

Shota 451

Chapter 451 Auction trap (28)

The fourth prince just looked at the second prince with a look of pity before saying, "Goodbye, second brother."

Then his men didn't even need his order to close the shield wall.

If they had been even a second slower, then they might have been stabbed by the weapons that had been thrown out by the second prince's men.

But they closed the shield wall just in time and those weapons just bounced off their shields.

When those weapons hit those shields, there was a glow that appeared around them.

When I saw this, I couldn't help feeling a familiar sensation from these shields.

They were most likely items with how easily they bounced those weapons off.

There wasn't even a single dent that was left on those shields after they bounced these weapons off.

This showed just how strong the in these shields were.

Of course, that didn't mean that the fourth prince's men would just let themselves be attacked without fighting back.

As soon as those weapons were thrown, there were weapons that fell down on the second prince's formation.

They also closed their shield wall as soon as they threw their weapons since they knew that they would be retaliated against the moment that they attacked. They didn't dare have their shields down when that happened.

But unlike the shields of the fourth prince's group, these shields didn't block these weapons as well.

There were some that cracked when the weapons slammed into them and there were some that dented. Regardless of whether it cracked or not, it was clear that these shields that had broken weren't able to protect its wielders.

There were many holes that formed in the formation of the second prince's group.

The ones beside the ones that fell had no choice but to fill in the gaps for the ones that fell.

But even then, it was clear that their formation wasn't holding.

It was clear that they were being overwhelmed by the difference in equipment.

So it would only be a matter of time before they were worn down by the rain of weapons that fell on them. It was only a matter of time before their formation broke and they were slaughtered.

The people of the second prince's group couldn't help feeling worried since they recognized this fact.

They looked to the second prince for guidance, but the second prince also had an ugly expression on his face.

He too was feeling the pressure of this situation and he didn't know how to get out of it.

He still had one last trump card up his sleeve, but he knew that the moment he used it, it would be the end of pretenses. The moment that he used this, it would mean that he was desperate and the fourth prince wouldn't show any mercy.

So he was hesitant in using it.

But the fact that they were trapped here was more than enough to tell him that he couldn't wait anymore.

So he looked at two people who had been standing by his side the entire time.

They had never left his side, so it was clear that they were important to him.

The two of them were surprised when they saw him looking over, but they revealed serious looks before giving a nod back as if they were trying to assure him.

Then both of them pulled out what seemed to be staves.

As soon as they pulled out their staff, there was mana that gathered around these two.

It turned out that these two trusted subordinates of the second prince were ians.

One of them had blue al energy gathering around them while the other had red al energy.

This was based on the element of that they used.

The one with blue al energy was clearly an ice elemental ian and the one with red al energy was clearly a fire elemental ian.

The two of them were gathering their mana to cast their spells, but before they could finish gathering their mana, it suddenly scattered away.

The two of them revealed shocked looks as they looked down at their staff.

They waved their staff and moved their hands as if they were testing something, but the glow never appeared again.

It seemed that there was something that was suppressing their mana that stopped them from casting their spells.

They looked at the second prince with a distressed look and the second prince revealed an ugly expression.

He didn't know what happened, but he was certain that it was done by the fourth prince.

So after a moment of silence, the second prince raised his voice and said, "Fourth brother, what did you do?"

The fourth prince in his own formation revealed a smile when he heard this.

Contrary to the second prince who had a grim look on his face, the fourth prince had a very relaxed expression on his face as he stood there in his own formation.

It was as if everything was in the palm of his hands and he was controlling everything.

Though with how easily the second prince's formation was being worn down, it wouldn't be strange if that was the case.

The fourth prince just casually said, "Is there a problem, second brother? Are you having a little deficiency?"

The second prince's expression became even uglier as he said, "Noah, you son of a b****, what did you do?"

The second prince had ripped off all pretenses at this point and even swore at his own brother.

That was just how desperate he was.

But the fourth prince deeply knitted his brows when he heard this.

If one didn't know better, they would have thought that he was deeply hurt by what the second prince said.

After a moment of silence, the fourth prince said, "Keep agonizing over it until your death. This is the fate of one who betrays the royal family."

His voice was so cold that it was like being thrown into a glacier.

Just a single word was enough to freeze a person.

Chapter 452 Auction trap (29)

Since the fourth prince had already sealed his fate, there was no way out for the second prince.

After these words from him, the fourth prince's men didn't hesitate to throw everything that they had at the second prince.

The weapons that they used also changed.

These were weapons that had a al fluctuation coming from them, so they were like the shields that the fourth prince's men used. These weapons being thrown were all items.

With the power of these items, they crushed through the shields of the second prince's men and destroyed their formation. Once the shields were crushed, they had no way of defending themselves and many of them fell under these weapons.

When it was all over, there was only the second prince and a few of his most trusted men who were left.

They had done all that they could to protect themselves and the second prince, but they were covered in wounds from having weapons rain them on them like this. They couldn't do a single thing against the relentless attacks of the fourth prince's men.

When it was only these few people left, the fourth prince suddenly raised his hand and all of his men stopped attacking.

He took a step forward and the shield wall opened up to reveal him to the second prince.

The second prince just had an exhausted look on his face as he looked at the fourth prince.

His men helped him to his feet, but it was clear that he was already completely spent.

It was clear that he had accepted his end.

The second prince gave a deep sigh before saying, "Do what you want with me. I give up, I won't resist."

But then he also took a deep breath and said, "I just hope that you will show mercy since we are brothers."

