

Chapter 207 - It seems to be a Peddler

"Whahyaaa!?" Shion hysterically screamed when she was caressed by a thinnish tentacle that had suddenly popped out from the ground around her butt.

The slash, she unleashed as she turned around while blushing, pried deeply into the ground, causing a cloud of dust to rise alongside the sound of an explosion. However, at that time, the tentacle, which had stroked Shion's butt, had already vanished beneath the ground, and while stretching out from another direction, pierced Shion's right armpit.

"Hyaaa!?"

Although you might call it piercing, it wasn't as though it penetrated through her clothes and skin. It was at a strength that you'd label as poking. Due to the blow that caused an intense stimulation to Shion's armpit, Shion started to flee with her face beet red while screaming.

But, although you could label it as running away, she was currently in a place surrounded by fairly tall walls. Hence she was quickly cornered by the tentacle that chased her down from behind.

"Kuuu! Give it a rest!" Grasping that she had no place left to escape, Shion swung her sword down with a yell, but the slash, which had quite a bit force put into it, was easily evaded, and instead the blade's middle part got lightly hit, making the sword turn into a totally different direction.

The blow of the bent tentacle struck Shion's middle forehead as she was trying to forcefully turn her sword back with a terrible and juicy sound, causing Shion's head to be thrown back. It was a hit that didn't deliver almost any damage, but as Shion was fixing her sword posture while rubbing her forehead that had become red, the originator of the bruise, the tentacle, continued to slowly sway in front of Shion as if to provoke her.

"She's sure being toyed with over there..."

In a place slightly separated from the venue, where Shion was chasing the tentacles or was chased by the tentacles, Renya had rolled up the hems of his usual black pants and taken off his boots. While barefoot, he had been absentmindedly watching the fight while sitting on the wharf.

As before, the location was the Gordonal Barony. The preparations to build a port at the wharf facing the ocean had been advancing at a quick pace. Likewise, a fairly huge stone building was being constructed in a hurry under Rona's command in a section of the wharf.

The situation inside the building wasn't visible from the wharf where Renya was sitting, but one of the katurul's tentacles had entered the building, and Emil was in charge of establishing a transfer array with that tentacle as reference point.

Rona hastened the construction of that building since once it was complete, a fish market would be set up next to it, allowing for a considerable amount of fresh seafood to be sent to a similar facility in the Kunugi Margraviate.

As for how to deploy the katurul's tentacle to Renya's inland territory, the answer was exceedingly

simple. Given that the katurul was living beneath the continents, you would hit onto the katurul's tentacle or main body at any place as long as you could burrow through the ground, even if it wasn't in the ocean. Of course, the katurul could also dig upwards from the bottom of the continent's mass to the surface, but Renya judged that it would probably be faster to have both sides meet in the middle, and instructed Frau to dig down to a certain extent of depth when building the facility for the transfer array near Klinge. Naturally he used that opportunity to order her to entrust that work to the four heroes under the slogan of digging as training.

Renya thought that he wouldn't know how much of a training doing public works would become for the heroes unless he had them first try it out, but he was confident that it wouldn't turn into a completely meaningless exercise either.

'However, unlike back when I made Keith's unit do it, the heroes - excluding Kurz - are all people who have accumulated quite a bit of training. There likely won't be any drastic changes in their combat prowess at this point,' he assessed. 'As expected, the only method to train them might be actual combat, rather than basic training.'

Once Renya considered that he might be able to expect a rapid growth depending on what enemy he would throw at them, he realized that there weren't any convenient opponents around for this. He felt that they would be somehow able to deal with a normal dragon individually. However, he also had a hunch that they would be turned into charcoal in an instant before it could turn into anything worthy to be called training if it was a higher-ranking dragon.

Renya also considered having the heroes join up as a team and throw them at the Four Greater Dragons against their will, but although he would be able to hope for a significant level-up if they managed to return alive, the probability of them doing so was close to zero according to the simulations in Renya's mind.

"This problem is a real pain." He kicked the water's surface with his bare feet while mumbling so.

