

THE ACADEMY IS DOOMED

Chapter 116

“Please stop troubling Senior Amon anymore.”

“Uh, uhh...pardon?”

Although Anar’el asked in bewilderment, Fiora simply stood firmly behind Amon without answering.

And among them all, the most bewildered person was none other than Amon.

‘Fi-Fiora, why is this kid suddenly acting like this?’

He had deliberately lowered his voice to preserve the principal’s dignity and was trying to reason with gentle words, but suddenly Fiora made such an aggressive move!

‘This won’t do.’

Amon hastily opened his mouth.

“Fiora, this is not your place to step in.”

“However, Senior Amon, the headmaster has caused you distress through consecutive business failures. And even at this moment, she’s trying to endanger our academy by pursuing absurd business ventures.”

Fiora continued speaking in a respectful yet firm voice.

“As a junior serving Senior Amon, I cannot tolerate actions that would put the academy and Senior Amon at risk. Please understand my feelings.”

Amon was persuaded by Fiora.

‘What a kind-hearted junior!’

However, while being persuaded, he also felt this wasn’t quite right.

The organizational hierarchy is more important than anything else!

If he let Fiora disrespect the headmaster like this, it would naturally lead to disrespecting the vice headmaster, and next would be none other than himself, the head of academic affairs!

Amon's upright character couldn't tolerate insubordination!

"How dare you! Can't you control yourself!"

"Bu-but, Senior Amon."

"Be quiet! You must never go against the headmaster's authority! Surely the headmaster must have deep reasons for pursuing these business ventures!"

Under Amon's stern rebuke, Fiora visibly deflated and dropped her head.

If she had a tail, it would have been touching the ground.

"You're...right. I'm sorry, Headmaster. I overstepped my bounds without understanding your intentions."

As Fiora apologized with a completely broken spirit, Anar'el hastily waved her hands.

"Ah, no. I'm at fault too. Pursuing unreasonable business ventures isn't right."

"No, I apologize again, Headmaster."

Watching the two repeatedly bowing their heads to each other in this warm scene, Amon cleared his throat and spoke.

"Ahem, then I'll take my leave now. Regarding the cultural festival you mentioned earlier, I'll report back after consulting with other teachers and students."

"Alright, Teacher Amon. I'll leave it to you."

"Leave it to me. Let's go, Fiora."

"Yes, Senior Amon."

Once the two left the principal's office, Anar'el slumped in her chair as if sliding down.

"Phew...what just happened?"

While wiping the cold sweat running down her pale face with the back of her hand, Anar'el sat there blankly before suddenly grinning.

She recalled how Amon had sternly rebuked Fiora when she confronted her.

“Hehehe, so Teacher Amon was on my side after all.”

No, he wasn't!

He was just keeping Fiora in check because he was worried about his own position being threatened!

But Anar'el, not knowing this fact, was in a good mood.

“Plus, he approved of the oil business investment too.”

Absolutely not!

He had just tried to save the principal's dignity by suggesting there might be some deeper meaning!

“I suppose he implicitly gave permission for the business investment?”

Humming a tune, Anar'el pulled out the investment contract, making an assumption that would have made Amon set Fiora to bite her neck off if she knew.

“I~ love~ investments~”

* * *

Walking down the corridor in awkward silence, Amon looked back.

Fiora had been following him with her characteristic dependable expression since following him, but her eyes were darting around uncertainly, unable to find where to look.

Looking straight into her wandering eyes that seemed like those of a dog thoroughly scolded by its master, Amon spoke.

“Fiora.”

“Ye-yes! Senior Amon.”

“Let's talk.”

“...Yes.”

Amon gestured toward the withered garden at the back of the academy that even Anar'el, a High Elf, didn't bother with.

“Sit down. Would you like some tea?”

“...Yes. Thank you.”

After handing Fiora some chamomile tea, which hadn't left his lips since coming to this academy, Amon continued.

“Why are you suddenly acting like this lately? It's fine to follow me as a junior, but honestly, I think you're going a bit too far.”

“...”

“At first, I thought you genuinely wanted to try teaching and learn a lot, but what happened in the headmaster's office today seemed beyond that level.”

Fiora, who had been hanging her head, opened her mouth.

“I wanted to be helpful to Senior Amon.”

“Helpful.”

After pondering these two syllables, Amon closed his eyes gently.

‘You're not helping at all. You're just being troublesome.’

Fiora's behavior was nothing but burdensome.

However, seeing Fiora so dejected and creating waves in her teacup with trembling hands, he couldn't just say, ‘No, you're not helping~ Go away~’

‘It was better when we used to bicker before. At least then she didn't follow me around for every little thing.’

Right. Following him to the bathroom was a bit much, wasn't it?

The shock, horror, and shame he felt when he came out of the bathroom to find Fiora waiting with a handkerchief were indescribable.

Sipping his tea with a sigh, Amon suddenly paused.

‘...Like before?’

Amon hadn't been completely indifferent to Fiora.

As the (real) head of academic affairs, he had occasionally asked others who maintained relatively good relationships with Fiora about her situation.

He recalled Marion's words.

'Fiora? Well, she quite enjoys drinking. At first, I thought she couldn't handle alcohol, but that wasn't quite true. You should have seen her dancing and singing on the table.'

Though he wasn't sure about her true feelings, from what he heard, she seemed to quite enjoy having fun.

Sloth had expressed similar opinions.

'I heard the House of Pendorean is very strict. Even stricter than our House Pid, which is already strict. That's why I've been letting her rest properly. By the way, I wonder if Fiora will start seeing me in a good light soon...'

Kai had said with a deep sigh.

'I wonder how that young lady from the prestigious House of Pendorean ended up like this.'

Amon compiled all the information in his head.

A strict family, a taste of freedom.

If Fiora's current serious attitude was her 'House of Pendorean' face, then perhaps her subsequent lazy behavior was a natural progression.

'Not the delinquent-like behavior she showed at first, but rather enjoying life in her own way.'

As he swirled his teacup where the tea leaves had settled, the dark tea slowly rose from the settled leaves.

Along with it, the unclear thoughts in his head also rose.

"Fiora."

"Ah, yes! Senior!"

Fiora, who had barely been breathing during the long silence, quickly raised her head as Amon continued.

"From now on, you don't need to serve me."

"...!"

Fiora's face turned deathly pale.

'Ah! Senior Amon! Are you casting me aside like this!'

A rejected loyal subject!

Seeing Fiora's face looking like a general betrayed by their tragic monarch, Amon sighed.

'I wish she would just tone it down a bit.'

Seeing Fiora's reaction as if she might break into wails and screams at any moment, Amon hastily continued.

"Fiora, in the Empire's language, you must listen until the end."

