

Chapter 194 - It seems to be a Meeting with the Baron

'Out of consideration that suddenly driving into the town in Emil's special car would probably cause chaos among the citizens, we got off in a fairly distant place, and I stored the car away in my inventory. Even though there was no problem up to the point of entering the city on foot, I wonder, just what's going on with the situation right now,' Renya was baffled. 'It seems a safe bet to say that getting involved with nobles won't result in anything decent.'

"I welcome you after coming all this way from far away, Margrave Kunugi-dono. I am Reicus Gordonal, the one ruling this territory. I am pleased to make your acquaintance."

The one bowing his head alongside those well-mannered, polite words was a man with a wrinkled face, a well-shaped and trimmed beard, and all the white hair on his head neatly combed down. A smile that felt as though he's a good-natured old man was plastered on his face, but his blue eyes, which were vigilantly staring at Renya, gave a graphic account that Renya would be in for a lot of pain if he were to look down on Reicus as mere old man.

All of that was certainly important information, but because Renya had something he wanted to know above all else, he asked with a somewhat flabbergasted voice, "Why yes, thank you for your politeness. By the way, there's something I'd like to ask you if possible."

"What might it be, Your Excellency?" Reicus answered.

"I just visited to give you my greetings and planned to leave immediately after finishing, but I'd like you to tell me why we were brought to this place?" Renya inquired while looking down at his feet.

What he found there was a soil firmly hardened after being tread upon, and once he raised his eyes, he saw the blue sky spreading.

The vicinity was surrounded by a simple fence, and it was obvious at a single glance that this place had been created for a clear reason.

Emil amused herself outside the fence, Shion revealed a somewhat troubled expression, and Rona was strangely calm.

'It's funny how the expressions of each of them seems to express their respective expectations,' Renya ended up thinking unintentionally.

"Please allow me to explain, Your Excellency." Reicus courteously said while placing a hand on his chest.

While acutely getting a bad premonition due to his behavior, Renya urged him to continue by nodding.

"Her Highness Shion, who has been staying near you, is the daughter of Her Majesty the Archduchess whom I love and respect." Reicus continued.

Renya nodded once more. After all he hadn't said anything wrong. And yet Renya felt as if his bad premonition was getting stronger, albeit little by little.

"Moreover, while unworthy, I had the privilege to teach Shion-sama the sword in her childhood."

Reicus said.

"Okay."

"It may be presumptuous, but I'm thinking of Shion-sama as my granddaughter." Reicus further continued.

"Okay?" As Renya looked at Shion once more while turning his confirmation into a question, he saw her smiling extremely bashfully while scratching her head for some reason.

While sighing as he wondered just what she was thinking in that little brain of hers, Renya was gradually understanding his own position, albeit only vaguely.

"So what you mean is that this embarrassedly wriggling girl over there is a precious pupil and granddaughter to you." After pointing at Shion, he pointed at Reicus who was humbling himself in front of Renya, adding, "A grandpa who's prone to worrying."

At the end Renya pointed at himself while smiling bitterly, "An undesired boyfriend, I assume?"

"No, not at all. I haven't said anything like that." Reicus waved his hands and shook his head while laughing, but Renya fully noticed that the laughter didn't reach his eyes at all.

"What I wish is to learn what kind of man you are, Kunugi-dono." Reicus explained.

"That would have been plenty possible by talking, no? I don't get your ulterior motive behind expressly dragging me to such a training ground."

Just as Renya said, they were currently at a place where the soldiers train everyday. The compressed ground was proof of many soldiers devoting their time to harsh training regimens while wearing heavy equipment.

"Certainly, words might suffice for that, but I have heard about you being a military man, Kunugi-dono." Reicus answered.

It was only faint, but Renya could hear the sound of Reicus sliding his foot across the ground with a scratch.

Renya sensitively perceived that Reicus had shifted his posture from just standing to getting ready with nothing more than just this little action.

"Unarmed, huh?" Renya muttered.

As he only came here to extend his greetings, he didn't have his katana hanging at his waist as he did usually.

Of course he could equip it with a snap seeing as it was stored away in his inventory, but it didn't look like Reicus would face him with a weapon either.

"No, I'm a swordsman." Once Reicus swung his right hand lightly, a longsword appeared in the twinkling of an eye.

