

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 51**

### **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 51-60**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 51

Chapter 51. My Person(1)

“Haah...”

The sun filtered through the window on a bright morning.

For me, a stifling yawn was turning into a deep sigh that seemed to carry my weary soul.

“As I mentioned earlier, magic is the utilization of the divine power that created this world. Hence, it depends on how we use the mana that resides within our bodies...”

After nearly 30 years, I was sitting in a lecture.

I might have struck a bad deal with the chancellor.

I had said I would attend classes from time to time, out of a sliver of conscience, but it seemed I would have to recalibrate what “from time to time” actually meant.

Even sitting still for two hours felt unbearably boring.

-Swish-

The moment the first class ended, I immediately stood up.

Today’s lessons were over for me.

If I listened any further, my mind would become muddled.

Just as I was about to leave the classroom without a textbook to my name, an unexpected voice stopped me in my tracks.

“Where are you going, Sian?”

My eyes immediately met with the proof of royalty, a red brooch representative of the imperial family.

In this classroom, there was only one person who would wear such an emblem.

Princess Arin.

She was glaring at me with apparent displeasure.

“I’m going to the bathroom.”

I responded with a flat expression.

“The bathroom is not that way. Don’t tell me you’re planning to skip out after attending only the first lesson in a month?”

Why is she, who isn’t even an instructor, concerned about my business?

“The bathroom on this floor will be crowded, so I was heading to the one downstairs.”

Princess Arin’s gaze sharpened with doubt as she observed my unchanged expression.

Beside her stood Resmus, wearing a look of mild embarrassment.

“Are you really just going to the bathroom?”

“Of course. I will return to the classroom after that.”

Though probably not for another two weeks or so.

“Alright. Then come with me. I need to use the downstairs bathroom, too!”

For a moment, I thought I might have misheard her.

When I had rescued Resmus, I thought she had changed a bit, but her childish behavior seemed to remain unchanged.

“Ah, Princess Arin, no matter the situation, please mind the dignity befitting a princess...!”

Even Resmus seemed compelled to intervene.

Something about the form of address felt off.

“Have you been granted permission to address her by name?”

“Hm? Oh right! I told Resmus to call me by name in private settings! We’re all just students here!”

All just students...

I doubted that anyone else in this academy held that view except for her.

“Regardless of what you desire, Your Highness, you should be cautious in front of others. As I’m sure you are aware, this place isn’t exactly hospitable.”

Despite my advice, her annoyed expression did not clear up.

“And you are?”

“Pardon?”

“Why do you still refer to me as ‘Your Highness’? I’ve heard you’ve even spoken terms with Prince Set. So why can’t you do the same with me?”

“Isn’t the situation different? I’m a subject of the empire, and you are imperial royalty. How could I dare address Your Highness so casually?”

Resmus flinched, surely surprised.

“I bet at first, she also firmly opposed the idea of dispensing with formality.”

Princess Arin exhaled a small sigh.

“You’re just the same as you were a year ago, aren’t you? Still so blunt and stubbornly upright.”

“I’ll take that as a compliment.”

As this pointless conversation continued, I heard footsteps descending the stairs.

“!”

The princess’s body stiffened as she saw their faces.

“Arin?”

Those who now faced her seemed to recognize her and immediately furrowed their brows.

It was easy to infer they were brothers by looking at their identical faces.

The unique trait of the Nephris family, a dark spot beneath the eyes.

They wore the same royal red brooches as Princess Arin.

I too recognized their faces.

The empire’s third prince, Fabian Severus, and the fourth prince, Nerobian Severus—Arin’s older half-brothers and sons of the current empress.

If I remember correctly, they are about four years older than me, so they would now be around 15.

As adolescents in puberty, their prominent adam’s apples and grown figures stood out.

To them, 11-year-old Princess Arin was nothing but a fledgling chick.

The brothers looked past her, their sleepy eyes observing from above.

“Good to see you after so long. Brother Fabian, brother Nerobian…”

Princess Arin touched the brooch and slightly nodded her head.

Naturally, they weren’t on cordial terms to begin with.

After all, they are princes backed by Count Nephris, the emperor’s relative by marriage. They had little reason to take kindly to Arin, who had dubious pedigree.

“ ... ”

Her brother, Prince Fabian, scoffed indifferently at her greeting without even looking at her and continued on his way.

On the other hand, Prince Nerobian smirked unpleasantly as if he found the situation amusing.

“At least you’ve grown a bit now, not shaking while greeting, Arin...?”

“ ... ”

She remained silent, merely tilting her head down.

Though she didn’t show it, I could sense her trembling.

“Even going to the trouble of keeping company, as fits a princess. Not that you’re one to have anyone worthy by your side...”

His scornful eyes glanced at her only briefly before they hardened upon locking with mine.

“Sian... Vert?”

Had I become such a public figure already?

It felt like everyone I encountered knew who I was.

“Do you know me?”

“Of course! How could I not know the son of the Duke Vert, an old friend of His Imperial Majesty? I saw your duel a few days ago. Despite having an unremarkable affinity, you beat the Sand Prince quite spectacularly, didn’t you?”

Not really feeling like a compliment—is it just me?

For now, I didn’t let it show and replied.

“Thank you for the kind words.”

“I’ll definitely invite you the next time I host a social gathering. Let’s talk more then!”

He patted my shoulder ambiguously, whether in encouragement or provocation, and smiled.

“ ... ”

Then, he approached Princess Arin and whispered something into her ear.

Balled fists and quivering pupils.

The whisper meant for her alone, unfortunately, also reached my ears.

Isn't having overly good hearing just a problem sometimes?

After casting a warning that wasn't really advice, Prince Nerobian promptly followed Prince Fabian down the stairs.

The aftermath of the storm left a deafening silence.

“ ... ”

Attempting to regain composure, Princess Arin took a deep breath.

“Sorry. That was embarrassing, wasn't it?”

“Those people just now... were they the princes?”

Resmus asked.

“Yes, they're my brothers. We don't get along too well, but they seemed particularly harsh today.”

“What did they say to you?”

“It's nothing. Just a misunderstanding.”

Misunderstanding...

Well, it wasn't exactly incorrect, considering that a “warning often carries a hidden threat.”

Strictly speaking, Prince Nerobian had just put Princess Arin on alert in that situation.

Why?

Obviously, because of me.

His offer to invite me to a social gathering wasn't made carelessly.

Just now, in this instance, he had treated me as a noble in my own right.

As funny as it is to say it myself, my status at the moment was far from trivial.

There were already rumors inside the academy that I was receiving special treatment and that I was using the royal quarters by order of the emperor himself—essentially, my position was made clear.

(I only came to know of this relatively recently.)

Anyhow, there I was, quite conspicuously beside Princess Arin, no matter the reason.

So, naturally, he couldn't help but be wary.

If there was a misunderstanding to be had, it was only that I'm no one's man at this point.

I was merely caught by her while trying to escape class and got into a bit of a scuffle.

“Uh... Sian?”

With her small lips trembling slightly, it seemed Princess Arin had something to say.

“Go ahead.”

“Is it true what they say about blood being thicker than water?”

Her question came out of the blue, but I had a rough idea of what she meant.

I answered casually.

“Typically, that would be the case. After all, blood relations represent the most fundamental connection in human society.”

“That’s true. Family is always supposed to be there, right...?”

Disappointment crept into her voice at my perfunctory reply.

“However, if you add power to these blood ties...”

“?”

“Then even the dearest of relations can become worse than strangers.”

It was somewhat of a personal testimony.

“Because power can be so much more cruel than blood...”

What she made of that was up to her now.

“ ... ”

I don’t know what she was thinking, but she clenched her fist with resolve.

\* \* \*

As the sun settled in the western sky, Brian passed through the center of Rowen’s streets, his hands full of snacks like candy, bread, and chocolate.

“ ... ”

Though it was still crowded with people, Brian’s heart wouldn’t settle down.

He sensed a strange, unfamiliar presence tailing him amidst the throng.

This wasn’t the first time he’d had this feeling.

Since the day after he arrived in Rowen with Sian, he had felt the watchful gaze of some unknown party everywhere.

Was it attributable to his unique animalistic senses?

Once or twice he might have ignored it, but when it persisted, even someone as insignificant as him had to take notice.

Especially when walking around outside the academy or buying groceries, he always felt a persistent shadow.



Was it a tracker sent from Belias?

If that were the case, then they would certainly not be trailing him alone.

After all, he was just a lowly servant.

The natural target would be his master.

Despite his worries, these presences would usually disappear without a trace within a day or two.

Specifically, after Sian left the dormitory every night saying he was going out for exercise.

Without saying a word, Brian knew his master was handling it on his own.

This had happened about three times up until now with watchers disappearing and new ones appearing.

But something felt off today.

Like other times, a group was following him stealthily, but now there was an additional group from the opposite side doing the same.

They clearly weren't from the same faction.

One simply maintained a distance to observe, while the other emitted a killing intent that suggested they might attack at any moment.

Perhaps because of a previous traumatic experience, he had grown accustomed to these vile intensions.

He couldn't just ignore them as usual.

Swiftly picking up the pace, Brian turned toward a dark alley instead of the dormitory.

His pursuers followed suit.

He had become the servant of an 11-year-old in what felt like both a short and long month.

In that time, he had encountered a slew of bizarre events: an odd instructor popping in and out, a woman materializing from a sword, and even a hybrid child of dragon and human lineage.

Even for a child of an esteemed duke, Sian's level of extraordinariness was hard to match.

Sian's age was merely a number for Brian.

Occasionally, he wondered about his master's true identity and made some guesses, but he never asked directly.

Sian, for his part, never told him to keep secrets or tried to hide anything.

Brian believed that his master trusted him and would tell him in his own time.

After all, he was not the sharpest of people.

As long as he remained loyal and served his master well, that was enough for him as a servant.

However, because matters of the world don't always follow one's wishes, being a servant ultimately meant having to be useful to their master.

A strong determination filled Brian's eyes.

Then, in the dead-end alley, he placed the snacks on the ground and, looking at the corner, he softly spoke.

"Come out now, please."

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 52**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 52

Chapter 52: My Person(2)

Under the bright full moon and dark night clouds, the skies coexisted with both light and shadow.

It was time for our little friends to drift into the land of dreams.

Curled up in bed, Nana fell into a deep slumber.

Was she dreaming of eating candy? She absentmindedly sucked on her finger.

Normally, I might have gone out for my nightly outings as usual, but not tonight.

There was no nursemaid available to look after the little one who slept so soundly, unaware of the world.

Indeed.

Brian was not in the dormitory.

Usually, he would return at dusk after his daily routine of shopping for Nana's snacks, but today, he has not returned even as the moon rose.

There's no way he would have fled into the night by now,

Could he have been ambushed and kidnapped by some unexpected foes?

[What's this, amateur hour?]

As if reading my thoughts, Ceyram appeared beside the sleeping Nana.

[You've been dealing with those crows lurking around lately, haven't you? If something happened to that child, wouldn't it obviously be their doing?]

Ceyram wore an amused smile, seeming quite entertained by the current predicament.

Those crows...

More accurately, they should be called watchers.

Ever since Brian and I arrived in Rowen and unpacked our bags,

strange watchers seemed to be waiting to tail us, as if they were already on standby.

If they had started following us after some time had passed, I might not have noticed, but their immediate presence indicated they had been prepared in advance.

In other words, this was not the work of the Duchess who had ordered my death.

In fact, the Duchess had been quite quiet so far, surprisingly so.

Knowing her nature, the moment she realized her plan had failed, she was likely living in fear each day, wondering when her misdeed would be discovered.

Truthfully, I had an inkling of who the culprit might be the moment I became aware of the watchers.

Thus, I didn't waste time on baseless conjectures and dealt with them that very day.

Though they were well-trained and tight-lipped, they couldn't withstand the cruel temptation of torture.