"Sob...pardon?"

"I mean you don't need to serve me with such extreme devotion."

Amon put his hands behind his back with a solemn face and turned around.

"I am a fully grown subject of the Empire. While I understand your loyal heart in following your senior, too much is as bad as too little. Look here. Do I appear so powerless to you that I need help with everything?"

Looking at Amon's incredibly reliable back, Fiora trembled.

"N-no, not at all."

"That's right. I am not a weak person who needs someone's help. Of course, I'm grateful for your dedication and service. However, there are times when a man must stand alone."

So please stop following me to the bathroom, that's what I'm saying.

"Therefore, Fiora, I'll say it again. You no longer need to serve me."

"..."

"But don't be disheartened."

Amon stretched out his hand vigorously.

"You and I can still support each other through our shining relationship as senior and junior!"

"Ah, aah! That's right!"

Seeing Amon speaking like the leader of a new religion with the sun at his back, Fiora's face filled with emotion.

"So Fiora! Break free from my shadow and find your true self!"

"My true self..."

"Yes. You were a child who shone brightest in freedom. While following me was also an admirable junior's attitude, you must never lose your own color."

"My own color..."

Fiora's body trembled.

The Empire's most loyal family means equally strict discipline.

That's why no one ever told her to live freely.

Only one person, her grandmother Diana, cherished her granddaughter and allowed her to act somewhat freely.

However, even Diana was a member of the 'strict Pendorean family.'

The very idea of making Amon her granddaughter's husband and taking him as a disciple was far from 'her granddaughter's freedom.'

The fact that Fiora came here at Diana's earnest request meant she couldn't be free from the Pendorean family's discipline.

'If I hadn't agreed to grandmother's request until the end...although she wouldn't show it, she would have been greatly disappointed.'

A loose compulsion.

As a result, she came here, and moved by Amon's unexpected character, decided to follow him.

After all, she too had the blood of 'loyal Pendorean' flowing through her.

Yet the person she decided to follow was telling her to live freely.

"...Senior."

"Yes, Fiora."

"Is it really alright for me to live freely?"

At Fiora's question, Amon brightened up as if he might do a backflip.

"Of course! This senior desires your freedom more than anyone!"

"Freedom..."

Culture, etiquette, manners, swordsmanship, dignity befitting a duke's daughter, imperial studies, military studies, scholarship worthy of the family's honor, a murderous daily schedule that would be insufficient even with 30 hours in a day.

In the family, there wasn't even time to breathe.

'But here...'

The sweetness of real freedom she had tasted since coming here.

Tears rolled down Fiora's cheeks.

"Fi-Fiora! Why are you crying! What makes you sad!"

"Ah, no... I'm just happy."

Hastily wiping away her tears, Fiora smiled brightly.

"Senior, thank you."

"Yes."

Amon stretched out his hand.

"Now, junior."

"Yes, Senior."

"I look forward to working with you!"

Fiora firmly grasped Amon's hand.

"Yes, Senior!"

It was a strong voice without any hesitation or pretense.

* * *

Early morning.

Amon exhaled.

“Phew...my bowels are healthy as ever.”

Amon rose with a refreshed face.

And while fixing his clothes, he quietly checked for any presence outside the door.

‘I explained it well yesterday, but surely she wouldn’t still be waiting outside the door, not understanding...’

After checking outside the door for a while with an anxious face, Amon poked his head out slightly.

‘...She’s not here!’

Coming out of the bathroom with a brightened face, Amon wiped his wet hands on his waist.

‘Hehehe, fortunately she understood well. I was worried about what to do if she didn’t understand.’

As Amon smiled contentedly, he suddenly became curious.

‘Come to think of it, Fiora extended her observation period by a week, right? I wonder how she’s doing? I heard her observation attitude has improved lately, and she’s trying hard to learn.’

Even when she was following him burdensomely, and after yesterday’s realization, he couldn’t even imagine how excellent the ‘true Fiora’ had become.

‘Should I go check?’

At this time, Marion would be preparing for class in the lecture room.

Therefore, Amon, who was about to head to the lecture room, smirked.

“...No, let’s trust her.”

Amon turned around and headed to his room.

And at that time, in Marion’s lecture room.

“Glug glug! My drinking buddy is back!”

“Kya kya kya!”

Fiora was dancing on the podium while shaking a bottle of alcohol.

She had regained her true freedom.

Chapter 117

Why does betrayal occur?

If we look for the fundamental reason, it's because we trust the other person.

In other words, if you don't trust someone, you can't be betrayed.

'How could someone like me forget such an important fact?'

The price of trusting Fiora and not going to Marion's classroom was steep.

Still hoping against hope, when Amon visited the training ground during Sloth's class time, he found Fiora dead drunk and sleeping.

Moreover, Sloth had surrendered her leather, that is, her sleeping bag, to Fiora and was shivering.

Enraged at this sight, Amon kicked the sleeping drunk Fiora like a ball.

"Heeek! Wh-what is this!"

"It's your senior! You rascal! What do you think you're doing!"

"Why, why! Why are you hitting me!"

"Sleeping drunk during precious class time! Is this proper behavior for a teacher! Have you completely forgotten the senior-junior oath we made under yesterday's sunset!"

"You told me to live freely, senior!"

"Damn it! You should be free within reason!"

Having tasted true freedom, Fiora didn't back down an inch even against Amon.

In the end, Amon and Fiora fought it out.

As a result, Amon ended up lying down defeated.

'As expected of a Pendorean family member. That Fiora, she hits hard. But I definitely didn't lose. The current me is lying down due to the feeling of betrayal.'

Amon, who was consoling himself, slowly got up.

“Ah, geez. My nose is bleeding again.”

Amon quickly plugged his nose and sighed.

‘I completely forgot that this academy is a den of demons. Of course, there couldn’t be humans in a demon’s den. Fiora was one of the demons too.’

Fiora’s true form was a monster combining Marion’s drinking habits and Sloth’s laziness!

Having realized this fact, Amon suddenly frowned and muttered.

“But that’s just a delinquent.”

She said she wasn’t a delinquent.

“...That Fiora, she must have deceived me.”

Amon trembled at Fiora’s deception tactics of reassuring him and then stabbing him in the back.

‘Sigh, whatever. She’ll live her life as she sees fit. If she keeps this up after the observation period ends and she officially takes charge of classes...I’ll kill her then.’

Amon carefully cultivated murderous intent towards Fiora as he got up.

It was almost time to start class.

* * *

Entering the classroom, Amon discovered an unexpected person.

Even though there was quite some time until class started, Fiora had arrived first and was organizing teaching materials.

Although she had never been late during her observation period, she had never come this early either.

Yet here she was, having arrived before him and preparing for class!

