

After moving from in front of the gate to Renya's mansion, the party took a rest in the parlor prepared by Frau. While Frau gallantly laid out tea and tea-cakes for everyone, Renya asked about Mayria and Croire who were nowhere to be seen. In response, Frau gave him the silly reply that Mayria was mowing the lawn in the mountains, and Croire had gone out to wash the laundry at the river.

After Frau flashed a smile lacking any ill-will at Renya, who fixedly glared at her, she chose the instant when Renya fleetingly looked away with a doubtful expression, to turn around her body in no time and switch to fleeing with a dash. However, that ended in a tragic failure as Renya's right hand, which lunged out with a movement similar to that of a flying swallow, grabbed the back of Frau's head with an eagle grip.

While wondering as to how the information of a fairy-tale from his former world found its way into this one, Renya immediately put strength into the hand holding Frau's head. As the back of her head was immediately assaulted by a brutal pressure, Frau screamed, struggled violently, and before long ran out of strength with her limbs powerlessly hanging down.

"Are you happy now? So, let's return to my first question, okay?"

"Assaulting an innocent girl, that's an act of savage violence ~nano." Frau uttered with her legs and arms swinging back and forth as her body was only supported by Renya grabbing the back of her head.

Renya narrowed his eyes immediately. Seemingly sensing that from his presence, Frau, who shouldn't be able to see Renya's face, hurriedly put power into her limbs and adopted a stance of standing at attention.

"Croire-ane-sama is in the bath, and Mayria-ane-sama is swamped in paperwork, as usual ~no!"

Contrary to its location at the edge of the Trident Principality, an amount of people and goods streamed into Klinge that couldn't be taken lightly at all. In proportion to that, the complexity and amount of the paperwork had reached absurd levels. Moreover, with the influx of marine products from the Gordonal Barony thanks to the establishment of the transfer facilities, the amount of documents which had to be processed went up as well. According to Frau, Mayria was drowning in work, be it day or night. Due to her state having taken a shape close to that of a ghost, hardly anyone besides the civil officials, Mayria's subordinates, approached Mayria's office these days.

"It sounds like the paperwork of the Kunugi Margraviate would fall apart like a house of cards, if Her Majesty the Archduchess were to retire with Mayria taking the throne after her, doesn't it?" Rona said so as if it was completely someone else's problem while slurping her tea.

Renya responded to her with a faint tinge of teasing mixed into his voice, "Rona, you should take measures so that it won't happen while you still can. After all you're the next candidate for the paperwork, you know?"

"Me!?"

Renya nodded his head at Rona, who was all panicked, with a serious look.

"Why me!? Renya, do you bear some kind of grudge against me!?"

"There's no one else qualified to do it."

Speaking about abilities, even Croire and Emil should have very likely what it'd take to get it properly done. However, it was unthinkable that Croire, who had a symbiotic relationship with the forests, would be suited for a work that would lock her into a dim room for extended periods of time. And since Emil possessed high talents and abilities as a researcher, the merit of having her stop that to put her in charge of office work was extremely low.

Given that Frau was the Head Maid, she should devote all her power in that field. As for Shion, Rona had no choice but to admit that Shion was completely unfit for this kind of work, after adding the annotation "while she's my mistress."

As a result, Rona became fully aware, while shocked by that revelation, that there was no one besides her suitable to succeed Mayria, going by the process of elimination.

'In that case I must come up with some kind of method while the breakwater called Mayria is currently managing the paperwork of Klinge, otherwise all that will await me is an eternal hell of documents and stamps.

However, there existed a simple method to avoid that. It was called abandoning anything and everything, escaping from Klinge. But, that would mean for Rona to leave Renya, and it would also result in her having to bid farewell from Shion.

Rona felt that she wanted to avoid that future as much as possible. Bidding farewell from Shion was unthinkable for her, she didn't even want to consider it. And on top of that, Rona loved Renya quite dearly. Moreover, Rona, who had grown accustomed to life in Klinge that allowed her to spend her time a lot more comfortably than any other city could offer her, didn't want to part with her current life because it was so pleasant.

Renya nonchalantly gazed at Rona's state as she started to come up with plans how to immediately take measures. In reality, if only Rona owned a bit of shamelessness, the option of staying in Klinge after rejecting Renya's demand existed, too.

