

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 as 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.



"Emil Rajah is...my big sister is...a <Hero>." The words that Jade spoke intermittently, as if squeezing them out, felt as if they passed from one of Renya's ears, through his brain, and then out through the other ear.

Renya wondered whether that demon, who was looking mortified in front of his eyes, got an overdose of coercion and made some joke comment without really knowing what he was saying. Still, he admired Jade as being quite a guy for having spat out such messed up words under these circumstances. But, when Renya spotted even the soldiers standing behind Jade looking flabbergasted, he perceived that Jade's statement might not be just him screwing around. And yet, unable to believe the words he had just heard, Renya suddenly came up with the idea that he might have misheard something, and thus asked Jade once more.

"Sorry, it's my first time to use the demon language, so maybe I misunderstood something. Could you repeat your words once more?" Renya asked while paying attention to not come across as rude.

In response, the soldiers behind Jade also for some reason. Apparently this was news that had heard for the first time as well, but contrary to Renya, who worried whether it was something the soldiers should listen to, Jade had apparently become a bit more comfortable in talking about it, now that he mentioned it once, and thus his next words came out a lot more smoother than before, albeit slowly.

"I said my sister, Emil Rajah, is a being which is commonly referred to as <Hero> in this world."

"...Are you serious?" Renya asked Jade once more, as what he was saying didn't sound quite real to Renya.

"It's reasonable for you to not believe me. But, it's the truth."

"Is that something the soldiers behind you should listen to?"

Even if Renya shelved the question about the authenticity of Jade's words, he still understood from Jade's face that this was undoubtedly a topic quite difficult for him to speak about. Even more so, when seeing the shock on the faces of the soldiers, which made it pretty clear that they had never heard anything about this.

Renya worried that one would usually have people, who weren't supposed to hear a certain topic, step out during such conversations, but probably because Jade had always hidden this deep in his heart, he now looked as if a weight had been taken off his mind as he answered Renya, "There's no way I wouldn't let my subordinates listen to something I allow a human bastard like you to hear, is there?"

"This is something my dead parents have very likely informed Emil about in the form of a letter by now," with that preface, Jade began to explain to Renya and the soldiers, who were all still dumbfounded, "Among the four races on this world, it's set for the three races besides the humans to select a hero from among themselves. The appearance of the heroes on the occasion of the humans summoning a hero from another world is a fact that's commonly known these days, but the appearance of a hero also includes the demons as inhabitants of the same world."

This was a truth known only to the demons. In the first place, demons weren't all that different from humans, except for their slightly differently shaped eyes, their brown skin color, and their violet hair colors. Even among humans you'd find people with dark brown skin, and on top of the eye shape not being very easy to tell unless you got considerably close to a demon, you couldn't really use it as a trait to differentiate demons from humans since there were individual differences among demons, too.

In other words, if a demon changed their hair color like Emil, a human wouldn't be able to tell that they were a demon at a glance, so they wouldn't get exposed even if they blended in with the other races and joined the demon king subjugation. However, when it came to the demon's side, only the act of changing their hair color was apparently something they couldn't quite stand, even when setting aside many other issues, and thus there didn't exist any demons who'd go this far to blend in with the humans.

Renya remembered how Croire got terribly surprised how Emil changed her hair color when she started to live under Renya's roof, and pointed it out.

"Fair point. However, there are various reasons for this. For example, one bodily trait will appear for those among us who carry the hero factor. It's them lacking one of the demons' traits."

"That's the hair color? ...In Emil's case it's the skin color, isn't it!?"

Even if they had a resistance against changing their hair color with their own hands, it'd be a different matter if their hair wasn't violet by birth. In the past, demon heroes, who lacked this hair color, apparently assisted the heroes of the other races for the most part. However, had they loudly announced their being a hero, they'd be questioned about their race. No matter how much they would name themselves as heroes, the fact of them being demons would make it impossible for the other races to accept one of their hated enemies in their midst. In the past, many people apparently became companions of heroes without letting others know their race, fought together with them,

and secretly left after the demon king was defeated, but most of those people were demon heroes, according to Jade.

Emil was the type of hero lacking the demon's skin color. Renya could fully agree with that as Emil's skin was so white that you couldn't even see any blood veins, let alone the demons' characteristic brown skin. Thinking about it now, Renya had to admit that Emil not having a brown skin like all other demons was odd, but Renya simply assessed that she had changed her skin color for some reason, just like she had done with her hair color.

