

# **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 151**

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 151-160**

Chapter 151: What for (4)

The desk was covered with work documents that hadn't been dealt with. However, Kundeul's eyes saw none of them. Each time he tried to focus on the paperwork, frustration surged, and papers were crumpled in his hands.

Sian Bert. Just how far did his potential reach? Although he hadn't used his full power, it was the first time someone had withstood his magic — that of a nine-star mage — so effortlessly. Was it not absurd to even consider such an instance? It was as improbable as an infant overpowering an adult man, a scenario inconceivable from the outset. And yet, it had unfolded right before his eyes.

As if to remind him of the relentless passage of time, another figure came to mind—one not quite human; a half-dragon in its own right. Even if it were closer to human, was it right to leave such a being with dragon's blood within the academy?

While Sian explained it as self-defense, he had undeniably killed someone. How could one justify the lingering threat of such a being erupting in violence? And yet, Kundeul found himself inexplicably sending food to him.

If asked about his most shameful moment during his sixty years of life, he would undoubtedly cite this moment as utterly incomprehensible.

– Knock, knock.

“Come in.”

Following the knock, the door opened, and Instructor Sirika entered, her complexion notably darker than usual.

She approached Kundeul hesitantly and silently extended an envelope. Though he hadn't looked inside, Kundeul immediately recognized its contents.

“What does this mean?”

“It's exactly as you see.”

Taken aback, Kundeul asked with eyes wide, but Sirika replied with calm detachment.

“I am resigning from my instructor position at the academy, effective today.”

She had handed him her resignation. “What’s the reason? It’s not just about this incident, is it?”

Since the emergency measures, Sirika had been responsible for monitoring Sian. However, she had failed to recognize the transformed half-dragon, not the real Sian. Though it was unexpected, it wasn’t an inexcusable error.

Was she attempting to resign as a means to take responsibility, as the dean suggested? Her resolute gaze was unmistakably sincere.

“I’ve been contemplating this for several months. I want to leave the academy and focus on personal matters.”

She said her resignation was due to personal reasons, unrelated to her family.

Considering her demeanor, it seemed unlikely she would elaborate further.

“Sirika. Among the instructors I’ve observed, you were the epitome of what an instructor should be. I trusted you enough to consider you for the vice chancellor position after Satwel. You know this, don’t you?”

“Yes...”

“Honestly, I found your actions during this incident atypical. Be it the approval of the field exercise or surveillance over Sian Bert... No, I’ll drop this matter.”

As Sian’s name was about to be mentioned, Kundeul firmly cut the conversation short.

“Anyways, I truly do not wish to let you go. There may come a time when you must leave, but not now. I cannot accept this resignation.”

With a decisive gesture, Kundeul pushed the envelope back towards Sirika, clearly refusing it.

Sirika spoke softly upon seeing her rejected resignation.

“I won’t be here for much longer...”

Her words echoed a resolute intent that remained unshaken.

As she prepared to leave the chancellor’s office,

“By the way, it was you who initially reported Instructor Boris’s sabbatical, wasn’t it?”

Her pupils quivered ever so slightly.

“Did he mention his reasons?”

“He only cited personal circumstances without giving details,” she replied calmly, concealing any hint of emotion.

“Very well.”

With no further discussion, Sirika stepped out of the chancellor’s office and headed toward her research lab in the annex building. Was it the recent murder case that cast a pall over the academy? Despite the bright moonlight, the academy grounds were eerily quiet.

As she arrived in front of her lab and reached for the doorknob,

“...!”

She sensed someone within the dark, unlit room and without hesitation, she opened the door.

-Creak-

Amid the shadowy twilight, a clear silhouette revealed itself—a young boy. Sirika greeted him warmly.

“Did you come for counseling, Sian?”

\*\*\*

He usually puts up a cheery demeanor, but inside it’s far from it; I understand that better than anyone. But counseling?

Our lord. What kind of dull joke is he trying to play?

“I came to tell you something more important than counseling.”

I gave a sly reply, as if humoring his notion.

“That’s kind of you to come find me this late in the evening.”

-Click-

She subtly closed the door then snapped her fingers, casting a spell to prevent eavesdropping—an action she always took during private conversations, making it seem ordinary.

-Hum-

Wait, what's that?

I felt something odd and looked up to see her manifesting mana. Soon a transparent barrier spanned the room. The ward sealed the space.

That's when I became uneasy.

-Swish-

From her bosom, a hidden black dagger revealed its ominous blade. That moment, I belatedly realized:

We're in trouble!

-Thud! Thud! Thud!-

The hands holding down our lord's wrists were shaking.

What a relief Keiram wasn't here. Had she witnessed this state of affairs, the bloodshed would far surpass that of the previous incident.

"Let's hear how you feel about recklessly going off on your own without a word, shall we? You have no idea how upset I've been!"

This is beyond mere punishment.

As I braced myself against her fierce expression, I asked hesitantly.

"Do you plan to kill me?"

"What's stopping me? A successor who doesn't heed my words might as well be dead and replaced by someone obedient!"

"That's quite the statement, isn't it?"

"Why not? Easy come, easy go, as they say! And Aeul will surely understand!"

Though it might seem like severe training at a glance, it is far from it.

Look at her: her face, having turned from anger to complete reversal. If I approached this with even a sliver of laxity,

I might truly die!

\*\*\*

After about ten minutes of rough discipline, the lord finally calmed down. I recounted to her everything that happened at the ruins, including acquiring a piece of the mausoleum.

“At least you didn’t return empty-handed. That’s a relief.”

Had I come back empty-handed, I shuddered at the thought of what discipline would’ve awaited me.

She passed me a sheet of paper without a word.

“It’s information on the assassins who targeted you.”

It contained details about them acquired by interrogating the sole surviving mercenary. The names or breeds of the hunting hounds aren’t important. What matters is the master who commanded them—and that master was...

“The royal family?”

The assailants were the sons of Dioné’s Prince and siblings of Arin Princess: Third Prince Fabian and Fourth Prince Nérobion.

“They did this to checkmate Arin Princess for her engagement, aiming at me to shift the target to another party, you say?”

“I would guess so. The mercenary, Geric, could only provide so much. Generally, hunting hounds aren’t given too much information. But based on this, we can conjecture...”

“Even after arriving from Nodely, how did you travel so swiftly to here?”

“I created a gate connecting my spatial domain with Mist’s domain. It allowed me to travel here in one step.”

Upon hearing this, she widened her eyes, asking,

“You can create a spatial domain?”

“It’s a recent ability.”

Power is a very honest element. The more you use it, the more you can grow without bounds. Neglect it, and it declines without end.

Following my blood-fought battle with ex-Mist member Linzé Nihalof, my body learned to wield the power of mist with far greater precision. I can now create a divine space comparable to that of Aeul.

Do you know one of the privileges of Aeul's divine space? It can connect two distinct spaces that share similar energies. In Nodely, I connected the spatial domain I created to the one in Ruwen, using a gate to shorten the distance considerably. As a result, I traversed what would've been a two-day journey in just one minute.

As soon as I returned, my first act was to check on Nana's welfare.

"You confined Nana within the spatial domain..."

"Should I have left a brat, who caused a rampage and eaten people, lying about in a room?"

"You had no plans to send her back either, did you?"

"..."

The room's atmosphere turned hostile.

"Were you planning to kill Nana?"

"It seems I can't do that anymore, not after you blatantly exposed her existence to the chancellor..."

Handing me my answer nonchalantly, she admitted to considering the act. When she first received word from her agents in Nodely, she felt like her brain had flipped inside out. She didn't know why, but the first thing that came to mind was Nana's crying face.

In my absence, Nana might have succumbed to another bout of hunger, caused trouble, and ended up crying in despair.

The lord confined such a Nana to a secluded place, planning to kill her once things settled.

I don't misunderstand her reasoning, as it was ultimately for my protection. However,

"Let me be clear. Whether that child eats people or dragons, don't bother her again. I'll take full responsibility."

The lord crossed her arms and gazed at me intently.

"Let me also be clear."

“Please proceed.”

“The only things assassins must take responsibility for are their own bodies. And there are times when you must abandon even that.”

I had a hunch about what she was about to say.

“Having more things to protect means your body becomes heavier and slower. Thus...”

“You mean it creates more vulnerabilities.”

“...”

The lord was silent for a moment.

“I don’t recall saying such things to you.”

“Then it must have been from a previous lord.”

Shaking her head as if to refuse continuation of that topic, she declared,

“Well, I understand your wishes. But don’t expect me to fully comply. This is the last time.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.”

After overcoming the ordeal, my eyes naturally fell upon the white envelope on the desk. I didn’t need to read its contents to know what it contained.

“A resignation letter?”

“There’s nothing surprising. I was preparing to do so, with Boris’s unknown return. I can’t stay here with peace of mind.”

It seemed the chancellor hadn’t accepted it.

“Even if an incident occurs, I can take it all upon myself. But if you wish to maintain this peaceful academy life, you must be more cautious.”

Peaceful academy life...

Picturing this, I couldn’t help but burst into laughter.

Peace...

That’s quite the alien word to me.

“You told me to realize what I can achieve with my power. Only then can I utilize it without regrets...”

“That’s true. It seems you can already accomplish much more than I anticipated...”

Now that I’ve revealed I’m a regressor, nothing I demonstrate will likely shock her.

But,

“You should also realize, lord, what I’ve shown you is less than half my power.”

Her face slightly twisted with concern.

“It sounds less positive than intended.”

The lord’s expression was far from bright.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 152**

Chapter 152: For Whom (5)

“Welcome back, young master...”

After ending my conversation with the head of the family, I returned to my room, where Brian, who hadn’t gone to sleep yet, greeted me.

“Where’s Nana?”

“She just fell asleep with Lady Emily. She was so happy after having a delicious dinner.”

Hearing that, I quietly approached Nana’s room and opened the door.

– Gently snoring –

She was sleeping so soundly, one could have carried her away without her noticing.

The clan leader might think that it was me who had rescued Nana from the subspace, but that wasn’t really the case.

She had already manifested the Dragon’s miracle and left the subspace before I arrived.

Thankfully she hadn't gone too far, so I was able to find her nearby, but when I did, she was not in a normal state.

She was in quite a panic, crying and apologizing to me.

It had taken quite an effort to calm her down.

To think she had already broken through the subspace barrier with her talent.

This reminded me once again why lineage is so important.

Next to her lay Emily, her hand holding Nana's in a comforting manner, both asleep.

Reminiscent of a mother, which is a stark contrast to how she trembled under the sheets, too scared to sleep, not so long ago.

I carefully closed the door so as not to wake them.

"Did your talk with Lady Sirica go well?"

"It went roughly as expected. You seem to have had a hard time. You look pale..."

"Do I really?"

As I turned away, thinking he might need a boost with demon blood or something similar, I was startled by an abrupt sound.

"I'm so sorry, young master!"

– Thud! –

Startled by the noise, I turned to see Brian kneeling and bowing his head in reverence to me.

What was he doing?

"Why are you apologizing?"

"Young master, while you were away, it was my responsibility to protect Nana... and I failed to do anything. I'm truly sorry...!"

Sorry? What for?

Why was he apologizing to me?

If anyone should be sorry, it should be me, right?

I was the one who irresponsibly left to chase uncertain information. Why should I be the one receiving apologies?

The whole situation was utterly perplexing.

“Get up.”

