

"I can...go back?" Kazuya muttered dumbfounded as if having heard something unbelievable, and let go of the heavy machine gun, causing it to drop to the ground with a thud.

While watching it turn into light particles and vanish as Kazuya apparently stopped focusing on its materialization, Renya nodded, "There's that goddess who sent me here. If you go by her words, she's apparently the boss of the goddess or whatever who dragged you into this world, so I believe she should be able to somehow do something about this?"

It wasn't as though Renya doubted the words of that little goddess, but he didn't have any intention to simply swallow everything she said either.

'In the first place, if she calls herself a superior goddess, she should manage her subordinates properly. At the point when she's incapable of that, it's evident that her administrative ability ought to be called into question. Still, going by the fact that she labels herself like that, I think that she should have at least that much power at hand.

"Though I won't be able to contact her, right?"

"I'll get her to contact you if you come to our side."

Upon Renya's reply, accompanied by him muttering in his mind that he didn't use that ability overly often as a retort, Kazuya raised his voice, obviously not believing Renya's statement.

"You're lyin'! Otherwise you'd have gone back a long time ago, no!?"

Even while believing that his doubt was very reasonable, Renya had already prepared an answer. While smiling bitterly, Renya replied, "As you know...I exhausted my life span over there. I don't know how you were summoned to this world, but my former body was cremated and buried."

Since he now had a young body, Renya felt like it'd be possible for him to go back if he wanted to, but even if he tried to return while keeping in mind his current self, he'd be stumped as to what to do over there at this point. That was yet another reason why Renya didn't intend to return to his former world. Given that he possessed no memories, Renya didn't know how much of an ability his former self possessed.

However, if he returned in his current state, he'd be a person with supernatural powers, to put it nicely. Alternatively, in the worst case, he might be treated as a simple monster. Renya wasn't aware whether the world over there had reached a point allowing people to use mana like in this world, but even if he disregarded that part, Renya's current physical abilities would go far beyond the best in the world across the board.

Renya was confident that he'd be able to set new world records in most track-and-field sports, be it short or long distance running, high jump, or long jump. In addition, he should be able to set new world records in all recorded sports. Even when it came to martial arts, he would likely be able to treat the world champions in judo, karate, wrestling and many other martial arts which he had no experience with, let alone his own discipline of kendo, like children. Even if he took on military forces outside of sports, he should be able to assassinate the leaders of all nations while unconcernedly humming a melody in the act.

"There's no way that a monster like me would be able to return to our former world, is there?"

As Renya revealed a smile that mocked himself, Kazuya apparently grasped what Renya was trying to tell him.

"That's..."

"Besides, my family register has already been deleted, I'm sure. Even if I went back there now, I'm pretty certain that I won't find a place to call home anymore."

"Can I...can I really, really go back?" While asking with a trembling voice, Kazuya extended a hand as if asking for help, and walked towards Renya with an unsteady gait.

Since it'd be pitiful to give him false hope, Renya turned his focus towards the little goddess believing that he should confirm with her first by getting in touch with her. Just when Renya was about to reach out to the goddess while thinking that it felt too odd to actually describe it as calling out to her, Kazuya in front of him vanished from his consciousness for an instant.

"Just kiddin'." A levelheaded voice somewhat filled with sneer.

When Renya pulled back his awareness to the movements of Kazuya in front of him, Kazuya's right hand grasped a glowing, black mass of metal, holding it out in Renya's direction. At the moment Renya realized that it was a pistol, two bullets were loudly spat out of its muzzle.

"Guuh!?"

They weren't aimed at a small target like Renya's head, but instead his abdomen which wouldn't move much even if Renya evaded in a hurry.

The bullets, which were fired from a relatively close proximity, usually should be avoidable at this range even for Renya. But, as Renya had been focusing his consciousness on contacting the little goddess, and moreover just started to believe that Kazuya actually wanted to go back to his former world, his movements were too late to dodge the bullets at this distance.

Renya, who had two bullets drilled into his abdomen without even the time to twist his body, groaned lowly, and immediately went down on his knees while suppressing the location of the impacts with his right arm.

