

Chapter 191 - It seems to be the Beginning of the Incident

It's a slightly sudden story, but the Trident Principality has access to the ocean.

If one considers the Trident Principality's structure, it should be obvious that it's very natural.

Because becoming a shield against the Miasma Forest and the demons lying beyond would be the goal of a country in that location, there were no complaints about the event of Trident Principality's foundation.

Or maybe it was very popular and normal to doubt whether a country could be created in such a dangerous place.

The Miasma Forest itself is a forest boasting an abnormally vast size, even if based on Renya's knowledge. It's far bigger than any of the countries on the human continent.

Its width covers the entire area ranging from the continent's northern extremity to its southern tip.

Conversely, returning to the story about the Trident Principality, it's a state that was created or was allowed to be created as a shield against the Miasma Forest. Hence, there was no reason for the Trident Principality's width to be inferior to that of the Miasma Forest.

In other words, the Trident Principality is a state with its size from north to south being far bigger than the one from east to west.

Of course it's impossible for a single noble to manage that long border. The number of nobles governing territories situated at the boundary line between the Trident Principality and the Miasma Forest reaches two digits if you include Margrave Renya Kunugi.

However, if one were to ask whether all of those nobles at the boundary line were functioning as shields of the principality against the Miasma Forest, anyone would deny it.

For some strange reason most of the invasions through the Miasma Forest take place at the continent's central area. It almost never happened that the demon armies invaded from the northern or the southern edges.

Based on that, the nobles at the northern and southern tips served their purpose as long as they governed their territories while suppressing the damage of somewhat big monster hordes.

By the way, the one governing the territory in the center of the continent was no one else but Renya.

This place had been given to him purposely. Renya, who knew this fact, has been harassing the archduchess by sending long, ridiculing letters composed of fervent complaints.

Leaving that aside, there is no connection to the ocean in the Kunugi Margraviate because of its location.

Furthermore, generally rivers gain in width the closer they get to the ocean. Hence there was no big river in Renya's territory.

In that case, one might wonder whether it wouldn't be extremely difficult to secure water, but since sorcery tools that generate water, springs with copiously gushing, clear water, and rivers with a reasonable width existed all over the place, it was possible to secure water without much trouble by creating, drawing or transporting water from those places.

However, the number of fish in such water sources is low.

The rivers' streaming speed was high for some reason, resulting in the fish being small and thus not really being suited as food.

A little amount was inhabiting springs and similar, but probably because clear spring water had a low amount of nutrients, the fish living there were mostly small as it didn't seem to be an environment where big catch could live.

In short, the fish circulating on the market in the Kunugi Margraviate were mostly fish that had been brought in from other territories. Their variety and freshness couldn't possibly satisfy Renya. This was a very grave problem for Renya.

It was such a serious issue to him that it drove any serious thoughts about the demon king, the

demons, or the monsters out of his head.

"That being said, isn't there some good plan on how to deal with this?" Renya asked.

It was Shion's place - something unexpected in the eyes of the other members - where Renya went to look for a consultation.

But to Renya this wasn't unexpected at all since either Shion or Mayria were the best candidates for this kind of topic.

After all they were both daughters of the Trident Principality's archduchess.

Renya estimated that the two might possess plenty of information on such matters.

"Renya, I wonder what to think about me being the one to tell you, but I think there are other issues you can wrack your brain over such as the demon king or the demon's army led by him, despite them staying docile for the moment." Shion brushed him off.

"That side will work out one way or the other. In the worst case, I will somehow deal with it. However, this problem is one I can't do anything about, albeit having pondered about it quite deeply." Renya insisted.

"No...umm, for the demon king's existence to be inferior to the issue of establishing a route for procuring marine products..." Shion muttered with a stupefied look after having been asked for consultation by Renya, who earnestly brooded whether there might be some good method to obtain marine products while groaning in her room.

"For me it's a big problem." Renya stated powerfully.

"O-Okay? Well, in that case...if you make contact with the nobles at the sea through mother...but, since the ocean is quite far away, there are no methods of circulating the goods, are there?" Shion considered the issue.