Despite my firm instruction, Brian didn't seem to rise.

“Don't make me repeat myself.”

– Suddenly –

Brian stood up as if nothing had ever happened.

Seeing his haggard face, it was clear he'd been through a lot while I was away.

I never thought I'd ever vocalize this sentiment in my life, but here it was.

“I'm sorry.”

“Pardon?”

He blinked in surprise, as if misunderstanding what I had said.

“I've put you through trouble for my foolish quest. My apologies...”

He stood frozen as if his soul had left his body. Would it hurt him to respond? This was embarrassing...

“Rest. I'm going out.”

“Where to, young master?”

“Out for a stroll...”

Where would I be going at this hour?

Even though making rounds had become a daily routine for the past two years, I'd never felt heavier than I did tonight.

Surrounded by silence, not even the sound of insects, and feeling the annoyance weigh on me, I slumped down on a nearby bench.

[Why do you have such worry written all over your face?]

I sighed deeply as if to agree with Keram's words.

[What happened to that vigorous spirit that could suppress the magic of nine stars? You look as ragged as a drenched doll.]

Typically she would have teased me relentlessly, but today she just quietly sat next to me without a fuss.

Does the more you have to protect signify the heavier your body becomes?

When I heard that statement from the clan leader in my previous life, I didn't relate to it at all. At that time, I thought there was nothing for me to protect.

Who could I have been concerned about? I could barely take care of my own life, let alone someone else's.

I once thought that would never change, not until that demon picked me up.

Even after my regression, I thought I had nothing to lose.

Now, I feel like my body would twist and crumble if I were to lose anyone.

"What have I become?"

It wasn't so much a lament as it was a purely rhetorical question.

I never would have imagined, once an emotionless shadow scarcely treated as human, that I'd now be grappling with such ordinary emotional concerns.

[Yeah, even I'm not sure how I ended up this way.]

Keram chuckled, sympathizing with my words.

It doesn't seem so far off now.

The academy, this fence that protected my current status,

The moment to step away from it was approaching.

\* \* \*

Under the bright sun floating in the sky, shedding light of peace on the continent, was the god of light, Lumendel.

Beneath the majestic statue, a woman with pristine white hair folded her hands in sacred prayer towards the monument.

– Thump –

Soon, familiar footsteps approached from behind, prompting the woman to gently open her eyes, smiling faintly.

“You’ve been quite busy lately, haven’t you, Eshel...?”

“.....”

“Recently, I hear you’ve been snooping around the ancient ruins within the empire. Have you found a treasure you desire?”

The owner of the footsteps remained silent, replying only with a smile.

“The Prince Luinel from the palace has been deeply concerned about you. Even before you were his prince, you were his friend. Shouldn’t you at least show your face?”

“Your words are teasing...”

“My apologies. To think I would speak of friends to the practical and pragmatic Eshel... Yet, these days I hear you’re often seen with Princess Violet.”

Eshel maintained his placid smile in response to her remarks, saying nothing.

“But for someone who rarely visits, your face seems worse for wear. It’s almost like you’ve come to me as a last resort, after getting nowhere elsewhere?”

“Why would I do that? I simply didn’t want to impose on you, Saintess.”

“It pains me more not to share your troubles. Are we such strangers that we cannot share our secrets...?”

Despite her provoking persistence, Eshel’s smile remained unchanged.

“So have you found what you were seeking after all? Though, if you had, you wouldn’t have come to see me.”

Eshel replied with a silence that held affirmative meaning.

“Truthfully, there’s not much I can do for you. Even with my sincere daily prayers, Lumendel gives no sign, just like the silent Eshel...”

As the saint finally rose from her seat gracefully, Eshel’s eyes betrayed a flicker of unrest.

“However, you’re quite lucky. Whether I know for whom or not, I’ve received a revelation last night.”

Eshel’s facade finally wavered.

“You heard the voice of Lumendel?”

“Yes! To my surprise as well. Who would have thought that Lumendel, who bedeviled even when demonic armies invade, would offer a prophecy. I wonder what darkness he sees on this peaceful continent.”

Eshel’s gaze hardened as he looked upon the saint with newfound suspicion.

“Don’t glare at me so, Eshel. I have no intention to withhold what I know from you. Lumendel wouldn’t want that either...”

Whispering secretively yet smoothly, the saint stepped closer to Eshel.

The two were nearly close enough for their lips to touch.

The saint gently caressed his sculpted face before whispering a sweet revelation into his ear.

“Seeker of the light of truth, do not forget that where there is light, darkness coexists. Remember that moment buried in the flow of memory, and you shall surely find what you seek...”

It was a riddle-like divine revelation.

Yet the interpretation didn’t take long.

As the saint’s lips parted from the shell-shocked Eshel with a tease of a smile, he also began to smile.

This smile was different, not the facade often shown to hide his feelings but a genuine expression of joy emanating from within.

\* \* \*

– Bang!

Unable to contain his bubbling anger, the Third Prince Fabian slammed his desk fiercely.

Before him, his brother NEROBIAN gripped his head, his face a portrait of displeasure.

“Didn’t you say this would be a sure thing, Fabian! What kind of fools did you hire for this to end up in such a mess?”

“Do you think I expected this outcome? I chose reliable mercenaries, even included one with peculiar tastes...”

The two brothers had sent assassins to the academy to eliminate Arin’s fiancé, Sian Bert.

However, the outcome was disastrous.

Instead of anticipated success, they were greeted with horrible news, far from what they expected.

“And of all people, Arin discovered the scene. That useless girl...”

Nerobian grated his teeth as if cursing Arin, who had found the crime scene.

“Now that it has come to this, we must cut off any ties to this mess! No one must ever know we were involved!”

“I know that! All evidence linking us is already...”

“Princess Violet is here!”

Amidst the serious discussion on damage control, an uninvited guest arrived.

Upon hearing the news, the brothers doubted their ears.

“Why... why is Violet coming all of a sudden...?”

Before an order could be given, the door opened, and Princess Violet entered.

“What sort of secret conversation has made you both freeze upon my arrival?”

The brothers exchanged glances, resigning themselves to her presence.

“What brings you here?”

“Must I have reason to visit? I merely thought I might share a moment with my brothers.”

“Why are you acting unlike yourself, sister? Since when have we been on such friendly terms to chat?”

Nerobian bluntly expressed his discomfort, cutting to the point.

“Indeed. Why is it that though we share the same blood, we act like we can’t stand each other? At a time when we should be sharing joy, we plot tragedies against one another. It’s pitiable.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“Why did you send people to the academy?”

“...!”

“Was it to kill Arin’s fiancé, that young man Sian Bert? And then to put the blame on me and our brother?”

The brothers’ pupils shook, failing to maintain their composure.

“But things didn’t go as planned? The mercenaries you sent were found dead. What exactly is happening?”

“What is this nonsense you speak of...?”

Nerobian attempted to deny the accusation, but even a coherent sentence eluded him.

Violet smiled brightly at her brothers, finding their reactions endearing.

“How heartbroken would father be to know this? The shock that would overcome him, I can imagine how much it would hurt.”

“What do you want?”

Fabian, though shaken, managed to grasp the situation and asked with a quivering voice.

“I imagine how much shock that tender young girl Arin must have felt. I, too, must comfort her as family, but perhaps...”

Was it a prediction of what she would say next?

The brothers swallowed hard.

“Shall we take a trip down memory lane and pay a visit to the academy?”

(To be continued)

**The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter  
153**

Episode 153. Anxiety (1)

“Are you feeling all right?”

“I slept so deeply for the first time in a while, I feel like I could fly! With this condition, I could even win against Xian, couldn't I?”

Seth's reckless remarks, which made all their worries disappear, were met with a stern response from Lunab.

“It's just a joke! Can't even joke around now...”

Seth waved his hands dismissively, indicating he wasn't serious.

As they returned late from their journey through the rough sandstorm, Lunab and Seth reflected on the trip. They had set out as a trio, but now they were returning as a pair—a situation that wasn't entirely laughable.

“Aren't you going to ask?”

“Do I have the right to ask? The academy's issues aren't something you wanted to happen. And as for me, I happened to be asleep, blissfully unaware as the situation unfolded. To be honest, I'm quite ashamed. If he hadn't been there, we wouldn't have been able to return so comfortably.”

Seth wet his lips and expressed his honest feelings.

“It looks like Xian has some unknown support behind him, right? The power he holds seems to exceed what we had imagined?”

“That seems to be the case...”

And that was an understatement—it was far beyond.

“Then what's there to probe further? A man is bound to have one or two secrets his lover doesn't know. As a rival, I should respect that!”

Perhaps charmed by the frank and cool manner in which this was said, Lunab looked at Seth with a slightly different kind of respect than usual.

“If you're going to be my rival, you've got to have that much about you! That's what will make me want to rise to the challenge all the more! Great! When we get back to the academy, I'll embark on a training regimen twice, no, three times more rigorous than before! You'll help me, won't you, my junior?”

“Do it yourself.”

Seth’s ambitious offer was met with an indifferent reply, immediately disarming his enthusiasm.

Lunab thought, a little grateful that Seth was straightforward, but also a little troubled by the simplicity of his thinking.

After a couple of days,

They finally arrived back to Luwen, around the same quiet dawn as when they had departed.

“Huh?”

Seth looked towards the city gate and questioned his eyes. The number of knights guarding it had seemingly doubled since he last saw it.

“What’s going on? Why has the number of knights increased so much? Sneaking in now seems impossible.”

“Then let’s just go in.”

Nonchalantly, Lunab strode towards the gate.

Seth watched on with a blank stare.

“Please state your identity... Huh?”

The guards, about to ask for their identities in a serious tone, paused as they recognized the familiar yet unfamiliar faces.

“Lu, Lunab Rainriver?”

She was one thing, but with the appearance of Seth, whose size alone was enough to confirm his identity, the guards’ eyes went wide.

“What are academy students doing here at this time...?”

“We just finished a field study and are on our way back.”

“A field study, you say? We haven’t been informed of such...”

“That’s because it was an unsanctioned activity. We’re going back to face disciplinary action.”

There was a moment of silence around the gate.

“We understand. Please go in.”

“Thank you. You don’t need to bother with any formal reception.”

Lunab gestured for Seth to follow, as if wondering what he was doing.

Watching her, Seth thought to himself that although he was accustomed to dealing with blunt remarks, it seemed he wouldn’t have much luck with this junior.

“By the way, why are there more guards than usual? Is there a reason?”

“Oh, you’ll probably hear about it once you’re back, but there’s recently been a murder within the academy...”

“A murder?”

The eyes of both young people gleamed at the news.

“Yes. Additionally, there’s an official announcement that dignitaries from the empire will be visiting soon...”

“We’ve arrived!”

At that moment, a knight hastily ran down the road towards the guards and shouted urgently.

“The imperial family has just passed through the west city gate!”

\* \* \*

The reasons for alumni to visit the academy were mainly twofold: to relive old memories and enjoy a break or to encourage current students, like siblings or acquaintances. Given the academy’s remote location, these visits were not frequent.

It was practically unheard of for the royal family, let alone three members together, to drop by—an unprecedented event in the academy’s history.

“It’s nice to breathe the clean air of the academy. You all feel the same, don’t you?”

“Indeed. It’s like recalling the nostalgia of forgotten memories...”

Unlike Nero Bian, who awkwardly smiled in assent, Fabian showed visible displeasure.