The fourth prince didn't say a single thing as he looked at the second prince.

The second prince's men looked at the fourth prince with narrowed eyes, but they didn't do anything even though it looked like they wanted to do something.

The fourth prince finally gave a sigh before saying, "Do you regret your actions?"

The second prince was surprised to hear this from the fourth prince.

He looked at him with an uncertain look like he didn't understand why the fourth prince had asked him this.

But he gave a nod and said, "Yes, I..."

Before he could finish, the fourth prince had given the signal with his hand.

The men on the roof suddenly threw more weapons at the second prince.

The second prince's men were completely caught off guard by this and they couldn't guard themselves or the second prince.

The second prince only had the time to reveal a look of shock before he was stabbed by all the weapons thrown at him.

Even in his death, he never thought that the fourth prince would do anything this underhanded.

His men had tried to block the weapons for him, but all they did was get pinned to him with these weapons. In the end, they become a large mass with all of these weapons pinning them to each other.

With the second prince dead, it was all over.

I couldn't help looking at the fourth prince with a strange look.

After all, I had never expected the fourth prince to actually kill the second prince.

I had thought that he would just capture the second prince and use him for something else, but it seemed that it had reached a point where he could no longer be spared.

But the death of the second prince confirmed my guesses, while also giving me some new information.

The death of the second prince...it was related to the king.

That was made evident with the argument that they had.

It was an argument that deeply involved the king, so it was clear that the king was related to this.

It seemed that regardless of which world it was, the royal family needed to be heartless.

They didn't even care about killing off their princes, as long as it meant that the royal family would survive...

The fourth prince just ignored the gaze that I cast in his direction as he moved forward.

His men tried to stop him, but he stopped them with a single wave of his hand and they all backed down.

The fourth prince slowly closed the distance between him and the mass of corpses in front of him.

Then he raised his hand and grabbed one of the weapons that pinned them together.

After grabbing that weapon, he pulled it out of the mass, causing one of the corpses to fall to the ground.

The fourth prince just ignored this corpse as he reached out for another weapon that he also pulled out of the pile.

The fourth prince continued to pull the weapons out one by one until all of the corpses had fallen away. The only corpse that was left was the second prince's which surprisingly was still standing there.

That was because there was a long spear that had stabbed through the second prince and had pierced right into the ground, propping him up and making him unable to fall down.

The fourth prince slowly pulled that spear out of the second prince, letting his corpse fall into his arms.

He held the second prince, not caring that his blood was staining his clothes at all.

He lifted the second prince's corpse up and then put him down on the ground in an empty spot.

After putting the second prince down, the fourth prince looked down at his corpse with a sad look on his face.

He just silently stood there over the second prince's corpse with that sad look on his face.

After a long silence, he leaned down and reached a hand out towards the second prince's face. With that hand, he closed the eyes of the second prince which had been wide open in shock.

"Second brother, I hope that you will become a better person in the next life."

Chapter 453 Auction trap (30)

After a long moment of silence for the second prince, the fourth prince stood up again and moved back to our formation.

He looked at one of his men and said, "Bury him properly. You are free to dispose of the rest of them as you wish."

There was no need for this person to ask who 'he' was.

There was only one person that the fourth prince could be referring to, the second prince.

His subordinates didn't ask anything else and just gave a bow before heading over to the corpses on the ground. Though they would treat the second prince's corpse differently, they still had to take care of all the corpses that were here.

The others would most likely be burnt or thrown in a ditch, the second prince would receive a small private burial plot.

After he gave this order, the fourth prince walked off without even looking back.

However, before going, he waved his hand at me as if he was telling me to follow him.

I took one last look at the second prince's corpse before following the fourth prince out of this place.

There was only silence as I followed him.

I had questions that I wanted to ask, but I could see that it wasn't the right time to ask them. The fourth prince clearly had some thoughts on his mind and it would be...wrong to ask these questions while he was in this state.

So I was waiting for an opportunity to ask what was on my mind.

That opportunity came very quickly.

The fourth prince led us to a carriage that was waiting for us.

The three of us got into the carriage and then the carriage started driving off.

In no time at all, there were people that appeared on the streets again. They were walking around, going about their normal lives like they had noticed nothing happening in this capital city.

They had no idea that such an important event had just happened.

But that wasn't important to us either since the fourth prince finally spoke.

"I'm sure that you have plenty of questions, so feel free to ask them now." The fourth prince said with a smile, but there was still a clear trace of sadness in his eyes.

I looked at him for a bit before calmly giving a nod.

Taking a deep breath, I said, "You used me, didn't you?"

There was a silence that hung in this carriage.

Shaka looked at me with a cautious look, as if he was surprised that I would be so direct with this.

However, the smile on the fourth prince's face slowly grew wider as he looked at me.

Finally, he said, "Yes, I did."

I slightly knitted my brows when I heard this, but I quickly gave a sigh and relaxed them.

I knew that there was nothing to gain from being angry, so I just forced myself to calm down and ask, "Why?"

"Because it was necessary." The fourth prince said without a single fluctuation to his voice. There was no expression on his face, as if what he was saying was the most natural thing.

But this caused me to knit my brows slightly.

I looked at him with narrowed eyes for a bit before suddenly saying, "Even though it broke our original agreement?"

The fourth prince didn't seem bothered by this as he said, "But now you've accomplished your goal. There's no need for you to stay in the capital anymore.

No one will dare make a move against you since you were one of the ones that took down the second prince."

I knitted my brows even more when I heard this.

