

The God of Jesters

Chapter 7: 1.04.2 Life goes on.

"Can you speak little guy?" I placed my finger in the cage and then slowly rubbed the back of Grifter. But I didn't experience a similar sort of aggression that I was so used to. Instead, the rat looked at me with pity.

Pity?

A rat showing pity toward me?

Just what is going on?

"Little guy, are you really a rat or something else?" I asked.

Lots of weird things have happened lately and I won't be surprised to learn that little Grifter was actually a prince that was turned into a rat by an evil witch.

And only by kissing him would he be able to revert to his original form.

But Grifter just shook its small head. And then pointed its little hands at me.

"Me... yes?" I understood what the rat was saying at once. And even Grifter seemed happy at my understanding.

Then, the rat fell on his back with all his four feet up, almost as if it was dead.

"Hmm, me dead?"

"You wish to kill me?"

"Oh, I already knew this."

I was amused by the intelligence of Grifter like never before. The little guy seemed almost human, if not for his lack of vocal cords that were capable of forming eligible sentences.

"This is some weird way to threaten someone." Though this threat might be weird. But what was weirder was the individual threatening me.

I still can't ignore the fact that little Grifter was smart enough to threaten me with so much emotion.

Though the rat got up once again and shook its head. Then I did the same motion again and again as if I had misinterpreted his previous message.

But at this point, I was in no mood for this.

"Enough with this act, tell me who you are and what is going on."

But the rat is a rat, how can I expect it to explain what it wished when there was such a huge difference in our life level.

This was just a rat, an intelligent one.

While I was a human, a bored one.

"Find some other way to tell me. I will be going and fixing that broken cupboard." As I have planned to live in this place for a long while, I need to fix the home that I will be living in from now on.

As for what happened earlier, I am sure that it will go away with time unless something similar doesn't happen again.

It's been a year since I got here and unlike my previous claims, I have truly become part of this community.

Not to mention, I was even at a legal age to get married.

"Hear ye! Hear ye! The demon of the woods struck again. Another cow died."

Kids acting as the newspaper boy in the cities, roamed around while spreading the news of another death. That has put the villagers in a shock once again.

But for a long while, these same people have long abandoned the thought that I would be someone who would kill

As there were multiple instances that I was somewhere else when this happened.

Sadly, can't be said about a particular family which was forced to leave the village after everyone found that one of their sons used to do some indecent activity with the cows during the night.

And the way they left was pretty ugly.

Though the villagers soon learned that it was not them who were doing this.

It was not anyone.

As a cow was left that way even in front of a farmer's eye who planned to stay awake at night to keep watch.

According to him, he slept only for a few minutes. But that was enough for the perpetrator to do his deed.

Which shook the village to the core.

But what about it? Not like this being or whatever it was hurting me or those close to me.

Leaving tomorrow's class after checking the homework for the kids, I left for the jungle all alone once again.

I can see the villagers still busy with their work, I can even see Meena on the side washing clothes and drying them on a rope, and the kids who were happy to be relieved of their studies as they started to run like rats to play once again.

Such freedom was not even afforded to the kids in the city, as there was a precedent of children being kidnapped right from people's doorstep.

If not for me being a tad bit ugly, with the way I lived, the same might have been my fate.

"Now where was it?" I wandered in the trees before stumbling upon the mouse trap I had built before.

"Hmm, a female at last." I was happy to find that I had finally caught another female rat for Grifter.

"You might be able to entertain him for a while, the little guy is getting desperate these days."

As I was admiring the feral nature of a wild rat, a voice from behind me asked.

"Caught another one?"

"Yes, Staying here doesn't mean I can abandon my work. One day I still have to go out and I would like to go back to society with some results." I lied, as I can't tell Meena that I was planning to stay here for her.

Nor can I tell why I caught this rat.

"But why rats? I still can't understand what could rats give us besides diseases." She asked me with a curious look.

A question she has asked before, but her simple brain could never understand it even if I tell her.

But once again, I calmly told her.

"Simple, rats grow fast and their anatomy is pretty similar to us humans as well."

"You can treat them as humans and as they grow old fast, they are perfect for experimentation in multiple fields."

"From medicines, biology, and most of all sociology. The one I am studying. And you can already see the result in little Grifter, he has gotten smarter with time."