“What’s this? The delinquent is pretending to be diligent?”

At Amon’s sarcasm, Fiora responded in her usual blunt voice.

“Are you starting again? Stop picking fights.”

“Then stop giving me reasons to. I heard from Senior Marion that you were dancing while waving a liquor bottle this morning?”

“...!”

“I heard everything, you drunkard.”

Perhaps even delinquents feel shame, as Fiora blushed and grumbled.

“It was just for today.”

“No, keep living like that~. It was nice seeing you sleeping drunk~.”

“...Really?”

When Amon glared at her, Fiora quickly turned her head away.

“Sigh, what’s become of my life?”

While grumbling in despair, the classroom door opened.

“Hm? Chloe, why are you here so early?”

At Amon’s question, Chloe glanced at Fiora and smiled sweetly.

“Just because.”

“Hm? I see. Have a seat.”

While Amon didn’t think much of it, Fiora, who had caught Chloe’s glance, narrowed her eyes and looked sideways at Chloe.

‘That kid has been looking at me with those eyes recently.’

Suspicion? It was a gaze containing something similar to that emotion.

However, knowing how much Amon cherished his students, Fiora couldn’t point this out.

‘Fiora! How dare someone like you harass the students!’

Head goes boom!

It wasn’t hard to imagine the scene.

Besides, while her gaze was like that, she was normal when talking, so Fiora decided to dismiss it as just the way the child's eyes naturally looked.

As time passed, all the good and diligent students were seated early despite there being quite some time until class.

"Kids, you all came early."

Amon looked over the students with a pleased face and said while opening the textbook.

"Then let's start class!"

"Ahhh! Teacher!"

"I should come back when it's class time."

As the kids hurriedly tried to escape, Amon chuckled and closed the textbook.

"I'm joking, you kids. Well, since we have some time left, this is perfect. I had something to ask you all."

"What is it?"

The moment Amon wrote 'Cultural Festival' on the blackboard, Raymond jumped up.

"Finally, it's time for me to shine! Right, Raymond!"

'That's right, Raymond.'

"Your thoughts are the same as mine!"

The two Raymonds were dancing with joy.

'That's scary.'

However, this time there was no reason to stop Raymond.

The current situation was that we had significantly fewer students.

In other words, it was a situation where we needed to compete with quality rather than quantity, and Raymond's dolls boasted considerable quality.

In the end, this might become an important element of this cultural festival.

'Still, we can't fill the exhibition hall with his dolls like last time.'

Amon cleared his throat and said.

“Ahem, Raymond. As you say, your role will be important this time.”

“I knew you thought so too, teacher!”

“But you know, how about doing things a bit differently from last time?”

“Huh? Differently?”

Amon said with a warm face.

“Last time there was an exhibition, right? So it was natural for your works to be the star. But this time it’s a cultural festival, right? All students should be the stars, and guests should be able to enjoy it too.”

“That means...”

“You already proved your skills wonderfully at the last exhibition, right? So this time, how about an event where you use your excellent skills to make dolls on the spot for guests, so everyone can enjoy it?”

This would be better to hear and easier to persuade than directly saying ‘No house of horrors.’

Raymond was nodding with a face that seemed to find it reasonable.

“Indeed...you’re saying we should target mass appeal this time, right?”

“Oh? Y-yes, that’s right.”

“I understand. That does sound good too.”

As Raymond’s persuasion ended simply, Amon clenched his fist.

Indeed, talking with kind-hearted students was more comfortable than dealing with demons (teachers).

“Thanks for understanding, Raymond!”

“Hehe, it’s nothing.”

Amon wrote new words on the blackboard.

[Raymond – On-the-spot Custom Doll Making]

Just with this alone, people would have something to enjoy at the cultural festival.

Who wouldn't be tempted by dolls quickly made on the spot by Raymond, who possessed the dexterity of a Sword Master!

'Once spectators see the making process, they'll come running over in fascination.'

Amon smiled warmly and said.

"Now then, do any of you have something you'd like to do?"

Chloe raised her hand quickly.

"Yes, what would you like to do, Chloe? Sword dance? Sword demonstration?"

With Chloe's skills having reached the realm of Sword Expert, she was more than qualified.

But Chloe said in a confident voice.

"Animal experience!"

"...Huh? Animal experience?"

Chloe seemed to think an explanation was needed and continued.

"I'm confident in taming animals. My homeland, the Kingdom of Aran, is in a mountainous region where livestock is rare, right? So we place great importance on bonding with livestock. We treat them practically like children. As a result, livestock training goes well, and children often play and ride them. Wouldn't it be perfect for an animal experience?"

Chloe said with a bright smile.

"A sword demonstration or sword dance would be nice, but there are many nobles in this city. Sword Experts level swordsmen would be common. There wouldn't be any differentiation."

"Hmm..."

"Besides, guests will likely bring many children, and animals can attract children's attention. Horses, goats, cows, pigs, and so on. The more variety, the better, right?"

"Hooo..."

Amon's face became serious.

Now that he heard it, it was quite reasonable.

Numerous nobles stay in Amur, a commercial city.

However, there are tens or hundreds of times more commoners who reside here and work for their living than nobles.

Moreover, being a commercial city, there aren't many opportunities to see proper animals.

'Of course, horses, cows, and pigs are everywhere in Amur too. But cows are valuable assets that need to be treasured as reliable burden bearers, and horses are the exclusive property of nobles. Commoners don't get chances to ride them.'

While they might see them being sold at trading companies, they rarely interact with them in daily life.

In other words, Chloe meant to target such commoners.

But suddenly a question arose.

"But can you ride pigs too?"

"We rode them a lot back home. Though adults can't ride them because of their size."

"So kids can ride pigs too..."

As Amon stroked his chin enviously, Chloe said.

"Right, it would be good to have dogs and cats too. They perform tricks well when tamed."

"But can you tame them by the cultural festival? We only have about a month left."

Chloe gave a somewhat creepy smile.

"Don't worry. I'm confident."

While everyone except Amon felt a chill from that smile, Amon, who completely trusted Chloe, simply thought 'Must be a skilled technique of Aran Kingdom's secret arts' and didn't think much of it.

"Alright. Then I'll put it on the list for now."

[Chloe – Animal Experience]

Amon tapped the blackboard and said.

“Then next student. Boris, is there anything you’d like to do?”

After hesitating for a moment, Boris said.

“I’d like to do a magic demonstration.”

“Magic demonstration! Yes, basics are the best. You can do it together with Senior Marion.”

Magic is also the exclusive property of nobles.

Since most guests are expected to be commoners, magic would surely be a good spectacle for them.

[Boris – Magic Demonstration]

Amon looked at Ami.

