

# **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 121**

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 121-130**

### Chapter 121: Justified Belief (1)

As the spell was incanted, mist arose from the demonic sword and enveloped the owner's body. It was an altruistic energy that couldn't be found anywhere else in this world. With the demonic sword manifested, Sian no longer appeared human. It seemed more accurate to consider him as a non-human that used to be human. Boris's breathing quickened, his limbs trembled, and his nerves felt like they would freeze, yet his face was inexplicably filled with ecstasy. He appeared mad, but he was utterly intoxicated by a thrill he had never felt before—the exhilarating murderous intent that felt like it could rip him apart at any moment.

Who is Sian Vert? Who is he that he could so ignite Boris's desire for knowledge? Boris desperately wanted to explore the unknown depths within the shadowy mist. A single command completed the fusion of Sian with the demonic sword, and Sian finally charged toward Boris. The speed was unbelievable for a human being. A normal human would have been helplessly decapitated. However, Boris knew the owner of the demonic sword wouldn't kill him so easily. The clear vengeance in his eyes confirmed it.

For some reason, Boris couldn't care less. Now was the time to slowly uncover and explore the existence of Sian Vert. Even if he had to draw out all his magical power or use the not-yet-mastered magic of the Holy Scripture, he would...

"Stop."

Boris's excitement was interrupted. An inner voice halted the volcanic eruption of his emotions.

"Retreat now."

Boris doubted his ears. "What are you saying? The owner of the demonic sword is right before you, why...?"

"You cannot handle him."

Boris couldn't argue against the stern and authoritative voice. Only he could see the noble soul of the Holy Scripture that had appeared and was looking at the owner of the demonic sword with discomfort.

"Aer. You were hiding something far more dangerous than I thought..."

His voice was filled with negativity, not curiosity.

\* \* \*

Before I knew it, a magic circle formed under Boris's feet. It was escape magic. He had been so smug, and now he was casting escape magic? It was maddening.

A thin and transparent barrier suddenly appeared before me, stopping me from slicing off his arms as he gathered mana.

"It's a shame. I would have liked to enjoy more conversations with student Sian, but it seems I must depart here."

Depart? Who asked you? Did he think I'd let him go just like that, especially him?

My blade made a crack in the mana barrier he had hastily erected. It was a pretty solid barrier but useless against me.

The moment the barrier shattered, I lunged without hesitation.

"Marionette!"

As if they were the guards, ragdoll-like puppets sprawled before me in a pathetic attempt to block my way.

I shredded them to pieces on the spot, ensuring they couldn't attack again. The puppet pieces turned to dust.

"Wh-why isn't the curse working?"

Curse? What curse? He thought it would work on me as it did on the puppets?  
Ridiculous.

With my blade, I delivered my first act of vengeance, striking just above his heart. It was a sensation I'd long anticipated since my previous life. The cold blade against his hot flesh—a delightful irony.

"You're late," commented Ceyram succinctly.

As if on cue, Boris smirked meaningfully. The escape magic initiated, and he began to fade as the completed magic circle emitted a blue light.

He really thought divine power was enough to run away?

"I'll see you next time, Sian Vert..."

Had I been too swayed by emotion? It was unlike me to let a target, especially the enemy of my prior life, slip away.

Out of annoyance, I gave Ceyram a merciless twist.

I still remembered their contemptible glances as the Holy Sword pierced my heart in my past life. Although I knew everything, I was nothing but a pawn to them.

But times have changed; I know their dirty intentions, and they still have no clue about me. They were curious about me, driven by their insatiable thirst for knowledge.

When they truly gain power and realize what I am, I'll already have prepared the worst kind of despair as a gift.

I'd advise them to keep their throats clean until then.

With a final scream, Boris disappeared from my sight.

\* \* \*

To calm my boiling emotions, I closed my eyes momentarily. Perhaps I should have placed a binding barrier first to prevent any magic. But such thoughts were meaningless.

"I was hoping to face a worthy foe for once," Ceyram sighed with regret.

I couldn't believe it and asked, "Why didn't you say anything?"

"About what?"

"That the owner of the Holy Scripture was here. You must have known all along."

It made no sense that a divine artifact couldn't recognize another divine artifact. Ceyram knew but never said a word. She answered vaguely, gazing off into the distance.

"You'll only tire yourself out with such worries. Haven't you heard that you should focus on what's happening rather than dwelling on the past?"

As expected, she dodged the question. I could tell at once there was something she couldn't disclose.

For now, I'll leave that aside and turn back to the head of the household. The team that had evacuated were already back, handling the aftermath. The household head beckoned me closer with her eyes, so I shrugged and walked over.

"Do you want to go first, or shall I?"

Either way, there was much to discuss. She granted me the choice, though I hadn't sorted everything out yet.

"Do you have many things to say but don't know where to start?"

She caught on to my hesitance right away.

"Then I'll ask first. Did you take care of the business you had to?"

"Yes, well, more or less," I averted my gaze as I responded.

"Weren't you gone for about ten days? Honestly, it's a bit disappointing you returned so soon. I thought you'd be back just as I finished up..."

It seemed like the head of the household had planned to kill Boris all along or perhaps the circumstances had pushed her into that decision. Without that intent, she wouldn't have shown her blade.

"It just happened that way. It felt like I needed to return quickly."

Though Ceyram showed no reaction, I glanced her way.

"Regardless of the reason, I can't solely respond with joy. I suspected you were more than a mere scholar, but never that you were the keeper of the Holy Scripture."

The 'Black Greed Fog' that the head of the household had summoned was a magic so potent that it could neutralize the magic of a 9-star archwizard. Less than five people on the continent could have survived it. If asked whether it could affect the owner of the Holy Scripture, I honestly wasn't sure.

Holy Scripture Hiscrea. Though I once derogated it as a vile scrap of paper, I know full well the power of a divine artifact—it grants power beyond the human limit. Without knowing how long he had possessed the Holy Scripture or his ability to control it, considering the amount of magic that manifested from it at that time...

The household head could have been the one consumed, not Boris. She wasn't oblivious to this possibility, but she didn't hesitate, resolute with one purpose: to kill Boris.

"Why? Because of you," would be the answer if you asked.

She always was like that. Before, now, and likely in the future. No matter the danger I might encounter, she would always engage in her purging efforts for me.

Knowing her all too well, I couldn't smile.

“Aren’t you going to ask anything else?”

“Like what?”

“Anything.”

Boris had one consistent reason for coming to the academy: to search for the existence of the threatening fog. I didn’t know where he started suspecting me, but he always considered me a suspect.

I should have dealt with it myself, but my sister’s situation was urgent, so I had no choice but to postpone it. I did arrange a temporary evacuation for Brian and the others, but ultimately, it was an issue that sprang from me.

There was much to ask and object to, yet she persistently refrained from questioning me.

“So accusatory for a student. What do you want me to ask you, Sian?”

She approached slowly.

“Why do you possess complete power as a successor?”

No response.

“How did you find the demonic sword, undiscovered even by Lord Aer?”

Silence again.

“Or why you detest your mixed-blood family to such an extreme?”

Had she already known all that? But, of course, she would have, being the one who has always scrutinized my every move down to the smallest detail.

She suddenly tousled my hair.

“Didn’t I tell you? I won’t ask anything...”

“Not even if I do something? No matter what?”

The household head nodded, no hesitation in her response. The sincerity in her words left me with a peculiar feeling.

“There’s nothing more dangerous than blind trust,” I remembered the foolish god saying. Why?

It wasn't that she had blind trust in me. She has justified trust, rooted in the absolute fact that I am the successor.

Right, that's what it is.

Then why not add a bit more to that justified trust?

I raised my head and met her eyes.

"I have lived another life before this one."

She froze, her smile stiffening.

"In that life, I also met the head of the household."

It was intriguing. Have I ever seen her so flustered in all of our current life?

I hope she would not get angry.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 122**

Chapter 122: Justifiable Belief (2)

In the southern city of the Ushif Empire, Brenu, the Royal Academy's neighboring city, served as a stopover for travelers heading to Rowen.

A woman, cloaked in a black mantle, made her way through the streets.

Passersby couldn't help but turn their heads in unison as she passed, unable to fully conceal her striking beauty, which piqued their curiosity.

Some recalled the firstborn daughter of a family rumored to be a child of the gods.

"....."

The woman's eyes stealthily shifted backwards, sensing the suspicious gaze following her.

Soon, as she turned toward an alley, a man seemed to have been waiting, following right after her.

Feeling no immediate threat or ill will, she, still on guard, asked,

“Do you have some business with me?”

The man bowed politely, apologizing for his unsolicited following. Then, he produced a letter from his coat and handed it to her.

Taken aback, she accepted it.

“.....!”

After reading the contents, her eyes widened with shock and she looked back at the man and inquired,

“Chancellor Condor is here?”

\* \* \*

Upon entering the room, Ellis couldn't hide her surprise.

“Why so alarmed? Didn't you hear everything at the front lines?”

“That's... I did, but I didn't expect the Chancellor himself to come...”

And it was unexpected indeed—Chancellor Condor was known to never leave the Academy, not even during breaks.

The fact that he came all the way here for a former student left Ellis at a loss.

“I heard you left the Knights Order.”

Sensitive words, yet Ellis responded without showing any sign of distress.

“Chancellor, did you know something like this would happen to me?”

“I didn't know from the start.”

Condor handed over a stack of documents to her.

Ellis went through them calmly, her brow furrowing occasionally with disbelief, but without any apparent fear or confusion.

“That was from your youngest brother.”

Those were his words until she reached the end.

“When did it happen?”

“Around two months ago.”

Ellis’s mind went blank for a moment.

The documents mentioned a connection between some members of the Order of Light and the royal family.

They were provoking the monsters on the front lines as part of some scheme during the royal family’s visit there—all events which unfolded right before Ellis’s eyes.

Was this information akin to a prophecy?

Certainly, it was beyond the knowledge of a thirteen-year-old academy student.

At the document’s end, the true identity of Cecilia, once her knight, was revealed—a member of the imperial guard directly serving the royal family, different from the usual guards who were public figures, as it performed covert operations.

Realizing the truth, Ellis sighed out of sheer disillusionment.

“Your eyes... They’ve returned to how they were three years ago.”

Observing Ellis, Condor spoke.

“What do you mean?”

“Literally that. To put it nicely, you have the eyes of someone on the brink of a new beginning; to put it harshly, the eyes of someone lost, unsure what to do.”

Struck by his accuracy, Ellis fell silent once more.

