

Chapter 183 - It seems to be the Recapture Battle 3

"Margrave-dono!" (Albert)

The black snakes apparently released Albert's body right away. Albert stood up with verve and turned around to Renya, but Renya slowly shook his head after calmly watching him get up.

"If you're going to ask me to save the guys stuck in the trap, it's probably impossible." (Renya)

"No way..." (Albert)

"To cancel a barrier with an official procedure would likely take time. In the first place, we can't analyze it. I don't know whether it had been prepared ahead of time or was an impromptu feat of strength, but I have no clue where to start from, seeing as the barrier's scope is too wide. Of course it would be possible to destroy it with all might from our side, but..."

Renya, who looked at his right palm while softening his voice towards the end of his statement, continued with an apologetic feeling for some reason.

"Of course there's no way to rescue the soldiers within if I use sorcery to blow away the barrier and the traps on the ground altogether. I think you can also safely say that great damage would befall the city on the other side." (Renya)

Completely eradicating the traps and barrier deployed by the black armor didn't seem to be such a troublesome undertaking if Renya were to mobilize his mana and the knowledge he received from Emedra.

However, if he did that, it would be impossible for the soldiers inside the barrier to get away scot-free.

If it was a wall, he would just need to destroy that wall, and thus it would suffice if he released his sorcery at an angle that wouldn't allow for the soldiers to be hit, but to break the needle traps on the ground, it would be necessary to launch sorcery into the ground.

Telling the soldiers, who are writhing in pain after being stabbed by the needles, to dodge would be unreasonable. Moreover, a spell so weak that it wouldn't kill the soldiers would be very likely incapable of destroying the traps.

"A stalemate, it is." (Renya)

"That can't be!" (Albert)

"I will try to think about it, but...for starters, go and do something about that." (Renya)

What Renya pointed at was the rear guard of the dragonoid army, which had been outside the barrier's range, and had now fallen into a state of chaos due to the scenes taking place inside the barrier.

Although the deployed barrier was quite big, it apparently wasn't huge enough to also lock up the infantrymen who left before its deployment, and the rear guard that had been left behind in order to take care of the chariots and the cavalry.

"Have them calm down and retreat. If it were to turn into a situation where even they are eaten, it would get totally out of control." (Renya)

'In order to once again rally the soldiers, who are shaken up due to having lost their commander, Linus, all too easily, some kind of impact is probably necessary', Renya thought.
'Being called out by their hero, Albert, should do the trick, I think.'

"...Understood." (Albert)

Seemingly having instantly judged that he couldn't do anything else anyway, Albert showed a faint hesitation towards Renya's words, but immediately bowed his head and started running towards the troops that were falling into a state of disorder.

Renya, who followed Albert's back with his eyes, waited until Albert was a good distance away from them, and breathed out.

"Now then, that means we have to do something about this side, though." (Renya)

Honestly spoken, as Renya had been told to somehow keep the number of victims low, it was a chore for him.

On the other hand, if he were told that he didn't need to consider the victims, he had the confidence that he could handle it one way or the other.

"That's true, isn't it? I mean, after all that armor will devour many thousands or a good share of the dragonoids if we leave it alone as is. I really wouldn't want to take that thing on after everything is over and done with." (Emil)

While squinting, Emil stared at the spectacle on the other side of the barrier's wall.

Even as understatement, the scenes happening in there should be called a torture that would almost never take place in broad daylight, but it was nothing that would cause Emil's expression to freeze up.

Once Renya looked around thinking, 'leaving Emil aside, the other members will be certainly shaken by those scenes,' they generally had gloomy expressions and made sure to not look as much as possible by averting their eyes. Only Shion looked in the same direction as Emil without any visible change in her countenance while having a blank expression.

"Are you alright, Shion?" (Renya)

'No matter how I think about it, it's not a sight that would allow a woman to stay calm after witnessing it.'

Shion's words used the same, unchanged tone as normal in reply to Renya who called out to her after becoming worried that she might have been overwhelmed by her emotions.

"Mmh? Yeah, well...it might be a bit awful, I think, but Renya, you're behind me...besides..." (Shion)

She stopped talking for a moment, and after pondering how to phrase it, she dropped a bombshell.

"It's the citizens of another country?" (Shion)

Everyone turned startled looks at Shion who declared that without any hesitation. While having a bit of sweat running down his face, Renya asked what everyone was likely thinking.

"Hey, that's quite the awful thing to say, you know?" (Renya)

"Ehehe..." (Shion)

"Oy, that's no praise!? I'm really not praising you, okay?" (Renya)

Renya repeated to Shion, who grinned in embarrassment while scratching her head, to make doubly sure.

