

Chapter 213 - Invasion of Kanezawa ⑤

Since it'd stand out if they acted in a large army, I order the part of my subordinates, who've been on standby, to move at a distance that wouldn't expose them to the humans. Then I wait for Kaede to report the start of the battle between the main force of the Kanezawa Liberation Army and Demon King Kaoru.

Victory will be decided by speed. I have my subordinates, the ones who will become the main force, get on the load-carrying trays of large trucks, and get everything in order so that they can move at any time. Personally, I also move all the way to the location where I'm going to start 《Reign》.

How many humans have headed over to Hakusan? How many are left in Ishikawa University?

A goblin bloodkin, whom I sent out earlier to scout, has informed me about several large buses and cars departing the university. Even now, many cars and buses are driving off towards Hakusan from the university. That makes it important to smartly time the start of our operation. If we act too fast, it's possible that the main force of the liberation army is going to turn around. If it's too late, they'll come back here after Kaoru's 《Reign》 succeeds or fails, resulting in battle.

There are two hours and ten minutes left until Kaoru's 《Reign》 finishes. If it comes to moving with a big group, it takes more than an hour to move from the battlefield in Hakusan to Ishikawa University. It's indispensable to launch 《Reign》 as soon as the battle between the humans and Kaoru starts.

I silently waited for Kaede to contact me.



One hour and forty minutes left until Kaoru's 《Reign》 finishes.

——～♪

The melody informing me of a call plays on my smartphone.

『Started』

This is the signal indicating the start of our operation.

——《Reign》!

I close my eyes and think the skill name, while holding out my right hand towards the ground. The ground trembles, and then a black vortex, with a diameter of around 30 cm, that seems to swallow space around it, comes into existence right in front of my right hand.

The usual text stream is being displayed on my smartphone's display.

『You have started 《Reign》』

『《Reign》 has been announced to the hostile entities within its effective range』

『Please remove all hostile entities in range within 180 minutes』

『Alert! Hostile forces confirmed within the effective range. Please eliminate them at once.』

『Display map of effective range? 【YES】 【NO】』

As soon as I tap 【YES】, a simple map showing the area in a radius of 5 km around me shows up on my phone.

The number of humans remaining in Ishikawa University amounts to roughly 30,000. Approximately 300 humans are spread out over the remaining area. Seemingly still elated from their previous, great victory, none of them shows up as yellow dots, willing to surrender.

——The first and second mobile units are to head east! Around 100 humans are hiding there, so get rid of them!

——The third mobile unit is to head west! Around 50 humans are hiding there, so get rid of them!

I hurl instructions at the mobile units who I made head out first.

Layla is in command of the first mobile unit. She has three bloodkin and 50 dhampirs under her. Dakel is in command of the second mobile unit. He has three bloodkin and 50 dark elves under him. Saburou is in command of the third mobile unit. It's a new unit mostly consisting of former Demon Kings, who have submitted to me and usually work on defense these days.

I have prioritized the distribution of high-ranking items to the mobile units. It should be no problem to leave the few scattered humans to the mobile units.

The humans remaining in the university will pose the main problem.

——Rina, go ahead and start the invasion of Ishikawa University!

——Chloe, lead all units, and start the invasion of Ishikawa University!

I order Rina's main force, who's boarded the trucks, and Chloe who's leading a great number of subordinates who haven't boarded trucks. 800 bloodkin and 11,000 subordinates, omitting those left behind for defense like Yataro and Izayoi, simultaneously start the invasion.

"Humans of Kanezawa, you have taken good care of my subordinates a while ago. Starting now, our Aster Empire will show you its true strength. Mercy to those submitting. Death to those resisting."

I declare war on the humans, also with the intention to recommend surrender.

『Are you taking us for fools, Demon King Shion!? We won't yield to you! We'll turn the tables on you as many times as it takes!』 An elderly man, not 『Kanezawa's Sage』, roars back at me.

I guess 『Kanezawa's Sage』 and 『Kanezawa's Saintess』 have moved to Hakusan. In that case, none of their main forces should have stayed behind.

I chuckled after confirming that the diversion yielded the desired result.



~Takaharu's PoV~

"Oh!? Ain't dat swarms of 'em?"

"Srsly? Looks like Shion-cchi's plan went bust?"

"I wonder 'bout dat."

Having arrived at the destination with Sarah, who selfishly got on my bike behind me, before anyone else, I take a look at the humans gathered in front of the university's gate. After waiting for a little while, Rina's team arrives in more than 20 trucks.

"How is the situation?"