“Arian should be at the Royal Wing. Let’s not delay.”

Clearly, he was eager to finish this visit and return quickly.

“Why the rush? Since we’re here, we should take our time and enjoy the outing...”

While Violet looked around with absorbed delight, the faces of Fabian and Nero Bian were on the verge of collapsing from distress.

To what extent did she intend to torment them by bringing them here?

In this baffling situation, a familiar face appeared before them—the youngest, Arian, had run all the way after hearing of the royal family’s visit.

“Princess Arian Sevellus of the Ushif Empire greets her sister and brothers!”

She immediately greeted her siblings.

“It’s been a while, Arian! We were so worried about you, it’s a relief to see you looking well.”

Violet greeted her warmly with a bright smile.

Fabian and Nero Bian also forced smiles as they welcomed her.

“What brings you all the way to the academy...?”

“I thought you might be shocked by the unfortunate incident that happened before. We’ve come to console Arian with that in mind!”

“Me, for me?”

It was unbelievable for Arian.

Her gaze naturally fell on Fabian and Nero Bian, and upon seeing their anxious reactions, she realized Violet’s words were not genuinely heartfelt.

“Let’s not stay here too long, shall we move to another place?”

“Then, I shall guide you to my room...”

The room in the Royal Wing, familiar to all three siblings.

Observing the neatly arranged textbooks and borrowed books intended for academic enhancement, Violet did not hold back her compliments.

“A top student’s room indeed looks different. It makes even me want to learn from it.”

“Compared to Violet, I believe it’s nothing special.”

Arian humbly replied.

“Seeing how much my younger sister has grown, I’m so proud as your sister.”

Arian felt bewildered by the current situation.

The Princess Violet she knew wasn’t like this.

Without interest in siblings or even state affairs, why was she awkwardly showering her with praise now?

It felt off, almost as if the visit had no genuine, kind purpose.

“Speaking of which, Arian’s fiancé lives in this dorm, doesn’t he? Was it Xian Bertrand?”

At the mention of Xian, a chill of dread passed through her.

“Yes. That’s correct but…”

“I’d love to meet him. I heard that you and him have had a connection since before enrolling in the academy. What do you think of him, Arian? Does he seem like a good man?”

“Well, that is…”

Arian struggled to respond immediately.

It wasn’t that she had nothing to say, but rather, she questioned whether it was appropriate to say anything at all.

“If you wish to meet him, we will go and fetch him.”

Suddenly, with a displeased expression, Fabian volunteered to bring Xian.

“It would be improper to summon someone without prior arrangement, especially since he’s the youngest son of the Bertrand ducal family, not just Arian’s fiancé. We should go, don’t you agree?”

As if ready to meet Xian, Violet stood from her seat.

“Arian likely isn’t in his room right now! He usually trains with his guardian knight on weekends rather than staying in his room…”

“Is that so? Then we’ll have to wait for him in his room. There’s no rush; we’ll wait patiently.”

It wasn’t the waiting that was the problem, but going to Xian’s room itself.

If he were alone, it might be fine, but there was another presence in her room that must not be discovered.

Arian couldn’t let them take her to Xian’s room.

“Xian doesn’t like it when people come to his room uninvited. He might get upset if we go!”

Not expecting such a reaction from Arian, Violet’s eyebrows twitched slightly.

“Let me talk to him instead…”

“Arian.”

“Yes?”

“You’ve grown up, haven’t you? Now you argue back to my words…”

Violet’s face, previously brimming with smiles, suddenly turned cold as ice.

But just as quickly as it had changed, her original smile returned, leaving Arian gripped by fear she hadn’t felt in a long time—rendering her unable to speak further.

Fabian and Nero Bian also remained silent, sweating profusely.

In the awkward silence that filled the room,

“Sir Xian Bertrand has arrived…”

An unexpected visitor’s arrival was announced.

“Xian has come?”

Arian’s speechless mouth opened once more, and at the same time, Violet’s expression subtly shifted.

Soon, Xian himself appeared before them.

“Xian Bertrand of the Bertrand ducal family. I greet the noble imperial princess and princes.”

Facing the imperial family, Xian greeted them without a hint of tension, his gaze indifferent.

“Oh, it’s been a long time, Xian Bertrand. Or perhaps, Sir Xian…”

While the princes awkwardly welcomed him due to some familiarity, Violet’s stiff face did not relax.

“Welcome, Sir Xian! We were about to come see you, so I appreciate you coming to us. Please, have a seat!”

Soon, Violet’s expression softened, and she hurriedly ushered him in, as if she owned the room. Xian naturally sat next to Arian.

Still disoriented, Arian cautiously glanced at Xian from the corner of her eye.

His appearance was calm and indifferent as always.

Perhaps comforted by this familiar sight, Arian could feel her anxiety slowly subsiding.

“I hope we have not disrupted your weekend routine.”

“No, it’s fine.”

“What were you doing?”

“I was practicing swordsmanship with my guardian knight.”

“Oh? Then Arian’s assumption was correct? Knowing each other’s schedules so well, it does make me a bit envious.”

Despite the flattering praise, Xian’s expression remained stoically unchanged.

“As you’re aware, Sir Xian, the recent unfortunate event has been incredibly shocking for Arian. I hope that you have been comforting her well. We’ve come today for that very purpose.”

At the mention of the unfortunate event, the princes’ brows furrowed.

Arian, too, felt uneasy.

Although it would be understandable for an older sister to make such a remark to her younger sister’s fiancé, in the context where everyone knew the underlying intent wasn’t genuine, the air in the room became heavily tense.

“Words of comfort?”

With that, Xian lifted the corner of his mouth in a strange smile, as if her words were extremely trivial.

Seeing that smile, Violet felt an incredibly toxic sensation as if her blood was curdling, accompanied by a strong, inexplicable sense of unease.

“Did you come to offer the disease and the cure?”

Apart from Xian, everyone else’s faces turned pale.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 154**

Chapter 154: Anxiety (2)

The words of a person can vary in meaning depending on the situation and the atmosphere. However, the words that Sian now spat out, no matter how one interpreted them, could not be taken positively. His words were filled with a negative connotation.

“Sian! What exactly are you saying?” Arin was the first to react. Rather than anger, it was more like a question of why he would say such a thing.

“There are limits to being arrogant. Have you forgotten what kind of existence stands before you?”

“No matter how much of a favorite son of the Betelgeuse Duke’s family you are, or how much favor you have from our father, this is no safe haven for such reckless talk!”

Fabian’s face turned stern, while Nerobian burst out in anger, pointing out his disrespectful attitude. Sian’s gaze naturally turned to his brothers.

“I’ll return those words to you, Prince Fabian.”

“What?”

“You are also being arrogant, how brazen must your heart be to come here?”

-Crack!

Enraged, Fabian lunged at Sian and grabbed him by the collar.

“Do you really want to die, or has the joy of belonging to the royal family intoxicated you to the point of losing your wits? Do not be mistaken! You will not be protected by the likes of her.....”

A person who cannot restrain their emotions is no different from a beast, revealing their true nature. Fabian conveyed his sincere warning to Sian, regardless of who was around or who could hear.

“Keek!”

Instead of an apology, what returned was a mocking laugh filled with scorn. It was clear that he considered the situation beneath him.

“Forgive me, Third Prince. My tolerance isn’t that thick, so I cannot smile in the presence of someone who tried to assassinate me.”

“.....!”

Fabian’s hand, which had been gripping Sian’s collar, began to tremble. It was a whisper only those standing close enough could hear, but, unfortunately for Arin, she had also caught wind of it.

“Sian, what did you just say?”

With her hands covering her mouth, Arin asked with a shaky voice, barely in control. Unlike the two trembling men, Sian stood firm like a large tree that had supported the heart of a forest for a long time.

“Calm down, brother!”

Nerobian quickly rushed to restrain Fabian. Having not heard Sian’s words, he could not understand why his brother was shaking like a frightened man.

Gathering his wits, Fabian let out an awkward chuckle.

“There are limits to speculation! What evidence do you have for such accusations.....!”

“Be calm, Fabian.”

Violet, who had been silent the whole time, stepped in to block him. Frozen as if under a spell, Fabian turned away, unable to meet Sian’s stern gaze.

After a silence of considerable length, Violet spoke with a calm smile amidst the intense atmosphere that no one could lighten.

“It seems we chose the wrong time for this meeting.....”

Sian's expression remained impassive.

"It seems the youngest has a strong ally now. How fortunate. For the sake of the harmony between you two, we should take our leave."

Violet then stood up, turned around without waiting for anyone to stop her, and left. The two princes simply watched her go, not even attempting to follow.

"What are you doing? We should make room so as not to disturb your intimate moment."

After she delivered her final sting, the princes finally began to move, leaving without any farewell. The storm that had raged in the princess's room quiets down, as if it had never happened in the first place.

With the royal family gone, Arin could not bring herself out of the shock, laying still and staring at the ceiling. After some time had passed, she regained her senses and looked around;

".....!"

To her surprise, Sian was still there, having not left her side.

"Sian?"

She couldn't believe he might have waited until she came to.

Without a word, Sian handed her a document.

"What's this?"

"You'll know once you check."

Still dazed, Arin looked through the document Sian had given her.

".....!"

Shocked by the horrifying information that one's eased mind could not simply digest, Arin immediately asked.

"Is this... where did this come from? Is it true what is written here?"

The documents contained detailed plans of how the imperial princes Fabian and Nerobian had hired mercenaries to assassinate Sian.

"This is my last gesture of gratitude for looking after Nana in my absence."

“What?”

“As the attacks from other members of the royal family against you will only get worse, Princess Arin, you should further build your own sword and shield for protection. That should be sufficient as a means to protect you for a while.”

A sword is not only to harm others, nor is a shield only for one’s defense. At times, a sharp sword can serve as a means of defense against another’s threat, and a sturdy shield can become an offensive tool. Only when these complex elements are properly utilized can one’s means of protection be complete.

Even though it was significant advice that would allow her to stand confidently on the palace’s treacherous ice, Arin had her doubts.

“Why?”

“Why are you telling me this?”

Sian’s advice had always been an ever-present part of her life, whether it was sincere or not. Arin always kept it close to her heart, believing it to be the foundation for a better self.

But this advice felt different.

Wasn’t it like being given last words by someone about to go far away?

“.....”

Sian’s lips quivered imperceptibly.

Was he hesitating?

Seeing the one who even before beasts never lost his composure now struggling was unusual.

With the increasing feeling of unease bubbling within her, Arin prepared for the worst.

“The engagement to the princess.....”

As Sian opened his mouth,

“I don’t think I can do it.”

The moment his intentions reached her,

“.....!”

Arin felt as if the world was crumbling around her.

\* \* \*

Not long after the assassination incident, the imperial family visited the Academy, causing a restless atmosphere to linger. Amidst this, Lunev was strangely quiet.

Ramella, who had been observing her for some time, found this unusual behavior quite unnatural.

“I see you’re not visiting the library these days.”

“There is no need to.”

Just a few days ago, Lunev had been eager to research the sorcerer’s book, but now, she was engrossed in reading an entirely different type of book.

Ramella couldn’t comprehend her thoughts but thought it was better than her disappearing without a word again, so she turned away with a shake of her head.

-Boom!

The door to the dormitory burst open, and a woman entered.

“.....?”

Ramella was taken aback.

“Lunev?”

Just a few seconds ago, she had been sitting at her desk reading, but now she appeared at the entrance.

