

Chapter 185 - It seems to be the Recapture Battle 5

'It was a flash cutting across from the right to the left of the black armor's chest,' Renya believed. Him thinking that it 'was' such a slash stemmed from that blow having absolutely no feedback. Even after pondering afterwards whether he really unleashed it or not, it was a slash that didn't leave anything but a somehow ambiguous impression behind.

In the first place, when cutting something, the hands always would sense some kind of feedback of the object that had been cut. Renya didn't have even the slightest intention to blurt out "I cannot get enough from this wonderful feedback," like someone who was working as an assassin and had stepped into a hell from where they couldn't return any longer, but even so, without the feedback of cutting now that he cut the armor, it didn't feel real either.

That flash simply dug into the black armor's armor between the right elbow and shoulder, passed through the handle of the halberd in the black armor's hands, and exited at the left side. Even though that was all that happened here, anything and everything was torn apart with just that much.

The black armor's part above the line, where Renya's katana had passed through, continued to soundlessly slide off the lower part. The halberd had lost its support after being cut in two at the handle, succumbed to gravity, and fell to the ground alongside the black armor's two arms.

Even faster than the falling arms and halberd remains could hit the ground, largish needles, which were behind the black armor, were severed at the same height. Moreover, the wall of the violet barrier, which separated the inside from the outside, on the other side was cleaved apart. Seemingly having the sorcery structure itself broken, the severed needles were unable to maintain their shape as needles and vanished as dust. The cut barrier wall now allowed to see the landscape on the other side of the wall that had been deeply cut, but it began to slowly repair itself.

Renya didn't have the spare time to be surprised and wonder just what had happened. After all he was on a course of directly clashing into the black armor if he didn't do anything. And he knew that there was like no time left for that to happen because of his strengthening which exceeded his expectations by far.

In a state of being calm on the surface but somewhat panicking in his mind, Renya transitioned from the stance of having swung his katana slash completely through to placing his feet on the abdomen of the black armor that was standing stock still. Different from the time with Kurz, he kicked off the armor without holding back at all.

Causing a sound that was very unlikely to be produced when a human kicked an iron plate, Renya's body traced back the flight path he took to get here while being upside down, flying to the back.

Renya didn't have any interest in what would happen to the black armor he had kicked, but adding to the fact that Kurz' body, which served as his sole foothold, had slid back quite a bit, Kurz had gone down on one knee, seemingly having received a considerable impact. Renya grasped that Kurz wouldn't be able to move right away before the attacks by the black armor would start.

Renya judged that Kurz would be very likely unable to pick him up even if he were to try land elsewhere in that minute after cutting the black armor, and thus tried to return to Kurz by himself.

'If I were to land while still having some momentum left, I might damage Kurz once again.' With those thoughts Renya killed his momentum by revolving many times in midair, and landed on Kurz' shoulder.

"You alright, Kurz?" Renya asked while tapping Kurz' helmet with his palm after he got down on Kurz' shoulder.

With a slightly pained voice Kurz answered, "Margrave-sama...what was that just now? If it had been just me, I wouldn't have been able to endure it. Even quite a few snakes were torn apart..."

"No, I mean I just strengthened my body normally..." Renya returned.

Wondering whether he had made some mistake, Renya reviewed the knowledge he had received from Emedra, but even after re-thinking his information about strengthening a body with mana several times, all that his knowledge told him was "it's a technique to reinforce one's abilities by passing mana through one's body," and he couldn't find any mistake with his method of strengthening either.

"That's a normal body strengthening?" At the end of Kurz' line of sight was the black armor, which had been kicked flying by Renya. After having crashed into the barrier wall while thoroughly smashing the needles growing out of the ground and getting various other things involved alongside its path, a cloud of dust was now raising at its impact site.

The barrier wall, which had been widely cleaved open by Renya's slash, produced countless cracks at the part Renya had cut and the part where the black armor had impacted - apparently having turned Renya's attack into a double score - broke apart in small pieces before long, and vanished.

"It was reeeeeeally painful." Kurz stressed.

"Nuu...I did something inexcusable." Renya apologized.

As the wall separating the inside with the outside disappeared, Renya and Kurz could see how the troops of the dragonoids' rear guard, which had been on standby outside, started to advance in order to rescue the collapsed soldiers.

But, although the wall had vanished, the needles growing out of the ground were still present. They blocked the path of the advancing soldiers and made them stumble.

"The needles remaining despite the barrier having broken down means the spell formula is still active, or that a battle formation is left somewhere." Renya conjectured.

"Isn't that the spell caster?" Kurz pointed a finger while saying so.

