

Chapter 192 - It seems to really be something like that

"It looks like there was a noble with a territory facing the sea who approved us visiting it."

A short while later Shion visited Renya's office while holding a bundle of papers in her hand. Renya admired her for the quick job, but given that the contact information originated from the archduchess personally, he somehow guessed that it might be very likely a result based on some kind of consideration. He didn't consider being treated preferentially as especially good, but there was no need to be antagonistic towards someone giving him such treatment either.

By the way, since the transfer gate was usually used for such exchanges over a long distance that put importance on speed, it became extremely expensive, but because the second choice would be to give up on speed to save costs, it depended on the situation which method would be chosen.

"The Baron Gordonal territory, which is located north of the Kunugi Margraviate, seems to exactly fit your requirements." Shion said.

"Tell me the details about Baron Gordonal." Renya asked with the feeling that it was likely written in the bundle of papers in her hand anyway, but Shion's next action surprised him somewhat.

She threw the bundle of papers on top of Renya's desk, and started to talk without looking at anything. Renya felt like he had been allowed to watch a bad student, whom he considered to simply be a cheater, suddenly start smoothly writing the answers of a test on the sheet without looking at anything. However, without knowing anything about those thoughts of Renya, Shion verbally provided the information he had asked for without any hesitation.

"Baron Gordonal is a noble who doesn't show up at the central government often. There are various factions among the nobles, but I haven't heard anything about this person belonging to any of them. Because his territory is far off and seeing how Baron Reicus, the family head, is an elderly man, mother doesn't summon him unreasonably either. Probably because of that, he doesn't have any outstanding achievements and it's said that he will very likely stay a Baron for a while. There are no special products in his territory. The agricultural produce is much the same as in other territories, but the harvest is slightly low. If judging it over-all, it's no mistake to consider it to be located in the lower-middle ranks as territory of the Trident Principality." Shion explained.

Renya moved to the next question while wondering whether marine products weren't acceptable as special products, despite only caring about it being a territory with access to the sea, "...What about Baron Reicus Gordonal?"

"He's an elderly baron with an age of 69. In his youth he was someone who quite flashily joined battlefields and territorial defense battles, but after he lost his wife, he quietly secluded him in his territory. It's said that he was one of the three top swordsmen in the Trident Principality. It was just for a short time in my childhood, but he was my sword master teaching me the basics of swordsmanship." Shion said slightly proudly.

Although Renya made sure to not show it on his face, he now somehow understood the trick behind Shion being able to smoothly recite the information.

'In short, it's because he's someone related to her.

He couldn't have helped but to doubt the mental capacity of someone, who didn't really know

anything about the person they declared to be their own master.

"Is he strong?" Renya asked.

"I'd like to confirm that, but...if one is next to you, Renya, that's a somewhat questionable point, isn't it?" Shion replied.

"Just regard me as an exception." Renya himself was aware that he could likely be called an irregular.

If you were to use such an irregular as criterion, the talks wouldn't lead anywhere.

"In that case, he's strong. Not only did he repel monster invasions on countless occasions while having a territory adjoining the Miasma Forest like you, he also has experienced fighting against demons." Shion replied.

"Against demons, you say? That's amazing, but did he defeat them?" Renya inquired.

"That is...if it's about having defeated them he did, but...quite a few of his subordinates and his wife, who was an excellent sorceress, passed away in the battle."

Seeing Shion saying that with a bitter voice while casting her face down, Renya broke in a cold sweat in his mind.

He tried asking about it while not taking it too seriously, but the outcome was much graver than he had expected.

However, if you were to consider it, demons were at the same level as dragons for normal people. If they met them, they had to be resolved to die on the spot. Although that wasn't what Renya himself felt about it.

That meant, even though he traded the lives of his subordinates and wife for it, the abilities of the baron, who returned alive after killing the demons, were tremendous.

Even while admiring that fact, Renya firmly decided to memorize that he mustn't broach this topic in case he were to meet with the baron.

"Renya, are you in there?" A bright voice that seemed to blow away the slightly gloomy atmosphere in Renya's office resounded.

The one who opened the door without knocking and entered was Emil in her usual getup that looked cold by just seeing it.

After vaguely sensing the mood inside the room and slightly tilting her head to the side in confusion, Emil indifferently asked Shion, "You're talking about breaking up?"

"We're not breaking up!" Shion denied with a loud voice.

"Well, we would need to go out in the first place, no...?" Renya retorted very calmly.

"Even though we've got a relationship of having kissed and a night visit..." Shion protested against his retort with teary eyes.

