

Into The Rose Garden - Chapter 7

Chapter 7

Aelock was a little pleased that his discerning eye was right on this one. He had no talent for investing, but he had an eye for art. Aelock, after being ushered to a living room where there was no one, took a look at the paintings slowly. Admiring art in the familiar living room whilst wearing a suit, which felt a bit unfamiliar, he felt as if he had gone back to the past. He straightened his shoulders a bit, and his chin pulled up on its own. Aelock, with a subtle smile on his face, examined the artist's delicate brushstrokes.

"That painting was sold for almost the price of a house at the auction. It was a fairly good investment."

Klopp broke in from behind when he entered. Though Aelock was startled, due to his aristocratic education, he simply took a step away from the painting with a slight nod, as if he had known he was there from earlier.

"It is a very delicate painting and incorporates a lot of emotions within. The painter probably loved this space. That is why he poured all the glimmer into such a bold color. I do not think this is the only one that painted such a scene. I think he painted several works depending on the season or time. If it is a series, collecting them will increase the value."

"This is early summer in the series of four seasons. Other works are in question."

"Hm."

Aelock nodded and cast his gaze at Klopp.

"You have a good eye. This is probably an early work, but you managed to notice it."

He was a little short of breath and his heart was a little tense, but it wasn't unbearable.

Klopp's gaze toward him was similar to when he saw him on the street last night. The slight difference was that if the eyes were full of cold contempt at the time, now there was a little admiration and corresponding disgust.

The conversation was cut off.

The dark eyes still glared at him with cold hatred, and Aelock did not dare to say anything in front of him. He only moved his eyelids slightly and looked at the faintly trembling hand of the man. It seemed that he provoked him again, though Aelock didn't exactly know how.

He was a little anxious that that big, warm hand that slowly curled up might fly towards his cheek. It hurts to get hit, but more than that, he might be kicked out immediately if he angered Klopp. Half of his wish was still yet to be fulfilled. Aelock smiled at the alpha, who was always angry, to prove that he meant no malice. But apparently, that wasn't a very good choice. Klopp clenched his fist so hard to the point his knuckles turned white.

Just as he was trying to step back, fearing that he might get hit, it was the butler who came in with a tea set that broke the chilly atmosphere. He modestly nodded at his master as a greeting gesture and set the tray on the table. Klopp, who had been emitting deep hatred, slightly relaxed his expression and offered a seat to Aelock with a cold smile. Though he was still scared, Aelock nodded slightly and went to sit down in front of the table.

The tea served by the butler was a high-quality black tea that he used to enjoy drinking in the past. As he took a sip of the warm liquid, Aelock seemed to relax a bit. It had been a long time since he drank tea. No, it was the first tea he drank after leaving this mansion. Before, a sip of this tea was nothing, but now he was so grateful that he thought he might write out a long and lengthy ode about it. While he wrapped both hands around the teacup and felt its warmth, Klopp spoke first.

"You look much better than last time, Count."

Rather than being particularly sarcastic, he spoke calmly, but it felt fierce enough to tighten the pit of his stomach for a moment. Aelock didn't want to show his slightly trembling fingers, so he let go of the teacup and lowered his hands under the table.

"Thanks to you."

“How did you find your way here?”

“What do you mean?”

To Aelock’s question, Klopp responded as he leaned against the backrest and crossed his legs.

“It has been two years since you did not come to this mansion, no? It is simply a common house to me, but to you, is it not like a home? I was a little disappointed that I had not been able to see you around.”

Even though he said that, there was absolutely no sincerity in those words. Klopp was so eloquent that the expression ‘Viscount Bandyke’ was now more appropriate, as opposed to the genuineness he would once show when felt unpleasant that had also now vanished. In other words, it also meant that each and every one of his sarcastic remarks were properly piercing Aelock.

“I was occupied with this and that.”

Actually, he had tried to come to this mansion several times. He went through a lot of things until he realized that it was a vain hope and a false dream and that it was hard to say whether or not it could be fulfilled in this lifetime, but he didn’t find the need to say it all. Even if Klopp had a good reason, would it be necessary to describe in detail the miserable times that he does not want to recall in order to please the insatiable man?

After taking another sip of the slightly lukewarm tea, Aelock looked quietly at Klopp. Now all he wanted was one thing. Although they were lives that were born in a way that he never thought of or wanted at all, it was an unchanging fact that they were Aelock’s blood. He wanted to hug those angels at least once. He wanted them to know who gave birth to them. That was all.

He had no desire to let them know what he had done, what punishment he was paying for, and where and how he was living now. The small children don’t have to live with a dark past like the original sinner just because they were born out of his womb. He just wanted to see if they were living happily under the care of Klopp, who had chosen such a cruel method for revenge.

After a while, Aelock made up his mind and opened his mouth, facing the dagger-like gaze that was stabbing him.

“He is a beautiful child.”

