

Chapter 6 - It seems to be a Confession and the Conditions for a Return

Renya wondered what he should do if the Rajah family's head would truly come running to the place where they had been talking while standing after telling the officer to go call him. But his worries proved to be needless. Even if they might be demons, their handling of matters like these wasn't all that different from how humans tackled it. The demons apparently wouldn't allow a suspicious person, who had shown up all of a sudden, to immediately meet with a person of noble lineage either.

After having to wait for some while, a demon, who seemed to be a servant, sprinted their way at long last, and guided Renya and Emil to a room. The two entered a very normal parlor, which was completely outside Renya's expectation since he had believed that they'd be led to some big room like an audience hall. It was an exceedingly modest parlor with just a low table in its center, flanked by two sofas on either side.

A single male demon was already waiting inside the room, greeting the newcomers without even trying to get up as he sat deeply in a sofa with his back leaned backwards. His hair color was similar to that of Emil: light purple, and his skin was dark brown, as to be expected. His long middle-parted hair carelessly spilled down past his shoulders. Since he had a slender face, he looked like a woman at first glance, but his eyes were long slits and contained a sharp glint. He was a man with eyes giving one the impression that he might as well be a carnivore of the cat family. His body build was somewhat thinner than that of Renya, but probably because he had directly come back here from the battlefield, his neck and below was covered by plate armor made in a way that let Renya wonder whether it was a little bit too ornamental. Next to him lay a large sword as long as he was tall, and a full-face helmet - this one also appearing to be adorned with quite a few ornaments.

Behind him stood two fully armed soldiers, wearing full body plate armor, longswords, and shields, apparently serving as his guards and making it clear that they wouldn't try facing the human in a one-on-one.

Once Renya cast a glance at Emil next to him, wondering whether this was the head of the Rajah family and Emil's so-called younger brother, Emil slightly drew back her chin, indicating her confirmation, after seeing the question in Renya's eyes.

"So you came, human? Well, sit down."

Although it wasn't as though Renya hadn't expected this treatment from the very beginning, Emil's brother did hold the highest position if considering Renya's position in this place, and thus Renya sat down on the sofa opposite of him just as offered while believing that this reception might have been somewhat unavoidable.

Emil's brother restrained Emil, who was about to sit down next to Renya, by pointing his palm at her.

"Could I have you leave us alone, elder sister? As far as I've heard, it seems like you have special feelings for this lowly human."

"S-Special feelings!?" Emil got flustered after having this pointed out to her.

Seeing his sister's reaction, Emil's brother snorted in a bored manner, and continued, "I don't really care whether those feelings of yours are towards him as a man or as an experimental animal, but since it's possible that you'll be unable to make an impartial judgment, it's wrong for you to participate in this talk."

"N...guh!"

Renya held back Emil, who planned to object, with a look. "Shion and the others are up there. Since they might get worried if I don't come back for a long time, I'd like you to take care of that side for me, Emil. I'll talk with him."

It was a forced reason, but for the time being Emil apparently could agree with it, reluctantly desisted from speaking up, bowed at Renya and her brother, and immediately left the room thereafter. After the room's door closed and Emil's brother confirmed that Emil's presence had disappeared, he spoke up.

"I've heard about you bastard from my sister. You can save yourself the introductions."

"I haven't heard anything about you from Emil. Could I have you introduce yourself?"

Due to Renya asking this while being fully aware that it was rude, the soldiers' aura immediately became menacing, but while restraining them by holding up a hand, Emil's brother answered, "Jade Rajah. The current head of the Rajah family. It sounds like you've been taking care of my misfit sister."

"Misfit, eh?"

Even if that condescending attitude of his couldn't be helped since demons had a trait of generally belittling the other races, Renya got fairly irritated at him badmouthing a fellow demon like Emil who counted as friend for him. Beginning to think that he might need to talk back here while taking into account that the talks might break down in the worst case, Renya suddenly noticed how Jade held something similar to a palm-sized notepad in his left hand, and moreover with something written on its surface.

While narrowing his eyes a bit, Renya read what was written there.

<It looks like you've always taken good care of my sister in your territory. I've been worried that she might have caused you trouble in some way.>

Renya's eyes turned into dots in response. Seemingly having realized from Renya's reaction that he had read his message, Jade wrote something new with quick and fluent hand movements, albeit keeping his eyes pinned on Renya's face, and showed the new text to Renya while continuing to speak.

"So, for what reason has a lowly human like you visited land ruled by demons?"

<Would it be alright for me to ask what kind of business you might have with us?>

Thanks to the blessing from the little goddess, Renya's eyes perceived all letters as something he could understand. If he had accidentally activated his <Appraisal> ability he always forgot about, he'd know that Jade used the common language used on the human continent for writing the text on his notepad.

"Umm...I was worried about Emil not coming back after going out, so I came to check on her situation..."

"For the likes of a frail human to worry about a demon without knowing your own standing is the height of folly, isn't it?"

<Why yes, thank you very much for your kind consideration. Allow me to deeply apologize for having made you worried.>

Wondering what this second communication channel was about, Renya somewhat managed to comprehend the course of events after looking at the soldiers standing behind Jade. In short, while the fact of the demons looking down on the other races was a hindrance, Jade also had to keep up his reputation with his subordinates, and thus he had no choice but to use a provocative tone with Renya.

However, Jade apparently considered this treatment far too impolite towards Renya and the others, who had chased after his sister out of worry, going even as far employing a dragon. As a last resort, he came up with the idea of talking with Renya while using two separate channels.