I didn't know how I was supposed to react to this.

One moment, the fourth prince showed remorse over killing the second prince and the next, he was stating it like it was nothing more than a fact.

This change really was just too sudden for me and I couldn't adapt.

There was a long silence that hung in the air before I said, "The crime of killing a prince isn't one that is easy to bear. Don't you think that you should have told me about this before you put your plan in action?"

The fourth prince raised a brow as he revealed a smile and said, "Would you have worked with me then?"

I deeply knitted my brows since I could hear the almost taunting tone in his voice.

He was right, I definitely wouldn't have worked with him if I knew.

After all, this was the death of a prince. This was not something that was light.

This was an event that would affect the future of this nation, an event that no one in this kingdom could avoid.

So there would be a lot of attention that would come from this.

Attention which was the last thing that I wanted.

I had only thought that this was a plan to cripple a few of the second prince's limbs, not to kill the second prince.

If I knew, I definitely wouldn't have agreed!

I took a deep breath after staring at the fourth prince for a bit and said, "Regardless of the circumstances, do you really think that it is right to lie to your allies? Or is there anything else that you're not telling me?"

The fourth prince didn't answer this question, but the smile on his face really annoyed me along with the way that he looked at me.

The way that he looked at me was almost like he had found an interesting toy.

I knew that he wouldn't stop using me for different things in the future unless I made things clear.

But before I could say anything, the fourth prince said, "It's fine as long as you receive some compensation, right?"

He leaned in and said with a smile that was like the devil's, "What kind of compensation do you want? As long as I can get it for you, you can have it."

Chapter 454 Auction trap (31)

As I looked at the fourth prince, I couldn't help deeply knitting my brows after hearing him say this.

To anyone else, this should have been a dream.

After all, the promise of a free favour from the fourth prince was something that countless people in this kingdom wanted.

However, it was anything but a dream for me.

I knew that once I made this request, he would be free to do whatever he wanted with me. It would wipe out the debt of this one favour that I had already done for him, freeing him to do what he wanted with me without any regret.

That was the worst case scenario for me.

This time it was killing a prince...what would it be next time?

Would he make me start a coup with him next time?

I definitely couldn't allow that to happen.

But if I were to reject him...would that offend the fourth prince?

He was going out of his way to make this offer and if I rejected this offer directly, it would seem like I didn't appreciate him and this offer. It would make it seem like I was looking down on him and his kindness.

So it was all about how to decline the fourth prince.

I looked at him in silence for a bit before finally deciding on what to do.

"Your highness, thank you for this kind offer, but I will have to reject it. It was a deal that was about necessity for both of us, so I can't feel right about taking anything. We were just doing what we needed to do." I said in a slow and calm voice.

The fourth prince raised a brow as if he was surprised by this before saying, "Is that so. Are you sure that there isn't anything that you want?"

I shook my head and said, "I just hope that your highness will continue to look out for me in the future."

The fourth prince gave a nod before saying, "Of course, I've already given you my promise that I would and I won't back down on that now."

This time, it was my turn to be surprised.

After all, I never thought that the fourth prince would be so enthusiastic about making this promise.

It was as if he had something personal at stake here...

That was also why I couldn't help feeling that there was something bad here...almost as if something bad was about to happen to me.

I suppressed that feeling and said in a polite voice, "Then I'll have to rely on your highness in the future."

The fourth prince revealed a wide smile as he nodded in agreement.

But then as if he felt that something was off, he said, "No, I can't just let you go back empty handed. I should give you something for everything that you've done."

"Shadow Five." The fourth prince suddenly said and a cloaked figure suddenly appeared in the carriage.

It seemed that she had been here the entire time, but she had hidden herself. As for how she had hidden herself, I really had no idea...

The fourth prince turned to the cloaked figure that had already fallen to one knee and said, "I want you to keep protecting Count Zwein for me. Be sure to follow his orders and keep him safe."

Though her face couldn't be seen, it was clear by her body language that she seemed disappointed by this.

The fourth prince didn't seem to notice this at all as he turned back to me and said, "In addition to this, I will be giving you a few more things that will help you with your territory."

I was taken aback by this sudden generosity from the fourth prince, but I quickly said, "Your highness, there is no need for that. As long as your highness is willing to support me, then that will be enough."

The fourth prince knitted his brows when he heard this.

He just looked at me with this frown on his face before coming forward to say, "Are you looking down on me?"

I couldn't help trembling when I heard this.

This was the one thing that I was afraid of when trying to reject the fourth prince's offer.

But before I could say anything to rectify this, the fourth prince suddenly revealed a smile and said, "I can guess what you are thinking, but you don't need to worry. I won't involve you in anything else from now on since there's no need for you to be involved. I will take care of everything on my own and you can just return to your territory until it's time."

"It's time?" I couldn't help repeating under my breath as I didn't understand what he meant by this.

However, before I could ask the fourth prince, he already sat back down in his seat and looked out the window.

The look on his face made it seem like nothing I said would change his mind...so I could only sit there with a worried look on my face.

I didn't know what the fourth prince had planned, but I didn't think that it would be anything good.

I knew what kind of personality the fourth prince had because of my knowledge from the game, so I knew that whatever plan he had...it would be very bad for me.

I just couldn't stop it...

All I could do was think of a way to minimize the damage so that I could protect the things that I cared about in the future.

As we traveled through the streets, I heard the fourth prince mutter under his breath, "If I don't make sure that his place has everything, I'll never hear the end of it from her...She'll surely be angry that I didn't take care of everything."