He didn't put it in words, nor did he commit the foolishness of showing it on his face, but there was no way for Renya to tell Rona to leave just because she had turned down his own demand. Furthermore, there should still be around twenty years left until the current archduchess would abdicate, as long as there weren't any troubles. As long as they had this much time, it should be plenty possible to gather a reasonable number of civil officials possessing abilities above a certain threshold, but Renya deliberately didn't point that fact out to Rona.

'By some chance cornering Rona might lead to a slight reduction of Mayria's workload because Rona comes up with some kind of ingenious idea. And even if that's not the case, it's not like it'll worsen the current situation either.

"Enough of that. Frau, you said something about hot water appearing, but just what happened? I don't recall having instructed you to dig so deep that you'd find hot water, following my common knowledge about these things."

Rather than depth and so on, as far as Renya knew, there was no place with a heated ground that would create hot water around Klinge. According to Renya's knowledge, hot water gushing out after you dig only corresponded to something like a hot spring. And he believed that hot springs mainly existed in areas close to volcanoes. Apparently hot springs also existed in places other than that, but no matter how much you might say that underground water had a tendency to go up in temperature the deeper it was located than the sea level, it should still be necessary to dig down several kilometers to reach a water temperature so hot that steam would rise from it.

After pondering for a short while how she should answer Renya's question, Frau started to speak fluently, seemingly having determined that she should explain everything she knew from the beginning.

According to her, the heroes, who had been ordered to dig the hole, dug obediently as instructed at first. They used tools called pickaxes and shovels for that. However, the scheduled size of the hole was far too big for only four people to dig manually, no matter how much higher the physical abilities of the heroes might be compared to ordinary people. As might be expected, the first to throw the towel at this job was Leopard. Throwing away the shovel in his hands with the reason that he had simply enough of this monotonous work rather than his body having tired out, Leopard made a certain suggestion to the other three heroes.

"Since any more of this is the height of boredom and doesn't suit us anyway, wouldn't it be way easier to get its shape or whatever manually fixed after blowing up the ground so that the hole would get a reasonable size?"

Looking at it based on efficiency, it wasn't a bad suggestion. But, Renya clicked his tongue at this smart way to cut corners, considering that this work was supposed to also serve as training.

'It looks like it had a big influence that I wasn't present then and there, but no matter how I look at it, it appears beastmen tend to try getting things done roughly and noncommittally.

Renya considered that annoying, but pulling himself together as it had already happened anyway, Renya focused on Frau's explanation once again.

It was Kurz who opposed Leopard's proposal. In Kurz' eyes, they were told to dig, and not to blow away. Kurz' claim was that doing something he wasn't told was unnecessary, and doing something unnecessary wouldn't result in anything decent.

"Isn't his trust in me a bit too strong?"

"But, he's an honest and good boy. Right?"

Even Renya didn't feel like denying the words of the smiling Shion. While still thinking that it'd be fine for Kurz to be a bit selfish seeing as he was still a young boy going by his outer appearance, Renya prompted Frau to go on.

As always, Grün stuck to remaining neutral while calmly continuing with his work. As Grün declared his neutrality with a smile, saying that he would obey whatever they decided, the decision of the heroes fell into the hands of Albert, the one possessing the final vote, but although it was

unexpected in Renya's eyes, Albert supported Leopard's suggestion. Hence the heroes' course of action was decided with two agreeing, one disagreeing, and one abstaining.

"Hmm, why did Albert...?"

Renya believed that Albert had a bit more prudent character, but the following words of Emil made him understand Albert's reasoning, albeit only somewhat.

"Maybe various things built up within him...? Isn't that what you'd call a backlash of a serious person who accumulated a certain level of bottled-up feelings?"

"He had been continuing to follow orders while wondering why he had to do so, but beastmen and dragonoids seem to have the fundamental trait of preferably choosing brute force approaches since they have many areas where they are above in abilities compared to humans and elves." Kilie said as if adding some trivia, but everyone, who had listened to her, agreed that it wasn't a good idea to go along with everything and anything.

Putting that aside, now that they had decided on an opinion, they had only to put it into practice. Thus a destruction spree by two heroes apparently started to unfold in the vicinity of Klinge.

"Two?"

"It looks like Kurz-kun ran away, and Grün-san also took his leave to a quiet place."