In response, Renya remembered, 'Come to think of it, that happened as well, didn't it? Moreover, if we're talking about kissing, it's something I did voluntarily, albeit it was for the sake of making her drink medicine.

As such it wasn't as though he didn't feel sorry towards Shion once she was told that he wasn't going out with her.

"Yeah, well I guess you're right there. Just now I said it without thinking it through. Sorry." Renya apologized after accepting it honestly.

Hearing his words, Shion's face became red, and she started to squirm while covering her face with both hands.

Emil had watched her state with eyes that made it obvious that she didn't give a damn at all, but seemingly having decided that things wouldn't proceed at this rate if she didn't interject, she addressed Renya while making sure to not look at Shion, who was earnestly agonizing, "I have finished the calculations you had asked of me, you know?"

"Let me have a look."

After gently pushing aside Shion, who was still wriggling her body, Emil spread out a paper, which she had suddenly taken out of nowhere, on top of Renya's desk.

"Just now, from where...?" Renya began to ask.

"It's said a girl's body has plenty of places to hide things, right? You didn't know?" Emil grinned broadly.

The paper unfolded on the table was a huge map of the circumference of the Kunugi Margraviate. The paper had a size that definitely wouldn't allow to tuck it in any gaps on Emil's body, no matter how one thought about it.

'She probably just said something so suggestive after having casually taken it out of a void storage, but I'd like her to say such things after considering what she might cause by voicing them out in case her words are taken seriously,' Renya thought.

"There's a place on you to hide something so big, Emil? I don't know where, but isn't that way oversized?" Once Shion, who returned from writhing around, exactly voiced Renya's thoughts although it wasn't as if she had read his mind, Emil's expression froze.

Shion responded to Emil, who turned her head in Shion's direction with a stiff motion as if causing creaking sounds, with a curious look, wondering whether there might be some kind of problem.

"Is there some kind of problem?" Shion voiced out her own thoughts.

"I-....It's you who are saying that...!? You!?" Emil was shocked.

"What are you doing Emil!? I just honestly stated my thoughts...bah, you thought that I would stay silent just because it's me, didn't you!?"

Deliberately averting his eyes from the two who had started to grapple while completely ignoring

his presence, Renya scanned the map spread out on top of his desk.

What was written on it were the calculation results of possible tunnel digging courses from the Kunugi Margraviate to the north, and the necessary depths in regards to the topography.

Renya didn't understand the details as he had absolutely no knowledge in that field, but as far as he saw from the parts he comprehended, a route through the Miasma Forest, which he had considered at one point, seemed impossible over the whole span.

If asked how about a route heading straight north in that case, it apparently couldn't be called an overly realistic plan either since it would result in the necessity to dig it quite deep so that it wouldn't be exposed to the other nobles, despite it having a shorter distance than taking a detour.



Renya smiled wryly after feeling that it was a very Emil-like way of drawing up a plan that used the premise of proceeding with the work in such a way that it wouldn't be noticed by the other nobles rather than consulting with them.

"Either way, even if we used the heroes' outlandish abilities, it appears to be difficult to actually implement it." Renya commented.

"I-Is it fine for me to ask why you had planned to have the heroes do it?" Albeit being in the middle of her scuffle with Emil, Shion asked Renya while holding the wrists of Emil, who had grabbed Shion's mouth on both sides and was trying to stretch it to the left and right, and was doing her best to not allow Emil to succeed.

"About that, what do you two think about the heroes?" Renya questioned the two while deciding to not think about the fact that two girls were grappling and that one of them was actually a demon for the time being.

Having her mind pulled off the scuffle for a moment due to Renya's words, Emil removed her hands from Shion's cheeks.

It created a situation of struggling for supremacy between Shion, who didn't let that opportunity slip and tried to push from her side, and Emil who resisted becoming the one being pushed.

"What...do you mean with that?" Emil asked back.

If Emil were to use her whole power as demon in this situation, she might have enough power to immediately twist and kill someone at Shion's level, but Emil apparently possessed enough discretion to know that she couldn't afford to do something like that, and thus forced Shion back with a strength within the range of common sense.

Shion was surprised by the fact of being outmatched by Emil who she considered to only be in charge of brain work, but in the instant she grasped that she had no chance of winning with strength, she retreated without going against the force of being pushed, causing Emil's upper body to pitch forward.

Before Emil was able to fix her posture, Shion decisively head butted Emil's forehead. A dull, thick sound reverberated inside the room.