Without saying more, Condor waited patiently for her to speak.

“You asked me once, Chancellor, if I thought I knew everything about my brother...”

“Yes, I did.”

“It’s funny because I’ve heard something similar from our father. He said my brother might be far greater than I ever imagined.”

Condor simply listened without rebuttal.

“So, I’ll ask you something too. How much do you actually know about Sian?”



"I've spent decades at this Academy, and I can assure you that you know no less than I do, and probably not much more."

Doubt lingered in Ellis's gaze.

"Did you know Sian took a leave of absence?"

".....!"

"When I asked why, he said it was simply for you."

Ellis's expression softened, piecing together the puzzle of suspicions.

"So that's why..."

Condor looked at her with a hint of sympathy, for he had only ever seen his strongest and most confident protégé.

"I'm disillusioned. Everything I pursued seems wrong now that I realize it."

"Don't worry about it. I went through the same."

".....What do you mean?"

"That boy. When we first met, he asked me whether I desired the prosperity of the Empire or the honor of my family."

Condor's eyes dimmed.

"After Diana died, I left all concerns of my family to focus solely on the Academy. Immersed in striving for unity, perhaps my body and mind had become complacent."

It was the first time the usually serious and composed Chancellor spoke his heart.

"I always wanted to say this to Luinel when he became Emperor: not to hate his brothers, but to embrace them all, as that's the true trait of a sovereign."

The words he could afford as both the Emperor's father-in-law and a grandfather to a prince.

That sentiment remained unchanged.

"So, I am going to head to the palace."

"What?!"

“Even though I’ve relinquished my title, I cannot stand by as my family crumbles. I will go and set things right, and of course, I’ll see His Majesty the Emperor.”

Determination mixed with a touch of anger lit Condor’s eyes.

“So, as an old man who wishes well for you rather than as the Chancellor, I ask this of you, Ellis.”

Ellis nodded, unflappable.

“Forget everything that has happened and leave the Empire for a while. And don’t tell anyone about it—not even your family, or your father or me, and certainly, not your brother.”

Ellis couldn’t simply agree.

“You must have prepared yourself somewhat when you left the Knights. There’s no need to sacrifice yourself for your family anymore. Life has gone full circle, but now you can start anew. It’s time for you to find your own path, Ellis.”

Not as the fabled child of the gods, but as a woman named Ellis Vert, she could start a simple life dedicated to herself, not the world.

That was Condor’s sole wish for her.

“That’s right..”

After a brief silence, she spoke,

“Only then will I be able to stand proud before myself.”

It was a life for herself, begun by Sian, and now to be continued by her alone.

With determination, Ellis stood up.

“Are you planning to meet him?”

“I was, but on second thought, it’s better not to.”

As she reached the door, Ellis turned and said with a faint smile,

“Please, send my regards to Sian.”

\* \* \*

The cloaked woman passed by the corner and went her way.

“.....!”

Noticing a familiar aura, Brian halted abruptly and turned his head.

“What’s wrong, Brian?”

Emily asked, noticing his reaction.

“Oh, nothing. I just thought I saw someone who looked like Lady Ellis, that’s all...”

“That doesn’t make sense. Why would Lady Ellis, now a Knight of Light and surely busy with duties, be here? And so beautiful that she resembles Lady Ellis? Nonsense!”

Brian couldn’t help but feel awkward and scratched his head.

“Let’s hurry! It’s about time for the little one to wake up!”

“Yes, ma’am!”

Still, he glanced back once more, but the woman was gone.

As Emily said, what would Lady Ellis be doing here?

‘Yes, there’s no way Lady Ellis would be here.’

Brian brushed aside his thoughts and moved on.

“Ah! Life was better in Belias! What am I doing in a place like this?”

After a week in Brenu, near Rowen, Emily couldn’t help but grumble over her fate.

“If there’s something to be done, you could have gone alone. Why drag us along to some other place?”

For Brian too, it was puzzling indeed.

Sian often left without notice, but this was the first time he had moved his people elsewhere.

As always, he didn’t ask why.

Yet considering Sian’s recent wariness, it seemed likely he had relocated them for security.

As Brian often heard from Sian, “If you can’t help, at least don’t be an obstacle,” so he trusted staying quiet without incident was the best support he could offer.

They reached their temporary home, a simple house suitable for three to live in. Yet now, an unseen barrier had been erected, allowing only authorized entry—a security measure installed by Sian before departure in case of emergency.

Their few outings were solely for grocery shopping; leisurely walks or city tours were largely avoided.

It was evening, and Nana, who had been napping, should be waking soon.

“We’re back, little one.”

“.....”

Emily opened the door first, then tilted her head.

“Still asleep?”

Nana was unusually silent, typically quick to greet them.

She wasn’t in the living room.

“.....!”

Suddenly, Brian felt a chill run down his spine.

The house felt empty, beyond just him and Emily.

A sense of void grew, as something that was there before now was gone.

Brian’s face began to sweat.

“Her room is empty too? And why is the window open?”

With the urgency of a raging bull, Brian rushed to Nana’s room.

A neatly folded blanket, missing shoes, an open window.

“She seems to have left, doesn’t she? But why would she go off by herself without a word?”

Brian thought to himself,

‘We’re in trouble....’

(To be continued)

# The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 123

Chapter 123. Appetite (1)

“Wow...”

Eyes of all ages and sexes were concentrated in one place.

Everyone was so astonished that they were busy exclaiming in admiration.

“Look how cute she is! Is she a noble’s daughter?”

“But why is she wandering around alone? Isn’t there a guardian?”

“She doesn’t seem to be lost, though...”

It was a rare sight—a petite girl with distinctive pink hair and clear, bright eyes.

Roughly estimated to be between ten and eleven years old, this adorable girl was freely roaming the streets of Brenu.

Her cuteness was so heartwarming that those who saw her couldn’t help but blush and turn their heads.

Yet, the girl seemed unaware of the gazes, busy surveying her surroundings.

‘Hee hee!’

Everything around her seemed novel and amazing.

Though Sian had allowed her to go out occasionally, it was usually to the empty wilderness or mountains, so she had little experience with the lively scent of people.

This was her second time exploring the city since the imperial banquet, but since it was her first time stepping out without Sian, her feelings were inevitably fresh and new.

“Ah!”

Suddenly, a sweet smell that tantalized her appetite wafted towards her.

Nana ran straight to the source without hesitation.

“My, my! Little miss, welcome! Would you like one?”

“Yes, one please, mister!”

The shop owner handed her a crepe brimming with fruit, a pleased smile on his face.

Nana thanked him and accepted the crepe, handing over a coin in exchange.

Biting into the crepe with great anticipation, she was filled with a bliss as if she had the world at her fingertips.

“So delicious!”

It was her first outing without a guardian, but she had no troubles.

She knew the basic economic principle that one must pay for goods (the money was stolen from Emily’s purse), and she had learned from books to refrain from over-the-top behavior that would attract too much attention.

“I wonder what Papa is doing?”

Savoring the delicious food, she naturally thought of Sian.

He had once told her that there was nothing good outside for her yet, that it was safer inside, and that she could roam freely once she grew up. Until then, she had to behave well.

Nana was not upset by this; after all, it was her beloved Papa’s words.

Knowing that he loved her and treated her dearly, she lived without significant complaints.

But today, she couldn’t restrain herself any longer.

She was napping leisurely when a strange voice in her dream awakened her, and for some reason, she felt a gnawing loneliness she hadn’t felt before.

This unusual sense of suffocation compelled her to make an excursion without permission while Brian and Emily were out.

She meant to return before they came back, but she lost track of time while indulging in the crepe, and before she knew it, the sun was setting in the west.

“Oh no! It’s time for Brian and Emily to come back!”

Gulping down the rest of her crepe, Nana hurried home.

She considered her outing essentially perfect, without incident or happenstance, but suddenly,

“!”

She was stopped by two burly men who blocked her path.

With their menacing looks, they were clearly not the type to give off good vibes.

These were completely unfamiliar humans that Nana had never seen before.

Sensing a negative aura from them, her previously excited expression hardened.

At the corner of a side street, hidden by the shadows of the setting sun, and momentarily out of sight from others, the two men gazed at Nana with meaningful smiles.

“Sniff sniff!”

Nana briefly sniffed their scent, and then,

-Swoosh!

A third man appeared from behind and covered her face with a mask.

The two men who had appeared first then quickly snatched her up and hurried off down the alley.

All that was left where Nana stood was swirling dust.

\* \* \*

“We hit the jackpot, boys! We’ve caught a top-notch one today!”

The men who returned to their hideout could not contain their excitement and cheered.

However, those who saw her for the first time were shocked and baffled.

“Eh? What? Did we just kidnap a noble’s daughter?”

Her face alone didn’t indicate noble blood, but one could easily deduce she was a noble’s child from her delicate appearance.

“Who cares? We’ll just launder her identity and sell her on! No one will know who she was! Heh heh.”

“Don’t worry! We’ve already checked; there are no nobles among the recent outsiders in Brenu! She must be the daughter of some well-off merchant!”

The men gathered one by one, curiously inspecting Nana.

“Look at this! This catch will cover all our past deficits and more! Those old bald tycoons especially will love it!”

Amidst their indecent chatter and curses, Nana remained unresponsive, her eyes blankly watching them.

One man, intrigued, moved closer to her.

“Why’s she so out of it? Has she been shocked into insanity?”

He waved his hand in front of her face and gripped her jaw, moving it this way and that, but she did not react.

“Leave her! The dazed look might even make her more popular!”

“More I look, more curious this kid is. In all my years, I’ve never seen a pink-haired girl. Certainly doesn’t seem like she’s from the Empire?”

As they became curious and entertained, they knew one thing—Nana was nothing more than a special commodity that would fill their bellies.

“My little miss, no need to be scared! We’re not bad people, really! We’re just going to help you live at a good place!”

Knowing full well his words would fall on deaf ears, Nana remained non-responsive.

However, her gaze was firmly fixed on the man in front of her.

“Come on, smile a bit! That’s what our customers like! Like this? Eh? Just like this!”

The man exaggeratedly opened his mouth and laughed strangely, causing others to snicker without admonishing him.

“Eh...”

The previously startled Nana suddenly grinned broadly.

The man, taken aback, doubted what he saw.

“What, what is this?”



In that gaping mouth, two sharp fangs protruded, horribly alien and definitely not human.

“Smell...”

Her listless black eyes began to turn sharp and crimson.

“Yikes!”

Sensing the repulsion, the man stumbled back, but in an instant,

-Crunch!

