

# THE ACADEMY IS DOOMED

[The Academy is Doomed #C101 - Read The Academy is Doomed C101](#)

Chapter 101

“Father, about that.”

Amon, clutching his aching back that had been hit all over, said.

“The potatoes growing in our territory seem strange.”

“What? The potatoes are strange?”

Immediately, his father Kaim’s face turned serious.

“Don’t tell me someone got sick from eating the potatoes you took to the Academy?”

“What?”

“That would be a big problem. The potatoes we have stored now would be from that harvest period. If people got sick after eating them, we should thoroughly inspect the entire warehouse...”

“No, no! That’s not it.”

Amon waved his hands and explained the whole story.

Our territory’s potatoes are full of mana!

Everyone who ate them got stronger, their vitality increased dramatically!

After hearing this explanation, Kaim frowned and said,

“Did you put some medicine in the potatoes you took?”

“What do you take your son for...? Anyway, I’m telling you because it seemed strange.”

“Hmm, what’s strange about it? We just planted the seed potatoes we bought from Eden.”

“Right? There shouldn’t be anything strange.”

Suddenly Kaim smiled.

Come to think of it, he began, and continued.

“Come to think of it, wasn’t it thanks to you that we bought and planted those seed potatoes?”

“What? What do you mean?”

“Originally, our territory mainly grew rye.”

Amon smiled bitterly as he felt the dull taste of black bread made from rye lingering in his mouth.

“But you said you saw it in a book, and suggested we plant and grow potatoes.”

“I did?”

“Yes. Something about how growing potatoes and rye together is good for the soil? You said potatoes are crops that turn over the soil and rye is a crop that covers the soil, so we should grow them together.”

“...I did?”

“Don’t you remember?”

“No...”

In reality, rye and potatoes are indeed compatible crops.

It preserves the soil and reduces labor.

That’s why the Drake territory still grew rye before potatoes.

“I remember you even picked out the seed potatoes.”

“Again, I did?”

“You must not remember because you were so young.”

Kaim shrugged and said.

“Anyway, they’re potatoes bought from Eden, what could be so special about them? Aren’t you just imagining things?”

“Imagining...”

Amon deliberately swallowed his words.

In times like these, it would be right to just say ‘I see’ and move on but he had to make one request to his father.

“Just in case, please don’t send the potatoes outside.”

“I can guarantee that. Because we don’t have enough to send outside anyway.”

“That’s fortunate, but what a sad reason.”

Right now, potatoes are the staple food in Drake territory.

They’re so scarce that people are encouraged to mix them with rye when eating.

It wasn’t for nothing that people here hunt monsters to fill their stomachs.

“Anyway, even if Eden develops and things get better, please don’t send potatoes outside. As I said before, just in case.”

“If Eden develops, wouldn’t we stop growing potatoes...?”

“Ah, right.”

\* \* \*

It seemed difficult to solve the mystery of the potatoes right away.

Therefore, Amon was reading the family chronicles kept in his father’s study to resolve the second agenda.

‘When I read it before, the content was so ridiculous that I felt embarrassed and just skimmed through it, but this time is different. I need to learn well about the bad blood with our ancestors, even if just a little.’

So Amon was reading the chronicles as if reading a thesis.

And after reading for a while.

[As Amonis IV spoke, comparing the excellence of Duke Redmayne to the inadequacy of Grand Duke Drake, Grand Duke Drake said, “That bastard used to call me brother and senior when he was the crown prince’s son, but as soon as he became emperor, he became a bastard,” at which the Emperor’s face turned red like a ripe persimmon and said “Who called you brother...”]

Amon narrowed his eyes.

'Huh? Were our ancestors and the imperial family on good terms during the crown prince era?'

Lost in thought, Amon started reading the chronicles carefully again.

[As Amonis VIII greatly praised Count Pendorean and said, "That Marquis Drake whom I couldn't associate with since childhood, that bastard, I'm thinking of taking away his title and giving it to this one," Marquis Drake said, "Frankly speaking, considering we're from the same womb up there, if I'm someone you can't associate with, since I'm older than you, you must surely be some picked-up bastard," at which the emperor became greatly angered...]

Amon closed his eyes tightly and covered his face with his hands.

Even looking at it again, it was unbearably embarrassing.

'The Pendorean Duke family must have something similar to chronicles too. Then such content would be written there...I'm so embarrassed. How can I hold my head up and live like this.'

Anyway, what Marquis Drake, his ancestor, was saying resembled what older brothers typically say when teasing their younger siblings.

[...When the Emperor slapped Marquis Drake's wife's cheek, Marquis Drake wife's fierce counterattack left the Emperor bedridden, and the court historians whispered that this must be what they mean by getting back what you give...]

No, now looking at it, it wasn't a brother but a sister.

'Marquis Drake's wife certainly had a sharp tongue. Come to think of it, judging by the tone, they seemed to have been close in their young days this time too...?'

If they hadn't been close when they were young, there would have been no reason to mention childhood.

Anyway, after that, he could find passages suggesting that they had relatively good relationships in their younger days.

The climax was from the time of Amon's grandfather.

[Belial Drake, the heir of Viscount Drake, stole and ate the sausage that Crown Prince Sandrio cherished. The Crown Prince cried so bitterly that all the nobles attending the banquet couldn't help but lament.]

[Nevertheless, due to their deep brotherhood, the two made up, but the Emperor could not stand idly by watching the arrogant behavior of Viscount Drake...]

In the end, although the two directly involved made up, the children's fight escalated into a parents' fight, and the current Drake family became a 'Baron family'!

'But no matter how you look at it, grandfather was wrong here. Stealing and eating someone's sausage?'

Clicking his tongue, Amon shook his head.

'You can't resist sausage! Grandfather, this is where you made a big mistake!'

Soon after, Amon closed the chronicles and nodded.

It felt like a ray of hope was shining through.

'Looking at the chronicles, generation after generation had good relationships with the crown princes. But for some reason, after they ascended to the throne as emperor, they started fighting like dogs with our ancestors. Obviously, the supreme position of emperor must have corrupted them.'

If so, wouldn't there still be a chance to turn things around?

'Maybe we can end the bad blood between the Drake family and the Amonis family in this generation.'

He would not make the same mistakes as his ancestors.

If he cultivates deep brotherhood with the crown prince from now on and maintains a close relationship until he ascends to the throne?

'Unless someone suddenly goes crazy, there shouldn't be any reason for the relationship to become twisted.'

Amon nodded firmly with determination.

"Alright. Let's become close with the crown prince."

But there was a problem.

"But where do I find the crown prince...?"

\* \* \*

'So this is what they mean by it being darkest under the lamp.'

Kai smiled bitterly.

'I've wanted to help Senior Amon all this time but couldn't find a good way, and to think there was such a city right below the territory.'

Since he planned to invest in Eden occasionally when he had the chance from now on, he wouldn't have to see the sadness-filled Amon he saw when pledging to participate anymore.

As Kai stretched with a relieved face, he suddenly shuddered.

Then he frowned and scratched his ear.

"Why is my ear suddenly so itchy?"

\* \* \*

"Father, do you know anything about His Highness the Crown Prince?"

Kaim narrowed his eyes at the question thrown while he was about to lift his spoon.

"His Highness the Crown Prince? Where did this sudden question come from?"

"I was wondering if you've ever met him before."

Our ancestors maintained close relationships with crown princes throughout generations, after all.

