

The full swing of Emil's punch directly impacted on the face of a demon who had approached her. Her fist, which had plenty of power added to it through mana on top of her physical strength as a demon, pulverized the demon's head after meeting almost no resistance. White and red pieces were blown across a wide range behind the demon.

Originally that'd be more than enough to cause a huge fountain of blood to spray out of the cut section on the demon's neck, but without anything like that happening, only a gooey, crimson liquid continued to run down from the neck to the torso.

The fact that there was no reaction by the being that had been alive confirmed Emil's belief that someone was manipulating the demon soldiers deployed to the front line for some reason through some method, and that all those demons were those who had been murdered in the towns along the Demon King army's invasion path, very likely just like the town Renya and the others had seen during their journey to this place. She had somehow grasped it from their presence, but now that she had actual proof, there was no need for her to hold back any longer.

Kicking away the body which was still trying to grab her despite having lost its head, she performed a vigorous turn on the spot, as if dancing, and vertically cut through the body of another soldier, who had closed in on her from behind, with the hem of her coat which was as sharp as a blade.

Even this body only had a gooey, red liquid oozing out from the cut wound, completely lacking the usual vigor of blood when gushing out. It was evidence that the heart, the pump circulating the blood, didn't beat anymore within this dead body.

Pity welled up within Emil as she saw how the corpses of her brethren were defiled without allowing them a proper burial, but this feeling was immediately painted over by her combat excitement.

She dodged a spearhead with the least amount of movements, smoothly stepped in, pressed her hand against the armored abdomen of her opponent's torso, and released her mana. The soldier who received her attack dragged all the other soldiers around him into it, burning everything down within the range of the bursting flames and explosive blast.

"Aren't you in perfect shape there?"

The demon king's army didn't consist of just demons. It also contained plenty of humanoid monsters. These ones being truly alive, though. While running through the gaps between those monsters, Shion muttered in admiration after seeing Emil's way of fighting.

During that murmur, the mithril katana, having its sharpness increased by receiving Shion's willpower, freely drew white, gleaming trails between the enemy soldiers.

"A somewhat nasty stench is constantly hanging in the air."

With Shion's strength and the techniques she had been taught by Renya to some extent added to the mithril katana which got hardened even further by her will and mana, the arms of the lifeless puppets ranked next to scraps of paper.

The soldiers on her side also lacked any significant blood flow, as might be expected, and merely

collapsed to the ground after turning into dripping chunks of meat. Not a single blood spurt clung to her katana either.

"Ain't the smell of blood and grease somewhat less offensive than this stench?"

"Somehow I feel like agreeing with you on that one."

Shion didn't know whether it was owed to them being manipulated by someone or because they were recycled corpses, but the movements of the demons were dull. Shion cut apart one demon after the other, even though just one demon would cause great havoc on the human continent under normal circumstances. As she simply kept slashing as if cutting the places she could cut, without any hesitation or delay, her movements looked extremely natural.

"I ended up agreeing with you, going with the flow, but what does grease actually smell like anyway?"

"You don't know from humans?"

Contrary to Shion, almost all of Emil's movements were brute strength approaches. She happily punched and kicked anything within range. Be it face or belly, she simply hit everything without a care whether they might use shields or wear armor. As long as her attack landed, it instantly turned into a fatal hit thanks to her strength as a demon and the mana charged into the blow, completely smashing apart the area around the place she hit.

Her power was at a level where all that mattered was her hitting. It was a way of fighting that took aiming as optional and looked extremely unintelligible as it fully disregarded technique.

"Is it somewhat unexpected?"

"I wonder?"

While inclining her head in doubt at Shion's question, Emil crushed the heads of the soldiers which she had grabbed with her left and right hand, using just her grip strength, and ripped those heads off their torsos. And yet, the soldiers' bodies didn't stop moving.

Since they were already dead to begin with, something at the level of losing their heads wouldn't hinder them in the first place. That's why Emil firmly stepped down on the heads, grabbed the belt of an attacking body's trousers, pulled it up with one hand so as to lift it into the air, and slammed it back down on the ground. Even though there was almost no distance for it to gain speed, the headless soldier was stabbed into the ground neck first with an absurd momentum, resulting in its body being scattered in all directions through the impact with the ground.