I couldn't help looking at the fourth prince with a strange look, but he was completely lost in his own world and wasn't in any mood to talk to me.

However, there was a bad feeling that built up inside of me...

It felt like something was going to happen, something bad.

Chapter 455 Brother

The destination of this carriage was the residence given to the dwarves.

When we arrived, they immediately came out to meet us.

The first thing that they did was go around and check my body to see if there were any injuries.

Then they asked me about what had happened.

During all of this, the fourth prince just stood there with a smile on his face. But his eyes...were sharp as he looked at the dwarves. It was almost as if he was analyzing them to see if he could find something special about them.

But if one looked closely, they could see that it wasn't with kind intentions that he was looking at them with...

Rather, it seemed like he was trying to find something that he could use against them in the future.

Even when he wasn't trying to do something specific, he was still trying to find something that would help him in the future.

It was no wonder he was able to do all that in the game.

But now...the flow of plot had changed with the death of the second prince...

The second prince's death was supposed to happen later in the plot, at least several years in the future. However, because of my interference, the second prince had died early.

Even the speech that he made in the end about wanting the throne, that was just like the one that he should have made when he died in the future.

Others wouldn't know this, but I couldn't mistake it since it was one of the important cutscenes in the noble quest line.

It seemed that I really was having an effect on this world.

After they finished asking me about what happened, the dwarves were about to pull me inside to start the banquet that they had prepared.

But before they could, I turned back to the fourth prince who had been silently waiting the entire time.

If I just left without saying anything to the fourth prince, then it wouldn't be good.

So I went to give him a bow, but the fourth prince suddenly came forward and said, "Count Zwein, there's no need for you to do that. You can just act around me like you would a friend."

I was caught off guard by these sudden words from the fourth prince.

I looked at him with a cautious look like I didn't understand what he was planning, but I couldn't read anything from his face.

So I just said, "Your highness, thank you for everything."

The fourth prince raised his hand when he heard this and said, "Count Zwein, there's no need for that. We both got what we wanted out of this and I feel like we've gotten closer because of it."

He came forward with a smile and reached his hand out around my shoulder to pull me in.

As I came closer to him, he looked at me with that smile and said, "Count Zwein, since we've become much closer, I feel like we should change the way that we address each other."

I was completely caught off guard by this sudden suggestion from the fourth prince.

At the same time, I looked at him with a confused look as I had no idea what he wanted to do.

The fourth prince didn't mind this confused way that I looked at him and said with the same smile, "I feel that you are someone that I'm destined to meet, someone I'm destined to get along with. I feel that we will be in each other's lives for a long time."

I couldn't help revealing a strange look when I heard this...

Was the fourth prince...coming on to me?

In the game, the fourth prince had never had a wife or even a fiancée...so there were rumours that he swung the other way that was sprinkled into the game.

I had thought that it was just some flavour text, but...

The way that he was acting now, it really seemed like he was into 'that'.

Was he going to ask me to...?

The fourth prince didn't care about the way that I looked at him as he said, "I feel like we were destined to be brothers, so how about we become sworn brothers?"

I let out a secret sigh of relief after hearing this, but I still had a shocked look on my face when I heard this.

Sworn brothers, that was not a pact that could be made that easily...

Yet the fourth prince wanted to become sworn brothers with me?

Still, even if I didn't want to do this, it wasn't as if I had a choice.

The fourth prince was offering this to me and if I turned him down, there was no doubt that this would offend him.

Before that though, I had to ask, "Your highness, are you sure about this? This isn't something that can be done that easily."

The fourth prince said with a wide smile, "Brother, you don't have to worry about that. Plus, you should call me brother and not your highness anymore."

It was as if he had already gotten an agreement from me with the way that he was calling me 'brother'.

Still, he was right since I wasn't about to disagree.

So I said with a sigh, "Then brother, please take care of me in the future."

The fourth prince gave a satisfied nod as he let go of my shoulder and said with the same smile, "Brother Zwein, you don't need to worry about a thing in the future. Let me take care of it for you."

I gave a nod before saying, "Thank you, brother."

Though on the inside, I couldn't help feeling exhausted.

The fourth prince gave another satisfied nod before heading back into his carriage.

I just stood there and waved at him as he left. He also waved back at me from inside the carriage.

Once he was gone and I was certain that he was gone, I couldn't help giving a small stomp of my foot.

I was frustrated that I had been played by the fourth prince like this and that there was nothing that I could do about it. At the same time, I couldn't help feeling that my future would be dark...

After all, I would be caught up in the plans of the fourth prince.

While others might not know how terrifying he was, I was completely aware of it.

He was the real villain of the game, an existence that was as terrifying as the demon king, but he was a human.

So there was no doubt that bad things would be in store for me.

I could only give a sigh and accept this since it was already determined.

Even if I wasn't happy, there was nothing that I could do about it.

So instead of agonizing over this, it would be better to come up with plans for the future. I had to come up with ways to keep myself and the people that I cared about safe...

...

After the carriage left, the fourth prince sat there with a smile on his face as he said to himself, "I have to make sure to get him on my side before they get married or else my sister will make me suffer in the future."

Chapter 456 Sudden departure

The fourth prince kept his promise and we were allowed to leave in just three days.

It was very shocking that we were allowed to leave this quickly.

After all, it wasn't just me that was leaving, but the entire dwarven ambassador team.

They would be allowed to come back to my town to set up an embassy for further relations with the Dwarven Kingdom. So there would no longer be a need for them to come to the capital.