“Ami? Any good ideas?”

“Umm...let me think about it a bit more.”

And Amon looked at the last remaining student.

“Rustianel?”

Rustianel, who had been deep in thought, opened her mouth.

“Gold eating.”

Amon let out a deep sigh at the hope that was dripping with self-interest.

“What do you mean you’ll do gold eating at a cultural festival?”

“Why do you think it won’t work?”

“...Why would you think it would?”

Rustianel shook her head and said.

“Teacher, have you ever seen someone eat gold?”

“Huh? Um...no?”

“It would be fascinating, right?”

“It would be...fascinating?”

Even Amon had almost fainted in shock when he first saw it.

Rustianel continued explaining.

“Teacher, nobles will come to the cultural festival too, right?”

“Hm? Well, they would. It is Amonis Academy after all.”

“The cultural festival is a place of entertainment. A place to spend money. Do you think nobles would hesitate to spend just one or two gold coins to see a fascinating sight?”

Amon shuddered and looked at Rustianel.

He hadn't thought that far.

“Teacher, can't you smell the money?”

“...Rustianel.”

“Yes?”

“Eat half and leave half. We need to show people it's real gold coins. Let's consider that remaining half as the viewing fee. I'll give you half of that viewing fee.”

Rustianel smiled brightly.

“As expected of Teacher Amon. The viewing fee is important.”

“You...will become someone great.”

Amon wrote additional words on the blackboard.

[Rustianel – Gold Eating]

“Then only Ami is left, take your time to think about it and tell me...”

“Me! Me! No, I mean, I thought of something!”

“Really? What would you like to do?”

Ami said proudly.

“I want to be the barker for Rustianel’s gold eating!”

“ ... ”

“Oh whyyy. I can do it well.”

Amon sighed and said.

“While you’re at it, do some fire hoop jumping too.”

Chloe quickly added.

“You can jump through it with the dogs and cats I tame!”

“...Was I being treated as a dog or cat?”

Sighing, Amon wrote Ami’s hope on the blackboard while saying.

“We’ll need to ask other teachers’ opinions first, so this isn’t definitely how it will go. Understand?”

“Yes! Teacher.”

As Amon looked over the list while hearing the students’ responses, he froze.

[Raymond – On-the-spot Custom Doll Making]

[Chloe – Animal Experience]

[Boris – Magic Demonstration]

[Rustianel – Gold Eating]

[Ami – Barker (Tentative)]

Looking at it all written down, it wasn’t a cultural festival but a circus.

Chapter 118

After the day’s work, Amon faced other teachers in the conference room.

They were reviewing the contents of the ‘cultural festival’ that the students wanted.

“Uh, um. Amon.”

“Yes, Senior Marion.”

“I understand most of it, but Rustianel’s gold eating? What’s that?”

Amon slowly closed his eyes.

Having already caught the scent of money, Amon was planning to push forward with Rustianel’s gold eating.

“We should be able to gather spectators for sure.”

“...It would be interesting indeed.”

“People don’t know she’s a dragon, so they might see it as a feat of strength show.”

“...This is completely different from the cultural festival we had in mind.”

Sloth also muttered while scanning the list.

“But it was normal until last year...”

“What did you do last year?”

“Things like plays, swordsmanship, magic demonstrations, and debates?”

Amon clicked his tongue.

“That’s too obvious. Far too obvious. For an academy located in the heart of a commercial city, what kind of competitive edge would such obvious things provide?”

Everyone made bewildered expressions at Amon’s statement that denied the academy’s foundations.

However, Amon was confident.

“We need to make money too, don’t we?”

“...So money was the goal after all.”

Well, looking at the content, it seemed they could definitely make money.

Though whether it was appropriate content for an academy’s cultural festival was questionable.

Kai pointed out that fact.

“Doesn’t a cultural festival have its own appropriate format? But this seems more like a circus than a cultural festival. Would the Imperial Education Department really approve?”

“It’s fine. We already got permission from above.”

“From above...”

From the beginning, this was just a shallow trick by the Emperor to transfer support funds to Amonis Academy through the Education Department.

Hadn’t instructions already been given that the scale of the cultural festival should be determined independently by the academy?

‘If they complain, we can just say it couldn’t be helped because we have few students. If we say it was the result of trying to make the spectacle as rich as possible somehow, what can they do about it?’

If they’re dissatisfied, the Education Department should help recruit some students!

“Anyway, we teachers need to be in charge of each stage listed. Which stage would you like to take?”

“Um, are we really going with this?”

To Kai’s objection, Amon said:

“Should we do a play with five students instead? You can be a tree in the background.”

“...Ahem! I think this is fine as it is.”

The others didn’t seem to have any particular complaints either.

‘It’s not like we’re the ones doing it anyway.’

‘If the students want to do it, what’s wrong with that?’

Anyway, at Amon’s words that they needed to decide which stage to be in charge of, Kai aimed for the most normal one.

“Hmm, then I’d like to take Boris’s magic demonstration.”

At those words, Marion glared.

“Tsk! Kai! Even cold water has its hierarchy. I practically raised and taught Boris from the start, so why are you trying to snatch him away?”

“...”

“I’ll be taking charge of Boris’s magic demonstration stage.”

“...Yes, senior.”

Marion breathed a sigh of relief.

‘Whew, got the normal one.’

Kai, who lost in both seniority and justification, held back tears and chose another option.

“Th-then I’ll take Chloe’s animal experience.”

Sloth cut in with a languid voice.

“No, I’ll do it. Our territory has plenty of war horses and livestock. I can provide most of the animals Chloe wants.”

This time he was outmatched in practical matters!

But he could provide such support just as well.

“S-Senior Sloth, couldn’t I take the animal experience?”

“Don’t want to. If you’re unhappy, why don’t you become my senior?”

As Sloth brought up seniority again, Kai’s cheeks trembled.

“But come to think of it, you can work with Raymond, right? Raymond follows you well, doesn’t he?”

That’s not true.

Only Kai thought that way.

Moreover, the problem was that Reinbelt, after hearing Raymond’s complaints after class, had told Kai, “Please stop bothering our Ray.”

Therefore, he was hesitant about being in charge of Raymond.

‘But gold eating? I absolutely don’t want to do that. As the Imperial Crown Prince, gold eating? How could I do something like that?’

A dilemma!

Looking at Kai sweating profusely, Sloth said:

“Anyway, I’ll take the animal experience.”

“Ah...!”

Sloth seized the stage she wanted by taking advantage of Kai’s confusion.

‘Whew, got the easy one. If I just provide the animals, Chloe will handle everything herself, right?’

Now only Raymond’s doll making and Rustianel’s gold eating remained.

