

SICKLY GIRL, BUT A DRUG ADDICT

Count Barak Train.

Famous as a central dog in noble society, but behind the scenes, he was in cahoots with bigwigs from the underworld...

He was what you'd call a bat-like person.

With a life motto that the strong side is our side.

An animal instinct to do anything to survive.

Utilizing these two strengths, he finally succeeded in reaching the extreme of darkness.

The faceless Demon King who manipulates the kingdom from behind.

The Fire Sword Ghost.

"Excellent."

"Th-Thank you, Fire Sword Ghost... No, no! Your Majesty the Demon King!"

"Don't mind the title."

The Fire Sword Ghost.

His face burned completely, leaving not even a trace of his form.

Now existing only in rumors, the darkness of the kingdom.

The one who stands at its peak.

No one knows what his ultimate purpose is.

But standing before him, his intimidation feels like burning flames.

Just hearing his voice makes one breathless.

“Barak Train. I am entrusting you with a ‘company’.”

“A-A company, you say?”

Train received a pharmaceutical company that produces replicas of Vermilion Heart from the Fire Sword Ghost.

“From today, it’s yours.”

“I-I cannot suddenly accept such an incredible thing...”

“No need to worry about trivial matters. Do as you wish.”

“Pardon?”

“Whether you continue to grow it, destroy it, or use it for personal matters. I mean do as you please.”

“Such...”

Why he was favored.

Why he was entrusted with such a weighty task.

There was no way to know.

However, there were rampant rumors in the back alleys about why the Fire Sword Ghost continuously creates new companies.

And why he hands them over to trustworthy people.

‘Expose more Athenas... to the counterfeit.’

Vermilion Heart, produced for the purpose of treating and training Athenas at the academy.

The Fire Sword Ghost obtains it and continues dangerous research.

The goal was to enhance the addictiveness of the counterfeit.

Athenas are important military resources for all nations on the continent.

If such military resources were to be subjugated under the Fire Sword Ghost to obtain addictive Vermilion Heart...

Order would be rewritten.

And the Fire Sword Ghost would become the true master of the world.

Train could become the right-hand man of such a person.

Whatever his ultimate goal, the Fire Sword Ghost is a shrewd person who can create pharmaceutical companies overnight.

Count Train, merely a minnow, dared not disobey his orders.

“Please don’t misunderstand. I was merely saying that I want to contribute as labor to the Count’s company.”

However, though helpless before the Fire Sword Ghost, he was still excellent in the art of survival, having made it this far.

Even that tasteless joke about mature women not being his taste was to hide his true intentions.

To begin with, would there even be anyone sexually interested in Athenas?

In society, such people are called ‘those with peculiar sexual preferences’ or ‘perverts’.

There’s even a specific term for it: Athenaphilia.

Even the nickname ‘Daddy’ was something Rukia started using on her own after he gave her special treatment to use her as an intermediary.

“Indeed, there was a slight misunderstanding.”

“I’m glad you understand.”

“However, I cannot let you work at the company.”

It's dangerous to bring an Athena directly to the company.

Most academies are like this, but Regin is particularly famous for its thorough management of Athenas.

If he takes this Athena and surveillance follows, if the company's location is exposed or his identity becomes known to the public?

Train would be pushed out of the central political arena. And at the same time, expelled by the Fire Sword Ghost.

Moreover, the badge the silver-haired girl is wearing has a wolf looking to the left and a crow looking to the right drawn together.

'She belongs to Aesir.'

Aesir dormitory is a prestigious one that hasn't missed being ranked first in dormitory evaluations for years.

Compared to other dormitories, not only the school rules but also the management regulations are much stricter.

With about 100 Athenas belonging to one dormitory.

Those members are managed daily by five full-time professors, dormitory supervisors, and club supervisors.

If, by chance, it's misunderstood as kidnapping and a professor sends an Athena.

And if the sent Athena happens to be the Thunder Emperor or Flash Black.

'My future looks bleak...'

With his bushy chin beard and pot belly, he might seem lazy and thoughtless.

But there's a reason Count Train has survived, moving between the light and darkness of the country.

To prevent the ashen girl from coming to the company directly, Count Train hurriedly racks his brain.

It was a crucial turning point of life and death.



...That's what he seems to be thinking.

Although it's an extremely reactive game.

If you play for thousands of hours, you can predict for what purpose newly born characters are created.

Athenas learn from a young age how to control their powers, so they never exert their abilities unless necessary.

Of course, there are blockheads like the Thunder Emperor who use their fists first, but this is a very exceptional case.

Athenas absolutely.