As expected, even those corpses would apparently stop moving after turning into pieces. She used the same method on the other soldier's corpse, leading to another batch of flesh chunks flying about.

Emil's arms and body had started to get dyed in blood spurts, but she didn't appear to mind the disastrous scenery around her. Just when she tried to wipe away blood clinging to her face with her blood-smeared hand, she noticed that it'd just worsen things, and hurriedly pulled her hand away.

"Since I'm strong to begin with, techniques and such are meaningless, don't you think?"

"That's the reasoning of a wild beast..."

"I mean, partner, aren't you in the same boat there?"

Shion felt somewhat embarrassed from being called a partner by Emil. However, it wasn't a bad feeling, and to begin with, it was also her who had started talking about them being friends after slugging it out. She definitely hadn't expected that Emil would call her partner, but once it happened, it felt rather natural to Shion.

"I...you think so?"

"You've gotten a bit shrewder since having started to use a katana, but aren't you basically a reliable firepower that always breaks through from the front?"

After repelling a weapon directed at her and cutting down the enemy soldier by swinging her katana, she blew him away with her <Roar>. Given the huge number of enemies, Shion ended up heavily relying on that technique which affected a wide range with its high power output. Now she stood brooding smack in the middle of the empty space instantly created by her <Roar>. Because Renya had naggingly told her to never shoulder the katana or stab it into the ground, Shion had now reached a state where she'd unconsciously sheath the katana into its scabbard whenever she didn't use it.

In the beginning, when Shion had just received the katana, she always injured her fingers or palm as soon as she returned the katana to her scabbard, but humans getting used to things was something dreadful, seeing how she was nowadays able to smoothly return the blade into its scabbard without even looking.

"It's because my family's lineage is full of such people."

"And demons are just that kind of a race, you see."

They looked at each other for a short moment, laughing, and then, as if having suddenly remembered something, Emil said with a serious expression, "By the way, what was our mission again?"

"Rout the enemy army suitably, and kill their leaders if possible."

The instructions Shion had received from Renya were limited to that. The wind wall was indispensable to buy time until the work inside the city was done, but that wall had its magic continuously chipped down, albeit very slowly. Even Renya as the caster of the wind wall knew that its disappearance was just a matter of time. For this reason it was necessary to hinder the enemy army outside the wall from concentrating on the wall's cancellation.

In reality, Renya had planned to take over that duty himself, but Frau raised an objection to that idea. According to Frau, it was absolutely necessary for Renya to take up a position in the central part of the city for the work they were trying to accomplish inside the city, Renya learned after consulting with Croire and Frau.

Hence they suggested the alternate plan to ask Liaris to drive away the enemy army with Dra-kun, but, after a little pondering, Renya reached the conclusion that he couldn't send out Dra-kun and Liaris since it was possible for them to die in a clash with the demon king army which would be quite bad since the dragoon was borrowed from the Trident Principality.

At that point Emil suggested for her to go outside the wall and fight the enemy army herself. This also earned Renya's disapproval, but since Emil stubbornly insisted that she wanted to be allowed to at least protect the residents and retainers, and because Shion mentioned that it'd be impossible for her to not accompany Emil in such a case, Renya gave his permission after seeing that they'd handle this together.

"Routing the enemy soldiers sure is no big deal."

"Though it's a pain for them to be spread out over such a big range."

"Isn't that somehow the perfect moment where you'd want to be greedy?"

"That's, well yeah, but do you have an idea where to find the target?"

Although they blew the enemy soldiers up with magic arts and smashed them apart with <Roar>, the enemies kept flooding at them without any end in sight. In the first place, the idea that just two people could take on an army with a size that would swallow several villages and towns was already a mistake in itself, but despite them being surrounded from all sides and getting attacked from all directions, Shion and Emil covered for each other's blind spots, resulting in only the corpses of the enemy soldiers piling up. The two, who kept changing moving corpses into unmoving corpses, didn't even break much of a sweat.

"I wonder, isn't the source of this sickening stench the enemy boss or something?"

"Oh, I see. But, it certainly stinks."

"Kinda like the stench of an old hag who failed at her make-up."

"I don't know whether that's a proper allegory here..."