A ghastly sound of flesh being torn filled the air as blood spurted before the man’s eyes.

“Aaaah!”

A scream as if his breath was being cut short, and all the bystanders’ faces turned to stone.

“Help me...”

The man on the ground clung to his arm, which was severed, writhing in agony.

“Smell, the smell is... irresistibly delicious.”

Half-closed eyes and blood-smearred lips.

The scene was grotesque, but there was more.

“What... what did you bring?!”

Some collapsed on the spot, their legs too weak to stand.

Horns sprouting from her head, wings stretching wide, and a mysterious tail swaying gently.

Humans fear the unknown the most when encountering it, and she was no longer human to them.

Nothing about where she came from, why she existed, or her purpose was known—only a lone predator was present.

“I’ll enjoy this meal...”

As always, after preparing her meal, Nana’s face glistened with ecstasy.

\* \* \*

“Yes, I remember that pink-haired child! Wouldn’t be strange to forget such an adorable face!”

Finding Nana’s whereabouts wasn’t too hard.

From a merchant wrapping up his shop, they learned she had bought a crepe.

“Where did she get money for that?”

Shaking her head in disbelief, Emily was amused at Nana’s audacity.

Never did she suspect Nana had taken the money from her own purse.

“When did she pass by?”

“Not too long ago. An hour or less? The sun was setting, and I was about to head home too.”

Getting a small clue was something, but it was not enough to pinpoint Nana’s location.

As the sun was nearly set, they had limited time to gather more information.

“What got into that usually docile child? What do we do now, Brian? Keep asking around?”

Wasting time like this, uncertain if she was safe, was not ideal.

Thinking hard, Brian suddenly manifested mana.

“What are you doing?”

“I’ll use magic to find her.”

He remembered a spell taught to him by Sian when he gained some control over his mana.

Appropriate for his wind attribute, it was said to be handy for finding people.

-A ding

A small green sphere of mana caused a breeze that wrapped around Brian’s face.

“Sniff sniff.”

Like a dog sniffing out food, he closed his eyes and sniffed.

To Emily, it might've seemed like a spell meant to bring a refreshing cool breeze, but it was a detection spell that made it easier to track scents.

If there was a place emitting a scent, it indicated something serious had occurred there, making the spell useful for following traces.

“!”

Brian seemed to catch a whiff of something.

“Did you find her?”

“No, not exactly...”

Brian hesitated.

A faint whiff of blood in the breeze hit him.

One thing was clear; Nana's blood wasn't part of it.

Instead, it was as if a massacre had occurred, with at least a dozen mingled blood scents stimulating his sense.

He rushed towards the source of the smell.

“Wait, I'm coming with you!”

The location wasn't far.

In the middle of a slum just off the main street where the sun's rays didn't reach, a hefty wooden door blocked their path.

Taking a breath, Brian opened the door.

“Oof!”

As the door creaked open, the suppressed smell hit them instantly.

Brian covered his nose instinctively and cautiously peered inside.

“Smack smack...”

No one was visible, but the sound of chewing could be heard.

Familiar sounds, like when Nana ate her food.

Panic-stricken, Brian stepped into the space as,

“!”

He was met with a sight he couldn't even articulate.

“What, Brian? What's inside...?”

Emily began to follow, but Brian hastily covered her eyes.

“What? Why are you doing that?!”

“It's better if you don't see...”

Despite his warning, his gaze remained fixed on the being before him.

Realizing new people had arrived, the source of the sound finally turned its head.

“Are you there, Brian?”

He couldn't respond.

Since meeting Sian, Brian had thought he had seen the pinnacle of brutality and strangeness but today, it seemed that feeling had been renewed.

“I don't think I need dinner tonight...”

Her eyes, filled with satiation, brimmed with joy.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 124**

Chapter 124: Appetite (2)

“Nana ate a person?”

Despite being accustomed to death, I couldn't let this statement slide without a reaction.

“You might want to hear the full story before you judge.”

Brian began explaining with a grim look on his face.

“... So we burned the place and the bodies to erase any evidence. We thought there might be remnants, but it seemed more important to erase Nana’s traces first.”

He stuttered at first, but managed to get his message across without much issue.

“That’s all...”

I listened quietly, having decided to withhold judgment until I heard everything. As for my feelings?

Impressed. I mean it.

It wasn’t just random chit-chat; I was sincere. Slavers had kidnapped Nana during her unauthorized outing(?). They must have seen Nana wandering alone and saw an opportunity. It was just a guess though, as there was no certainty.

When Nana was found, she was the sole survivor, too shocked to say anything beyond apologies.

Two days had passed since that incident.

Overlooking the messy details, Brian not only made a sound judgment but also cleaned up nicely. There was nothing to criticize.

“I failed to look after Nana more carefully. I am ready for any punishment...”

“No. You did well.”

He lifted his head quickly at my reassurance.

“Really?”

“Yes, you did. No one was harmed in the end, right? That’s what matters.”

Brian visibly relaxed after a few seconds. I could see the stress he must have felt just by looking at his face.

“And Nana?”

“She hasn’t come out of her room much. She wasn’t sleeping when I checked earlier.”

She had also refused to eat for the past two days. For our dear little one, who loved her naps and meals, it must have been quite a shock to shun those comforts.

It seemed I was the only one who could comfort her. Without hesitation, I entered Nana's room.

"..."

She must have known I arrived earlier. Usually, she'd race to ask if I brought a gift, but this time, she didn't even show her face. Her sullen mood was apparent, even from behind.

-Fwoop!

She glanced at me and pulled the blanket over her head. Her reaction was almost impressive.

Too awkward to leave, I approached her.

"I'm sorry. I can't bear to look at Papa right now."

Upon sitting down on her bed, she spoke as if she had been waiting.

"Why?"

"I did something wrong..."

"What did you do wrong?"

My question was a bit taunting.

"I ate a person... The same kind of person as Papa and Brian and Sister Emily..."

Hmm. Well, technically, yes.

But from my perspective, Nana is half human, half dragon. While a human eating another human is obviously a problem, a dragon eating a human is different. It's somewhat akin to a human eating a bug – not that we seek them out for food, but it's not exactly forbidden either. Most dragons wouldn't bother with humans, just as we wouldn't eat bugs unless we were starving.

I was a bit perplexed, though.

Nana, who loved to eat, had now even eaten a human? We'd need to correct this behavior lest she grow up to be a man-eating dragon.

"Come out, Nana. You have to face Papa."

Though hesitant, she eventually unveiled her face from under the blanket.

“Are you going to hate me?”

“Let’s talk.”

Relieved, she wriggled closer.

“Did you ever want to eat people before?”

“No, never! I didn’t think about it at all! I am like you, Papa, a person! And people shouldn’t eat other people!”

It’s a kind of instinct to know that cannibalism is wrong – which is why Nana was so disturbed by her actions.

“But why did you eat them?”

“Well, it’s just that...”

She hesitated, burying her face back in the blanket.

“The smell...”

“The smell?”

“Yes, those people... they had such evil, malevolent scents. I knew at a glance they were bad and would do harm to me...”

She had sensed danger using her unique draconic senses. No problem there.

“But the smell was so sweet...”

This was a concern.

“It was so sweet, I just wanted to eat them right then. I wasn’t in my right mind...”

There’s a legend on the continent that dragons eat those despised by everyone. Nana must have found these vile individuals alluring. Given her unfamiliarity with most humans, these slavers were likely the worst she had encountered.

For her future’s sake, though, we needed to ensure this hunger didn’t become a habit.

“How do you feel now?”

“Fine! Completely fine!”

“Then let’s not dwell on it.”

I reached into the blanket to stroke her head. I couldn't say I wasn't at fault for putting her in that situation in the first place, but we needed to be careful going forward.

Emerging from the blanket, Nana looked out the window.

"...Feels so cramped."

"What does?"

"Just... I felt so gloomy and claustrophobic. Even in my sleep, it felt like someone was calling me. So I got up, thinking someone was calling me..."

Her eyes were filled with melancholy, as if she was holding back some worry.

Thinking about it, this city wasn't just any old city to her, was it? I promptly stood up.

"Let's go, Nana."

"Where to?"

"Out for a walk."

Her eyes brightened with anticipation.

\* \* \*

Under the setting sun, a gentle evening breeze flirted with my skin. Since hearing about the slavers, I'd suspected they were remnants of Zickerman Albas, whom I had assassinated two years ago.

From the hilltop, I could see the merchant guild building where I had killed Zickerman and found Nana's egg. The same place her mother died.

Nana, who had never been here before, had a nostalgic look in her eyes. Instinctively, she must have felt a profound connection to this place.

"Papa?"

"Yes?"

"Am I really a person?"

Sometimes she'd ask. What was she? Each time, I told her she was a person, just a little more special than the rest.

"Is this where we first met?"



“How did you know?”

“I felt it. Something familiar, yet deeply missed...”

Even without being told, she had always been clever at figuring things out.

The merchant guild had closed after Zickerman’s death and had been abandoned for two years. Rumors circulated that ghostly slaves haunted it, driving away any squatters.

Concerned Nana might be scared by the atmosphere, I asked her,

“Do you want to go in?”

“Yes!”

Without any hesitation, she agreed to enter.

The guild’s interior was worse than I remembered. Dust blanketed the floors, rust coated the walls, and rats and spiders had claimed it as their domain.

However, Nana seemed unfazed, following me obediently.

We reached a basement area, devoid of any remains. Interestingly, unlike the rest of the place, not a speck of dust was present, suggesting someone might have recently occupied the space.

I crouched down and placed my hand on the floor. Mana and a black aura rose from my palm.

“What are you doing, Papa?”

“Be safe on your journey.”

She didn’t understand but looked on curiously as the aura enveloped her.

Not feeling threatened, she didn’t resist.

I stepped back to give her some space.

[You don’t think this is good for the little one?]

Ceyram observed as I considered the situation.

“I would have had to do this eventually. This just hastened the process.”

Her rapid development necessitated this.

I had used a segment of 7th-tier dark attribute magic, , which turns part of my memory into an illusion for the target. Nana was now seeing past events through that illusion – everything about what happened here two years ago, including the brutal death of her mother.

I wasn't trying to show her pain, but to help her realize that she came into this world as a genuine person, with the warmth of human compassion.

As the illusion faded, Nana showed neither joy nor sadness.

“Was it a good visit?”

“Yes. Mama smiled and hugged me, wishing me happiness.”

Even if it was a fabricated encounter, it was precious to her.