It made sense since my territory was where most of the trade with the Dwarven Kingdom would be happening, so it was easier for us to discuss things here. But I never thought that the king would actually allow such a thing to happen.

After all, this was basically giving me all the rights to negotiate with the Dwarven Kingdom.

Along with my title as ambassador, I would be able to do whatever I wanted with the trade.

I could abuse it and set the price as high as I wanted to gouge the other nobles, not that I would do that in the first place.

But it was possible with this arrangement.

So how could the king allow this to happen?

Still, this was what happened in the end, so there was nothing that I could say about it.

I didn't want to question it just in case it would change his mind, so I quickly left with the dwarven ambassador team.

When we left, it was under the protection of several guards that all hid their identities.

It seemed that we were leaving in secret.

But then again, if we didn't leave in secret, there was no knowing what the different nobles would have done.

I actually hadn't checked in with any noble during this time because of the circumstances, so I had no idea what the situation of the capital was like.

However, as we moved through the streets, it was as I had expected.

There were far fewer people moving through the streets after the second prince died.

The official announcement was that he had suddenly fallen ill and succumbed to his illness, but everyone knew what the truth was. Even the citizens knew that it had something to do with the succession race.

So the capital had become very quiet during this time as no one dared to step out of place.

After all, a single misstep would be the difference between life and death.

After we left the capital, we met the fourth prince who had been waiting outside for us.

Seeing him waiting there for us, I had no choice but to go out and talk to him alone even though I very much didn't want to.

When he saw me come over, the fourth prince waved at me to come over with a smile on his face. When I came over, he said with a smile, "Brother Zwein, it really is hard to say goodbye after all that we've been through, but it seems like the time must come. I hope that you will be able to come to the capital again in the future."

Though I very much disagreed with this, I smiled and said, "Your..."

Before I could continue, I suddenly realized my mistake when the fourth prince gave a cough.

So I changed how I addressed him, "Brother Noah, it really is kind of you to say this, but I feel like I'll be busy with my territory from now on. I'll try to come, but it should be a long time before I have the free time to come to the capital again."

The fourth prince gave a nod of agreement before looking at the carriage, "With your new job hosting the dwarven ambassador, I'm sure that will be the case."

Then he looked around as if he was looking for something before saying, "Come out."

As soon as he said this, Shadow Five appeared out of nowhere and bowed to the fourth prince.

The fourth prince slightly knitted his brows when he saw this before saying, "What are you doing?"

Shadow Five couldn't help trembling when she heard this before bowing her head and saying, "Your highness, have I made a mistake?"

The fourth prince shook his head before saying, "You're going to be following Brother Zwein here and you're still acting like this? Take off your cloak already and stop hiding in the shadows. You will be protecting him openly as his guard."

Shadow Five trembled when she heard this before looking up slowly at the fourth prince.

But seeing that his expression didn't change, she slowly took off her cloak to reveal...a beautiful face.

She had long pink hair that framed a perfect fair white skin that had red eyes. She was without a doubt a beauty that it was almost a shame for her to cover herself up like this.

The only thing that she was lacking...was a few curves.

After seeing her take off the cloak, the fourth prince gave a satisfied nod before turning to say to me, "Brother Zwein, feel free to use her however you want. She will follow all of your orders while protecting you."

While I felt that there was some hidden meaning to this, I said with a straight face, "Brother Noah, thank you, but I don't think that there's a need. I have my own guards, so there's no need for you to send one of your personal guards to protect me."

There was a faint glow that appeared in Shadow Five's eyes when she heard this, but it was quickly buried.

The fourth prince shook his head and said, "Nonsense. You are my brother, so naturally I will protect you. Shadow Five here is one of my trusted guards, so I wouldn't be assured unless you were protected by her."

Shadow Five's eyes lit up when she heard this before she revealed a determined gaze.

Seeing this, I just gave a secret sigh.

I knew that there was no convincing them to change their mind, so I just gave a simple nod and said, "Then I'll have to thank you, Brother Noah."

The fourth prince gave a nod before waving his hand and saying, "Come with me. Before you go, there's someone that I want you to meet."

Chapter 457 A surprise meeting

I didn't know what the fourth prince wanted to show me, but the only thing that I could do was follow him.

We walked for a bit before coming to a carriage that was parked by the side of the road.

This carriage was the same carriage that I saw him riding in before, so I knew that this was the fourth prince's carriage. But when I looked closely, I found that there was a cloaked figure that was sitting inside.

For some reason, I felt that this cloaked figure seemed familiar.

It was like I had seen this cloaked figure somewhere before.

When we came over, the fourth prince raised his hand for me to stop before going over to the carriage alone.

He went into the carriage and seemed like he was saying something to this cloaked figure.

I just watched the two of them, trying to figure out where I had seen this cloaked figure before.

After a while, the fourth prince came out first and then helped that cloaked figure down from the carriage.

When that cloaked figure came out, I realized who it was.

Though she had changed cloaks, I was able to recognize her from her body figure.

It was the princess...

I don't know why she had snuck out of the castle again, but I knew that it wouldn't be simple since she had gone to all this trouble to come and see me.

There had to be a reason for this.

Once they came out of the carriage, the fourth prince came forward with her and said, "Brother Zwein, this is who I wanted you to meet."

I didn't know what they wanted from me, but the first thing that I should do is at least make a good impression, right?

So with a bow, I said, "A friend of Brother Noah is always a friend of mine."

