

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.



"Frau, I'm heading out for a bit. I leave the barrier to you."

"Okay, master ~nano. What should the others do ~no?"

Having immediately thereafter received the barrier's management rights, Frau held back Renya, who was about to rush out, while starting to maintain the barrier with her own mana. With a hand placed on the hilt of his katana, Renya pondered about her question for a moment, and then gave Frau her instructions.

"For now, wake them up and explain the circumstances."

"You're telling me to explain, but what exactly am I supposed to tell them ~no?"

Even Frau hadn't fully grasped the current situation. Renya believed that to be only natural. Assuming he were to explain ground attacks from a very high altitude or the danger of guns to the residents of this world, it'd be impossible to get them to understand. And Renya judged that to be extremely frightening. After all, the people of this world not understanding these things meant that they wouldn't be able to identify them as dangerous, even if they had a gun point thrust at them right in front of their face.

Only that was reason enough for Renya to prevent the people of this world from taking on the person who had launched the attacks. In battle where every second counted, being baffled by the weaponry from the very start would be like always being one step behind the opponent. It'd go beyond being a disadvantageous situation, and even if a considerable difference in strength existed, they would be dragged into a battle they wouldn't be able to win either way.

"Tell them: We are under attack, and Renya went to intercept. Stay inside the barrier while keeping a close eye on the vicinity. You're absolutely forbidden to follow Renya. That's all."

"Isn't that an unreasonable demand ~no?"

While hiding his mental exhaustion over dealing with this, Renya answered Frau while looking as scarily as possible, "If any of them follows, I'll make the experience the same as the enemy."

Frau's face cramped up as she wondered whether that wasn't equal to saying that he'd beat them to death.

It couldn't be helped that Renya repeated this to emphasize the importance since he felt like his friends had become blind towards danger in exchange for their suddenly risen abilities, "Frau, I really mean it, okay? If you like, you can even tell them that I'll sever all connections with anyone coming after me."

"Understood, master ~no. I promise to not let one of them go ~no."

Somehow Renya felt like there was a slight discrepancy to what he said, but it wasn't as though he had the spare time to debate minor details at the moment.

Believing that none of the other members would be able to leave the barrier managed by Frau, if she said that she wouldn't let any of them go, Renya yelled to Frau while circulating mana into his legs, "Please take care of it! Okay, I'm off then! Open the barrier up for an instant."

"Master, may the fortunes of war be with you ~no!"

For the blink of an eye, the barrier vanished to allow Renya to pass through. As if having aimed for that very instant, a part of the camp's ground burst open alongside a sound of wind being cut.

Even while realizing that the enemy had targeted this opportunity, Renya circulated his mana, and

kicked off the ground, using the power of his strengthened legs. At the same time as Renya heard a noise similar to an explosion from his feet, the scenery flashed past him.

"The opponent is reasonably skilled, huh...? That's going to be a pain."

At the very least, the opponent possessed abilities allowing them to handle weapons and arms that existed in Renya's old world, or could predict how to use them, on top of having known about the barrier's existence. Renya didn't know whether the enemy was an inhabitant of the same world as his old one.

'Even leaving guns aside, as far as I know weapons that would turn the ground into scorched earth on a wide range from a very high altitude didn't exist.

At the time when Renya rushed out of the camp, the attack that caused a part of the camp's ground to burst open was actually on a straight course for Frau. If Renya, who became able to use another magic art after entrusting the maintenance of the barrier to Frau, hadn't shifted the trajectory of the attack by hitting it with a weak barrier, something, which might have been the attack of an anti-material rifle according to Renya's analysis, should have directly hit Frau.

Once he considered the time delay between gunshot and impact under the light of sniping, he could estimate the enemy's location to be two kilometers away from their campsite. The fact of having a sniper as an enemy, who could directly target Frau - on top of timing their shot with the disappearance of the barrier - at such a distance, wasn't overly desirable when they planned to further investigate the demon country.

In other words, Renya had to kill the sniper on this occasion. Otherwise, they would have to constantly fear getting sniped as long as they traveled through the demon country.

"That's a not very appealing prospect, definitely!"

Renya hit a bullet aimed at him with his katana. The bullet had its trajectory radically diverted, impacting on the ground. With Renya's skill and eyesight, it was child's play to hit a bullet. However, it'd be meaningless if he got hit by the bullet after slashing at it because the two parts of the bullet remained on a trajectory that would hit his body for the reason of having too much firepower and speed. Understanding as much, Renya deliberately chose to turn his katana around and knock down the bullet with the blunt back of its blade.

