

THE ACADEMY IS DOOMED

[The Academy is Doomed #C111 - Read The Academy is Doomed C111](#)

Chapter 111

Amon was kneeling and listening to Reinbelt's lecture.

"Young man, you've only learned bad things, already trying to commit embezzlement and corruption? I was terribly wrong in my judgment of you!"

Honestly, Amon had nothing to say even if he had ten mouths.

Setting aside Reinbelt's principle of 'poverty and frugality,' embezzlement and corruption were crimes that anyone would know shouldn't be committed.

But even though he had nothing to say, he had complaints.

'What's so wrong about me keeping the money saved from construction costs? It's not like I'm trying to do shoddy work! A dragon is doing the construction, for crying out loud!'

However, Amon wasn't foolish enough to express these complaints and confront Reinbelt.

Right now was the time to lie flat and carefully appease Reinbelt.

"Yes, yes. Elder Reinbelt, you're absolutely right."

"Tch! I'll be watching you closely."

"Of course, of course. I'll keep it in mind."

After letting Reinbelt's threats go in one ear and out the other, Amon sighed.

Even a rotten croaker is still a croaker – though fallen now, Amonis Academy was once among the most prestigious institutions, and the construction costs for the collapsed buildings were enormous.

Three-tenths, no, one-tenth would have to go to silencing Brestle, so this perfect opportunity to pocket two-tenths was flying away.

'Who says this is just for my benefit? This is for everyone's good.'

He felt bitter and wronged.

'But it's too early to give up. Surely another opportunity will come...'

"You rascal! I can see in your eyes that you're still harboring wicked thoughts!"

"Eh...!?"

"I shall strictly discipline you, who are steeped in selfish greed!"

"No, this is getting ridiculous, you old man!"

Amon and Reinbelt were rolling around on the ground, tangled together.

"Hmm, so you say you'll take charge of this construction?"

Rommel, who had escaped from Amon's persistent brainwashing, was looking at Rustianel with a dubious expression.

He had no idea that Rustianel was a dragon.

"Are you perhaps aspiring to be an architect?"

"What? No, that's not it."

"Hohoho, child. Architecture is no game. If you're not careful, many people could get hurt."

Rommel nodded kindly.

"Leave this construction to me. Yes, just watching me work will be a great learning experience for you."

"Uh..."

"It seems you have some interest in architecture, and since this is a good opportunity, I'll teach you various things."

Rustianel tilted his head with a disgruntled expression.

Though a young dragon, Rustianel had lived for at least several hundred years, several times longer than Rommel, and had devoted considerable effort to architecture.

Moreover, as the prodigy of the Gold Dragon clan, the rising star of the architectural world, and the magician of architecture (all self-proclaimed), he couldn't simply brush off Rommel's comments.

"Would you like to see the estimate first?"

"Estimate?"

"Yes. The estimate has been ready for a while."

"Hohoho..."

Rommel scratched his cheek incredulously as he took the estimate.

'What kind of estimate could such a young child... huh?'

Rommel's eyes grew wide.

Material costs, labor costs, architectural consultation fees – everything was meticulously detailed in the estimate.

It was a perfect estimate even to Rommel, who had long been in the construction business.

'This, this young child made such a precise estimate?'

No! Brestle made the estimate!

But Rommel, unaware of this fact, trembled.

'Ugh, impressive.'

At that moment, Brestle, who was busy with work in the vice principal's office, was grumbling while flapping her itchy ears.

Anyway, Rommel let out a deep sigh and said,

"Ahem, the estimate is certainly thorough. But an estimate alone..."

"I'm not finished yet. Look here."

"Hm?"

Rustianel took out a pen and drew a line.

"Material costs. I can completely eliminate these costs."

“What? Ah, does the academy have materials in storage? No, do you have separate materials you can mobilize?”

Rustianel smirked.

“I’ll utilize the existing materials.”

At those words, Rommel also smirked.

“Hoho, child. Don’t say such nonsense. Those materials can’t be used. There’s too much damage for them to be recycled...”

Before Rommel could finish speaking, as Rustianel waved his hand, the debris scattered on the ground began to transform.

Rommel’s jaw dropped at the sight of the elegant column that was completed.

“Wh-what!? What in the world!?”

“Didn’t you know? I’m a dragon.”

“D-dragon...?”

It was hard to believe.

Why would a dragon be restoring a destroyed academy!

But regardless of the reason, seeing the columns and outer walls being created every time Rustianel waved his hand right before his eyes, he had no choice but to believe it.

“Why would a dragon...?”

“Please drop the honorifics. Anyway, isn’t the reason unimportant?”

“...”

“And as you can see, if I do the work, we can eliminate labor costs too.”

Rommel swallowed and stared blankly at the building being constructed at a rapid pace.

Rustianel continued speaking.

“Plus, I pride myself on my knowledge of architecture. So there’s no need to hire a separate architect, meaning no consultation fees either, right?”

“...”

“So I agreed to complete it for seven-tenths of the costs listed in the estimate as my service fee.”

Seven-tenths of the estimate.

Rommel closed his eyes tightly.

Even if he didn't charge consultation fees due to his friendship with Reinbelt, if he did the work, he would need to use at least as much as the estimate due to material and labor costs.

No, given the nature of construction, there was a possibility it could cost even more.

‘No matter how much I try to save, I can't do the construction for seven-tenths of that amount.’

Rustianel stared intently at Rommel, who had his eyes tightly shut.

“Well then, I think I've sufficiently explained why I should take on this construction. Now, would you tell me why you should take it on?”

This was construction undertaken by none other than a dragon.

In terms of cost and time, there was no way he could compete.

How powerless humans are before dragons.

Feeling doubtful about his own profession, Rommel said weakly,

“There is none.”

“Hehe, right?”

Rustianel, basking in the feeling of victory, casually waved his hand.

Simultaneously, a pristine building was completed.

“Now, six buildings are left. Well then, shall we continue?”

Though unsure if it was right for a dragon to rejoice in defeating a human, anyway, feeling triumphant about winning against a renowned human architect, Rustianel was about to move forward proudly.

“...Hm?”

At Rommel's suddenly puzzled voice, Rustianel stopped in his tracks.

“What? Is there a problem?”

“No, not exactly a problem, but...”

Frowning while examining the completed building, Rommel spoke with a hint of regret.

“This appears to be a style that was popular about 500 years ago. It looks like the architectural style of the great architect Gieud Riges... Ah, nostalgic. I used to reference it a lot when I was studying.”

At those words, Rustianel’s eyes trembled.

“...About 500 years ago, you say?”

“Yes. Looking at the sculptural form of the raised columns and the finishing of the walls...the window placement pattern is certainly characteristic of Gieud Riges’ architectural style, maximizing natural light by arranging windows like that...”

Rustianel listened quietly to Rommel’s words.

As a dragon who lived for thousands or tens of thousands of years, Rustianel was far removed from the human concept of ‘latest.’

However, as the rising star of architecture, the magician of [etc. omitted], it was natural to be interested in humans’ latest technology.

“...Then what’s the latest style these days?”

“Hmm, let’s see.”

Rommel crouched down and began sketching plans on the dirt ground.

“This outer wall section should be done like this...”

“Ah! It definitely feels more sophisticated!”