"That barrier which I destroyed with one blow in the battle to recapture the dragonoids' capital, the heroes had to attack it three times to break it. What do you think about that, seeing as they will be the representative combat forces against the demon king's army?" Renya specified his question.

"That is...it can't be helped in various ways, can it?" Shion said.

Was there a difference in awareness between the one who head-butted and the one who was head-butted? Although both sides should be in quite a bit of pain, Shion, who recovered first, grabbed the head of Emil, who was staggering with a hand on her forehead, and carried out a follow-up attack by dishing out another head butt while gritting her teeth.

The first attack was forehead against forehead, but probably because Shion unleashed a head butt from a properly prepared stance this time, it turned into a head butt showdown between the crown of the head and forehead, Emil's expression as she fully received it with the crown of her head became befuddled for a moment.

"Renya, if we use you as comparison, everyone will fall behind, especially in regards to combat." Shion locked Emil's head with her arm at her right side as Emil had stopped moving

Emil raised a heartbreaking voice because of the headlock that put her into quite the dilemma. Renya was puzzled, wondering just where Shion might have learned such a technique, but it wasn't a topic he really wanted to pursue.

"If not compared to you, I don't really know about Albert-san, but I think it's fine to say that the other three are at a considerable level, you know?" Shion continued.

Emil, who had been immobilized by the headlock, put her arms around Shion's slender waist at the height of her belly with her head still being held by Shion in order to somehow stage a counterattack.

Once she put strength into her arms and constricted them just like that, it became Shion's turn to scream in pain.

This became the start of a contest of endurance between Emil, whose head was pressed tightly, and Shion who had her hips constricted.

"Although coming from the demon king, it was his terminal. In other words, they barely managed to break a barrier created by a part of the demon king. If they were to fight against the demon king's main body, I can't see them having any chance, much less to talk about fighting a close battle." Renya explained.

"Maybe they...will demonstrate some mysterious power...when all four of them are gathered?" Emil said while bearing the pain, but even she herself didn't believe in the existence of such power.

And even Renya, the recipient, only shook his head, "I listened to various stories and tried to search through books, but there wasn't a single account stating anything about the heroes having such a function." Renya denied her words.

"Okay? But, how's that connected to this time's matter with the public works? Rraahh!?" Emil, had her head ground, screamed out her fighting spirit, and lifted Shion's body after straining her arms.

Then she thrust her own knee forward, and dropped Shion's butt on her knee. It was a backbone splitter, or what's called atomic drop in pro wrestling.[efn_note]Have a look here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=930iQyPAzXI> [/efn_note]

This had apparently been quite effective. It made Shion throw her head back, but she barely resisted releasing her arm. As if returning the favor, she put even more strength into her arm, constricting Emil's head even further.

"Public works is extremely effective as training of your basic abilities. At the time when I trained Keith's unit in Kukrika I had them earnestly dig holes on the training ground because of the lack of a fitting opportunity to put that work to use." Renya replied.

"Ah, that, huh? I see. Certainly, that can certainly forge all parts of your body." Shion recalled.

"Having said that, no matter how much time we would have, it likely wouldn't be enough for the heroes to dig a hole from here to the ocean. In the first place, the heroes would die from that, wouldn't they?" Emil commented.

The continuous knocking sound, which was audible, was Shion banging Emil's head against the wall.

On the other hand, Emil gathered her strength once more after having received the xth blow, lifted up Shion's body, made a half turn as if turning around, and dropped Shion's buttocks on her knee once more.

Apparently unable to endure the second blow to her butt, Shion collapsed while holding her bum, but seemingly having a hazy consciousness after having her head hit and pressured repeatedly, Emil couldn't follow up with an attack against the fallen Shion.

After a short break, Emil, who had somehow managed to clear up her consciousness by shaking her head, and Shion, who revived from her butt pain with teary eyes, confronted each other.

"Give it a rest already, and go doooooown!" Shion yelled.

"As if I'm going to let you finish me off!" Emil screamed back.

The technique both sides used while shouting was mysteriously a running lariat.

Both hit the throat of the other at almost the same time.

Emil, whose body was light to some degree if you compared the two, made a vertical half rotation on the spot, and fell to the ground with the back of her head first.

On the other hand, Shion won out in strength, but the blow of Emil, which she received in the way of a counter, apparently damaged Shion's body's interior, and at the moment when she passed next to Emil, she pitched forward and collapsed, albeit not as flashy as Emil.

This was what you'd call a double knockout.

After confirming that both sides showed no sign of standing up, Renya rang the bell to call Frau for the sake of retrieving both, which also became the gong announcing the end of the match.