If it had been Renya from a little while ago, he might have felt surprised by that event, but now that he possessed the sorcery knowledge he received from Emedra, he could immediately see through this being <Draw>.

It was a spell to draw an item, which had been marked in advance, into one's hand.

If you were to go by the spell's degree of difficulty, it wasn't complicated, but that still didn't mean that it could be used by any amateur.

Moreover, since Reicus hadn't chanted the spell, it was difficult for Renya to imagine that Reicus had used sorcery after naming himself a swordsman. Hence, he guessed that the sword itself might have been enchanted with that spell, or that it was a so-called sorcery craft.

However, based on the assumption of that being correct, Renya had a single question, "It has a blade, hasn't it?"

Enchanting an item with a spell naturally wasn't done for free.

Emedra's knowledge didn't contain the exact method, but even to Renya it was clear that it wouldn't be cheap by any means. Because of that most items having applied such enchantments to them were daily articles.

That didn't mean that rich people didn't have such items made for playing around, but those were mostly exceptions. Renya's words hinted at him thinking that the sword in the Baron's hand was such a daily article as well, but the Baron denied this very easily.

"Yes, it has. Would it have been better for me to have a toy called blade draw by chance?" Reicus asked jokingly.

Renya immediately understood that this had apparently been a provocation, but he didn't really feel like getting angry over it.

After all, the other party was far below him in social standing. And although he was much older than Renya was right now, Reicus' age was below Renya's true age, too.

As result, it simply ended with "Orly?" in Renya's eyes, despite it having been an attempt to provoke him with a threat.

However, because Renya could understand that these actions of the Baron were apparently based on his concerns for Shion, and not on some kind of vanity or curiosity, there was no way for him to treat Reicus with nothing but cruelty either.

'There seems to be another troublesome aspect: this Baron seems to be the kind of person who understands about others by crossing swords with them,' Renya thought.

That way of thinking was common among pure military people and soldiers, but Renya couldn't approve of that approach.

Generally it wasn't limited to swordsmanship, but Renya's line of thinking was based on the idea that killing someone with a single blow was the true secret of someone intending to make a living with battle.

However, although Renya almost never reached that ideal and thus reluctantly went with an ideology of Many Shots One Kill, a katana was still a tool to kill an opponent for Renya.

Given that his thoughts and beliefs differed in this area, he didn't voice it out loudly, but to Renya the way of thinking that one would understand something from crossing swords didn't sound like anything but the nonsensical rambling of deviants or people with supernatural powers.

In a nutshell, he didn't really want to go along with it, but the other party had the just cause of it being for the sake of Shion and something like the obstinacy of a military man.

Thus Renya found it very difficult to flatly ignore these causes and run away here.

"What's wrong, Kunugi-dono? You certainly won't say that you can't accept the request of an old man like me, will you?" Reicus asked Renya who had sunken into silence.

Renya let his eyes wander as he was hesitating, and then met eyes with Shion who had suddenly been looking his way.

Seemingly understanding that Renya was hesitating over something even without knowing what he was thinking, she donned a worried expression.

Renya spoke to her about something he had just come up with, "Say, Shion."

"Ueh!? W-What is it?" Shion replied with her body trembling with a start thanks to being called out to all of a sudden.

Renya smiled wryly while continuing, "That means I got stuck with fighting against your teacher, you know?"

"T-That's true...I would be happy if you could avoid killing him, though." Shion answered timidly.

'That's what she worries about all of a sudden?' Renya wondered, but Reicus also looked at Shion with an expression that seemed to be somewhat startled.

"It won't come to this if my opponent doesn't harbor such an intention. But rather than that, do you think there's something else you should tell me here?"

"Eh? Eh!?" Being told so, Shion clearly became flustered.

She reflexively turned her eyes left and right, looking for help, but as Rona kept up a composed expression, making it clear that it had nothing to do with her, and Emil grinned broadly as if finding it all funny, it was very unlikely that either would help her.

As a last resort Shion wracked her brain frantically, and at the end of her pondering while being watched by everyone, her face suddenly lit up because she had apparently reached some kind of conclusion.

While feeling a touch of unease due to the change of her expression, Renya thought, 'Don't blurt out anything weird while putting on airs all by yourself.'

At the end of his line of sight, Shion tightly clenched both her fists together and shouted flatly and distinctively with a voice that carried oddly well, "I love you!"