“The columns should be made thinner.”

“What? What about the load?”

“It requires more columns, but if arranged like this, the columns won’t be visible. And this is a style I conceived independently...”

“Wow! That’s amazing!”

Rustianel was listening to Rommel’s explanation with sparkling eyes full of amazement.

Seeing Rustianel like this, Rommel shuddered.

'This can't be! A dragon is trying to learn my architectural techniques!'

Overcome with emotion, Rommel spoke excitedly.

"Also, recently, there's a strong trend toward adding engravings to buildings like this!"

"Engravings on buildings!"

"Yes! And by inlaying gold to create a luxurious effect..."

"Inlaying with gold!"

The two architects were chattering away happily with their heads close together.

* * *

"Huff, hah..."

Amon, breathing heavily, clenched his fist.

"Finally, victory."

At the feet of Amon, who muttered in a resolute voice, Reinbelt was lying down and squirming.

Although he was a Grand Sword Master, he was thoroughly exhausted from moving non-stop to fetch Rommel.

Moreover, it was an unfair fight with bare hands against Amon, who engaged in fistfights with ogres barehanded.

"It was a fair and square fight, Elder Reinbelt."

Of course, Amon wasn't unscathed either.

One eye was so swollen he couldn't open it, and his nose was so swollen it would make a proboscis monkey call him big brother.

But a victory was a victory.

"Now two-tenths of the construction costs are mine!"

Amon let out a mighty shout.

With Reinbelt down, he planned to embezzle the construction costs fair and square.

“Now then, Rustianel!”

The moment he turned his head calling Rustianel.

Crash-!

He witnessed the sight of a newly completed building magnificently collapsing.

“...Eh?”

“Teacher Amon, did you call me?”

Seeing Rustianel approaching with small steps, Amon asked while trembling,

“W-why did you demolish the building you just finished?”

To that question, Rustianel answered with a bright smile,

“They said it was an outdated style from 500 years ago, so I’m going to rebuild it!”

“I-is that so? I see.”

Right, it would be better to build in the latest style.

Just as Amon was trying to calm his startled heart, Rustianel continued with sparkling eyes,

“By the way, teacher. The trending style these days is decorating buildings with engraved precious metals!”

“...What?”

Amon’s cheek trembled.

What nonsense is this about decorating buildings, which aren’t even portable, with precious metals!

“So about that, I think we’ll need to use all the costs listed in the estimate.”

“What!? What kind of dragon talk is this!”

“Since there are no labor or material costs, we should just barely make it. I won’t get my service fee, but since I’m doing the work anyway, I want to do my best.”

Shocked by those words, Amon grabbed Rustianel's wrist, almost ready to kneel down.

"Ru-Rustianel? What horrible things are you saying?"

"Why? Weren't we allowed to use all the costs in the estimate anyway?"

"I-I need to take two-tenths..."

"Why do you need to take that, teacher?"

The Gold Dragon, cold-hearted in business dealings, seemed unable to understand Amon's embezzlement.

"Anyway, leave the construction to me! I'll complete it as quickly as possible! Since Teacher Rommel said he'll help too, we should be able to finish soon!"

Teacher Rommel!

Amon glared and whipped his head around.

'Like friend, like friend. That old man was the source of all trouble!'

Just as Amon, his face contorted like a demon, was about to shout at Rommel.

"Wow! So this is Amonis Academy!"

Startled by the sudden bustling voices from behind, Amon turned around.

Dozens of people were gathered at the main gate.

'W-who are these people?'

While frozen in confusion.

They too were whispering in confusion.

"What's this? Why is the academy in this state?"

"The buildings are collapsed, and the inside is reduced to ashes?"

One of them sighed.

"They said Amonis Academy was ruined, I guess it really is ruined."

"Yeah. Gold Road Trading Company was distributing enrollment flyers, I guess there must have been some mistake."

Hearing their whispers, Amon felt like he'd been doused with cold water.

'These are prospective students who came after seeing the promotional flyers!'

Amon moved painfully due to the injuries from his fight with Reinbelt.

"O-our academy isn't ruined!"

"Oh? Not ruined...Aaaaah!"

Seeing Amon's appearance, they fled in terror.

With one eye so swollen he couldn't open it, and a nose surpassing that of a proboscis monkey, who wouldn't flee when Amon approached limping!

Seeing them scatter and run away, Amon stopped in his tracks.

"...Sigh."

Amon slumped down with a sigh and looked up at the sky.

"The sky looks hazy, it seems like it's going to rain..."

Clear streams of water trickled down the cheeks of Amon as he muttered.

Chapter 112

"Hello, teacher!"

"Hi, did everyone enjoy their lunch?"

Fiora cheerfully received the students' greetings and suddenly turned her head.

Normally, Amon would have picked a fight by saying things like 'Look at the delinquent pretending to be nice!' or 'Even a delinquent can be warm to children!' but he was sprawled out on the teacher's desk, completely listless.

There was one reason why Amon was so lifeless.

'To think the academy's terrorist attack affected him so deeply....'

The truth was that his wealth accumulation through construction had come to nothing.

However, other teachers didn't know this fact, and since the only recent incident was the terrorist attack, it wasn't unreasonable to make such assumptions.

Of course, not everyone believed this blindly.

'Knowing Amon, he probably had expensive liquor hidden in one of those buildings. That's why he's so dejected, isn't it?'

Sloth shook his head at Marion's deduction.

'No, I think he had emergency funds hidden in one of the buildings. And now that money's completely gone.'

Kai, dissatisfied with these speculations about his respected Amon, said:

'Come on, I heard senior has been working hard lately distributing promotional flyers. But now with the academy in this state, we can't accept new students, so that's why he's so dejected.'

'Hehehe, Kai, your head is full of flowers.'

'Right. What do you take Amon for? By the way, I heard you eat bugs?'

'...Who said such a thing?'

Thus, the teachers each had their own theories about Amon's depression.

The surprising thing was that all these speculations could have been true without being strange – this was evidence of just how impressive the image Amon had shown them until now really was.

Anyway, the only common point among all the various speculations was that Amon was depressed.

Indeed, Amon was in despair.

'Where exactly did my life go wrong?'

It was a question he had asked himself many times, but thanks to what he saw this morning, he seemed to be getting a clue.

Wondering if any new students might come, he was lurking near the school gate when he saw a young man running from afar, exclaiming in excitement.

'That's Amonis Academy! To think that I, the third son of a rural noble family, would become a teacher at Amonis Academy!'

The young man who came running with an emotional voice declared boldly:

'I'll work hard teaching noble children to gain recognition, build connections steadily, and raise up my family with my own hands! My journey starts now!'

Making what seemed like familiar resolutions, the young man ran towards the academy's main gate, but as soon as he looked inside, he shouted 'Amonis Academy is ruined!' and left without looking back!

It was a sight that provided many realizations.

'If I had run away without looking back then, would I be living a different life?'

Just as he was tearing up with self-reproach:

"...What kind of delinquent dares to tap the leg of their respected senior?"

"It's class time."

Fiora, who disliked using formal speech due to her hostility towards Amon, was slurring her words.

And that was making Amon's prejudice even deeper.

'Just like a delinquent, even their way of speaking is sloppy.'