“I’m back.”

Walking in as if nothing had happened, Lunev placed something over her head where the other reading ‘herself’ was sitting.

-Flash!

A blue aura flashed from her hand, and then, the reading figure of Lunev vanished, with mana emanating from the small doll she was holding.

“Illusion artifact?”

Ramella immediately realized what it was and was simply dumbfounded.

As Lunev pocketed the used artifact, Ramella yelled.

“When did you... where have you been at such a time?”

“Nodeli.”

Ramella was speechless at the unexpected response.

“If you’re just going to stand there, go get the message sphere for me.”

“The message sphere?”

“Yes. I have something to tell my grandfather.”

Lunev’s eyes shone with the determination of someone who had made a new resolve.

\* \* \*

In the pitch-black night sky, Aschel walked forward, following a faint trail of light, moving slowly but confidently.

The brighter the path he followed, the closer he knew he was to the legendary holy sword he had longed for, increasing his pace.

Light and darkness coexist, but even darkness that could cover the world becomes powerless in front of a single beam of light.

Remembering the moment he first sensed the existence of darkness, Aschel finally found the true light of truth he had sought.

All that remained was to verify that truth.

Overcome with anticipation and joy, a smile couldn’t leave Aschel’s face as the altar of the radiant holy sword was about to reveal itself.

“.....?”

Confronted with the sight, Aschel had to question his eyes.

The breathtaking splendor of ascension narrowed into a fine point as doubts began to rise in his mind.

A harrowing scene.

The holy sword that should have stood firmly on a silver altar lay on the floor instead, and the beam of light he thought was the undying light of salvation merely struggled pitifully like the weak flame of a candle close to extinction.

Was this truly the revered face of the holy sword?

Confused but calming his thoughts, Aschel picked up the fallen holy sword and placed it back onto the altar.

-Whoosh!

A bright radiance burst forth from the lifeless blade, and soon a woman with hair as golden and lustrous as the sun and sky appeared in the space around him.

Aschel lost himself to her noble aura for a moment, then knelt as he faced the sacred spirit that stood before him.

“I greet you, Durandal, the holy sword that illuminates the continent with the light of truth!”

The woman stepped onto the altar without a word and slowly moved toward him.

The divine weapon was said to belong only to the savior who could draw forth warm, vibrant light from the chilling darkness.

Her touch reached the savior’s chin, and as Aschel beamed with ecstasy,

-Slap!

A harsh sound of impact echoed through the air.

Aschel’s pale cheek reddened, and the woman’s face, who had slapped him, was also colored with anger.

“Listen to me without uttering a word from now on, heir of Lumen Del.....”

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 155**

Chapter 155: Anxiety (3)

The royal family hastily left the Royal Hall as if fleeing and exited the academy. Though there were still appointments left, such as meeting with the principal, no one mentioned them as if they no longer mattered.

“We cannot let this go easily! How can the royal family, which must be respected above all, be insulted by a young child of a duke’s family? Where else would such an incident occur?” Nerobian, who had not yet grasped the situation, scolded Violet.

Unable to bear it any longer, Fabian yelled at him, “Quiet, Nerobian! Isn’t this all because of you?”

“What, what? Why suddenly blame me...?”

-Grasp

Fabian, in a burst of urgency, grabbed Nerobian by the collar and whispered something into his ear.

“H-How could he possibly...?”

Nerobian, having heard the truth, was unable to string his words together properly, his face draining of color. He had thought he erased all traces, but how had word of it spread to the ears of those concerned?

With Sian now aware, it was only a matter of time before the word reached Arin. And if it reached the Emperor, an unimaginably dreadful situation would unfold.

“There’s no need to worry too much. Surely Arin will understand, considering it an unavoidable situation between brothers.”

“Sister! But that is...”

“Let’s end the discussion here. Since the meeting with Arin is over, shall we return to the royal palace? I have fulfilled my promise and will keep silent on this matter.”

Violet, seeking to conclude the situation, suggested they return to the royal palace. The anxiety in the hearts of the two princes only grew heavier over time. Still considered thorns in each other’s eyes in the competition for the throne, it was unfathomable that such a significant vulnerability was left unexploited.

Violet, alone in the carriage, closed her eyes and became lost in thought. The oldest emotion of humanity is fear, and the fear of the unknown is the most terrifying. Just as people fear not the pain of being cut by a sword, but the anticipation of the unknown pain that comes before the actual cut. The princes will continue to fear the weakness that may explode at any moment.

And that boy, surely he would want it that way.

'Undoubtedly.' The sight of Cecilia's head rolling in front of his eyes still sent shivers down his spine and flooded him with anxiety. That gaze, that smile, that murderous intent—such unforgettable imprints, etched into his being like tattoos, would never leave him as long as he lived.

'No doubt!' The man was the first to instill such fear and helplessness in him, after a lifetime of never feeling it. And now, Violet knew for certain. [Sian Vert](#), the youngest of the Vert Duchy and Arin's fiancé, was 'the one.' The assassin she and Aschel were searching for.

\* \* \*

The Artifact Messenger Orb. A magical orb filled with mana which allows those who are geographically distant to communicate. Lunev had received one from the head of the Regen Guild, but it was only after a significant amount of time that she used it for the first time.

"Do you expect me to believe that now?" Regen questioned harshly, though Lunev, as always, replied in an unfazed tone.

"If you didn't understand, I can explain again, as many times as necessary. Do you need me to?"

Despite Regen's stern rebuke, Lunev dutifully relayed the events in Nodeli in an organized manner, omitting any mention of Sian and cunningly explaining mist-related matters as mercenaries passing by who offered help. Even without including Sian's actions, the fact that there were many opposing her in the Garam Guild and another attempt to abduct her was sufficient to rile up Regen.

"I heard you requested information on an object of study to the guild recently."

"Yes, that's correct. That was why I went to Nodeli."

"It's out of character for you. What sudden inspiration made you take such proactive action?"

"Was there ever anything typical about me? It was merely personal curiosity. Rather than informing the guild and seeking help, I wanted to investigate quietly on my own."

Regen's uncomfortable grunt echoed through the Messenger Orb, his distrust apparent.

"Oh, and I've sent a file to the guild for the returning members. It should arrive shortly."

"What file are you referring to?"

“It’s a list of Auram Guild members hiding within the Garam Guild.”

Regen stood up with such force that it almost seemed visible, despite the lack of sight through the orb.

“Not all, but most should be in there. I hope you clear them out by the time my break ends and I return. That’s why I’m giving it to you.”

“Why did you withhold such crucial information until now...!”

“I’ll see you during the vacation period. Grandfather.”

Lunev ended the communication with callous finality. Ramella, who had witnessed the entire conversation, asked with disbelief, “Is it, is it true?”

“What do you mean?”

“The things you just reported to Lord Regen. Is it all true?”

“Don’t worry. The guild won’t hold you responsible for anything.”

“But that’s not the point! Why suddenly interfere with guild affairs like this...?”

“It’s more of a fog than a breeze.”

Lunev’s gaze momentarily hardened.

“What?”

“Nevermind, it’s something else...”

**\*\*Bang bang bang!\*\***

“Hey, Junior! Are you in there?”

A resounding knock, like a bear pounding on the door, echoed inside the room. Lunev, recognizing who it was, frowned slightly.

“Why is that foolish senior...?”

“Should, should we open the door?”

“No, I’ll go.”

It was her first visitor since enrolling in the academy. Despite having hoped for someone else to be the first in that role, Lunev felt it wasn't so bad, and she comfortably opened the door.

"Ah, finally! Big trouble! Big trouble!"

"What is it? Senior Sian refused to spar with you?"

"That's also a problem... No, that's not it!"

Seth seemed distressed, ruffling his hair with his large hands.

"That Sian guy submitted his withdrawal!"

"...!"

Lunev's normally uninterested eyes flashed wide open in an instant.

\* \* \*

The principal stared at the envelope on his desk and then looked up at me with exasperated anger. "What does this mean?"

"It means exactly what you see. I've already filed another copy with the administration office."

Although I'd clearly labeled the contents to avoid the need for opening the envelope, I wondered if I should have gifted him a pair of glasses before leaving.

The withdrawal notice.

It's a document that expresses my intention to leave the academy, no further explanation needed.

"Why have you gone through all this trouble for the last two years, putting up such an unbelievable front, and I have not imposed any restrictions on you? Do you know the reason?"

"What is it?"

"There are various reasons, but most importantly, I was observing your suspicious and secretive behavior to uncover what you were up to. And instead of finding something, it only grew more mysterious over time, especially with the recent events..."

I purposefully avoided his gaze.

“Now, you are leaving with all that suspicion unresolved. Leaving the academy that guarantees your status—where do you plan to go?”

“I see no obligation to disclose that to the principal.”

At my resolute and indifferent response, the principal sighed, exasperated.

“Fine! Then tell me this. If I let you go, can you assure me there won’t be any commotion associated with your name on this continent? It doesn’t matter whether it’s good or bad.”

I was unable to respond immediately.

“You can’t answer, which means no. In that case, I cannot let you go. Releasing someone like you, who could strike like lightning from the clouds at any moment, would be irresponsible.”

“Whether the principal agrees or not, I intend to leave the academy soon.”

Silence befell us, but upon realizing he couldn’t deter me, the principal spoke up again.

“When would that be?”

“A week at the latest.”

“Is it because of that child?”

At the mention of Nanana, my body tensed involuntarily.

“She does play a part.”

Considering she’s a significant reason, it wouldn’t be wrong to say.

“What if I spread what I know about you to the world?”

“It wouldn’t bother me much, but it seems a bit petty. Isn’t it your duty to encourage the bright future of a student, rather than sabotaging it?”

“Quite the words coming from someone calling himself my student.”

There were things I learned from him, after all.

With that, I turned to leave.

“If you walk out that door, it should mean that we’ll never meet again.”

His ambiguous final warning echoed behind me.

“I would prefer that as well.”

Replying naturally, I turned my head slightly.

“Hopefully, you will stay here for a long time.”

He scowled as if my words were a curse.

Descending the steps of the main building I’d never climb again, I encountered two familiar faces.

They didn’t look particularly happy to see me, but Lunev approached with concern.

“You’ve submitted your withdrawal? Is it true?”

Word travels fast.

Seeing no reason to hide it, I nodded.

“May I ask why?”

“Nothing special. I just can’t stay here any longer.”

Ultimately, I had only remained at the academy to conceal my true identity behind the protective guise of a student. But once that guise no longer served its purpose, there was no reason to stay.

That was all.

Lunev stared at me silently, with evident struggle on her face—the struggle of having much to say but unable to express it.

“You really do as you please until the end.”

“That doesn’t sound like something you should say.”

“I’d appreciate it if you just acknowledged how much I want to act on my own whims but hold myself back.”

That would indeed be horrifying.

But this feeling, too, would end. There would be no more running into this impulsive junior.

“Hey! Sian Vert! What do you think you’re doing leaving without me?”

It was Seth’s turn to approach, his face aflame with protest.

“Don’t forget our agreement! You promised to fight me if I led you to Nodeli! Don’t tell me you’ve forgotten, or it’s going to be a problem...”

“I’ll do it.”

My swift reply stunned him into silence.

“What, what did you say?”

“I said I will. It’s not possible to do it inside the academy. Come out to the outskirts of Rowen tonight.”