The black armor, which had completely lost the part above its chest, was still trying to somehow stand up over there. Black chains spilled out of the armor's cut section while clinking. Although Renya and Kurz had anticipated as much, there was no sign of something like a person or similar having been stuffed in there.

"The chains are its main body?" Renya wondered.

"I think so? The sensation when I and the snakes hit it was the same for the armor, the weapon, and the chains, you know?" Kurz replied.

"I see? That means..." In front of Renya, who watched while reaching a certain possibility in his mind, the black armor's arms and helmet, which had fallen to the ground, lost their shape and vanished. They were absorbed into the violet light lines drawn on the ground, moved towards the black armor that had finally gotten up, and were absorbed into its body through its feet.

"It's regenerating after all, huh?" Renya concluded.

The armor's cut section swelled up, and once the overflowing chains were stored back away, the black armor's body was restored to its state before being cut without taking that much time. The halberd, which had been cut in two, returned to its previous state, and the black armor readied it once more while causing a grating sound of metal being scraped.

"Going by the template, it should have a core somewhere." Renya stated.

"And where would that be?" Kurz folded his arms and tilted his head to the side in confusion.

Renya didn't have any words to return to that question.

"Since it's bothersome, I will have its whole body disappear in one go..." Renya said in annoyance.

"Ahahahaha, Margrave-sama, even I know that punch line~" Kurz retorted in a carefree tone.

In response Renya lightly hit Kurz' helmet, which was next to him, with his fist in silence. That hit made a far nicer sound than he had expected, and although it was a light hit, Kurz staggered.

"I-I mean, isn't it the truth, Margrave-sama?" Kurz protested while holding the place that was hit, but Renya made him shut up with just his eyes.

"There are many things you mustn't say out loud even if you think them, Kurz." Renya admonished Kurz.

"That's too unreasonable, Margrave-sama~" Kurz honestly complained while rubbing the place that got hit, although it wasn't as though having his exterior hit would affect the inner Kurz since the armor was something Renya had created properly in Kurz's case.

Even while wondering that Kurz had become able to express himself to such an extent with a tone that seemed to somewhat plead for pity, Renya hit the helmet once more, forcing Kurz' attention towards the black armor.

Having completely finished restoring its body and weapon, the black armor was about to head towards Renya and Kurz with its halberd at the ready, but its movements were obviously slower than before being cut by Renya.

Renya, who comprehended that the act of cutting it apparently hadn't been completely pointless, felt relieved as he couldn't see such an effect on the black armor's parts visible from outside at all.

"I suppose that's a sign that we can defeat it as long as I chop it up continuously." Renya judged.

"Yeah~" Kurz affirmed.

"It's not really difficult if I can secure a proper footing, but well..." It was Renya's impression that the chains were fairly troublesome weapons, but if one excluded those, the black armor would be no more than a simple, dull, armor monster.

Exactly because he had such an impression, his irritation at the current situation, where it was difficult to land proper slashes as the ground had been covered with needles, became stronger, and he asked in annoyance, "In the first place, just what the hell is that armor anyway? Is it something

like the demon king's offshoot that attacked Klinge?"

"Even if you ask me...however, I somehow grasp that it's nothing overly pleasant." Kurz said while striking down the chain attacks that came flying with buzzing sounds towards the ground by intercepting them with the snakes.

Probably because the chains themselves had also lost in power compared to the initial attacks, they were extremely easily repelled or broken, albeit they should possess the same power as the snakes.

"Although they regenerated, they have become slightly weaker, haven't they? I will try passing mana through my katana in addition to strengthening my body, I think?" Renya played around with the idea.

"I wonder, which will be completely destroyed, the rear guard forces or the city of the dragonoids~?" Kurz retorted.

By just having swung his katana while having strengthened his body through sorcery, Renya performed an attack that not only cut the black armor but also the barrier's wall which had been a good distance away. As such Kurz was asking what tragedy would strike next if Renya were to let mana flow through his katana this time as well. Kurz expected that either the rear guard or the city would get mixed up in this, but because he voiced out his thoughts honestly, his helmet was once again hit by Renya in silence.

"In that case, with a single target spell like <Roaring Lightning>..." Renya tried to offer an alternative.

"How are you going to stop its feet?" Kurz countered with a question.

<Roaring Lightning> was a spell that let lightning strike down. Even if it had speed, it wasn't a spell that had much of an effect over an extended range. Originally it required the caster to chant and concentrate mentally for a fairly long time. According to Emedra's knowledge, it was a spell that wouldn't hit the target once its activation was sensed ahead of time unless something unexpected happened.