Amon let out a deep sigh and wiped his moistened eyes with the back of his hand as he got up.

"Time has passed so quickly. Delinquent, the textbook."

Amon skillfully caught the textbook that Fiora threw, and approached the students who were already seated.

"Well then, children. Let's start class."

Depression was depression, but classes had to be conducted properly.

* * *

After the history class ended, Amon spoke while organizing the textbooks.

"Hey, delinquent."

"What is it?"

"Isn't today your last day of observation?"

Fiora frowned and glared at Amon.

“How did you know that?”

“How would I know? I just know because it’s about time.”

“...”

“Are you preparing well for your classes? Starting tomorrow, you’ll be in charge of your own subject, so you’ll have to teach alone.”

Fiora put the collected student textbooks on the desk and said curtly:

“Mind your own business. I’ll handle it well on my own.”

“Sigh, just like a delinquent, your rebellious phase sure lasts long. Really long. Fine, do well on your own then. I’m leaving first.”

After Amon swiftly left the classroom, Fiora, left alone and fidgeting with the textbooks, had a cold sweat running down her cheek.

‘What should I do? I haven’t done anything.’

Thinking she would end up living a teacher’s life that wasn’t even in her life plans, she spent the first week mostly in worry, and after that, it was a series of days spent fooling around.

‘Hic! Hey, Fiora! Let’s have a drink today too!’

‘Sounds good!’

As it turned out, Fiora was quite good at drinking.

The first time when Marion offered her a drink, it was truly her first time drinking, and it was quite strong alcohol, but in moderate drinking situations, she wasn’t bad enough to say she ‘couldn’t drink.’

Come to think of it, the adults in the Pendorean family also enjoyed drinking quite a bit, so those genes hadn’t gone anywhere.

‘Lady Fiora, it’s nice to take naps over there. Take a nap during class.’

‘Sounds good!’

Now that she had somewhat adjusted, Fiora readily accepted Sloth’s flattery.

Sloth still hadn't given up on trying to get on the good side of Fiora from the Pendorean duke's family!

And in Kai's class:

'Did you just yawn because the class is boring?'

'...'

'To think that Lady Fiora of the prestigious Pendorean family would yawn because class is boring, your observation attitude is terrible! How disappointing!'

'...'

Since she only got scolded by Kai for her poor observation attitude, Fiora's feelings toward Kai weren't particularly good.

Anyway, as a result, Fiora had become a picture-perfect delinquent who enjoyed drinking, took naps during class, and had poor class observation attitudes.

So how could she be prepared for teaching!

'Ugh, what should I do? But I have no teaching experience. I never even thought about becoming a teacher in the first place, and I don't have a teaching certificate...'

That's why they give an observation period for such people.

Although it was a situation where she was crushed by a disaster she brought upon herself, Fiora wore a bitter smile.

'...But it was comfortable. Since Father is strict, being at home isn't comfortable.'

While Father can be caring when he wants to be, he's strict when he needs to be, isn't that why she's here?

The only person who indulged her whims back at the family home was Grandmother Diana.

Therefore, the laziness she tasted while being here was incredibly sweet, although the price of that laziness was steadily expanding her once-firm waistline.

'...Anyway, this isn't the time for this.'

Faced with the reality of having to start teaching from tomorrow, Fiora decided to seek help from other senior teachers.

'Let's go to Senior Marion first.'

Isn't he the most humane and caring senior when he's not drinking!

Fiora immediately headed to the faculty office where Marion was.

"Hic! Curriculum?"

"Yes. I'm sorry, but I was wondering if I could get some advice."

"Hahahaha! Sure, sure. Let's see~ The curriculum format I used~"

After rummaging through the drawer for a while, Marion pulled out empty hands and laughed.

"It's not here!"

"Eh."

"Kekeke! I must have thrown it away."

"..."

"Why do you need a curriculum anyway? There are no answers in textbooks."

Marion was the type to teach spontaneously while drunk.

Of course, he did have a curriculum, but it was ingrained in Marion's body, so it wouldn't be of immediate help to Fiora.

"Hic! You've been watching and learning until now, so can't you just teach the same way?"

"I, I'm not confident I can do well."

"Well, if you could learn everything just by watching, why would experience be necessary?"

Marion said while needlessly tilting an empty bottle.

"Sorry but I can't help you. Want to hear it verbally at least?"

"Yes, yes."

"Hic! Right, then when you start class, hic, hey. By the way, is there no more alcohol?"

As mentioned, Marion was the most humane and caring when not drinking, but that means he becomes like a dog when drinking!

Fiora quickly ran away.

'T-then to Senior Sloth...!'

Frantically searching for Sloth, Fiora found a giant caterpillar wriggling in a corner of the training ground.

It was Sloth wrapped in a sleeping bag.

"S-Senior Sloth?"

"Zzzzzz..."

"Senior Sloth!"

"Nyam... mmm, Fio..."

Sloth was sleeping so deeply in the training ground where the sunlight was just right that he wouldn't wake up even if someone carried her away.

Although Sloth had recently been flattering Fiora to an uncomfortable degree, when sleeping, her lazy nature meant flattery or whatever didn't matter!

Actually, even when awake, it's doubtful if Sloth would be helpful with curriculum planning.

'...I'm doomed.'

Fiora closed her eyes tightly as she instinctively realized this fact.

'Then do I have to ask Senior Kai and that Amon for help?'

However, she wanted to avoid asking Amon for help no matter what.

It wasn't just because Amon as a person was irritating, but how could she slink back asking for help when she had just confidently said 'Mind your own business. I'll handle it well on my own!'

'...So let's go to Senior Kai. I don't like him either, but he must be better than that person Amon. Ah, I'm going to get scolded terribly again.'

Worried, Fiora went to Kai and got scolded heavily as expected.

“That’s why I told you so many times to pay proper attention during class observation.”

“Uuugh...!”

Kai, who had been nagging endlessly as if trying to make her ears bleed, pulled something out.

“W-what is this?”

“What else? A guide book for creating a curriculum.”

“...Pardon?”

Fiora picked up the book that Kai handed over.

It was too big, thick, and heavy to be called just a book.

‘...You could kill someone if you hit them with this.’

Fiora, who was blankly staring at the book, shuddered.

On the cover was written ‘Even a Monkey Can Create Academy Curriculum – Basic Edition!’

Which means...

Thump, thump thump thump-!

Kai pulled out several more books.

Beginner Edition, Intermediate Edition, Advanced Edition, and Applied Advanced Edition appeared in succession.

“Read them and create it yourself.”

“...”

“What are you standing there for? Aren’t you leaving? Got lots of time? Seems like you have lots of time to make a curriculum then why did you ask for help I don’t understand.”

Fiora left Kai’s room hugging the books and sobbing.

‘I’m finished. I’m a failure.’

Actually, it wouldn’t be a huge problem to start teaching without a curriculum right away.

But it would certainly be sloppy and rushed.

'Since I'm teaching anyway, I want to do it well...I should have prepared the curriculum earlier! I shouldn't have been lazy just because it's my first time living outside!'

But regret is always too late no matter how early you do it!

Fiora, who berated herself for her laziness, read the first page of 'Even a Monkey Can Create Academy Curriculum – Basic Edition!'