His face instantly transformed from shock to jubilation.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 156**

Chapter 156: Unease (4)

– Knock, knock

Resmus knocked on the door, but there was no response from inside.

“Lady Arin, I’m entering.”

As he opened the door and entered, he found Arin sitting in a chair, blankly staring at the ceiling.

“I brought some snacks. Would you like to eat something? You haven’t eaten anything this whole time, right?”

Arin’s condition was the very picture of listlessness, having lost all motivation for anything.

Her usually energetic and lively demeanor was replaced by this desolate contrast, invoking a sense of sorrow in anyone who saw her.

“Am I pathetic, Resmus?”

Her voice was weak as she started to speak.

“Getting rejected for an engagement wasn’t unpredictable, but why do I feel like my world has ended? Why am I so pitifully crestfallen?”

After her encounter with the imperial family members who visited the academy, Sian had suddenly announced their engagement was off.

The reason he gave was that he could no longer stay at the academy, and he did not elaborate further.

Not long after, news spread throughout the academy that Sian had submitted his withdrawal papers.

“It’s natural to feel helpless now. After all, Lady Arin, you and Sir Sian were...”

“Very close?”

“...”

Resmus found himself at a loss for words.

“I won’t deny it anymore. Yes, I did like Sian a lot.”

Despite her frank admission, Arin’s expression remained empty and clouded.

“Ever since we parted on the front lines, I think I’ve always liked him. I tried different ways to express it, and I worked hard to become better, hoping to win his heart. But in the end, it seems I could never be Sian’s partner. More precisely, Sian didn’t need me...”

Resmus wanted to say something comforting but found no words that would suffice.

Any platitudes seemed inadequate to alleviate Arin’s current feelings.

“When my sister and brothers came by this afternoon, I was honestly frightened. It felt like reverting to the past me I’d forgotten. The incompetent princess, capable of nothing—that’s the real me.”

Her shame from that moment, immobile from Violet’s single utterance, still rushed to her like a tide of embarrassment.

“However, the moment Sian showed up, all those anxieties vanished, and I felt a sense of relief and peace. It was like having a pillar to rely on. His confidence when facing my fearsome siblings even inspired my admiration...”

In her hand was a document Sian had given her that day.

“Why did Sian give this to me? Maybe it’s his way of telling me to protect myself? Since one never knows what might happen, I should always be cautious and prepared.”

It was like a final gift.

Interpreted differently, it also signified an end to any next steps.

“Sian took care of me to the very end, yet what did I do for him? Nothing. I didn’t even truly understand Sian...”

Merely that he was a descendant of a somewhat special duke’s family.

After all, Sian never confided anything about himself to Arin.

“Sian said he lived for himself, but what does that really mean? Can I not fit into the life Sian strives for?”

“Don’t be too disheartened! If you really meant nothing to Sir Sian, he wouldn’t have given that advice! I believe he spoke harshly because he wants you to live well, even without him!”

“Yes, that’s probably it. Sian has always been that way. Since he can’t say those words by my side now, he must mean for me to persevere alone...”

Arin nodded faintly, seemingly agreeing with Resmus.

But,

“Resmus, do you think I can manage?”

Arin was not confident.

“Sian may not need me, but I still need him. Can I, who feels this way, navigate through the daunting future without him?”

Her voice began to waver.

“I... I’m not sure I can...”

Large tears fell to the floor, making a damp spot.

“I should be strong and prove myself, but I don’t know if I can... Just a little longer, no, if only he stayed with me forever... Why can’t I beg him to stay?”

Her tears fell in drops and soon poured down like rain, her sobs now audible.

“I’m such a fool...”

The incompetent princess, a pathetic sight she never wanted to reveal again, was now fully exposed through her tears.

\* \* \*

“Enough! I give up, Sian!”

Declaring his surrender, Set collapsed on the ground, utterly spent.

“The sky is ridiculously clear today...”

The night sky, unusually brilliant with its scattered stars, drew his gaze upward.

As he lay there, looking up, he turned to me and asked,

“Tell me the truth! How much of your strength did you use while fighting me?”

“Whatever you think, it was less than half.”

“Monstrous...”

He exhaled in disbelief and then simply flopped back down.

“In the end, even with my whole unit, I couldn’t leave a scratch on you. It’s far from even a letdown.”

One of the driving forces behind human development is the frustration of drawing close to a goal but not quite reaching it.

That frustration pushes humans to pursue further growth.

But when such vast walls rise up, creating an insurmountable gap, instead of frustration, despair and helplessness take root, and growth is replaced with stagnation—eventual decline.

That’s the state he must be in now.

“May I ask something?”

“Go ahead.”

However, instead of asking immediately, Set hesitated for a while.

“If I had gone berserk at the ruins, would I have struggled to defeat you?”

His tone was unusually serious.

“That I don’t know. We never fought to the end.”

My response wasn’t meant to console but was an honest one.

Why fear a human in a coma?

For in that moment, one faces not a human but an otherworldly entity, a being from a different dimension.

Given that even that sandy god tried to use this guy to kill me, it’s uncertain what the outcome would’ve been had we fought to the end.

“Is that so?”

Seemingly enlightened, Set quickly got up.

“People say it’s the guardian deity of this land, Sabulrom, who enters my body. If that is true, it implies you too must have power akin to that deity when you face my berserk side, right?”

I simply nodded, giving him room to interpret as he wished.

“The more I see, the more impressive you are. Unlike me, with no memories after going berserk, you have full control over your power. With you like this, beating you would be harder than reaching for the stars. Thanks, [Sian Vert](#), for letting me see where I stand...”

He thrust a thumb up, expressing genuine gratitude.

“But don’t think it’s over! You should look forward to the day we meet again! By then, I’ll be many times stronger, maybe even dozens of times. You wait and see, Sian!”

“You still haven’t given up?”

“Of course not! A rival is a rival for a reason! I’m going to keep growing stronger, aiming to surpass you, so stay alert, Sian!”

I couldn’t help but chuckle at his pure and straightforward declaration.

That's right. This simple but steadfast guy wouldn't give up so easily.

Even though it was somewhat clingy, I couldn't say it felt unpleasant.

"Getting stronger is good, but take care of your health first."

"What?"

"If you catch a cold and die from it, you'll regret it."

"Ha! My body's sturdier than a rock! I'm not so weak that I'd get sick with something as trivial as a cold!"

Well, who knows.

The tragedy of life is that no one knows when it will strike.

Seeing him warming up again, it seemed he wasn't ready to return just yet.

Leaving him there, full of confidence and laughter, I turned around and headed back to the academy.

– Whooosh

A lonely night breeze blew from the front, slicing through the heaviness in my chest.

Why, though?

I wasn't sure why, but part of my heart felt cold and constricted.

Why should I feel such a profound sense of loss for someone who's simply unnecessary and decided to leave?

I couldn't understand it at all.

Especially Lady Arin's face...

To an outsider, it looked as if her world was crumbling.

Her image haunted me, irritatingly indelible in my mind.

[If you keep sulking like that, will food be served? Will rice cakes come? You'll only earn wrinkles on your face.]

Ceyram, who appeared out of nowhere, taunted my pitiful state.

Oddly enough, today of all days, I felt no retort to his scolding was necessary.

[Isn't it strange? Those little things you thought insignificant seem to genuinely care about you. Even though they don't know the real you...]

"What are you trying to say?"

[Do you think I don't know you? You want to deny it. That those who don't know your true nature are showing you pointless concern.]

Isn't that obvious?

To the outside world, they see a normal academy student, but if they knew I was a ruthless assassin stained with the blood of thousands, their gazes would change in an instant.

Knowing this, I had intended to leave without attachment since it wasn't my concern, yet why does my chest feel so uncomfortably tight?

"Pathetic..."

It was a word thrown not at anyone else, but at myself.

-Swish

At eleven o'clock, based on where I was facing, I felt a familiar presence and instantly turned my head.

It was clear, even without checking, that it was a member of Mist.

"The clan leader has urgently requested your presence in the void space."

The matter was grave enough that they came directly to find me.

"For what reason?"

"It seems we have found our target."

At the mention of a target, my body reacted like a predator who had found its prey.

It wasn't about a new cleansing operation.

It implied that someone we previously missed, someone who must be eliminated, had been located.

An intense sensation, long dormant, began to resurface within me.

“Did we find Boris?”

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 157**

Chapter 157. The Clan of the Black Blood (1)

A magic stone emitting a brilliant, multicolored light.

However, the face of Regens, the head of the Garam Magic Society, watching over it, was shrouded in darkness.

His gaze was like that of a statue, not even blinking.

The only thing that moved was his fingers, betraying traces of his inner turmoil.

In the midst of this, a member of the academy approached him with a report.

“Lord Regens! As you instructed, we have captured all the traitors within the academy listed on the roster!”

“Everyone, without a single person missing?”

“We are investigating to see if there are any additional related parties, but at least the people on the list have all turned out to be internal colluders from the Garam Magic Society. It’s almost surprising how everything matched up...”

The academy member could not bear to meet Regens’ gaze, aware of the weight of his attention.

“It seems this was the meaning behind the phrase ‘even a single rat hiding inside can gnaw at the pillars.’”

Who could have known that the rats they had ignored, considering them foolish, had grown so large and seized control of the house from within?

For Regens, feelings of emptiness outweighed any sense of joy.

“They were after Lunev?”

“Yes. I am reluctant to say, but one of the caught Garam Magic Society members cursed, claiming that regardless, we would never be able to fully unleash the power and potential she possesses.”

Despite the humiliating words, Regens’ expression remained unchanged.

“I can’t deny that...”

He knew all too well that the current situation stemmed from his own ignorance and indifference.

Had she not spoken up, he would have remained ignorant.

The girl had long seen through everything within the confines of the academy from her narrow room.

Yet, knowing it all, she had never spoken up until now.

Why? Even though she didn’t tell him earlier, why did she decide to speak now?

Regens knew better than anyone how talented she was.

He nearly brainwashed her to contribute her skills to the advancement of the academy, yet she never flinched.

She withstood the force of Caron’s seven-star magic power and, in a state without the strength even to stand, used a grand spatial transfer to escape the ruins?

Without divine intervention, such a miracle would be unthinkable.

Even if not a god, it was unbelievable without some form of ally by her side.

Yes.

There must have been someone.

Although Lunev explained she had received help from her academy senior and Prince of Spania, Seth Shahar Khan, Regens did not believe her.

She was undoubtedly hiding some crucial secret from him.

When this secret was unraveled, then, Regens believed, his current curiosity would finally be resolved.

“Call the academy members.”

Three academy members, who had been summoned at his call, bowed their heads to him.

No sooner had Lunev returned than she submitted the list of names, along with reporting everything that had happened in Nodeli.

Nonetheless, in front of the head of the academy, whom they least wanted to face, they had to give their reports on the incident once again.

“I trust you know why I have called you.”

“Yes, chancellor...”

“Tell me everything you saw there, without holding back any truth.”

One by one, the academy members reported to Regens what had happened in Nodeli.

However, since none of the three had participated in the ruins exploration, the content did not differ greatly from what Lunev had said.

After hearing all the stories, Regens looked at them with a resolute gaze and asked,

“Lunev and Seth... were they the only members of the academy you saw?”

“Yes, that’s correct.”

“Can you swear on the name of the academy?”

“Do you doubt something about our report, sir?”

None of the three academy members could reply affirmatively.

“You should consider what truly serves the academy’s interests.”