Caught in a dilemma, Kai asked while sweating:

“Senior Amon, what are you planning to take?”

To Kai’s question, Amon answered with a serious face.

“Gold eating.”

He absolutely could not, under any circumstances, hand over anything that smelled of money to someone else.

And at Amon’s words, a ray of hope appeared on Kai’s face.

‘Thank goodness! At least I avoided the gold eating!’

Now only Raymond’s doll making remained.

Although he had been scolded by Reinbelt to stop bothering Raymond, there must have been some major misunderstanding somewhere.

‘Right, misunderstandings can be cleared up. And the lesser evil is better than the worst.’

Kai sighed in resignation and said:

“Then I’ll take charge of Raymond.”

“Fine then. So Fiora is left? You just rest. Just help out here and there when extra hands are needed.”

“Yes. I understand.”

Kai realized what it meant that doing nothing guarantees at least a middle ground.

* * *

Amon headed to the headmaster's office with the organized meeting contents.

"I think we can proceed like this."

"Thank you for your hard work, Teacher Amon."

"It's nothing. And there was a suggestion during the meeting – how about you join in with Chloe's animal experience, Headmaster?"

Anar'el tilted her head.

"What? Why would..."

"An elf and animals. It makes for a good image."

"..."

"You weren't planning to just play around during the cultural festival, were you?"

Anar'el swallowed.

Actually, she was so full of thoughts about playing that she had already made plans.

"Th-there's no way. Of course I was planning to help."

"As expected of the Headmaster, I believed in you."

He didn't believe in her at all.

'Anyway, thanks to this we'll have enough attractions. Elves and animals do go well together.'

It was a moment of satisfaction.

"Oh right, Vice Headmaster Brestle suggested running food stalls, what do you think?"

The pleased smile on Amon's face disappeared.

If the initial proposer had been someone else, he would have slapped his knee saying "Right, we almost forgot that at a festival!" but since Brestle suggested it, only anxiety surged.

"...I'm worried."

“...You think so too, Teacher Amon?”

“But do we really need to do that when we’re so short on students? It would be nice to have, but...”

Anar’el spoke as if resigned.

“Vice Principal Brestle said she’d take responsibility for it herself.”

“...That makes me even more worried.”

“Plus she already left to get the necessary ingredients.”

“So it wasn’t a suggestion but a notification.”

A terrible anxiety made his head throb.

‘But even Brestle wouldn’t eat up food meant to be sold in front of everyone. Right, even a Dark Elf would have that much decency.’

As mentioned, isn’t the cultural festival a celebration where everyone becomes the main character?

So he decided to understand with broad-mindedness if Brestle stole a little bit of food.

‘Anyway, the important thing is the gold eating that I’ll be running.’

To be honest, if they could make a big profit there, even if the other things failed...

‘No, they shouldn’t fail. We need to leave good memories for the students.’

Amon, who managed to bring out ‘Teacher Amon,’ nodded his head.

“Anyway, I understand. We only have a few weeks left until the cultural festival.”

He reached out to Anar’el and said:

“Headmaster, let’s do our best with all our might.”

“Of course, Teacher Amon.”

The two clasped hands and prayed for the successful completion of this cultural festival.

* * *

Everything was going smoothly.

Although it should have been difficult having to prepare for the cultural festival while conducting regular classes, the students' expressions were bright.

Well, it was their first official academy event after all!

Ah, of course, the previous exchange was an event too, but it wasn't an event that gave joy to the students.

Therefore, while feeling tired, the students did their best, feeling joy in the fact that the cultural festival preparations were progressing steadily.

"Jjong-ah! Lie down!"

-Pant pant pant!

"Nabi! Roll over!"

-Meow.

Chloe was skillfully training the dog and cat that Sloth had provided!

Behind such Chloe, dozens of animals were standing at attention, waiting only for Chloe's commands.

'...How on earth did she train the animals?'

Amon was curious about that fact.

But even when he asked Chloe, she would just smile and say "It's a secret," and Boris and other students would avoid answering, saying "Chloe told us not to tell."

'It's not like I can ask the animals either.'

Amon scratched his head and turned around.

"Chloe, are the preparations going smoothly?"

To that question, Chloe smiled brightly.

"Yes, it's going well. The animals that can be ridden for the animal experience now have no resistance to carrying people, and the ones that will perform tricks are learning quickly."

"That's amazing in such a short time. By the way, where's Senior Sloth?"

"She said she'd take a nap over there."

“I knew it.”

But he had no intention of scolding her.

‘Thanks to her providing the animals, the cultural festival preparations are going smoothly.’

Amon moved on to the next student.

“Boris, spread the magic a bit wider here!”

“Yes!”

“Good! Splendid and beautiful!”

Boris was busy preparing performances to show at the magic demonstration with Marion.

Amon occasionally watched, and he was becoming more skilled with each passing day.

‘Plus, worried about running out of mana, I’m feeding him plenty of potatoes from my territory.’

Also, Amon prepared enough potatoes to eat on the day, so there won’t be any shortage of mana during the magic demonstration!

Amon headed to the doll-making station that Raymond had set up.

There were dolls made as samples to show to guests on the day, modeled after everyone at the academy.

They were dolls that captured people’s characteristics incredibly well.

‘Although they’re only stuffed doll size since they need to be made quickly on the spot, they’re really well made. Is his eye for detail at Sword Master level too?’

He was relieved that they had prepared plenty of materials.

And for the last student, Rustianel’s gold eating corner...

‘...There’s nothing to prepare.’

There was a reason Amon was going around looking at other students’ stages!

‘And what’s really unexpected is that the food stall Brestle is preparing turned out better than expected. It’s cheap, plentiful, and the quality is decent.’

Brestle might not care about other things, but she was serious about food.

Her logic was that what goes into her own mouth is important, but what goes into others' mouths is equally important.

Come to think of it, Brestle had never actually stolen food from others.

She just claims a lot for her share and claims ambiguous ownership as her own.

'I was worried about what if there were no customers, but Brestle even asked Gold Road Trading Company to attract customers while placing orders for ingredients...'

Standing still lost in thought, Amon suddenly looked up at the sky.

'...Why is everything going so smoothly? It's making me anxious.'

But Amon soon shook his head.

"It'll go well. We've messed up so many times before, so just this once should go well."

Amon tried to suppress his anxiety as he moved on.

* * *

On the day of the long-awaited cultural festival, Reinbelt was deep in meditation.

'The recent incident with the intruder was entirely my fault. Therefore...'

Opening his eyes, Reinbelt muttered in a determined voice.

"This time, on the honor of the Empire's Four Knights, I will not allow even a single intruder."

Chapter 119

Amon was lost in contemplation watching the sun rise outside the window.

'Finally, the long-awaited culture festival day has dawned.'