'I'm worse than a monkey!'

It was the moment Fiora burst into tears.

"What are you doing standing in the middle of the hallway?"

"...Gasp!"

Fiora turned her head at the sudden voice from behind.

Amon was standing there, sipping chamomile tea.

"W-what is it?"

"How strange. I asked what you were doing first, but you're asking what it is."

"..."

"Hm? What's that?"

Amon looked at the book Fiora was holding and let out a hollow laugh.

"Oh my, it's the monkey series."

"...You know about this?"

"Of course. I have it too."

"Y-you have this?"

Amon nodded.

"It's helpful when making a curriculum. Just has a lot of unnecessary content."

"..."

“But you’re the first person I’ve seen who has it besides me.”

It wasn’t Fiora’s but Kai’s, but Amon didn’t know that fact.

Amon, who took a gulp of chamomile tea that helps greatly with mental stability, said:

“Have you finished the curriculum?”

“...Not completely.”

Not completely – she hadn’t even started!

Amon smirked at Fiora’s words.

“I thought so. Well, if you had finished, you wouldn’t be reading that.”

Fiora suddenly felt irritated at Amon’s sarcastic words.

How could he mock someone even at a time like this?

Just as Fiora was about to snap back in irritation:

“Come with me for a moment.”

“...What?”

When Amon, who suddenly said this, started walking heavily, Fiora followed behind without knowing why.

Shortly after, arriving at his room, Amon handed over several sheets of paper.

“Take it. It’s your class curriculum.”

“What? My curriculum?”

As Fiora blinked blankly, Amon took a sip of tea and said:

“I made it just in case, and just in case became as expected.”

“...”

“I only learned science superficially so I don’t know the details, so modify the specifics yourself, okay? As for the class progress, you can decide as you go while carefully going through the textbook and checking if the students understand.”

Fiora, who was blankly reading the curriculum Amon had handed over, bit her lip hard.

Even to her untrained eye, it was a meticulously well-made curriculum.

“Um, excuse me.”

“What? Is there something you don’t understand?”

“W-why did you make this for... me?”

Simple goodwill?

Concern for a junior?

Though she couldn’t be certain, just as emotion that seemed like genuine appreciation for this clear consideration towards her was beginning to rise:

“Because a delinquent wouldn’t be able to make a curriculum, so I made it just in case. Why?”

Not goodwill but distrust!

The appreciation that was beginning to rise immediately bowed its head.

Chapter 113

For Amon, it was impossible to believe Fiora’s words “I’ll handle it well on my own.”

How could he trust someone who had never shown trustworthy behavior in the first place?

‘Well, she’s better than my first impression of her though.’

He wasn’t referring to when he met her outside with Diana, but rather her behavior shown at the academy.

The Fiora he saw then was the very definition of an arrogant troublemaker.

That’s why he had felt so frustrated and desperate when her employment was decided.

‘But for someone like that, she’s surprisingly behaving quite normally. Whether she’s being careful or there’s another reason, I’m not sure.’

Because of this, Amon could form a hypothesis that ‘she’s not a troublemaker.’

‘Maybe she acted up deliberately to avoid staying in this hellhole of an academy after seeing its true nature.’

It was quite a credible hypothesis.

As mentioned, she was normal when she was with Diana.

Moreover, didn't Anar'el also say that her being a troublemaker was false?

'And as the biggest evidence...'

He glanced at Fiora, who was trembling while holding the curriculum documents.

She was seriously conflicted.

She was wondering whether to be grateful for the prepared curriculum or to burst out in anger at Amon for getting under her skin even in such moments.

'See this! Was she really a troublemaker? At this point, if she were, she would have torn up the documents and thrown them in my face, maybe even spat at me!'

It meant she had the basic human decency to weigh feelings of gratitude against anger.

And just as Fiora was about to make a big decision after trembling and contemplating for a while, Amon took out a new teacup and said,

"Hey, Fiora."

"...Grr! What is it?"

"Just sit down first. Let's have some tea."

When Amon suddenly poured tea into the cup, Fiora's eyes filled with suspicion.

'Did he poison the tea?'

Seeing Amon smile gently as if he were harmless, Fiora became convinced.

'He must have poisoned it! Taking this chance to get rid of me!'

Amon accurately saw through Fiora's inner thoughts.

"There's no poison, and if you don't want to drink, just listen to what I have to say."

"...Why didn't you poison it?"

"You're showing the exact same reaction as someone else."

Amon, who had been sipping tea from his cup, spoke up.

“There’s something I’ve been feeling about you recently, and I’d like you to be honest.”

“...?”

“You just pretended to be a troublemaker because you didn’t want to work here, right?”

Fiora’s eyes widened.

Amon had accurately seen through her intentions.

“H-how did you...?”

“You were completely different when you were with Lady Diana, and even at the academy, your actions were very different from your first impression.”

“...”

“Until just now it was just a guess, but seeing your reaction, it seems I was right.”

Finally finding someone who understood her, Fiora’s eyes welled up with tears.

And she thought that perhaps Amon might become her savior.

Fiora began to beg with tears in her eyes.

“Then, senior. Please help me. I want to go home.”

“You want to go home?”

“Yes! I never intended to work here at all. Grandmother just said I only needed to briefly attend an interview...”

“Hmm...is that so?”

Amon stroked his chin with sparkling eyes.

‘But what should I do about this?’

Amon absolutely! Under no circumstances!

Had any intention of letting Fiora leave this place!

‘She might be the only normal person in the academy. She might become my only colleague. And she’s asking to leave?’

Not a chance!

Even a sheet of paper is lighter when carried together, and isn't rolling through hell better with two people than alone!

Amon spoke with a genuinely apologetic face.

"Fiora, I'm really sorry, but as a regular teacher, I don't have that kind of authority."

"Ah..."

At those words, Fiora came to her senses belatedly.

Although she had desperately clung to hope for a moment, she knew she couldn't leave this place.

If she ignored her father, the family head's thunderous command and returned home, she didn't know what terrible future would await her.

"Of course...you're right."

Seeing Fiora dropping her head in resignation, Amon sighed and said,

"Come on, come on. First, sit down."

"..."

"That's right. Have some tea too. It's chamomile tea, great for calming the mind and body."

Looking at her carefully sipping tea with a sad face, Amon spoke.

"First, let me ask. Why don't you want to work here?"

"..."

"You can be honest. I'm curious about this as one person to another, putting aside our positions as senior and junior teachers."

At Amon's cunning persuasion, Fiora sighed and said,

"...There are many reasons. This academy is practically ruined, isn't it?"

Amon's heart ached.

He couldn't deny it.

"Th-then what else?"

“Honestly, the seniors are a bit...”

Amon clutched his aching heart.

He couldn't refute this either.

“I-I see. Any other reasons?”

“And...”

At that moment, Fiora closed her mouth.

Setting aside the previous reasons, her fundamental reason for not wanting to work here was because her grandmother Diana had asked her to ‘become friends with Amon.’

With that fact lingering in the back of her mind, she felt uncomfortable just facing Amon.

However, since she couldn't say that, she decided to make up an excuse.

“I don't think teaching suits me.”

“...Hmm, I see.”

Amon nodded with a benevolent expression, arms crossed, as if he understood everything.

