehow work out if we diligently transport it in smaller parts...umm, Frau?" (Renya)

"Considering the expended mana and the cool-down time, it's a transportation method with an extremely bad efficiency ~nano. But, if he says it can't be helped, then it must be so ~no. Not only do I feel it will only be possible to achieve an efficiency that would resemble having all of it carried by large dragons, but it also will overwhelmingly lose to a transfer gate in regards to speed, but...oh, you called, master ~no?" (Frau)

Frau had lowered her eyes on the document written by the chairman of the Dragonoid's Witenagemot, an organization Frau doesn't care about at all, and was reading its contents. Upon hearing Renya's somewhat reserved voice, she raised her eyes. She had checked every nook and cranny of the document whether it included some traps or holes in regards to the various transportation agreements and methods of payment, but due to the clear contents being so faultless and simple that she felt let-down, she instead became worried and read the document many times over. Because her name was called in the middle of that, her reflexive response felt close to being flat. Even while flustered in her mind, she kept her expression calm and faced Renya.

"I feel sorry for burdening you with troubles once again, but...it looks like you're unhappy about something?" (Renya)

"Gunuuh..." (Frau)

Once she tried to swallow down the words she was about to unintentionally voice out, they turned into something like a weird groan. Frau blushes and slightly averts her eyes from Renya's face. If she's asked whether she's displeased, she cannot help but confirm. That's Frau's current mental state.

Because the dummy puppet, which she had created by investing quite a bit of time and money, had been completely destroyed, Frau believes that her sullen mood might be only natural, but showing that displeasure to Renya, who doesn't know the circumstances, is a failure as a maid.

As for the defensive battle of Klinge, Frau only told Renya's group that they repelled the enemy army by using a sorcery array covering the whole city which used the mana Frau had squeezed out of Renya.

Since she would also be troubled if they were to investigate it, she included two pieces of dummy information about the city-class sorcery array: a barrier covering the whole city, and a function to reduce everything to ash which approaches the city.

She pretended that they somehow managed to repel the monsters by charging lots of Renya's mana into those two functions.

In reality Frau thinks that it might actually have been possible to repel the enemy army with just those two functions.

Her not having used them is merely a matter of her own preferences.

Regardless of that, as she couldn't falsify the parts about an offshoot of the demon king having slipped into the enemy army and its battle with Frau's dummy, she mostly reported the truth to Renya.

The reason for her being unable to deceive him about those parts is Frau's suicide bomb technique at the very end.

That one blow contained almost half the mana she had exploited from Renya.

Since she used the remaining half to initially start up the sorcery array and maintain the hell furnace, Frau threw her biggest, instantaneous firepower into the mix at that point in time, but it also resulted in her successfully killing the demon king's offshoot.

Given that she simply felt that it wouldn't be any good if even the slightest part of that corpse were to be left behind, Frau unleashed an amount of mana capable of completely eradicating it, but in exchange, Frau's dummy got destroyed, and a huge hole with a diameter of several meters and a completely unknown depth was created at the place where Frau's dummy went off.

If she had only made the dummy explode, considerable damage would have likely spread to Klinge which was really close to the spot.

As Frau apparently considered that possibility as well during the battle, it resulted in a big hole exactly because Frau focused all its explosive power only into the vertical direction, but as they don't really know just how deep the hole's bottom might be even after trying to examine it with the <Probe> spell, a fence and a notice board stating "Danger! Don't approach!" have been set up so as to avoid the possibility that anyone would approach the hole carelessly and fall inside.

Her being unable to leave out the attack by the demon king's offshoot is owed to the existence of this hole, and because Frau couldn't come up with another likely reason.

Frau expected that she would be scolded by Renya for releasing magic at a level that could very likely cause large damage to the city, but after listening to her story, Renya revealed a slightly troubled smile, and limited it to only caressing Frau's head.

Speaking of why Renya could come back to Klinge: It's of course because a direct transfer gate from the dragonoid city to Klinge had been opened.