Of course, once he did something like that, the impact of the bullet would be transmitted from the katana to his hand, unlike when slashing with the blade. Hence, if he were to keep thoughtlessly knocking down the bullets in such a way, his hand would likely become numb in no time, possibly resulting in him dropping his katana.

While considering all that, Renya pinned down the shock traveling into his hand with physical power and grip strength boosted by mana.

When he knocked down another bullet, a small groan escaped Renya's mouth through his gritted teeth. The power and precision of the bullets grew the closer he got to the sniper. The bullet trajectories had started to precisely aim at Renya's trunk, making the task of knocking them down while also evading the diverted bullets increasingly more difficult.

However, it also clearly told Renya that his distance to the sniper was shrinking. Perceiving this as a chance, Renya opted to bait the enemy. He stopped his feet, and let the right hand holding the katana dangle, providing himself as an easy target. He used his left hand to beckon the sniper, who was very likely watching him through something like a scope or similar.

He intended for it to be a light provocation, but the effect seemed to be instantaneous. Right away, Renya heard two gunshots from nearby. Both bullets were aimed at Renya's head. But, as long as he knew that they were coming, it was an easy task for Renya to knock them down. He flicked one bullet away by striking up the back of his blade, and knocked down the other by bringing the blade back down.

Immediately following, Renya accelerated, heading for the source of the bullets. At this point, Renya had faced seven bullets. Even if he didn't know what kind of weapon the sniper used, there should soon be a time gap for reloading. The running speed of Renya, which went beyond the speed he used until now, couldn't be described with the adverb fast anymore.

Running with the intent to instantly close the distance to the sniper, Renya suddenly perceived a small, red flash at the edge of his visual field, and immediately threw his body down as if pulling off a forward somersault.

Within the next split-second, an explosion reverberated across the vicinity. Aiming at the space where Renya's body had been before he leaped forward, countless small, metallic balls were scattered with explosive force. Renya, who had been sprinting at an outlandish speed, ended up tumbling across the ground while keeping up his speed.

"A directional anti-personnel landmine!? They even brought in something like that!?" Renya was surprised by the identity behind the detonation, but his enemy sniped at Renya as he was rolling across the ground without giving him any time.

As if driving on Renya who evaded all the shots by continuing to roll, further explosions and small metallic shrapnels burst open, chasing after him. Renya had no time to get up, nor to wield his katana. Single-mindedly focused on continuing to evade by rolling, another gun shot assailed Renya.

Having dodged that bullet, which seemed quite capable of causing a fatal injury with a light graze, Renya suddenly noticed that the attacks had stopped with that bullet having been the last.

"...This only gives me a bad feeling."

A bunch of landmines, which were set up to herd him into a certain direction, and sniping to prevent him escaping in an unexpected direction. As a result of bringing these two things together, Renya judged that the enemy had guided him into the target zone while standing up and brushing off the dirt from his clothes.

"In that case, what's going to come next is..."

The ground beneath his feet felt somewhat soft. Once he lightly dug up the spoil with the tip of his boot, clay-like masses wrapped up by vinyl appeared beneath. Something like a metallic stick with

an ominously blinking red lamp at its tip was stabbed into each and every single of those objects, which had been buried over a wide range in such large quantities that it'd make anyone flabbergasted just how much time and effort had been invested to bury so many of them.

Going by his knowledge, Renya judged those to be detonators, and at the same time he suddenly grasped the name of the clay-like mass. After sighing heavily, he spoke up with a tired voice while looking up to the sky, "C4 explosives...A detonation field, eh...?"

As if to drown out his voice, the place where Renya stood was engulfed by a tremendous explosion. A detonation that would very likely burst the eardrums of anyone standing nearby, and an eerie vibration that would penetrate all the way to the pit of one's stomach. The blast, which would likely be misunderstood as an earthquake in the far distance, unearthed the ground while flames and smoke were whirled up high into the night sky. A few moments later, the plain transformed into a huge crater after being devastated by the heat and blast while having huge amounts of its soil blown upwards.

"There ain't no way that we've gotten summoned...if this was all it took to kill him."

At the edge of the crater, dominated by flames, smoke and a rain of dirt, a figure shouldering something like a long, metallic rod showed up. He had light brown, ruffled, trimmed hair. Going by his voice, he was in the later half of his teens. If Renya were to look at it, he'd immediately understand that the attire, unfamiliar to the residents of this world, was a school uniform. His looks weren't anything you'd call handsome, and would rather fit the description of mediocre, but his look was sharp and grim.

"You said "we," didn't you...? Well, I suppose that means the demons got their hands on several Losts. Sounds like yet another pain in the ass."