“Let's go, Papa! I'm hungry!”

Nana stood up energetically, ready to leave.

I watched her go, feeling she had grown a bit taller somehow.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 125**

Chapter 125. Omen (1)

In the subspace of Aer, located in the city of Rowen known for harmony, Silica stood steadfastly in the center of the plaza when a member of her team approached her.

“Aschel Vert is still in Belias,” the member reported.

“Anything unusual?”

“Nothing yet. Despite the Imperial family having already returned to the palace, there doesn't seem to be any indication that he will follow suit anytime soon.”

“And the palace side?”

“Our members stationed throughout the capital are monitoring day and night, but so far, we've found no clues regarding Boris.”

“Keep a closer watch. Report immediately if you sense even the slightest magic.”

“Yes, my lord!”

The member accepted the orders with a booming voice.

“And Sian?”

“Just a moment ago, he returned to the Academy with the group that was in Brenu. It seems there were no particular issues.”

Throughout the report, Silica maintained an expressionless face, but for the first time, her lips twitched—as though she was about to smile but restrained herself.

“My lord, shouldn’t we start preparing as well?”

“Preparing for what?”

“No matter how cautiously we guard, eventually something regarding your lordship will spread without knowing when or where. Shouldn’t we be preparing to leave the Academy with the members now...”

“I’m the only one whose face got exposed to him, right?”

The member was at a loss for words at the rapid response.

“Well, that’s true, but...”

“Then it doesn’t matter, does it? If something happens, I’ll handle it alone. There’s no need for all of you to prepare unnecessarily. I’ll take care of it.”

“But, still!”

Before the member could finish speaking, they eventually bowed their head.

“Understood, my lord.”

Having completed their report, the member then left the area.

Left alone again, Silica silently gazed blankly at one side of the space.

Although she said that, she very well knew that the situation was incredibly dangerous.

The organization, the heir, and the god of the black mist they serve.

If mishandled, everything that Mist had maintained until now could collapse.

But not a single trace of worry showed on Silica's face, as if there was something she firmly believed in.

"A regressor..."

Her normally straight lips curled slightly into a semicircle at the mention of a regressor.

\* \* \*

A day away from the capital of the empire, Severus, by carriage lies the domain belonging to the Quizzel family.

Since early morning, the domain's residents were buzzing with the news that the former lord and current chancellor of the Royal Academy, Condor Quizzel, had returned.

After stepping down from his duke position a decade ago, this was his first return—all eyes, from ordinary residents to key administrators of the domain, were focused on Condor.

In the study of the Quizzel family mansion.

Originally, it was a place where the current lord and head of the family, 'Pierro Quizzel' the duke, conducted his business, but today he stood rather submissively at the desk like an attendant.

Sweat was trickling down his face due to the tense atmosphere.

Before him was his father Condor Quizzel, still wielding considerable influence within the family.

"It's been 10 years since I stepped down from the duke's position. I heard our family has flourished more ever since, but how come the taxes have increased and domain expenses have diminished?"

Condor gave his son a look as if asking for an explanation.

"Well, in the past few years... more funds have gone towards the royal household..."

"For what?"

"Various reasons, you know? For maintaining dignity and such..."

"Maintenance of dignity for the royal household... Was such a trivial maintenance of dignity so important that it accounts for half of the annual expenses of the domain?"

Pierro Quizzel was desperately searching for an excuse.

“Then why do you do this, when you know as much as I do? Father, you know it, don’t you? Every year, the Nephris Marquisate provides 1.5 times more support to the empress’s family than our Quizzel family! Nephris Marquisate is serious! He’s really planning to make his lineage become emperor!”

Condor was silent.

“You also want Prince Luinel to become emperor, don’t you? Moreover, I’ve heard that during the recent frontline tour, Princess Violet got missing! Who knows what happened? Maybe the Nephris family had a hand in it! Wasn’t that why you ordered to increase the number of royal knights for the princess, father?”

After listening in silence, Condor finally snorted with contempt.

“Yeah, I’m not in a position to criticize you kids.”

“Excuse me?”

“I have one thing to ask you, Pierro. Do you not care if all members of the royal family die as long as Luinel can become emperor?”

“Why would you say such a thing?”

“Just answer the question.”

Pierro’s hesitation didn’t last long.

“If a Quizzel can become emperor, it doesn’t really matter, does it? That’s what power is all about, and in the current situation, a peaceful succession to the throne is simply impossible...”

“You and Luinel probably think alike, right?”

“I suppose so?”

Bang!

Unable to contain his anger, Condor struck the desk with force, expressing his repressed rage.

“A throne tainted by blood is like a jewel crafted by demons! Why have you all forgotten such a simple truth!”

Anger as fierce as the intent to kill gleamed in Condor’s eyes.

“I won’t say any more. Cut off all financial support to the royal household, to Luinel, from today! I will take responsibility!”

Was he no longer worth checking on?

Condor, driven by emotion, promptly stood up and stormed out.

“Where are you going?”

“To the palace!”

His steps revealed no hint of hesitation as he left the room.

\* \* \*

In the mansion of the Vert family within the western boundaries of Belias.

Knock knock.

A man, looking a bit desperate, entered the room.

It was Aschel’s descendant, Kellin.

“Lady Aschel. Another message has arrived from Prince Luinel. He’s asking when you’ll return to the palace...”

Unlike the serious Kellin, Aschel appeared very relaxed.

Her calm demeanor remained untroubled as she sipped her tea, manifesting no hint of anxiety.

It had been over a week since the royal family, having completed their tour, had returned to the palace.

Aschel, who was supposed to accompany the second princess as a retainer, still remained in Belias.

Officially, it was to deal with the death of Knight Cecilia.

However, besides ordering an immediate disposal of the body, she showed little interest in what actually happened to her.

She would usually be found sitting by the window, immersed in deep thought with a faint smile on her face.

“Shouldn’t you be returning to the palace by now?”

Despite Kellin's question, Aschel just kept smiling silently out of the window.

"I've got information that Headmaster Condor of the Academy has just left his domain for the palace..."

"I have been thinking deeply for the past few days."

Finally, Aschel opened her mouth, causing Kellin to involuntarily shrink back.

"Something felt off. Plans that I've laid out started to unravel and fall apart. Such disarray was uncharacteristic, even for someone who always prided themselves on perfection..."

Cold sweat trickled down Kellin's back.

"So I thought, what if someone unknown to me knows of my plans? Or what if someone is blocking the information from reaching me?"

Aschel spoke with a laugh, but Kellin could not muster even a smile.

This far in the conversation, it was clear to even the simplest mind that he was under suspicion.

"Has there been any contact with Boris yet?"

"No..."

"Two years ago, upon your return from the Academy, you said something to me."

Aschel's gaze, which had been directed out the window finally turned towards Kellin.

"You said that some unidentified force had been watching over my youngest sister..."

"Yes, that's correct..."

"Maybe that unidentified force has dealt with Boris? Otherwise, it doesn't make sense to have no news of him at all."

Kellin found himself without anything to contest.

"And you're not going to check this time?"

"!"

“They say the root of suspicion often lies closest to you. Kellin, you have been my descendant for a long time. You’ve done many things for me. So I thought I knew you quite well.”

Kellin avoided Aschel’s gaze and swallowed dryly.

“But, over the past two years, your behavior has been curiously different from the Kellin I knew. Overall, you seemed the same, but in the details... as if a false personality was impersonating the original one...”

“I don’t quite understand what you’re trying to say...”

“Look into my eyes, Kellin.”

As he reluctantly met Aschel’s gaze again,

“!”

A crimson radiance flashed from Aschel’s eyes.

Feeling threatened, Kellin quickly turned his head away.

“Cough!”

An unknown force squeezed his throat.

“And then I thought, what if someone had magically altered your personality that day two years ago? An identity for someone else, not for me?”

Standing up, Aschel slowly approached the agonized Kellin.

“Kellin. Are you truly the one I knew, who lived for me?”

Struggling to breathe, Kellin barely managed to speak.

“Lady Aschel! Please don’t doubt my loyalty...”

Yet his desperate cry was returned only with a void laugh.

“We’ll see about that now. I’ll check whether the loyalty you hold is truly for me...”

‘Do you hear me, Aschel?’

While Kellin held a sneer and was about to speak, a familiar voice echoed in his mind.

“Boris?”



It wasn't an illusion.

It was a telepathic communication, part of psychic magic that allowed for the transfer of thoughts without speech.

Though the resonance was somewhat unstable, it was undeniably 'Telepathy' from Boris to her.

'I'll get straight to the point because we don't have much time.'

Boris skipped all preliminaries and went straight to the matter at hand.

'Everything is getting twisted. At this rate, the black mist of corruption may overshadow the light.'

"What do you mean? Where are you right now...?"

'Find the holy sword.'

"!"

Aschel's pupils shuddered violently.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 126**

Chapter 126: Omens (2)

After a full day of travel from the Quizzel family's domain, Condor arrived in Severus. As the chancellor of the Royal Academy and one of the few nine-star sages in the continent, the imperial family welcomed him with the honor befitting a high-ranking dignitary.

Condor's primary purpose was to meet with the Emperor, but having yet to recover his full health, the Emperor requested he wait a little longer. Thus, within the palace, Condor found himself killing time endlessly.

"Is a meeting with His Majesty the Emperor still difficult to arrange?"

“It seems that he was improving for a moment, but he has suffered another attack. I apologize, but it may be some time before you can have a private audience with His Majesty...”

When the official brought this unwelcome news, Condor’s face filled with concern.

“What about Prince Luinel?”

“He has not left his quarters, as far as I’m aware, but...”

“Then I will go and see the prince.”

Without hesitation, Condor stood up to leave.

“However, right now, the prince has confined himself and declared that he will not meet with anyone...”

“Then tell him I will wait outside his door until he agrees to meet.”

The official was at a loss, faced with Condor’s resolute stance that did not consider the prince’s wishes.

Just as Condor made to leave, an unexpected visitor approached.

“Princess Violet has arrived.”

It was not the Emperor or the prince, but a third figure who had come looking for him.

Even Condor frowned, evidently caught by surprise.

“Princess Violet is here?”

As the doors of the audience chamber opened, the empire’s second princess, who had been waiting outside, appeared.

“It’s been a long time, Headmaster. Or should I say, grandfather...”

Even though they were related by blood, the term “grandfather” uttered by her felt strangely alien to Condor.

“Please forgive my rudeness for not rushing to greet you upon your arrival in the imperial city. How have you been?”