However, that wouldn't explain why Emil had expressly kept her hair color as violet when they reunited in those rocky mountains, Renya could agree with the story if it was an in-born hair color.

"It's not said that you can't defeat the demon king unless you gather all heroes. Though it might also be a faulty way to call the demon hero a being who doesn't matter either way."

"No, wait a sec. It's fine for a hero to appear among demons and all, but why would that hero lend a hand in defeating the demon king? The demon king is the ruler of all demons, right? Even if the demon king and hero might be antipodes, why would they help killing their own king?"

It was impossible for him to mention it here, but Renya was aware of the battle between demon king and heroes in this world actually being part of a game played by the supervisors of this world. Renya always felt doubtful what he should be thinking about a game where the battle would always be fairly unbalanced since it hosted demons vs. everyone else, but if on top of that, a hero even appeared at the demon king's feet as another component, Renya felt like it completely disqualified it as a game.

"It means the demon hero is a wildcard who can support either side. They can ally with the demon king and ambush the other races, or they can become a hero for the demons to save them, if the demon king turns into a calamity unbearable by the demons. That's how it works."

Renya understood that the demon hero was similar to a joker who might become an ally or enemy for the demon king, a being overpowering any single hero in abilities. If the demon hero joined the demon's side, it'd result in the kings of the humans and elves becoming demon kings for that hero. If you considered that hero as gambling element that could immediately plunge the demon king into a bad situation if they increased the heroes' side by one more or make the game proceed favorably for the demon king if he won the demon hero over as ally, Renya could somewhat understand the intent behind this.

"It's become so bloody complicated..."

'Give me a damn rule book,' Renya cursed.

"If the demon king's rule is for the sake of his people, the hero will become his strength, and if the demon king becomes a tyrant terrorizing even his own people, the hero will simply help take him down. Even for you humans it's not unusual to kill a king you brought to power with your own hands, is it?"

"That's, well...you're not wrong."

It was a common story. Similar events took place in Renya's former world, and if one were to scan through the history of this world, they'd find many instances of the same here as well.

"So being a hero wasn't limited to males, huh?"

"That's a condition limited to only the human's hero, I think. Among the other races mostly men come forward as heroes, but it's not like there were no female heroes in the past."

"What would be the reason to try killing a hero, who could increase your military power, all of a sudden?"

"There are two reasons I can think of. First, the idea that it's easier to get rid of an element, where you don't know what it'll do, before it turns into a problem. This is the reason why quite a few of the past demon heroes met their end at the demon king's hand."

Renya could somehow guess the other reason. With a feeling of wanting to match up answers, Renya spoke up before Jade could mention the second reason.

"The other reason would be the demon king having judged that he'll be able to win this fight even without the hero at his side, huh?"

"It's as you say. The stronger the demon king, the more of a nuisance the existence of the hero becomes."

'It looks like it takes quite a bit of time and effort if the demon hero decides to become an enemy, and even if they become the demon king's ally, they won't count for much of a reinforcement in combat power, but isn't that treatment way too terrible?' Renya wondered. 'But, the ones who set it like this while perceiving all of it as a game are the supervisors. I'm sure they haven't considered the sufferings of the people, who drew the short stick of becoming a demon hero, even in the slightest.' Renya sighed.

"What's the reason for you not exposing Emil as a hero until now?"

'Wouldn't a person lacking the racial traits be found out right away? Back then the demon king might not have existed yet, and the humans hadn't summoned their hero either, but even if people didn't know whether she was the hero, her family should have at least known that there would be suspicions about it.'

"My sister left the house early on and fully devoted herself to research." Jade answered as if recalling the past. A pang of bitterness was visible on his face. "Though you could also say that she was induced to do so. My research-loving sister even used her own body as a research subject...and transferred her consciousness to a body that looked like a normal demon. Her original body was hidden away, so she probably wouldn't have been found out by anyone."

'It's probably the body I fought with when we met for the first time,' Renya recalled. 'If I assume that Emil's existence wouldn't have been exposed to the demon king with that body as cover, it's my fault for destroying it and returning Emil to her original body.'