It would have been fine if Kurz running away would have actually been owed to the pretense that he ultimately did it because of his opposing view, but Renya was sure that it was an action based on Kurz hating the possibility of getting harshly scolded by Renya if some kind of trouble occurred.

In contrast to that, Grün should have originally stuck to following the suggestion they agreed upon since he was neutral, but it was plain as day that he ran away to avoid any harm triggered by being involved with this. Renya believed that he should have opposed the suggestion in the first place then, but as the vote tally would have had very likely ended up becoming even in that case, and since Grün hated to drag out the decision unnecessarily, it was very likely a truly self-preserving thinking that he would be troubled if he caused bitter feelings by making the mistake of getting in the way of the two, who had cast a positive vote.

"I have no basis for it, I don't think you can call the two's characters all that great."

"Where are those two right now?"

Frau shrugged her shoulders at Rona's question.

"Both haven't still been found ~nano."

"There was no need to go out of the way to search for them, but even if we tried to force a search, the probability of actually finding them is probably rather low,' Renya judged. 'Just like Kurz can store away the two priestesses, who always accompany him, in that black fog of his, Kurz himself will be able to hide anywhere as long as he can store himself away as well. It's obvious that hiding forever will be impossible, considering things like food etc., but still, I think it's pretty clear that

finding him will be a pain as long as he doesn't show up by himself. As for Grün, he's a hero specialized in concealment and covert actions to begin with, so it'd be a lot harder to find him than Kurz.

Rather, unlike Kurz, Grün was far worse as he was equipped with all necessary abilities to live by himself as long as he simply stuck to hiding the fact that he was a hero. If things went west, it was possible that he would never be found.

'In that case I'd likely have no other choice but to ask Croire to get him to come out through persuasion', Renya sighed.

"With that said, as a result of the two heroes continuing to blow up the ground..."

"They dug a hole deeper than they had to, and in the end struck on hot water, you're saying?"

"Before that, the earth and sand that was blown up, and the vibration of their attacks caused damage to the surroundings ~no. We're being approached by Klinge's residents with reimbursement demands over broken windows or tableware, and destroyed furniture ~no. Also, there were a considerable number of complaints about the noise...petitions stating that it was troublesome as babies couldn't sleep arrived at our place ~no."

"...Apologize politely, and pay for the damages."

If heroes started to attack the ground at full power right next to a city, the fact of damage spreading through the scattered earth and sand hitting the wall or flying above the wall and hitting buildings close to the wall was obvious without even any need to think about it. Moreover, the vibrations of those attacks were mostly similar to tremors of earthquakes. It was quite possible for tableware to fall off cupboards, windows breaking, and the walls of buildings developing cracks. Furthermore, it went without saying that the sounds of explosions would trouble the surrounding citizens if attacks boasting this much power were carried out.

"We will precisely record the amount of money paid, and slap the bill in the faces of the beastmen and dragonoids."

As Renya laughed with a low, subdued voice, obviously suppressing his anger, Frau roughly calculated the amount of money claimed by the residents, who had approached them until now, in her mind, and after further considering the financial standings of the beastmen and dragonoids, she reached an amount they would probably pay without a word. In case they were unwilling to pay even a little sum of money, she would add a short comment of "My master will be angry ~no." It wasn't as though either race didn't know Renya to the extent they would remain unwilling despite that indirect threat.

"So, where are those two idiots right now?"

"When the hot water gushed out, both were basked in boiling water, resulting in them getting scalded across their whole bodies...they're being hospitalized at the medical ward ~nano."

The hot water seemed to have quite the temperature, and moreover gushed out with a considerable force. While it was just bad luck for them, or rather, paying for their own mistakes, it meant the two

heroes got swallowed up by the boiling water, unable to evade as it was directly after they had just released big techniques and thus got nicely boiled together by hot water like the two friends they were.

"Tell the medical ward personnel to tie the two to their beds, hindering them from moving around for a while."

"Okay, master ~nano. But still, that didn't bring about only bad results ~no." Frau continued to explain to Renya, whose anger subsided to some extent as he apparently thought that they got what they deserved.

"You're saying you built a bathing facility?"

"Correct ~no. Although I had someone observe the hot water that was dug up for a while, there's quite a bit of hot water, and the water temperature wasn't as high as at the beginning. But since it was gushing out while maintaining a considerably high temperature, I thought that it would be a waste to not use this ~no."