And after a brief pause, Amon spoke with an utterly serious face.

“First, I'd like you to take some time before deciding whether teaching suits you or not.”

“...Pardon?”

“You haven't been here that long yet. Besides, you've only observed so far and haven't taught a class by yourself, so I think it's a bit early to judge whether you have an aptitude for teaching or not. Ah, I'm not denying your thoughts about not having an aptitude. I just wish you'd watch a little longer.”

What a dirty way of speaking that affirms the other person's thoughts while expressing his own!

Fiora dropped her face and nodded slightly.

“Well, honestly, I don't think teaching suits me either.”

“What? You, senior?”

Fiora tilted her head.

Didn't he seem very skilled when teaching?

"I just work hard at it. You heard about my circumstances briefly last time, right?"

"Ah...yes."

When the war with the Gunter Coalition broke out, Amon had expressed his willingness to participate and roughly shared his circumstances.

"That's why I work hard at it, regardless of whether it suits me or not."

Fiora's eyes trembled.

Suddenly, Amon seemed very mature.

'Ah, that's a lie.'

Amon thinks teaching suits him so well that he can't imagine himself as anything but a teacher!

Born to be a teacher! A human born to become a teacher!

Amon, who defined himself that way, spoke softly.

"Well, those are my circumstances, and yours might be different. Still, I sincerely hope you'll take some time to observe."

"...Yes, senior."

With this, Fiora would now think 'Even Amon, who isn't suited for teaching, is working so hard!' and thus would hesitate a bit when trying to run away from this place!

Amon spoke with a vile smile.

"And you said you don't like the seniors, your colleagues."

"Th-that's..."

"It's okay, it's okay."

Amon spoke as if whispering in a small voice.

"Actually, I feel the same way."

“Wh-what?”

“Did I look like I got along well with those people to you?”

“...No.”

Amon snickered and continued speaking.

“Anyway, I’m not going to tell you to ‘try to get along with them’ or ‘how can you be picky about people at work.’”

“What? Then...”

“I’m not going to tell you to endure it either.”

Amon sipped his tea and pointed at Fiora.

“They don’t like you because they misunderstand you as a troublemaker, right? Just clear up the misunderstanding. I’ll help you.”

“S-senior...”

“Then their attitude towards you will change too.”

Tears welled up in Fiora’s eyes.

Unlike how she had seen him until now, Amon felt incredibly reliable at this moment.

And seeing Fiora overcome with emotion, Amon hid his face behind his teacup and smiled a chilling smile.

‘Heheh, she’s halfway there.’

Then it was time to drive in the final nail.

After downing his tea in one shot, Amon put down his cup and said with a serious face.

“And about the academy going downhill. I won’t deny this either. Because it’s true.”

“...”

“If you’re going to work somewhere, you’d naturally want to work at a successful place. It’s natural. Honestly, I think the same way. However...”

Amon spoke with blazing eyes.

“I want to restore this place, Amonis Academy, to its former glory with my own strength.”

For his own advancement!

However, that inner thought didn't reach Fiora.

“Ah...!”

Only his passion reached her!

Amon spoke with a serious face.

“For that, I'm doing my best with what little strength I have.”

Why wouldn't she understand?

After her employment was decided, Anar'el had praised Amon until her mouth wore out.

His dedication to the academy! His effort! The crystallization of his sweat!

Of course, she didn't believe those words entirely.

In Amon's annoying attitude towards her, she could hardly find even a fragment of the wonderful and great teacher Anar'el had spoken about.

'But even though I haven't seen much, I could desperately feel that one thing – that he truly cares for the academy and the students. Starting from his attitude towards the students.'

Therefore, Fiora felt sincerity in Amon's words.

Indeed, it was sincere.

Because he sincerely wanted to restore the academy and teach the students well to advance in life!

“So, Fiora.”

Amon spoke while lowering his head.

“As you said, everyone will think of it as a shabby and failing academy. But I'm working to change that thinking. So, will you wait a little?”

Amon tensed up as he said this.

'If it were me, I would have fallen for it completely. But the problem is that other people aren't as kind and pure as I am.'

Therefore, he anticipated Fiora saying 'I don't want to.'

'Now then, how should I persuade her after that...?'

"I'll wait."

"...Huh?"

At the unhesitating answer, Amon doubted his ears as he looked at Fiora.

"What did you just say...?"

Fiora spoke while nodding slightly with her face down.

"Yes. I'll wait."

"Uhh..."

He hadn't expected her to fall for it so quickly?

Could it be that Fiora was also a kind and pure person like himself!

Clearing his throat, Amon decided to try pushing his luck a bit more.

"Ahem! Well then, could you help me?"

A cunning scheme to pull in a normal person as a colleague, like a snake slithering over a wall!

Not knowing his inner thoughts, Fiora answered without hesitation.

"I'll try my best."

When Fiora suddenly changed her attitude like flipping her palm and became cooperative, Amon rather felt suspicious.

'What's her sudden ulterior motive?'

Having badly messed things up more than once while pretending things were going well, deep anxiety appeared on Amon's face.

'But well, this time should be fine! Because Fiora is normal!'

Amon smiled gently and extended his hand.

“Thank you! I look forward to working with you, my junior!”

* * *

The head of the Pendorean Duke family, Royce Vald Pendorean, was worried about how his daughter was doing. He was a strict but loving father.

‘There shouldn’t be any major problems but...’

Duke Pendorean looked out the window.

Through the starry night sky, he seemed to see his beloved daughter’s smiling face.

“Yes, it should be fine. As long as that child’s bad habits don’t show up.”

Chapter 114

Someone once said: Youth is more beautiful than flowers.

And the warmth that comes to those experiencing pain in their youth tends to easily melt their frozen hearts.

Isn’t there an old saying that “Even slaves form bonds with each other”?

The warmth shown by the usually unlikeable young man, his maturity, and his passion was more than enough to inspire admiration!

It was more than enough to melt the frozen heart directed at Amon.

Ah, that’s not to say that romantic feelings had blossomed.

However, it was clearly “fondness.”

‘Yes. I was surprised to find he’s a better person than I thought, but it’s definitely not romantic feelings.’

Fiora consoled herself as she headed to the principal’s office.

“What? You want to extend your observation period by a week?”

Anar’el tilted her head at Fiora’s sudden request.

It wasn’t unusual for new teachers to inquire about classroom observation, but most usually asked to reduce the observation period.

Yet here was someone asking to extend it instead.

“Yes. I think I’m still not ready to teach classes on my own. So I’d like to observe and learn more from other senior teachers. Please, Principal.”

Seeing Fiora bow her head as she spoke, a look of deep emotion appeared on Anar’el’s face.

For a 269-year-old high elf and educator, it was always delightful to see someone who recognized their own shortcomings and sought to learn.

“Alright! Go ahead!”

“Thank you, Principal.”

“Hoho, seeing Professor Fiora so enthusiastic makes me happy! Was there perhaps something that triggered this?”

Fiora had been approaching her teaching duties without enthusiasm, though not quite as badly as her initial troublemaking.

But suddenly she was acting like a completely different person!

To Anar’el’s question, Fiora answered.

“I feel that at this rate, I won’t be able to help my senior as a junior should.”

