

Garden 75

Vol. 3 Chapter 10.7 - The bitter with the sweet

Aeroc slept all day the next day. He woke up late in the afternoon. Kloff was still holding him tightly, making sure he didn't fly off somewhere. Anxiety had kept him awake all night, but seeing Aeroc wake up with a twitching nose under the warm afternoon sunlight was a reward for waiting patiently until the darkness receded.

As soon as he woke up, Aeroc called out to the person in front of him, as if calling out to a stranger, saying, "Kloff?" There was no trace of fear or pain in his slightly hoarse voice. Deeply relieved, Kloff smiled and greeted him as he had been planning all along.

"Hello, Aeroc. I'm afraid you're still in a dream."

Aeroc blinked his eyes dazedly, brows furrowing as he just woke up.

"What are you talking about?"

"I still love you, as always."

He blinked his eyes as if he didn't understand, but soon burst into a bright smile. He seemed to have stabilized, thankfully. As the worries that plagued him throughout the night went away, Kloff lightly pressed a kiss on his lips, which curved into a pretty shape.

“To think that I got such a hot confession as soon as I opened my eyes. You must have tried so hard to be a romantic.”

“...You’re the one who made me do that.”

“When did I do that?”

It was a little strange to see no trace of panic in his playful smile. Did he not remember what happened last night? Well, it was better that way.

Kloff embraced the cheerful Aeroc once again, kissed him deeply, and then got up. He wanted to have a hot shower to wash away his tired body, soaked with tears and sweat. The sheets were pulled back as he rose, Aeroc stretched his body, letting out a groan, before relaxing again. At the unexpected sound of his loud groan, their gazes met, and Aeroc smiled, looking slightly embarrassed.

“I’m tired.”

“Of course. You did heavy labor all night.”

“...We did have sex for a long time, I don’t think we did it all night. And I don’t suppose you did anything unscrupulous like touching a sleeping person?”

Aeroc glared at Kloff in suspicion. Kloff didn't understand how Aeroc could think of that. No, before that, how could Aeroc blame him after leaving him to half-drown in the black waters of Styx, while he comfortably fainted himself? But he kept that to himself, fearing that Aeroc might have another seizure. Kloff grumbled inside and put on a gentle smile outwardly.

"Sex is not labor. And it's not something to be enjoyed alone."

"But why am I so tired then?"

Well, that was because he had escaped in the middle of the night, got caught, struggled, and made a scene. As Aeroc raised his knees to rub his ankles with a puzzled look on his face, Kloff slid a hand around his round lower belly.

"You moved the fertilized egg from here to here all night long."

A rosy blush instantly appeared on Aeroc's cheek. He chewed on his lips for a moment and then scolded Kloff.

"That's not heavy labor."

"Of course, that's labor. Picking the strongest, healthiest seeds from a myriad of seeds, creating a human being, and then transporting it from a deep valley to the open plains."

“In the prestigious university where only brilliant minds gather, you used your scholarship to study rhetoric? What a shame.”

Running a hand over his reddened cheeks, Aeroc scanned the audacious alpha up and down, looking at him in disbelief. Kloff, who thought he had said quite a unique expression, smiled smugly. Immediately, a pillow flew and hit him in the face.

Although the person who spoke seemed completely unaffected, the listener felt embarrassed and squirmed. Meanwhile, Kloff got off the bed. Clearing his dry throat from the whispering he'd done all night, he drank from the water on the table. Then he poured a glass of apple juice and pulled off the bed sheets. He offered it to Aeroc, who was lying face down on the bed.

As soon as he sat up and took it, he made a pitiful expression, saying, “Uuuh. I guess I won't be able to drink black tea from now on?” Kloff, who had been looking at his omega affectionately as if he would get up at any moment and brew tea leaves in apple juice, drew the line calmly with a gentle voice.

“For the meanwhile, be satisfied with apple juice.”

Grumbling, Aeroc drank the juice. Then he said the line that pregnant women often say.

“I'm hungry.”

“I'll get a meal prepared for you.”

Kloff, putting on a gown and tying his waistband, nodded his head.

“Take out the potatoes. I don’t eat them.”

“Alright.”

Just as he was about to step out and call the butler, Aeroc shouted from behind.

“Cancel that just now. I’m going to eat stewed potatoes and vegetables. But instead, you’ll cook them for me.”