The explanation didn't take too long, but this time, Meena asked.

"So to you, humans are like rats?" She asked me a question with such an obvious answer that it was laughable.

"Not to me, it's not the truth that only I believe. Humans are not different from rats, the only difference we have at the moment is our intelligence. But our behavioral patterns and nature are pretty close to them."

"I still don't understand, so I will leave it at this."

"By the way, father is calling you for something. I don't know why." She informed me with her bright lips before leaving in a childlike manner as her hair moved with each of her motions. Like grass under the light wind.

After this, I left.

I know better than to make the chief of the village wait out on me. Not when the situation in the whole village is so serious.

So hurrying to my home, I approached Grifter's small nest in which he had done some workaround.

"Please don't kill this one" I prayed to the little guy before putting the female rat into its cage, while Grifter just kept looking at me while nibbling some flesh from the bones of another dead rat.

I don't wish to say this, but Grifter is a pretty messed up rat.

"It's been a year, and you haven't aged at all. Truly an enigma."

The grifter I remember was already over a year old when we first came to this village. So by this point, he should have gotten old with time. But I can still see him as energetic as before.

Making me understand just how special my little Grifter was.

Now if it only is capable of siring some children instead of killing all the female rats I send to him, then it will be better.

After saying goodbye to the little grifter, I left my house.

Believe it or not, life in this village is pretty hard. Everyone needs to work non-stop.

And I was the same.

Getting to Meena's house, I found from her mother that Meena's father was at the back, so I followed her words and reached the tanning room that I have worked in multiple times before.

"You are here? Took your time?" He asked, at which I just informed him my reason for the delay.

"Of course, it's your job. Then I wonder if this is related to your job as well?" The old village chief said as he took out a small bottle. A bottle that I was very familiar with.

And I understood that things were a bit serious.

"You don't have to panic, there is no one else here besides me." The old man tried to calm me down, but how could I.

I understood what these villagers would do to me if they deemed me to be the devil.

I haven't forgotten what happened to the zoophilic man and his family not so long ago.

"It's... it's mine." I said, before continuing. "It's for my own use. Not anyone else." I added.

"Why would a scholar need poison?" He asked, his eyes muddled with suspicion.

Now, no matter what explanation I gave to this man. He would believe none of it.

Which was understandable from his perspective. He was the leader of this village and protecting it was his job. There must already be countless people that are questioning his leadership. So it's understandable why he was taking such a serious approach toward me.

"This is in case I am captured by someone. I would use this to escape." I put forward an excuse. An excuse that might sound horrific, but they were the justest reason to keep this vile vial on my body.

"Chief, you know me. I am not capable of doing something like that. And there is nothing to be gained for me as well."

"Enough... We have already made a mistake before, I don't mind making another one."

"You will leave this village the next time merchants come here to collect the leather. And don't worry, I will pay you for your classes as well. Just don't come back."

"Chief, this is wrong. I won't do anything to harm this village." I pleaded.

I truly did.

I might be a bit ill in the head. But I won't put myself in danger by doing something so foolish and meaningless.

The art itself might be beautiful, but the process of creating it is never beautiful.

"No buts, go back to your city. It's where you should be anyways." The old man said with a sorry voice.

Followed by a warning.

"And stay away from Meena."

'Hmm.'

A father's threat was a lot heavier than the threat of a village chief.

I also understood at this point that I was not safe here.

"If that's what you wish," I said, leaving the place with my head a bit down.

I was sad.

After Jester left the premises, hidden behind the leather, some other men slowly walked out of it.

"We should have killed him here." One of them said, his voice filled with anger after the loss of multiple of his livestock.

"Don't be foolish, exiling him is the best choice for us. We can't repeat the same mistake as we did with Jessie's family. He might be a weird man, but losing his life over it was too much."

"I don't mind throwing him out. As even though he had helped us, we have also paid him back full. There is no reason for that man to stay here."

The talks among these men continued and most of the general consensus was that they wished for him to leave the village.

But a certain group among them didn't think the same.

That certain group already had a different plan in mind.

A plan in which Mirage aka Jester, dies.

And no one was aware of it, for they had already made up their mind.

The death of their livestock will be avenged, and who knows, they might prevent even a bigger tragedy.