As I methodically peeled away the flesh from each of their fingers, they inevitably spilled everything.

'Ke, Kellin! It's Kellin Diego!'

A name all too familiar, even welcoming: Kellin Diego.

Although his official position might have been that of a knight for the Belias, he was unlikely to actually be serving in the order.

At this moment, he would be clinging to the side of that man, taking care of all the dirty work at the estate.

But in this life, I haven't so much as met the man.

Meaning, it wasn't solely his decision to send watchers after me.

Without a doubt, some suspicious higher power had ordered it.

With this knowledge, my next step was simple.

Kill every one of them that came.

No news is good news?

To those who value every scrap of information, silence only breeds meaningless anxiety.

Eventually, once all information is cut off, the real perpetrator will have no choice but to show himself.

That's why I hunted down and killed additional watchers night after night, completely severing information to Belias.

In the end, Kellin himself would have to seek me out.

A confrontation I certainly anticipated.

But this, this was odd.

As if embodying the suspicion that Kellin wouldn't make a risky wager without certainty, even if vital information kept getting cut off, he wouldn't orchestrate such a reckless attack on the people around me.

The academy, watched from all sides, was particularly off-limits for such actions.

[You're aware, aren't you? Recently, there's a new party tailing us. Really, our master is quite extraordinary, huh? With so much attention, how could you possibly die on schedule?]

A dedicated fan of life and death, is it?

A soft laugh escaped me as my gaze drifted towards the peacefully sleeping Nana.

“.....”

She seemed unlikely to wake up anytime soon with her quiet, steady breathing.

Still, it would be problematic if she were to awaken in the absence of a guardian, so I had to hurry back quickly.

I tucked Ceyram safely in my coat and stepped outside.

The area surrounding the Royal Pavilion didn't necessarily need academy personnel, as knights from the empire and other kingdoms were abundant, practically taking on the role of guards in the area.

Thus, even the most skilled watchers would struggle to remain in this vicinity.

I began by moving away from the dormitory.

– Chirrrrrr

Within the stillness, a sinister bird call sounded out.

The watchers were nowhere to be found, not even a hint of their presence could be felt.

Usually, by the time one exits the academy, the crows would have started to gather, but for some reason, they were silent today.

I decided to follow where my feet led me and ventured further.

Before I knew it, I had reached the commercial streets of Rowen in front of the academy.

As befitting the time, while there were lights on, no shop doors remained open.

The solitude seemed even more pronounced than usual.

But isn't it strange?

There's no human scent to be found... yet the smell of blood is distinctly in the air.

My body instinctively gravitated towards the familiar scent.

I eventually came upon a dead-end alley.

There appeared to be no need to search for the source of the smell.

Fresh, thick splashes of blood scattered about suggested that it hadn't been long since they were spilled.

“Ha.....”

A deep sigh escaped me involuntarily.

[Isn't it obvious? You don't even need to piece together the situation to know the answer, do you?]

Ceyram's gaze wasn't on the bloodstains; rather, it fixated on the scattered items around them.

Candy, bread, chocolate – precisely the kind of treats that the little one would enjoy.

There they lay disarrayed on the rough dirt ground, abandoned and ownerless.

What does this imply?

The situation fits too neatly together, leaving no room for conjecture.

These items, without a doubt, were bought by Brian.

Then, whose blood is this?

There's no need to ask; it's clearly Brian's blood.

The real question is why his blood and the things he bought were found in such a secluded place.

Brian was not brought here against his will.

He came here of his own volition.

Perhaps he also sensed what had been happening around me lately.

The ominous crows that recently began to follow us so closely.

So, he attempted to lure them out.

Whether he intended to beat them to death with his hands or use some sort of desperate strategy to die together with them is unclear, but...

It's laughable.

To think he felt he had the capability, this delusion of a sense of crisis?

The idea of someone threatening me is so absurd it's speechless.

[You sure picked a fine specimen. He truly gave his all for you. Such devotion is hard to come by in servants, isn't it?]

Though it could sound sarcastic, Ceyram seemed genuinely impressed.

I quietly asked her.

"Do you know, Ceyram?"

[Hm?]

"In all my past and present lives, I've never had a servant. Meaning, I've never once had someone live solely for my sake."

The only one I ever considered worth protecting was him.

"So, I thought about it. A life dedicated to living for me. Wouldn't it be nice to have individuals devoted to me? Like my past self, someone who would sacrifice everything for me? It seemed quite appealing."

[Why the sudden confession?]

Ceyram's brows tilted downward, perhaps my reflection coming off a bit abrupt.

"Despite his lack of talent and marginal ability, Brian is undoubtedly my first servant and my person. Yet, now it seems he's in danger because of some insignificant beings? Can you imagine how that makes me feel?"

At my question, Ceyram gave a slight chuckle and replied.

[With that look in your eyes, there's only one answer I can give, isn't there?]



My eyes? Honestly, I'm not quite sure what expression I'm wearing at this moment.

This emotion... it's actually new to me.

That someone who decided to dedicate their life to me is now in peril.

The sensation is really... indescribably shitty.

[You're going to kill them, right? And very painfully...?]

The malevolent soul of the demonic blade sneered coldly at me.

How dare they lay a finger on my person when it would be futile even if they touched me?

A rage difficult to contain surged from within.

\* \* \*

– Thump!

With a heavy blow, the sound of grunts echoed throughout the space.

“This damned lunatic! Did you swallow your vocal cords or something...?”

Despite the relentless beating, Brian only swayed helplessly like a limp puppet.

He had desperately wanted to respond, but after being hit indiscriminately, including his vocal cords, he had been unable to utter a single word.

The assailants were unaware of this and continued to press and attack for a confession, which Brian found incredibly frustrating.

His bones had practically shattered under the continuous assault.

By now, even if his voice came back, he doubted he could speak due to the pain; it was an utterly wretched feeling.

‘I should've just stopped showing off and informed the young master...’

During the beatings, this thought crossed his mind hundreds of times.

In hindsight, considering he had blatantly lured them out, maybe some level of conversation was an option?

He had been the one to ask them to come out, but who could have known they'd attack like a swarm without any discussion?

"It's no use with this guy! He just won't think straight!"

Finally, the torturer declared defeat.

The young man who had been sitting and watching silently approached Brian.

"Huff... Huff..."

Brian could only gasp with difficulty.

"I was under the impression that you, as the sole guardian knight, were someone exceptional, but it turns out you can't even speak a word?"

It was not the heavy voice of an adult but rather the thin, light voice of a young boy.

Brian slowly raised his head to find the source of the voice.

With thick violet hair and flawless, tender skin, the boy seemed as young as Sian.

He wore a chilling smile as he asked Brian.

"Do you have any idea why you're in this state?"

Having never met him before, there surely was no previous conflict with this stranger.

Brian realized then that Sian must have been involved.

"They say that when a master is incompetent, the subjects beneath him suffer. Isn't that quite true? Oh, and you don't even know what your master has done, do you?"

The boy continued with a cheerful smile.

“I utterly despise being lectured or looked down upon by anyone. Whenever I feel that way, I just want to kill everything around me with sheer fury! Once I lose it, no one can stop me. Not even my father...”

Madness began to fill the boy's tone.

“And then your master crossed me? Sian Vert, that man insulted me, Beruth Luimill, with those contemptible eyes! Together with that insignificant fifth princess of the empire! It was a level of humiliation I had never felt before in my life! You think you can get away with such an act unscathed? Not a chance!”

As his mania subsided, his cold eyes returned to a blank gaze.

He muttered as if unsure whether to smile or cry.

“Should I tell you what I plan to do with you? First, I'll painstakingly skin you from head to toe, wrap you up like a surprise gift! Then, I'll send it directly to your master! Can you imagine his reaction upon receiving my present? He'll be terrified, not knowing where it came from, trembling in fear day after day! I will relish watching his terror peak! And at the pinnacle of his fear, that will be when I kill him along with the princess!”

Brian was suddenly reminded of a common phrase Sian would use.

Utterly pitiful.

Pitiful to the point of warranting sympathy.

Brian had no idea what Sian had suffered, but he knew all too well what would happen to someone who crossed Sian.

Who was about to do what to whom?

The one thing he was sure of was that even if he perished here today, these people would soon savor an agony far worse than his own.

As if resigned, Brian closed his eyes.

Perhaps his life had already ended near Belias, so this impending death was surprisingly easy to accept.

Only a slight regret lingered.

Maybe he could've been of more help to the lord he considered serving for a lifetime?

That thought was exceptionally tragic.

But what could be done?

After all, these people were likely to be knocking on death's door along with him shortly...

"Aaargh!"

The shrill screams of agony filled his ears.

The cries continued without cessation, one after the other.

"Hiiiek!"

Sinisterly familiar, the ordeal unfolded.

Brian slowly opened his eyes once more, lifting his gaze. The familiar figure standing before him inquired softly.

"What are you doing?"

(To be continued in the next chapter)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 53**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 53

Chapter 53. My Person (3)

Blood-stained eyes and blurred vision.

Enshrouded within that haze was a presence not unfamiliar.

Brian eventually began to doubt his own eyes.

Hair as dark as the pitch-black night, apathetic eyes tracing a straight line.

A youthful face that contrasted with the lethal aura it carried.

To his knowledge, there was only one person with such an aura.

“Yo-young master...?”

The lord he had sworn to devote his all to, Sian Vert, was before him.

The moment his drooping eyelids snapped open—

He felt he should reply to the question “What are you doing?” but his injured throat barely allowed words to form.

“Kuaaack!”

Meanwhile, screams as if vocal cords were tearing apart broke out around him.

The mercenaries who had been beating and torturing Brian clutched their severed limbs, spreading agony.

Ignoring them, Sian stroked Brian’s neck.

“Vocal cords damaged? No wonder you can’t speak. Is it from the beating, or did the beating stop you from speaking?”

He wanted to reply ‘the latter’, but even that was impossible now.

“I thought you didn’t know the crows were circling around, huh? If you didn’t want to be treated badly, you should’ve just run to me. What’s this? You said you’d devote everything to me, yet you end up risking your neck in such a sordid place? Are you really my person?”

It was not a situation of keeping silent but rather being silenced.

Despite surely being reprimanded, there was both an odd sense of embarrassment and a hint of joy.

Eventually, Brian grinned sheepishly at Sian.

Sian, taken aback, let out a small sigh.

“Ah, enough of that. You’ve been beaten enough; what more can I say? Luckily, you don’t seem on the brink of death. Just sleep until this is over.”

Sian gently patted Brian’s blood-streaked face.

“.....”

It was but a light touch, yet it oddly seemed to bring slumber, his eyelids growing heavy.

The screams of people begging for their lives sounded as if they continued, but he couldn’t be bothered to care.

Soon enough, Brian slipped into a deep sleep, oblivious to the world.

\* \* \*

Isn’t there a saying about discerning the promise of a mighty tree by its sapling?

I’m not too fond of old sayings, but I figure this one’s truly a gem.

Who did what to whom, planning what outcome?

It makes you wonder if such words should come from the mouth of an eleven-year-old.

Sparing it for being a sprout, pardoning it because it’s young?

That’s an attitude best left to knightly fools.

A sprout quickly becomes a tree, and a brat quickly becomes a villain.

Therefore, it’s important to ensure the sprout grows right.

“You, what are you exactly? Why are you doing this to me?”

Beruth roared, sitting defeated.

You’d think he’d already endured some cruel torture.

Yet, not even a single scratch marked Beruth’s limbs, perfectly intact.

In other words, I hadn't laid a finger on him.

"Don't come any closer! Stay away!"

Step by step, as I advanced, he frantically scrambled back.

"Looks like there's been a misunderstanding, Sir Sian! I wasn't trying to harm your knight! That guy... He seemed up to something fishy, so I was interrogating him! I heard he was trying to kill you, so I..."