"As ya can see. Doesn't it look as if da diversion failed?"

——The diversion succeeded. That's less than half of the original enemy force.

When I answer Rina's question, who got off her truck and came close, Shion's angry voice reverberates in my mind.

"Oops, my bad, my bad... Dat means da diversion worked out, huh?" I withdraw my previous comment in a hurry.

I've got no clue what triggers Shion, and I sure don't feel like being screwed with in the same way as Saburou.

"So Shion, what should we do? Wait for Chloe's unit? Or——" Rina holds a monologue while knowing that Shion can hear her.

——Invade with the newly deployed living mails leading the charge!

Shion answers Rina's question.

Nice! That fuckin' rocks! Cautious Shion telling us to attack such a number of opponents means that our enemies are small fry, aight? I tuck my new A-rank weapon — **【Dragon Annihilation Fist】**,

away into my pocket.

——《Summon》, Growth Knuckles!

I equip the sacred treasure, which looks like nothing but plain brass knuckles. I'm sure it's going to be fine as long as I switch if things get iffy.

The Growth Knuckles are the best. Their offensive power is still weak. Their rank is also trash-tier at D. But, the more I use them, the better they fit my hands. The only weapon in the whole world that evolves for my sake.

I don't give a damn about items. Although it's best to be strong, the cultivation of my Growth Knuckles has become such a huge entertainment for me that it actually shakes my fundamental belief that I can only trust in my trained abilities and body.

While I'm putting on my knuckles, 100 living mails of the Orichalcum series — our new combat forces — get off their truck in order, and form up into a line in accordance with Rina's instructions.

One of the orders from Shion in regards to his new combat forces is —— 『I don't care about them dying. But, make absolutely sure to prevent a theft of their items!』

What a cruel master to put the items on a higher priority than the lives of his subordinates. Having said that, it's a fact that I've got currently a lot more fun than during my time as Demon King. Our heartless master — Shion, treats those who are strong favorably.

In that case, I suppose I should do my best to not get discarded...!

While smiling wryly at my own thoughts, my blood boils in light of the battle that's going to start from now on.

Chapter 214 - Invasion of Kanezawa ⑥

~Rina's PoV~

The enemies standing in our way at Ishikawa University's main gate amount to roughly 10,000. Opposing them, we have 800 —— the elites who have gone ahead. 800 vs. 10,000.

Considering it normally, those would be odds that could be described as suicidal, going far beyond foolish, or, if you can't go against an order from above, as a death sentence.

But, neither am I suicidal...nor do I believe that Shion has sentenced me to death. Certainly, in the world after the 【Cataclysm】, an overwhelming difference in strength — though pipe dreams such as being matchless or undefeatable still remains impossible — has turned into a common occurrence.

Back when we were waiting in the Domain, Shion sent more than 3,000 ghouls as reinforcements,

but...not one of them came back. In other words, the combat forces in front of us are strong enough to have defeated more than 5,000 ghouls.

No good...I shouldn't think about unnecessary things. No matter how much I strain my little brain, resourcefulness like that of Shion remains distant for me. It's Shion's duty to come up with ingenious plans. My duty is to simply follow Shion's orders and swing my sword.

I shake off the pointless, bad thoughts, and focus on the enemy in front of me.



——Anticipate the enemy launching ranged attacks. The 100 living mails are to form a line of defense as vanguards! Bloodkin are to line up behind the orichalcum living mails! [efn_note]The author made some mistakes here. First he called it Mithril series, to amend it later to Orichalcum. Second, the numbers are still off since he mentions 10 in 213 but 100 here. I changed it in 213 to 100 living mails since 10 make no sense as protection for the other 790.[/efn_note]

Obedying Shion's rapid succession of telepathic orders, we begin to advance on the university's main gate.

"Tsk! Are we goin' to be in time with those slowpokes in da lead!?"

"Right! Would it be wrong for Taka-nii and me to go ahead?"

Takaharu and Setanta bare their irritation at the snail-like march speed of the living mails.

"Out of the question."

"Seta-boy, don't fret. The enemies won't go anywhere."

Once I scold Setanta, who wants to go on a rampage, grandfather gently admonishes Setanta. The look full of affection he's pointing at Setanta makes me recall a conversation I had with grandfather, who was feared as 『Sword King』 in the past, before our departure.

"Grandfather, do you feel no reluctance...about fighting humans?"

"Why are you asking me something like this out of the blue?"

"Shion...has that kind of personality, but he can be considerate if he wants to. If you request it...being freed from the participation in the upcoming battle——"

"You're telling me to stay back home while my granddaughter fights at the frontline?"