"Didn't I tell you before? My father, that is, your grandfather, was completely at odds with His Majesty the Emperor. And since I somewhat hastily inherited the title, I've never met His Majesty the Emperor, let alone His Highness the Crown Prince. I was already overwhelmed just trying to feed the people of this territory. Does that answer your question?"

"Yes. I'm sorry."

For a noble, never having met the Emperor or even set foot in the capital was by no means an honorable thing.

Therefore, he could understand his father's somewhat sharp response.

He had asked the same question before, after all.

'Rather, Father should be thankful he hasn't met that damned Emperor. Father is a bit weak-hearted, so if he saw that bastard Emperor throwing his weight around in front of him...'

Tears welled up in his eyes just thinking about his father trembling.

Soon, Kaim's expression softened as he said.

"But why are you suddenly asking about this?"

"I was wondering if I could become close with His Highness the Crown Prince."

"You've finally gone mad."

Clicking his tongue, Kaim took a spoonful of mashed potatoes and said.

"Never mind and just eat your meal."

"Yes."

Amon nodded while chewing his mashed potatoes.

'I'll have to ask people who might know when I return to the Academy.'

\* \* \*

After talking about what had happened with his family, how Ami's studies were going, and spending all his energy badmouthing his fellow teachers, the day passed in the blink of an eye.

Also, since he had briefly stopped by Eden to check if his brother was doing well, the time to return quickly arrived.

"Then mother, father. I'll see you again soon."

"Yes, come again. Headmaster, I entrust our Amon to you."

In response to Kaim's polite greeting, Anar'el, who had come to pick up Amon, smiled brightly.

"I should be the one asking! Don't worry!"

"Haha, thank you."

A moment later, after returning to the headmaster's office, Amon asked, just in case.

"Nothing happened while I was away overnight, right?"

A question full of anxiety!

Anar'el smiled gently.

"Why are you worried when you were only away for one day?"

"Well, true."

"You really have such special affection for the Academy!"

Seeing Anar'el laughing heartily, Amon smiled wryly.

He wished Anar'el would have some proper affection when she talked like that.

"It's good if nothing happened. By the way, Headmaster."

"Yes?"

"Have you ever met His Highness the Crown Prince?"

"His Highness the Crown Prince...You mean Sandrio's eldest son?"

After being lost in thought for a moment, Anar'el shook her head.

"No. I've only heard about him from Sandrio and Victoria, but I've never seen him in person."

"Hmm. I see, as expected."

"What do you mean, as expected?"

Since he hadn't expected anything in the first place, there was no disappointment.

'But it's okay. There are still many people I can ask.'

Surprisingly, there were many prestigious people at this Academy.

War hero Marion!

Sloth from the renowned swordsmanship family, House Pid!

One of the Empire's Four Knights, Azure Sky Sword King Reinbelt!

The rogue from House Pendorean!

'When you list them out, there really are only amazing people...'

If there was a problem, it was that the contents were quite lacking.

Anyway, if he caught them and asked, he should be able to get some decent information.

Amon hurriedly moved his feet.

\* \* \*

“H-hey.”

“Huh? Elder Reinbelt?”

Kai opened his eyes wide.

“Why are you looking for me so urgently, Elder?”

At that question, Reinbelt looked around and said in a lowered voice.

“Amon is looking for you right now.”

“Senior? But why do you look so surprised?”

“No, no. He’s not looking for Teacher Kai, but for Crown Prince Kaias.”

Kai opened his eyes wide.

“W-why is he suddenly looking for the Crown Prince?”

“That’s what I’d like to know.”

Kai’s face turned serious.

‘Could he have noticed the investment in Eden through the merchant guild?’

But that couldn’t be.

Because he had thoroughly concealed the information, it would take considerable time even for his father, the Emperor’s direct intelligence unit, to reach the truth.

In other words, it was unlikely that Amon had realized the truth in just one day.

“Well, even if he’s looking, he’s just asking around.”

“The Crown Prince, about me?”

“Yes. Where he can be met, what he likes, things like that.”

Kai scratched his head with a wry smile.

“This feels quite strange.”

“This is no time to laugh, my friend. When he suddenly came to me and asked, I was sweating bullets.”

“How did you answer?”

“I told him how would an old man who only picked mountain vegetables know about His Highness the Crown Prince.”

“Ha, hahaha...”

Reinbelt looked around again and said.

“Well, anyway, I’ve told you. From what I saw, it seems he’s going around asking several people including me, so he’ll probably come to you soon too. Think about what you’re going to say.”

“Yes. Thank you, Elder.”

After Reinbelt disappeared Kai rested his chin on his hand and fell into thought.

‘Hmm, how should I answer?’

Should I reveal my identity now?

No, it wasn’t time yet to face Amon as the Crown Prince.

To break the old bad blood, they needed to build a closer relationship first.

‘I should just give a vague answer this time.’

Anyway, he didn’t feel bad about it.

Judging by the fact that he was looking for him and asking about his preferences, it seemed Amon didn’t have negative feelings toward him as the Crown Prince.

‘If Senior Amon feels that way too, breaking free from the past bad blood might become that much easier.’

Satisfied, Kai nodded.

‘Now then, when will Senior come?’

Kai decided to wait for Amon.

And Amon did not show up before Kai all day!

Kai's current identity was from House Straw!

Since it was a family he had never heard of, Amon naturally thought they wouldn't know the Crown Prince and didn't even think to ask Kai about the Crown Prince!

Chapter 102

Amon was feeling intense despair.

'Ah, indeed, there isn't a single old saying that's wrong. This must be what that wise saying meant – when you have expectations, you get betrayed.'

Actually, he had no choice but to have expectations.

To mention once again, War Hero Marion!

Swordsmanship noble family, Sloth of the Marquis Pid family!

Skipping the rest, they were all figures who carried dazzling signboards.

'Yet none of them has ever seen His Highness the Crown Prince....'

He had expected that people of Marion, Sloth, and Reinbelt's caliber would have met the Crown Prince at least once.

And as for that ruffian Fiora of the Duke Pendorean family, he didn't even expect to ask if she had dared to have an audience with His Highness the Crown Prince!

Though he did ask just in case.

'Never seen him. Why do you ask?'

'Just asking, you ruffian.'

'Kyaaaak!'

'Kuaak! My bones...'

Of course, in reality, Fiora had several interactions with the Crown Prince but when Amon, with whom she had deep emotional conflicts, asked, she just said she hadn't seen him out of spite.

And the next day, Amon, who had come up empty-handed, was trying to eat breakfast in the cafeteria.

'Sigh, our great colleagues won't even give me a chance to use them as medicine.'

Just as Amon was grumbling and about to shove some pilaf into his mouth.

"Senior Amon."

"Hm?"

Just as he was about to stuff the pilaf into his mouth, Amon slowly turned around at the voice from behind.

"Oh, Kai. What? Something wrong?"

"Nothing special."

"...Oh, okay."

Why would someone bother a person who's trying to eat when there's nothing special?

Amon, who had unnecessarily buried his face in his food tray, spoke without looking at Kai's face.

"Going to eat?"

"No. I'm planning to eat a little later."

"Really? Then what's this not-special thing about?"

"Well, you see."

Kai spoke as if it wasn't a big deal.

"I heard you were going around asking about His Highness the Crown Prince after returning yesterday?"

"Eh?"

At those words, Amon slightly raised his head to look at Kai.