His attempts at excuses were reminiscent of someone dwelling in a deep chasm.

Having no intention of listening to his pitiful blather any longer, I stepped heavily on his retreating left foot.

-Crunch!

The satisfactorily crisp sound of breaking akin to a snapping twig echoed.

"Kuaaack!"

At the agony of his broken bone, Beruth screamed.

Ignoring his cries, I leaned in, locking eyes with him.

"What were you going to do to me?"

He glared back with hatred-filled eyes.

"You think you'll get away with doing this to me? I am Beruth Luimill! If I get angry, no one can stop me! The pain I am feeling now, I can make it many times worse...!"

He clearly didn't understand the gravity of our conversation.

I casually seized one of his hands.

"What, what are you doing...?"

Rough, unrefined to the touch.

The scars along it were not due to hard labor or training.

These were unmistakably marks of brutality – a history of violence inflicted not by others, but by himself, signs of a tormentor from an early age.

Indeed, a seedling destined for significant growth.

“What’s the saying? If the master is incompetent, the subjects suffer? Seems accurate...”

I had no words to offer.

My negligence led to Brian’s harm, after all.

“But doesn’t it strike you as unfair? The lesser suffer due to an incapable master, yet the so-called master faces no repercussions. Like you, right?”

Look at these corpses scattered around.

They were subjects who just moments ago parted from this world due to their helpless master.

A terrible end for them, all because of this wretched child.

“What are you... Aaack!”

I drew Ceyram I had kept concealed and plunged it down without hesitation.

Beruth’s body convulsed like a fish freshly hauled from water.

If one plans to deliver pain to others, they must be prepared to endure the same.

The pain of this blade slicing the flesh, to be honest, barely qualifies as discomfort.

I had yet to inflict true agony on him.

Forcefully lifting his head, our eyes met once more.

“I might be loathsome to you. You might detest me. Whisper about me behind my back, I don’t care.”

It’s just petty jealousy from the inept, after all.



“But why mess with him?”

“Uuhuk...”

Beruth could only sob, unable to answer.

“If you disliked me so much, you should have confronted me, not him.”

“I’m sorry, Sir Sian! I won’t ever approach you or your people again! I promise I won’t go near the princess nor that commoner! Please, just spare my life!”

The roaring lion had become a groveling, pitiful worm.

[What a dull creature,] commented Ceyram, as if it had lost interest.

“I tend to agree.”

The creature who had once fearlessly snarled at me...

This is why nipping the sprout in the bud is crucial, you see?

But I’ve always been wary of those who only brag with words...

I set Ceyram aside briefly and flicked my hand.

“.....!”

Sensing his imminent fate, his pupils quivered wildly.

“What, what are you doing?!”

In my outstretched palm, a black orb of concentrated mana formed.

The dark sphere seemed poised to devour Beruth, emitting a sinister aura.

“Time to finish what we started last time, shall we? The game where we put mana orbs in our mouths.”

“That, that kind of game doesn’t exist! If you put it in wrong, you really could die!”

“Don’t worry. The mana orb alone won’t kill you.”

I've spared you solely on the account of your noble title.

Not that I care if you die, but the hassle afterward would be intolerable.

But you're likely to suffer more than death itself.

"So remember this well. If you ever cross paths with me or mine again, you will wish you were dead. Remember that until your dying day."

If you don't want a worse death in the future...

Without hesitation, I thrust the orb into his mouth.

"Aaaaack!"

A shrill scream spread throughout the desolate forest.

Beruth thrashed wildly like that fish out of water.

Such is the exquisite torment of mana.

"Bleargh!"

He strained to expel the forced mana, but it only multiplied his pain.

Soon enough, he wouldn't have the energy to struggle.

I concluded my business and turned back without a second glance.

Sapling grooming was complete.

Should it show signs of corrupt growth later,

I will uproot it entirely, leaving not even ashes behind...

\* \* \*

"Ugh!"

As consciousness returned, his head pounded.

"You're awake!"

A single groan accompanied the flash of consciousness, followed by a high-pitched cheer.

“Did you have a good sleep, Brian?”

A small tail wagged playfully.

The owner sat on the bed, watching with innocent eyes.

“Nana...?”

Brian, suddenly alert, looked around quickly.

A peaceful dormitory bathed in the warm morning sunlight.

Gently touching his throbbing head, he found it tightly wrapped with a white bandage.

“I heard about it! You were bringing snacks and tripped over a curb, knocked out cold! Papa found Brian lying in the street and brought you here!”

Bright-eyed and innocent, she gently stroked Brian’s wounds.

Who would get such grievous injuries from tripping over a curb?

Brian stared blankly, recalling the events of the previous night.

Certainly, the last thing he remembered was being in the middle of a forest tinged with the stench of blood.

Caught by Beruth and his crew, he suffered vicious beatings and torture until Sian appeared, and then he lost consciousness.

“The, the young master...?”

-Creak-

As if summoned by his thoughts, Sian entered the room.

“You’re up?”

Same as ever, his expression detached.

Yet, Brian felt an inexplicable relief at his presence.

“Leave us; go eat, Nana.”

“Okay, Papa!”

With her father’s permission, Nana scampered out the door, leaving just Sian and Brian.

“Ar, are you alright?”

“That’s not something you should be asking me, right?”

Brian sheepishly scratched his face, realizing that the question might be better posed to a mirror.

“Really, I have no excuse. I tried to handle the situation without understanding my limit... I’m sorry for troubling you, young master.”

Sian crossed his arms in response.

“To be honest, I don’t want to criticize you for stepping in. But did you really think you could handle them on your own?”

Brian, flustered, waved his hands in denial.

“I, I never planned to fight! From the moment they followed me, their aura was so fierce I wanted to figure out what kind of men they were, then run away. I had no idea they’d attack without warning...”

“So you knew they were hostile from the start?”

“Yes...”

Brian wilted under Sian’s icy gaze, feeling his judgment looming unspoken.

“Here I thought I had a man willing to sacrifice himself for his master, yet he can’t even protect himself... Once your injuries heal, your training begins. Just be ready for that.”

Sian pulled something out and handed it to Brian before rising to leave.

“Wh, where are you going?”

“Out.”

It was just another one of Sian’s inexplicably timed outings.

“.....?”

Brian sat there, gazing dumbfoundedly at the object left behind – a sturdy, somewhat heavy dagger.

The ornate sheath gave way to a finely honed blade that seemed to exude a chilling intent.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 54**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 54

Chapter 54. My Person (4)

There’s a saying that the perpetrator always returns to the scene of the crime. Usually, to clean up after their mess.

Just to be clear, I haven’t done anything wrong.

I am simply returning to the scene to finish what I started.

Of course, encountering an unexpected third party there would be troublesome.

It’d be a problem even if the person I encounter is someone I expected.

“.....”

The cold look in her eyes conveyed a chill like that of an ice block.

Our head, her expression today is as heavy as cotton soaked with water.

“Explain.”

Her single-word question conveyed her negative feelings.

The scene of the bloody feast from last night looked as if time had been reversed, completely immaculate.

Moreover, another welcome face was in front of the head.

I spoke without care.

“His name is Kellin Diego. He is a knight affiliated with Belias. He’s the leader of the watchdogs who have been sent to watch over me.”

Kellin was lying helplessly on the ground with his eyes and mouth sealed.

As you might expect, the cleanup of the scene was handled by the members of Mist, including Lady Silica.

But it wasn’t just a simple cleanup.

Although I ended up handling Beruth and his group first, they were just added problems to deal with later on,

while the true crows that had been clinging to me persistently with the intention of keeping me under surveillance were another matter.

And those crows were certainly there at the scene.

I remember there were five at the time,

But now, in front of my eyes, there is only this one?

The rest seem to have flown off to the afterlife.

“All this time, I kept quiet because it seemed like you were handling things on your own, but it looks like you made quite a few enemies back home?”

“It would be more accurate to say that I had no allies.”

If there were any, it would have been Emily or my sister, Ellis, at best.

“What about Beruth?”

“For now, I left him alive and threw him in front of the healing center. I presume the healers who were about to clean the yard have found him by now.”

“It seems generous of you not to kill him.”

“If I had tried to kill him, you, head, would have rushed to stop me.”

She did not try to deny it.

Trash as he may be, he still has the noble tag attached to his status.

His position is fundamentally different from that of common-born students like Resmus.

If I had acted on impulse and killed him, not only would the Academy be stirred up, but international relations would become extremely awkward.

To exaggerate a bit, it could have broken a hundred years of continental peace.

Of course, I am not so foolish as to be unable to make such rational decisions.

Though I did consider killing him in a moment of excitement, instead, I gave him a pain worse than death so he won't be wagging his tongue irresponsibly.

“I am constantly amazed at your abilities the more I observe. The strength that surpasses the assassins of Mist, the eloquence to deal with that steadfast Chancellor Condor, and the mental fortitude to handle a demonic sword... You show the finest qualities that a successor can exhibit.”

Who can be pleased when praised with such murderous eyes?

Regardless, she continued emotionlessly.

“I have no particular desire to pry into what happened in your hometown or how you grew up. It would be a lie to say I'm not curious, but I won't ask. The same goes for Lord Aer.”

Sometimes, not knowing is more beneficial to me and those around me than knowing.

An assassin's true role is to follow their target without being swayed by personal feelings or backgrounds.

She would know that better than anyone.

"However, it'll be problematic if incidents like this continue. Whether it's Beruth or this crow here, there will continue to be those who are suspicious and envious of your actions. That'll become quite troublesome for you, won't it?"

"I agree. However, you don't need to keep cleaning up after me. Whatever I've caused, I shall resolve."

She sighed at my unflinching posture.

"I wish you'd understand the heart of a teacher who finds it not so easy to do so. I like that you want to punish those who touch your people. But such extreme methods within the Academy will eventually turn into a crisis for you. It will endanger not only you but also those around you. Can't we stand to see that happen? As an emerged successor, we will protect you by whatever means necessary."

Protect me by whatever means necessary...

Why was this same person so cool about letting me leave the organization when I decided to leave in my previous life? I suddenly wanted to ask.

Asking wouldn't get me answers anyway.

With a shrug, I said,

"Punishment is an act of applying negative pressure to the subject to induce positive development. But what I did is not punishment. It's a sort of warning that if they dare climb up again after being crushed, they'll be completely subdued."

Why should I promote the positive development of those bastards?

I don't hold out hope for their rehabilitation.

I just want them to live quietly without attracting my attention.



“Jealousy towards me? It’s just the self-pity of those without ability. I really don’t care about such gossip. However, if something like this happens again, not to me, but to my people...”

This incident has made one thing clear to me.

“I’ll find them all and crush them. That’s how I choose to live...”

As I reaffirmed during my encounter with Aer, in this life I have to correct what I had to and could not do in my past life.

Always looking around, wasn’t that it?

That idiotic god’s words seem to make a bit of sense.

The head in front of me and the other members are no different.

They all are within my fence, belonging to my domain.

For those who would risk their lives for me because of the problems I bring, I will never abandon them.

Well, as long as they don’t stab me in the back.

There seemed to be a slight softening in the head’s steady gaze as if she was moved by my firm resolve.

“I hope we don’t have to be too busy rushing around.”

“I’ll try.”

With an unaffected smile, I responded with a small one of my own.

“My work here appears to be done. Leave this crow with me; from the look in his eyes, he doesn’t seem to have the intention to kill.”

Leaving behind a gift (?) unintentionally, the head left the scene.

As soon as she was gone, a black mist rose from within me.

[Unnecessarily showing off...]

Ceyram’s eyes narrowed discontentedly.

“What’s the dissatisfaction now?”

[Would you understand if I spoke? Forget it! What about that guy?]

Ceyram pointed to Kellin, who was lying in front of us, motionless as a dead body.

“.....”

He’s still conscious.

His thundering heartbeat is audible from here.