"The present demon king...I don't know what he's thinking. I'd still understand if he was targeting

my sister as an individual, but it's inconceivable for him to suddenly be slaying my parents."

"It's not just your guys' parents, probably."

"What?" Jade's expression changed.

Renya told Jade and the soldiers about the town they had stopped by before coming here.

"Until we came, the demon country had been isolated from outside. In that case, the only being capable of easily eradicating a demon town would be the demon king, right?"

"Your Majesty...Your Majesty, just what are you...?" Jade groaned lowly as he drummed his clenched fists on his knees.

Before long he spoke to Renya while staring at his face. His voice was filled with so much bitterness and grief that even Renya, who didn't harbor many positive feelings for demons, reflexively straightened himself.

"That's why. We have once sworn loyalty to His Majesty the Demon King, no matter how we'd be treated. While it may be true that we don't understand his thinking, we can't do much about it now. But, that doesn't apply to my sister. She was shunned and kept at distance from the very start. There's no need for her to keep us company here."

"Okay?"

"If we continue to resist here, even His Majesty might not be able to have his eyes everywhere. Isn't it possible for you to use that time to take my sister and return to your homeland? I know you won't be able to listen when it's a request from me, but you don't think so badly of my sister, do you?"

'How should I answer this?

While looking back into Jade's eyes who kept his gaze pinned on Renya with a serious expression, Renya scratched his cheek, obviously slightly troubled.



Renya told Jade that he'd explain the situation to his friends, discussed the next steps with him, and learned about the location of the room which had been prepared for them. Once he reached their room without getting lost, Renya opened the door, about to go inside. Just to silently close it again after witnessing what was going on inside.

"Wai-!? Renya! Renya!? Why are you running away!?"

"Emiiil! I was so worried about you! Being able to meet you again makes me so haaappy!"

"H-Hey, how about saving me!? Wai-, hey! Stop it...! Aren't you aware of your own monstrous strength, damn it!? LET-GO-OF-ME!!!"

Through the door Renya could hear screams asking for some kind of help and excessive, overboarding, shrill squeals of joy, most likely stemming from overflowing happiness over the reunion, but while shutting those out of his own perception and telling himself that he didn't see anything, Renya tried to leave this place.

But, it wasn't as though he had a destination. Still leaving here would be by leaps and bounds better than entering that room.

There was a danger that he might get criticized by the demons if he wandered around too much, but once he considered that it might not lead to anything too critical as long as he brought up Jade or Emil's name, he started to believe that it wouldn't be such a bad idea to go on a little exploration tour of a place where demons, and moreover noble ones, lived, as he didn't really have any chance to do so before.

"Umm, Renya?"

It was Rona who called out to him after quietly opening the door and peeking out through the gap. As Renya stopped since he didn't have the heart to indifferently leave with Ronya's face looking somewhat apologetic, Rona continued speaking, "I'm very sorry, but could I have you come inside, please? We won't be able to hold any decent conversation without stopping 'that'. I'm also worried about Emil's body, even if demons might be much sturdier than us."

While assessing that the need to worry about the demon in a brawl between a human and a demon was kinda unusual, to say the least, Renya slowly and gravely nodded at Rona's plea, placed a hand on the door and opened it carefully. As he stepped inside, he noticed the room's fairly terrible state.

The demons had apparently prepared a spacious room, considering their number of people, with sofas and a low table being set up in the center. And right now Shion was using that low table to wrestle - she'd call it hugging - with Emil on top of it. Emil, still in her dress, seemed to frantically struggle, attempting to somehow free herself from Shion's embrace, but because Shion's physical strength was beyond abnormal or because Emil wasn't overly serious, Emil continued to be swung around in the room's middle, unable to escape.

Each time she got whirled around, the hem of her dress got rolled up, allowing a peek at her bare legs or something more. In short, it was a scene that could only be called tragic.

Probably because Emil's upper body fervently squirmed within Shion's arms, her dress slid to the sides or down all over her body, making it somewhat difficult for Renya to decide whether he should enjoy the view or silently avert his eyes.

"Renya! Stop staring and get Shion off me, will you!?"

"I wonder whether I'm really in any position to pour cold water on such a heartfelt reunion."

"Liar! There's no way for you to ask yourself something like that!!"

"Shion looks pretty happy to me, though?"