“Oh, it’s been a while, Princess Violet...”

Although she was his granddaughter, her status as a princess demanded respect. And since they were in the palace, not the academy, Condor did not hesitate to speak formally.

“If you could please excuse us, I wish to have a private conversation with my grandfather.”

“Of course...”

Upon the princess’s command, everyone apart from the two of them soon left the room.

Left alone in astonishment, Condor looked at the second princess with a questioning gaze.

“Please speak freely, grandfather. It will be easier for you that way.”

“...What are you thinking, Violet?”

Condor cut straight to the point without beating around the bush.

“Please, take a seat. I won’t take much of your valuable time.”

Condor sat down half in trust, half in suspicion, unfamiliar with this outgoing version of her he had never seen at the academy.

“I’m truly grateful for the additional knights you sent for my protection during this tour. Thanks to them, I returned safely without issue.”

Condor responded with silence, already aware of what had transpired on her tour from reports sent by the dispatched knights.

The princess’s claim of an uneventful journey was a clear falsehood.

“You’re wary of me.”

Realizing his attitude, she remarked with a bitter smile.

“Why would you think that?”

“The look in your eyes, grandfather, whenever you see me... it’s changed so much. It’s a shame. You should be focusing your apprehensions elsewhere right now...”

In an instant, Condor’s gaze turned icy cold.

Unperturbed, Violet continued.

“I’m aware that including my brother among the reasons you sent those knights…”

“...!”

“I also know that they caused chaos in an attempt to have me killed. You sent knights to protect me from that, didn’t you?”

Condor controlled his emotions before asking,

“Since when have you known?”

“I’ve long been aware of my brother’s feelings towards me. And I’ve had my own contingencies planned. Though they might not have been fully realized…”

He was well aware of what her contingency plans entailed.

“So, allow me to speak plainly.”

“What are you proposing?”

“Make me the Empress, grandfather.”

Condor neither jumped up in surprise nor tilted his head as if he hadn’t heard.

He was merely filled with questions as to why she mentioned the word “empress.”

“The Emperor’s health is getting worse. The bouts of illness are coming more frequently. Yet, he still firmly intends to make my brother his successor. If this continues, the throne will undoubtedly go to him.”

Unless the current Empress’s faction were to instigate a rebellion, it was the likely course of events.

“But I don’t believe he will be a true Emperor. You know that as well, grandfather.”

“On what grounds do you make that claim?”

“Tell me, grandfather, do you really think my siblings and I will survive once my brother becomes Emperor?”

Condor couldn’t affirmatively respond.

“A future approached by an emperor without harmony or inclusiveness will only lead to ruin. The moment my brother takes the throne, he will kill us all. Is that the kind of emperor you truly want?”

Of course, he didn't.

The same would be true for the Emperor himself.

And it was for that reason he was at the palace now.

"But I am different. I am genuinely prepared to embrace everyone. The righteous empress of our empire that you desire... I can be her."

Condor thought for a moment.

Is this woman who now sits before me really the Princess Violet I know?

So different was she from the image he had seen during the past six years at the academy.

Was she replaced by someone else, or was her true self only now being revealed? He couldn't tell and inevitably wrestled with suspicion and confusion.

"I may not visit often, but from watching you, I have learned something."

After a brief silence, he opened his mouth.

"You've never been one to step forward. Even when fights break out, you prefer to watch, rather than directly participate."

As if in agreement, the princess nodded.

"What has happened to change your mind?"

With a soft chuckle, Violet responded,

"Nothing much. I have merely seen the light."

"The light?"

"Yes. A bright light that will elevate me to the highest position for the sake of the empire, and further, for the entire continent and humanity..."

Condor furrowed his brows, unable to comprehend.

Meanwhile, the princess maintained her inscrutable, mysterious smile.

\* \* \*

News had spread at the academy that new instructor Boris had requested a leave of absence for personal reasons and that Headmaster Condor, who seldom left the academy, had departed for the imperial city without explanation. With students just beginning to return and the academy's operations normalizing, this unforeseen occurrence roused a renewed sense of unrest on campus.

Arin, who had been reading a book, glanced at an empty seat—the spot where Sian, having taken a leave of absence, would have sat.

“Sigh...”

With a sigh she didn't understand herself, she closed her book.

For ten days now.

It wasn't just the leave of absence. Since he hadn't mentioned when he'd return, it was possible he might not be seen for the entire semester.

Deciding to focus on what she could control, she devoted herself to her studies, but Arin couldn't help but be bothered by Sian's empty seat.

-Creak-

As the classroom door opened, she thought another student had entered and didn't look up from the empty seat.

But as the student passed behind her,

“...?!”

He simply sat down in Sian's vacant spot and began preparing for class as if nothing was amiss.

“Si, Sian?!”

Surprised, Arin jumped up and approached him.

“What, what's going on Sian?”

“I came here to attend class.”

“But, I mean, have you come back from your break?”

“Yes.”

“What happened?”

“It’s personal.”

His terse response ended the attempted conversation, leaving Arin speechless.

Over the years, he was consistently the same, unchanging.

Eventually, she gave up trying to understand and returned to her seat.

Once class ended, Arin quickly packed her things and looked back at Sian’s seat, only to find,

“Huh?”

It was empty.

Looking around in confusion, someone addressed her.

“What’s wrong, Lady Arin?”

“Le, Resmus! Have you seen Sian?”

“Hm? He was just here a moment ago.”

Sian had already left the classroom with remarkable speed.

“So, it figures.”

Realizing that pondering the matter was pointless, Arin, accompanied by Resmus, headed for the Royal Hall.

As they exited the main building, a group approached her, bowing respectfully.

“Greetings, Imperial Princess Arin Severus.”

Although their faces were unfamiliar, Arin instinctively knew they were from the imperial city.

“What, what brings you here?”

“We bring a message from His Majesty the Emperor at the palace.”

“From my father?”

Arin’s eyes widened in bewilderment.

Although she occasionally received letters, they were mostly mundane inquiries about her welfare.

However, she had never had messengers come to her directly, not even when her brothers Fabian and Nero were at the academy.

She realized something significant must be afoot.

For now, she returned to the Royal Hall with the messengers.

The Emperor's message was neatly wrapped in multi-colored silk.

"Phew..."

Arin took a deep breath to compose herself before carefully unwrapping the message.

The beginning contained concerns and inquiries about her life at the academy.

Knowing the Emperor's health was failing, she couldn't maintain her calm.

But as she reluctantly tried to suppress her emotions and read on, the content in the final page made her jump to her feet.

"What, what is this?!"

Her face flushed red wasn't the only reaction.

Her hands shook like leaves in the wind. Disbelieving, she turned to the messengers and shouted,

"An, an engagement with Sian?!"

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 127**

### Chapter 127: Signs (3)

For Brian, there was one routine in his day that was as non-negotiable as his exercise: visiting the academy's message center. As a seed of Sian, he checked daily for any correspondence or items that may have come for him and, if there were, he would immediately deliver them to Sian. Of course, given Sian's introverted nature, letters did



not come too often. Aside from the occasional affectionate notes from Ellis, he hardly ever received mail. Today, however, there was a letter from someone other than Ellis.

The sender's name was not written. However, upon examining the back of the letter, Brian's jaw dropped and he ran straight to the Royal Section, where Sian was. On one side of the envelope, the seal of the Vert family was stamped.

"Milord, a letter has arrived for you!"

Even as he ran, the letter was kept perfectly uncreased. Sian did not ask where it had come from. Judging by the seal on the letter, he seemed to already know, and he calmly read its contents. Brian had been serving as his attendant for three years now and had developed a certain level of perceptiveness. Although he didn't say it out loud, Brian also had an inkling about who might have sent the letter. After all, if it bore the seal of the Vert family, it was obviously written by one of its members. And if it had been sent by Ellis, it would not have been so lavishly packaged.

Brian cautiously speculated that it might be some form of official document sent from the head of the family to a member.

Sian let out a sigh mixed with a hollow laugh, an expression of disbelief evident on his face. It seemed he had read something unpleasant. Without a word, he spent the next ten minutes staring at the letter intently. The air in the room grew heavy, and as the solemn atmosphere lingered, Brian stood frozen, dripping with sweat.

Suddenly, Sian nonchalantly dropped the letter he had been reading onto the floor.

"I'm stepping out."

With just that brief remark, he left the room. Brian blinked, confused at his master's abrupt departure.

"What's going on? What is it?" asked Emily, who had been leaning against a wall, observing the situation.

"I'm not sure myself! Maybe there was something in the letter that disturbed him..."

"It's from Belias, right? With a seal like that, it must be from the eldest son or the duke himself?" Emily reached out and the dropped letter was soon in her hands.

"Are you planning to read it?"

"No, well, if he casually threw it away like that, it must be nothing serious..."

Even so, reading the master's letter would be unthinkable for Brian.

“Please, refrain, Miss Emily. Regardless, it isn’t our place to read it...”

“I know, I know...” Despite her carefree nature, Emily understood the etiquette of a maid. But the nagging curiosity was strong enough to challenge even that, and both found it hard to peel their eyes from the letter.

“If it’s not important, he’ll probably tell us later... probably.”

Resigning herself, Emily neatly placed the letter back on the sofa. The two then refocused on their own tasks, trying to suppress their lingering curiosity.

Creak.

Meanwhile, Nana, who had woken up, opened the door and came out.

“Yaaawn!” With a cute yawn, she naturally moved toward the sofa and plopped down.

As she wiped her eyes, it wasn’t long before she noticed the letter next to her.

“...?”

Five minutes passed, during which Nana’s gaze did not leave the letter.

“Nana, are you up...?”

When Brian returned to the living room a short while later, he froze upon seeing the letter in Nana’s hand.

With her bright eyes, Nana tilted her head and asked, “Papa, are you getting married?”

\* \* \*

[“A fresh bridegroom’s face shouldn’t be so gloomy, should it?”]

I sighed inwardly at the thought of something so preposterous. Knowing that arguing would only exhaust me, I let out a sigh to conceal my frustration. I had anticipated that this would come someday, given my recent actions.

The engagement between Arin Severus, the youngest of the imperial family, and Sian Vert, the youngest of the Vert ducal family, seemed nearly confirmed from the moment I, a non-royal, was assigned the Royal Section at the academy. I can’t say I didn’t know about it. But isn’t this too soon? The princess and I are only thirteen years old. Although it’s customary among the nobility to get engaged before graduation from the academy, that usually happens at sixteen or, at the earliest, fifteen, not at such an early age.