“Stop pretending to be unconscious. I know you’re awake.

“.....!”

As the mist and gag covering his eyes were released, his face appeared, dripping with sweat.

“You are Sian Vert...”

Since this was our first encounter in this life, such a reaction was expected.

“What exactly are you? How can the youngest of the Vert family have such a force? Those people are undoubtedly the followers of the Black Mist...”

“That’s not why I freed you. Think for 5 seconds about what you should say in this situation.”

He responded in less than 5 seconds.

“Do you want an answer to what you want? I regret to inform you that my mouth is not so loose. I would rather die biting my tongue off here!”

Something I’ve felt since my previous life is that this guy is really obstinate.

Once upon a time, although I was madly following that devil, I felt some awe towards him for being so steadfast.

Still, he’s a very petty person.

A foolish man who can't tell the difference between crap and bean paste, thinking his own conviction is the most important in the world.

Do I look like him?

Maybe.

But I don't feel a shred of sympathy for this guy.

Because.

He was the first person to try to kill me.

Out of jealousy and envy, claiming that someone like me was unnecessary for the family, he was the very first person who tried to assassinate me.

Therefore, he was a man that I killed with my own hands.

"You've been watching what I've been doing! It was like looking at a demon, not a person! Perhaps he realized your true nature long ago! Your existence will surely cause great harm not only to the Vert family but also to him!"

"That person," he refers to must certainly be that guy, right?

So, he's already scared of me while I'm still so green, wary and frightened?

It's laughably ridiculous.

Hiding my thoughts, I asked,

"What will you do if I let you go now?"

"I will return to Belias immediately and report everything about you to my lord. No threats or coercion will work, and even if you cast 'Binding Spell' on me, it won't matter. I'd rather die by biting my tongue off here and now!"

"You are determined. That must be why Aschel continues to use you."

"Do not casually speak the name of that man!"

"Should I give you some advice? That won't last long."

"....."

His glaring eyes were so fierce that I wanted to gouge them out.

“If he trusted you that much, you wouldn’t have died so soon, especially not by my hand.”

By me...

“What are you talking about.....”

“It’s none of your business. It’s better to roll in a pit of shit than to die. Anyway, let’s extend that life of yours a bit longer. It’s to make use of you in a way that’s more meaningful to me.”

I gathered a large amount of mana within my body and channeled it into my hand.

“It seems you do not understand me. No matter what you do, you can’t change me.....”

“I never said I’d change you. I’m simply going to make you anew.”

A vast amount of mana beyond comparison to before accumulated in my hand.

“This power...? What are you trying to do?”

Think of it as an honor, if you like.

It’s a high-grade magic that I find bothersome to use for someone like you.

At that precise moment, the clouds concealing the sun dispersed, revealing shadows that had been hidden.

With the mana in my hand, I struck down towards Kellin’s shadow.

“Creation: Shadow Personality!”

-Fyeeeeeng!

Along with the spell, a jet-black light surged where my hand touched the shadow, and the congealed mana passed through the shadow and transferred directly into Kellin’s body.

Receiving it, Kellin wore the expression of a soulless shell, completely vacant.

Phew, it's disgustingly hard to do after a while.

The 9-star dark attribute spell 'Shadow Personality'.

A high-ranked spell that creates a new personality from a person's shadow, which is said to house a second soul, and implants it into the target's body.

It was a top-tier spell that even in my past life I had used only once.

After grappling my momentarily dizzy mind, I looked at Kellin again and asked.

"Do you know who you are?"

"Kellin Diego. A formal guardian knight of Belias, I came to Rowen with a mission to monitor Lord Sian."

His tone was noticeably more submissive.

"Who do you serve?"

"....."

After a brief pause, Kellin continued.

"Originally, I served Lord Aschel, the eldest son of the Vert family... But now, I have no desire to serve him. Instead, I wish to serve Lord Sian, who created me, as my new master. Please accept me!"

At this, Ceyram clicked his tongue and remarked,

[No puppet is quite like that.]

That's exactly why I made him such.

"Listen closely to what I am about to say. Then return to Belias and convey everything to Aschel, who awaits you. Without omitting a single thing....."

"Newly born Kellin Diego, shall heed Lord Sian's command!"

His face, as always, was filled with determination.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 55**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 55

Chapter 55: Link (1)

“Haap!”

The scent of sweat permeated the air, and the strong yells resounded loud and clear.

This was the academy’s pride and joy – the physical training grounds.

It was where students trained their physical strength and swordsmanship, along with receiving personal guidance from guardian knights.

As the academy placed great importance on the training of mind and body, the facilities for the students’ individual training were equipped to the highest standard.

Of course, I didn’t come here to train myself.

I came to train our outstanding, if not somewhat reluctant, young seedling.

“Huff...”

Brian, having completed his target number of reps, collapsed to the ground.

“I, I’ve done them all, young master!”

“Rest for 30 seconds, then we move on to the next exercise.”

“...”

He looked as though he wanted to beg me to kill him instead, but evidently, he couldn’t bring himself to say it.

With resignation, Brian took his stance and started doing push-ups.

“Is it tough?”

“Yes, it’s to-... no, I’m okay!”

For a moment, his true feelings slipped out.

“If it’s really that hard, say it now. I can always send you on a snack run or something.”

“Oh, no! Lord, I’ll take the chance you’ve given and see it through!”

With a robust yell, Brian resumed his training.

Starting anything always boils down to the basics.

Physical strength is the most fundamental means for all bodily activity,

Only when this is in place, can we move on to train in swordsmanship or martial arts.

Well, it seems like they don’t just hand out knighthood in Belias for show.

Despite not knowing how the livestock back in the domain has been raised, he did possess a certain level of physical strength.

Truth be told, simple physical training could be done inside the dormitory.

As someone who prefers to avoid crowded places, that would’ve been the comfortable option for me.

But there was one reason I brought Brian to this very place: to show him.

While direct training is beneficial, watching others train can be equally enlightening.

Around us, not only students but also their guardian knights and academy knights were engaged in training, a sight not uncommon here.

Of course, it wouldn’t benefit me to watch, but it would serve as an excellent textbook for our Brian.

\*Cough, ah, ack, hhhkk!\*

Unaware of my thoughts, Brian kept groaning unintelligibly while showing off his pale teeth along with the veins on his neck.

“Sian...?”

In the midst of all this, I turned my head upon hearing a familiar voice calling my name.

There she was, Princess Arin, approaching with a smile that was quite pleasant to see.

“Been watching the whole time? Came to train with your guardian knight?”

“Yes, something like that.”

Although I’m here purely for Brian’s training.

“Did your Highness also come here to train?”

“Yes! Every weekend, I train here in strength and swordsmanship with Resmus. I’m learning so much from her!”

Behind the princess stood Resmus and five other guardian knights.

It seemed like there were more knights than usual around her.

“There are more knights with you today?”

“Hm? Oh, well, that’s because... Because of the recent incident, I felt I should be more cautious.”

At the mention of the recent incident, Resmus flinched behind her.

It was no big deal.

A new academy student, Beruth Luimill, was found in front of the healing center early one morning.

One of his ankles was broken, and his body had sustained serious internal injuries. The devastating prognosis was that he might not be able to produce mana properly in the future.



Despite being questioned about the culprit, Beruth refused to speak...

Well, it wasn't that he didn't want to, he couldn't.

Though not exactly praise, I considered his silence to be managed well.

As long as he keeps his mouth shut, he shouldn't have more run-ins with me.

"Who could it have been? Even if they weren't on good terms, for someone to attack a noble's heir within the academy..."

Exactly my thoughts.

Who could be this malicious friend? Makes me curious to see their face.

Is this itching curiosity just a figment of my imagination?

"Anyway, Sian, you should be careful too. You never know what can happen."

"I'll bear that in mind."

While not sure who should be the one concerned, I decided to respond with some acknowledgement.

But I had to admit, her stern disposition was admirable.

Despite the monotonous nature of the theoretical classes, she was among the top students, and here she was, diligently training on weekends as well. That was no easy feat.

I wonder if she still has plans to recruit me. Regardless, if she continues to grow like this, the chances of her being labeled an 'unfortunate princess' would decrease significantly.

At least, if she manages to build a proper power base of her own.

"Do, do, young master...?"

Suddenly, Brian called out to me with a voice as faint as a mosquito's buzz.

Alerted by his tone, I turned to find him sweating profusely, as if he was on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

“What’s gotten into you all of a sudden?”

“Th-Th-There... right now...!”

Brian’s anxious eyes turned towards something beyond the training hall.

I followed his gaze, and in that moment...

What’s this? Did I see that wrong?

Beyond the stream outlining the training hall perimeter, in the thicket of the grassy clearing, stood a familiar figure.

This was odd.

This sensation... like being struck on the head with a hammer, was one I had not felt in a very long time.

Why? Why is the child that should be in the midst of a nap within the room, here of all places?

Wearing the magical training hood provided by the academy, the audacious child roams freely through the heart of the academy grounds.

As soon as I saw those innocent, bright eyes, I felt a cold sweat running down my spine – it was Nana.

\* \* \*

The door was just as securely locked as when I left. Out of caution, I had even set up a small magic barrier when I left, making it virtually impossible for someone to open the door and leave. Yet, seeing the curtains fluttering in the wind and the window wide open, everything became clear. Could it have been a month since our little one hatched from its egg? Not only had it started crawling, walking, and talking, but now it seemed to have taken up flying as well? Moreover, from a second-floor height no less. The speed of its growth was incredibly pleasing, yet alarmingly rapid.

I had scoured the area up to a 200m radius from where Nana was first seen, but there was no trace of her anywhere. In a rush, fearing it might have returned to the dormitory out of a homing instinct, I arrived

only to find the impressive scene of its escape.

“Could someone have already found and taken her in?”

Who could have discovered it? That would lead us into the worst possible situation. Thankfully, Nana was wearing the magic cloak I had carelessly thrown on it when it was first found. As long as it wasn't taken off or blown away by the wind, it might pass off as a normal child at first glance. But that wouldn't last long. If even a bit of it came off, revealing any hidden parts...

I couldn't even begin to imagine the troublesome situations that would follow. There was no more time to waste. Closing my eyes gently, I immediately executed Mist's secret technique.

“Black Mist 4th Technique: Sensing Killing Intent!” As I chanted, the fog that leaked out from between my collars seeped into my eyes. Although it was a secret technique used to detect killing intent through the power of fog, it wasn't limited to detecting only killing intent. Since Nana was a hybrid of human and dragon, she must surely possess some dragon's mystique. She couldn't have gone far, so if I start from the dormitory and gradually expand the detection area...?

“Hmm?” Suddenly opening my eyes wide, the surrounding fog instantly vanished. What? Why are you here?

“Have you been looking for me?”

“Follow me, Brian!” I, along with Brian, kicked open the door and headed towards the Royal Wing's third floor. It was a place I knew who resided in but had never visited before. As soon as we stepped into the corridor and reached the end, I saw three unfamiliar faces. There was Nana, smiling brightly in the middle, and two women holding her hand on either side. This is driving me crazy.

Noticing us, they looked up in surprise.

“Sian?”

(To be continued...)

Editor's note:

Change Form to Technique.

Uh oh, Sian's in trouble.

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 56**

Matan's Shooter 56: Link (Part 2)

The Royal Hall consists of a total of six floors.

My room is located at the far left end of the second floor,

And currently, Brian and I are positioned in the right direction of the third floor's corridor.

If asked who lives there, I could say, it's a princess from some country that I had just encountered in the fitness training room.

Well, that's irrelevant for now...

"Papa!"

Why on earth are you here?

Upon spotting me, Nana let out a cheer and dashed down the corridor.

"Papa...?"

The word 'Papa' left the two women looking baffled.

Ah, I really hoped she wouldn't say that...

I quickly checked over Nana's condition as she ran.