But strangely, Kai seemed to have a somewhat annoyed expression.

'What's this? Is he in a bad mood?'

From Kai's perspective, he thought Amon should have asked him too.

After all, he was the Crown Prince himself!

But since Amon hadn't come to him even after a day had passed, he came directly.

Amon, who couldn't know this fact, continued speaking casually.

"Ah, yes. I had something I was curious about."

"I see. Then why didn't you ask me?"

Amon had nothing to say.

'I didn't ask because I'd never even heard of the Baron Straw family, so I thought you obviously wouldn't know about His Highness the Crown Prince.'

But since he couldn't just say that outright, Amon spoke with his professional face.

"Well, Kai. You're my junior."

"Huh? Y-yes, that's right?"

"The others are my seniors, so it's not much of a problem to take up their time with personal matters. But if I take up a junior's time with personal matters, it might look a bit inappropriate to others, right? That's why."

To Amon's gentle words, Kai responded with a stiff face.

"You asked Fiora but why didn't you ask me?"

Amon felt a chill.

Did he go to Fiora and forcefully ask about that?

'No, why is this crazy bastard being so scary?'

After clearing his throat, Amon said.

"That's proof that that ruffian doesn't even deserve to be treated as my junior."

"Aha! I see."

"But Kai."

"Yes?"

“You said you have a fiancée, right?”

“Yes, I do, but why are you suddenly asking about that?”

When Kai tilted his head with a puzzled expression, Amon gave a rotten smile.

“Just asking. Anyway, did you really come here just to ask why I didn’t ask you?”

“Ask? What do you mean by that?”

After laughing haha, Kai cleared his throat slightly and said.

“Our Straw family, despite appearances, is from the capital. So I’ve had chances to see His Highness the Crown Prince from afar. That’s why I thought I might be able to help Senior Amon.”

“R-really?”

Well, isn’t there a saying that you should send people to the capital?

Both prestigious nobles and barely known lower nobles are desperate to live in the capital.

In the end, there are bound to be many nobles who stick to the capital despite their low recognition.

Kai’s family seemed to be one such case.

“I didn’t know that. Sorry for making you come here unnecessarily.”

“No, no. By the way…”

Kai smiled brightly.

“What are you curious about regarding His Highness the Crown Prince? And why are you curious?”

“Hmm, let’s just say the reason is personal circumstances.”

He couldn’t reveal the family’s private matters.

Kai nodded.

‘Well, it must be hard to say you want to cut off past grievances.’

Amon also thought.

'I can't say I want to cut off family grievances.'

It was the first time Kai and Amon's inner thoughts aligned.

Anyway, looking at the enthusiastic Kai, Amon cleared his throat and said.

"Ahem, then do you know where I might be able to see His Highness the Crown Prince?"

"That would be in the capital, right?"

"I know that much. I mean things like making an official request for an audience, or places he frequently visits. As someone from the capital, haven't you heard anything?"

Kai let out a sigh.

Places he frequently visits?

'There aren't any. I've never gone outside the palace because of people's eyes, and even when I do go out, I only wander outside the capital while hiding my identity.'

But he was also hesitant to recommend making an official audience request to Amon.

'It's not time to meet directly yet.'

Of course, since he had cast magic to change his face, no one would recognize at a glance that 'Kai' and 'Kaias' were the same person, but they might feel something off.

Clearing his throat, Kai said.

"Well...They say His Highness the Crown Prince rarely comes out. Moreover, there are widespread rumors that he doesn't accept separate audience requests."

"R-really? Then what does he like?"

"What he likes..."

Kai tilted his head.

Come to think of it, he doesn't particularly like or dislike anything.

"That's not really known either."

At Kai's answer, Amon's eyes trembled with irritation.

'This bastard, why did he even come?'

He came, forcing himself saying he could help, but he doesn't actually know anything.

'Should I be grateful that he at least made me realize I don't have to snoop around trying to meet the Crown Prince...'

It felt like having the sprout of hope crushed under someone's heel.

Amon gave a rotten smile.

"I see. Thank you. You've been a great help."

"Don't mention it, Senior. I'm glad I could help."

"Hahaha."

Burying his face back in his dishes to eat, Amon waved his hand dismissively.

"Then let me eat."

"Ah, yes. Enjoy your meal."

"Yeah, yeah."

After Kai withdrew, Amon became lost in thought while eating.

'So in the end, there's no way to meet the Crown Prince?'

Considering the family records, he needed to target the time when he was Crown Prince.

Munching on his pilaf, Amon muttered.

"He doesn't accept separate audience requests?"

After swallowing the pilaf with a gulp, Amon said.

"Well, opportunities can be created if needed."

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Anar'el blinked with a blank expression.

It was because of Amon's sudden suggestion.

'Since it's Sunday and a day off, how about visiting Her Majesty the Empress at the Imperial Palace?'

To that suggestion, Anar'el tilted her head.

"Well, that's fine, but why suddenly?"

Actually, Empress Victoria had already asked her to visit separately, so she was planning to make time to visit soon anyway.

But why would Amon suddenly make such a suggestion?

Amon spoke in a polite voice.

"When we visited the Imperial Palace last time, there was an incident and we didn't get a proper chance to catch up, right? That's been weighing on my mind until now."

"Hmm."

"Even though I received special leave to take a day off, I'm saying this out of concern that the Principal might become weak from only looking after the academy's welfare."

At Amon's words dripping with consideration and concern, Anar'el narrowed her eyes.

"Does this have anything to do with the question about whether anyone has seen His Highness the Crown Prince?"

At that question, Amon's face stiffened.

'Oh no! This elf isn't just a simple blockhead!'

Indeed, she lives up to the name of High Elf.

Amon, revising his mental evaluation of Anar'el slightly, bowed his head while speaking in a sweet voice.

"How could that be! I'm merely thinking of the Principal's welfare as the future head of academic affairs."

"Oh my! Is that so?"

"Of course, of course."

"Hmm. Not a bad idea though."

Anar'el had also been accumulating stress recently.

'Teacher Phais...no, Phais, thanks to that person being a spy, the plan to distribute flyers fell through, and with the war situation and everything else, there's been a lot going on.'

Moreover, according to rumors, the reason this war ended quickly was because Empress Victoria personally led her lady-in-waiting corps to subjugate Mother Kraken.

When else would she meet Victoria, her friend of 50 years, if not at a time like this?

Anar'el nodded.

"Then that's what we'll do."

"A wonderful decision. Then could you take me with you when you go?"

"Teacher Amon, what exactly are you trying to do by meeting the Crown Prince?"

Amon's cheeks trembled.

'She's grown a lot.'

It seems the elf who had gone through numerous hardships and adversities could grow this much.

Eventually, Amon decided to confess his true intentions.

"Actually, I have something I'd like to say to His Highness the Crown Prince."

"Something to say?"

"As you might guess from last time, His Majesty the Emperor seems to quite hate our family."

"That's right. It seemed like he hated not just Teacher Amon, but the entire family. What exactly happened between Teacher Amon's family and him?"

Amon shook his head.

"It's a family matter, so it's difficult to tell you."

"A family matter...I see."

Anar'el fell into serious thought.

'Seeing how the good-natured Sandrio acted, it seems like no ordinary hatred. What deep story could there be...?'

It was indeed a story deep enough to make Anar'el faint if she knew.