After I said this though, there was a weird feeling coming from in front of me.

It was almost as if there was some kind of strange pressure coming from in front of me and the one that it was coming from was the cloaked figure. However, that strange pressure wasn't aimed at me, rather it was aimed at the fourth prince.

When he felt this pressure on him, the fourth prince couldn't help revealing an awkward smile.

I didn't understand why the princess was putting this pressure on the fourth prince, but I acted like I didn't feel anything.

After a moment of silence, the fourth prince said, "Brother Zwein, this is my sister and the princess of our kingdom, Princess Angela."

After he said this, the princess slowly took off her cloak to reveal her appearance.

I was surprised, but not surprised because I didn't know she was the princess.

Even though I had already seen her in the game before, seeing her in real life was something else.

Her beauty really knew no bounds...

That light blonde hair, those soft blue eyes, and that fair white skin. She really seemed like one of those princesses from a fairy tale with how she looked.

If this was a fairy tale, then there would be some kind of evil stepmother that would be jealous of her beauty.

But this wasn't...

After she pulled off her cloak, she suddenly reached a hand out towards me.

I was caught off guard by this, but I quickly realized what she was doing and I reached out my hand to take her hand. I then bowed down and placed a kiss on her hand like a gentleman.

After that kiss on the hand, I said, "It is an honour to meet you, your highness."

The princess just looked at me with a smile on her face without saying anything.

The fourth prince gave a satisfied nod when he saw this before saying, "Brother Zwein, the reason I'm introducing you to my sister here is because she will be in charge of visiting your territory in the future on behalf of my royal father."

I immediately turned to look at the fourth prince with a shocked look when I heard this.

He wasn't surprised to see me looking at him like this and instead continued by saying, "She will be in charge of the matters with the dwarves on behalf of my royal father, so you will be working a lot with her in the future. I wanted to let you meet her before so you could get acquainted ahead of time."

I slowly turned back to look at the princess with a shocked look on my face, but she just kept looking at me with that smile on hers.

It was almost as if this didn't seem to concern her.

Giving a deep sigh, I just said, "I look forward to working with you in the future, your highness."

The princess just gave a simple nod in response to this before turning to look at the fourth prince.

When the fourth prince saw this look, he came forward to take her by the hand and said to me, "Brother Zwein, I think that we should end it here today. I'm sure that you have a long journey ahead of you, so I don't want to keep you here for long."

I was surprised once again by how suddenly the fourth prince ended this, but he wasn't wrong.

I wanted to leave as soon as possible to avoid being caught up in anything, so I said with a nod, "Brother Noah, thank you for everything that you've done." I then turned to the princess and said, "Your highness, it was an honour to meet you."

The fourth prince gave a nod and then said, "Then Brother Zwein, until we meet again."

I said with a smile, "Brother Noah, until we meet again."

The two of us stood there for a few seconds before turning around to head to our own carriages.

Both of us had different thoughts in mind that the other never would have expected.

But as I was walking off, I felt the urge to turn around.

When I did, I saw that the fourth prince had also turned around.

Seeing that I was looking at him, he mouthed, "Good luck."

Without saying anything else, he turned back around and didn't turn back once.

I was just confused why he would mouth this to me.

Chapter 458 Who was this?

After we set off, I couldn't help falling into deep thought.

As for what I was thinking about, it was naturally what the fourth prince had said to me.

He had told me that it would be the princess that would be in charge of the matter with the dwarves in the future. What he meant by this was the trade with the dwarves that would be done on behalf of the king.

Would the king really leave something this important to the princess?

As far as I knew, the princess never got involved in things like this.

She was the princess that the king loved and spoiled, which was why she was such a tomboy. She had never been involved in royal affairs before, so she definitely never did anything like this before.

So why would the king suddenly give her this role?

It was impossible that he didn't know how important this role was, so why would he give it to someone who had never been involved in this kind of thing before?

Wouldn't this be bad for him?

The more that I thought about it, the more confused I was.

After all, there were just too many things that were different from the world that I knew.

The second prince's death and now the princess being given this role.

If I had to find one thing in common with this...it was that I was involved in this matter.

No matter how I looked at it, it seemed like I was changing the course of this world's history.

That was something to be expected since I was not someone that belonged to this world, but at the same time...it was terrifying. That was because if this world was going to progress differently from the knowledge that I knew about this world, it would mean that this knowledge that I possessed was useless.

If I didn't have my knowledge, there was very little that I would be able to do...

After all, the system that I had was...the Sex Toy System.

Other than a few useful items, I had gained nothing else from it so far. It had even gone into hibernation because I hadn't been able to gather all the resources that it needed for the next step.

But then I suddenly realized something...

Wait, with the trade with the dwarves, didn't that mean that I had enough resources now to start producing items with the system like it had been waiting for?

Did that mean that I would finally be able to use the system again?

But that hope died just as quickly as it came.

The system that I had was the Sex Toy System, so even if I could use the system to produce items, what good would that be?

What would I be able to do with a bunch of sex toys?

The more and more that I thought about my situation, the more I fell into despair.

It didn't seem like there was a light at the end of this tunnel...

I just had no idea what to do.

But the mood was completely different on the other side.

...

The fourth prince couldn't help looking at the princess with a strange look on his face.

That was because the princess currently had a look on her face that the fourth prince had never seen before.

This kind of shy expression that she had never revealed once in her life was creeping the fourth prince out.

He really wanted to say, "Just who are you?"

But of course, he was able to keep it in and not say it out loud in the end.