The Dragonoid's Witenagemot, which had been ordered to secure a path for bringing in the relief supplies, agreed to the establishment of a direct transfer gate without complaining or hesitating this late in the game. The gate itself was established through a construction at top speed while driving the engineers on to use all the stamina and abilities they could muster, regardless of day and night. Due to this, Renya became the one possessing a transfer gate which is the closest to the Dragon Den among the humans, but Renya doesn't care about that at all, and only perceives it as trivial information.

"Anyway, the priority is them being able to eat something. It seems like the dragonoids lost a considerable amount of food in the several battles so far. I don't care about the soldiers or the Witenagemot, but the townspeople starving is something I don't really want to watch." (Renya)

According to Renya, the Witenagemot, which was allowed to retreat from the frontline without making any decent moves themselves, and the soldiers, who apparently were unable to carry out a normal defensive battle, are not worth it to receive favors at the same time as the citizens.

As for the soldiers, he believes there's some room left as he pities them a bit seeing as it might be related to the incompetence of their superiors, but as for the Witenagemot, he only feels that they should demonstrate their efficacy by coming up with one or two ingenious ideas how to reverse the situation if they don't want to starve.

But, because the citizens bear no kind of responsibility for this war, and are merely victims, Renya felt sympathy for them.

Renya considered starvation to be terrifying.

Given that he didn't have any knowledge as to why he thought it to be so, he thought that it might be remnants of the memories, which were apparently completely erased when he came to this world, or that it might be related to him harboring a strong desire for delicious food, but either way, Renya feels scared of starvation.

That's why he believes that he has to at least send the food quickly as part of the relief goods.

"The food we can send immediately are...<Elven beans-like things>, <Aren't those actually elven beans? things>, <It would be really great if it were elven beans things>, and <It's not impossible to regard them as elven beans things> ~nano." (Frau)

"Oi...?" (Renya)

"It's a joke ~nano. Your face is scary, master ~no." (Frau)

Due to Renya bringing his serious looking face close while speaking with a low, subdued voice, Frau hurriedly apologizes and waves both hands.

Of course she said those words with the intention to making a joke, but apparently having pierced a soft spot of Renya more than she had expected, Frau panics.

"Putting the joking aside, we have plenty of elven beans on stock ~no." (Frau)

"So you're saying there's only beans?" (Renya)

"I think they will be happy being able to eat anything ~no. Ah, no, master your face is really scary ~no. I'd like you to not put pressure on me since we will send other goods as well ~no." (Frau)

Frau, who sensed that Renya's look had become grim, immediately takes out a piece of paper from a pocket of her apron dress, and quickly scans it.

It's a list of the goods in Klinge's warehouses which she had investigated in advance.

Renya thinks that she should have taken it out and talked about it first if she possesses something like that, but seeing as Frau is more or less categorized as fairy, she apparently had a preference towards pulling pranks or derailing a talk.

"Grain would be slightly difficult after all ~no. Even Klinge mostly depends on buying it. As for meat, quite a considerable amount has been swapped from your inventory to the warehouses, so we can earn a good sum of money with this and beans, but...we are also running short on seasoning ~no. There's nothing left over there ~no?" (Frau)

"Salt at the most. To begin with, seasonings are fairly expensive, so it's nothing one would store in great quantities either." (Renya)

Since it has reached the point where all kinds of seasonings can be obtained in Klinge without much hassle, one wouldn't notice unless told, but if you speak about typical seasonings in this world, it will be centered around salt or vinegar. Other seasonings aren't used much.

Renya's favorite seasonings, miso and soy sauce, are products of the elven country, which mostly don't appear on the markets in the human countries. Even the blackish lumps, which is sugar that hasn't been processed properly, is treated as high-class seasoning, and nothing that commoners would get to taste.