Absolutely never draw their weapons first, until they are subjected to hostile acts like preemptive attacks.

First, to make the other party recognize that I have no other intentions, I should show a defenseless appearance.

...I'm used to begging with my head down anyway.

And this way, I can get more Vermilion Heart.

I stood up from my chair and threw my body onto the game table.

In the process, Rukia barely caught me as I almost slipped and fell.

Standing on the table.

Kneeling down, pressing my head to the floor, I murmured in a desperate voice.

“Please... I beg you, Count Train...”

Kyahaha.

Rukia’s laughter, watching from the side, was resonant.

“Daddy. I didn’t see it before, but you have more peculiar tastes than I thought?”

“Wh-What are you saying! Rukia. That can’t be!”

“Well, you give out several bottles of samples to other kids. But you’re being particularly strict with our department head. Puhuhu. You don’t have to hide it?”

“Th-That’s not it. There are adult circumstances.”

Well done, Rukia.

Nice supporting fire.

“Do you give out samples too? Then could I at least get that? I’m sorry for showing such an unsightly display... but I’m desperate for even one sample. I beg you like this, Count.”

“...Ugh.”

I’ve made it clear in advance that I don’t have the ability to pay.

So Count Train must decide carefully even about providing samples.

I might cling to him asking for more.

I might throw a tantrum begging him to take me to the company, saying I’ll pay with my body.

I should subtly let him know that I don’t have such intentions.

This man’s vigilance is much higher than expected.

“It doesn’t have to be a drug factory. If you arrange any other job for me, I’ll gladly work.”

The suspicious gaze subsides a bit.

Is it a success?

I’d like to simulate the dimension of possibilities, but there’s not much time.

I have only 4 minutes left.

I brought my head back to the floor and rubbed it.

Normally, I would have hit my forehead, but now if I did that, my last remaining vitality of 1 would fly away, so I can’t.

“Please... I beg you so desperately.”

Scratching my nails on the game table that I couldn’t grasp.

I hoped that Count Train would fall for my intense appeal.

Soon, a short sigh emanates from the front.

“Alright. For now, I’ll provide this sample.”

I slowly raised my upper body and stared at Count Train with hollow eyes.

“Thank you... thank you so much.”

Count Train promptly closed the jewel box in front of him and slid it towards me.

I click open the jewel box that came into my hands.

Inside, as I saw earlier, two bottles of the red essence of life were lying.

“Ah... God.”

I finally obtained it.

The counterfeit of Vermilion Heart.

Because my life is maintained by Vermilion Heart, I can tell intuitively.

Bright red crystallization of blood.

The forbidden elixir that maintains my life.

This perfect spherical medicine bottle that fits snugly in both hands.

...Will lead me to the future.

“I’m glad, department head. Really~ I was imagining a future without you just a moment ago?”

“Rukia. That’s enough fuss.”

“Hehehe! Come on, hurry! Hurry and drink it! There are only 2 minutes left!”

Me, kneeling on the game table, holding the medicine bottle in a reverent posture.

The emotion in Count Train’s eyes, as he looks at me, changes from suspicion to curiosity.

“Thank you, Rukia. Thanks to you, I’ve at least avoided becoming a star in the sky.”

“Come on, don’t worry and hurry!”

“Huhu.”

I am smiling, but.

If I were to express my current feelings as I hold the counterfeit of Vermilion Heart, Scarlet Heart, in my hand.

Emotionless, boring, and listless.

Even with death right in front of me, it’s always like this when the drug effect is circulating.

Even if I die, the game will reset and start from the beginning.

It feels like I would start again from this body's childhood.

"Aah..."

But my body has escaped the control of my head.

My heart beats on its own, and my cheeks flush.

I painfully pulled out the cork stopper and threw it on the floor.

While the red liquid splashed and the stopper bounced off the edge of the table flying far away, I shoved the bottle's mouth into my mouth.

Glug, glug, glug.

The cold blood of life flows into my body.

The drug effect that begins to spread throughout the body only when death is imminent.

In an instant, sensations that had disappeared.

Expand hundreds, thousands of times and shake my head.

A frenzy of sensations.

Fireworks exploding from all directions.

Fireworks where one becomes the flame itself, not a spectator.

Every nerve in my body says it's alive.

It asks, "I'm here, didn't you know before?"

It feels like I could find even the smallest inflammation hidden throughout my body.

The bruises on my shoulder and knee from when I fell earlier say.

Hello. I'll be here for a week.

It's throbbing, can you go away?

No.

Fine, do as you please!

“Hu. Huhuhuh. Hu... huhuh.”

[You

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