If you gave a dog something that delighted it, it'd sometimes result in the dog shredding it apart

after biting strongly into it while shaking its head around. Renya judged that this might be a similar situation. In the meantime, Emil cried out to him in despair.



"Hey! Just now you thought about something totally rude, didn't you!?"

"I was just thinking that it wouldn't be torn apart anyway since it's so durable."

"What are you talking about!?"

"...The pretty dress looks like it's going to be ripped apart anytime soon ~no."

Seemingly having been afraid of getting dragged into this whole mess, Frau had evacuated to the wall. Now she scuttled over to Renya, and tightly clung to his waist.

Once Renya looked at where she came from while gently caressing her head, he spotted Croire leaning against the wall with her arms folded whereas Az and Liaris stuck to the wall, seemingly wanting to blend in with it, while holding each other's hands with somewhat cramped expressions. Croire kept her calm as if this whole scene was an everyday occurrence, but Renya could feel that Az and Liaris were quite nervous.

Renya breathed out lightly, thinking that he couldn't really blame them for it. From their point of view, it was next to impossible to act completely normally in a place teeming with demons.

"I think they're nervous for another reason, you know?" Rona retorted in no time.

In response, Renya stroked his jaw, pondering whether the people around him weren't reading his thoughts way too easily as he somehow showed it too clearly on his face.

"I can somehow grasp the general gist since we've been hanging out together for quite a while now." Rona added with a wry smile.

While wondering whether this was the way things worked, Renya called out to Shion who had transformed into a devastating storm atop the table.

"Stay, Shion!"

"I think that's a command you'd use for a dog ~no." Frau commented in astonishment, but as the meaning apparently got through to the person in question, Shion immediately stopped moving.

Then Renya and Shion fixedly stared at each other. After a little while, Renya cast his eyes down, and whispered, "Good girl."

"What the hell's good about this!?" Emil screamed while being swung around once again.

In response to her gaze, pleading with him to stop this, Renya composedly announced, "Let her do it until she gets tired of it. That will save us further troubles down the road."

Everyone except for the people concerned asked themselves whether it would really work out as Renya said it would. But, none of them rebuked his words.

Given that it was clearly obvious to Renya that each of them would hate to be told that they should stop this if they made some imprudent comment here, he decided to let Shion do as she pleased for

a while since he didn't need to worry about any potential criticism.

"It's truly wonderful to see that you're safe and sound."

"Okay, listen, just now I wasn't all that safe and sound..."

In the end, it required another 20 minutes after Renya's entry for Shion to get fully satisfied and release Emil. Emil, who had been continuously whirled around during all that time, looked like a mess, with her clothes completely disheveled, her hair being wildly ruffled, and her eyes being lifeless and empty. Currently she was laying like a corpse on a sofa, screaming to have the label 'after the fact' attached to her.

On the other hand, Shion didn't look tired at all, despite having thrown around a person over such a long time, and her expression, as she looked at the wasted Emil, seemed rather full of life thanks to its glossy feel.

It woke the urge in Renya to suspect that she might actually possess some kind of energy drain ability, but since he'd likely found out about it if that was the case, he harbored the dull impression that she was simply overflowing with vitality, and thus moved on to invite everyone in the room to take a seat on the sofas.

One person was down in the ropes, but after waiting for everyone to find a free spot, Renya informed them about the information he had heard from Jade. Since it wasn't as though he had been forbidden to speak about it or anything, Renya frankly told them everything.

The news of Emil actually being a hero was received with surprise by everyone except for Emil. With only Emil forming a faint smile on her lips and not looking all that surprised, Renya asked her whether she had already known about this to confirm his suspicions.

"Well...more or less, yeah." Emil's voice as she answered was intermittent, but this didn't stem from her having received a shock, but merely from her having been unable to fully recover from the previous ordeal's effects.

"I'd like to hear your opinions what we should do from now on." When Renya looked at everyone, it was strangely Liaris who answered first.

"Eh? We're not going to simply grab Emil and head back to Klinge?"

"I'm not gonna go with you, you know?" Emil responded to Liaris while raising her body on the sofa.

Renya alone looked up to the ceiling as it confirmed what he had suspected. The others stared at Emil in surprise, as if asking her what she was talking about.

"I can't face running away from here all by myself. I mean, it's not like I received much love in this family, but telling me to scurry back to Klinge while leaving my brother, his retainers, and the residents behind is kinda unreasonable, don't you think?"