While cackling madly, Kazuya thrust the gun he had just now used to shoot at Renya's head, which Renya had apparently lowered because of the pain assailing him.

"Are you an idiot to fall for such crap?"

"...So you...didn't want to go back?" Renya asked while not lifting his face.

Kazuya laughed loudly at that question, answering, "You retarded? Even if I went back to my former world, only borin' days would await me there, you know? In this world I can use my cheat, and as long as I kill you, I'll be honored as a hero by everyone! I'll be able to have my fun with that pretty princess! As if I'd go back to that shitty world when I can have such a stimulating life over

here thanks to my peerless ability to use modern weaponry in a fantasy world!"

"Peaceful, normal days...that's hard to obtain and precious...I believe?"

"You can have your fill of that! I mean, if you croak here after being shot by me, you'll be able to spend those beloved peaceful days of yours in the other world, whether you like it or not!" Kazuya curved his lips upwards and bluntly declared full of composure, while pointing the pistol at Renya's head with his finger placed on the trigger. "A Colorado Kill of two shots in the belly and two in the head. No matter what abilities you fucker might possess, you'll definitely kick the bucket from that."

"As long as you manage to hit me, right?" Renya's words were filled with a calm, freezing bloodlust.

While terrified by that excessive coldness, Kazuya saw a silver flash sweep right beneath the wrist of his right hand as he tried to pull the trigger. Before his brain even registered that he had been attacked, his body, boosted by body strengthening, retreated to dodge the attack.

Kazuya succeeded in barely dodging the silver flash that was swung down after reverting its trajectory from being swung up beforehand while limiting the damage to a shallow cut on his chest, but he had to witness how only the hand gripping the pistol, which had been slashed first, fell down towards the ground where he stood a moment ago as if watching some comedy act.



"Drawing and cutting in one stroke while kneeling? That's what you'd call iai, right?" Renya said while standing up into a seigan stance.

At that moment, finally, Kazuya's right hand flopped down to the ground, and Kazuya himself was assailed by an intense pain as blood sprayed out of the cross-section.

"Iih!?! Gaaah!?"

"You see, these clothes are a special make by Frau, and you can easily compare them to the Kevlar of our former world. It makes breathing a bit hard, but there ain't no way for little crap like pistol bullets to penetrate it."

Renya sheathed his katana and dusted off his clothes, causing two warped bullets to drop to the ground with a clattering.

Undoubtedly Renya had been attacked in an unguarded moment. Renya had believed that Kazuya wanted to go back to his world until he actually shot at him. After all, Kazuya was a victim in Renya's eyes. He had been dragged into this world against his own wishes, and was demanded to fight Renya under the pretext of some kind of slogan. He was a victim who got screwed over on many accounts.

That's why Renya thought Kazuya was going along with the possibility of going back, but it was quite clear that he had erred on this quite dramatically.

"You see, I don't really want to describe it with the term of 'nowadays' youth'."

"F-Fuck..."

Kazuya tried to somehow stop the blood gushing out of his right arm by pinning it down with his left hand, but it was next to impossible to stop the bleeding of a wound that involved completely losing one's hand by just holding it down with the other hand. While Kazuya's face twisted due to the continuously occurring pangs of intense pain, he glared at Renya with eyes full of hatred.

"How dare you do that to my right hand!"

"I don't think you've got any right to complain after shooting two bullets at my abdomen first, though?"

Renya didn't reveal it, but he actually felt quite a shudder when it happened. Certainly, Renya wore Frau's special combat clothing, and its toughness was guaranteed by Frau herself. But, it wasn't as though Frau knew the force of gunshots as there didn't exist anything comparable in this world. And yet, until Renya got shot, he optimistically believed that it might work out one way or another, even if it'd hurt a lot, as long as he had his recovery skill, and operated under the baseless assumption that it wouldn't lead to a fatal injury either way.

In reality, Frau's clothes negated the pistol bullets' penetrative force almost completely. Not only didn't allow her clothing the bullets to pierce through the fiber, but even the impacts from the shots were limited to the level of a slightly stronger body blow by a male adult.

"You shithead...that ain't the same at all. I'll fuckin' slaughter you!"