Instead of an answer, Regens issued a warning, creating an atmosphere that seemed to offer one last chance.

“...”

After a moment of nervous glances, one academy member, biting his dry lips, finally broke the silence.

“Tr, truth be told, there was one more person!”

“One more person?” Regens immediately pressed for an answer.

“Yes! The person we’ve been watching all this time, that person...!”

-Sparkle-

Suddenly, sparks flew from the academy member’s body, and with a ‘bang,’ he collapsed on the spot.

“...!”

Taken aback by the sudden turn of events, everyone present fell silent.

The member who had been about to speak was now foaming at the mouth, unconscious.

“What on earth...?”

-Crack-

Regens, who had approached, examined the state of the fallen member.

The moment he tried to reveal something he had been harboring inside, the mana concentrated within him exploded outward.

This was surely not his own mana, but a situation caused by mana injected by someone else.

Regens’ eyes, full of certainty, flickered subtly.

“Spell of Covenant!”

A magic spell that infused a small sphere of mana into the victim’s body, designed to explode from within if the victim spoke a predetermined forbidden word.

“When did this happen?”

The other academy members, unable to hide their panic, turned a pale shade.

Even their expressions suggested they had no idea such a spell had been cast on them.

“...”

Without anger or panic, Regens coolly observed the collapsed academy member.

What secrets needed to be hidden by such inappropriate actions?

Or did it mean that something, like her words, proper to her, really existed, though now he even began to question that?

Moreover, he realized that any more half-hearted doubts and conjectures would be meaningless.

-Whoosh-

The power of the 9-star sage, the leader of the academy, surged upward, creating a fierce whirlwind around him.

Along with that, a magic stone at the center of the space began to resonate, and a large magic circle started to form on the floor.

\* \* \*

It was unusual, though not unexpected, for Mist, the foremost assassination group on the continent, to lose track of a target.

Since the organization was not one to abandon an assassination merely because of a miss, they had diligently pursued traces of Boris every single day.

The imperial capital, major cities of the empire, magical academies across different countries, even the warfront at Belias.

Because it was impossible to predict when, where, or who Boris might contact, they had kept a vigilant watch, seeking any trace of him.

About a month into the search,

They unexpectedly discovered his trail in quite an unusual place.

“The slums?”

“Yes. On the outskirts of the northern imperial city of Aexilium, in the slums, we spotted someone who appears to be Boris.”

The clan master frowned deeply, his brows furrowing.

“Aexilium was that bastard’s region of origin, wasn’t it?”

“Yes. Considering it was a place of suspicion, our side has been keeping a close watch. Although we can’t be sure whether he’s been there from the start, the agents who sent the message are fairly confident it’s him.”

Despite receiving such eagerly awaited news, the clan master's stern expression remained unyielding.

I felt the same.

"Like a cat watching a mouse hole."

The slums are often thought of as run-down and crime-riddled, but this place is different.

It's the only remaining slum area after the coronation of Emperor Dione, where the residents are less than slaves. They are not even considered human.

Why are they not regarded as human?

Simply because they possess something that the common people do not.

They are known as the Clan of the Black Blood.

The residents of Aexilium's slums flow with a mysterious black blood, not the crimson red that is typical among humans.

Regarding the others?

There's nothing unique. Having black blood doesn't mean they possess any special power or ability; they have the same bodies as anyone else.

But what kind of country is this?

One that worships the god of light, Lumen Del, and inherently rejects darkness.

Would such a country view black blood favorably?

Absolutely not.

They are simply a target of aversion, and the slum is where they congregate.

Now, Boris is hiding there.

As the clan master said, the mouse has indeed found a perfect hole to hide in.

At this point, I couldn't help but have doubts.

It's been a month since the incident in Rowen.

He did a good job hiding, to be fair.

It was no common feat that the skilled agents of Mist couldn't find even a trace of him for a whole month.

The question is whether there was a need to hide for a whole month.

He could've gone to the imperial capital, where the First Prince was, or to Belias, where Aschel was,

Desperate to spill the beans about the heir of the demonic sword being in this peaceful and dreadfully dull academy, and yet he had managed to hold off.

I would have personally rushed there at any sign of his emergence, of course.

Having accomplished his grand mission, was there any need to hide like a hero returning to obscurity from worldly affairs?

Regardless of the reason, now that his whereabouts were determined, I had only one course of action.

"I will go."

"..."

The clan master did neither look my way nor acknowledge my words.

"With my resignation from the academy already submitted, there's no need to be cautious any longer. I should go alone."

"Everyone out."

Finally, he ordered all the surrounding agents to leave the room.

Since I never expected to be included in that 'everyone,' I didn't budge from my spot on the floor.

Once all the agents had left,

She looked at me with resolute eyes and said,

"You've really seen it through to the end."

I immediately understood what she meant by 'the end.'

Apart from my submission of resignation from the academy, she referred to the annulment of my engagement to Princess Arin.

As always, I replied calmly,

“You didn’t expect this?”

“Breaking off your engagement and leaving the academy doesn’t erase the spotlight on you.”

“I don’t care. It would have happened eventually; it just happened a bit earlier.”

“You know what kind of place Aexilium is, right?”

“Of course.”

“Then you should also know I can’t possibly send you there, right?”

“And who else could you send? You had no qualms sending me alone to Lambert; why the worry now?”

“...”

“This is why you have an heir.”

Finally, she sighed heavily, a sign of consent.

I turned and left without lingering.

“I trust you’ll take good care of my family.”

“After all that chaos, you still think I’d take care of them?”

“Yes.”

With my unwavering, sharp reply, the clan master let out a snort.

“It won’t take long. I’ll return soon.”

Whether she respected my decision or had resigned to the fact that I would go anyway, the clan master simply watched my departing figure dispassionately.

With that, I left the subspace.

\* \* \*

“Human beings were created by imitating the appearance and inner nature of the Creator God. It is only natural for humans to emulate the temperament of God.”

Under the immaculately white statue shining with golden light, a woman bowed her head submissively.

With her hands neatly folded, she offered a prayer to the deity that brought light to the continent in a posture of reverence.

“Not just humans, but all creatures striving to follow God’s providence have existed before, yet humans are considered the most ideal beings capable of harmoniously traversing the seven virtues and seven sins. Like you who always watch over us from beyond the bright rays of light...”

Slowly lifting her closed eyes, she finally came face to face with the restrained gaze of the statue.

“As creatures, it is our natural order to follow you, our creators. However, there will always be those who rebel against these basic principles wherever you go. What happens then? They become ostracized by their group and become eliminated. That is the only way to maintain the existing order, after all.”

Rising to her feet, the woman gently caressed the extended hand of the statue as if it were a helping hand of salvation.

“But humans are inherently afraid of change, and overhauling an order that has become custom over a long time is no easy task. Nonetheless, even knowing this, was your voice raised to me because you felt a fear that the order might collapse? My curiosity outweighs my questions.”

The fingers that had caressed the hand of the statue brushed her own lips.

“However, our experience has taught us one thing, hasn’t it? Only those who can maintain the order have the right to judge right from wrong. The voices of the weak will eventually fade and be forgotten. Just like 300 years ago...”

In a moment, a golden aura flickered in the white iris of the statue.

It wasn’t a simple optical illusion.

It signified that the chosen successor of the god had finally found the truth.

“Your successor seems to have found truth at last. But why, I wonder, does that gleam of truth not feel as grand as expected? Could it mean there is more truth we must seek?”

The sunlight streaming through the window enveloped the woman, creating an image as though the grace of God had descended upon her.

With an indifferent smile that betrayed neither joy nor sorrow, the woman simply gazed tenderly at the statue.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 158**

Chapter 158. The Clan of Black Blood (2)

Arin trudged down the stairs with heavy steps. The sight of her back moving away looked so pitiable that Resmus couldn't bear to look and turned his gaze away. Normally, she would have paused on the second floor to peek into Sian's room, wondering if she might bump into him by chance, but now she passed by without even a glance as if he had been a stranger from the beginning.

"...?"

Before Arin, someone familiar appeared.

"Lunev?"

It was Lunev, who hadn't been seen for a while.

"Are you off to class?"

"Yes. It seems like it's been a while since I saw you in Royal Ball. What brings you here?"

Lunev hesitated for a moment at the question.

"I've come to see Senior Sian. I think I might not be able to see him soon..."

Hearing that Lunev had come to meet Sian, Arin's pupils wavered slightly but she kept her composure and maintained her smile.

"I see. He should be in his room about now. Considering he's even submitted his withdrawal paperwork, I doubt he'd attend classes now..."

"You're okay with it?"

"Hmm?"

Not quite understanding the question, Arin tilted her head.

“Even so, isn’t it too easy for you to accept that another woman is visiting your fiancé’s room...?”

The question seemed a bit too forward for a twelve-year-old girl, but Arin answered with a calm smile.

“I broke off my engagement with Sian.”

Lunev’s half-shut eyelids flew open in surprise.

“May I ask the reason?”

“I just told him it felt like he couldn’t stay by my side any longer. He must have felt a significant burden by our engagement...”

Sian submitting his withdrawal was something Arin had been somewhat expecting.

Could his not being able to stay mean that he would not come back again? Sometimes knowing too much can be a problem too. Regardless of who Sian was, she had asserted several times that it wouldn’t concern her, but now it might have led to this situation as she learned his true nature.

Arin, though appearing indifferent on the surface, was most certainly not okay on the inside, which made it extremely uncomfortable for Lunev.

“Let’s go together.”

“Hmm?”

“Whether saying goodbye in person or not, the feeling will be different.”

Was she suggesting that they should at least say a final goodbye?

If she were to see Sian’s face now, whatever willpower she had left would crumble in an instant.

For Arin, it was better not to go.

However, before she knew it, her hand was being gripped by Lunev, dragging her toward Sian’s door.

-Knock knock

Lunev knocked, but there was no response from inside.

Just as she was about to knock again,

“...!”

The door creaked open on its own accord, as if it had been ajar from the start.

The three ladies entered without a word, drawn to the room.

“Is nobody... here?”

In the empty room, devoid of even a human scent, Arin and Lunev were unable to continue speaking, a heaviness settling in their chests as if a stone had been placed upon their hearts.

Was there a need for words?

They knew the situation already.

He had left.

Without even a final word, gone in such a futile way.

“...!”

Just then, a stir from behind indicated someone else had come searching for Sian’s room.

Turning around, the ladies saw a familiar face.

“The princess?”

It was Brian, a descendant of Sian.

He looked startled to find them in the room, as if he hadn’t anticipated anyone being there.

“Sorry, Brian! The door was open, so I came in without thinking.”

“Th-that’s alright, Your Highness! It’s not our room anymore anyway...”

Brian tried to calm them with a wave of his hand.

“Has Sian... gone?”

“Yes! Last night he took only his basic belongings and left the academy. I’ve come to gather the rest of his things.”

It was a departure typical of [Sian](#): cold and uncaring.

“Do you know where he went...?”

“I’m sorry. I can’t say...”

Just as expected.

Realizing that even the last bit of courage she had mustered was pointless, Arin let out a resigned sigh.

Unable to bear watching her disappointment, Brian looked away.

“Could you please deliver this then?”

Arin pulled out a letter from within her clothing and handed it to Brian.

“I meant to give it to him sooner, but I was unavoidably delayed. It’s regrettable that I can’t say goodbye, but please tell him to stay healthy and safe.”