"N-No...that's not what I wanted to say..."

"You don't need to worry about me. Contrary to expectations, I've started to like living in this place — the Aster Empire. There would be nothing better than not having to cross swords with fellow

humans, but...that's how the world works nowadays, right?"

"B-But..."

"Besides, I want to protect. The residents of Aster...the friends fighting together with me...and you, my precious granddaughter."

"——!?"

"That's why I'm going to fight as well. I might be labeled as evil or demon by the humans, but I've made up my resolve to slay all enemies of Aster."

Grandfather was already prepared. In that case, I should also resolve myself. For the sake of protecting my dear friends and my family.

——!?

『Clang』 — the dry sound of metal clashing against metal. The source of the sound is an arrow that struck the shield of a living mail.

『Listen, foolish monsters following our sworn enemy Shion! We won't submit, no matter what! If you don't want to end up like your pitiful friends who all croaked here earlier, now's the time to get lost!』

——?

A recommendation to flee? By the humans? To us, subordinates of Demon King Shion?

If they've got the power to defeat us, then they'll do so. That's the *modus operandi* of humans regarding us. However, these humans have advised us to run away.

That means——

"——It's a great chance! All forces, raise the marching speed! We're going to suppress them in one breath!"

The living mails begin to advance at full speed while readying their shields.

"Flora! Deploy magic barriers above us together with your lilim!"

"Suuure. It sure been a while since I've last heard one of your orders, Rina-chan~" Obediently going along with my order, Flora deploys magic barriers together with her subordinates.

"Don't worry about a bit of enemy fire! Go, go, go, goooooo!" While encouraging my comrades, I sprint through the downpour of spells and arrows.

100 meters left until the enemy at the university's gate.

"Sarah! Give me a wide-ranged attack!"

"Ay! ——《Thunderstorm》!"

The storm unleashed from Sarah's wand swoops down on the humans, cladding them in purple lightning.

"Seta, Takaharu, clear a path for us!"

"Okaaay! ——《Wind Chase》!"

"Seta, ya lil' brat! Dat's cheatin'!"

Clad in wind, Setanta rushes at the enemies. Takaharu, who's changed into a beast king, quickly chases after him.

No further orders have come from Shion so far. In other words, my commands must be correct.

"Seta, Takaharu, disperse to the sides!"

Reacting to grandfather's yell, the two leap to the left and right.

"——《Sky Blade》!"

The invisible blade unleashed by grandfather's slash rips through the enemies at the gate.

"Aaaahh! Even though it's my duty to be the very first to attack!"

"Idiot! Dat's obviously my role!"

"Hah? Didn't you see my magnificent magic!?"

"Who cares! Magic doesn't count anyway!"

"No way! That's, like, totally unfair!"

Setanta, Takaharu, and Sarah have a chat in the midst of battle, lacking any kind of nervousness. Should I scold them as their leader? Or should I be proud of their dauntlessness...?

I smile bitterly at the conversation of the three which is no different from usual.

"It's the enemyyyy! Enemy attaaaac——"

"Aren't you kinda late? ——《Single Thrust》!" Setanta easily robs the screaming human of his life with a swift stab.

"Tsk! No helpin' it. Guess I'll back 'im up... Uuuuoooooooo!"

""""——!?""""

"W-W-Who was it!? ...The one saying that Demon King Shion's forces are small fries..."

"H-Help meeeeeeeeeee!"

"D-Don't lose your cool!"

Hearing Takaharu's roar ripping through the atmosphere, the humans fall into panic.

"Sorry for having made you wait ~pyon! It's the climax right at the beginning ~pyon! All living beings, become spellbound by my body! ——《Perfect Body》!" Hibiki, who rushes to the front with a slight delay after Setanta and Takaharu, exposes his brightly shining, nude body without any shame, pulling off a pose.

"B-Bunny ears...bald...T-back...man...what...what the hell is that...!?"

"Why...why...why must it be a maaaaaan!!"

"P-P-P-Please heeeeeeeelp!?"

"D-D-D-Don't get flustered! It's an illusion! It's an illusionary attack by the enemy!?"

"Killllll!! Get rid of that nightmaaaaaaaare!"

Affected by Hibiki's 《Perfect Body》, the humans succumb to a fear opposite of the one caused by Takaharu.

"Ri——"

——Rina, you're forbidden to introduce yourself!

I try to charge at the enemy while giving my name, but my mouth is forced closed by Shion's order. I'm not allowed to introduce myself...?

I silently hack away at the enemies.