Her cloak wrapped neatly around her.

Her wings folded in.

Even her tail skillfully hidden beneath her clothes.

To anyone's eyes, she was nothing but a typical child.

Not exactly fortunate, but should I say we've dodged a bullet?

At least she didn't seem to have been caught looking like a dragon.

I hurriedly signaled to Brian next to me.

"...!"

Catching the signal, Brian promptly scooped up the sprinting Nana in his arms.

"Alright, Nana, it's time to go back to your room!"

"Why? I still want to play!"

Having secured Nana, he bowed to the princess and quickly made his way down the stairs.

I approached the princess with a nonchalant expression.

The Princess Arin too did not wait, and strode towards me.

"What are you doing, Sian?"

It seemed she was somewhat upset that Nana was taken away so unexpectedly.

"Why suddenly... Could it be your child?"

"How could that be? She is my cousin's sister."

Resmus, who had rushed over as well, then asked me.

"But she called you 'Papa'..."

"It's just a nickname. She casually calls others 'Papa' too."

After all, thinking of me, who's only eleven years old, as her dad is bizarre in itself, isn't it?

They are also only eleven years old; an age hardly equipped with proper recognition of such matters, so maybe it's not too off base...?

I shrugged off the unnecessary thought internally.

“Your cousin’s sister...?”

“Yes. My cousin’s family had business in Rowen, so she was left in my care for a while. Could you tell me where you found her?”

“Well, not long after you left the training hall, she appeared in front of us. Saying she was looking for ‘Papa’, we thought she was a lost child, so we looked after her...”

Did this kid already learn teleportation magic or something?

Well, at least it seems she hadn’t come into contact with anyone else.

From their reaction, it didn’t look like they saw any dragon physical traits, just seemed to have taken care of her passingly.

“Well anyway, it’s good that you found family. Never expected her to be related to Sian. You seem to like the child more than I thought?”

“What do you mean?”

“Nana was talking quite highly of you! Saying how you adore and take really good care of her. Hearing ‘Papa’, I naturally thought she was talking about her dad, but it seems she was referring to you, Sian.”

What on earth...

I evaded the question, saying I merely looked after her as much as needed.

“So, this child, I mean Nana, when is she leaving?”

“She is leaving today. In fact, that’s what I was preparing for.”

The mention of departing today seemed to stir a sense of loss in her.

A hint of sadness was visible in her eyes.

“Is that so? It feels somewhat sad to part without saying goodbye. Could we perhaps say our final goodbyes?”

Making excuses and now preventing a goodbye would only arouse further suspicion.

I figured we'd just show her face briefly and then make our leave.

Just as I was about to respond,

“Papa!”

An adorable voice suddenly shouted from the bottom of the stairs, hitting my ears unannounced. In that instant, my eyes sparkled momentarily and turned toward the base of the stairs. The first thing I saw was the dark crimson wing peeking out from beneath the cloak.

“.....!”

A cheeky little one with both arms spread wide was running, no, flying towards me. Behind them, Brian, with a face full of desperation, was urgently chasing after. Without a chance to think of how to deal with the situation, Nana's cheerful face soon burrowed into my embrace. And at that moment, as if a ghost had blown a breeze, the hood that had been covering Nana's head gently slipped off. -Swish The horns that adorably popped out among her soft pink hair. It was a part of the body that should not and could not exist on a human.

I quickly raised my hand, covering Nana's hood again with a swift movement as if to sever a target's neck. Shortly after, Brian, having returned to the third floor, gasped for air and said, “I-I'm terribly sorry, young master! Nana suddenly insisted on going to you and ran off.....!”

At this moment, Brian's words were not important. What mattered was how many saw what should not and could not be seen. I discreetly lifted my gaze toward the places where the princess and Resmus were.

“.....!”

Not even a resurrected corpse could make such a face. Their eyes and mouths, wide open as if time had frozen, refused to close. The four men and women flowed silently between them, only Nana blinking her bright eyes as if wondering what the problem was.

\* \* \*

“So, you mean... This child has nothing to do with Sian, and you just happened to find her before coming to the academy?”

“Yes. Honestly, I didn’t expect her to wake up until it actually happened.”

I responded with a naturally nonchalant expression.

“The more I look at her, the more fascinating it seems. A hybrid of a dragon and a human, by appearances, she seems no different from us...”

The same room, the same furniture, the same layout. The Royal Hall dormitory, indistinguishable from the space where I live. However, this is not my room. The room at the very end of the third floor on the right of the Royal Hall. A space where the fifth princess of the Ushif Empire lives with a commoner-born honorary noble.

In other words, it was Princess Arin’s room. I never expected to enter her room in such a manner, all for the sake of explaining the situation. Amidst this, Brian stood as stiff as a mannequin, maintaining a proper posture with a tense face.

Well, it would be nerve-wracking for a commoner to enter a room of the royal family. But no one paid attention to the nervous Brian. Arin and Resmus, still disbelieving the current situation, gazed at Nana’s ears and tail with fascination. Meanwhile, Nana, seemingly exhausted, was soundly asleep on the sofa.

“So, this child is now, Sian, being raised in your room?”

“Yes, well, that’s the case. She had no owner, and it felt too lonely in the spacious room alone, so I’ve been raising her with my knight.”

“No wonder you hardly showed up for class, it was to take care of Nana.”

Not exactly for that reason, but since it doesn’t seem bad to agree, I decided to affirm.

“Such a pitiful child.”

Arin gently stroked the sleeping Nana’s head with a look of pity. “A dragon and a human... A child belonging neither here nor there, unaccepted by anyone...”



Was she projecting her own situation onto the child? Without needing an explanation, Princess Arin seemed to have already predicted the sorrow Nana would face in the future.

“Really, Sian, you’re doing a good deed...”

Well, I’m not sure if this could be called a good deed. I just did what I wanted. How to judge that act is up to everyone else...

“Sian, you don’t want others to know about this child’s existence, right?”

“That’s right. There’s nothing good in making it known.”

“Then, I too, vow on the princess’ name not to speak of Nana’s existence to anyone. Resmus will do the same, right?”

“Of course, Princess Arin! I don’t have anyone in particular to tell anyway.”

After a brief pause, I asked in a low voice, “Are you serious?”

“Of course. It’s just too sad to become unhappy simply by existing. I wouldn’t want Nana to be unhappy either...”

Had I grown fond of her in just that short time?

Well, she certainly didn’t seem to be lying.

And she didn’t seem like the type to have any ulterior motives either.

“But, instead...”

“...?”

“Could I, maybe, come to visit your room sometimes?”

“Excuse me?”

I asked again, thinking I had misheard.

“Don’t misunderstand! I have no bad intentions! I just want to see Nana’s face from time to time!”

Her neatly clasped hands and flushed face.

The way she cautiously sought permission was reminiscent of a young girl.

Well, that shouldn't be a problem.

I sighed softly and said, "But I would prefer if you could limit your visits. It wouldn't look good for a princess to be seen frequently entering the room of another noble."

"Okay, I'll keep that in mind..."

She said, smiling brightly at the sight of Nana sleeping peacefully.

Looking at her smile, I couldn't help but think that she was an unpredictable woman.

\* \* \*

After ending the conversation, Sian returned to his room with Nana.

The sun had already set beyond the western sky.

"The sun has set already? I guess I'll have to do my training inside today."

Resmus, who had been gazing at Arin, asked with a smile,

"You seem to be in a good mood?"

"Um? Does it look like that?"

Arin, a bit flustered, touched her reddened face.

"Your face is full of smiles. Did your conversation with Lord Sian make you that happy?"

Resmus had long noticed Arin's feelings towards Sian.

"What are you talking about? That's not it, Resmus!"

The person in question hadn't even fully realized her own feelings.

"It's just... I feel good because it seems like we've found even a small connection, that's all."

A secret connection only they knew about. Thinking they shared something made it feel as though the invisible wall between them had crumbled, if only a bit.

‘Have we gotten a bit closer...?’

Arin hoped in her heart that they would grow even closer.

\* \* \*

[What? Did all these interesting things happen while I was asleep?]

Interesting my foot.

It’s a miracle I haven’t turned the academy upside down looking for her.

[Isn’t this little one extraordinary? Already mastering the essentials of crawling, eating, and even escaping? Is she going to grow up to do great things like her dad?]

That dad, he’s not talking about me, is he?

[But for a bribe to keep quiet, that’s pretty obvious, isn’t it? Does that young princess really come to see this little one in your room? Why didn’t you take the chance to say she’s coming by to admire an enchanting magic sword?]

“Aren’t you embarrassed to say such things with your own mouth?”

Ceyram wore a sly smile as if there was nothing wrong.

[Anyway, you do realize you were lucky, right? This child will keep growing day by day. That means there’s more chance of getting caught.]

I know.

Nana’s rapid growth has surpassed my expectations, and it’s only a matter of time before her abilities become known outside the Royal Court.

What should I do with her?

Whether he knew of my troubled thoughts or not.

Nana was just happily indulging in the snacks Brian had brought.

“Perhaps it would be good to take her for walks at times like this?”

Caught in my thoughts, Brian suggested.

“Walks?”

“Keeping her inside all the time will stress Nana too. Wouldn't it be better to take her out for a look around when everyone is asleep like now?”

I stared at Brian for a moment.

“Why, what's wrong?”

“It's just, you seem pretty smart at times like this?”

“...?”

Brian scratched his head, as if to express his inability to understand my words.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 57**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 57

Chapter 57. Link (3)

“Hmm?”

The night sky was blanketed with fog.

A silver-haired man flying through the night suddenly looked down below.

“Why do you ask, Lord Lucion?”

A red-haired woman flying alongside him questioned.

“It smells foul.”

He abruptly stopped flying and began to survey the vast plains stretched out beneath his feet.

“Where exactly are we now?”

“We seem to be in the vicinity of Rowen, not too far from the Royal Academy.”

“The Royal Academy, you say...”

The man stroked his chin, keeping his focused gaze on the plains.

“Do you sense some bad energy?”

“Bad energy? Well, it’s not necessarily bad energy.”

A small sneer crossed the man’s face, seemingly tinged with discomfort.

It was an unfamiliar energy from somewhere deep in his memory, yet exceedingly irritating.

“It’s an energy that I, as a dragon walking this world, cannot tolerate. It infuriates me.”

A feeling grew within the man—a feeling that he must not leave this place just yet.

“We should postpone our return.”

His fully spread silver wings emitted a radiant energy.

While illuminating the dark night sky beautifully, his eyes were brimming with an unfathomable murderous intent.

\* \* \*

“Papa!”

Nana, standing tall on the wide plains, waved at me.

“It’s really spacious here! There’s no one else but us, right? Nana is super excited!”

Nana, as if to release the stress built up over time, flew around the place, spreading her wings wide.

“Wait, Nana, that way is dangerous!”

Brian was hurriedly following her, trying to catch up.

They are having fun.

It was a quiet plain area, easily 10 kilometers away from Rowen.

Accepting Brian’s suggestion to show Nana around outside, I brought the two of them here in the middle of the night.

Rowen was situated on the border of the Three Kingdoms,

where the outskirts of the city had been a battlefield for hundreds of years.

Meaning, it was a land abandoned by the steps of man.

Here, Nana could run and fly, even transform into a dragon without any issues.

[Got yourself quite a merciful father, huh?]

Ceyram teased with sarcasm appeared in her materialized form.

She lay on the grass, looking relaxed, with one hand propping up her head as she watched over them.

At this point, I couldn’t really deny being a father.

[Why? Why not make her a mother too while you’re at it? That young princess would be perfect, right? I suppose she’d be thrilled.]

“That’s a horrendous thought...”

I shivered at the absurdity of it all.

[Denial, denial. But as I hear, even the place you’re living in now was provided by the emperor of this land, right? You know what that implies? It might not be soon but it won’t be too long either, right?]