To begin with, in this world where exchange between races wasn't thriving, most of the demons, who were perceived as enemies all over the world, shouldn't know the human language, which led to him basing his plan on that anticipation.

'In that case, couldn't he simply have his subordinates step out? Though they'd probably protest vehemently to leave Jade, a demon noble, to meet all alone with a shady human.



Judging that he should continue the conversation while pretending to not have realized, Renya decided to ignore Jade's words, and instead pay attention to the written text.

"I'd like you to tell me the reason why Emil can't leave this place if you know."

"You just need to ask her yourself, don't you? Maybe she simply wanted to watch this uproar as a spectator?"

<Very likely she can't desert us after having seen our current situation.>

In Renya's eyes, the forces currently surrounding the town could be called a large army. On top of the town being at a huge disadvantage in regards to numbers, most of the forces outside the walls were demons from what Renya could tell after looking down on them from the sky.

The demon armies Renya had seen and heard about so far mostly consisted of monsters. It was his first time to witness an army where most of its soldiers were demons. Demons, where just one of them would cause a huge riot in a human country, had gathered in numbers that could be defined as a large army, and were in the process of attacking this town. Even phrasing it modestly, it was a situation that could be called hopeless for the defenders.

"She's a foolish sister. She should have obediently stayed where she was, sheltered by humans."

<It wouldn't have come to this if I hadn't informed her of our parents' death. I've been regretting to having done so.>

Renya could consent with this being the reason for her having come back here. Renya believed that it'd have been less trouble if she could have at least told them about it before leaving, but it made sense if Emil believed that she might receive contra if she started talking about going back to the demon country, and thus left silently. Even demons were living beings. Because it was proper for them to at least possess family bonds, Renya thought that it was reasonable for Emil wanting to go back home after hearing about her parents' death.

In other words, Emil had come back home because her parents died, and in the middle of that, the town got surrounded and attacked by a demon army. Unable to go back to Renya's place by herself with this bad war situation, she remained here. This was the full story leading up to now.

"My sister is a misfit as a demon, but she looks reasonably beautiful. Since you're quite infatuated with her, you've chased her all the way to this place, right? Then grab her quickly, and scurry back home with her."

<Please take care of my sister.>

Jade nodded lightly by lowering his eyes so that the soldiers wouldn't notice. Renya felt uncomfortable by that gesture.

"That means you're entrusting Emil's safety to our side?"

"You've gone as far as employing a dragon to fly all the way here. If it's just her, it should be a breeze to take her back home, right? We will resolve our own issues in our own way. Something

like the help of a human is unnecessary."

There was no message through the notepad.

"How weird. It kinda sounds to me as if you're telling me to somehow let Emil alone get away, don't you agree?"

"You came here with that in mind, didn't you?"

"You mentioned that you've heard about me from Emil, right?" Without replying to Jade's question, Renya confronted him with another question.

Without understanding the intent, Jade still nodded, showing no agitation on his face.

"Does that mean you thought I was a human who would have his hands full with letting Emil get away one way or another, after hearing Emil's stories about me?"

The presence of Renya as he noisily stood up like a shape lifting its sickle-shaped neck was pregnant with a thick air of intimidation. Its intensity caused Jade's body to reflexively freeze on the sofa, and was strong enough to put the soldiers behind him on guard. But even the soldiers were unable to place their hands on the hilts of their longswords, being at their limit with just staring at Renya.

While releasing a coercion strong enough to make them believe that they'd get killed in the instant they touched their weapons, Renya continued speaking.

"If you've properly listened to what she told you, it'd be normal to think that I might be somehow able to do something about your situation. And yet you're telling me to grab Emil and quickly run away. I don't know if you're an utter idiot, but it's not that you haven't considered that option, right?"

"That's...because something like the help of humans is..."

"If she could lend it, Emil Rajah would even borrow the help of the devil. That's the kind of demon she ought to be. Otherwise she wouldn't have expressly lived under my roof, don't you think?"

Getting his words interrupted, Jade had no words he could return to Renya's statement. He kept staring at Renya with eyes as if he was looking at something unbelievable, all the while keeping his mouth shut. Renya waited for a while, but since he spotted no noticeable reaction from Jade, he continued speaking.

"Not to mention your responsibility towards your residents, if you call yourself a noble. Do you plan to entrust Emil to me, and happily die in battle with your residents in this place? Or..." At that point he made a short break, and after taking some time to collect his thoughts, Renya put his own guess into words while glaring straight into Jade's eyes with a look that wouldn't allow any deception or silence. "...Is there another reason to let Emil alone get away, even if it's in exchange for everything else?"

"That...is..."

It was just a vague feeling, but Renya had thought that Emil might be no ordinary demon. The biggest reason was Emil completely lacking one of the demons' traits, albeit no one had brought it up with her for some reason. The demons' traits were purple hair, dark brown skin, and the shape of their pupils. You could say that Emil mostly conformed with the demons when it came to the eyes and hair, but her skin color was abnormally white.

Renya had assessed that it might be related to her lineage, but after having seen Jade, her little brother, that reason became unfeasible. After all, Jade was a demon endowed with everything you'd call the traits of a demon. In that case, Emil's missing demonic trait had to be caused by something else, and Renya thought that Jade should be aware of that cause. At the same time he believed that this might be the very reason why Jade had pushed so much for entrusting Emil's safety to Renya.

"Answer, Jade Rajah. Emil is one of my precious friends. I won't allow anything bad to happen to her."

It wasn't as though Renya had used magic arts. However his voice forced Jade to speak as if being enchanted by a spell.