A figure stood still in the middle of the deep hole created by the explosion. Renya, who had sheathed his katana into its scabbard at some point in time, called out to the boy with a voice clearly betraying how very fed up he was. Even though he got caught in the middle of such a grand explosion, not a single injury was visible on him, and even his clothes had remained untouched.

"Man, you're a monster just like I've heard from the rumors. Just how the hell did you manage to stay unhurt under these circumstances?"

"Usually you'd introduce yourself before starting to flood others with questions, right? Do you want to be cut down without even the chance to tell me your name?" Renya didn't even try to hide his displeasure.

The boy answered without the slightest scruples in a casual way, "Don't you know the fantasy setting of the one asking for a name introducing themselves first or what?"

"As if I care, moron. Hurry up, and spit out your name. Don't be such a pain. You know about me anyway, don't you?"

'Otherwise he wouldn't have attacked after getting everything ready so meticulously', Renya assessed.

The boy formed a daring smile on his lips, and answered Renya's question while slowly lowering the metallic rod to waist level.

"No choice, I s'pose. This is why guys not understanding what fantasy's 'bout are...well, whatever. I'm Kazuya Kiyomizu. Kiyomizu as in the clear water of a temple, and Kazuya written with "one" and "to be." Got it?"



'It looks like he comes from the same world as I did', Renya thought while sighing. 'Still going by his outfit, he seems to be a student, but would modern students suddenly become capable of handling explosives, mines, and sniper rifles by just being summoned to another world?'

"You're Kunugi Renya, right? Just the other day there was news about your death, but for you to have been summoned to another world...how unexpected. A truly fantasy-like development that'd make anyone jealous. Did you know? Your grave was looted by someone, it seems."

"So you know about me, huh?"

'I didn't hail from some ancient royalty, and no valuable objects have been buried in my grave either.' Renya felt curious just what weirdo would dig up a grave filled with nothing but bones. 'However, I have no way to find out anything about the criminal anymore. Given that the Lost in front of me has apparently fallen into this world before learning of the grave robber, he most likely doesn't know the details either.'

"Of course I do! I mean whatever you say, you were a living national treasure! Rather, aren't you way young!? So you've become young again through a cheat, eh?"

While being surprised about the information that seemed to be a piece of the memory he had lost, Renya outwardly pretended to be calm, and scornfully laughed as if dealing with an idiot, "So you've been watching the news at least. That's usually more than you could actually ask of any modern student."

"So, why the fuck did you living national treasure get involved with demon persecution and shit like that?"

'Oh,' Renya was puzzled in his mind. Certainly he had mostly encountered the demons as enemies, and if you excluded Emil, most of those encounters were bitter experiences. 'Didn't Emil put me through quite some troubles as well?', Renya immediately retorted, but as long as they hadn't been hostile to him, Renya shouldn't have persecuted any demons.

"It looks like you had some stuff goin' on in the past, but don't you think it kinda sucks to invade the demon country, which hid itself behind a barrier, going as far as deliberately damaging the barrier?"

'Ah I see, that's the explanation he was given,' Renya comprehended. 'Certainly if you keep things fuzzy by saying that there were various issues in the past, you can't describe Kazuya's grasp of the current situation as a huge misinterpretation.'

"I have my own reasons as well. So, you're saying you intend to stick with the demons?"

"I mean, there ain't no protagonist who'd refuse after being asked for help by a princess, aight?"

Renya tilted his head in confusion upon hearing the term "princess." Going with a reasonable guess, the demon king might have a daughter, but Renya felt that there was first a need to make sure that Kazuya wasn't talking about Emil here.

"What kind of girl is that demon princess?"

"She's a cutie. Blond hair, blue eyes, slender, and huge boobs. A princess as if out of a painting."

Renya immediately judged that this wasn't Emil. The information Renya possessed said that demons mostly had violet hair with blond hair being impossible. Although exceptions existed in everything, it was unbelievable for such an exceptional princess to appear so conveniently in this situation.

"So you plan to fight me after getting emotionally moved by that princess?"

"Well, I've got the perfect cheat for just that. Aka, yep."

Kazuya pointed the rod's end at Renya. Renya's knowledge perceived that rod, which possessed an extremely long gun barrel, as the Anti-Material Rifle FR-12.7. Renya couldn't clearly tell whether he had experienced fighting one of those as it seemed to be a part of his lost memories, but he judged that it wasn't anything he saw for the first time since he could immediately identify it.

"If you withdraw, I'll turn a blind eye on you. Be a nice boy, tuck your tail between your legs, and scurry back home to the human territory."

"I've got a reason why I can't withdraw." Renya replied, placing his right hand on his katana's hilt.

While looking at him, Kazuya pulled the trigger of his rifle without any warning.