“Anyway for that reason, it seems His Majesty the Emperor’s emotional wounds are already too deep to be reversed.”

“So...you want to establish a connection with the Crown Prince. Is that it?”

Amon nodded while wiping away tears.

‘That blockhead elf now understands everything at a glance...How moving.’

Amon couldn’t hide his joy at the Principal’s growth!

And Anar’el interpreted those tears of joy differently.

‘Indeed, how much emotional suffering must they have gone through.’

Combined with Amon’s career-oriented tendencies that she had heard about before, Anar’el felt like she might cry along with the tears Amon was showing.

And as the Principal, she felt a strong desire to resolve the future head of academic affairs’ hardships.

“If that’s the case, alright! I’ll try to arrange a meeting with the Crown Prince!”

Actually, it wasn’t difficult for Anar’el.

She just needed to tell Victoria ‘Let’s meet separately without Sandrio.’

And seeing Anar’el flapping her ears as if saying to just trust her, Amon smiled.

“I’ll put my trust in you, Principal!”

At that moment.

“...It must be getting into autumn.”

Kai was shivering and fixing his clothes due to a sudden chill.

## Chapter 103

Late afternoon, Amon was dressed neatly.

According to Anar’el, Empress Victoria had allowed Amon to accompany her despite the recent disaster.

'It wasn't that young man's fault. I actually wanted to meet him anyway, so this works out well. I won't tell Sandrio, just come to the rear garden. You can bring that young man as an attendant.'

Amon was momentarily bewildered by the Empress's words that Anar'el had relayed.

'She wanted to meet me? Why?'

Well, that reason would be revealed when he met the Empress shortly.

More importantly, that wasn't the main concern.

'Today's goal is to get acquainted with the Crown Prince. The Principal... no, the Headmaster said she would subtly arrange a meeting, so I just have to hope things go well.'

Fortunately, the Empress had called Anar'el to the rear garden, seemingly worried about things going wrong if they encountered the Emperor.

After neatly adjusting his formal attire, Amon nodded.

His face was shining with hope and determination.

'If things go well, I might be able to break free from this insufferable ill fate.'

Just as he thought this.

"Are you ready?"

At Anar'el's call, Amon stepped away from the mirror.

"Yes, Headmaster. Let's head out."

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The Imperial Palace's rear garden.

Amon had been here once before.

It was where the meeting of the Empire's Four Knights had taken place, and where a competition had broken out to take Amon as a disciple.

Among the dozen or so separate buildings located there, Amon and Anar'el were heading toward the most splendid one.

"Amon, please be mindful of your behavior today."

In response to Anar'el's worried voice of caution, Amon gave a wry smile.

"What do you take me for? I'm always mindful of my behavior."

"...That's true."

The Amon she had seen so far might act up sometimes, but he knew when and where to do so.

That was a merit, if you could call it that.

'But Sandrio's reaction last time was unusually strange. I wonder why he acted that way.'

Anar'el made a mental note to ask about it sometime when she had the chance as she opened the door to the separate building.

Her unhesitating movements suggested she had been here quite often.

"Victoria! I'm here!"

Seeing Anar'el act as if she were entering her own room, Amon's wry smile deepened.

'Headmaster, you're the one who should be mindful of your behavior.'

Fortunately, confirming the assumption that she was a frequent visitor, a voice full of joy quickly responded.

"Anar'el, it's been so long!"

From one side of the building, the Empress rose from a table laden with refreshments and stretched out her hand as she approached.

"Thank you for coming all this way."

"It's nothing. My warp magic skills haven't gotten rusty yet."

"Hehe, Anar'el's warp magic. Ah, those times were wonderful."

"Yes, I miss them..."

Anar'el and Victoria's eyes grew distant with nostalgia.

Once, Anar'el had traveled across the continent with Victoria and Sandrio.

Adventure, exploration, and pioneering.

That journey remained unforgettable in their memories even after all these years.

'Anar'el! We need your warp magic!'

'Yes!'

'Princess Anar'el! Please warp us!'

'Yes!'

'Anar'el! Warp!'

'Yes!'

'Waaaaarp!'

'Yeeeeees!'

Come to think of it, did she do nothing but cast warp magic the whole time?

Tilting her head at the slightly hazy memories, Anar'el spoke up.

"By the way, how have you been lately? I've been worried with everything that's happened."

Victoria sighed.

"Don't even mention it. Sandrio still has a fit at just the mention of 'Vel' from Velslime Wasteland. I was already worried enough about Sandrio, and then the scum...ahem! The Gunter Archipelago Alliance bared their teeth, which made me so angry."

"Ahaha. So that's why Victoria took action herself."

"That's right. Oh, by the way, I heard something recently..."

Victoria brought up a different topic.

And so, after about 10 minutes of the two women catching up.

30 minutes, 1 hour, and about 2 hours passed.

The wry smile on Amon's face had reached its peak.

'Who am I? Why am I here?'

After standing quietly behind Anar'el for hours, he wasn't sure if he was Amon or a tree in human form!

But he couldn't carelessly speak up.

Even while pleasantly chatting with Anar'el, Victoria had been observing him with piercing eyes that gleamed coldly.

Having witnessed her instantly subdue the Emperor at the Imperial Competition and personally hold a "time for reflection" to punish the Emperor when visiting the palace to withdraw the operational suspension recommendation, Amon could only freeze like a frog before a snake.

'If I speak out of turn, I'll get hit too. Literally get beaten like a dog.'

So Amon was being "mindful of his behavior" as Anar'el had cautioned.

After all, on the surface, he had come here as Anar'el's attendant.

After some more time passed.

Perhaps her throat had gotten dry from talking so long, Victoria took a sip of tea and smiled as she spoke.

"Oh my, how rude of me. I'm sorry."

"Huh?"

At the sudden apology, Anar'el blinked with round eyes.

Had Victoria done something wrong?

Glancing subtly behind Anar'el, Victoria said.

"I've kept that young man standing for too long. It's been quite a while, I should have offered him a seat."

"...Ah!"

As if finally remembering Amon's existence, Anar'el covered her mouth and turned to look at Amon who had been standing quietly behind her all this time.

"I-I'm sorry, Professor Amon. I got caught up talking with Victoria since it's been so long..."

Amon smiled brightly.

His wry smile had reached such mastery that unless examined closely, it looked infinitely gentle and benevolent.

“It’s fine, Headmaster. It’s natural when meeting an old friend after so long.”

“Ah! As expected of Professor Amon! Thank you for understanding!”

“Ha.ha.ha. Don’t mention it.”

Watching Anar’el and Amon’s back-and-forth exchange, Victoria smiled gently.

‘He passes for now.’

It seemed he had come here with Anar’el for some purpose.

‘But considering he came as Anar’el’s attendant in name, if he had spoken up about his business right away...well, it’s fortunate no blood was shed.’

In other words, making Amon stand for hours was a kind of test to observe his character and personality.

This was because she knew the rock-bottom personality of Amon’s grandfather, Belial Drake, whom she had met several times in her life.

‘The Belial I knew would have flipped the refreshment table and caused a scene long ago. Amon Drake, was it? To think such a grandson could come from Belial.’

Looking at various aspects, she could give Amon a passing grade.

Though he was an attendant in name only, considering he stood silently behind them for hours without showing any sign of displeasure despite that not being the real situation.

Victoria smiled and waved her hand as she spoke.

“More importantly, please sit down. And I apologize again. I got caught up meeting Anar’el after so long and forgot about you.”