"Klinge's emergency stores are abnormal ~no. Yet, if you consider the circumstances, it's not an amount allowing us to send many goods to other cities ~no." (Frau)

'Renya doesn't want them to starve, but the point of him thinking that he might give them delicious food if he's giving them food anyway doesn't really seem all that realistic', Frau thinks in her mind. Considering that their territory has been invaded quite deeply after them losing repeatedly on top of them being in the middle of a war, it shouldn't be difficult to fill their bellies so that they won't starve as long as it's a reasonable quantity, even if Klinge can't provide anything besides salt, beans and meat.

It would be troublesome if they were to request taste, quality and variety.

"It sure fits your character, master ~no. ...That's why it's hard for you to bluntly refuse ~no." (Frau)

"What?" (Renya)

"I was just talking to myself ~nano. I plan to provide seasonings at a level that the food quality won't drop for the residents of Klinge ~no." (Frau)

"Sorry. I keep asking you unreasonable things." (Renya)

Renya looks apologetic.

'If you're aware of it yourself, I'd like you to at least compromise a bit ~nano', Frau thinks.

"We will send over the meat and beans first ~no. Putting aside the quality, our first priority will be to avoid starvation ~no. The rest will follow little-by-little while watching the situation ~no. I'd like you to compromise on that much, master ~no." (Frau)

"Understood. That's inevitable." (Renya)

'If I ask for too much, it will become limitless. If Frau says that this is the limit, she must be right', Renya yields.

"We have so much money that we could sell it....but people are starting to become reluctant about selling goods, as expected." (Frau)

The fact that the war against the demons has begun is an information roughly known on all continents existing in this world.

Once such news spread, the merchants handling food-related goods will hesitate to sell their food, causing a declining amount of food on the market.

"We will somehow raise the productive capability of Klinge...but that will still require time ~nano." (Frau)

"Eh? Such a big variety of produce was cultivated here?" (Renya)

As far as Renya knows, only elven beans were cultivated inside Klinge.

Since this is something he ordered to be planted if there's open space, it's only natural for him to be aware of it, but it was the first time for him to hear about Klinge producing crops besides the beans.

"It's experimental ~nano. There are facilities in Klinge which raise various out-of-season crops such as the rice mentioned by you, master, with water containing mana ~no." (Frau)

Renya ends up wondering whether mana is really all that almighty, but in reality it's not as Renya imagines it.

Plants are just growing faster by amplifying their own growth power through precisely compiled spell formulae. If you ask whether plants will grow faster by pouring mana onto them, the answer will be no.

It would only produce strange, incomprehensible things polluted by mana.

The techniques in this area are Emil's specialty. It's not like Frau knows the concrete details either.

"I hear about that for the first. When did you build something like that?" (Renya)

"It was included in the initial design of Klinge ~no. In order to effectively use the space, we have guided the sunlight into the underground. It's the underground facilities that produce the crops. Once they are fully operational, Klinge will become a city capable of lasting through 10 years of a siege with its own supplies ~no!" (Frau)

The ones participating in the planning of Klinge were Frau and Emil.

Renya wanted to ask under what kind of battle assumption they had built such facilities, but right now he's thankful for those pointless, meticulous facilities.

"You said you're raising crops out-of-season with mana, right? What's necessary? Quantity or quality?" (Renya)

"Mostly quantity ~nano. But, since I have already assigned a reasonable amount of mana to those facilities, master's mana will be an oversupply ~no." (Frau)

A part of the water flowing out of the spring installation, which had been built in the basement of Renya's castle as camouflage for the hell furnace, has been used for this, but Frau doesn't intend to explain or even mention its existence to Renya.

"But..." (Renya)

"Master, it's not good to rush things ~no. Since I'm having it operate at full speed, I'd like you to give me some time ~no." (Frau)

In the first place, if Renya's excessive mana were to be poured on plants in its raw form, it's unknown what would grow out of it.

Frau racked her mind how she should persuade the somewhat unhappy-looking Renya so that he won't do something like pouring his own mana into a vine of the elven beans around here.