

Garden 95

Vol. 4 Chapter 2.1 - My honowable defianse toward confronting the disrespekful illllegal inhabitant

My name is Lenoc Ellim Benteiwind.

I am the eldest alpha and son of Count Teiwind. I know that from hearing my name alone, people would exclaim 'Ah...'. That is, if they know Teiwind.

At a time when the world's civilizations are advancing and philosophies and politics are revolutionizing, it may seem a bit old-fashioned to emphasize the history of a long lineage, but it's also not right to completely ignore the deep traditions that have been passed down through the millennia. Especially when you are carrying on the name of a great family whose very existence represents a distinguished spirit. Thus, I learned the teachings of my ancestors from the depths and breadths of the newspapers and more.

I breathed in the dreadlocks of the classics, soaked in the essence of fierce scholars. I climbed the ladder of a study that has been in the hands of more than a dozen counts until it got deeply coloured. I reached for the black book with the golden seal that I had longed for since I knew of its existence. A volume I could barely hold in one hand. A weight that I could barely support with two hands. This was the weight of a classic.

I climbed down the ladder and placed it on the well-refined table. I dragged the chair over before flipping open the hardcover. It was quite a penance to move a big chair as tall as I was, but this classic was worth it. I climbed onto the chair and sat down on the cushion.

Today I will find the answer to the greatest adversity of my life. With trembling hands, I opened the solid bookcase. A feast of countless spellings. The one I'm looking for must be here somewhere.

Ah, the agony.

Why didn't this classic show me the answer? The sea of words, 2,830 pages in all, was so alien to me. I pulled my hair unrealizing. The sight of the dark, bronze-coloured lump of protein in my hand made me angry. His curse had begun. A man without any authority who dared to dominate the Count estate, and also deceived the current count. That wicked man who was bending and shaking the count's mind, body, and spirit. I was still struggling today to drive him from this house.

I turned the pages annoyedly. Whatever spell he had cast, there weren't any legible words in this book. The time was passing, what could I do? Just then, I heard footsteps outside.

I closed the book in a rush. I needed to disguise my plan. That man was quick on his feet. The slightest slip of the tongue would be detected and I would be punished severely. I immediately pulled out a large sheet of white paper and placed it over the book. Then, I grabbed a stubby, rainbow-coloured pencil. My preference was for a heavy, inked fountain pen, but I was not allowed for that yet. The door opened and the man walked in.

"Lenoc. What are you doing here?"

He laid another pile of receipts and contracts on the hefty desk, as if he were intent on sucking the lifeblood out of the count. Those were important documents that my parental custody, the Count of Teiwind, must see and judge for himself! If the count failed to do so, I, his rightful heir, must do it myself, but this man had usurped his authority because I was not yet of age.

He placed a heavy ledger on top of it to block my interest in the papers, then stepped aside. I had to act as if I were a 7 year-old child who knew nothing. It felt like a blow to my pride, but it was a desperate struggle to survive.

"I'm drawing, Father."

Disgrace. Humiliation. It truly was. The fact that I had to call him father, despite the absurdity of it all, simply because I was born from the sperm he provided.

I looked at him and smiled. An aristocrat should smile at any moment. He stretched out a hand like a weapon and stroked my hair, as if to feign an innocent cut. He stroked my shiny, glossy chestnut-colored hair, then reached down and gripped my shoulders tightly, before going away. If he added a little more strength to that grip, I would have an immediate meeting with my ancestors. An honorable death is always welcome, but this was not the time. I have not yet freed the Count.

That man watched me draw, his dark chestnut eyes glittering like an old beast. The family crest, the lion. It was a subconscious plea for the power of the ancestors to help me drive out this vile demon.

He looked down at the painting gravely. Would this work? These sharp claws and whipping mane. And those piercing eyes and ghastly teeth. One day, this lion will set against this evil that has driven absurdity and bring justice. I looked at him confidently. He stared, dumbfounded, overwhelmed by a lion so alive it could roar at any moment. Then he opened his mouth. I waited to see what he would say. Would he be afraid? Would he drive me away? If you have a mouth, say something.....

"What is this, a hairy potato?"

Uhuk... This... This evil demon. It was clear that the poison of cruel lies ran through his veins. How could he call the Golden Lion of Teiwind, a potato? I was in pain. My pride was crushed. My hands trembled.

“... It’s a lion. A golden lion.”

“Ah, right.”

Having crushed the will of a brave man with his cruel words, that person smiled. “Good work,” he said belatedly, adding more lies before going over to the desk as he sat there. That was a relief. Even if he gave a big bruise to my ego, he didn’t notice the book. That man was extremely wary of me absorbing more knowledge, more information. It must be his instinct to fear that I would be getting smarter and threaten his position.

I carefully pushed the book aside from under the papers. I intended to wrap it in a picture of a lion and take it to my bedroom. That man didn’t look this way anymore, deeply engrossed in sorting through his books and papers.

That’s right, it would be very pleasant to feast on the sweet fruit, but it would be short-lived. The moment I finished deciphering this book, the man would be miserable. He would be forced to look up, his big body bowing on the floor, begging for forgiveness and saying, “Mr Lenoc, please forgive me. From now on, you can use as much pocket money as you like. Here are the keys to the safe and chequebook.” I smiled a little as I imagined that day to come. It was then.

“Are you leaving now?”

Ah. I shouldn’t have made a sound. I drew unnecessary attention. I decided not to be surprised and answered as usual.

“Yeah, I’m supposed to play with Eurea.”

“It’s almost bedtime.”

Busted. I hadn’t thought of the time.

“I’m just going to play with her for a bit and then go to bed.”

“Hmm.”

He seemed to be in deep thought. I hope he didn’t notice it. I smiled, feeling the cold sweat running down my spine. Fortunately, he quickly returned his gaze to his papers.

“Alright. Don’t stay up too late. It’s not a good habit to get up late in the morning.”

“Yes, Father.”

Phew. I let out a deep sigh of relief and slid off the chair, putting away my coloured pencils and folding the paper in half to secretly wrap the book. I carefully pulled it down with both hands, and then!

“Lenoc.”

“Yes?”

“Leave the Civil Law behind.”

How... did he know? He still hadn't taken his eyes off the papers. Did he have eyes on his head? Don't panic, Lenoc Teiwind. You are the Count's only hope, a brave man with the spirit of a lion. You can do this.

“What... is that?”

“The book under your lion drawing.”

“Aaah, this?”

I wondered why, as the legitimate son of the Count, I felt guilty as if I had stolen something from the Count's study. Was this some dreadful trick of the Demon? In any case, I had to get through the crisis. I acted as if I knew nothing. While struggling desperately with my pride, that man was completely blindsided.

“Yeah, that one. Leave it behind.”

“Ah, yes.”