That was a lie.

Knowing that she had been watching him with sharp glances several times, Amon bowed deeply like a knife.

“Not at all, Your Majesty. As I came as an attendant, please don’t mind me.”

“Hehe, no no. Ah, this could go on forever. Please sit.”

“Then excuse me.”

Amon quickly sat down

After standing for hours, he was secretly glad to be offered a seat.

And as Anar’el watched Victoria offer refreshments to Amon, she hesitantly opened her mouth.

“Um, by the way, Victoria.”

“Yes? What is it?”

Anar’el grinned sheepishly and continued.

“I’d like to meet Victoria and Sandrio’s eldest son, would it be possible to see him now?”

Having completely forgotten about Amon until now, this was her attempt to help achieve his goal!

But hearing those words, Amon froze as he was about to put a cookie in his mouth.

‘You said you’d arrange it subtly, but this is way too obvious...?’

Isn’t this being far too transparent!

Victoria seemed to notice something from Anar’el’s unnatural words, subtly looking this way with a smile.

“The eldest son, you mean the Crown Prince?”

“Yes. Yes. I’ve only heard about him, but I’ve never actually met him.”

“I’ve invited you several times before, but you never came, right?”

“I kept saying I should go soon, but kept forgetting.”

“Really, an elf’s sense of time...”

Victoria chuckled and muttered.

“Come to think of it, never met him... I see.”

After muttering “never met” in a strange tone, Victoria smiled.

‘Sandrio said to hide his identity, seems it hasn’t been revealed yet.’

Whether the plan to break the long-standing bad blood between families by going to the academy was going well remained to be seen.

'Seeing how the Drake family child wants to meet our Crown Prince first, it seems it's not going completely badly...well, I'm sure they'll figure it out. Anyway, it's been quite a while since I've seen that child, should I call him?'

Victoria nodded readily.

"Alright, let's call him then."

\* \* \*

After lunch, Kai turned his head while brushing his teeth.

The communication crystal was flashing brightly.

'Hm? This color is Mother?'

Why would Mother suddenly contact him?

After spitting out his toothpaste with a "ptui," he quickly grabbed the crystal.

"Yes, Mother. Have you been well?"

-Kaias, come to the Third Separate Palace for a moment.

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

But without giving any reason or even waiting for a response, the connection was cut off.

"...Mother, really."

This again.

Befitting the Emperor's teacher, Mother sometimes had an excessively tough side.

That's why she would charge at the Gunter Archipelago Alliance with her status as Empress.

"Well, I guess I'll take some time to go then."

Kai glanced at the mirror and touched his face with his hand.

At the same time, the appearance-changing magic he had cast on himself was lifted, and the somewhat ordinary-looking face of 'Kai' disappeared, replaced by the intellectually handsome face of 'Kaias'.

She clearly called for 'Kaias', so she must be calling for him in his capacity as Crown Prince.

'Feels like it's been a while since I've seen this face.'

He smiled and took out the formal wear bearing the imperial family's crest that he had hidden in his closet.

Then he cast the warp magic to head to the palace.

Swoosh-!

Finally arriving at the magic circle, 'Kaias' headed towards the separate palace in the rear garden.

'Feels like it's been a while since I came here. Though I definitely came recently.'

Well, back then he was too busy substituting for his father in state affairs after he fell ill from the Velslime Wasteland business failure to take in the garden scenery as Crown Prince.

'Well, since I'm here, should I go see Leila?'

Since he had gained weight from stress-eating while handling state affairs back then, his fiancée Leila had teased him about it, so it might be good to show her that he's back to normal.

As Kai headed to the rear garden thinking various thoughts, his eyes narrowed sharply.

Below the wall outside the separate palace, Amon was stretching his body.

Having stood for hours, his body was stiff, so after getting permission to step out briefly, he was stretching.

'S-Senior, why are you here...?'

Could it be that after all that talk about finding the Crown Prince, he had found a way to meet him?

'This presence is the Headmaster? Don't tell me he requested an audience through the Headmaster?'

Kaias, who had been standing there in confusion, sighed.

'Sigh, I really don't know what Senior is thinking.'

Still, seeing Amon taking such active steps didn't feel entirely bad.

'But I can't reveal my identity yet. It would be better to reveal it when our relationship has matured more and we can fully trust each other.'

So Kaias tried to pass by Amon and enter the separate palace.

Since he always had appearance-changing magic on his face while at the academy, Amon wouldn't recognize him.

'Hm? But what's this?'

As he tried to pass by Amon and enter the separate palace, Amon was staring at him intently with furrowed brows.

At that suspicious gaze, Kaias internally sighed.

'Senior, you don't need to kneel and pay respects, but you should at least show minimal courtesy to the Crown Prince for others to see...'

"What? Kai, what are you doing here?"

"Eh?"

At Amon's familiar greeting, Kaias hurriedly touched his face.

Instead of the blunt nose from the appearance change, it was his original high, straight nose.

The jawline and lips were also his original features.

But how did Amon...?

'C-Could it be that the appearance-changing magic wasn't working from the start?'

Kai's face froze in shock.

Chapter 104

Why? How come his appearance transformation magic wasn't working?

But now wasn't the time to think about such things.

“Se-Senior, why are you here...?”

Buy time. Change the subject.

Under such determination, Amon answered the meaningless question with a disgruntled face.

“I came with the headmaster for work, but why are you here?”

“Th-That’s...”

Kaias looked at Amon with a forced smile.

Amon was still staring intently at Kaias with furrowed brows.

He was staring intensely at the ‘ceremonial robe with the imperial crest’ that Kaias was wearing.

“Wait. You, could it be...”

At Amon’s voice, which seemed to have realized something, Kai’s face turned serious, and Amon spoke with a grave expression.

“Could it be that the Straw family was a house directly serving the imperial family?”

“...Pardon?”

Kai’s mind went blank for a moment at the unexpected question.

But soon he could understand why Amon had asked such a question.

The ceremonial robe with the imperial crest.

Wearing it means one is either a member of the imperial family, that is, royalty, or a close aide serving the imperial family.

However, Amon didn’t consider at all the possibility that Kai was ‘royalty’.

To be precise, he didn’t want to think that way!

A junior he knew was actually royalty? Then what about all the disrespectful actions he had shown until now? That’s why he absolutely couldn’t accept it.

And meanwhile, Amon’s misunderstanding was an opportunity for Kai.

'I shouldn't reveal that I'm the crown prince yet. When we can trust each other more, only then should I reveal it to break the long-standing bad blood between our families in our generation.'

Having made up his mind, Kai boldly exclaimed.

"That's right! Our Straw family serves the imperial family!"

"Huuuck!"

Amon covered his mouth.

'Th-Then I've been saying things like I don't know His Highness the Crown Prince to such an important family without even knowing!'

How should he apologize for his terrible rudeness!

Unconsciously, Amon instinctively bent his waist at a 45-degree angle.

"Se-Senior? Why are you suddenly bending your waist?"

"My waist is naturally like this?"

"..."

Amon, whose only remaining pride as a senior was maintaining his way of speaking!

Realizing this fact, Kai reaffirmed his resolve.

'For now, I absolutely must not let anyone know I'm the crown prince.'

If Amon were to learn the truth, he would surely faint on the spot.

Anyway, after successfully deceiving Amon, Kai realized the immediate problem at hand.