'Going by her reaction, I can't absolutely exclude the risk of her really misunderstanding this as me praising her if I don't tell her off properly.

"Let's shelve that issue for now." (Grün)

As it had turned into an atmosphere where it was hard to say anything, Grün cut in with a forcibly-calm voice.

Everyone except for Shion silently offered their gratitude towards Grün's consideration who apparently spoke up in order to somehow change the mood as one of the older people here, seeing as the other members couldn't bring themselves to speak up.

"In order to get closer to that black armor, we need to undo the barrier no matter what."

"That's reasonable."

Even if they could handle the the needles at their feet somehow by jumping or whatever, there would still be the obstacle of the violet light wall separating the inside from the outside.

"That's why I think that we should obediently start from searching for a method how to cancel that barrier, but what do you think?"

"It's a sound argument, but..."

Rona raises her hand diffidently.

"How long is that going to take?" (Rona)

"Let's see." (Emil)

Emil groaned while staring at the barrier.

"Going by my estimation...if it's at the level of a hole...around one hour." (Emil)

"You think there will be any survivors left inside by then?"

The answer was obvious, but Renya tried asking anyway, just to tentatively make sure.

"Ha ha ha. In your eyes people must be really amazing, Renya. If they suffer under such

circumstances for an hour, there's no way that there'll be any survivors, is there?" (Emil)

Emil smiled brightly, but Renya's expression became gloomy and heavy. It was a truth he understood even without being explicitly told so, but he couldn't help feeling the heaviness weighing down on him now that he heard the words frankly spoken out.

"It looks like it's impossible to keep the number of victims low, therefore...I suggest to resign ourselves to it and force our way through?"

Croire proposed.

It was a suggestion that would cause Albert to fly into a rage or try to prevent it if he heard about it as a dragonoid, but no matter how much they pondered about alternatives, it's not like some other ingenious plan came to mind.

"Margrave-sama? Shall I go?" (Kurz)

At the moment when Renya and the others started to think that it might be inevitable if they had no other options left anyway, Kurz suddenly suggested something like that.

"I feel like I can proceed through that need-laden path." (Kurz)

Renya looked at Kurz after being told so.

Currently Kurz was fully covered by a silver plate armor.

Its sturdiness was something Renya could guarantee since he had run various tests on it in the past. It was difficult to believe that Kurz' armor could be broken as long as he was in a state of having full control over his consciousness.

Even if it were to be destroyed for argument's sake, the Kurz inside the armor was in a state of being protected through the black mist generated by himself. It wouldn't develop into a situation where he would get injured right away.

If there was something to worry about, it was the armor that had quite a few gaps all over. It was to such an extent that it might get somewhat dangerous if the armor were to be penetrated through those gaps.

"Margrave-sama, if I deliver you to that black armor by carrying you, you will be able to somehow deal with it, right?" (Kurz)

"Hmm? Yeah...probably. Well, I will manage, I guess?" (Renya)

"Then things are simple, aren't they?" (Lepard)

Lepard interjected.

"We just gotta open a hole so that Kurz can pass through that wall, and have him charge in."

"What about me?" (Renya)

"Ain't it fine if you have Kurz carry you on his back? There ain't no way that it's gonna burden him to carry you alone in his armor state, is there?" (Lepard)

"No matter how close Renya gets to that armor, fighting without any place to step on will be impossible, don't you think?" (Rona)

Rona voiced her concern in a hurry, but Kurz cheerfully replied to that,

"Then Margrave-sama simply has to use me as foothold." (Kurz)

"Is that really alright? Even if we ignore those needles, once they touched that violet light...the snakes were erased. Didn't you feel any pain?"

Upon Renya asking while looking worried, Kurz pondered for a little moment.

"It hurt a bit, but not to the degree that I wouldn't be able to endure it. Without me, you won't be able to fight over there, will you Margrave-sama? In that case I will do my best." (Kurz)

"I see. Then allow me to rely on you." (Renya)

"Now that we have decided, it's better to get started soon. Leave the opening of a hole to us, okay?"

Lepard knocked his fists together, and Grün drew his two katana. Kurz beckoned Renya over, and once Renya got close, he crouched down with his back facing Renya so that it would be easy to get on.

"Being carried by you, Kurz, feels somewhat strange." (Renya)

"You're like a grandpa~!" (Kurz)

Small laughs came from the surroundings in response to Kurz who had probably said that with the intention of making a light joke, but just Renya alone pondered with a serious expression whether this would be how it would feel to be carried by one's grandson, while clinging to Kurz' back.

