

## **R. Garden 37**

Vol. 4 Chapter 2.15 - My honorable defiance toward confronting the disrespectful illegal inhabitant

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There was a loud thud. I thought I was going to fall off the ladder and crash into the bookshelves, but it didn't hurt as much as I thought it would. When I opened my eyes, there were books everywhere, and I could see the ladder that had fallen, but I wasn't on the floor. My shod feet were wobbling. I saw an arm across my chest. When I looked up, I saw the other arm supporting the falling bookshelf.

"Here we go."

The demon simply pushed the bookcase back. The bookshelf, spilling all its books, was easily put back in place. As the shadow disappeared, I was suddenly blinded. I felt a pang in my heart and tears formed in my eyes. My lips quivered. The demon, who had been standing directly in front of the bookshelf, lowered his gaze.

"Are you not hurt?"

A large hand stroked my hair. Suddenly, I felt a rush of sorrow. And despite being the eldest alpha of the family, I found myself crying like a baby.

"Aaaaah."

I wrapped my arms around his big body and hugged him tightly, like a baby monkey in the picture book. It had been a long time since I'd given up hugging him to my younger siblings because I'd grown up.

I left my younger siblings, went to the study alone, and used the ladder without permission. I'm going to get in trouble. No one needs a crybaby, troublemaking firstborn alpha.

But to my surprise, instead of scolding me, the demon simply smiled and carried me up.

"My son, you've suddenly become a baby."

I looked at him in surprise, and he laughed. It was obvious he was mocking me, but I wasn't angry. Tears kept streaming down my face.

"I told you not to use the ladder in the study because it's dangerous."

"I'm sorry."

"I'm just glad you didn't get hurt."

The demon's forehead rested against my head. He always smelled of books and ink. And the smell of a big man. My panicked heart calmed a little.

"The study ladder is off limits."

“Yeah.”

I nodded like a baby, not really answering, feeling unnecessarily embarrassed. I heard a low chuckle. I wrapped my arms around his thick neck and leaned my forehead against his broad shoulder. My nose snorted and I hid in his shoulders.

The demon walked over to a nearby couch and sat down. As I sobbed, still in his arms, he soothed me.

“You must be very scared. It’s okay now.”

He took out a handkerchief and wiped my nose. I could have stopped crying, but I just wanted to cry some more. I gritted my teeth and squeezed out more of my drying tears. He laughed.

“You’re strangely interested in my study, why don’t you tell me what you’re curious about?”

I was taken aback by his sudden question. A sniffle escaped me. As I sniffled, he wiped my nose with his handkerchief again.

“The way you keep sneaking around, you must secretly want to know about something. You’re very curious, just like me. You’re persistent, and I don’t think you’ll stop until you find your answers. But I don’t want you to do anything dangerous again, like you did today. I hope you can tell me what you want to know right now, I’ll teach you as best I can.”

The low voice was very gentle. And so, foolishly, I blurted out a secret that should never have been revealed.

“Are you under a bad spell? Or are you hiding something like an evil magician’s grimoire?”

“What? Magic? What do you mean, all of a sudden? It’s all law books in there.”

“You’re not under a curse or something, are you?”

Tears welled up in my eyes. In the glimmery sight of mine, I could see his surprised face. I was scared.

“Who says I’m cursed?”

“Granny Martha, hicc, said you’re an, imprinted alpha~ hiccc, so you’re making Mother sick, hicc.”

“Oh, dear.”

The sad smile on the demon’s face made my heart sink. I wanted him to tell me it wasn’t true, that he was just messing with me. That he wasn’t under some weird spell. That even though I called him a demon, he was nothing of the sort.

He always said he had to protect my mother and my siblings, but that must be his lies! He's so bad! I hate him!

"Hiccc, tell me it's not true."

I slammed my fist into the demon's shoulder. However, his unyielding attitude hurt me more.

"Hurry up and say no. Hicc."

"Shhhh. It's okay."

I heard a low chuckle through the soothing voice. He didn't say no until the end. He must really be a demon king. I was born with a demon's blood. A pair of large hands cupped my cheeks, wiping away my tears. He smiled as he wiped the tears from my eyes.

"I didn't realise my Lenoc was such a crybaby. I thought you were so much like me, but it turns out you're just a mama's boy."

"No! I look like the demon king!"

"The demon king? Hahaha."

He laughed out loud, making me embarrassed. He ran his hand through my hair, messily stroking it.