I had a response, yet I did not wish to retort.

So, I maintained my silence on that question.

Instead, I let out a single laugh and continued the conversation.

“Do you know what else I learned from my past life, Ceyram?”

[What, going for a confessional?]

Ceyram responded with a seductive smile.

“That no matter how hard I try to live a peaceful life, it’s not possible for me. Even this peaceful time right now is just a brief respite. I promise it won’t last long.”

[Of course, it won’t last! You didn’t think you could live peacefully with a demonic sword like me around, did you? For my pale skin’s sake, you need to show me some blood on a regular basis! Otherwise, I will...!]

-Whoosh

“...!”

A white mana glow suddenly flashed in the sky.

Following that, the mana descended to the ground, encroaching around and seemingly sealing off the space as if preventing anything from leaving.

“See, I told you it wouldn’t last long.”

-Thud

“Ow!”

Nana, who had been frolicking about, stumbled over something and fell backward.

“N-Nana, are you okay?”

Brian quickly approached and comforted her, stroking her head.

A dazed Nana simply touched the colorless barrier in front of her as if it were intriguing.

“What is this?”

A barrier spell.

And it’s an incredibly powerful one.

Not meant to belittle it, but this wasn’t the kind of mana any rising apprentice magician would possess.

It was powerful, akin to that of an archmage like Principal Condor.

Furthermore, the eerie energy emanating from the barrier...

was not something humans should possess.

-Whoosh

A mysterious red light flickered beneath the colorless walls that surrounded us.

It created a boundary that not only prevented entry from the outside but also ensured that we inside could not leave.

“Brian, take Nana and come over here.”

“Yes!”

Brian quickly picked up Nana and ran to my side.

-Ruuumble

As if feared, Nana gently clung to my leg as thunder rumbled in the black sky.

“...”

She was trembling.

Not because of the thunder but because of the foul energy within that vexing thunder, shaking with fear.



I silently stroked Nana's hair without saying a word.

Soon, with a vibration at the center of the barrier, lightning struck.

White smoke rose and from within it, an energy that was not unfamiliar was sensed.

The energy that only the descendants with godly blood, the inheriting race, could emanate, the Divine Energy.

It wasn't exactly a pleasant sensation for me – an energy belonging to some fool.

“Disgusting.”

The entity inside the smoke started with a highly irritating remark.

A towering man over 2 meters tall.

Shimmering silver long hair and a single horn rising in the middle of his forehead.

On his back, massive wings emitting a vast divine energy slowly retracted inward.

A dragon.

Full-blooded, not a half-human, half-dragon like Nana, but a pure dragon.

He belonged to a different dimension from the young devil dragon I had encountered in the Lemea Gorge, a perfect dragon that had lived for hundreds of years.

Behind him stood a woman with a similar aura.

She was a dragon as well.

The silver-haired dragon wrinkled his brow upon seeing Nana hiding behind my leg.

“So it was this. The source of the foul stench...”

This?

In an instant, as a twitching sound struck, anger rose internally.

“You, are you the master of that half-breed? Human?”

Contempt filled the question, and I chose to stare at their faces instead of responding.

Sensing displeasure in my eyes, the red-haired dragon raised her voice in anger.

“How dare a lowly human glare at us like that!”

The silver-haired dragon raised his hand, pacifying her.

“That half-breed is a problem, but your energy is not ordinary either, human...”

His gaze shifted past me to Ceyram beside me.

“I see. I thought I felt some unusual energy amidst the foul stench; it appears to be coming from a demonic sword.”

Ceyram chuckled at this revelation.

[Oh my? Am I still so popular? There are even those who recognize me, should I grace them with an autograph?]

“Stop joking around. You possess the power of a god and have fallen to be a pawn of a lowly human? Or are you still half asleep, unable to judge the situation?”

Her face contorted in an instant.

[Do you want to die?]

“ ... ”

[Where did those pathetic creatures come from to make me blow my top? Should I rip out your tongue and use it to shut your mouth?]

“Who dares utter such insolence in our presence!”

A roar shook the air, bringing with it a violent wind.

I continued to stare unfazedly at those creatures.

“All this while, you’ve been silent, human. For creatures like you, it must be an honor just to witness the presence of such a noble being. It’s understandable to become mute instantly.”

Such nonsense no longer amused me.

“However, rest assured, human. I have no intention of laying a finger on lowly beings like you. But that half-breed, we will need to take her with us...”

“ ... ”

“Although an ugly being, she is still a half-blood of dragon and human... It’s worth exploring her potential. Hand over the girl, and I will personally spare your lives...”

“Shut your mouth.”

A bone-chilling silence filled the atmosphere, tensions rapidly intensified.

My eyes remained fixed on the silver beanpole.

“What did you just say?”

“Shut your mouth. Are those big ears only for show? If you don’t want your gibbering mouth torn apart, keep it closed, you brat.”

When one is dumbfounded, it seems even dragons experience a momentary halt in thought.

The red-haired dragon’s pupils shook violently, perhaps due to loss of words.

“Hahahaha...!”

A mad cackle echoed within the barrier as he unleashed his murderous intent towards me.

“This is why inferior creatures cannot be tolerated. Unable to judge the situation, they bring upon themselves misery and despair...”

Gathering a massive amount of mana in his right hand, he extended it towards me.

“Let’s start by gouging out those detestable eyes of yours...”

-Clench!

As he tightly clenched his stretched hand, the concentrated mana dispersed and rushed towards me.

“...?”

But nothing changed.

My eyes were still focused on him, and there was no effect on me or my surroundings.

The only thing that appeared was a round black aura centered at my feet.

“A barrier within a barrier?”

Silver beanpole’s brows furrowed deeply.

“Did you just cast another barrier within my own?”

I wasn’t in a mood to kindly answer his ridiculous question because, our little one, who until now was only trembling, was now on the verge of crying, her face distorted in fear.

“...”

I had seen that face too many times before.

Regardless of age or gender, every human I’ve killed always showed a face consumed by fear and dread at the end.

And now, this little one was showing the same expression,

shaking with fear not because of me, but because of those contemptible beings.

“Brian.”

“Yes, young master...!”

“Cover Nana’s eyes and stay back. And never step in front of me.”

“As you command, young master!”

Brian took off his cape to wrap around Nana.

Quietly, she allowed it, and until the moment she left my side, she did not stop trembling.

“What are you, exactly? No matter if you possess a demonic sword, how could a mere human exert such power within my barrier...”

Ignoring Silver Beanpole’s words, I quietly closed my eyes.

A small period named peace, a brief rest.

To unleash the energy that had been dormant within me during that short time, I took a deep breath and quietly chanted.

“Black Mist 9th Technique: Demonic Sword Materialization.”

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 58**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 58

Chapter 58. Link (4)

Sian, fused with the demonic sword, no longer bore any resemblance to a human.

He was the embodiment of dark mist.

Not the natural order of the primordial world, but an artificial nature that seemed to have been conjured by him.

He exuded a negative energy so potent that it invoked various emotions merely by being observed.

“Ru, Sir Rukion? That power is surely...?”

“The power of an outcast banished from the divine realm.”

Rukion Caronis Aron Zemoarian Charolt.

A pureblooded Silver Dragon, untainted by the blood of any other creature.

He watched Sian’s transformation with eyes glittering with immense interest.

“Indeed, you too have something you believe in, hence that repulsive baring of your fangs...”

Sian remained silent.

He simply strode out from the barrier he had created, confidence in his step.

His razor-sharp gaze was filled with nothing but murderous intent.

“However, no matter how sturdy the vessel, it cannot contain the overflowing river. Even if one possesses the divine armaments, the weak body of a human has its limits in wielding them. As I’ve repeatedly said, it’s crucial for your primitive kind to understand your place.”

With a peculiar smile, Rukion concentrated mana in his hand.

-Zzzt

As if electricity collided, a strong spark ensued.

The concentrated mana gradually assumed a form, eventually transforming into the shape of a long spear.

“You should feel honored to witness my Light Spear, human. Try to resist as much as you can. If you happen to catch my interest, you might join that half-breed as the subject of my research...”

“You sure talk too damn much...!”

With speed leaving no room for response,

The Sian of dark mist instantly closed the distance and delivered a rapid strike to Rukion.

-Clang!

It was as if not the mind but pure instinct had blocked it.

Rukion, barely managing to block the sword with his spear, lost the relaxed demeanor he had moments before.

“How could his movements be so...!”

-Woosh

At the moment the purple blade slid down the spear’s shaft,

Sian’s body dynamically rotated, unleashing a flurry of strikes three times faster than the initial assault.

-Clang! Clang! Clang! Clang!

Rukion, far from retaliating, struggled even to defend.

Any lapse in concentration felt as if the sinister sword would pierce his noble flesh,

For Rukion, who detested such an outcome, it was a desperate struggle to block.

“Dare you, a lowly human...!”

As Rukion’s fury manifested divine power, a blue magic circle, accompanied by lightning, formed above Sian’s head.

-Crack!

Sian then swiftly backed away, drawing his sword.

Where he had stood, white lightning swirled, leaving the ground scorched black.

“Gah...”

Rukion thought he had managed to buy some time when he refocused on Sian,

“!”

In an imperceptibly short instance, between zero and one second,

It was hard to even take a breath.

Malevolent eyes, burgeoning with a murderous red light, once again loomed close, gazing down at Rukion.

In that moment, Rukion realized.

This attack was undodgeable...

“Sir Rukion!!”

-Clang!

A colorless, transparent barrier collided with the purple demonic sword.

A shield formed by the convergence of divine power and magic, an inherent defense unique to dragons, impenetrable by any human force.

“Ka, Kadellina...!”

“Please, step back and regroup! I will handle this unworthy human!”

The moment Kadellina, a dragon of proud heritage, blocked the strike, she spread her majestic wings, radiating the power of her noble race.

“Haah!”

-Thud!

The divine power she channeled through her barrier spread out, and unable to withstand the force, Sian’s body was flung away.

“Stand back, Kadellina! This foe is beyond your match...!”

“Do not worry, Lord Rukion! A mere human’s power cannot penetrate my shield...”

In that instant, she saw it.



Amid the flashes of lightning created by Rukion, a shimmering space of light. Amidst the black mist as dark as the night, filling the vast view of the dragon...

The moment its crimson eyes, born of pure ferocity, locked with the fog of ignorance, an inescapable fear seized every part of its body.

Its hands, holding the barrier, began to tremble violently.

Scion murmured softly as he looked at her.

“Mist Sword: Scattering Eight Petals...!”

With the sword technique invoked, the enchanted blade danced in the air as if performing acrobatics.

Its speed was such that even the superior senses of a noble dragon could not catch up.

She could do nothing until eight slashes were drawn.

The blade pierced through the barrier and burrowed into her body, and she could only watch as it happened.

-Crackling sound

“Aaaah...!”

Kadellina, now split into eight pieces, scattered in every direction.

Thick blood poured over her, staining the black mist red.

Rukion watched everything unfold.

His heart beat wildly, and his blood flowed faster.

The emotion he could sum up in one word was fear.

The superior race, inheriting the blood of gods, felt fear against a mere human.

“What, what are you...?”

There was no longer any arrogance in Rukion's voice.

Only questions.

He desperately wanted to know what kind of being before him could exhibit such grotesque power.

“ ... ”

His hands, gripping the spear, trembled endlessly.

\* \* \*

The dragon, Kadellina, was torn so badly that its original form was unrecognizable.

When she is reborn, I hope she refrains from such petty insults at first sight.

My gaze naturally returned to my original target.

“Suspicion, denial, caution, and fear encompassing all those emotions.

For the highest race to fear just a single human, what an amusing spectacle!”

-Sliding

A stream of blood slid down my cheek.

It seemed I was grazed by lightning a moment ago.

“This scent... Ah, I see. You've drunk the blood of a beast from the Limia Valley!”