Kloff extended his hand outside the door and turned back when he didn’t see the butler. He asked, “What?” in response.

Sipping on the remaining juice, Aeroc added.

“Cut the potatoes into pretty round shapes.”

“Are you being serious? I’ve never cooked before.”

Kloff showed a helpless expression, but Aeroc showed the same unaffectedness as Kloff had been earlier.

“Learn from now on. In the future, you’ll have to feed the two of us.”

Kloff sighed as he watched the omega pointing alternately at his chest and stomach.

“Is this your way of revenge because I don’t let you drink black tea?”

“No.”

“It is though.”

“No.”

“Don’t lie to me.”

“Well, so you can’t do it?”

Kloff's head snapped up in response to the accusation of lying, but Aeroc just shot an annoyingly arrogant glare. His determination not to eat anything unless Kloff personally made it was evident in his firm smile.

After an intense staring battle, ultimately defeated by the disadvantage of being the imprinting sinner, Kloff finally let go of the string he had just grabbed to ring the bell at his bedside. He walked out of the room, keeping down his temper with Aeroc, who was laughing in amusement. Damn it, where was the kitchen again?

"Did you really cook it yourself?"

Kloff offered Aeroc a bowl of his painstakingly homemade vegetable soup, and after a couple of sips, he let go of the spoon with a displeased scowl. As an aristocrat trained in strict dining etiquette, Aeroc could barely stop himself from gagging as if he were swallowing a poison concoction. In exasperation, Kloff held out a hand that was bandaged all over.

"Here, evidence."

"...Was the weird thing I chewed just now your fingernail or a piece of flesh from your finger...?"

Aeroc swirled the remaining soup with the spoon, looking as if he was ready to vomit at any moment.

"It all washed off when I washed the blood off the potatoes."

"I thought it smelled like metal. Did you feed me your blood?"

"There's a study that says blood is good for iron deficiency during pregnancy."

Kloff made excuses as best as he could. He had already said that he had never cooked before, so he didn't know why he was making more excuses.

"You did this on purpose, didn't you? Because you don't want to cook."

"Absolutely not. I can swear on our child."

Kloff cut in with a decisive tone. Aeroc hummed, before looking at Kloff and pushing the bowl away.

"...It's different."

Kloff was taken aback. He asked, "What?" in response, but Aeroc just said, "There's just such a thing." and didn't mention it any further. Aeroc hiding something made him feel anxious and nervous, but Kloff decided not to push the matter further.

The vegetable soup, made literally by sacrificing himself, went straight to the trash, and Aeroc ate the soft bread and soup made by the cook, along with some fruits and vegetables, well-cooked meat dishes, and even ice cream for dessert, before falling asleep.

It was amazing how voracious his appetite was when he was quite slim. He would usually just eat the food in front of him silently. Kloff hadn't realized it before, but when the two of them had meals together, Aeroc would even pick up food that fell on the table with his fingers. Kloff couldn't forget how shocked he was when he first saw it.

While he had an insatiable appetite for anything edible, he would immediately spit out raisins in disgust. Aeroc didn't seem to have a problem eating other dried fruits, but Kloff didn't understand why he hated dried grapes so much. On the other hand, he ate fresh fruits without any reservation, so it didn't matter.

Now that Aeroc was pregnant, it was natural for him to eat a lot, and it was also cute. Since he would look for something to eat again after waking up from his sleep, Kloff prepared simple cookies and juice on the nearby tea table. After kissing Aeroc's forehead and lips, who fell asleep peacefully but still looked tired, Kloff turned off all the lights in the room, bringing only a very small lantern, and sat next to the slightly large table next to the bed.

He had to stay by Aeroc's side for the next few days and take care of the tasks he couldn't handle during that time. Above all, now that they were going to have a child, it was necessary to prepare for that. If they couldn't have a formal marriage vow, they would have to come up with some other legal binding equivalent to that. Not because he didn't trust Aeroc, but to make Aeroc trust him. Of course, Kloff wouldn't deny his intention to keep Aeroc tied to him.

While preparing paperwork that would bind them to each other, akin to a slave contract, he occasionally stole glances at the sleeping beauty. Just being in the same space was enough to work him up. Unconsciously, he wore a faint smile and focused on his work. Although his fingers, sacrificed for Aeroc, were extremely sore as they touched the pen, he endured it.

It was a quiet and peaceful night with only the sound of the pen scratching away.

