

Turning 50

Chapter 50

The blue belt signified the individual who served the Emperor directly, and the five knots represented over fifty years of service in the palace. The golden tassel symbolized the most brilliantly shining sun, a privilege only the head of the Emperor's attendants held.

Yuder had no memory of seeing him in his previous life. The man seemed to have vanished with the death of the current Emperor.

"His Majesty is waiting for you in the Second Palace. Please follow me."

"I'm here today not as the Duke of Peletta but as the Commander of the Cavalry. I'd appreciate it if you could address me accordingly."

"Ah, indeed. This old man's memory fell short."

The head attendant seemed quite familiar with Kishiar. Yuder didn't miss the swift but careful glance he cast over the Cavalry members.

"..."

The Cavalry members hardly dared to breathe as they passed through the long corridor and the garden. Among them, Kanna was by far the most nervous.

Yuder saw that her habit of bowing her head and walking excessively low was a continuation of the peculiar behavior she had displayed before they arrived here.

She seemed to want to hide her appearance from the gaze of others. He was curious about the reason, but in this quiet situation, he regretted that he couldn't strike up a conversation.

The head attendant confidently traversed the third corridor and walked through the garden. Since he mentioned the Second Palace, they would have to cross a few more corridors. Yet, despite walking for so long within the palace, there was hardly any sign of people in the Sun Palace.

In his memories of a previous life, the Sun Palace was always bustling with numerous attendants, visiting nobles for the imperial audience, and foreign diplomats. This tranquility felt odd to Yuder, but the head attendant and Kishiar seemed used to it.

'Is the Sun Palace devoid of people due to the current Emperor's decree?'

Just as he thought this, the head attendant suddenly halted.

"Someone is coming."

Moments later, as he had said, they felt the presence of several people coming from beyond the pond on the right side of the garden. As soon as they spotted the head attendant, Kishiar, and the Cavalry members, they stopped in unison.

From the belts around their waists, they were attendants. However, the belts they wore were as deep a red as twilight. Yuder knew what that red color signified.

Red was the color of the Crown Prince, the future of the Empire.

And the current Crown Prince was none other than the Emperor, Katchian La Orr, whom Yuder would serve until his death in the future.

"I was taking a walk and thought I saw a familiar figure. It turns out Duke Peletta is visiting."

The tall group of attendants parted on both sides, revealing a boy from within. His appearance bore an undeniable resemblance to the imperial bloodline, much like Kishiar La Orr.

The beautiful golden hair blessed by the Sun God, red pupils, and outstanding looks, though still youthful, were unmistakably traits of the imperial family.

Although he appeared much smaller and younger than when Yuder first saw him in his previous life, how could he ever forget that face?

Without realizing it, Yuder clenched his fist tightly. The sharp pain digging into his palm helped distinguish between the past and the present.

The boy before him was still the Crown Prince. Katchian La Orr didn't even know who Yuder Aile was. At this moment, his gaze was solely on the head attendant and Kishiar.

Observing it, Yuder reiterated to himself several times.

Now was not the past. Many things had changed since then and would continue to change.

Preventing the Crown Prince, in a few years' time, from calmly issuing an assassination order against Kishiar La Orr. That was the future he wanted to stop.

If he said he held no resentment against the Emperor before his execution, it would have been a lie. However, even such emotions eventually vanished. Yudrain Aile, the Commander of the Cavalry, didn't have his regrets rooted in that.

He once again recalled the thoughts he had reflected upon with bitter self-deprecation moments before death, utterly exhausted. In them, there was no longing for revenge.

He hadn't returned to the Cavalry for revenge.

Of course, there were no intentions of letting Katchian La Orr become Emperor as smoothly as before, given that he had to save Kishiar and also survive.

In his previous life, the person he had watched over was far from being an excellent ruler. But now wasn't the time when he had accumulated enough power to intervene. The timing was too early.

Yuder opened his eyes that he had closed and looked forward. Coincidentally, the first thing he saw was the straight back of Kishiar La Orr. He stood leisurely, like a large tree casting a shadow over the members behind him.