What a remarkably keen sense of smell.

Of course, I didn't respond.

“However, that alone doesn't explain it! Even if you drank the blood of a beast and possessed the relics of a god, it's not just any god but the god of the black mist! A banished god without any authority shouldn't be able to exhibit such power! Tell me, what exactly are you!”

Unable to listen any longer, Ceyram scoffed.

I shared the sentiment.

When they encounter something beyond their understanding, they always charge like angry bulls, demanding explanations.

Such a race lacks any sense of dignity.

No matter how you look at it, they don't seem qualified to point fingers at humans as being inferior.

Without a word, I grabbed Ceyram and slowly approached the silver-haired giant.

They say you need to experience things firsthand to understand.

That applies to dragons as well as humans.

The arrogance and scorn directed at me just a moment ago, and the confident war spirit that followed, were all gone.

One would think, witnessing their comrade torn to shreds for their sake, they'd be in tears, rushing to their defense.

And yet, he was still babbling with that insolent mouth...

Such a contemptible creature has nothing to teach me.

"Fine, if you insist on remaining silent to the end. Good! I'll personally sever your head and extract all the memories from your dark brain myself! This is all your own doing!"

-hummmm

A massive magic circle formed beneath him.

Accompanied by an immense amount of mana and divine energy.

It wasn't higher-grade magic he was preparing to use.

He was merely dropping the poor imitation of a human and returning to his true form.

-Whooooosh

A violent gust stirred, carrying away the dense mist around us. From the magic circle, a giant vortex erupted, and within, a transformation was slowly taking place – a silver-haired dragon.

To others, I'm not sure how this might appear, but right now, that creature is in its most vulnerable state. A single sword thrust above its head would suffice to end its life without so much as a whimper, for it has no means of defense right now.

Did it expect me to be standing here in awe, thinking, 'Wow! A dragon is transforming right before my eyes!'?

I can't remember where I heard it, but there's an unwritten rule not to attack during a transformation. It was considered a basic courtesy in battle, right? So, does that mean I should just stand by and watch this annoyingly dramatic transformation unfold? Why would I?

I am an assassin. The moment I discern the optimal angle, regardless of courtesy or protocol, I rush in and kill. That is the fundamental principle of an assassin. And it applies to that long-haired brute just the same. As the mist shrouded Ceyram, I kicked off from my spot and ran. Have you ever seen the root of a great tree? Every plant, buried in the ground, spreads its roots in all directions to support its stem.

Just as a tiny sprout grows into a great tree and puts forth thousands of leaves, so too does a single sprout spread underground over time, growing countless roots. These prolific roots spread without knowing where they'll go or what they'll encounter. This minor blow that I'm about to deliver to that massive body will become like the sturdy roots of a great tree, enduring through countless years to form the very heart of the forest.

"Mist Sword: Roots of the Sturdy Tree!"

-Crack!

At the very moment the dragon achieved its full transformation. I leaped lightly from the ground and drove Ceyram into the very center of its body. -Hiss The mist surrounding the sword infiltrated the creature, branching into hundreds of paths like roots spreading through a tree, dispersing throughout its entire body.

"You, what have you done to me...!"

It was gallant in its transformation, but now it's time for it to exit the stage. I looked into its eyes and smiled faintly.

"May you be more adaptable than noble in your next life."

"Aaaargh!"

It responded with a gruesome scream. The mist, transmitted by the sword, soon created hundreds of holes in its body, which, without a chance to heal, split open along with the cracks, severing the massive body completely.

-Thud

It's over. I've killed one of the noblest species, a dragon, in just five minutes. The dragon's body, torn into hundreds of pieces, scattered all around. It may not be the right thing to say in this situation, but why does this scene look... like a feast to my eyes?

"Brian!"

"Yes, young master!"

I handed a chosen piece of meat to him, who hurried over. Blood was dripping from the flesh.

"Young master, why this...?"

"Eat it."

"Pardon?"

His eyes widened as if he had misunderstood.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime delicacy that you won't get to try again easily. It's a tonic like no other for strengthening the body, so stuff as much of it as you can into your stomach."

Even as I said this, I too picked a piece of flesh and sucked the blood from it. Ah... I felt the divine energy of the dragon spreading deep within me. Though it was a bit foolish, the blood of the greatest species on earth is indeed different!

[...] Ceyram, standing beside me, shook her head as if she was disgusted.

“Papa, is it yummy? Can I try some?!”

Nana, having regained her spirits, approached me and asked.

“You can’t. I’ll give you something else when we get back! Eat that.”

“No! Nana wants to try it too! I want some!”

Ah, little one. As much as I’d like to oblige, I’d rather not encourage cannibalism among your kind.

I gently grabbed Nana’s clothes as she rushed towards the corpse. Her attempts to move forward while whining were quite amusing.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 59**

The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin Chapter 59

Chapter 59: Link (5)

Rainbow-colored magical stones the size of small shields.

Surrounding these magical stones, sages in blue robes were seated in a circle.

Among them, hardly any were maintaining normal expressions.

More people were standing than sitting, a sign of the unrest.

Most of them couldn’t close their mouths or eyes, fixated on the face of the informant who had brought the news.

“What do you mean? Sir Rukion and Sir Kadellina are missing...?”

“Just as I’ve said. Since their last display of magic near Rowen, their energies have completely vanished.”

The informant continued calmly, as if expecting the sages' reactions, but he too couldn't grasp the current situation.

Missing dragons, the noblest of species.

It was more like an extinction, as there was no remaining trace of them on this land.

Two artifacts, their lights lost, stood as evidence.

“As you can see, both of these ‘Dragon Stones’ have lost their light. When they first entrusted these artifacts to us, they made it clear. The moment the light fades from these stones, they would no longer exist in this world...”

They had firmly been told to not worry about such things, to simply follow orders without question.

Neither the dragons who spoke nor the sages who listened expected such a circumstance to occur.

“Did you say near Rowen? Have you visited the last reported location of their energies?”

“Despite using detection magic and searching in every direction, we found only remnants of a battle. Absolutely nothing else, not even a drop of blood or a scale...”

The more that was revealed, the more absurd it sounded.

While everyone struggled to accept reality, a middle-aged man closest to the multicolored magic stone watched the situation with a serious expression.

This was ‘Regens Rainriver’, the head of the Garam Kingdom’s Magical Academy and one of the few Continental Grand Sages.

“Hmm...”

His concise sigh attracted all the sages’ attention.

Regens’s gaze was focused on the faded Dragon Stones.

“If these are indicators of a battle, then Rukion and Kadellina... they must have lost their lives. Isn’t that so?”

“Yes, but... given the power Sir Rukion and Sir Kadellina held, equivalent to eight stars or more...”

“Why bother with formalities for the deceased? There’s no need to keep referring to them in high regards.”

Regens gestured to cease expressions of deference to the dragons.

“Still, this battle warrants closer examination. If not a single drop of blood was found, is it possible whoever killed the two dragons used magic to erase their traces?”

“But, Lord Regens! As you know, our investigators are no less skilled than seven-star mages. If they couldn’t detect anything with their magic...”

“It must have been a darkness attribute wielder.”

The attribute not for offensive or combat magic but rather for stealth and camouflage.

To erase the traces at the site with magic, the caster’s magic level would have to be far higher than the investigators who used detection magic.

“To kill dragons, no less. I doubt the investigators come close.”

Regens spoke without surprise.

“Even so, darkness attributes are...”

Among higher-ranked mages known to the world, darkness attribute wielders were exceedingly rare.

It was improbable to reach high ranks with darkness attributes.

Nonetheless, Regens seemed fixed on the idea, repeatedly tapping the table and muttering the word “shadow.”

“Rowen... isn’t that where the Royal Academy is?”

“I see. But there’s no one there who could kill Rukion... or Kadellina, except for the chancellor, Condor Quizzel. However, his attribute isn’t shadow as far as we know...”



“There’s no rule saying it must be the chancellor. Attention to hiding skills is also part of the darkness attribute. Maybe there’s a high-level practitioner lying low there. It’s worth checking out. Extend the investigation to the Academy.”

“Yes, Lord Regens!”

After receiving the order, the investigator left, and Regens closed his eyes.

The other sages silently observed him.

Until he reopened his eyes and spoke again, nobody said a word.

“They say the devil’s work appears every now and then. It seems we’re precisely in that state.”

His tone was steady yet filled with an indescribable discomfort.

“How’s the search for a new tradesman going?”

“We’re scouring the entire continent, but it might take more time to find someone with the capabilities and resources of Zickerman Albas.”

“And the alternative bloodline of the demonic?”

“We’ve been searching everywhere, but without deploying a new supplier to the frontlines, it’s going to be difficult. Most of the blood diverted to the black market by unscrupulous supply agents has been recaptured.”

Regens exhaled another long sigh.

“Do you all really think everything that’s happened is mere coincidence?”

With that, a collective gulp was heard throughout the spacious hall.

“Renald Crimson, who’d been providing us with demonic blood, was assassinated on the frontline; Zickerman Albas, who supplied us with research materials and human subjects for years, also assassinated. And now Rukion and Kadellina, whose contributions were vital to the Academy’s survival, have disappeared. Are all these just coincidences?”

Anger and doubt mingled in Regens’s eyes.

“I for one can’t believe it. There must be a link behind these tragedies. Without resolving this, there’s no future for our Academy.”

It was suspicion, not evidence.

Yet the other sages couldn’t help but suspect there was a connection behind these events.

Frustrated by their lack of knowledge, they listened as Regens rose and admonished them.

“Steel yourselves. Something unknown is stirring in this continent. Only by overcoming it will we step into a brighter future!”

With his speech concluded, Regens turned and disappeared into an unlit space, the golden seal of the academy glinting on the back of his robe.

\* \* \*

“How is it? Tasty?”

“Yeah! It’s really delicious! Treats from Arin are the best!”

Nana’s sheer bliss as if heaven itself was unnecessary, her cheeks full of snacks brought by Princess Arin.

They’re having fun.

They looked just like loving sisters.

Since I had given permission for Nana’s visit, I had no room for objection.

Now that I think about it, isn’t this a first?

Bringing an outsider into my room.

Not that it’s stacked with corpses or anything, but the idea of an outsider stepping in was hardly pleasant.

-Tik Tok

Nevertheless, to honor the special guest, Brian stealthily brewed tea and placed it on the table, beads of sweat dripping from his tense face.

I really must say, the man is excellent at doing things unasked for.

Seeing Brian, Arin asked, “Doesn’t Sian have any other knights besides Brian?”

“As you can see, no.”

In fact, Brian wasn’t supposed to be here either.

“That’s unexpected. I thought you’d have brought the maid from that mansion... Emily, was it?”

Impressive that she’d remembered the name.

Given the girl’s presence, or rather the lack of it, it wasn’t all too surprising.

“She’s not a guardian knight, so I didn’t really want to bring her to the academy. No desire to play tricks either.”

I believed Emily would fare better remaining in Belias than following me to the academy.

“Princess Arin, it’s time for your classical literature class.”

“Oh, is it that time already?”

Checking his watch, Resmus reminded her of the impending class.

Good, now it’ll quiet down.

Feeling a bit stiff, I thought I’d relax in peace with some exercise once they left...

“...?”

Princess Arin, rising to leave, suddenly gave me an intense stare.

“Do you have something to say?”

“What are you doing?”

Her unexpected question momentarily puzzled me.

“I’m going to class? We’re in the same one.”

Ah...

A deep sigh escaped me internally.

The princess must’ve intended this visit for her own purpose.

“Nana! We’ll be back from class soon! Behave and play with Brian till then!”

“Okay! Have a good time, Princess Arin!”

Ignoring my thoughts completely, Arin cheerfully waved to Nana and led me out of the dormitory.

“You weren’t thinking of skipping class again, were you? It’s great to care for Nana, but a student’s duty is to attend classes! Imagine the trouble if you fail due to absences?”

