

# The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin

## chapter 15

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Chapter 15: The Emperor's Tour (2)

Arin Severus, the fifth princess of the Ushif Empire.

As the youngest and latest child of the emperor, she held a position that was practically unrelated to the throne.

However, if she lived without greed and only within the power granted to her, it was a very good position to enjoy a long and comfortable life.

Yet ironically, she did not desire such a life.

As a member of the imperial family and a daughter of the emperor, she believed she must fulfill her responsibilities and duties. She was convinced that this was the reason for her birth.

Nevertheless, not many looked favorably upon her attitude.

Although it seems reasonable for a princess to be concerned about the welfare of her country, even such a minor interest could be uncomfortable for those around her.

Some wondered if the fifth princess was interested in the throne or if she was being incited by a faction of rebels.

Though she might feel unjustly treated, the political arena created by the throne was inherently like this.

Don't do anything.

She had been told repeatedly:

By the servants,

By the surrounding nobles,

Even by the emperor himself,

She was begged to live comfortably and not to do or pursue anything else.

But why should that be?

She simply wanted to help the world, not as an empress, but as a princess.

Was it really fair to suppress all ambition and enjoy a life of ease just because she was the youngest?

She hated it.

She detested that notion profoundly.

The life of a princess she sought after was not like that at all.

She reasoned that people disregarded her because she was young.

Therefore, she must not reveal any sign of her youth.

It was she who had personally requested to accompany the emperor on the front lines.

Although the emperor strongly opposed her decision, the young princess showed her stubborn will by even undergoing a hunger strike.

It's not like you could starve to death the precious youngest daughter whom even her father couldn't bear seeing in pain.

Emperor Dione had no choice but to allow her to come along.

She was a true princess of the Empire.

She must concern herself with the welfare of the nation, tend to her people, and contribute to the peace of the continent.

In this sense, she felt that she had matured internally.

Taking these steady steps and continually growing, she had no doubt that she would become a better princess.

That is, until she came face-to-face with a man named Sian Vert...

During her journey to Belias, she encountered the youngest of the Vert family, who had once been scorned as the incompetent one of his house but had earned recognition from his lord through his growth and stern life on the front lines overrun with monstrous entities.

Not something anyone could ignore, especially the princess who yearned for such recognition, particularly coming from the Duke Vert himself.

She thought she might learn a lot from this man Sian, who seemed to be quite like her. Perhaps if she spent time with him, she might take away valuable lessons.

“Sian Vert of the Duke Vert family, at your service.”

That was her first impression of him from inside the carriage.

Undoubtedly, he presented a composed and formidable demeanor even before the emperor of the Empire.

“...?”

Princess Arin couldn't help but tilt her head in confusion.

At first glance, he was nothing but a ten-year-old boy, yet whether it was his stalwart impression or his calm tone, he exuded an adult-like aura.

‘Is this man really a peer of my age?’

An odd sense of alienation that seemed unapproachable to her.

Even in front of the emperor,

Even in the face of numerous nobles who were slandering her,

She always tried to maintain her confidence, but this was different.

Someone with seemingly the same conditions as herself, but with a very different demeanor.

Upon meeting him face-to-face, indescribable emotions welled up within her.

What kind of life had this young lord led to be showing such a disjointed presence for his age?

And what made him so different from herself that they seemed worlds apart?

Feelings of resentment and envy rose simultaneously.

It was unfair.

She tried every day to improve herself, yet why did this man make her feel such profound despair just by being present?

As a young child not yet rid of her immaturity, she couldn't help but reveal her inner feelings.

In contrast to the princess's flurry of emotions, Sian appeared indifferent and unaffected.

\* \* \*

The emperor's tour proceeded more smoothly than expected.

From the western desolate forest that bordered the demarcation line, to the eastern red river flowing through the canyons and the arid cliffs.

As if detecting the presence of nobility, the monstrous creatures did not appear.

Emperor Dione, inexhaustible, and Duke Vert, pacing by his side.

Walking in step with the emperor of the Empire.

A privilege that would be condemned as disrespectful by others, was permissible for Duke Vert.

This showed just how much respect the emperor had for the duke.

The bond between the two men was just that.

Well, let's set aside the fact that they were originally like that...

Exactly five steps behind the emperor and the duke,

A procession of guardian knights follows to protect them.

In the center, receiving protection, was Princess Arin.

The princess seemed endlessly fascinated by the natural environment of the frontlines, looking around curiously in every direction.

Then suddenly she glanced back...

“...!”

Here she goes again.

If she has a problem, why doesn't she speak up? Why keep frowning? Strictly speaking, I'm supposed to be escorting (?) from a step behind as per Duke's instructions...

This princess, why does she keep looking at me with such a grim face every now and then?

It's hard to feel good when someone looks at you as if you've eaten something disgusting.

With so little goodwill to begin with, why is she behaving like this?

Once this tour is over, our paths will hardly cross.

I can only hope for this to be over soon.

As the emperor's tour continued, we arrived at the arid cliffs.

Overlooking the expanse below, Emperor Dione took a deep breath.

“Whether at the palace or here, the air itself isn't much different.”

The statement was loaded with meaning.