Because of the water gushing out of the recklessly dug up ground, the hole had become quite big at that point in time, and the hot water, which had accumulated there, looked unusable as it was mixed with mud. Frau drained this water into a tank, which had been built by neatly joining building stones together, and by letting the mud settle inside the tank in addition to installing a filtering device at the tank's drain, she processed the muddy water into fully usable, clean, hot water.

She then decided to use this processed water for bathing by drawing it along waterways. The bathing facilities were constructed by Frau and Keith's group at high speed. The finished facilities were covered by a single, huge building, resulting in a gigantic bathing facility, which was very like the first of its kind in the world, right next to Klinge's wall.

Given that it was naturally impossible to allow hot water blended with mud to continuously gush out indefinitely, Frau single-handedly took care of servicing the hot spring source, reaching the point that it had become possible to provide clean hot water, although little-by-little.

It was a story that couldn't be told to other people, but since the temperature at the hot spring source was definitely nothing where a person could simply thrust in their hands, making it very difficult to service it at this rate, Frau mostly made sure that no mud would get into the water by stacking up stone blocks and maintaining the shape of the hole using Puchiyog-kun. Still, because the water blew out from the ground instead of seeping out from in-between rocks, getting completely rid of the mud was impossible. And thus the necessity of a settling tank didn't change.

The temperature of the water that gushed out wasn't suitable for bathing, but as its temperature was lowered to some extent through the settlement of the mud and the time needed for streaming, it had the completely unforeseen side effect of the temperature being fit for bathing at the time when the processed water was poured into the bathing area, even without deliberately adding cold water to it. Otherwise it would have likely been necessary to construct something to draw water for cooling the hot water from somewhere.

"Was it also Keith and the others who finished the hole for the transfer facility?"

'If so, it'd mean that we have exploited Keith and his men quite a bit, making it necessary to give them some days off in addition to a monetary reward, or in other words, paying them an extra corresponding to what's called a bonus,' Renya thought while asking, but Frau denied this.

"Obviously Keith and the others would have collapsed if I had forced them to dig such a hole ~no."

"Who dug it then? Don't tell me! The katurul? If you made that thing do something like that, I wouldn't know how to pay it back at all."

'I don't think that it needs money, and even if it comes to sending over food, I haven't the slightest idea about its tastes.

Renya couldn't think of anything but to head over to the Gordonal Barony once more, and use himself as a tea bag.

"Even if I wanted to get 'that' to dig the hole...Frau doesn't know how to communicate with 'that' ~no. The ones who dug the hole for the transfer facility were Kurz-kun and Grün-san, who had run away before ~nano."

The common grounds between these two heroes was that they would likely be caught sooner or later, even if they escaped, as they couldn't stay away from Renya for an indefinite amount of time. In that case, it'd mean that these two, who would be trying to escape, and the other two, who acted like idiots, would be the same in regards to not having dug the hole as instructed. Hence they believed they might be able to file for extenuating circumstances at the time of getting caught, as long as they did their best in one go and at least finished the hole as they were told.

Once they saw that their views aligned up to this point, the rest was simple. Kurz and Grün dug the hole at the instructed size as fast as they could while wrecking a considerable number of pickaxes and shovels, and then escaped.

"So what's their reason for running away in the end?"

"They fear joint liability for the damages caused by their two comrades ~nano."

"...I don't feel like Kurz and Grün are related to this matter, so they don't really need to run away...please tell them, if you can contact them."

"I will ask the patrolling soldiers to keep spreading the news ~no."

It wasn't as though they had any liaison to contact the two heroes who had disappeared. Hence, the idea was to have Kurz and Grün, who were in hiding somewhere, hear about it by having the patrolling soldiers shout out, "Lord-sama isn't angry, so come out," all over the city, but Renya held his forehead over the fact that this was completely like searching for lost children.

"That means, right now there's a building for the hot spring source, which had been excavated by two idiots, outside Klinge's wall, and bathing facilities that had been built for the sake of using the hot water. In addition, there's one more building for the transfer facility. So, the number of buildings grew by three in total?"

"Leaving aside the hole, the buildings atop were built at a truly fast speed ~no. It was so quick that even Frau got slightly exhausted ~no."