“Yes. I understand...”

Though he accepted the letter automatically, his expression was visibly perplexed.

Instead of Sian’s name, the envelope bore an unexpected addressee.

‘To Nana’

\* \* \*

People often say that life is the same wherever you go.

This place would be no different, I suppose.

People bustle through the streets with their own purposes, much the same as anywhere else.

For someone like me who doesn’t particularly enjoy human company, the places are dirty and noisy.

However, such atmosphere is merely fleeting.

As I continued down the trail, the tumultuous atmosphere quieted and the lively streets gradually grew grim.

Instead of the subtle smell of food wafting from taverns and diners, the air was tainted with the stench of rotting corpses. The richly adorned people were replaced by figures draped in rags too poor to call clothing, lying fallen around every corner.

Even beside fresh loaves of bread, deranged individuals clutched worn papers, muttering unintelligible prayers or incantations.

With each step, the number of glances cast towards me grew.

Clearly, not friendly ones.

Dismissive glares filled with distrust and caution passed me by, but undeterred, I pressed on.

-Swish

A woman stepped in front of me, her eyes glazed over as if half out of her mind.

“Why have you come here?”

A cautious query from a stranger fearful of outside visitors.

“If you have lost your way or have come without specific purpose, please leave at once. This is not a place for someone as esteemed as you.”

Esteemed, she said.

Without any introduction on my part, on what basis had this woman called me ‘esteemed’?

Even in the face of her imploring request, I remained silently unresponsive, prompting people around to gather.

By their looks, their intentions were not to threaten or harm me, but more likely to protect this woman in front of me.

Otherwise, they wouldn’t have such anxious eyes.

I hadn’t expected any different.

To the residents born and ignored here, an outsider is nothing more than an object of suspicion.

While I wanted to brush aside those in view and scour every nook and cranny for him, creating a disturbance and leaving traces would be counterproductive.

For now, it might be best to turn away here and come back when night falls.

“...!”

That’s when I caught the foul stench of bile rising within me and immediately turned my head.

There, precisely one hundred steps from where I stood, I could not ignore the presence of someone all too familiar.

“Why have you gathered like this?”

Approaching was a man with a warm smile aimed at the crowd.

What’s going on?

Am I seeing things wrong?

“It’s not good to approach people with threats. Let’s all lower our guards.”

As if chastening the crowd, he then grinned at me, interest alight in his eyes, holding a large basket whose contents I could not discern.

“I apologize for startling you. The locals are wary of outsiders. It seems I’ve inadvertently committed an impropriety. Allow me to apologize on your behalf.”

Is this some kind of joke?

To endure such shameless hesitation was enough once.

With my judgment that I could no longer stand such insolence, my hand reached out swiftly and slammed the man’s neck to the ground.

Panicked cries rang out as the basket flew up, spewing bread, fruit, and various foods into the air.

“Boris!!”

People exclaimed in shock, but I paid them no heed.

Whatever scheming performance this was for, now that my hand clutched his throat, any hope of release should be abandoned until his head was severed from his body.

“St-stand back!”

Even while struggling to speak under the restraint, he strained to voice an order.

A transparent, circular barrier formed around us, halting anyone trying to reach us.

His poor attempt at counteraction barely elicited a response.

As I unsheathed my kerambit and raised it to his neck, he begged.

“Please, spare me...”

What?

Did I hear him wrong?

To think I’d ever hear this devil plea for his life?

If he intended to startle my mind, momentarily he succeeded.

Other people might mistake him for another, deceived.

But you know what?

The scar of hatred seared in my heart keeps reminding me.

Staring into those eyes full of murderous intent is none other than, Boris Lehelm, a minion of the devil, bound by no means or methods to achieve his goals!

Yes, I suppose even your despicable life pleading at death’s doorway cannot be anything but desperate.

But fear not, there’s still time for repentance for you.

Whether brief or extended, use the remaining moments of your life to reflect meaningfully on...

“Just please, save them. They have done nothing wrong...”

The moment I began to draw the blade across his neck, his urgent plea halted my hand.

My ears, sharp as a rabbit’s, are now doubted multiple times today.

Was this plea not for your own life but for those clinging around us?

One might mistake you for a valiant priest striving to protect the innocent.

Was this an act gone too far, an alteration of character to evade Mist’s pursuit?

That would be problematic.

What I wanted to see was your despicable true nature distort and break.

Hold on.

An ominous thought brushed my mind, furrowing my brow.

A change of personality?

A thick, black blood stroked Boris's neck along the edge of the kerambit.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 159**

### Chapter 159: The Clan of Black Blood (3)

Every morning at 7 o'clock, he appears on the busy streets of Aexilium to begin his day's work. He takes on jobs ranging from simple tasks like moving cargo to complex and magical ones like healing and artifact crafting—tasks too challenging to be achieved by human strength alone—earning commensurate rewards. The compensation he earns is spent entirely on food for the day, which he then distributes to the residents of the slums. This has been Boris's personal routine for the past week without fail.

For me, this was unbelievable information that I simply couldn't ignore. Even the agents stationed in Aexilium initially didn't notice that he was Boris. But to me, that wasn't too surprising. Even looking at his face, the difference in his manner of speech, personality, and even the subtleties like his gait felt so starkly distant from the Boris Luthelm I knew.

However, no matter how much one might hide their exterior, one cannot hide their true nature. The unmistakable scent of mana wafting from behind his false guise was proof of that. There is a saying that a talent is deemed so only when recognized by someone who truly understands their worth. I have known since my past life that Boris came from these slums. His shameful past was that of a despised clan with the cursed black blood, a person who was outright rejected by society.

But two years ago, it all changed when Prince Luinel Severus visited the city and took notice of Boris, bringing him into his service, thereby changing his life. Boris caught the eye of the devil's child and began to utilize his abilities, eventually rising to the position of Mage Society President, becoming an indispensable figure in the empire.

What his life here had been like and what kind of person he was to the residents was honestly none of my business. I didn't particularly care to know more about it, either. But from the way most of the slum dwellers greeted him warmly like someone they'd known for a long time, I could guess that his previous life wasn't much different from now. Just look at the faces of the residents—a look of sheer ecstasy as if they've truly found their savior. I just couldn't extinguish the twin wick of emotion burning in my eyes.

"I'm back, Master."

Ceyram had returned from wherever he'd gone with a less than pleased expression.

"How was it?"

[Not even the tiniest bit! It's impossible not to feel something, even if it were merely hidden away. I assure you, even if we scour the entire city and the slums themselves, the Holy Scripture isn't here.]

The Holy Scripture of Hiscrea's energy was unfelt, and Boris, its owner, was presenting a completely different persona. But that didn't mean he wasn't the Boris I knew. My own heart's throbbing scars kept signaling to me that he was the right person. And didn't he blatantly reveal his name to be Boris Luthelm?

Then, there's only one hypothesis to consider:

This was not Boris's original personality. Likely, a new personality has been created and replaced his own through magic. Just as I once changed the personality of Kellin, who was a scion of Aschel, with magic, his personality too must be a new creation brought forth by some power.

So the question is... who changed the personality of this slippery individual...

[Whoever thought of this joke, I have to admit, it's quite original.]

"Too original for my stomach to handle..."

[What do we do now, Master? Killing that hapless husk of him hardly seems satisfying for your revenge, does it?]

I couldn't deny it and could only bite my lip in frustration.

I can assert that there are surely no more than five people in the entire continent who could create a 'personality of the shadow' similar to my own creations. Isn't it obvious? Creating a new personality that never existed before is far more difficult than erasing thousands of existing ones. It's not something that can be done simply with vast mana and high magic grades. Even with my prodigious attributes, I can barely manage such magic with all my might, let alone some wandering mage accomplishing it on a whim.

“If it’s the power of the Holy Scripture, then it would indeed be more than possible...”

I don’t particularly want to suspect anyone else. Boris must have changed his personality intentionally. And maybe he even anticipated my reaction when I faced him. If he’s the one I know, it’s very much within his character to do so.

Yes, as much as I hate to admit it, I’m willing to acknowledge it. His audacious plan has worked perfectly.

Right now, I have no desire to kill this changed Boris Luthelm. Killing this idiot who remembers nothing about what he has done, merely wearing the same shell, wouldn’t erase the scars of revenge etched onto my heart.

Even if I killed him, I wouldn’t be assured that his original personality would disappear along with him. What I need to do is to find the true personality of Boris and locate the Holy Scripture, so I can completely extinguish everything about them. Otherwise, there would be no satisfaction in all those bold claims I made in front of the clan leader.

Even in the lightless slums, night eventually falls. With the sunset and the deep shadow of darkness covering the slums, the people who had been taking refuge in the savior’s abode began to return home one by one. To a home that was too pitiful to even call one.

A desolate shack in the slum, as miserable and desolate as any of them, fills me with nothing but disgust. Without hesitation, I stepped inside.

Books piled up high enough to reach the ceiling, out of place with the simplistic shack—it reminded me of some dignified scholar’s room. There, amidst the profusion of books, stood a lonely figure with his back to me.

“I have been waiting for your return.”

He must have recognized it was me just from the commotion alone, as he immediately looked back.

“Waiting for me?”

“Yes.”

“What do you think I’m going to do?”

“Have you come to kill me?”

It would be ridiculous to deny it after today’s commotion.

“And how would you know that I was coming to kill you?”

“I don’t know....”

It’s infuriating. The person who perfectly resembles my sought-after target of revenge, yet with a wholly different inner being. It’s strangely repulsive.

“I know it’s a shameless question to ask, but still, may I ask: Have I, perhaps, committed some grave error against you in the past?”

The audacity of the question almost takes my breath away.

“If so, I sincerely apologize from the bottom of my heart.”

He even fell to his knees and bowed his head to the ground.

“However, I am sorry, I don’t remember anything at all—not about you or what may have transpired in the last few years.”

“You’ve forgotten?”

“Yes! I know you might not believe this, but I have a serious case of amnesia....”

Amnesia.

Sure, if his personality was switched, he wouldn’t remember anything he had done; that much would be logical, assuming he isn’t aware that his personality has changed.

“What do you last remember?”

“Two years ago, when Imperial Prince Luinel Severus came to Aexilium on a tour. At that time, I wanted to request support for this impoverished slum and went to see the Prince. I clearly remember his face—and then my memories stop right there. When I came back to my senses, I was back here in the slums. When I asked the people, they told me that two years had passed....”

“When did your memories return?”

“It’s been a little less than a month....”

The timeline seems to align with when we lost him in Rowen.

Since fleeing with the power of the Holy Scripture, did his personality change?

The personality of the man I knew then, and the one I’m facing now. At this point, I’m beginning to wonder which side is his true self.

No, why am I even confused about this?

Why not simply end this annoying conversation and kill him?

“Don’t harm the innocent people here in the slums! They’ve done nothing wrong!”

Watching me contort my face in silence, he spoke again.

“As you may already know, people here, including me, are regarded as sinful merely for existing and have lived under oppression and contempt. Called the cursed clan with black blood....”

His passionate eyes pleaded as if he was making an appeal, spewing out his grief.

“But that’s nonsense! How can we be treated as criminals simply for inheriting the blood of a previous generation unknown to us!”

My eyes inadvertently shifted to the white bandage around his neck.

In the ancient times before the War of Demons, there was a clan that committed a great sin that could never be forgiven, incurring the wrath of the gods. As a mark of their sin, the black blood ran through their veins, much like the taboo of following the God of Black Mist that took root across the continent. They too were considered impure merely for their existence.