Though it did take quite a bit of effort on his part to stop himself from saying it out loud.

Finally after a long silence, the fourth prince asked, "Are you happy with how that turned out? You didn't get to say a single word to him in the end."

The princess jolted when she heard this before shyly lowering her head.

The fourth prince's chin almost dropped when he saw her acting like this.

Was this really his rough and tough big sister who didn't seem like a girl at all?

Was this really the one that had tormented him when they were younger?

He just couldn't help refusing to believe this.

After lowering her head for a bit, she said in a soft voice, "Well, it felt like my heart was about to jump out of my chest when he kissed my hand like that..."

The fourth prince's lips twitched when he heard this.

He never thought that there would be a day where he would see his big sister like this...

But then he said with a sigh, "If you act like this around him, then what will happen in the future? How will you be able to even talk to him if you keep acting like this around him?"

The princess revealed a sad look when she heard this, but she still said, "I know...but it isn't that easy. I've never felt this way before and it's hard for me to adjust to this new feeling..."

Then after a pause, she added, "But I am trying. I will get better and talk to him properly next time we meet."

The fourth prince's lips couldn't help curling into a smile when he heard this.

Though there was a bit of doubt in his mind, he still said, "I believe in you, big sister."

After another silence, the princess suddenly came forward and took the fourth prince's arm with her hands. Holding that arm, she looked up with a pleading look and said, "Little fourth, you have to help your big sister. How did you get so close to him already? Please tell me your secret."

When he was hit head on this time, the fourth prince couldn't hold himself back anymore as he said, "Who are you?"

When she heard this, the expression of the princess changed.

It slowly went from a pleading look to an angry look as she released his arm and slowly brought her hand to his head.

Then she...grabbed him in a death grip as she said, "It's your loving big sister, don't you recognize me?"

The fourth prince revealed a bitter smile when he was in this death grip, but for some reason...he couldn't help feeling relieved.

This was the big sister that he was familiar with.

Chapter 459 Strange return

It took a few days for us to arrive back in my territory, but it was good to be back.

When we arrived though, we received a strange welcome.

Instead of the normal welcome that we received, it was almost as if we were completely ignored by the people of the town.

Everyone seemed to be running around as if they were busy with something.

It didn't seem like things were normal here.

So the first thing that I did was head to my manor to see if I could find Rose.

If there was anyone that could give me answers, it was her.

When I arrived, I found that she was trapped inside her office with piles of papers on her desk. As well, she was surrounded by many people who had papers in their hands, as if they were trying to get approval from her.

They all turned to look at me when I came in, but then they just ignored me and went back to what they were doing.

I couldn't help revealing a bitter smile when I saw this.

It was only right that they acted this way since I left most of the management of my territory to Rose. Even if I was back, they would still go to her for approval rather than me.

It was only Rose who raised her hand to stop the one talking to her and stood up to come over to me.

When she walked over, she said, "Oh, right, you were coming back. I completely forgot."

The bitter smile on my face became even more bitter when I heard this.

There was nothing that a husband liked to hear more from his wife than this.

But still, I couldn't blame her since I was most likely the reason why she was this busy.

So I asked, "What's going on here? Why is it so busy?"

Rose was about to say something when she suddenly looked behind me at someone there.

I slowly turned and followed her gaze and found that she was looking at Veronica who had followed me here.

I had honestly forgotten about Veronica during my trip to the capital since she had been so quiet and there had been so many things going on. It was only now that I remembered that she had been with me the whole time.

Rose pushed me to the side and took Veronica by the hand.

She pulled Veronica over to her desk and said, "Miss Veronica, please help me with these decisions. You're the one that knows what's best here."

Veronica just slowly nodded in agreement.

But before that person could start their report again, I quickly came forward and said, "Wait, wait, wait, before you start, tell me what's going on."

Rose looked like she suddenly remembered that I was still here and then she looked at me like she wanted me to leave.

Veronica had to be the one to tell me what was happening.

"Right, I completely forgot to tell you...I received a letter from my father saying that he would be visiting your territory soon and he asked me when you would be back. I think that he should be arriving in a day or two."

A look of shock appeared on my face, but also a slow look of understanding.

If a duke was coming, then it would make sense that they would all be busy like this.

After all, someone with the status of duke couldn't be treated lightly.

They had to make sure that everything was taken care of perfectly so that they wouldn't offend the duke.

That was why everyone was so busy.

Once she finished saying this, she was pulled back to the matter that Rose had been dealing with.

With the way that they were treating me, it was almost as if I had been dismissed for being useless. But of course, that was the truth of the matter.

No matter how smart I was, it didn't matter since I had never been in charge of a territory before. There were many things that one had to learn to take care of their territory and it couldn't be done rashly.

If it wasn't for Rose, my territory would have collapsed.

After all, the only real experience that I had running a territory was in the game and that was all simplified by the game system. Running a real territory wasn't something that would be very fun to put in a game, so there was just a simplified version that one would normally see in games.

So even if I wanted to get angry, I had no right.

Not that I would get angry since I knew that she was doing all of this for me.

I just awkwardly stood there as I thought about what to do before turning around to leave so that I could leave them alone to do what they needed to do.

But before I reached the door, I still turned back and asked, "Is there anything that I can do to help?"

Rose looked up from the report that she was looking at to look at me before raising her hand to stop that person again.

When he was stopped from reporting, he turned to look at me like I was getting in the way. It wasn't a look of jealousy, it was just a look of annoyance at the fact that I was delaying their important matters.