Those in the know would understand that this engagement between the imperial family and the ducal house means more than just the union of two people; it's a promise of mutual support, a type of alliance. This means that I am promised to the title of the imperial consort while Princess Arin will gain the Vert ducal house as a supporting power.

From my perspective, there's nothing good about this situation. News of this engagement must have already spread among the other members of the imperial family, and from now on, those who will monitor and guard against me will surely increase. They will send people to watch my every move and start a detailed investigation into me. As my actions become more restricted, the less freedom I'll have.

With the Emperor's involvement and my father's consent, I had no right to refuse this engagement. The same was true for Princess Arin. I was getting entangled in one of the most troublesome situations imaginable.

For now, I'd put this to the side and attend to more immediate matters. At the farthest corner of my spatial dimension, shrouded in thick fog, was the altar of Aer. It's been a while since my last visit to my benefactor's abode.

As soon as I stepped onto the altar, the fog that had cloaked it began to dissipate, revealing its occupant.

(Ah, be it Ceyram or you, none seem to come here with a smile.)

Aer remarked, almost with a sense of disappointment, upon seeing my stern face.

"I'd be smiling if you'd give me a reason to..."

It was a half-serious response.

"There's no time. Where is the owner of the scripture?"

Aer fell silent, not immediately responding.

"You knew from the start. You didn't tell me or the Master, and now we ended up in this situation..."

Aer's eyes glanced subtly to one side as if reluctantly acknowledging something.

I understood what that glance meant even without any verbal confirmation.

After a moment of silence, Aer wore a wry smile and spoke.

(You know well that I am an entity despised by the Divine Realm. But that doesn't mean I ceased to be a god. Just as a human shunned by other humans doesn't become a beast, the same applies to us gods.)

It made sense. The scumbags I eliminated might not be treated as humans, but their essential nature as humans didn't change. The same logic would surely apply to our exalted gods.

(Gods are bound by one immutable rule from the moment of creation.)

"A rule?"

(Yeah. It's forbidden to reveal one's plans to anyone other than another god. Breaking this rule results in more than just exile.)

"And if it's broken?"

(One is erased.)

His straightforward answer caught me off guard.

I couldn't help but look towards Ceyram, who was behind me.

(Even the owner of the scripture would've followed the same principle. Despite knowing of Ceyram's existence, she would not have disclosed it.)

That was the reason for her silence. Both the demonic sword and the scripture were, in a sense, children born of divine power and thus held divine status.

But why the need for such secrecy? What could possibly scare such high and mighty beings so much that they enforce silence on their subordinates, threatening obliteration for transgression?

Such rules sounded incomprehensible to me.

(Are you afraid? That your existence might be revealed by the owner of the scripture?)

I answered silently.

It's not like I'm scared, but neither am I completely unconcerned; It's an uncomfortable feeling.

(I understand. It must be worrying. The ripple effects that would spread to those around you if your true identity were to be revealed.)

I let out a half-hearted smile as if stung by the truth in his words. My identity being exposed was never really a concern. After all, it's not as if the world could kill me even if they tried.

But at some point, things around me that needed protecting began to accumulate. It's absurd for an assassin, whose priority is self-preservation, to have others to care for. I resolved to live for myself, not to be tied down by the life of living for someone else. I'm not interested in being trapped in such a petty denial.

In my previous life, I was fixated on just that demonic child. But now, I had so many things I wanted to keep close. Why bother with contemplation or making it an issue? If protecting these things is in my interest, any threatening existence must be wiped out, be it humans or gods.

(Oh dear, I almost can't face such a frightening gaze. You seem ready to kill even gods.)

Aer clicked his tongue while observing me.

"So in conclusion, you're not planning to tell me, right?"

It seemed less that Aer wasn't willing to tell me and more that he couldn't. Ultimately, I'd have to find out myself. Holding Aer up any longer would be fruitless.

I turned to leave.

(As your responsibilities grow, so too will the threats against you. The owner of the scripture must think the same.)

"What are you trying to say?"

(Suggesting you should make allies to help you.)

Aer wore an enigmatic expression as if proposing an idea while I turned back to him.

(Why not try finding a demonic tome?)

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 128**

Chapter 128: Signs (4)

Holy Scripture.

The divine magic scripture bestowed upon humans by God.

Demonic Scripture.

The divine magic scripture forbidden to humans by God.

Without elaborate explanations, they each can be defined in a single sentence.

How about that?

Though there's only a one-word difference, this alone distinctly divides human perception towards these two books.

To put it plainly, I am not a wizard.

Nor am I a magic knight who fights primarily with magic, nor a scholar who studies it.

Although, thanks to my absurd attribute levels, I may have reached the ultimate pinnacle in darkness attributes, basically, I have not lived my life studying magic.

Let alone having any interest in divine magic scriptures like the Holy or Demonic Scriptures.

It goes without saying I hadn't even heard of them.

Throughout my entire previous life, this was the first time I had heard of such things as divine magic scriptures.

Divine magic scriptures, huh.

Surely they are tempting items, but I have some doubts about whether they are necessary for me, an assassin.

Aer probably didn't explain in great detail, but now that he has mentioned it directly, it's difficult to just let it slip in one ear and out the other.

So... I should probably do a bit of research.

[You really think I'd know? With that moron deity not knowing, how could I possibly know?]

Ceyram was jumping up and down in frustration as he yelled.

[I've been asleep for 300 years! And haven't been separated from you for even a second since! How could I possibly know what that guy is doing, or where he is?]

He has a point, I suppose.

Yet, seeing his reaction, he's probably not entirely unaware of the existence,

But now it's awkward to press him further, seeing how his face is plastered with that injustice.

"Name?"

[What?]

"The name, at least you would know it, right? It's another scripture of God like the Holy Scripture, so it should have a name?"

Ceyram pursed his lips and looked away, as if he didn't want to answer.

Still, it seemed it wasn't something he couldn't talk about, for he soon spoke.

[Remiharam...]

"Remiharam?"

I rummaged through my mind for any lingering memories but, as expected, nothing came up.

Well, not that the name matters, but the real question is where this Demonic Scripture is located.

I had one speculation.

If this Demonic Scripture, like Ceyram, is not yet awake and is asleep or sealed somewhere, then it is likely to be somewhere near where the Holy Scripture was.

After all, wasn't the place I found Ceyram in the end, the Temple of Light where the Holy Sword was?

If we assume it's the same principle, then the Demonic Scripture might also be hidden somewhere in the space where the Holy Scripture was.

In that case, I should first look for where the Holy Scripture was, and to do that, I need to find the person who has the Holy Scripture as a priority.

Either way, there is no change in needing to find that bastard Boris as soon as possible.

My mind, cluttered by various thoughts, soon arrived at a particular location.

A place that's supposedly the most informative within this academy.

The library.

Here I am, back in the library during my lifetime.

Since I am not fond of reading, it's a place I rarely visit unless necessary.

But I still came here, just in case there might be some information about the Holy or Demonic Scriptures.

Looking at these countless books lined up, it seems it will take an age just to find a book.

Should I ask a librarian, even if it's against my inclination?

The moment I pulled a book out from the shelf without much thought,

“.....?”

Between the empty shelves, familiar eyes appeared.

A glare so dark and sinister that it could shame a person.

In this academy, there can only be one person with such eyes.

Lunev Rainriver.

Without any show of surprise, I asked in a flat tone,

“What are you doing?”

It felt uncomfortable to have her watching, not like she's some voyeur.

She ignored me and sniffing like a puppy, she said,

“I was in the middle of reading a book, and I smelled my senior, so I decided to come find you. My nose was accurate, as expected.”

Somehow it felt gross.

Do I really need to start spraying cologne to avoid this?

I should tell Brian to get me some later.



“Did you come to look for a book?”

“Something like that.”

“That’s unexpected. I thought senior wouldn’t like books very much.”

“I’m not particularly fond of them.”

If not for Aer, I wouldn’t have set foot here till graduation.

“What book are you looking for? Just tell me. I’ll get it for you.”

Confused, I tilted my head.

“Did you switch to being a librarian?”

“That’s not it. But since I’ve read just about all the books here, I have a rough idea where they are. If you don’t know the book’s name, you could at least tell me the content.”

What? If that’s true, she’s practically a walking library.

Knowing who she was, it didn’t feel like empty bravado.

Well, let’s humor her.

“I’m looking for information about the Demonic Scripture.”

As soon as she heard the word ‘Demonic Scripture,’ a flicker of disgust crossed her face.

Then, after staring at me for about 3 seconds, she turned around and walked away, returning shortly with about ten books in hand.

Most of them were unrelated to demonic or even magic.

“How are these related to the Demonic Scripture?”

“Just wait. What you see on the surface isn’t everything.”

She picked up the top book and began to page through it, as if performing a magic trick.

After a short while, she found what she was looking for and showed me the passage with a flourish.

It was part of the chronicles of Penelron, a famous swordsman from the Ushif Empire 100 years ago.

It was something Penelron heard from an old man while collecting information for a wyvern subjugation request from the adventurer's guild.

While not concretely helpful, it was a shred of information that seemed somewhat useful.

The rest of the books had similar content—brief, even downright poor, but put together, they could be quite good sources of information.

“There aren't any books here that directly discuss divine scriptures like the Holy or Demonic Scripture. I've never even heard of such books to begin with. That's all the information you'll get here.”

Even so, wasn't this something?

If it took a month's search and you still couldn't find it, but someone summarized it for you in less than 10 minutes, it's quite an achievement.

“Why are you searching for the Demonic Scripture? Are you planning to find it yourself?”

“Not really, just suddenly became curious...”

While she was reading the provided section, her doubting gaze was fixed on me.

“Whatever the reason, it won't be easy. Our society has been looking for divine scriptures like the Holy or Demonic Scripture for a long time, but there hasn't been significant progress.”

“Should you be telling me this?”

“It's okay because it's you, senior. You won't go around talking about it, right?”

It might be better not to talk to her at all.

“If you happen to find it, please show me too. There were two books I've always wanted to read in my life, and one of them is the Demonic Scripture.”

“What's the other one?”

“The Holy Scripture.”

Somehow, I thought so.

Well, it's her, so if she says the two books she hasn't read in this world are those two, I'd believe her.

The more I read, the more it seemed like most of the content referred to or compared with the Holy Scripture.

Most of it was clearly marked with the name Hiscrea, but not the Demonic Scripture.

The name is hardly ever mentioned or accurately noted—just briefly referred to as the Demonic Scripture...