The political landscape of the palace is a battleground of constant strife.

At least on the front lines, enemy distinction is clear, while at the palace, allies turn into foes on a daily basis.

Although a weary life, it's none of my concern.

“Er, excuse me?”

Suddenly, a foreign voice called out to me.

“...?”

Princess Arin addressed me for the first time in three hours.

She had an expression that indicated she wanted to ask me something.

“Why is that river so red?”

Her gaze fell on the river of red hues flowing through a secluded canyon.

“It’s the Blood River.”

“Blood River?”

The river of blood.

“A tributary that flows through the Lemia Valley. The reason for the red water is nothing unusual. It’s simply because the monsters bathe in it, splashing their bodily fluids around, resulting in that color.”

Upon hearing my explanation, the princess seemed quite surprised.

“So, all of that is the bodily fluids of monsters?”

Instead of answering, I simply nodded.

It might appear beautifully crimson from afar.

However, that river was not only a drinking source for monsters but also a place where they washed themselves, so it’s far from clean.

If one were to approach it to dip in a toe, they’d become a meal for the monsters. That’s why the knights of the front lines generally avoid getting too close.

Intrigued, the princess continued to gaze along the water stream, looking beyond the invisible valley.

“What lies beyond that river?”

“The demon world.”

Beyond the Blood River lays the demon world, inhabited by different races, not of this realm.

A madman might consider venturing there. If one wished to reach the demon world without knowing the way, they could simply follow this river.

Of course, I cannot guarantee they would arrive unharmed...

“Amazing...”

The kid is hopeless.

While others would refuse to go near the cursed place, she looks upon it as if it were paradise.

I wonder what kind of face she’ll make when she finally encounters a real monster.

\* – Boom! \*

“...?!”

With the sound of an explosion, a yellow glow burst into the western sky, signaling a monster’s appearance in that direction.

“Guard the emperor! All remaining knights follow me to that location!”

Duke Vert attempted to ensure the emperor’s safety first, but Emperor Dione was not interested in being protected.

“Such disappointing words, Willius.”

The emperor already had his sword drawn.

“Your Majesty, however...”

“Do you think I came here just to sightsee? I’ve been bored stiff and need a good fight.”

“...I cannot take responsibility for that.”

Duke Vert sighed, resigned.

Emperor Dione smiled in satisfaction but then looked solemn as he commanded his knights.

“Emperor’s soldiers are to follow Duke Vert’s orders from now on! Concentrate on eliminating the monsters until the extermination command is given!”

The publicly known magical rank of Emperor Dione is up to 8 stars.

He possessed enough magical power to stand with the greatest mages on the continent.

Had he not become the emperor, he might have been the head of the Grand Mage Assembly, such was the extent of his power. In truth, dealing with these mid-level monsters would have been over with a simple flick of his hand.

Amidst all this, the command of the imperial troops was handed over to the duke.

Such heartbreaking friendship indeed.

The knights moved in perfect coordination with the command.

I too had to join the battle with them.

“Did demons just appear now?”

A very bewildered Princess Arin turned to me and asked.

Unlike earlier, she was shaking noticeably.

“Your highness should retreat to the rear with the guardian knights. Wait there, and the situation will be resolved shortly.”

“What about you?”

“I’m going to the site of the battle.”

“You, can you even fight those demons...?”

I wanted to say ‘of course’, but I couldn’t.



Instead, I quietly responded to her.

“I’ve only been allowed to observe the fight so far. I’m going to do my job, so please, your highness, you should...”

“I want to go too!”

“...?”

What is this child talking about?

“I thought you said I’m just observing the battle? Then I should be allowed to go as well!”

The guardian knights around us looked equally flustered.

“This is the front line, your highness, not a playground.”

“I know that! I just want to survey the field as a princess of the Empire!”

“Regardless, it’s dangerous. His Majesty the Emperor certainly wouldn’t want...”

“I can take care of myself! You’re allowed, so why can’t I go?”

Ah... My blood pressure’s rising.

This princess is more stubborn than she seems.

I just want to knock her out and instruct the knights to take her away,

But that would mean staring at prison bars, not the front line.

“No matter what anyone says, I’m going!”

“Princess, please!”

Despite the knights’ protestations, the princess rashly pushed forward.

The guardian knights were at a loss.

To be bound by a single princess in a situation like this really shows the incompetence of the imperial troops.

A princess who can't seem to understand the gravity of the situation, how does she expect to survive?

As I was shaking my head, I quietly approached her.

\* – Click \*

I caught the princess's wrist in a flash, which no one else dared to touch.

"...!?"

"Your highness, if you're going to act like a child, you might as well return home."

"...What?"

"If your highness's stubbornness is tying down dozens of feet here. Let me remind you this is the front line, where a split second of poor judgment can have deadly consequences. Unless you plan to take responsibility yourself?"

Princess Arin was merely a burden for the knights, who were in dire need to focus on the battle.

Even if she was too young to understand, she needed some realization of the truth.

"I just thought..."

"If you can't be of help, the least you can do is not to hinder."

Unable to say another word, the princess finally retreated to the rear with the knights.

At least she didn't make a bigger scene.

I then made my way to the site of the action.

(To be continued)