Today's sun would be special not only to him but also to the students.

While drinking chamomile tea that helped calm his mind and body, he barely managed to steady his excited heart that was pounding with expectations of making a big profit today.

'It seems Gold Road Trading Company has been promoting it well, as even occasional passersby have been asking when the culture festival would be held.'

What was unexpected was that Gold Road Trading Company, known for their strict business dealings, readily agreed to promote the culture festival.

Later, he found out that when Brestle went to place orders for ingredients, she pleaded with such intense eyes that the branch manager had no choice but to agree.

'Even merchants yield before true madness. Anyway...'

Amon looked out the window.

The stages prepared for today were located near the main gate.

This was because there weren't many booths operating in the first place.

'Still, we've gathered them well so the density looks high. Besides, we've prepared quite thoroughly so it should be fine.'

A stage for magic demonstrations, a booth for handmade doll making, animals waiting only for Chloe's commands in a spacious enclosure!

And on top of that, various food booths that Brestle put her heart and soul into!

'...How did the food booth end up being the biggest though?'

With dozens of different food items, the Academy's chef would probably be clutching his secretly prepared resignation letter while shedding tears of blood today too.

'Anyway, the most important thing is Rustianel's gold-eating stage.'

Amon looked at the table and chair positioned at the center.

There, Rustianel would devour the gold coins showered upon her.

And half of the remaining pieces would be Amon's share.

'When the Gold Road Trading Company's branch manager visited, I asked him to especially promote the gold-eating stage well...hehehe.'

The numerous nobles staying in Amur are starved for entertainment, so success would naturally follow!

Amon leisurely sipped his tea while looking at the culture festival grounds bathed in dawn light.

* *

The leisure was short-lived.

‘Crazy. What is this?’

Amon had somewhat underestimated the capabilities of Gold Road Trading Company.

Aside from their ability to make money well, they hadn’t particularly done anything to build trust until now, so he couldn’t help it.

But now he had to revise that thought.

“They say there’s a magic demonstration over there?”

“Let’s go right now!”

Dozens of people of all ages rush toward Boris and Marion like they’re going to devour them.

“Wow! They’re making handmade dolls over there for just the cost of materials!”

“Let’s go right now!”

Young girls rolled like balls toward Raymond and Kai.

“Horses! Mom, I want to ride a horse!”

“Let’s go right now, dear!”

Just as Chloe had predicted, boys who yearned for large animals urged their parents to lead them to the animal experience area.

And as always, food knows no bounds of gender or age.

“The chicken skewer smell is amazing!”

“Let’s eat right now!”

Despite it being early morning, the academy was bustling with hundreds of people of all ages.

Moreover, each stage set up by the students was doing brisk business!

Even Sloth, who had planned to just provide animals and relax, was sweating profusely greeting guests due to unexpected crowds, and Fiora, who thought she would just help

occasionally since there were no students in charge, was running around helping here and there with her eyebrows fluttering.

Then what about our Amon's gold-eating stage!

"Brother."

"...What."

"I think we've failed."

Amon closed his eyes tightly at Ami's observation.

Surprisingly, despite there being so many people, not a single person was showing even a grain of interest in Amon's gold-eating stage.

Thanks to this, while other places were bustling with people, only the gold-eating booth was deserted as if it were in a different world.

"Should I really jump through a ring of fire...?"

"Ami, your brother trusts you."

"Can't you jump together with me, brother?"

"Hmm...Should we?"

While Amon and Ami were whispering, Rustianel, who had been maintaining her position solemnly, spoke in a grave voice.

"Teacher, Miss Ami. Don't act rashly."

"Rustianel!"

"There are many ways. For example..."

Rustianel pulled out a pouch full of gold coins from her bosom.

At that sight, Amon's eyes flashed with greed, and realizing this, Rustianel quietly hid the pouch while saying,

"When selling things, you show samples first. Moreover, since gold-eating is an unfamiliar spectacle, we need to show an actual example."

"Ce-certainly..."

Actually, the gold-eating booth wasn't a completely deserted frontier from the start.

At first, customers approached with interest, but when they heard the viewing fee was one gold coin, they ran away in disgust.

It was an unavoidable fee since it was a show about eating the gold coins given as viewing fees.

"So Miss Ami, please handle the customer solicitation."

"Okay. Leave it to me."

Ami stepped forward confidently.

And as if proving that her claim of having worked at a fruit store wasn't a lie, she called out in a sweet voice:

"Come oooone! Everyone! Look heeere!"

Living up to being Amon's sister, Ami let out a loud shout, and when the attention of passing customers focused on her, she clapped her hands and continued speaking.

"Thank you for coming to Amonis Academy's culture festival. Ah! Is everyone enjoying themselves!"

Having gathered attention in one breath, Ami quickly shouted:

"Come oooone! For those who aren't enjoying themselves yet, a sight to see! This person here is the famous alchemist Rustianel from the Arma Mountains! Please welcome them with applause and cheers!"

Amon, who was blankly watching Ami spinning around and encouraging applause from the crowd that had somehow gathered in a circle, fell into thought.

'She said she worked at a fruit store, but didn't she work with circus performers or wandering merchants...?'

The kind of pitch that suspicious goods merchants would make!

She also sneakily transformed Rustianel into 'Alchemist Rustianel.'

'Moreover, she mentioned the Arma Mountains, an extremely remote region, and appealed to people's interest by emphasizing the unique occupation of alchemist. Ami, you are really...'

Could his sister have the talent of a con artist!

Furthermore, Rustianel seemed to have made a quick judgment as well, as she began acting like an alchemist in line with Ami's words.

Swoosh-!

A trick of instantly melting gold coins and floating golden liquid in the air!

Amon nodded.

'Ah, I see. It seems Ami and Rustianel practiced together beforehand... No, that's not it. That rascal Rustianel is sweating because this is an unexpected situation.'

Anyway, thanks to that, they succeeded in gathering interest and curiosity.

By now, even people from the food booths were approaching here with interest.

And just as people were exclaiming at Rustianel's trick while focusing their attention.

Ami gave a signal with her eyes.

'Now!'

Recognizing that signal, Rustianel opened her mouth wide and the melted gold coins spinning in the air were sucked in like noodles.

"Whoa! What! She ate that!"

"What did she just eat!?"

At the expected reaction, Ami looked around at the audience in a circle and said,

"The accomplished alchemist Rustianel! Right here, right now! Eat gold!"

The audience was shocked and astonished!

"Don't believe it? Rustianel!"

Rustianel tossed a gold coin and caught it in her mouth.

And people screamed in shock at the sight of her crunching and chewing it.

"Waaah! Sh-she's eating gold!"

"Mom! She's eating gold!"