Continuing the search, I couldn't find a single place where Remiharam was properly written.

"But unlike the Holy Scripture, why isn't the name of the Demonic Scripture written? Is there a special reason?"

"Senior knows, don't you? The name of the Demonic Scripture?"

I casually replied,

"Remiharam."

At that, her face froze for a moment.

"Ah, no?"

I quickly asked, feeling a little startled.

"That's correct. You are well aware."

She reverted to a cold demeanor as if nothing had happened.

What's with this unsettling feeling?

"May I ask you something?"

"What is it?"

"I heard an interesting story about senior recently..."

"Hmm? There are many stories about me as a subject."

Of course, they were mostly negative rumors.

As someone already detached from such things, I didn't quite care what was being said.

However,

“Senior, are you getting engaged?”

– Thud!

The book I was holding dropped to the floor heedlessly.

I’m not the one who made that sound.

Exactly five steps away from where Lunev and I were standing, a certain princess from somewhere, trembling like she had seen a ghost, made the sound.

“Prin... Prince...”

So shocked that she couldn’t even say my name.

Considering we would only be uncomfortable seeing each other for the time being, it seems right that I should leave.

“Thanks for helping. I’m leaving first.”

“See you next time, senior.”

Caught in the middle, Lunev waved hastily in response.

Thinking I should at least say goodbye, I glanced at the troubled princess as I passed by,

“.....”

For some reason, she wouldn’t even lift her head; it seemed she had no intention of doing so.

I left the library.

\* \* \*

Sian was a student so distant from academic life that no one within the academy didn’t know about him.

Arin had often seen him working out in the training grounds, but he had never once sat in the library reading a book or studying. Therefore, she never imagined that he could be here.

Yet, what a surprise.

It was beyond her dreams to encounter him in the library of all places.

Caught off guard by an unexpected meeting, Arin couldn't say a word and by the time she collected herself, Sian had already left.

"Are you okay, senior Arin?"

Lunev, who was still there, asked with concern.

"Ye-Yes! Of course!"

Arin took deep breaths and calmed herself.

"Why are you so startled by Senior Sian, whom you see all the time?"

"What? No, no, it's not that I was startled, it's just... somewhat embarrassing."

Lunev tilted her head, seeing her unusual behavior.

"What were you talking about with Sian?"

"I was just helping him find some information."

"Is that so..."

Now she seemed to have forgotten what she had come for.

Arin simply stared blankly at Lunev, who stood there silently.

"Can we talk for a moment, Lunev?"

She nodded.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 129**

Chapter 129: Omens (5)

Two women were crouched in a corner of the library. With a heart open for honest conversation, Arin disclosed everything that had happened with Sian during the emperor's inspection tour three years ago to Lunev.

"I honestly expected the engagement with Sian. I think Sian felt the same way, considering how much Father favored him," Arin commented on the surprising but somewhat expected turn of events. It was evident, especially since Sian, who was not of royal blood, had been assigned to the Royal Guard.

"But I didn't think it would happen this soon. I thought at least it wouldn't occur while I was still at the academy, but it seems I was too complacent," she admitted, not having anticipated the arrangement during her academy years. Although young, she was well aware of the implications of an engagement between royalty and nobility: It wasn't about the romance of two young individuals; rather, this engagement was the emperor's way of granting the support of the Duke of Vert Household to the fifth princess, who otherwise lacked backing.

"The emperor wants me to live comfortably, without caring about the empire. But I don't want that. Sian's words about aspiring to become the emperor meant more than advice to me," she revealed. For Arin, Sian was a guide who paved the way to a future she couldn't see, presenting her with a vision when she was feeling powerless.

"I know. It's near impossible for someone like me to become the emperor. It's not a problem that can be solved just by my growth. The real barriers of the world are far too solid," she acknowledged, realizing her place in the grand scheme and feeling despair.

Listening silently until now, Lunev finally spoke, "Do you dislike the idea of being engaged to senior Sian?"

Arin's voice became smaller, like a flickering flame, "No, it's not that I dislike it! To be honest, I like it. Being engaged means I'll get closer to Sian..."

"But Sian will hate it. Worse, he might even resent it. While Sian is a great help to me, to him, I'm just a princess who's an imposition," her heart growing heavier with this realization.

While watching a disheartened Arin, Lunev recalled a past memory of when Boris Lehelm, the newly appointed instructor, first appeared before them. She remembered the moment when Sian stopped Arin from handing a mana sphere to Boris by grabbing her hand; Sian's face from that time remained unforgettable to Lunev—filled with anger, hatred, and killing intent, as if he was ready to kill anyone who dared to harm even a single hair on her. He seemed desperately determined to prevent Arin from being taken by someone else, a stark contrast to his usual demeanor.

Lunev thought to herself back then, 'Senior Arin must be precious to him.' For someone who seemed self-centered, Sian's rage on behalf of another was telling of Arin's significance to him.

With a sigh, Lunev said, "I'm envious."

Arin blinked in confusion, wondering if she had heard wrong. “Even if it’s an engagement in name, it doesn’t mean we marry right away...”

“That’s right...” There were still chances it could be called off.

“Then there’s plenty of time. You just need to make Senior Sian unable to live without senior Arin. I personally think we should face it head-on.”

“But if I do that, Sian might...”

“If you keep hesitating like this, senior Sian will dislike it even more,” Lunev assured confidently, her firm eyes revealing determination.

“What matters whether it helps or not? If you like him, just go for it. Like me,” she declared, her thoughts wandering back to the memory of Sian embracing her to save her in the palace, an intensely sweet memory.

Arin looked on, her eyes full of questions.

“Let’s try together. Senior,” Lunev said, smiling warmly at Arin.

—

After parting ways with Arin in the library, Lunev returned to the dormitory. Though some men loitered around the main entrance, she ignored them and went straight to her room. Inside, her personal knight, Ramella, met her with a displeased expression.

“Where have you been...?”

“The library.” Her response cut off any further questioning.

“You know I always tell you, it’s fine to go, but at least tell us...”

“I also always say. There won’t be any more incidents like before, so don’t worry,” she reiterated, unmoved by the concern.

Ramella turned his head, as if to drop the subject.

“Ramella?”

“Yes?”

“Could you bring me the research on grimoires that the academy has carried out recently?”

Ramella doubted his ears for a moment.

“The research on grimoires?”

“Yes. Even if it’s something minor, please bring everything possible.”

“Alright...”

Despite the unexpected request, Ramella soon brought her all of the academy’s research materials he had, about ten volumes in total. Lunev began sifting through the piled documents.

After about three hours, she addressed Ramella again.

“Is this everything?”

“This is all we have at the moment. If you want more detailed documents, we would have to request them from the academy.”

“I’ll have to ask you to do that, then. Please request all the documents related to the scriptures of the gods that have been conducted so far.”

Lunev’s tone was firm.

“May I ask, why are you inquiring about this?”

“Just a personal investigation.”

“Understood.”

Ramella did not press further, and he turned to leave.

“Remiharam...”

As Ramella turned at the whisper of that name, he warned, “Please be cautious, Lady Lunev. Even in the academy, it’s forbidden to mention the name of a grimoire.”

“Are you sure?”

“About what?”

“That only we know the name of the grimoire.”

“Of course. You know as well as I do that only a select few in the academy are aware.”

But Lunev wondered, ‘How could senior Sian, who is not part of the academy, know about it?’ It was a name that couldn’t be known through mere coincidence. Only



someone in the academy could have informed him. Lunev's curiosity about Sian deepened.

—

On a leisurely weekend morning, a boy spent time with his books. It was an image of an ideal student. He had been skimming through documents recommended by Lunev from the night before, but nothing truly useful was found.

[You're working hard in vain. Do you think that useless pile of papers will reveal anything?]

"I need to have some insurance since I don't know when I might be devoured by you."

[Impertinent little brat!]

Ceyram swung his fist in frustration, but the boy easily dodged by tilting his head.

He kept searching, despite acknowledging that it was probably pointless. If only that foolish god hadn't mentioned it, he wouldn't be as obsessively digging for information.

[You could look for a hundred days and not find it!]

Probably not for a hundred years, either. Resigned, he could only sigh endlessly.

"Lo, Lord, your tea..."

Amidst this, Emily brought him tea.

"Reading on a quiet weekend morning! Cultivating one's mind is a sight to behold!"

It seems his maid ingested something wrong this morning to say such an excessively normal compliment.

Just as the boy looked up, Emily seemed to want to say something desperately with her twitching lips—Brian as well.

"Lord... are you getting engaged to Princess Arin?"

"It seems so."

They must have read the letter. There was no point in hiding it, so the boy didn't make a fuss.

"Daddy getting married?"

Our little one also came scurrying over with questions.

“It looks that way.”

He answered nonchalantly.

Emily’s expression was a picture, looking as if she had a lot to say but was unable to articulate, an apt representation of her internal struggle.

There was a loud bang, interrupting the weekend tranquility, sounding as if someone were hammering on the door.

“A, who has come so early in the morning?”

“Enough. I’ll see who it is.”

The boy stood up, stopping Brian who was about to check. He had a hunch about the visitor.

With an exhaled breath of annoyance, he opened the door.

“Oh! You really are here, Sian Vert! Welcome back!”

He nearly closed the door on the unexpected visitor—none other than the idiotic, or rather, the Sand Prince, Seth Shahr Khan. His appearance was always burdensome, especially as the prince seemed to grow larger each time.

“Since you look bored, how about sparring with me...”

“I’m busy.”

The boy tried to close the door, but Set swiftly stopped it.

“What could you possibly be busy with? You’re obviously free! You think I’m here for no reason? I need someone like you to spar with—otherwise my fighting spirit...”

As they tussled over the door, Set glanced at the book in the boy’s other hand.

“Oh! You’re reading something interesting, huh?”

The boy’s gaze naturally followed to the book.

“Are you interested in our kingdom’s geography? That book is outdated; some of its content won’t be accurate. Our Spania Kingdom evolves every day!”

Loudly proud, as befitting a prince, he boasted though no one asked. The boy wasn't studying the geography for pleasure but had concerns about the village of 'Nodeli' in Spania's southeast. It featured a vague legend about an unidentified shrine where monsters summoned by a grimoire during the ancient God-Demon War were said to be sealed—a tale that hardly seemed helpful, and he was debating tossing it aside.

"If you have any questions about Spania Kingdom, just ask! I'll happily answer!"

He wasn't particularly curious, but there was no harm in asking.

"Are you familiar with Nodeli?"

