

### **Chapter 3 - It Seems to be an Attack on the Camp**

Night fell even in the demon country.

After roasting and steaming the huge amount of turtle meat they had unexpectedly obtained for dinner, Renya's party had gone to sleep in their respective tents, using Dra-kun's body as windbreak. Since a dragon was with them, there was no way for a being inferior to a dragon to willingly approach their camp, and since Renya or Dra-kun would notice it otherwise, a nightwatch could be described as rather unnecessary, but as they'd be far too defenseless if all of them slept like logs without anyone keeping watch, they had decided for Frau, who basically didn't need any sleep, and Renya, who looked worn-out for some reason, to take turns.

There was a reason for Renya looking exhausted. It all began when they decided who would use which tent. This time it was quickly decided that Az and Liaris would share a tent, but maybe triggered by that, Croire and Shion both claimed that either of them should share a tent with Renya while completely unwilling to compromise.

Since even Renya had fully understood that Shion had been aggressively approaching him ever since they camped in the Miasma Forest, he had expected that she might make such a move this time, but he didn't think that Croire would face off against Shion on this. Their fight developed from a dispute over their claims to an exchange of insults. While watching the elf and human girl, who had started to grapple for some reason, Renya asked Rona, who had remained a spectator just like him, something that suddenly occurred to him.

"You're not going to join?"

"Oh my? Did you finally get in the mood?"

"That's not what I meant though..."

Renya had asked as he couldn't quite come to terms with Rona, whom he imagined to be someone to go for the win if there was a good chance, staying at the sideline.

In response, Rona cracked a smile, and answered, "I've decided that my first night would be in a canopy bed while wearing a silken negligee. And this time I haven't brought any negligees with me," with a laugh.

While glaring at her with half-opened eyes, Renya wondered how the talk had taken such a turn while whispering, "Who was it again who invited me on the bed in the inn?"

"Just what might you be talking about? Wouldn't it be better for you to stop those two rather than bothering yourself with such past matters?"

Leaving aside if they kept it at a simple grappling, those two now possessed strength that wouldn't limit the damage to the surroundings at a small scale, if things started to escalate into a battle using magic arts and swords. Feeling like that, Renya suppressed his urge of giving Rona a retort for obviously remembering the past incident, and called out to Shion and Croire who were wrestling while keeping a perfect power balance for some reason.

"You two, how about giving it a rest and leaving it at that?"

""The prize should stay out of this!""

Those harmonized replies raised various questions in Renya such as when he had become their prize, and what kind of prize for what match he was supposed to be. However, judging that the whole situation wouldn't improve even if he tried to ask these questions now, Renya silently shrugged his shoulders, took out a rope from who-knows-where, wrapped up Shion and Croire, who were locked in a contest of strength, in a bamboo mat, tied the mat up with the rope, and tossed them into a nearby tent without even giving them the time to file a protest.

He used a quick technique to bring everything to a close in a few seconds. If something like a rope binding technique existed, you would definitely be able to describe his skill as master class. Having watched all of this, Frau and Rona looked at Renya with somewhat frozen expressions.

"Master, why are you so proficient at this ~nano?"

"It's not like I improved because I like doing this. I'd say it's a countermeasure for times when some fairy gets too mischievous?"

Frau's face clearly cramped up thanks to Renya implicitly telling her that she would have suffered the same fate if she put into practice here what she had tried to do to Az and Liaris in the Miasma Forest. Given that there was no tree around to hang up Frau while bound in a bamboo mat, Frau estimated that she'd be very likely hung up at Dra-kun's snout, and thus strained herself to show Renya an innocent smile.

"F-Frau is a good girl ~nano."

"I see. As long as you're a good girl, I think it won't be necessary to tie you up either." Renya grinned broadly at Frau who frantically kept up a calm facade while having her back drenched in cold sweat.

After those events, everyone went into their tents with Frau and Renya taking up camp on Dra-kun's back. After a while of lying on his back, Renya called out to Frau, who had been watching the vicinity on top of Dra-kun's back while gazing into the sky.

"Say, Frau."

"What is it, master ~nano?"

"Does the sun come out during the night...in this world?"

"Pardon?"

For the sake of checking what Renya saw while wondering what he was talking about, seeing how it was called night exactly because the sun didn't come out, Frau looked up, causing her to open her mouth widely.

A huge, white, shining circle was floating in the sky. However, Frau's perception immediately caught on that this wasn't anything so simple as the sun, and she yelled, "Master! It's an attack ~nano!"

"Hmm, they sure are going all out there."

Renya had grasped that this wasn't the sun from the very start. That, which gleamed palely in the night sky, continued to dye the surroundings white while slowly growing in size.

"It doesn't seem to be a dragon's breath either, though." The instant Renya muttered such a comment absentmindedly, his vicinity was wrapped up in a dazzling, white light.

In that moment, anything and everything went up in flames, melted and fell down. A heat so intense that it turned soil and rocks into crimson, muddy goo uniformly poured down over an extensive range in the area around Renya's camp. Renya's party was swallowed up by the light in an instant without any time to escape, and even Frau had resolved herself for death at this very moment.

However, in the next second, she understood that her worries had been unfounded.

"Is this a magic art attack?" Renya carefreely lay on Dra-kun's back while squinting at the blinding light as it continued to pierce through the barrier.

Going by his behavior and tone, anyone watching him would clearly doubt that they were currently under attack by a firepower strong enough to melt the ground.