“Ah! It seems someone has awakened Professor Fiora’s mindset as a teacher!”

Anar’el’s eyes sparkled as she spoke.

“Could it be Professor Amon?”

“...”

Seeing Fiora quietly smile without answering, Anar’el’s ears fluttered with joy.

“I knew it! Indeed! I’ve always believed in him!”

“...”

“Hohoho, hiring Professor Amon must be the most rewarding decision of my time as principal...But why are you looking at me with those eyes?”

Anar’el spoke with a trembling voice, seemingly uncomfortable with Fiora’s unsettling smile as she stared at her.

Fiora shook her head.

“No, it’s nothing. Then I’ll take my leave.”

“Yes! I look forward to working with you.”

Fiora left the principal’s office while maintaining her suspicious gaze.

* * *

At lunchtime, Amon’s face looked extremely relieved as he sat at the table and picked up his spoon.

‘It feels like I’ve gained an army of thousands.’

To think that Fiora, whom he thought was just another typical troublemaker from a noble family, was actually a normal person!

Moreover, yesterday she had declared that she would support him as his junior.

‘It’s reassuring. Very reassuring. With this, the number of normal people in our academy has increased to two. In this hell of a den, gaining a precious colleague is quite comforting.’

As Amon was contentedly enjoying his meal, he suddenly turned his head.

Fiora was approaching with food, presumably to have her meal as well.

“Oh! Junior! Over here, over here.”

“Hello, Senior.”

“Want to sit here?”

After Fiora nodded and sat down, Amon spoke in a subtle voice.

“How do you feel about your first class today?”

“That…”

“No, no. You’ll get indigestion while eating. It was stressful, wasn’t it?”

Amon, displaying abundant consideration for his first junior (as always mentioned, he just doesn’t like Kai for some reason), picked up his spoon as if suggesting they should just eat first.

“Let’s first eat…”

“I extended my observation period.”

“Eat first and then talk…What did you just say?”

What’s with this sudden curve ball when things were going so well?

“Ex-extended observation? Why suddenly…?”

“I received permission from the principal. I had entered the observation period with a casual attitude since I hadn’t been thinking about teaching, but I thought it would be better to start over from observation if it’s to help Senior Amon.”

“Uh…”

That makes sense.

‘But isn’t she being too serious?’

Though momentarily thrown off by Fiora’s solemn attitude that wouldn’t seem out of place if she were heading to a battlefield, Amon quickly concealed his surprise and spoke with a forced cough.

“Ahem, Fiora. Now that I hear it, you have a point.”

“Thank you, Senior.”

“However, there are things you can realize only when you face the actual situation unprepared. Sometimes you can gain more desperate realizations because of your inexperience.”

Amon said with a gentle smile.

“So how about reconsidering the extension of your observation period?”

That dirty rhetoric of agreeing with the other person while pushing his own opinion came out again!

But this time, Amon thought he wouldn’t be able to change Fiora’s opinion.

‘Actually, it’s not wrong. How can you teach alone when you haven’t even learned anything during observation?’

Therefore, Amon decided to pretend to give in if Fiora insisted on her opinion once more.

By doing so, he could show the broad-mindedness of a senior!

“Yes, Senior.”

“Huh?”

“Then I’ll go tell the principal right away to withdraw the observation extension. We should hurry to avoid any confusion.”

As Fiora stood up abruptly, Amon also jumped up.

“Wait! Wait!”

“Yes?”

“L-let’s sit down and eat first. There’s still time until your class anyway.”

“Understood, Senior.”

As Fiora sat back down, he looked at her.

“Um, let’s eat quickly.”

“Yes.”

Watching Fiora nibble on her pie, Amon was breaking out in cold sweat.

‘Why is she suddenly so scary?’

With a strange sense of unease, Amon stirred his pilaf and said,

“Um...Fiora?”

“*gulp* Yes, Senior.”

Fiora quickly swallowed her food to respond!

Amon’s eyes trembled.

‘Wait. Could it be?’

Amon opened his mouth.

“Could you stand up?”

“Yes.”

“...Turn around once.”

“Yes, Senior.”

“This can’t be...”

She even turns around when asked?

Amon slowly closed his eyes.

“Ahem! Fiora, this senior wants to eat a cutlet.”

“I’ll go order it.”

“Ehem! Bring some water too when you come back!”

Watching Fiora hurry away, Amon clenched his fist.

He was trembling.

‘I haven’t lived my life in vain! No doubt Fiora must have been deeply impressed by my character and broad-mindedness! Such a respectful attitude toward a senior...It’s like seeing myself! She must have learned from observing me!’

Sloth, who was half-dozing while eating at the opposite seat, said,

“Hey, Amon. Don’t bully your junior.”

“Oh my, suddenly I’m hearing strange noises.”

Amon, who was tapping his ears as if clearing sudden tinnitus, smiled brightly.

‘Such a loyal junior! Finally, a light has come to my academy life!’

* * *

Three days later.

While heading to the cafeteria, Amon naturally reached his hand behind him.

“Ahem! Fiora, hand me a handkerchief.”

Fiora, who was following one step behind, naturally placed a handkerchief in his hand.

“Here it is, Senior.”

“Thank you!”

“Not at all.”

Amon was practically using Fiora like a secretary.

The problem was that Fiora didn't seem to mind.

No, rather, Fiora was actively taking care of Amon's needs.

“Senior, here's your usual chamomile tea.”

“Huh? I'm not thirs-”

“It's been 1 hour and 16 minutes since you last had chamomile tea. Considering your usual pattern of drinking chamomile tea, that's already 27 minutes over. The consequences of not drinking chamomile tea, which greatly helps with mind and body function, are...”

“I'll drink it! I'll drink it!”

After hurriedly accepting the chamomile tea and gulping it down, Amon saw Fiora wearing a satisfied expression.

And there were several people watching this scene from afar.

“What kind of crazy behavior is that?”

In response to Marion's shocked words, Sloth said with a stern face,

“She's gone crazy.”

“Tsk tsk tsk, indeed. Poor Fiora. If the Pendorean family learns of this...”

“No, I mean Amon.”

“Huh? Oh, right. Amon is quite crazy too.”

Kai shrugged his shoulders as if it didn't matter.

“What's the problem? Recently, Fiora's observation attitude has become very good. She's working hard as if trying to learn even one more thing during observation, isn't she?”

“That's true, but...”

“They say when someone’s behavior suddenly changes, it’s time for them to die.”

At Sloth’s grumbling, Kai smiled and said,

“Well, anyway, I think it’s a good thing. Let’s just watch quietly for now.”

“Is it really a good thing...?”

Marion continued to glance worriedly at Amon and Fiora until the end.

Meanwhile, Amon was eating his meal with an emperor-like demeanor.

“Fiora, the bib is a bit...”

“No, Senior. If you spill stew on your clothes, the grease will require a long time for laundry, which would greatly disrupt your schedule.”

“Then, I’ll just eat pilaf...”

“If your nutrition becomes unbalanced, it will greatly affect your condition...”

It meant he was receiving excessive protection.

Kai, who was watching this scene from afar, chuckled amusingly.

‘As expected of the Pendorean family.’

The Pendorean family has been a loyal family serving the Imperial family since the 7th Emperor of the Empire.