Ami began to incite the people, adding momentum.

“You think it might be just food covered in gold foil? No, it’s not!”

Ami picked up a gold coin and flicked it with her finger, making a clear metallic sound ring out.

Then she put it in Rustianel’s mouth, who again crunched and chewed it!

“Waaah! That child is eating gold!”

“Mom! I’m telling you she’s eating gold!”

Ami smiled slyly.

The mood was ripe, so it was time to wrap things up.

“Now! For those who still don’t believe, put your own gold coins directly into Rustianel’s mouth! But, as you all know, since Rustianel will eat that gold coin, you won’t get it back!”

* * *

At Rustianel’s gold-eating corner, now a wasteland without people.

Ami was making a sad face.

“Why aren’t there any people? Did I do the soliciting wrong?”

Amon shook his head.

“No. Although you were a bit like a medicine peddler, people’s reactions weren’t bad.”

“...Should I really jump through a ring of fire then?”

People looked at Rustianel eating gold coins with curiosity, but they wouldn’t take any out from their own purses.

In the end, the only gold coins Rustianel ate were her own.

Moreover, having eaten quite a few gold coins for soliciting customers, Rustianel was sadly looking at her now somewhat thin purse.

‘The empire’s generosity has hit rock bottom. Even though Rustianel appears to be a child on the outside despite being a dragon, and is so hungry like that, not a single person thinks to give gold coins! How can the world be so cold!’

Amon, who couldn’t help but lament, looked around.

As time passed, more and more people were gathering.

Nevertheless, they showed no intention of approaching this booth.

Occasionally when someone asks 'What do you do here?' and we answered 'This person eats gold!', they would only show interest but no one would take out their gold coins.

'Strange, this is strange. What's going on? Among all these people, there's not a single wealthy person or noble? That's impossible.'

Something was definitely wrong.

So just as Amon was about to head to the main gate to check on the guests waiting to enter.

"Ah, Senior Amon!"

Fiora, who came running as if rolling, said with a haggard face.

"You're free! There are too many people at the animal experience area, please help!"

At that moment, Marion also came running, panting.

"Amon! There are too many people to control! Help us out!"

Kai, who had so many customers that he had started making dolls himself, came running with hands full of needle pricks.

"Senior! Please help us!"

"Kai, you rascal! Even water has its proper order! Our magic demonstration stage comes first!"

"Animal experience comes first! The Headmaster told us to bring Senior Amon!"

"Can't you see my hands are full of holes! Please save me just this once!"

Seeing them quarreling to take him away, Amon slowly closed his eyes.

At that moment, Brestle passed by while eating and pointed accusingly.

"Tsk, playing alone while everyone's busy."

With his heart becoming heavy, Amon's eyes welled up with tears.

* * *

Reinbelt was glaring at the line of people waiting to enter.

'This time, I won't let a single intruder in!'

Due to this mindset, Reinbelt's aura was unconsciously surrounding the academy like an iron fortress.

This ominous aura had no effect on ordinary people who knew nothing about mana, but it was different for knights and magicians who had learned even a little mana.

'I heard there's a culture festival there today, but seeing this unsettling aura, better not go.'

'Wow, look at that aura. Can't even breathe if we go there.'

The knights from the knight order, who happened to get their paychecks today, turned away without even looking in the academy's direction.

And the situation wasn't different for wealthy nobles and merchants.

This was because the knights and mercenaries guarding them strongly discouraged them.

"Baron Barton, what do you mean we shouldn't go to the culture festival?"

"There's an unsettling aura flowing there. It's a tremendous force that I simply cannot handle. Honestly, my legs are trembling even now."

"If you, a Sword Expert knight, say so...I understand."

For this reason, those entering the academy were only commoners!

There was no way 'gold-eating,' which was intended as an extravagant spectacle for nobles, would work out well.

But Amon, unaware of this fact, held onto hope while helping at the animal experience stage.

'Yes, wealthy nobles will come in the evening! That's when our stage really begins!'

Absolutely! No matter what! There was no possibility of that happening.

Chapter 120

Late at night.

When the many crowds who had come to the Academy's cultural festival were beginning to leave, Amon wore a peaceful smile.

Did he make a lot of money from people who came late to watch gold eating?

No!

He's actually wearing a resigned smile because not a single person came.

'That's just like my life. I thought it was strange how things were going so smoothly.'

The cultural festival preparation, mastery of tasks, execution – everything proceeded more smoothly than one could believe possible for the usual Amonis Academy.

They say sudden personality changes are a sign of impending death, and he wondered if the academy might be about to collapse due to how unexpectedly smoothly things went.

'But it turns out it wasn't the academy that was going to collapse, but me.'

Conservation of energy! Equivalent exchange!

The cursed academy's law that something must always fail has struck Amon this time.

"Brother, are you okay?"

Ami asked worriedly, seeing Amon staring into space with an empty face.

"...I'm fine. Ami, are you okay?"

Ami responded with a blank face to his concerned question, wondering if she might be disappointed about not making much money.

"Why wouldn't I be okay? I just rested."

True to her words, Ami hadn't lost anything.

The visitors who came to watch often gave her food, apparently impressed by how she attracted customers.

"Rustianel, are you okay too?"

"Huh? What do you mean?"

“...Never mind.”

Rustianel hadn't lost anything either.

Eating gold was just to fill her own stomach, and like Ami, she only ate food given by visitors.

But it was different for Amon.

'Tsk tsk tsk, what's a grown man doing with these kids?'

'What a nasty fellow.'

'I know a bit about reading faces, and that guy's face shows he'll fail from being too greedy for money.'

Amon only received a barrage of insults.

'Well, at least I didn't get hit with stones.'

Anyway, when the festival visitors had mostly left late at night, people from other successful booths approached with exhausted appearances.

“Ugh, uuugh...Finally it's over.”

“Senior Marion.”

Marion, who usually lived with alcohol on his lips, had lost his alcohol-flushed face from being too busy to drink.

And Boris, who approached with Marion, had gained noticeable weight in just one day.

He had eaten too many potatoes to replenish mana, unable to rest due to the continuous encore requests from the countless crowds.

“I'm so full...”

“Boris, you need to brush your teeth first. The potato smell is strong.”

“Sob sob...”

Sloth and Chloe's appearances were also terrible.

Sloth was walking half-slumped as if afflicted with a disease that would kill her if she couldn't sleep, and Chloe had also lost her usual composed appearance, looking disheveled like Sloth.

And Amon frowned as he looked them over.

'Ugh...! The smell...!'

When Amon stepped back due to the smell that had permeated their bodies from handling livestock all day, Chloe wore a deeply hurt expression!

'But what about the headmaster...? Wasn't she helping too?'