Even if he were to obtain marine goods, it would be meaningless as long as there's no means to transfer them over a long distance.

The simplest method was to transport marine goods that wouldn't easily rot by drying or smoking them, but Shion somehow grasped that this might not be what Renya was looking for.

"Don't tell me you're going to use a transfer gate for the sake of your own gourmand desires, are you?" Shion grilled him.

"Even I hesitate to use that method." Renya answered.

It wasn't impossible. After all Renya possessed a considerable amount of funds and an incredible quantity of magic stones. Assets that wouldn't run out even if he were to make the transfer gate in his own city operate 24/7 for an entire year.

However, that would result in becoming a hindrance to the people using the gate for other purposes.

A transfer gate is used after switching the channel to the destination. Normally it's already good to possess one such device, and two is mostly regarded as having many.

Even the transfer gate in Klinge has only one gate.

In short, it's specified so that it can't be used by others as long as someone is using it.

Besides, even if he were to obtain a certain amount of marine products by using that method, the

costs for the transport would be fairly high, making it difficult to circulate them among the common people.

Of course it was possible to ignore the costs and distribute the food while accepting to go in the reds, but that would be somehow different from what Renya was intending.

It's not like he wants to donate the marine products.

It would be pointless if there didn't exist a distribution channel which was continuously available even after the trade became independent from Renya.

Renya doesn't intend to spare any effort on paving the road in the beginning, but it's unthinkable for him to take care of it forever.

Once it developed into something that could also be done by others, he would quickly leave it to people he can trust. Saying that he wants to spread marine products to this side so that he can buy them up himself is Renya's honest notion.

"Even if it's you, you can't do anything about distances, can you?" Shion inquired.

"There is a method to handle that part somehow." Renya refuted.

The information that it's possible to transport personnel on the scale of a corps as long as one could create something like a path through a precise mana circuit wasn't anything he could shout from the rooftops, but Renya had obtained that piece of information from Emil who assumed that to have been the movement technique of the demon army.

That doesn't mean that it's a method exclusive to demons in particular. It's also not related to requiring some kind of special component.

In other words, it's a technique that can be used even without being a demon as long as one knows the method how to construct those paths.

Renya thought that he would try to obtain information related to the construction method from Emil, but once he very carefully examined his own knowledge, he found out that the construction method was properly recorded in the sorcery knowledge he had received from Emedra.

Renya was constantly grateful towards Emedra for having given him such a truly great present.

"But, that means...some kind of facility continuing from Klinge to a territory with access to the ocean would become necessary...and as far as I know, such a facility doesn't exist, does it?" Shion countered.

"You just have to build it if it doesn't exist." Renya declared without hesitation.

"Pardon?" Shion asked again, sensing something unbelievable in Renya's words.

Renya, the one who said them, indifferently repeated the same words while donning a curious expression as he wondered whether he had said anything weird, "You just have to build it if it doesn't exist."

"Just build, you say..." Shion mulled while trying to form her very own reasoning.

Because Shion was aware that she isn't overly smart and doesn't know many things, she pondered whether Renya might know something important she has possibly failed to notice.

But, after contemplating it so much that it looked as if smoke might rise from her head, Shion stopped brooding over it, fixedly stared at Renya's face and curtly said, "It's impossible, no?"

"Where there is a will, there is a way." Renya objected.

"I'm telling you, it's absurd. What do you think just how far away the ocean is?" Shion asked back.

According to Shion's somewhat unreliable knowledge, it was such a distance that it would take a carriage seven to ten days at full speed to reach the ocean, even if it advanced north or south in a straight line from Klinge.

The Forest Labyrinth said to be used by the demons was a structure spanning over a far longer distance than that, but she didn't know who might have created it, and she also didn't know at all how much time had been necessary to create that place to begin with.

However, even though such a distance would be much shorter than the Forest Labyrinth's extent, Shion knew that - assuming someone tried to create something similar - it would require an amount of funds dazzling one's eyes and time that would make one faint.