Maybe, in some unintended way, we do have something in common.

But...

“You’re a human being just like you! You have the right to be happy and to be sad!”

That does not absolve you.

The same human beings?

I wonder if the incarnations of you guys thought so too?

Even as I crossed the threshold of death several times for you, dedicating everything, you never trusted me. More than a human, you treated me as a disposable doll, looking at me with cunning eyes, just watching.

It doesn’t matter what your clan was or what blood flows in you. You’re simply the target of my revenge, the one who betrayed me after all my dedication and devotion.

Enough with the petty contemplations.

It seems there’s no longer a need to hesitate so foolishly.

Whether or not his true personality exists anywhere, I no longer want to talk to your detestable face.

Just as I firmed my resolve and my hand was about to reach Ceyram,

“Boris!”

A hoarse male voice called from outside the shack.

Startled, Boris quickly went outside.

“What... What is it?”

“Galas has been looking for you! We have no time to waste, come quickly!”

Judging by the sound of it, about five people—based on the heavy clanking, they were knights from Aexilium, not residents of the slums.

But who’s Galas?

“Wh... why is the lord looking for me?”

“You’ll know when you get there.”

Without explaining, the knights just tried to take him away by force.

I rarely remember people’s names, and when I do, it’s generally for two reasons: they were closely related to me in a past life, or, they were someone I had killed in a past life.

Galas Aibern.

A noble in close connection with Prince Luinel Severus and the lord of Aexilium, also one of the targets in my cleansing mission.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 160**

Chapter 160: The Clan of Black Blood (4)

“I was half in doubt, but it turned out to be true. The moment I saw your clueless eyes, I became certain. It’s been a while, Boris....”

“O-Oh, it has been a long time, Lord Galas!”

Boris, sweating profusely and unable to lift his head, stood before his former acquaintance.

Aexilium’s lord, Galas Aibern, looked upon his pitiful state with a displeased gaze.

In a dark alley, far from the bustling city center and streets frequently traversed by people, men with black masks patrolled, keenly guarding the surroundings. It seemed they did not want word of this meeting to spread.

“I’ve heard you recently took up a position as an instructor at the Royal Academy, yet why have you suddenly shown up in Aexilium again?”

“Uh, you mean the Academy instructor?”

Boris widened his eyes in surprise, as if hearing something unexpected for the first time.

“I’m sorry, my lord! I regret to inform you that I have no recollection of the past several years....”

As he had explained to Sian, Boris conveyed to his lord that his memory was not what it should be.

After listening to the explanation, Galas furrowed his brow in annoyance.

“Ha! Amnesia, you say... I thought you were on some secret mission for the prince. But then again, it’s hardly surprising that your cursed lineage lacks a proper state of mind.”

Despite Galas’s scornful words, Boris maintained an unwavering expression.

“So, do you intend to stay here?”

“It seems I will, if you would permit, my lord. If you allow, I’d like to continue to work for the people as I did before....”

“What are you saying, Boris? There’s no need for that.”

Galas dismissed Boris’s words out of hand.

“You should work not for the people, but for me.”

“If you mean work...?”

“Don’t pretend not to know. You remember, don’t you? The plan you eagerly prepared for Prince Luinel, which fell through when you left for the royal palace. This time, not for the prince, but for me—all for me, understand?”

Boris could only gulp, unable to give a straightforward answer.

“There’s no need for you to perform menial tasks in the streets pretending to help people. As long as you serve me, the residents of the slums will not starve.”

While it could sound like a considerate suggestion, it was essentially a command that left no choice for refusal.

Knowing this all too well, Boris reluctantly nodded his consent.

“I shall follow your command, my lord....”

After finishing the conversation, Boris turned quietly and walked toward the slums, where he had come from.

Galas watched him closely before discreetly summoning a subordinate and giving orders.

“Make sure that no one finds out that he has been here. Keep an eye on his every move from dawn till dusk!”

“Yes, my lord!”

Only then did Galas show a satisfied smile.

“He’s just as he was two years ago. After seeing the prince, he changed as if he became a different person. But now, he’s returned to the man I knew....”

Whatever had happened over those two years, the resulting gaps in memory now seemed to favor Galas.

The lord watched Boris walk away with a meaningful look, but that moment was brief.

“...!”

Galas immediately turned his head upon sensing something out of the ordinary, as if a predator had bared its fangs.

“What’s this?”

Yet there was nothing but the lonely night wind blowing.

\* \* \*

As you know, I am not fond of books.

But not being fond of them doesn't mean I don't recognize their value.

Hundreds of books were crammed into this cramped space, barely large enough for five people to sit.

Ranging from high-grade magical texts, which would typically be read by Academy researchers, to exclusive research documents from various national academies.

Where they were sourced from, I didn't know, but these books were too fine for a slum.

"...You followed me."

The person who had abruptly arrived in the hut spoke while gazing at my back.

It wasn't something that needed to be hidden, so I did not deny it.

The tension and fear from before had vanished.

Then, without hesitation, he started to tidy up the scattered books, as if he would never return to this place again.

"I will not grovel. Please, kill me...."

He eventually knelt before me in resignation and begged for death.

In my previous life, as in this one, I experienced many begging for their lives—or rather, for their deaths. When they underwent torment worse than death in what we called a time of penance, they always pleaded desperately for a swift end.

I never enjoyed those moments, but the scene before me felt particularly void of any impression.

It was infuriating.

My intent to kill him as a preventive measure had completely evaporated as well.

As I pictured the real Boris's sly smile somewhere watching me, my anger boiled over again and my teeth clenched.

"People say you're right. A cursed lineage not deserving to exist. I truly realize now how pathetic I am...."

“What do you mean?”

Without strength, Boris lifted his head and picked up a book that had been lying next to him.

“People always said we shouldn’t exist, that we were meaningless beings who shouldn’t be allowed on this continent. I hated those words so much, and I always wanted to argue back that we deserved to stand tall as humans on this earth too....”

The book Boris was holding was a basic magic textbook that newly admitted academy students might study.

“I had something they called talent. At the age of ten, I manifested mana for the first time, and within less than a year, I mastered numerous spells. The only thing I had to rely on was a magic textbook that I had managed to acquire.”

The condition of the book suggested it had been read thousands of times.

“The reason I sought to refine my magical skills was simple. If my powers could extend beyond the slums and help others, I thought the world’s view of us might change. So, I fervently honed my magic, used the strength I cultivated to bless others, but what I received in return....”

His voice choked up, and Boris couldn’t continue.

“If you followed me, you heard what Lord Galas said to me....”

He abruptly drew something from his pocket and showed it to me.

It was a familiar artifact that made my blood boil—a marionette doll.

“You seem to know what it is.”

Of course, I am familiar with such an artifact, even considering it as one of his specialties.

“Every day, I’d go out into the streets to work, but alone, there are limits. Even if I shared food with the slum dwellers, eventually there would be nothing left. One day, Lord Galas came to me with an offer to work with him. He said if the results were good, he would significantly increase the support for the slum dwellers. I had no choice but to accept his proposition.”

“Work?”

“Yes. He proposed that if we succeeded, he’d greatly enhance support for the slum dwellers. With no way to refuse, I had to accept the lord’s offer.”

“Was making marionettes part of the deal?”

“That’s right....”

I looked at Boris with a hint of skepticism.

Galas Aibern of Aexilium.

An oddity among imperial administrators, he was a graduate of the Ushif Empire Magic Society and had risen to the rank of a high-class magician, using his magic signature to secretly manufacture a wealth of magical artifacts, hoping to establish an independent power base without the royal court’s knowledge.

Once the truth was discovered, an assassination order was immediately issued.

After that, my fellow Mist Unit members and I assassinated him, and all the artifacts he had created were completely incinerated.

The reason my clan leader was concerned about me going to Aexilium alone was precisely because of this event.

Dealing with Galas was not difficult, but since he had produced such a large amount of artifacts, numerous squad members had been deployed to handle them.

It was nearly equivalent to the volume produced by the academy itself.

What puzzled me was that among the artifacts destroyed, there were no marionettes— not even similar types.

Yet somehow, this unknown fellow had collaborated with him to create marionettes.

It was something I couldn’t just pass by, thinking it was all fine.

“I would be lying if I said I didn’t know. Regardless of the purpose, I was aware that this artifact would be used for nothing good.”

“....”

“Yet, despite knowing it, I could not stop. The naive belief that my power was being used for something worthwhile, and the reliance of the slum dwellers on me, brought me to this point.”

“....”

“But now I’m tired. I don’t want to do anything anymore. Even if I don’t remember it, now that someone wants to kill me, what point is there in living any longer? It seems right that I should die now. So please...!”

-Crack

My patience with such trivial chattering wore out, and instead of responding, I grabbed his head forcefully and leaned into his face.

“Lead the way.”

“Huh?”

“Lead the way....”

A person’s outward appearance isn’t significant just by chance.

Although I knew his inner self must be completely different, the face I now confronted was eerily similar to the one that had shown a bizarre mixture of panic and confusion before escaping.

\* \* \*

-Creak!

“Intruders! Call for reinforcements...!”

-Creak!

The knight who attempted to call for help was swiftly silenced, his voice carried off into the air before falling lifelessly to the ground.

Exactly twenty people.

An excessive force to guard merely a stash of riches, and situated in a remote location far from the city center.

Obvious proof that something vital was hidden, recognizable even to a child.

I dispatched the guards without hesitation and approached the door.

-Clang

Of course, the door didn’t open. It wasn’t secured with a latch or a lock, but some other artificial locking mechanism was in place.

A restricting barrier.

The magic felt at least of 7-stars in strength, suggesting that the master of this place had cast it himself.

It wouldn't be too difficult to dispel, but I refrained.

"What are you waiting for?"

"Huh?"

"Open it."

There was no need for me to do it myself.

Boris, still lost like a soulless corpse, quickly ran to the door, and his mana emerged.

-Woosh

With a soft glow and the sound of fine powder fluttering, the barrier was dispelled.

"It's, it's done!"

-Boom

As soon as it was released, I kicked the door forcefully.

"...Lead the way."

"Yes!"

Boris, with a gulp, hurried forward, and I silently followed behind.

Even in the pitch-black space where no light penetrated, he moved forward without hesitation or faltering steps.

He glanced back occasionally, trying to gauge my reaction, which annoyed me, but I kept my composure.

After about five minutes, we faced a metal door even bigger than the main entrance.

Without delay, Boris dispelled the barrier it was held in place by.

"May I ask you something?"

I answered with silence.

“What did I do wrong to you...?”

Unable to ask while looking me in the eyes, he kept his gaze fixed on the door.

“Even if I can’t remember, this doesn’t make sense. What kind of confidence does it take for someone of your incredible power to blame me for a crime...!”

-Bang!

Instead of answering, I grabbed his neck and slammed him against the wall.

“If you don’t want to die, keep your tongue still....”

Whether he narrated some excuse or a tale with no relevance to his memory loss, it didn’t matter to me. To me, it was nothing more than a trivial provocation.

I desperately wanted to unleash my rage since I couldn’t kill him; it was so infuriating.

Apparently unable to withstand the force of my anger, the locked gate began to slide open.

As light flooded from the space previously concealed behind the door, something unfamiliar revealed itself and at that moment, I doubted my eyes.

(Continued in the next chapter)