Considering that the current Emperor is the 18th Emperor, this means they have served the Imperial family for 11 generations, for hundreds of years.

In other words, putting it nicely, loyalty has been ingrained in their family for generations, and putting it badly, they have inherited a seemingly crazy slave mentality for generations!

No wonder during the Great War, an enemy general disparagingly called the Pendorean family “The Empire of Amonis loyal dogs”!

‘To that extent, members of the Pendorean family tend to show blind trust in those they serve. In Fiora’s case, it seems to be Senior Amon. Well, not all members of the Pendorean family live only looking at the Imperial family.’

Kai found this situation amusing.

'A member of the Pendorean family supporting Senior Amon...Father would faint in surprise if he knew this. But maybe that could become an opportunity to see Senior Amon in a new light?'

Kai, who was smiling gently, looked at Fiora.

'...But even considering she's from the Pendorean family, isn't this a bit too much?'

* * *

In his office, Royce, the head of the Pendorean Duke family, who was checking documents, suddenly looked out the window.

Beyond the sun, he seemed to see his beloved daughter's smiling face.

"It should be fine. As long as that child's bad habit of getting too immersed doesn't show up."

It already has.

* * *

In the evening, while organizing materials for tomorrow's class, Amon turned his head at the sound of knocking.

"Senior Amon, the principal is calling for you."

"Huh? The principal?"

Grumbling while changing into his formal uniform, Amon went outside where Fiora was waiting.

"Ahem, you've worked hard, junior."

"Not at all."

"Thanks for letting me know. You can rest now."

"No, I'll escort you to the principal's office."

Here, Amon must have knocked on the principal's office door dozens of times more than Fiora, including kicks, and must have eaten dozens of times more meals than her, so what kind of guidance is this!

'It was nice at first, but it's getting burdensome now.'

This can only go on for a day or two, but it's already been three days.

But to firmly reject such goodwill from Fiora?

'Yes...Senior, I'm sorry.'

She would hang her head like a puppy drenched in rain, so Amon, with his tender heart, couldn't just drive her away.

"Alright...lead the way."

"Yes, Senior."

Staring at Fiora's back as she walked ahead majestically, Amon chewed his lips.

After three days, anxiety was starting to creep in.

'She doesn't seem normal either...'

Amon followed Fiora to the principal's office while rubbing his stomach that was churning with anxiety.

Chapter 115

"You've come, Teacher Amon."

"Yes. Why did you call for me?"

When Anar'el once again showed her shadowed face over her interlocked fingers, Amon sighed as if begging her to stop.

"Has something come up again?"

"You catch on quickly now."

"Sigh, what is it this time?"

Anar'el pointed to a document on the table and said.

"It's a directive from the Imperial Palace."

"From the Imperial Palace?"

"Yes. Sandrio's condition has improved a bit, so they say they'll send compensation for the failed Velslime Wasteland project. Though not as much as the full investment."

While it was disappointing that they couldn't receive the full investment amount, looking at the situation, there must have been quite a few of the Emperor's acquaintances who invested in the Velslime Wasteland project.

They would have to provide compensation to them while expressing regret, so it was fortunate enough that it was now the Academy's turn.

"That's good news. We were in a dangerous financial situation after using profits from the King of Mango deal with the Gold Road Association to quickly restore the Academy, but this will help ease our worries."

"Hehe, that's right."

Amon smiled faintly before dropping his smile and said.

"But I doubt you called me just to share good news."

"Really, you do catch on quickly now."

"It's not my first time experiencing this. So please tell me the main point."

Anar'el nodded and pointed to the document on the table.

"It would be better for you to check directly."

"Hmm. Alright."

Just as Amon was about to reach for the document, Fiora, who had been standing behind Amon until now, quickly snatched the document and respectfully handed it to Amon.

"Here you are, Senior."

"Huh? Ah...th-thank you."

Amon awkwardly smiled as he received the document, still uncomfortable with Fiora's behavior.

Seeing this scene, Anar'el brightened up and said,

"Could it be!"

"...Pardon?"

"I was wondering why you were standing in the back, but it must be to learn the proper conduct of a teacher by observing Amon step by step!"

The interpretation was more interesting than reality – that’s how Anar’el interpreted Fiora’s behavior.

And at Anar’el’s interpretation, Amon’s eyes widened as if having a great realization.

“So that’s what it was!”

“That must be it!”

“Of course! I was wondering why she’s been sticking so close these past few days!”

“Since you’re a model teacher more than anyone else, learning by staying right beside you would help her learn quickly!”

“So that’s what it was after all!”

Amon laughed heartily as his pride as a teacher doubled.

“You! Keep learning diligently!”

Fiora bowed politely with a rotten smile.

“I’ll keep that in mind, Senior Amon.”

Anar’el smiled warmly at the heartening sight of the senior and junior.

That’s when Anar’el flinched.

‘Huh? Why is Teacher Fiora looking at me with those eyes?’

Anar’el shuddered at Fiora’s gaze that seemed disapproving, staring with thoroughly rotten eyes.

Come to think of it, she seemed to have had those eyes recently too...

While Anar’el was feeling this sense of discomfort.

“...Cultural festival?”

When Amon muttered glumly after reading the document, Anar’el quickly snapped out of her thoughts and picked up on those words.

“Yes! Our Academy students have entered their second semester, right? The Academy holds an annual cultural festival in the second semester.”

“No, wait. We discussed this before too, but I clearly told you then – how can we hold a festival with just five students?”

Amon tapped the document with his finger as he continued speaking.

“And for the Imperial Palace to send down a recommendation to hold a festival... is this right? Has there ever been such a precedent?”

Amon had unfavorable feelings toward the Emperor.

So he spoke with a thoroughly prickly tone, displeased with the Imperial Palace's actions, but Anar'el shrugged as if to say 'what can you do.'

“There's no precedent because the situation is quite exceptional. For now, please continue reading.”

“Ugh...”

Amon continued reading the document.

[...Therefore, we recommend that Amonis Academy hold its annual cultural festival. Additionally, if the Academy's activities and performance are recognized, we have decided to specially grant funds to the Academy. Also, considering the current circumstances of Amonis Academy, the scale of the cultural festival shall be determined by Amonis Academy's own judgment.]

Special grant money.

And considering Amonis Academy's circumstances, they can determine the scale of the festival.

Amon looked at Anar'el with eyes that seemed to say 'surely not.'

“Could this be...is the Emperor being considerate of us?”

“Yes. As you probably guess, many nobles are in difficult circumstances due to the failure of the Velslime Wasteland project. That compensation will be paid from the Imperial Palace's operating funds and Sandrio's allowance.”

An Emperor receiving an allowance.

Thinking of the Empress who boasted tremendous military power, Amon felt a bit sorry for the Emperor for just a moment.

“And the Imperial Palace's operating funds and Sandrio's allowance won't be enough to console the nobles who lost money in the failed project.”

“Well, looking at the compensation amount we’re getting, it is a disappointing sum.”

“So it seems Sandrio came up with this method to provide additional compensation to me as a last resort. By involving the Academy, it becomes possible to draw on the Empire’s Education Department’s finances.”

So being Emperor isn’t something just anyone can do!