Her kind-heartedness sends shivers down my spine.

Just as I contemplated slipping away, I spotted a familiar figure in the distance – it was Kranz.

“...!”

Upon noticing me, he hesitated not a moment before turning on his heels and fleeing.

It was an expected act – I had instructed him to avoid me whenever possible.

“That was your brother just now.”

“Yes, we’re not close.”

Quickly dissuading any further inquiries, we reached the main building where another dear face awaited us –Beruth Luimill, hobbling on one leg with the support of his knights.

His arrogance seemed as steadfast as ever.

“Gasp!”

He gasped at the sight of me and ordered his knights to pick him up before he hurried away.

The speed was almost comparable to an assassin fleeing the scene.

“What’s wrong, Sian? Something there?”

“Nothing at all.”

Masking my reaction, I proceeded up the stairs and into the classroom.

“...”

Dozens of eyes turned to me, chattering amongst themselves as if questioning my presence.

Unwilling to entertain their superficial attention, I made my way to my seat and sat down.

Two months have passed since I enrolled in the academy.

As I’ve said before, this place serves as a fence to safeguard my current identity.

Despite not lacking in interesting occurrences, my aim is to stand out as little as possible – to carry on with life quietly.

In doing so, I would have to carefully fix everything.

All the things I had to do but failed to.

The vague connections I have now must be maintained and advanced.

And then, naturally, it will collapse.

All the petty plans of some vile, twisted demon spawn.

I can’t help but smile at the thought.

(To be continued)

# The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin

## chapter 60

Episode 60: Link (6)

“An unidentified power was watching over Sian’s back?”

“Yes, all the informants that had been dispatched so far had been dealt with by them.”

Eshel asked with an incredulous expression,

“Who... who are they?”

“Regrettably, we have not yet identified them. However, according to the sole surviving informant, they felt not like mere knights but well-trained assassins. In my direct investigation, it seems that they maintain a certain line, but as soon as that line is crossed, they immediately take action.”

Although Kellin was providing a serious report, his tone remained remarkably calm.

“Thus, I thought it necessary to report to you, Lady Eshel. I have halted all activity and returned immediately. I apologize for not bringing back as much information as you might have desired.”

The anxiety Kellin had before departure seemed to have vanished entirely.

It was as if he had become a different person.

“You’ve done well. I need to think this over. You may leave now.”

“Yes.”

With a lowered head and no sign of reluctance, Kellin turned and headed toward the door.

Eshel watched his retreating figure intently.

“Kellin?”

Just as he was about to exit through the door, she called out to him once more,

With an enigmatic smile, he quietly asked,

“I have... a question for you.”

Contrary to declaring he had a question, Eshel remained silent for nearly ten seconds. Kellin was the first to speak,

“May the blessings of Lumendel be with you.”

A seemingly irrelevant blessing.

However, upon hearing this, Eshel laughed heartily.

“Thank you for your answer, Sir Kellin. Don’t misunderstand; it’s just a periodic ritual. You may leave now.”

Without a word, Kellin bowed his head and then exited through the door.

“.....”

Left alone, Eshel fell into a deep contemplation with a peculiar expression that was neither displeased nor cheerful.

A sensation of profound disquiet was apparent.

Soon, a knock sounded on the door.

-Knock, knock

“Come in.”

A maid with light brown hair entered the room.

She appeared tense, her shoulders hunched.

“The carriage of the royal family has just arrived on the outskirts of Bellias, sir!”

“Is that so? Then I must prepare to leave. Thank you for notifying me.”

It was said that nothing stirred a woman's heart more than a handsome face coupled with a charming smile.

The maid's face flushed with ecstasy, but only momentarily before she accidentally knocked over a vase by the door.

-Crash!

The vase shattered into pieces with a loud noise.

"I'm sorry, sir! I'll clean it up immediately!"

As the maid frantically began collecting the shards of glass with her hands,

-Swish

".....!"

Suddenly, Eshel reached out, caressing her hands and casting a spell.

"Restoration..."

A pale light surged from his hands, enveloping the shards in the maid's grasp.

The pieces magically fit themselves back together, restoring the vase to its prior state.

Eshel replaced the vase on the desk himself, in place of the shocked maid.

"Are you hurt?"

"No, no! I'm fine, sir! Thank you for your concern!"

The pure goodness in his actions could not be mistaken for anything else, and the maid was awestruck as if she had witnessed an angel's grace.

Eshel then recognized her face from somewhere.

"Come to think of it, you look familiar. Your name was... Emily, wasn't it?"

"That's right! I served the youngest master!"

Emily had been Sian's personal maid up until two months ago.



“.....”

At that moment, Eshel wore an indiscernible, peculiar smile.

“Yes, who would have observed him longer than his personal maid?”

“Yes...?”

“Would you be willing to become my maid?”

“.....?”

Her face, previously filled with joy, suddenly stiffened into stone.

\* \* \*

“A younger son from the Bert Household?”

“Yes. Though a new student, he is virtually the sole possessor of the darkness attribute at the academy.”

The head of the Garam Kingdom Magical Society, Regens Rainriver.

Reading the report, he burst into incredulous laughter.

“Darkness attribute at 92%, almost divinely impressive by the numbers.”

“According to the investigators, despite his noble lineage, he was assigned the imperial dormitory, the Royal House, likely due to the influence of Emperor Dione. He’s also receiving considerable attention from Chancellor Kundel Quixel, not just the royal family.”

“It seems like none of the children from that family are normal.”

With a curious chuckle, Regens casually tossed aside Sian’s report.

“So you’re suggesting that this boy, at most destined to be a prodigy, is the being suspected of slaying dragons?”

Though a definitely unusual being, Sian was still just a boy.

A genius prodigy pegged as the killer of master-level dragons?

It was a tale too far-fetched even for fiction.

Regens's gaze turned as fierce as if he was about to unleash a death spell.

The investigator's cheeks ran with sweat.

"Of course, this alone doesn't declare the boy Sian a culprit, but there's a notable connection we can't ignore!"

"A connection?"

"At the very moment when Renald Crimson, who supplied the monster's blood, was murdered, Sian was also on the front lines!"

Regens's pupils flickered sharply.

"The boy was on the front lines?"

"Yes. Prior to enrolling at the academy, he lived on the front lines for about a year with senior knights to accumulate experience. The timing coincides with when Renald was moving monster blood and was killed!"

This too seemed a mere coincidence.

No evidence suggested that Sian was Renald's killer.

But the nagging connection provoked Regens's thoughts.

"And this is but a rumor, mind you..."

The investigator had more to report.

"After Sian left for the front lines, a story emerged that he returned alive from an encounter with a Devil Dragon!"

"Devil Dragon?"

"Yes! While the specifics are still being verified, the story goes that during Emperor Dione's frontline visit with the fifth princess, they were attacked by monsters. The boy Sian acted as a decoy to evacuate the princess and was taken by a Devil Dragon... yet he returned unscathed."

Regens's reaction to the story was unexpectedly serene, but then he broke into a smirk.

"Kuhahaha!

He burst into a rare, uproarious laughter.

"This is so absurd it's amusing! Seems the emperor and chancellor's interest isn't unwarranted, eh? Such a popular young fellow!"

Regens picked up Sian's report again.

"In the next two years, how many are expected to enroll at the Royal Academy from our kingdom?"

"Well, I'll need to check the exact figures, but I believe about 200."

"Too few."

Quite unusual for him, who showed little care for the academy, to ask about enrollment figures.

"Scour the kingdom for all talented individuals, not just nobles' offspring. Peasant, serf, status doesn't matter. Even those seeking asylum from other nations will do. We need at least twice the current expected number."

"If we do so, won't there be pushback from the royal family and nobility...?"

"That's not for you to worry about. Everyone has their respective duties. Without those golden fools' babble, there is no progress for this nation. I'll report to His Majesty."

"I shall heed your command, Head of the Society!"

After the investigator left.

Regens alone peered at the magic stone on his desk.

"....."

As his lips drew a semicircle, the stone faintly glowed with a rainbow light.

\* \* \*

“Returning home after two years since the Royal Academy graduation? You look well, Eshel, as if being home agrees with you.”

“It’s true for everyone; there’s no place like home.”

“Well, for me, that’s not the case. This place always feels gloomy, but better than the imperial palace, at least.”

With flowing silver hair and deep blue eyes, his imperial lineage evident in his dignified smile.

Crown Prince Luinel Sebellus of the Ushif Empire.

He was currently conversing with Eshel in a Bellias city garden.

“How’s His Majesty the Emperor?”

“Just the usual periodic symptoms. Timing was just unfortunate this time, but since it gave me a chance to see you, I don’t mind.”

The Emperor Dione, already suffering from a heart condition, had suddenly fallen ill.

Thus, Prince Luinel undertook the frontline inspection solo.

Though the emperor had previously visited the front with a royal entourage, this was the first time a prince, not the emperor, had traveled alone.

“And so, how long do you plan to rot away in this frontier? Isn’t it time to settle down? It’s a continental loss, not just an imperial one, for a bright talent like you to lie dormant.”

“I still have much to learn. I wish to gain further knowledge by my father’s side for the sake of the empire and our house.”

“How steadfast. Well, both you and I still need the shade of our parents, after all.”

The prince laughed heartily, continuing his conversation with Eshel.

“Elys is still without news, I assume?”

“.....”

Upon the mention of Elys, Eshel's brow furrowed minutely.

However, he didn't let it show, and replied with a gentle smile.

"It's truly frustrating not knowing what she's doing or where. While she occasionally writes not to worry, that's impossible for family, right?"

"You jest well. You think I don't know you?"

Without warning, the prince gestured with his finger to a knight standing 10 meters away.

Moments later, the knight brought a bottle of liquor.

"You're like me. We sense the need for family, especially siblings, yet we never fully trust. Their very existence can be a threat."

"That's a dangerous thing to say."

"What could there possibly be between us that we can't say? Sian, was it? Your youngest brother?"

".....!"

While maintaining an unperturbed demeanor, the prince poured out the liquor.

"The Emperor seems quite interested in him. He's been assigned to the Royal House at the academy, hasn't he? It's an extraordinary affair when the emperor himself intervenes!"

It wasn't jealousy towards Sian.

It was the reason behind Sian's privileges, tied to a certain woman, that unsettled the prince.

"In a few years, perhaps there'll be engagement talk? Hard to say."

Swigging from his cup, the prince let slip his displeasure.

Eshel refilled the empty cup and spoke,

"Who knows? If watered just once, he might grow into a fine tree. Nurturing a power base for the fifth princess isn't such a bad idea."

“That’s unexpected coming from you.”

The prince responded with surprise.

“Well, I suppose you didn’t mean it in a positive way. Are you saying, ‘Use the young princess’?”

“Better than letting others do so, wouldn’t you agree?”

The prince laughed heartily, downing the refilled cup grandly.

“Right! Better to use her myself than leave it to others! Still, Father is hale and hearty. He’s probably lying awake now, pining over that woman. Coddling such a useless offspring like a mere shell...”

“The privileges of the youngest sibling, I presume.”

At the mention of privileges, the prince shook his head.

“Well, indeed, time will tell the answer. Everything, including the Quixel family and you, is on my side. There’s no need to worry. We only have to wait for the time to come.”

The prince gestured into the air once more, and another well-groomed youth presented an extra bottle of liquor.

Eshel tilted his head, inquiringly,

“Have you replaced your guard, Your Highness?”

“Ah? Right! I’ve found a gem in the slums during my visit.”

Boris Lrehelm, the newcomer, bowed to Eshel and introduced himself,

“I am Boris Lrehelm.”

“.....”

For a moment, Eshel studied the knight before speaking again,

“You’ve found quite the premium gem...”

Eshel’s face carried an enigmatic smile as he gazed at the knight.

(To be continued in the next episode)