At that moment, Anar'el, who had collapsed from fatigue, was having her hair chewed on by a horse.

Soon after, Amon checked Raymond and Kai's conditions.

'Raymond looks fine. His face is glowing like he's fulfilled his life's dream after making dolls to his heart's content. But what's wrong with that Kai?'

Though he was the imperial crown prince skilled in both literary and martial arts, Kai had no experience with sewing, so his entire body was covered in blood from needle pricks.

It was understandable for his hands, but why his face was pricked remained a mystery!

'Did Raymond stab him in anger?'

Anyway, as Amon silently observed them all exhausted from fatigue, he realized something.

Though they all looked terrible in different ways, they had one thing in common.

The plump pouches that each teacher and student was holding!

Their earnings from today.

Glance-

Amon looked inside his own clothes.

Both his clothes and hands were light.

Faced with this bitter fact, Amon forced a laugh and said:

"Ha.ha.ha. You all earned quite a fortune. How im~pressive."

A voice dripping with envy and jealousy!

However, the teachers glared at Amon with envious eyes and said:

“Must be nice to have rested well?”

“Urk...”

“Ah, I wish I could have lazed around like someone.”

“Ugh...”

Clutching his chest from the fierce counterattack, Amon made a timid protest.

“I-I helped with work too...”

Kai said:

“You were just a hindrance. You tore up five dolls in a row at our doll booth.”

“Ack...!”

“Must have had too much energy from resting so well.”

“Indeed.”

Realizing he couldn't win against the teachers, Amon changed his approach.

He hurriedly ran to the tired students and said:

“Children! Thank you all for working so hard today!”

The students forced bright smiles despite their exhaustion when Amon approached with a bright smile.

‘As expected of our students! If it were those devil-like teachers, they would have picked a fight saying how dare you smile alone when we're dying from exhaustion!’

Having found peace of mind, Amon looked around at the students and said:

“You all look very tired, are you okay?”

Despite their obvious fatigue, the children nodded brightly at Amon's caring question.

“Yes. It was really fun because lots of people came!”

It was natural for the students to look happy.

All the performances they did at today's cultural festival were things they wanted to do.

Moreover, their efforts were greatly rewarded as numerous people enjoyed what they had planned and executed themselves.

Being rewarded for effort is special even for adults, but it's even more special for young children and will be a great experience for their future lives.

Knowing this, Amon smiled contentedly.

"I'm glad you all had fun."

"But...what about teacher?"

Even in their busy state, the students knew that the gold-eating performance led by Rustianel, Ami, and Amon had been a failure.

Though they asked with worried expressions, Amon instead replied with a bright face:

"Teacher had fun too. Although our performance didn't have great results...Rustianel, did you have fun today?"

As mentioned, Rustianel hadn't lost anything today.

"It was fun. And I ate lots of delicious things too."

"That's good. How about you, Ami?"

"Honestly, from partway through I was just going around sightseeing... hehe."

Both Rustianel and Ami had completely forgotten about 'gold eating' at some point, busy touring other performances and eating food.

"Good. As long as you had fun, that's what matters."

"...Teacher."

Amon roughly patted the heads of the children who approached seeming touched, and said:

"Haha, but do you have any thoughts after spending all day doing what you like?"

Boris said:

"Even things you like become something you don't want to do when it becomes work."

"..."

The other children nodded with tired faces, seeming to agree.

The children had realized too great a truth at their young age.

“Anyway, good work everyone today. The cultural festival runs for two days, but tomorrow will probably have fewer people than today, right?”

Though a commercial city, Amur didn't have that many residents compared to its economic scale.

If the cultural festival had many things to enjoy, tomorrow would have been just as crowded, but since there were limits to the prepared attractions, tomorrow would inevitably be quieter.

“So get plenty of rest today, and let's finish strong tomorrow too. Okay?”

“Yes! Teacher! Oh, that's right.”

“Yes?”

Chloe said shyly:

“Since it'll be quiet tomorrow, would you like to come watch our performance? You haven't properly seen what we're doing, teacher.”

“Hmm...”

True, Amon was too busy today, being called here and there with Fiora to fill in gaps.

So he was too preoccupied to properly watch the students' performances.

But here's the problem.

‘Chloe, are you saying I'll have nothing to do tomorrow so I might as well watch?’

Sometimes pure goodwill can hurt more!

Amon nodded with a rotten smile.

“Sure. If I'm free.”

“Yes! You must, teacher.”

“Right. If I'm free.”

Emphasizing again, Amon looked at Ami with determined eyes.

'Tomorrow will definitely be different.'

'That's right, brother.'

Word would definitely spread throughout Amur about how wonderful the Amonis Academy's cultural festival was on the first day.

And since mainly commoners came on the first day, nobles and wealthy people who didn't come to the cultural festival would surely become interested after hearing the rumors on the second day.

'Yes, the nobles and rich people were probably just cautious about wasting time. But once word spreads, they'll be interested no matter how cautious they are.'

Meaning tomorrow would be full of nobles instead of today's visitors!

The gold-eating performance would also receive praise and run successfully!

Amon clenched his fist with a determined face.

'Our performance starts tomorrow!'

* * *

Early in the morning, Reinbelt was deep in meditation.

'Yesterday, not a single intruder was allowed.'

Reinbelt clenched his fist with a determined face.

"Today too, those with impure intentions shall not cross the academy's threshold!"

* * *

Amon sensed it.

'Hmm, today's a failure too.'

Rustianel and Ami had already left their posts to play!

Amon kept watch alone and looked around.

'Mostly people who came yesterday are here, and it seems they mainly came to eat at the food booths. Checking out things they missed yesterday while they're at it.'

Though the crowds were far smaller than yesterday, the food booths were doing decent business.

And while watching the food booths with a vacant expression, his eyes met with Brestle who was helping the chef cook.

“Hah!”

Amon ground his teeth seeing Brestle mock him with shoulders raised almost to her head.

‘I guess you need to sell food to make money after all.’

Amon sighed and got up.

‘Sigh, there’s no one here anyway so I might as well go watch what the students are doing.’

Amon left the gold-eating booth, an extreme wilderness without a single person, and headed elsewhere.

And after some time passed several men stealthily approached the gold-eating booth.

“I heard they do something amazing here?”

“Surprisingly, some alchemist supposedly chomps down gold. But there’s no one here?”

One of them sighed regretfully.

“I was too busy with business to come yesterday, so I really wanted to see it today. What a shame.”

“Yeah. I even closed my shop and came early today to see that.”

“Tsk, nothing we can do about it. There’s lots of other things to see, let’s go check those out.”

The self-employed merchants of Amur headed elsewhere, jingling their money pouches full of gold coins.