Something hit through the water's surface with a splash at the end of the sheets of water spray he had sent flying, but Renya guessed from the sight beneath his feet that it wasn't some kind of fish. In the ocean, where Renya's bare feet had been dipping, countless tentacles of the katurul squirmed around, making for a sight that wasn't really all that great to look at.

One of the conditions the katurul demanded from Renya when it negotiated with him was for Renya to soak in the ocean with his skin exposed. It was a condition Renya didn't quite understand. When he asked for how long, the katurul answered something very vague along the lines of wanting him to spend doing that as much as possible during the period required to complete the transfer facility.

As a vague condition would result in a rather big difference in the interpretation by both sides, Renya wanted the katurul to become more specific on the details, but according to Kilie, human time measuring units were a concept that was extremely ambiguous to the katurul, so it couldn't apparently specify it any further.

Believing that he should make sure to satisfy the katurul as much as possible within the frame of that vague condition, Renya soaked in the ocean while exposing his skin by only wearing short pants at first, but after being caught by the katurul's tentacles, which seemed overjoyed for some reason, and being dragged around all over the place while keeping it at a level so that Renya

wouldn't suffocate, Renya was forced to go through such an ordeal that he couldn't help to ask he katurul to let him get out of the sea after such a long period that his skin became sodden.

It was Kilie who stopped Renya from instinctively attacking the tentacle with his katana that he had taken out of his void storage immediately after being released. Renya was confident that he would have attacked the ocean so devotedly and long until no trace of the katurul would be left in this area of the ocean, if Kilie hadn't stopped him at that time. Though, it was proof of the experience he had suffered having been this terrible.

"I wonder whether some kind of soup stock is coming out from these."

Renya harbored the overly silly impression that a huge tentacle will be overjoyed by the sweat of a man's feet oozing out as soup stock, but once he saw the flock of tentacles lively squirming around beneath his feet, he thought that he might have unexpectedly hit the nail on its head.

As Renya couldn't understand the katurul, he had no way to check whether his impression was true. And speaking of the sole person that seemed capable of communicating with the katurul, she had sat down next to Renya on the wharf and was in the middle of enjoying a sunbath with a fully slackened look on her face.

"Hmm? What is it?"

Noticing Renya's eyes on her, Kilie faced in Renya's direction with her expression still being all relaxed. It wasn't as though no one was around them, but in this situation, where not a single person would pay attention to the conversation between those two, Renya decided to ask about something he felt he should have asked a good while ago.

"You, who the hell are you?"

"The peddler Kilie."

The reply shot back at him right away didn't leave the domain of what he had expected. Certainly, he had anticipated as much, but Renya couldn't just swallow that reply as it was. After all she was the original owner of that katana that possessed outlandish abilities, which he had tossed into his inventory moments ago. Furthermore, she could understand a being that didn't possess human intellect like the katurul. No matter how he thought about it, it was impossible for her to be an ordinary person.

Strangely his other party members didn't seem to mind it overly much, but even that appeared to be very odd as a reaction in Renya's eyes.

'Wouldn't they usually try to mind it or kick up a bit more of a fuss?' He wondered.

They had so readily and easily stopped snooping around Kilie that it was abnormal, even considering that Renya told them to not pursue the matter too much. If he were told that peddlers were the personification of abnormality in this world, Renya could come to terms with it, but it was difficult for him to imagine that there was that much of a difference between peddlers in his former world and this world.

"You think you can get me to agree with that explanation?"

"Okay then. I'm actually an archangel possessing tremendous powers who was appointed as your guardian angel by orders of the chief goddess, Renya-san. In line with this, I lent a human body for the sake of supporting you, descended to the lower world, and was in the middle of coming to you."

As he looked at Kilie who spun her words smoothly with her usual loosened expression that lacked any feeling of tension, Renya's eyes were dyed with pity and doubt. Even as she received a look one would sent at a child with lacking intelligence, Kilie's expression didn't change at all.

"You're telling me to believe this?"

"That in itself would be completely impossible. But Renya-san, with you suspecting me, I don't think you'd believe anything I tell you, or am I wrong?"