"I don't know ~no. I have never heard of such an attack ~no."

Underneath Frau's butt, Dra-kun, who should clearly understand the meaning of the word "resignation" by now, stared at the world of death dyeing anything and everything in pure white through the barrier while literally unable to shut his widely open mouth.

"It's a heat ray attack from a high altitude ~nano. Going by Frau's estimation, the temperature in a radius of several hundred meters has exceeded 2000°C ~no. Having defended against such...absurd attack, master, you are quite nonsensical as well ~nano."

"You only noticed that now?"

Even if an average sorcerer had deployed a barrier in time, they should have burned to cinders alongside their barrier, unable to block the attack. A skilled sorcerer might have been able to block the attack, but they'd likely die after being swallowed up by the continuously rising temperature and the melted ground.

Not only was Renya able to instantly spread out a huge barrier that blocked the outlandish attack while covering the entire campsite, but his huge amount of mana had taken the shape of a globe, completely shutting out the effect of the high heat as bubbles popped up from the ground that had turned into lava. Frau couldn't do anything but be baffled at Renya's ridiculous skill of immediately deploying such a barrier while expending a huge amount of mana.

Because the heat was forced to radically expand into the atmosphere when the unidentified attack

impacted, it should have caused a thunderous roaring, but even that sound was completely intercepted by the barrier. Just maintaining a silence preventing any of the members sleeping inside their tents to notice the unusual phenomenons going on outside was astonishing.

'In other words,' thought Frau while praising herself for having remained sane, 'just now a chain of several outlandish situations occurred within mere seconds.'

Even if she were to brood about each single occurrence, she'd find them to be so offbeat that any normal sorcerer would very likely start talking about quitting as soon as possible. Frau thought that it might actually have been better that the sleeping party members hadn't witnessed all of this.

"The attack is going on for quite a bit now...it's starting to go on my nerves." Just as a slight irritation started to dye Renya's voice, the light, which had covered their visual fields in whiteness, suddenly vanished as if all of it had been some kind of illusion.

In exchange something gave off a strong flash of light at a place quite high up in the sky, resulting in a wind mixed with white snow to rumble down towards the simmering ground, cooling and hardening the crimson soil into a black mass.

Being protected by the barrier, this coldness didn't reach Renya and the others either.

"Master, I feel like asking what happened, just in case ~no."

"I tried to shoot down the attacker."

The attack's continuation meant that the source of the attack was still providing power at its origin. Infinitely continuing to attack from the same place was like asking to receive a counterattack, according to Renya, but hearing that, Frau put on an expression that was very hard to read. It's because Frau couldn't even start imagining what kind of magic art would be needed to trigger a phenomenon that would somehow be able to reach the attacker's body after piercing through the attacker's attack while it was still ongoing. On top of a weak attack never reaching the enemy as it'd simply get negated by the white light, an attack from within the barrier would break the barrier at the moment it pierced through the barrier.

Once Frau asked how he did it since it wasn't as though convenient barriers which would only allow the barrier caster's attacks to pass through actually existed, Renya answered, "I extended one part of the barrier."

"...The sorcerers all over the world would lose their minds if they had heard your words just now ~nano..." Frau felt a dire urge to strongly rebuke, "Who's supposed to believe such silly nonsense?"

However, the person who had actually pulled it off was right in front of her, and since what seemed to have been the enemy was destroyed in reality, Frau judged that Renya was very likely telling the truth.

'Certainly, if it's that barrier which has lasted through the attack, it might have been capable of breaking through the enemy's attack and reaching their body,' Frau assessed. 'However, if you consider the distance to the enemy, the concept of stretching the barrier all the way up there while also limiting the transformation to just one part of the barrier is beyond believable. Frau is very sure

that no sorcerer in this world would have thought of such an attack method.'

Renya being capable of such a feat was based on the abundant usage of his pointlessly huge mana, and his disconnection from the world's sorcerer's common sense that something like this would be impossible.

"It was wrong of Frau to have expected any common sense from master ~no."

"Somehow, it sounds really terrible, the way you're saying it."

Having started to lower his barrier as he judged that no follow-up attack would likely come after they had pulled through such a large-scale attack, Renya suddenly felt a presence, and turned his eyes in that direction. Without even the spare time to wonder just what it might be, Renya fixed his barrier in a hurry, and investigated the true identity of the presence.

At the same time, a fairly strong impact hit the renewed barrier. Furthermore, the sound of something exploding faintly reached Renya's ear from a distant direction.

"Eh? Another attack ~nano?"

"Looks like it. Moreover, this time..."

Renya wracked his brain why he could now hear that sound here. That sound, which he knew as a piece of knowledge but didn't remember, wasn't all that uncommon in his former world, but it shouldn't be anything that could be heard in this world.

"Just now, that was a gunshot...guns don't exist in this world, right?"

He couldn't specify the type of gun from just the sound. However, Renya believed that he wasn't mistaken about this world not possessing any guns, based on his own experiences so far. He hadn't found any traces of guns in the elven or dragonoid countries, not to mention the human and beastmen countries. Only the demons were still a blind spot in this regard, but judging by Renya's observation of Emil, he believed that there was almost no possibility for demons to possess guns.

As if sneering at all those thoughts, a crushed lead bullet clinging to the barrier's wall jumped into Renya's eyes alongside another gunshot.