'So how should I act now? Mother called for me, which means I need to enter the detached palace as the crown prince. Then what about having deceived Senior Amon?'

The situation had become complicated!

While swallowing his saliva, Kai carefully observed Amon's reaction and spoke.

"Um, Senior Amon?"

"Yes, no. What?"

After confirming that the appearance transformation magic was definitely working, Kai spoke with an awkward smile.

“Doesn’t my face look a bit strange today?”

“What? Your face?”

“Yes...Like, different from usual.”

“Hmm? Uh, hmm.”

After examining Kai’s face from various angles, Amon tilted his head.

“It doesn’t look any different from usual?”

“R-Really?”

“No, wait. You’ve lost weight?”

“...”

At Amon’s natural response, Kai slightly turned around and used magic.

After confirming that the appearance transformation magic was cast on his face again, Kai spoke to Amon once more.

“How about now?”

“What? Did you just put something on your face?”

“...”

Kai found this situation difficult to understand.

‘Is he unable to recognize the appearance transformation magic itself...?’

While Kai was trying to confirm a few things in this shocking situation, Amon waved his hand dismissively as if this wasn’t the time and said.

“Hey, this isn’t the time for this. His Highness the Crown Prince is coming soon.”

Amon, who had that very Crown Prince right in front of him, lowered his voice and spoke.

“So you should hurry along your way too, don’t accidentally run into His Highness the Crown Prince. It’ll be chaotic with all the attendants following and such.”

“...Ah.”

Finally emerging from his shock, Kai cleared his throat and spoke.

“Ahem! That’s why I’m here.”

“What? What do you mean?”

“I’ll explain the details once we’re inside.”

To overcome this situation, Kai took the lead and entered the detached palace.

Soon after, Victoria, who was sitting face to face with Anar’el in the back garden of the detached palace, turned her head when she saw two young men approaching from afar.

‘Hm? Is Kaias coming in together with the young man from the Drake family?’

Thinking this, Victoria opened her mouth while looking at Kaiyas.

“You’ve come, Crown Pri...”

Victoria, who abruptly closed her mouth, narrowed her eyes.

She had noticed that appearance transformation magic was overlaid on Kaias face.

If Reinbelt could recognize it, there was no way she, the emperor’s teacher, wouldn’t be able to.

‘What’s this? Why has Kaias come like this?’

Even the empress, who had turned the mother Kraken worshipped by the Gunter Island Alliance into lavish octopus sashimi while leading her lady-in-waiting corps, was taken aback by this unexpected situation.

Therefore, while she was hesitating with her words held back, it was Anar’el, sitting opposite Victoria, who reacted immediately.

“Teacher Kai? Why is Teacher Kai here...?”

Seeing that reaction, Kai was certain.

‘As expected, the transformation magic works properly on everyone except Senior Amon. Mother’s expression shows she can recognize the magic itself too.’

The mystery about Amon, who couldn’t even sense the presence of transformation magic, only deepened at that moment.

Anyway, now wasn't the time to think but to act.

Kai, who made a respectful bow, spoke in an affected voice.

"The eldest son of the Straw viscounty, Kai, presents himself before Her Majesty the Empress!"

"...Huh?"

At Kai's sudden proclamation, the empress wore a blank expression, and Kai shot a desperate look toward the empress.

'Mother!'

'Ka-Kaias? What in the world is this situation?'

'Please go along with me for now!'

The empress's face contorted at Kai's pleading gaze.

'You went to Amonis Academy and only learned strange things!'

Though she wanted to tell him to forget about past grudges and everything else, there must be a reason for the usually brilliant crown prince to act like this.

The empress, who let out a deep sigh, nodded.

"Seeing that you've come, I suppose something must have come up that prevented the crown prince from coming?"

The empress had the ability not just to go along but to actively create the story.

Kai, who momentarily broke out in a cold sweat, hurriedly jumped on Victoria's words.

"Ye-Yes, that is correct."

"I thought as much. Really, that crown prince, I don't know what's so fascinating about fiddling with those bugs that he's so absorbed in it."

"...Pardon?"

Kai's eyes filled with bewilderment.

'Mo-Mother? What do you mean I fiddle with bugs?'

At that moment, he could read Victoria's eyes twinkling with mischief.

Before Kai, who had realized this fact, could open his mouth to say something, Victoria quickly continued speaking.

“Child of the Straw family, since you serve the crown prince, please give him some advice too. Every other day he’s fiddling with bugs and giggling, do you think that’s proper behavior for a crown prince?”

At those words, Anar’el recoiled in disgust.

“Ugh, His Highness the Crown Prince has such a hobby?”

“Oh my, don’t even mention it. He enjoys poking and prodding at weird caterpillars and venomous insects wiggling around, I don’t know what to do as his mother.”

“Eek! Even venomous insects...?”

Amon also frowned and muttered.

“Wow, that’s a bit...”

Even Amon, who had lived rolling around with monsters in the Arma Mountains, doesn’t particularly like insects.

That’s why Amon was looking at Kai with sympathetic eyes.

‘To serve such a crown prince, you must really have it tough in various ways.’

That sympathetic gaze drilling into the back of Kai’s head!

Kai, who could feel his reputation deteriorating in real-time, hastily spoke

“Yo-Your Majesty the Empress. His Highness the Crown Prince has no such hobby.”

“Do you want to defend him so much because you’re bug-fiddling buddies?”

Amon and Anar’el were shocked.

“Te-Teacher Kai too!”

“Good heavens! That fellow, to think he had such a hobby!”

Seeing the two people trembling with shock, Kai’s eyes rolled back.

“Your Majesty the Empress! What are you saying!”

“It’s a joke. There’s no way the crown prince and you would have such a hobby.”

“Phew...”

“You’ve both recently changed your hobby to eating bugs instead!”

“What did you say!?”

This time, all three—Kai, Amon, and Anar’el—were shocked simultaneously.

“Yo-You eat bugs?”

“Surely you don’t eat them alive...?”

“They eat them raw!”

“Eeek!”

Terror rose in Amon and Anar’el’s gazes as they looked at Kai.

And by this point, Kai was coldly serious.

“Moth...Your Majesty the Empress, I think your joke has gone too far.”

Victoria smiled brightly at her son’s serious tone.

“Yes, let’s stop the jokes here. I just made too many jokes because I felt disappointed that the crown prince couldn’t come.”

“...He’ll come ag...He will come again.”

“Hoho, yes. I understand. You may withdraw now.”

Kai bowed his head in respect again.

“Yesh. I shall withdraw now.”

“Hohoho, yes. Yes.”

Kai turned sharply and left the detached palace, and only after the bug-eating Kai disappeared did Anar’el, who finally let out a sigh of relief, wipe his cold sweat and speak.

“Whew...I was really shocked for a moment, thinking it was true that His Highness the Crown Prince and Teacher Kai shared bugs to eat.”

“Hoho, Anar’el is still as innocent as ever.”

“Victoria is the same as ever too. Even though it doesn’t seem like you would, you always tell lies at every opportunity...”

The simple-minded elf used to suffer from numerous pranks while traveling with Victoria.

“Anyway, it’s a shame. I wanted to introduce you to the crown prince while you were here.”

“Hmm...”

Anar’el observed Amon’s expression.

Though she thought he might be disappointed that the meeting with the crown prince had fallen through, fortunately, Amon’s face showed that he was relieved not to have met the bug-eating crown prince.