"No matter how abundant your funds might be, it's not a project that could be handled by a noble of a single country. I think Mayria can make a more detailed calculation in regards to the construction time and the necessary funds than I could, but rather than doing something like that, it would be still more realistic to build an exclusive transfer gate, wouldn't it?" Shion commented.

"I have the manpower." Renya clearly asserted, appearing confident.

Feeling a strangely bad premonition because of Renya's bold attitude, Shion tried asking, "Just for reference, what kind of manpower is it?"

"Look, there are at least three lively people who don't know what to do with their stamina and abilities." Renya replied.

Being told so, Shion thought of the four heroes.

'Certainly, in the current situation with the demon's movements having quieted down, the heroes almost never get their turn, and leaving their abilities aside, they likely have more than enough stamina as well.

However, just as Shion was about to think, 'It's not four', she thought back on Kurz.

'No matter what Renya might say, he doesn't seem to have any intention to make Kurz, whom he favors, do such heavy work.

"Let me confirm for the time being, but what are you planning to have the heroes do, Renya?" Shion inquired.

"Public works. Mainly digging a hole." Renya answered curtly.

"Don't do it, okay? I beg you, give up on that, please." Shion pleaded.

Even under normal circumstances there had been complaints from all over the continent by him just having assembled all heroes.

Although those have mostly died out by now, there's almost no doubt that those complaints will resurface if it's revealed that those gathered heroes are used for public works.

And, Shion couldn't come up with a method how to extinguish those resurfaced complaints except forcibly retracting the reason since the fault would completely be with Renya this time.

"H-However, in that case the manpower for creating the path..." Renya stammered, obviously troubled.

"Let's think of another method?" Shion cracked a smile, not allowing him to refuse.

"In the first place, although you might say digging a hole, it's impossible to not go through the territories of other nobles, isn't it?" Shion argued.

"It won't be exposed as long as it's an underground path, right?" Renya replied.

"Yeah, sure...you could say that, but..only for the time being, no?" Shion said.

Although only vaguely, Shion believed that it might be somewhat difficult at the present point in time to change or stop Renya's line of thinking, and thus decided to slightly alter the direction of the discussion.

"Isn't it fine to do all this after first going to the ocean and check whether it's worth all the trouble? Renya, you're a Lost. You have never seen the ocean in this world, have you? Isn't it possible that there might be no marine products you like?" Shion reasoned.

"...That's yet another argument completely lacking any dreams and ambitions..." Renya pulled a slightly sad face.

Seeing that, Shion followed up in a hurry. It's because she thought that it might certainly hurt Renya's mood to have his preferences denied from the get-go, but bulling through with one's preferences was a troublesome matter, too.

"It's just an example. An example, okay? On the contrary, there might possibly be marine products there which stir the wish in you to transport them to Klinge even if it's slightly unreasonable. Isn't it worthwhile to devise means how to get it done after you discovered such goods?" Shion asked.

"You...have become glib, haven't you..." Renya said half naturally and half astonished.

Shion averted her eyes while pretending for it to be natural, "I will refrain from commenting on that. So, which do you prefer, Renya, north or south?"

"Definitely north. Somehow I've got a hunch that there are more delicious things in the north." Those were words lacking any basis or even a mental image, but Renya replied immediately.

Shion nodded, "I got it. I will contact mother for a bit and try asking her about a noble who possesses a territory in the north and doesn't seem to have troubles with us staying there."

"I see. I suppose I will wait for the reply then." Renya answered.

'First of all, we must look for a place that accepts an investigation. In regards to that it's the easiest way to get information from the archduchess through Shion.

Deciding that course of action, Renya was about to return to his room, but suddenly stopped.

Once Shion looked again at Renya, who had stopped moving, Renya turned around and asked, "How about digging a path below the Miasma Forest?"

"Hmm, isn't it better to consult with Emil and Croire about this rather than me?" Shion suggested somewhat irresponsibly while thinking, 'I feel like the matter of having the heroes do public works itself is already set in stone. In that case I got to fully delegate that matter to someone who knows more about this field and might be able to avoid it more skillfully than me who's no suitable obstacle.'