"I will hold you with something else since I won't be able to prop you up with my hands, okay~?" (Kurz)

Right after saying so, a black mist gushed out of Kurz' back. It didn't materialize as snakes, but started to support Renya's body by manifesting around his body as if gently running alongside it. It was the first time for Renya to be touched by that mist, but he felt like being wrapped up by a warmth that somewhat felt like steam, without any eeriness that would warrant any worries. If one considered it properly, those two priestesses had been stored away somewhere inside that mist, so there was no way for it to be something that caused one to feel chills or coldness, but since it also became a weapon to completely devour enemies and such at times, you could call Renya's worries justified.

"We're ready to go~" (Kurz)

"Alriiight, I guess I will put a little bit effort into it then!" (Lepard)

Lepard made his palms face each other as if holding something in front of his chest, creating a small space.

That stance was the one he had demonstrated a little while ago when using his big technique. The other members distanced themselves from Renya's group so as to not get caught up in it.

Next to Lepard, Grün took a stance with his legs in an L-shape, with his left leg bent in front and the other extended behind. At the same time he readied his two drawn blades into forming a straight line, with his left katana being in front at the height of his chest, and his right katana held above the solar plexus.

"Oh, nice, Grün. You sure look as if you gonna go with a big bang, don'cha?" (Lepard)

"It's a technique I'm not really keen to use, but it's a reliable method in this situation." (Grün)

"Who's going to start?" (Lepard)

"I will gladly let you make the first move." (Grün)

"Okay, leave it to me!" (Lepard)

The air was rumblingly converging in the space Lepard had created at this chest.

Lepard unleashed that cluster of air, which had taken a concrete shape after plenty of air had amassed, towards the barrier alongside a yell full of fighting spirit.



Once the air drill, which had even torn through an army, clashed against the barrier's wall, a strong gale blew into the vicinity with the wall swaying strongly.

The wall became quite distorted, but it didn't look as if the air drill would be able to penetrate it. While there was still some power left in the technique of Lepard, who clicked his tongue, the two katana readied by Grün cast a light of mana.

"These are the wings of the two sexes. They spread their wings in unity. Fly together and pierce through all creation!" (Grün)

The pair of blades, which had been lined up in one straight line, were clad in mana and turned into a single ray of light.

Once ordered by Grün who lightly crouched down in preparation of the impact, that light pierced into the part, where Lepard's big technique had hit the barrier, while leaving a shock behind which even Grün, who prepared himself for it, couldn't endure completely.

The wall, which had been largely warped by Lepard's technique, was hit by Grün's follow-up attack, and had countless cracks running across it.

However, it didn't go as far as it having a spot where it broke apart.

"Oy, that's a lie, right?" (Lepard)

"For it to endure the combined attack of two heroes..." (Grün)

If they had overcome the wall easily, it might have caused serious damage to the place on the other side of the wall.

Maybe such braking mechanism unconsciously came into play here. Or maybe the deployed wall was something that had been meticulously set up so that it could even stop blows powered by the heroes' strength.

While Lepard and Grün looked shocked due to the wall starting to break, but not getting destroyed completely, Kurz charged towards a crack in the wall with Renya on his back.

"It's alright, if it doesn't work with two people..." (Kurz)

The ramming attack by the black snakes of Kurz assailed the barrier's wall, which was about to repair itself, in order to not allow the wall to succeed.

While continuously unleashing snakes, which got repelled when they hit the wall, without giving up, Kurz raised his right fist overhead as he was keeping up his charging speed.

"Then you just have to destroy it with three people!" (Kurz)

The instant his fist struck the barrier, it was covered by black mist.

Immediately after Kurz' fist and the violet-shining wall clashed, a shrill, bursting sound, which seemed to cause mental discomfort to anyone who heard it, reverberated into the vicinity.

Renya reflexively covered his ears, but due to the unpleasant sound, which he could still hear albeit subdued, he furrowed his eyebrows and endured while gritting his teeth.

At the time when the barrier received the attack of the third hero, it was still small, but as expected, unable to endure the consecutive attacks of the heroes, the wall broke, and a small hole opened up, big enough for Kurz to barely pass through.

However, the spell which was forming the barrier was still active. It immediately started to repair the gaping hole, however faster than it could accomplish that, the charging Kurz trespassed inside

the barrier.

Countless needles sensed the foreign object and attacked from below.

They got repelled by the armor's surface, crushed by the armor's feet, and blocked by the black mist so that they wouldn't reach Renya. Meanwhile Kurz pushed his way towards the black armor, the source of this barrier.