"Indeed! A small village in the southeast of the kingdom. A quiet and peaceful place with moderate weather; I've often used it for private training."

Seems he had visited the locale at least.

"There's a shrine of some sort there?"

"It's more of a ruin than a shrine. It's from an ancient time, so its purpose is unclear, but you can see something interesting there—a monster inhabits it!"

The boy couldn't help but laugh at the absurdity. Did Set think monsters were as common as stray dogs?

"I wouldn't believe it, huh? It's true! I boldly entered to capture it, and I ended up fleeing in defeat! Hahaha!"

He bragged as if fleeing was an achievement to be proud of.

"It was the first time I've run away in my life! I felt like I'd die if I didn't escape. Even the villagers strongly advised against entering, and that thing, that monster, even had a name!"

A name? Usually, only beings of significant power like dragons had individual names.

"What was it?"

"Let's see... Remi-something?"

Wait a moment. That can't be, right?

As doubts swirled in his mind, he threw out a guess, more in hope than expectation.

"It wasn't Remiharam, was it?"

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 130**

Chapter 130. Omen (6)\*\*

“What are you talking about right now, Sett student?”

Startled by the unexpected visit, Instructor Silica could hardly believe what she'd heard and promptly demanded clarification.

“I meant exactly what I said. Teacher! I wish to partake in a field trip with this Sian here!”

The supposed field trip application in discussion was downright preposterous.

Overcome by a sudden headache, she painfully grasped her head.

“Sett student? A field trip is, as the name implies, a study achieved through an experience in an external location. What exactly do you expect to learn from this field trip you desire?”

“Exploring the unknown! Isn't that the true essence of learning? Investigating these mysterious relics from an ancient era indeed constitutes a perfect learning experience, allowing us to grasp the true meaning of education!”

Though she had agreed to blindly trust him for the time being, she was rendered speechless by the absurdity of his argument.

She was unsure if such a thing would warrant approval, but one thing had become clear:

I am probably going to be killed by the clan leader soon.

“Well, since the application has been made, I will register it. But you do understand, right? Whether it gets approved is another story. It's not just going to happen because one person agrees to it.”

Final approval would require consensus from other instructors, including Instructor Silica, especially now with Chancellor Condor away.

“I shall await the good news. Teacher!”

“Well, don’t get your hopes up too high...”

After Sett completed his business, he rose with a triumphant look on his face as if he had accomplished a mission.

Likewise feeling the need to extricate myself quickly, I rose from my seat when,

“student Sian?”

The clan leader stopped me with a voice that seemed to grit teeth.

“A word with you, student Sian.”

The look in those sharply raised eyes read ‘you’re not going anywhere.’

Once Sett was sent away, I sat back down.

“Explain.”

The clan leader demanded an explanation in a curt tone.

Having anticipated this, I explained the whole situation without hesitation.

“So, you mean to say there’s a relic in a village called Nodeli in the southeast of the kingdom, and according to Sett, the name of the potentially demonic creature residing there might be Remiharam? That’s the same name as the Demon Sword? And now you want to go there using a field trip as an excuse?”

I nodded nonchalantly.

“How on earth did you convince Sett?”

“He immediately agreed when I promised to serve as his sparring partner in exchange.”

To this, the clan leader unsuccessfully suppressed a profanity.

“Let me ask you one thing. Where did you hear that the Demon Sword’s name is Remiharam?”

“Ceyram told me.”

She sighed and continued.

“Judging by your expression, you must be unaware, but unlike the Holy Scripture of Hiscrea, the name of the Demon Sword is not known.”

Huh? What's this about?

"I can assure you, there are very few people on this continent who know the Demon Sword's name. Even I heard the name Remiharam just now from you for the first time."

"Didn't you hear it from Aer too?"

"While Magic Swords are from Aer, Demon Swords are not. They are born from the power of another deity we do not know, so it wouldn't make sense for Aer to mention it."

'One shall not divulge one's intentions to any being other than the divine,' as stated by the rule of the gods Aer mentioned.

So, it would have been improper to discuss this whole time?

How did Lunev know about it then?

"It is admirable for you to follow Aer's words. But you should be aware of the danger you're in right now, shouldn't you?"

I responded with silence.

"The proposal for an engagement with Princess Arin, you say? That means you'll be under close scrutiny, not only from the royal family but also other noble houses from the empire. Can you handle that?"

"If I must, then I must, right?"

Honestly, I can't guarantee that I can handle it at all.

"There's nothing more to say. I do not wish to send you chasing after some uncertainty. I don't care about Aer's words. As I've told you repeatedly, I can't stand to see you in danger."

Her determination remained unwavering.

"I shall ponder an alternative path then."

"Not giving up to the end, I see."

As if she had expected it, she sighed again and shook her head.

"Do not speak of surrender before me lest I kill you..."

"...?"

“Those were the words of the previous clan leader to me.”

Leaving behind the rare confused expression on her face, I smiled and exited the room.

\* \* \*

Sett was completely confident that there would be no issues.

Well, knowing he's a fool, I never took him seriously, but the real problem was on my side.

The clan leader's opposition was far more vehement than expected.

I understood the situation.

Leaving my position in times of increased surveillance is essentially akin to admitting suspicion.

If I really want this, I have to wait for a vacation period, but I don't see time to wait.

With Boris potentially stirring up trouble at any moment, just idly killing time is out of the question.

If there's anything I can do, I should be doing it.

Much as I say so, I honestly don't know how.

Ultimately, I need to leave something that could replace me at the academy,

but illusion magic can only last a day or two at best.

Since it doesn't have a physical form like a summoned beast, it's likely to be exposed if left unattended for long.

It seems I may need to find a double who exactly resembles me...

“Huh? Young Master! When did you get here?”

Emerging from the kitchen, Emily saw me sitting on the sofa and questioned me.

“I've been here since a while back?”

“That can't be! You were just in the kitchen eating until a moment ago!”

How could that be?

As hungry as I might be, there's no way I would seek out her food first.

It's no exaggeration to say Emily's food tastes good to nobody but me.

Confused, Emily rubbed her eyes and then rushed back into the kitchen.

"Eeek!"

A terrible screech echoed.

Wondering what had happened, I also hurried into the kitchen to see,

"...?"

Blinking about five times, I was doubting my own eyes.

Emily stood aghast, almost crying out in horror.

Sitting at the dining table and heartily eating her prepared food was a black-haired boy.

That was, unmistakably... me.

"Young Master...two of you?!"

No.

It may resemble me as if it were a clone, but that's not me.

Judging from the familiar aura emanating from this unfamiliar boy, this kid must certainly be...

"Ha ha! Surprised, isn't it?"

Following a 'poof' and a burst of smoke, the supposed boy revealed his true identity.

"It was a big success to surprise Papa and big sis Emily!"

The only person who'd enjoy Emily's food, it was Nana.

"What on earth is this?"

Unlike perplexed Emily, I immediately grasped the situation.

Polymorph.

The unique dragon magic of transformation into humans.



Known to be a high-level spell mastered only by fully-grown dragons, how could this child, who's merely a half-grown one, use such magic?

It seemed beyond belief.

"How did you do it, Nana?"

"I don't know! I fell asleep dreaming about Papa, and when I woke up, I was transformed into Papa! And it's not just Papa! I can transform into other people, too!"

"...!"

With another 'poof!', this time Nana changed into Brian.

"Look! Exactly the same, isn't it?"

Not only the appearance but the voice was exactly the same.

I watched in silence for a while as she transformed.

"Young Master, why aren't you saying anything?"

Why am I not saying anything?

Because I'm busy making an insane plan right now, wondering if it's really the right thing to do.

Despite knowing I shouldn't, my mind was violently torn between the two thoughts—there's no other way, isn't there?

\* \* \*

In Prince Fabian's room on the fourth floor of the Royal Palace Great Chamber, seated on a chair and resting his chin in his hand, Fabian was being observed by his brother Nerobian, who was standing with arms crossed.

"Father really is something, isn't he? To welcome guests even amid recurrent fits."

Fabian stayed quiet.

"After 10 years, right? One can only wonder what conversation will unravel between the respected uncle and Father."

"Be quiet, Nerobian! Can't you see I'm thinking?"

Unbothered by his brother's irritability, Nerobian continued.

“What’s there to think about, brother? A chancellor who had no interest in worldly affairs aside from the academy is now in the imperial palace! It’s clear he’s opportunistically seizing the chance to begin constructing his position, given Father’s deteriorating health!”

“Don’t jump to conclusions. We know nothing for sure.”

Fabian dismissed it with a drawn line.

“The state of affairs in the Royal Court has become quite the puzzle. The chancellor’s unexpected visit is one thing, then that shell of a child, Arin, is set to be engaged to the Vert Family, leaving us feeling oddly sidelined.”

Fabian couldn’t truly argue against that point.

“Get a grip, brother! At this rate, we’ll be steamrolled. The coterie nearby continues to swell while we’re simply maintaining stature!”

“So, what do you propose?”

Fabian looked expectant, challenging him to present an idea.

“Well, we give their figure a bit of ‘adjustment’.”

Nerobian’s mouth curled into a conniving smirk.

“Are you suggesting we make a move on the Condor Family? You’re still thinking about that...?”

“Who said anything about touching them?”

Fabian flinched for a moment, knitting his brows.

Giving in, Nerobian leaned in and whispered something into his brother’s ear.

“That youngest son of the Vert Family... let’s kill him!”

Fabian exclaimed in shock.

“Have you lost your senses, Nerobian!”

“Why? He’s nothing but a foundling, an illegitimate scion. Wouldn’t matter if he died, would it?”

Nerobian was dead serious.

“You remember Mother’s old plan, right? The one about involving the assassin group, the Mist, with Princess Arin. Now’s the perfect time to proceed! We assassinate that Sian kid and frame the Mist for it! Then, we implicate the Condor Family! It’s not complicated! Even if it fails, we have the perfect escape strategy in place!”

The plan in its intricate details was already laid out.

All that remained was Fabian’s decision.

“Brother, whether you become emperor is not the current issue. This is a desperate struggle for survival! If we keep dithering, all will be taken: throne and nation, followed by our very lives...”

Unable to hold back his trembling gaze, Fabian closed his eyes.

As his brother suggested, there was nothing to be gained by sitting idly.

If not wanting to shed my own blood, then the only course is to spill another’s.

‘It is only the natural struggle for a human to survive,’ Fabian thought, consoling himself.

“Tell me more about it, Nerobian.”

With a broad smile, Nerobian whispered the entire plan to Fabian.

(To be continued)