“A demon king is a bit cooler than an evil with a cane. I like it.”

My crying stopped. I wasn't sure how to react to his casual affirmation. As I stopped crying and sniffled, he kissed me on my forehead.

“Listen, Lenoc. Your father imprinted on your mother.”

Lenoc's eyes widened. My tears welled up again, and the demon tenderly wiped them away again.

“Some people call imprinting romantic, but it's really not. It's more like, right. It's a terrible curse, as Martha said. Anyway, it's not a very good thing. It changes your personality and makes you do bad things.”

His lips quivered sweetly. I didn't want to see him smile sadly. He always looked so confident and evil. Why would he be sad?

“When you're imprinted, you can't see anyone else but one person. I never realised what that meant before. I thought it was a good thing as long as I was with Aeroc, but since you were born I've realised it's not. I love you so much, you, Eurea and Jester. I love you all so much that it makes me happy just to look at you. But.....”

“But?”

The demon paused for a moment.

“But I can’t live without Aeroc, do you know what I mean?”

I stared at him, still. Suddenly I remembered how he hadn’t cared for us on that dreadful night when Mother had fallen ill.

“Even if I am here? Even with Eurea and Jester?”

“Even if you’re there. Even with Eurea and Jester.”

My face burned, and my tears began to flow. The demon swept my hair back. My wet cheeks ached against his palm.

“That’s what imprinting is. Even if you have your lovely child, there’s no point when your partner is not with you. Yes, I am under an evil curse, and I can’t help it. It’s no one’s fault, it’s just the way it is.”

He hugged my stiff body tightly. His stroking hand was heavy. My heart was pounding with fear. I don't want to hear anything. Just tell me this is a dream.

"If anything happens, please take care of your siblings."

"B-But I'm just a kid!"

"You're old enough. Enough for this father to believe in you."

I stared blankly at the beaming smile.

"Though I wish you could stay my baby forever."

He sighed for a moment, then rested his chin on the crown of my head. My head felt like it would crumple under the grave weight.

"As you can see, Aeroc is weak. I'm very worried."

I shook my head. Mother is healthy, and the demon will always be in this house.



“So, Lenoc, it’s time to stop playing.”

“.....”

“You need to grow up, defeat the demon, and save your siblings. Of course, you have to find someone that you love too.”

I wanted to scream no.

I don’t like not having the demon.

Because the truth is, I love him extremely.

Because Lenoc is the Demon’s son.

“Until then, I will protect you.”

Not until then. I’ll always be the Demon’s, Daddy’s son. I’m sorry I called you the demon, so don’t say that.

My lips trembled, but no sound came out.

"I love you, my son."

Lie!

That's a lie.....

When Mother found out that I had used the ladder in the study and tried to knock over the bookshelves, he scolded me sternly.

"You're not allowed in the study from now on."

"That's harsh. Lenoc is all grown up now. He should be reading."

"But he could have been hurt if you hadn't arrived in time. Haa- it's terrifying just to imagine that."

"But Lenoc is fine, and he would have learned by now, right?"

The demon stood beside me, offering support. But I didn't want to meet his gaze.

“You’re being too easy on Lenoc.”

“Kids grow up making mistakes.”

“I didn’t.”

“You’re special. I almost burned the house down once.”

Mother raised an eyebrow at that.

“Lenoc, don’t burn down the house.”

“Yeah.”

“Come on, let’s stop and go eat. I’m starving. Eurea’s waiting.”

As he led Mother, who was still angry, the demon sneaked a glance out of the corner of his eye. I should have acted cheerful when he saw that, but I stupidly turned a blind eye.

\* \* \*

In an estate with a beautiful rose garden live a Count, his lovely children, and an evil demon. I, Lenoc Ellim Teiwind, have been sent to protect the Count from the evil machinations of the demon .....The demon is actually a fool. He is under an evil curse. I have confirmed with several people that there is no way to break it. Even Lord, who was not on good terms with the demon, was sympathetic when it came to the imprint. Furthermore, I've tricked the imprinted demon naively into telling me how to defeat himself.

Becoming an adult.

I decided to study spelling. I've decided to go to the National Capital University to become an outstanding adult. There, I might get to learn about the demon's traces and research him. It might take me a long time to defeat him, but I won't give up.

Unfortunately, the journal is on hiatus for the time being. I've also decided to stop calling him a demon. I can't keep doing childish things like that forever.

Until then. Goodbye.