「愛してます！」

「なあシオン？ これからお前の師匠と戦う羽目になったんだが？
何か俺にかけてくれる言葉とか無いかね？」

「私が望みますのは、クスギ殿の人となりを知る事、でございます。
まさかこの爺の申し出、受けて頂けないのですかな？」

二度目の人生を
異世界で

At almost the same time, Renya and Reicus audibly slumped their shoulders.

Alongside a sigh, Emil drove her elbow into the flank of Shion, who tilted her head to the side with a "Huh?", and Rona's palm relentlessly hit the back of Shion's head, who was holding her flank while groaning.

Grabbing the shoulders of Shion who pitched forward after being slapped, Rona turned Shion around, silently grabbed her collar, and started to violently shake her back and forth.

Emil mumbled something in a murmur behind Shion.

"It sure is nice to be young." Reicus, who somehow managed to fix his posture, squeezed out words that seemed to be a follow up in one way or another, but Renya didn't entertain the will to confirm or deny them.

After a short time, within this considerably silly atmosphere, Shion, who had been given some detailed instructions by Emil, broke free from Rona's hold, and while clenching her fists once more, she clearly stated while blushing faintly, probably because it was the second time, "Renya, do your best!"

"That flirtation really lacks impact." Emil curtly said.

Shion received a shock from being instantly shot down by Emil.

While watching Shion's state, Renya twisted his lips into a broad grin and extended his left hand into empty space. That hand gripped the hilt of a katana, making a drawn blade, which was tempered to shine palely in the sunlight, appear out of thin air.

"I don't really feel like going ahead with this, though." Adding his right hand to the hilt, he adopted a seigan stance.

As if in concert to that, Reicus held the longsword in front of his chest with both hands for a moment, and then after getting ready, he held out his left hand in front, and lowered the longsword in his right hand towards his right side.

"One must fight after being cheered on by a girl, right?" Renya said.

"Ho ho ho, what a bothersome gentleman." Reicus answered.

The expression of Reicus, who laughed at Renya for forcibly making up a reason to fight because he couldn't get out of this although he didn't want to go along with it, hardened in the next moment. Even though Renya hadn't taken a single step forward after getting ready, Reicus retreated several steps from his position.

'Just what happened?' To the three onlookers it was immediately obvious.

"Renya...I'd like to make the single request to keep it at the level of not resulting in a serious injury..." Shion implored Renya timidly.

"It's fine. As long as he doesn't die, I can probably heal him up one way or another." With an as calm expression as ever, Rona said something that wouldn't serve as follow up no matter how you looked at it.

And Emil added immediately after, "Even if he dies, I can fix him up somehow, so it should be

okay, I think."

"You don't call that okay!" Shion yelled back.

"Even before that, I think you don't call that healing, Shion." Rona calmly retorted Shion's retort.

The one on the receiving end of the retorts, Emil, wondered what might have been wrong about what she said, "Eh? I mean, it's healing as long as no one finds out about it, no? If I can get Shion to tell me about his personality and stuff, I'm confident that it won't be found out even by his family, okay?"

"...Just what are those people over there?" With cold sweat appearing on his forehead, Reicus, who heard the dangerous conversation outside the fence by chance, threw that question at Renya who pondered whether this might not be going too far.

Wondering how he should answer this, Renya decided to go with an inoffensive reply for starters, "My friends, I guess."

"I see. I fully understand." Reicus replied.

That immediate answer made even Renya end up feeling strange about it. After all just that would mean that this dangerous conversation suited him.

"I'd like to protest vehemently." Renya objected.

"I shall listen to it once this match is over."

"I see. Let's begin right away then?" Renya asked.

Reicus felt as though he heard the space around him crack.

No sooner than Renya prepared himself, the intimidating air, which had been assailing his entire body, became even denser, making Reicus' blood run cold.

Feeling as if he was getting choked at the same time, Reicus made sure to slowly breathe from the depth of his abdomen as if to oppose that feeling while sensing how his palm grasping the longsword got damp with sweat.

"Even if there are various circumstances, don't think that you will get away unscathed after making me draw my katana, old man." Renya smiled.

So as to not get overpowered, Reicus shouted out loudly his fighting spirit and slashed at Renya with a sharp sideways sweep.