Amon was impressed.

‘He’s quite talented at finding ways to spend money, at least.’

Anyway, he was most pleased with the part about ‘determining the scale of the cultural festival at the Academy’s discretion.’

‘With these conditions, a cultural festival? We can definitely do it. It’s absolutely not because I’m tempted by the special grant money. I want to create good memories for the students. It’s definitely not because I’m tempted by the special grant money.’

After brainwashing himself, Amon opened his mouth.

“A cultural festival with five students. Fortunately, our students are high caliber. The teachers are highly capable too. So if we put our heads together, we should be able to create something that could pass as a cultural festival.”

Anar’el snapped her fingers and said.

“As expected of Teacher Amon! You catch on quickly!”

A dragon, a Sword Master, a Sword Expert, a potato-eating magician, and Amon’s younger sister!

They were outstanding students that would be impressive anywhere.

‘If we’re short on content, we can just have Ami do some tricks like jumping through fire rings.’

Amon, who had particularly strong trust in his sibling, nodded.

“Good. I should ask the students and other teachers too.”

“Yes. Please do.”

“Then while we’re on the topic…”

Amon gestured toward Fiora who had been standing behind without saying a word.

“Fiora, what do you think?”

At that question, Fiora bowed politely and said,

“Your opinion is my opinion, Senior.”

“...I-I see.”

It was truly groundlessly burdensome.

Anyway, since the business was done, Amon slowly rose.

“Then Headmaster, I’ll take my leave now.”

“Wait a moment, Teacher Amon.”

“Yes?”

“There’s one more matter I’d like to discuss.”

Sitting back down, he thought.

‘So it’s finally come.’

He had thought it strange to be called for just good news.

‘Come to think of it, the Headmaster has been rather docile lately. I’m sure they’ve made another huge mess.’

It was a desperate effort to prepare mentally and face the situation rather than be shocked by unexpected circumstances!

After taking a deep breath, Amon said.

“Huuuh...Yes, what is it this time?”

Anar’el’s eyes widened as she held out another document.

“This time we really have a good opportunity.”

“Ah. Yes. Let’s see.”

Again Fiora quickly grabbed the document and handed it to Amon.

‘This is really burdensome...’

Making a mental note to tell her later to refrain from such behavior when the opportunity arose, Amon looked over the newly received document.

[Investment and Investigation Launch for New Material, Petroleum]

[Regarding the new material, petroleum, that the Imperial Palace is watching closely...]

Amon put down the business proposal after reading only that far.

“Fiora, step outside for a moment.”

Speaking in a stern voice, Amon turned back toward Anar’el.

Then after sitting blankly for a moment, Amon looked behind him.

She was still standing in her place.

“Fi-Fiora. Aren’t you going to leave?”

Amon asked in a confused voice when Fiora, who had been faithfully following his words, stood without moving, and she gently bowed her head and said.

“I will maintain my position.”

“Huh? Why...”

“Because I judged it would be better.”

Could this be defiance? But looking at her respectful attitude and eyes, she seems to sincerely think it’s better to remain.

‘What’s wrong with her? Not knowing what she’s thinking makes me so anxious...’

While soothing his anxious stomach, Amon glanced at Anar’el.

‘The Headmaster clearly said they wanted to discuss with me. Then she probably hasn’t invested in the project yet. So there’s no need to scold her loudly...’

He wanted to preserve the Headmaster dignity in front of Fiora, though he wasn’t sure if there was any dignity to preserve.

“Headmaster.”

“Yes, Teacher Amon.”

“Did you... invest? You haven’t yet, right?”

At Amon's trembling voice, Anar'el said brightly.

"I haven't with Academy funds yet. That's why I wanted to discuss it."

"...Sniff!"

"Wh-why are you like that?"

"Headmaster, you've grown so much. I'm not someone who cries easily but why are tears coming?"

"Hehe."

"But wait, you haven't with Academy funds?"

Anar'el nodded.

"I invested personally. A little?"

"Ugh...!"

Amon grabbed the back of his neck but quickly composed himself.

What does it matter if she invested her own money?

"Ahem. Anyway Headmaster, this new material called petroleum, I definitely saw it in the Association's business presentation before, right?"

"Maybe? Did you?"

"Yes. Remember clearly."

Tapping the document, he said.

"Petroleum? This fancy naming sense. What is stone oil? Stone oil."

"Hmm..."

"And the fact that the Imperial Palace is watching it closely is concerning. Isn't this the same Imperial Palace that already tasted great failure with the Velslime Wasteland project? Though it was due to a natural disaster, what meaning do such reasons and excuses have in business?"

"Umm..."

Anar'el said as if making an excuse.

“But still, Sandrio recommended it...”

“Oh my goodness. That makes it even less trustworthy.”

“...”

“Anyway, I’m against it.”

“B-but...”

Anar’el hastily explained.

“They say if this petroleum thing is processed, it could potentially be used as fuel and power source. Then the current system itself might change, they said.”

“Who said that?”

“The chemist Boiler who’s watching this petroleum closely said so.”

“Boiler.”

“What a useless-looking name!” Is what he wanted to say, but since he couldn’t say such things about someone’s name, Amon forcefully swallowed his words.

“So Teacher Amon, I think this investment is really a great opportunity.”

“...”

“If an educational institution like the Academy succeeds in investing in a new material, wouldn’t that recognition of insight be meaningful? New materials are treasures of science, chemistry, and industry, right? What could be a better investment target for an educational institution like the Academy?”

Amon’s head tilted slightly.

‘What is this? Why does it sound plausible? Is the 269-year-old elf still growing? Is her eloquence improving day by day?’

While the great Amon was swaying like an aspen tree at the elf’s sweet talk, Fiora, who had been standing behind Amon, opened her mouth first for the first time.

“Headmaster.”

“Ah, yes. Teacher Fiora.”

Then Fiora continued speaking with a chilling smile.

“Since Senior Amon seems to be troubled, wouldn’t it be better to stop this conversation?”

“...Pardon?”

Amon flinched at Fiora’s sudden admonishment of Anar’el.

‘What? Why is she suddenly like this?’

As much as Amon was surprised, so was Anar’el.

‘Wh-why is she suddenly acting like this?’

Fiora was still staring at Anar’el with inscrutable eyes.

‘But those eyes...I feel like I’ve seen them somewhere.’

Anar’el flinched while furrowing her brows and searching her memories.

‘Ah! Those eyes are...!’

The eyes she had seen when the farm owner came rushing with a sickle during the recent visit to the King of Mango farm.

Also the eyes she often saw when Amon grabbed her and ranted.

Hostility, antagonism, anger.

Anar’el’s ears drooped almost to the ground upon realizing that Fiora had been looking at her with such eyes all along.

‘Why, why look at me with such eyes...?’

Meanwhile, Fiora of the Pendorean family, thoroughly steeped in genuine slave mentality from serving the Imperial family for 11 generations, was internally grinding her teeth while looking at Anar’el.

How many times had the Anar’el before her made poor Senior Amon fall into despair through multiple business failures!

How much had she tormented the powerless Senior Amon using her position as Headmaster as a weapon!

‘Headmaster. Senior Amon’s enemy.’

The Empire’s watchdog of the Pendorean family had opened its eyes.