Anar’el, who patted her chest in relief, said.

“It can’t be helped. There will be another good opportunity next time.”

“Hohoho, yes.”

“Then Victoria, it was nice to see you after so long. Let’s meet again soon.”

“Soon...Are you speaking in elven time perception?”

“Ahaha. No, soon in human time perception.”

Victoria smiled brightly and stood up.

“Yes, then. I should head out soon...”

Victoria suddenly stopped speaking and turned her head.

It was because she sensed a familiar presence.

“Gr-Grrrr!”

There was the emperor, foaming at the mouth while glaring at Amon, having somehow heard that Anar’el had come.

“...Anar’el.”

“...Yes.”

“I’ll hold him back, so hurry and run away.”

“Yes, Victoria.”

Amon and Anar’el fled hurriedly, hearing the emperor’s screams from behind—“Kyaaak! My wife! Today I will surely tear that bastard to pieces...!”

\* \* \*

Returning to the headmaster’s office, Anar’el spoke wearily.

“Sigh, I don’t understand why there’s such an uproar every time I visit.”

Amon also nodded while sighing.

“Indeed. I don’t know what crime I’ve committed for him to act like that.”

“You really have no idea?”

Though of course he knew about the countless grudges accumulated since the previous generation, he pretended not to know and said.

“I’m just wrongfully accused.”

“...By the way, it’s a shame. It was a chance to meet His Highness the Crown Prince.”

“No, I have no desire to meet His Highness the Crown Prince who chomps down on live bugs.”

“Victoria said it was a joke.”

“Where there’s smoke, there’s fire, right? She must have made such jokes because he does similar things...”

“Could that be? Well, Victoria has never made jokes without reason...”

At that time, Kai was outside the headmaster’s office, listening to that conversation and sobbing with his fist in his mouth.

“Anyway, Teacher Amon.”

“Yes, Headmaster.”

“Hohoho! It’s finally here!”

“Something’s here again. But until when will things just keep coming?”

Despite Amon's criticism, Anar'el resolutely pointed at the mountain of academy promotional flyers piled up behind her and shouted.

"Finally, from tomorrow we can start promoting the academy in earnest!"

At those words, Amon let out an exclamation.

"Ah! We're going to fail again!"

"..."

## Chapter 105

While Anar'el only sees the flower garden with hope, no one knows what the future holds.

No matter how many promotional flyers were spread about the academy, considering the common sense and situations Amon had experienced so far, it was clear that this time too they would fall into the abyss of despair.

But as mentioned, no one knows what the future holds.

'If things go well, I could secure Ami's future and save face for Elder Caselag.'

He decided to bet on the one thread of hope that might still remain.

'...Wait a moment.'

Amon, who had been lost in thought for a while, opened his mouth.

"Principal."

"Yes?"

"I've been thinking, but isn't there only me to distribute the flyers?"

"You noticed."

"...Sigh."

If drunk Marion were to undertake this task, people would surely receive flyers reeking of alcohol.

Sloth? She would just use the flyers as a pillow and take a nap in some quiet place.

'Then Fiora? No, what would that brute know about academy promotion. It would be fortunate if she doesn't grab visitors by their collars. Then in the end, only Kai remains but...'

According to the Empress, 'Bug-eating Kai' was a joke, but why did the proverb 'where there's smoke, there's fire' come to mind?

Of course, the Kai he had observed so far was rigid but didn't match the title 'Bug-eating Kai', but Amon's victim mentality, having been backstabbed so many times at the academy, was telling him to exclude any possible risks.

'While distributing flyers, he might just pick up and eat a bug saying it looks delicious. What would people think of our academy then?'

Heaving a deep sigh and scratching his head, Amon nodded.

"Alright. I'll do my best within my capabilities."

"Ah! As expected, Professor Amon never betrays my expectations."

Anar'el, showing off the high elves' characteristic fancy ear control with joy and emotion, said with a confident face.

"Then I'll leave it to you! Professor Kai will take over your classes for the time being, so you don't need to touch any other work! Understand?"

Anar'el's consideration to focus solely on promotional work for the academy's revival!

However, for Amon, this was nothing short of a disaster.

'You're saying you'll take away my time with the students, my only sanctuary and oasis!'

The students too would surely wail in despair upon learning that Kai would be substituting their classes, faced with such a horrifying situation.

While Amon was also indignant at Anar'el's utterly wicked measure, actually combining promotion with academy duties would be tiresome either way.

Given Amur's nature as a commercial city, time available for promotion was limited to the afternoon.

Amon's classes were also in the afternoon.

'Besides, I might need to go to other cities.'

Clicking his tongue, Amon said.

“You’ll cover the expenses when I go to other cities as business expenses, right?”

“Of course. There will also be special allowances.”

“Oh? Special allowances.”

“Since it’s official academy business, it will be processed as a business trip. Special allowances are natural.”

In that case, Amon could also swallow his tears and postpone his reunion with the students.

Though the students would only shed tears over classes with Kai.

“Then alright. I’ll start the promotional work tomorrow.”

“Yes! I’ll be counting on you, Professor Amon!”

Suddenly, Amon looked at the mountain of promotional flyers piled up behind the brightly smiling Anar’el.

While it might have seemed overwhelming to handle all those piled-up flyers alone, Amon’s eyes were sparkling with light.

‘I’ve thought of a good method.’

\* \* \*

The person in charge of the Gold Road Trading Company’s Amur branch, Branch Manager Delmons was taken aback by Amon’s appearance.

Not just Amon’s visit, but because he came with a cart loaded with piles of paper.

“A-Ah, Professor Amon, have you suddenly jumped into the paper industry?”

“No. These are promotional flyers for Amonis Academy.”

“Promotional flyers?”

After examining the mountain of papers, Delmons nodded.

“I-I see. You suddenly came with so much paper, I thought you’d quit teaching and entered the paper industry.”

“That wouldn’t be unreasonable.”

While carrying the paper-loaded cart from the academy to here, passersby had looked at him with eyes that seemed to say 'what kind of peddler is this'.

Some even whispered, 'Why are those tissues so stiff.'

After a while, Delmons served tea and said.

"But what brings you here? Coming to our company with promotional flyers loaded up."

Thinking 'these merchants really,' Amon drank his tea and said.

"You know very well."

"Hmm."

Indeed, there's only one reason to bring promotional flyers to a trading company.

"You're planning to distribute promotional flyers through merchant groups heading to various parts of the continent."

"That's right. Could I ask for your help?"

Promotional agency was one of the tasks the trading company occasionally handled.

Of course, being the massive 'Gold Road Trading Company', they only accept requests from figures befitting their status.

To announce things like job postings from high nobles, requests, and such.

And in return for accepting such requests, Gold Road Trading Company receives benefits.

On the other hand, there was no reason for Gold Road Trading Company to accept this request.

Wasn't it a failing academy with just five teachers and five students?

'Though there is the favor of transferring 10% of the King of Mango farm shares...'

However, Delmons is a merchant to the bone.

A type that forgets both enemies and favors in front of money!

Since Gold Road Trading Company had already perfectly taken over the 10% share of the King of Mango farm, there was no reason to accept Amon's request.

“Haha, Professor Amon.”

Scratching his head, Delmons said apologetically.

“Gold Road Trading Company’s schedule is planned down to the minute without any gaps. Therefore, please understand that we cannot allocate separate time.”

Hearing the polite rejection, Amon narrowed his eyes and said.