As she was completely right with her remark, Renya had no words to return to her. After all he wouldn't believe anything, even if she told him to trust her, now that he had started to distrust her.

"That's why I'm the peddler Kilie for the time being. I think it might be fine for everyone to consider me as a super-beautiful merchant who appeared out of nowhere in times of need."

"That's nothing you'd say about yourself. Really." Renya grumbled with a fed-up voice, but at the same time he judged in his mind that there didn't seem to be any point in probing any further into this topic.

Even if he tried to believe Kilie, this was just their second meeting, and he had almost no information about her. And in case he doubted Kilie, it hadn't so far developed into a situation where Kilie caused some harm to Renya or obtained some outrageous benefit through her own actions.

"You're a cunning fellow..."

"Since it would also be a problem if I were too slow on the uptake, it can't be helped."
[efn_note]The raw uses here something like "...if I were seen as delicious by you." It's a word play on the previous line where the "cunning" can also be read as "inedible." I changed it a bit to localize it.[/efn_note]

Kilie answered Renya, who looked as if he had swallowed a bitter pill, with a sweet smile.

As Renya reached the dangerous conclusion that it would be fine to simply slay her if she caused some trouble and thus put an end to this matter for now, Kilie suddenly clapped her hands together as if having come up with something.

"Come to think of it, Renya-san, all your friends are just women, aren't they?"

"There are also men, but...they remained back in my territory."

Renya felt that there would be no objection from Kurz and Grün even if he described them as his friends, but he ended up wondering what Lepard and Albert would think about it. In Renya's

perception, all of them were his friends, but it wouldn't be weird for those two to object.

Given that Renya was aware himself that he had done some fairly terrible things to Albert because of various circumstances, Renya was sure that especially Albert would deny it at full force. That's what Renya thought, but Kilie had apparently aimed her thoughts into a totally different direction.

"If it's a lineup of that many beauties...your nights must be quite arduous."

"...What?"

Renya asked back while sensing how his head denied comprehending the meaning behind those words, but his voice apparently hadn't reached Kilie's ears as she continued fluently speaking like a waterfall.

"Even if a man partners up with that many women, isn't it a matter of the man's ability to make sure that all of them are fully satisfied? At least that's what I think. Luckily I have good news for you in that regard. I just happen to sell all kinds of drugs and gadgets for that kind of activity."

"Why would you have such things...?"

The temperature of Renya's look as he asked this had become so chilling that Shion and Rona would be immediately able to judge it as critical if they were to see it, but Kilie, who got all passionate about her explanation, didn't show any signs of having noticed it at all.

"They are very popular among middle-aged noblemen who took a young girl as wife and similar. Concerning the efficacy, it's potions allowing you to enter a heaven-like state by just drinking a sip, pills allowing you to obtain a stamina making going all night at it a breeze, or powders making women all wet and ecstatic. In addition, as optional gadgets, I have an array of items catering to any kinds of desires and preferences like handcuffs, whips, low-temperature candles, ropes, etc....eeeh!?"

'I must not allow this girl to yap on any longer. At present Rona and Emil are further away, and since Shion is frantically struggling in the mock battle against the katurul's tentacles, they shouldn't have been able to hear Kilie's sales talk, but it would become a disaster if those girls heard about it,' Renya assessed. 'It would be still fine if they only felt embarrassed and shy about it.'

The problems would start if they were to gleefully buy up those items, Renya didn't want to know about all too well. Renya wouldn't have any other choice but to seriously consider fleeing at night.

What's the best thing to do so that it wouldn't come this far? The answer was extremely simple.

"Be quiet...for the peacefulness of my heart!"

"A-Aah!? Renya-san!? Renya-san!! The area around my temples is creaking...I'm tell you it's creeeeeaaaking!?"

While gathering the attention of the surrounding people, who wondered what was going on, Renya tightly grasped Kilie's head in an eagle hold. And while retraining the movements of Kilie, who was desperately thrashing around in an attempt to escape Renya's palm while screaming, with his other

hand, Renya started to ponder whether he should just get rid of her in the ocean once she stopped moving.