The staff that Rose had trained were all professional, so work was the only thing on their mind.

I just revealed an awkward look as I waited for her to say something.

After thinking for a bit, Rose suddenly said, "You can go and find Haley, I think that she needs some help lifting things."

An awkward smile appeared on my face when I heard this.

I wasn't even relegated to doing something small, I was sent off to lift things.

But that was just the position that I was in and if it made it easier for her, I would naturally do it.

So neither of us said anything else as we turned to go back to business.

Rose went on with the planning while I went off to find Haley to help.

Chapter 460 The duke's visit (1)

The days passed by quickly and we received word two days later that the duke would be arriving soon.

It was the scout team on the edge of our territory that had noticed the duke's carriage and immediately sent word to the town to inform us.

When that happened, Rose started running things with even more of an iron fist than she did before. This time, I wasn't able to escape since I was the count and the lord of this place, so I had to prepare myself to greet the duke.

As such, I was dragged off by a few of her maids and made to sit still for several hours as they prepared what I would be wearing to greet the duke.

Actual formal wear was much more troublesome than normal formal wear, this was something that was used to impress the guests that came, so there were many different parts to it.

From the clothes to the accessories to even the smallest details of my hair, it all had to be perfect.

So I was basically turned into a dress up doll before the duke arrived.

But there was one good thing that came from this.

Rose also had to put on formal wear and...the moment that I saw her, my breath was taken away.

She was already a beautiful woman, but when she went all out like this...there was nothing that I could say.

In fact, there was a part of me that wanted to bark for her, but I held myself back in the end.

The two of us were dressed up like this as we waited in our manor for the duke's arrival.

Since I was a count and she was a countess, it wasn't as if we could wait outside for the duke.

We had to wait for our people to pick him up and bring him here.

During this, it really was uncomfortable sitting there since we were just waiting without having a thing to do.

If we moved around too much, it would ruin our formal wear and give a bad impression. So we had to sit as still as possible until the duke arrived.

Finally, the duke's arrival was announced and we stood up to greet him.

To our surprise, we found that it wasn't just the duke that came, but also his wife.

The way that they acted, it was almost as if they were on vacation rather than visiting the territory of another noble.

But that was just how it was for nobles of higher rank, they felt less pressure in situations like this since the pressure wasn't on them. They didn't need to worry about offending others, it was others that had to worry about offending them.

So they could just act as casual as they wanted, there would still be people that would try to flatter them.

After they came in, I stood up and walked over to the duke before saying, "Duke Beauchamp, it is an honour for us to have you visit our territory."

This time, I had completely changed how I addressed the duke.

Before, I had been overly courteous and had addressed him in a very respectful manner.

But this time, I addressed him properly as a noble of slightly higher ranking.

That was because now that I was a count, that was what was expected.

If I were to keep acting like I had done before, then it would have been insulting.

After all, trying too hard made things seem fake. If I were to keep acting humble like I did before, then all it would do is offend the duke.

The duke looked at me with narrowed eyes when he heard me addressing him like this.

Seeing him look at me like this, I couldn't help feeling a bit worried...

But then the duke revealed a smile and said, "Count Zwein, you're too kind. I should say that it is an honour for me to come to your territory."

Rose revealed a surprised look in her eyes when she heard this, but I quickly patted her hand to calm her down since I was already used to this.

The duke knew that I was a part of Shadow Garden, so he had acted this way when I had been in Bright Water City.

I was already used to hearing him talk like this, so I said with a smile, "Then it could be said that it is both of our honours to be here today."

The duke was surprised by this, but he revealed a faint smile as he nodded in response.

After that, the four of us all sat down and some tea was prepared for us.

Since they had just arrived, we didn't get right into business and talked about some small things that weren't important.

We were just letting the duke and the duchess settle before getting into it.

However, the duke was the one that changed the topic to a subject that hurt him quite a bit.

"Where's Veronica? Shouldn't she be here?" After he said this, he looked around as if he was searching for her.

But there was no place that she could be since we were in the living room of our manor.

If she was here, he would have already seen her.

Both Rose and I revealed awkward smiles when we heard this.

We had tried to get Veronica to come with us to meet the duke, but she had refused.

It wasn't as if we could force her to come with us if she wasn't willing, so we had no choice but to meet the duke and duchess without her.

Now that they had brought the topic up, we had no choice but to give the excuse that we had already given.

Rose said with a smile, "Lady Veronica has been interacting with our dwarven friends quite a bit recently. They invited her to help out with their forging today, so she couldn't cancel and had no choice but to miss this meeting. Of course, she will be coming to dinner tonight."

The duke revealed a bitter smile when he heard this.

He looked at the duchess and both of them had bitter smiles on their faces.

When we saw this, we couldn't help feeling worried about this and I said, "If you wish, we can send someone to get Lady Veronica and have her join us."

The duke just shook his head and said, "There's no need for that."

He looked at us with that bitter smile as he said, "We know what kind of personality our daughter has, so there's no need for you to give excuses. It's clear that she just didn't want to come see us."

When we heard this, the two of us suddenly jolted and panicked.

We were about to offer up more excuses, but the duke just raised his hand and said with the same bitter smile, "There's no need for you to make excuses for her. There's nothing that you can do if she doesn't want to see us."

Then after a pause, he said, "But that does mean that she's having fun if she's still willing to stay after all this time."

We couldn't help revealing a bit of worry when we heard this.

There was a bad feeling that filled us after he said this...