“Even considering that I transferred 10% of the King of Mango farm shares?”

“That was just a fair trade. We completely eliminated Amonis Academy’s debt after all.”

“Hmm. Is that so?”

Amon had anticipated this situation.

‘How frightening can merchants be.’

Having grown up in the harsh Drake territory when young, Amon often marveled at merchants’ lack of blood and tears whenever he visited the nearby city of Eden for trade.

‘When I grew up, I firmly resolved to live just like that.’

But look.

Now Amon was just a teacher with a very tender and weak heart, benevolent and full of affection.

Heaving a regretful sigh at his own frailty, Amon opened his mouth.

“If that’s how it is, then there’s nothing to be done.”

“I’m truly sorry.”

“What is there to be sorry about when the company’s schedule is like that?”

“Thank you for understanding...”

“But it’s regrettable.”

“Pardon?”

“We were internally reviewing whether to transfer an additional 10% share of the King of Mango farm, but with such a firm rejection, it leaves quite a bitter taste from the academy’s perspective.”

At those words, Delmons’ body suddenly stiffened.

“A-Additional transfer of 10% sh-shares of the King of Mango farm?”

Come to think of it, doesn’t Amonis Academy still have 10% shares?

Moreover, Gold Road Trading Company was earning considerable profits through the newly acquired 10% shares.

Looking at Delmons who was stumbling over his words in surprise, Amon smiled faintly.

By now, Amon was sitting with his legs crossed wearing an arrogant smile.

“As a trading company, I understand avoiding actions that don’t bring profit. But I’m an educator, so I prioritize ‘relationships’ over practical benefits. That’s why I came to Gold Road Trading Company first, having built rapport for a long time...but I guess it can’t be helped.”

In other words, it meant ‘Are you heartlessly pushing us away without even remembering our favor?’

Of course, understanding that meaning, Delmons’ face became urgent.

“A-Ah, Professor Amon! Just a moment!”

“I’m listening. But I can’t listen for long as I need to hurry to the Platinum Trading Group!”

The Platinum Trading Group!

They’re on par with Gold Road Trading Company.

Having heard news that they were desperate for a smooth supply of the King of Mango, Delmons couldn’t let Amon go like this.

“Professor Amon! We have built up a relationship over time, haven’t we?”

An amazing sight of a merchant seeking ‘relationships’!

“I only stepped back momentarily because of my position as branch manager! How could we not help distribute promotional flyers between us? Right!”

Having significantly risen in position within the company after obtaining the previous 10% shares, Delmons' cry was desperate.

But Amon's expression was cold, and Delmons, ready to crawl between Amon's legs, said.

"Professor Amon, listen."

"I'm listening."

"The number of peddlers Gold Road Trading Company sends across the continent is twice that of the Platinum Trading Group."

Amon said with an uninterested face.

"That means your scale is larger but the Platinum Trading Group makes each peddler extravagant after all."

"Th-That's true! But what's the purpose of promotional flyers? Isn't it to spread the word far and wide to cities, villages, and mountain valleys alike?"

"That's right."

"In that aspect, we at Gold Road Trading Company can promise much more promotional effect than the Platinum Trading Group!"

Delmons was now kneeling while frantically waving the promotional flyer.

"This is a golden opportunity to announce Amonis Academy's revival across the continent!"

Amon stroked his chin as if interested.

"You make a good point."

"R-Right? Then..."

"But something feels lacking."

"Pardon?"

"There are widespread rumors that the company is raking in money from the 10% shares of King of Mango that we already gave, and if we give another 10% on top of that, Gold Road Trading Company would truly be sitting on a gold mine."

"...!"

“If the Platinum Trading Group knew this, they would surely promise tremendous support to our academy...”

Delmons' cheeks trembled.

‘So he’s saying just promotional help isn’t enough!’

Taking a deep breath, Delmons said.

“Fine.”

“What is?”

“We’ll distribute 20% of the net profit that Gold Road Trading Company generates from the 10% shares of King of Mango farm over the next 10 years.”

At those words, Amon’s eyes lit up brightly.

‘This guy has gone mad!’

In a good way, that is.

‘When we had 10% shares of the farm, all we could get was profit from the farm itself. Sometimes they send the King of Mangos as a gesture of gratitude, but that can’t really be counted as profit. Since we eat them all.’

But Gold Road Trading Company takes 10% shares, and transfers 20% of the net profit earned through those shares?

That amount would be on a completely different level from the profits that the farm used to distribute directly.

‘What kind of creatures are merchants! They’re monsters who suck every penny from consumers while even coating ordinary fruit with gold! The net profit such creatures generate can’t even be compared to the money made by honest farmers selling fruit.’

These were truly groundbreaking conditions.

Gold Road Trading Company had played their ultimate card with no room to back down further.

‘Actually, the talk about transferring shares was a lie.’

It was just bait thrown to provoke Delmons.

'But if they come out like this, there's no reason not to proceed. Since continuous income was the goal anyway, the principal will surely agree actively.'

Meanwhile, the reason Delmons played such an ultimate card was simple.

They had already gotten an exhilarating taste with the previous King of Mango shares. Plus, Delmons had his personal reasons.

'With a total of 20% shares of the farm, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say the entire continent's King of Mango market would be in our hands. Even if we transfer 20% of the net profit from 10% shares, it's definitely profitable business. This will also raise my position within the company.'

He might even be able to jump into the succession battle for the trading group if things go well.

And a rotten smile appeared on Amon's face who had been silently lost in thought.

"Haha, this is. Oh my, this shouldn't happen..."

Scratching his head, Amon said.

"But you know. Additionally..."

At that moment, Delmons said with a stiff face.

"You should know, but this is the best condition our company can offer. No matter how desperate the Platinum Trading Group is for King of Mango, they won't be able to offer conditions like this. No, I'm certain they won't offer them."

"No, no. It's something trivial."

"...Something trivial?"

Nodding his head, Amon said.

"Could I stay at the company while you distribute the promotional flyers?"

"Pardon? W-Why?"

Amon smiled faintly.

"Because I'm supposed to receive business trip expenses!"

Delmons understood immediately.

“Hahaha! Understood. We’ll provide you a room. I promise the best treatment too.”

“That’s reassuring! Give me plenty of chocolate too!”

“We’ll serve you the finest!”

Clearing his throat, Delmons continued.

“But may I ask when you plan to proceed with the transfer of King of Mango farm shares?”

Amon’s rotten smile deepened.

“We should be able to proceed formally once the promotional flyer distribution is complete!”

“Oh! I see!”

“However, there’s just one small issue.”

“Yes? What is it?”

Amon said with a serious face.

“One of the academy’s executives might show a somewhat lukewarm attitude. So I hope the company can help persuade that person.”

Delmons laughed heartily.

“Hahaha! Don’t worry. Persuasion is our specialty, isn’t it! Put your mind at ease. But which executive is it?”

Suddenly Amon said with a serious face.

“Vice Principal Brestle.”

Brestle, she would not hesitate to fight the world alone if it was to protect the King of Mango.

\* \* \*

Amonis Academy is a historic educational institution established by Emperor Amonis, the first emperor of unification.

Though its meaning may have faded somewhat now, no one would deny that it was once a lamp and symbol that illuminated the empire.

And there was a group of people glaring at the distant Amonis Academy.

“Glory to the Alliance.”

Darkness began approaching Amonis Academy.