"Emil, that's..."

Emil restrained Shion, who started to say something while rising half to her feet, with a look, and continued, "The demons, when it comes to this world, are generally hated by all other races. I think that's the reason? Even with the emotional bonds being weak, we've got a strong sense of fellowship. Abandoning my brother and the others and going back to Klinge might be simple. Especially with Renya being here as well. But, I'm 100% sure that I'll regret having left them in the lurch here after returning to Klinge."

"That's...but..."

"Demons have a long life span. Though it's not like I know how long I'm going to live. But, I can't stand the idea of always being tormented by feelings of regret for the rest of my life. If that's going to be the case, it'd be better to just perish here."

"Emil..." Shion tried to file some kind of protest, but she refrained as she perceived that she wouldn't be able to shake Emil's decision on this.

While looking truly apologetic, Emil said to her, "Sorry, Shion. Sorry to all of you guys as well. It must be disappointing to be told something like this after having gone through all the trouble to come to such a distant place, but would it be possible for you guys to head back without me?"

"Out of the question. There's no way that we're going to leave you behind." Renya's response to Emil's words, which somehow sounded like an entreaty, was curt and decisive.

His answer caused Emil's face to distort, looking somehow happy and yet pained.

"I'm going to fight back if you try to force me, just you know."

While smoothing down her ruffled hair with one hand and fixing her dress with the other, Emil glared at Renya, but he didn't seem to take any notice of that.

"It's no big deal to roll you up in a bamboo mat, but that in itself would be meaningless. Hence, let me confirm some things with you."

Without minding Emil's puzzled look, Renya confronted her with his question, "Who do you recognize as those needing protection? Is it okay for me to assume them to be your brother, his retainers, and the residents?"

Due to the all too sudden question, Emil brooded while darting her eyes around, and then replied, "T-That's, well...that's all of them, I'd say?"

Emil's answer wasn't quite clear. This came from her answering while not being able to assess whether it was alright to answer like that since she couldn't grasp where Renya was trying to go with this.

Emil believed the probability for Renya to lay out some kind of trap for her to be exceedingly low in the current situation, but neither could she entirely exclude it. She felt that her being caught in some promise and being taken back against her wishes was the one thing she had to avoid at all costs.

"Your brother and his retainers are here, right? What about the residents?"

Even while feeling somewhat confused by Renya's next question, Emil frantically wracked her brain, recalling the requested information, and answered as truthfully as possible.

"Since the army of His Majesty the Demon King has advanced all the way up to our town...I think that those, who managed to run away, took refuge in the town. Those who didn't manage to get away are probably dead by now, but what about it...?" Emil answered without much confidence.

"That's a big help as it makes things easy." Without any interest in the way she answered, Renya wrapped up matters as if he didn't care as long as he got the information he required.

Fixing his shallow seating posture on the sofa, he folded his arms, closed his eyes, and started to ponder about something.

Seeing him act like that, Emil and Shion started to whisper amongst each other.

"Hey, do you have a clue what he might be planning?"

"You know...there's no way for me to know that, right?"

"Seeing him like that, aren't you somehow worried? I mean, with Renya you never know what he's going to perpetuate next."

"I agree with you on that, but it'll be alright. Leaving things to Renya shouldn't result in a terrible outcome..."

"You sure?"

"I suppose you just need to make up your resolve a bit."

"I can hear you girls, you know?"

Once Renya opened one eye after getting interrupted in his deliberations, and cast a glance at the two, both quickly fell silent, and averted their eyes, looking in the far distance. Judging that it'd be fine, whatever their reaction might be, as long as they stayed silent, Renya delved into the sea of his thoughts once more, and checked his own line of thinking while comparing it against the draconic knowledge he had previously received from Emedra.

"I think this is going to work, but...Frau, Croire, I need to consult with you two for a bit."

"Master, what did you come up with ~no?"

Frau looked curiously at Renya whereas Croire donned a somewhat doubtful expression.

"There can be only one conclusion under these circumstances, no?" On the other hand, Renya answered Frau with a look as if not understanding what could cause them to be so curious or wary. "It's the way how we can all happily go back to Klinge."

While everyone wondered whether such a method actually existed, Renya began to slowly explain what he had in mind.