"I think you should consider the possibility of getting slaughtered before worrying about slaughtering others, though?"

The distance Kazuya had leaped back to evade the return slash of Renya was just a few steps away from the spot where he had been when he shot at Renya. However, for Renya it was a distance that might as well not exist in the first place. And even if Kazuya were to be able to materialize weaponry while his bleeding didn't show any signs of stopping, it'd be impossible for him to use them skilfully.

"Do you understand that you're cornered here?"

As soon as Renya took a step forward, Kazuya retreated the same distance. After taking one more step forward, Renya slowly bent down and picked up Kazuya's right hand. Pinching it with his left hand, he shook it around.

"You don't really believe that I'm going to forgive you for shooting at my abdomen, do you?"

Renya casually tossed Kazuya's hand away, just for it to dance through air and fall to the ground in four pieces. The katana he should have drawn just now, looked like it had never left its scabbard. Due to the completely invisible slashing attack, Kazuya's face paled for a completely different reason than his constant blood loss.

After having completely destroyed the hand that might have been stuck back on the arm if Kazuya had picked it up and applied healing on it, Renya kept walking.

"Have you resolved yourself?"

"Kuuuh...stop..."

If nothing were to happen, those should become Kazuya's final words in this world. He extended his bloodstained left hand after stopping to hold down his wound, appealing to Renya to not come any closer.

Without minding that, Renya advanced and was just about to slash up diagonally. But someone jumped between the two men, and fended off Renya's slash.

"Oh?"

"Tsk."

The one being surprised was Renya, whereas the one clicking his tongue was the intruder. Renya widened his eyes after seeing the thing that blocked his attack while causing sparks to scatter between both parties.

"A katana?"

The intruder's whole body was covered by a cloak with the hood lowered so that the face remained

invisible. The clothes peeking out beneath the cloak were something similar to a khaki military uniform. The legs were covered by something like boots up to the knees.

Even more so than the clothes which gave Renya the impression of having seen them somewhere before, the item, which had blocked his attack, made Renya perplexed as he wondered whether such a weapon actually existed in this world.

To Renya it looked like something he'd call a saber. It had a plain, round guard, and a black, matted hilt. Even the blackened scabbard hanging at their waist was of an extremely frugal make. And yet, the blade, which had stopped Renya's blow, was clearly a very sharp one. It also didn't look like it got damaged in any way after blocking Renya's katana which had always one-sidedly damaged the opponents' weapons, even when facing a great sword handled by a demon.

"The second one?"

As Renya asked since he predicted that the newcomer wasn't an inhabitant of this world, going by their clothes and weaponry, the answer of the intruder sounded aloof and so calm that you wouldn't believe that they had exchanged slashes just now.

"Who knows. I, for once, don't know how many others besides me exist." It was the voice of a young man.

Due to his voice that got stuck in his ears for some reason, Renya cracked a joke, "Oh well, I guess we'll just go with you being the third then?"

"I don't really care about the order you assign to me."

Renya evaded the sweeping kick, unleashed by the young man while answering, by jumping backwards. While alertly thrusting his saber out at Renya, who had widened the distance while strengthening his wariness of this mysterious intruder, the young man said to Kazuya without looking back, "Hurry up and get lost. You're in the way."

"Shut up...but, thanks for the help." Kazuya honestly thanked the newcomer despite insulting him at first.

While suppressing the blood which was still dripping out of his wound, he withdrew while making sure to stay behind the intruder. Renya planned to go after him to finish the job if there was an opportunity to do so, but unable to spot even the slightest opening in the guard of the invader in front of his eyes, he missed the timing to slay Kazuya in the end.

"What a troublesome guy..."

"The same back at you. Well, I guess I'll have you keep me company for a bit until that manages to get away."

Renya was positively surprised that there was someone among the enemies who possessed the admirable disposition to serve as shield for the sake of letting his ally escape, but without doing anything about the intruder in front of him, Renya didn't think that he'd be able to chase after Kazuya either. Seeing how Renya accepted his lot, and readjusted his katana, a bit of happiness

crept into the presence of the intruder.