Klopp's slightly smiling lips twitched a little. Deep brown eyes shone terribly. The thin mask he was wearing, who looked plainly angry, cracked a little. Klopp's lips trembled slightly as he glared at him as if he would break his neck at any moment, and then a confident sneer erupted again.

"When did you see him?"

"Coincidentally the other day."

When he answered meekly, Klopp snorted, "Ha.". Then, he rested his chin on his hand and looked at Aelock carefully. It seemed as if he was judging if what he said was true or not.

"The child does not look like you."

It was an appeal prepared for a certain degree of threat. Even if there was an argument or violence that was too much to handle, he had to try it first. If he lost this opportunity, he couldn't guarantee when he'll see them next time. Aelock made a firm resolve inwardly and deliberately looked at the cold opponent, pretending to be calm so as not to back down. However, Klopp didn't seem quite shaken by that, only the corners of his mouth trembled slightly, and he immediately replied in a light voice.

"Well, that is because he resembles my spouse."

He didn't understand at first. No, for a moment, he wondered if Klopp was crazy again. He would never think of him that way..... He blinked my eyes several times and couldn't close his mouth before suddenly realizing it.

Oh.

The hope that had barely kept his composure had been shattered into a myriad of pieces. He wanted to scream and have a mental breakdown right away. However, thanks to the suit and shoes that tightened the body, and the scent of tea that revived the old teachings of an aristocrat, he unconsciously responded with a deeper smile.

"The tea was good. The scent of it is nice. I would like to drink more, but I think I need to leave."

"Are you leaving already?"

As he stood up, Klopp asked in a sarcastic tone.

“Thank you for serving me tea when it is not the right time for it.”

“You will not be able to go far.”

He did not even stand up.

Aelock left the living room and the mansion without looking back. The gatekeeper saw him walking at a slightly quicker pace from afar and opened the gates without saying anything.

He couldn't even thank him and had to leave the mansion with a pale face.

Sure, it would be a lie to say that he didn't expect it at all. He once thought it himself. The reason why he didn't think about it deeply was that he wanted to leave a bit of room. Room for the belief that one day Klopp will forgive and accept him.

But that was nothing more than a false delusion. The hatred of the man who lost his beloved wife and child was greater and stronger than anything Aelock could have imagined. Even in the midst of a life where everything was destroyed or lost, those who had a grudge did not stop taking revenge.

Everything was futile. No matter how hard he tried, Klopp would not let him off the hook. He just realized that. After years of miserable and wretched days. Along with the weight of his sins. His rationality knew it, but it was the first time he consciously realized it. The street, paved with smooth stones, now looked muddy and it felt as if legs had gone into them knee-deep.

He hadn't seen or heard anything since he happened to see Klopp that day and fell in love with him. Rayfiel also met him later than he did. He, with dark brown hair and deep eyes, was of course entitled to having his own person, but Aelock was very angry when he was intercepted in the middle.

He firmly believed that he, who was superior in family background, wealth, beauty, and talent, was better than poor Rayfiel, who had nothing outstanding except that he was an omega who could give birth to children. Being an alpha, he had no choice but to put up with it, but not anymore. The drug, which he was half-forced and half-tricked into taking by Klopp, possessed by intense hatred, turned the alpha into an omega.

'If you took my wife and child from me, you should pay me back.'

For the sake of him who said that, even after compensating for the lost child, he gave birth to another. Even if he sinned, he didn't exactly mean for something like that to happen. Because he lost his property and family and paid for his sins. He thought it would be okay since the arrogant side of him had all disappeared while he was rolling around on the streets. He thought that one day Klopp would let him off the hook. How could a dead person defeat a living person?

But now he that saw it, he knew that was not the case. The living could not beat the dead. In Klopp's memory, it was clear that Rayfiel would forever be engraved as a beautiful and kind figure. Forever so that the shabby and withered Aelock could never soil him again.

It felt like it was getting hot under his eyes. It was as if tears were on the verge of flowing out. But he couldn't cry. He had never cried in my life, so he had forgotten how to cry. He wanted to cry but couldn't, so Aelock trudged along, unable to hide his distorted and ugly face, swallowing the bitter liquid that was burning inside.

Perhaps the two children will live without knowing Aelock for the rest of their lives. They would be told that the man who gave birth to them sadly passed away a long time ago because of a bad nobleman. Yes. Maybe that was better. It was better than passing the guilt on to them. If they were the children of his 'wife', Klopp would at least love them unconditionally.

The thought made Aelock a little happy. It hurt a lot, but he was so happy that he felt like crying again. However, no matter how much he grimaced and made sobbing noises, no tears flowed from his dried-up body. The flushed cheeks were very hot.

He continued to walk, cloaked in the blood-red sunset. There weren't many places to go. He headed for the place where he once sent away the petals, with the rattling noise of the old shoe heels. Maybe today, he would send away his own light body like a dry straw that blew everything away.