"It's obvious to me, partner. It's something you'd also hear frequently. Because old hags stink so much, they bathe themselves in all kinds of intense perfumes, which only redeeming feature would be their price, to gloss over their own stench. This is a chemical reaction by those perfumes blending with the original stench. It's a fermented smell that would likely kill any dog with a good nose. Once things devolve into such a state, it's too late. That's why you should take proper care of your skin, partner, since humans age much faster than a demon like me. It'd be best for you to keep using high quality cosmetics, meter the perfume to suppress the smell, and limit your cosmetics to decent brands. If you do all that, things should end for you without becoming a disgraceful hag who scatters such a nasty stench wherever she goes."

"O-Okay?" Obviously overpowered, Shion agreed with Emil who lined up one word after the other, rattling on without pause.

Only when she was told that she'd age faster, Shion felt slightly offended, but humans certainly grew old fast when compared to demons who actually boasted a long life span.

"Holy shit, even I as a demon feel dumbstruck by the thick skin of the person scattering this stench to keep on living without a care. I wonder, isn't her skin thick enough to be used as a shoe sole if peeled off?"

"I-I wonder."

"In the first place, don't you think it's absolutely indecent to scatter such a stench while being aware of it yourself?"

With those words Emil blew away the soldiers around her with a spell for a moment, and then suddenly looked all sleepy in the empty space she had created. In front of Shion who widened her eyes wondering what was going on, Emil placed her bloody right hand on her chest, and the left hand on the belt of her hotpants, acting as if she was going to slide her pants down a bit with a jerk.

"E-Emil!?"

"Shion, you should learn this by heart, okay? A girl like me, who's full of charm, is going to attract men in swarms from far and beyond by just pulling off this lil' stunt, even without scattering such a disgusting stench."

<Don't fuck with me, you stupid bitch!!>





Emil had started to explain all this while creating an alluring atmosphere. On the other hand, Shion got flustered, wondering just what was going to start from now on, despite them tentatively being in the middle of battle.

What loudly resounded above their heads was the voice of a fairly aged woman. Contrary to Shion who restlessly looked around her to find the source of the voice, Emil completely changed from her tempting behavior up until then, and twisted her lips while immediately getting ready for battle.

"Found you...you're surprisingly thin-skinned, aren't you?"

"U-Umm? Did you possibly provoke her, aiming for this to happen?"

"Who knows."

More than half had been Emil horsing around, but it wasn't as though she didn't see any chance in succeeding with this. It wasn't as if Emil had realized the true nature of the enemy army's leader at this point in time, but it was plain fact that the dead were moving around for some reason in addition to some abnormal fragrance hanging in the air.

Going by those two facts, Emil conjectured that they were within the effective range of some kind of skill or ability. When it came to an effective range fully covering such a big army, it'd be impossible for the user to skillfully handle their ability without grasping the situation within that big effective range through some sort of method. Moreover, if the user had no means to pass on their will within their ability's range, it'd degrade the ability to something worthless which would be limited to at most making the dead move around with some conditions added to it.

With those conjectures, Emil thought that it might be possible for her to learn the ability user's location, if she could trigger some kind of reaction from them by having the ability user direct their attention at them.

"Either way, I know where to find her now. Perfect time to hunt her down, right?"

"Leaving aside the method you used to achieve that, I consent."

Shion readied her katana so as to pursue the direction where Emil was looking at. As if to prove that Emil's guess about the ability user's location had been correct, the enemy army's defense obviously tightened in that direction, causing Emil and Shion to grin broadly.

"How very nice of her to go out of the way to prove my guess, don't you think?"

"It looks like there's no mistake. What an idiot."

Guessing that their target might be somewhere, and knowing that their target was somewhere were two completely different stories. As soon as they knew for certain that they were right, all they had to do was push their way through without holding back anything.

"Well then, partner, let's kill the leader and get ourselves some praise from Renya, shall we?"

"That's definitely a charming proposal, partner."

For just an instant, Emil's face was colored in surprise by Shion's reply. But, that expression was immediately overpainted by a daring smile, and while cladding both her hands in such a dense mana that it blew off the blood clinging to them, Emil shifted her eyes in the direction where she had detected the enemy army's ability user.

"That's just the right mood there. Now, let's go for a nice, lil' hunt, partner!"