Since it actually was a spell causing lightning to strike down over a range of several meters at the same time of its activation, it wasn't that simple to evade it, but if it was someone with a high level of ability, they would just need to rush out of its effective area in the moment it activated, or if they had training in sorcery, they would have plenty of time to prepare a defense against lightning. Renya being able to handle that was owed he could simply release the spell without casting. Renya remained silent for a moment, wondering what he should answer at Kurz' reasonable question.

"Kurz, can you detain it?" Renya asked.

"I think I can, but..." Kurz replied but his voice fully gave away that he didn't want to do so if possible at all, directly transmitting Kurz' inclination to Renya without any need to make any guesses.

Renya wondered whether it had been such an unreasonable request, but Kurz' next words allowed him to somehow understand the reasoning, "Margrave-sama, my snakes would get dragged into your attack too..."

"That is..." Renya lacked a proper reply to that.

"It hurts quite a bit each time a snake is destroyed, you know? I don't want to experience something like that." Kurz clearly refused.

"Muu..." Renya couldn't imagine just how much 'quite a bit' might actually be, but even Renya could understand Kurz's point of not wanting to do it since it would hurt.

Renya didn't have any fondness of forcing others to do what they don't like. As he was pondering how he should detain that black armor, Kurz was still slapping down the chains unleashed by the black armor.

"Is it bad for me to defeat it normally?" Kurz inquired.

"Can you actually bring it down?" Renya doubted.

"Now that it has weakened to such an extent, I think I will be able to manage one way or another. But, I wonder, just what the heck is that katana of yours that caused damage which the armor can't heal with just one slash~?" Being told so by Kurz, Renya lowered his eyes at the drawn katana.

For Renya it was an item he didn't spend much time on thinking about except for its extremely sharp cutting ability, its extreme sturdiness, and moreover it being mostly maintenance free. 'Of course I have no intention to handle that katana, which possesses the capability to withstand my usage, roughly to begin with since it appears to be something that can't be readily obtained in the world over here. From the start the act of someone, who handles katana, treating their weapons without care normally deserves certain death', Renya believed. 'However, as a tool is no more than a tool in the end, there's no point in being stubborn about this part either. As a matter of fact, after he obtained the katana, he tried to examine it with the help function and his appraisal skill, which he hadn't used much most recently, but both only returned <Appraisal impossible>.' Renya didn't bother any further with it, believing that such things exist in this world as well, but now that he was seriously asked by Kurz, it certainly wasn't as if he didn't wonder just what that katana might be.

"That question...let's shelve it for now, okay? I actually don't really know the answer to that either." Renya admitted.

"Then it can't be helped~. After all even you don't know, Margrave-sama." Kurz gave up on it readily.

If it concerned knowledge, Renya believed that Croire or Grün definitely knew much more than himself, but for Kurz Renya's judgment and knowledge seemed to be the best.

"Well then, Kurz, can I ask you to get rid of that?"

"That's fine, but you're going to stay there, Margrave-sama?" Kurz asked.

'It might be slightly difficult to fight against that black armor while I'm still on his shoulder.'

Considering it like that, Renya stared at the empty air, lightly kicked off Kurz' shoulder, jumped, and sat down in the air.

"Margrave-sama, wow~! How are you doing that?"

"I hardened the atmosphere with <Manipulation>...ah, no, I created an invisible bag with sorcery, turned it into a simple foothold by filling it with air, and sat down on it," explained Renya.

"You didn't need my shoulder?" Kurz wondered whether there might have been no necessity to borrow his shoulder if he could create a foothold himself.

Renya smiled at that and denied it, "No, if it's at the level of sitting on this, it can handle it somewhat, but it lacks the strength to serve as a stepping stone for me."

'I wonder whether that spell is different from the one that restrained Rubydra's body,' Kurz thought, but didn't voice it out. It's because he believed that Renya must be right if he said that a foothold created with this method would be insufficient to be used in battle.

"I see! I'm off to somehow deal with that black armor!"

"Please do. I will see if I can't do anything about this needle spell." Renya said.

There was some knowledge about canceling spells included within Emedra's knowledge. Carefreely thinking that he might find at least one spell that would work against this as long as he searched for it, Renya apparently entrusted Kurz with the fighting, deciding to devote himself to his own speculation.

Once he smiled at Kurz from above his air bag and waved a hand, he raised the height of his sitting location a bit higher so he wouldn't become a hindrance for Kurz, folded his arms, and started to let his eyes wander.

"Then..." Kurz made the mana in his body flow towards his entire body, his armor, and the black mist he was manipulating himself.

While the black armor put itself on guard, apparently because of its wariness due to the risen presence of mana, Kurz broke into a smile inside his silver armor without anyone being able to see it, and muttered to no one in particular, "Now, I guess it's time for lunch."