Seeing just that, the emotions boiling within his chest began to slowly subside, and his usual composure returned. After a few deep breaths, he was able to observe the conversation between Prince Katchian and Kishiar with cool eyes.

"What a surprise. To meet Your Highness the Crown Prince here, it seems like it's going to be a lucky day for me."

As Kishiar responded with a leisurely smile, a grin also spread across the prince's lips. If you judged by his face alone, he seemed genuinely pleased.

"Duke Peletta must be busy. I heard you have been even busier these days, but I'm glad to see you looking healthy today."

"You've been concerned about my health? I'm honored."

"But who are the strangers following you, Duke? I don't recognize these faces."

The prince's gaze skimmed over the Cavalry members. During that brief moment when his gaze landed on Yuder's face, Yuder clenched his fist tightly then gradually released it.

"They are members of the Cavalry I created a while ago. They are talents who will become the power of our empire."

"Oh? I've heard the story. Hearing the Duke say that, I suddenly have high expectations. I hope one day to see their skills firsthand."

"Haha. You'll certainly be surprised."

While pleasant conversation was exchanged, the Cavalry members glanced at each other. After a few more words about the Cavalry, the Crown Prince finally got to the point.

"Actually, I felt a strange energy from afar, which led me here, and only after meeting you, Duke, did I understand its source. What exactly is inside that box that gives off such an impression that I should not approach it any further?"

His tone was smooth, but his intent was clear. Yuder glanced at the small box that Kishiar was holding.

Judging by his intuition, after observing Katchian La Orr for nearly ten years, the prince wasn't asking because he didn't know. He already knew what was inside. He simply wanted confirmation.

'Coming to see for himself, even though he already knows, indicates he wanted to verify something. It might be nothing, but if not... it could be related to whoever was behind the targeting of Kishiar and the Red Stone.'

All the way to this place, Yuder had been pondering the identity of the intruders' mastermind. There were countless possibilities.

Kings of other nations greedily eyeing the Red Stone, the Sun God's church, which, although proclaiming this newfound power as a divine gift, might not be thrilled about the current situation, the Pearl Tower mages who couldn't resist their desire to study the stone, and many more were possible culprits.

And among them was Katchian La Orr, who in Yuder's previous life had directly ordered the assassination of Kishiar La Orr. Knowing that the prince, who was about to become a power within the empire, had no reason to covet the stone in such a way, this possibility was low, but it was still a potential scenario that could not be completely dismissed.

Unaware of Yuder's scrutiny, the prince merely smiled.

"I apologize, but it's difficult for me to speak about it, as it pertains to a task His Majesty has assigned. I can't disclose anything before reporting to him."

Kishiar, too, was smiling. Unlike the prince, who appeared quite cold and fierce when not smiling, Kishiar maintained an inscrutable tranquility and leisureliness.

"Ah, if your visit is due to such pressing business, I can't keep you any longer. Let's have tea together some other time when we meet."

With the Emperor invoked as an excuse, the prince immediately stepped back.

"I understand. Today's weather is lovely, so I hope you continue to enjoy this beautiful scenery."

From behind Kishiar, the Cavalry members also bowed in unison. But their uneven salutes, each different from the other's, caused the prince's attendants to frown. It was clear from a glance that they looked down upon the Cavalry members as uncouth individuals.

Yuder followed behind Kishiar for a while, then stealthily turned his head. He saw the retreating figure of the prince, disappearing into the distance along with his attendants.

"Would you mind waiting here for a while? I need to report to His Majesty."

Even after parting with the prince, the squad walked quite a distance across the palace. The building they arrived at was the Second Palace, located in the innermost part of a complex linked by corridors and gardens.

The Sun Palace was composed of seven buildings connected in a unique pattern. When inside, it felt peculiar, but it was said that from the sky, it resembled a constellation.

The reason the number attached to each palace seemed unrelated to its actual position was due to this design. The Second Palace, being the furthest from the entrance among the seven buildings, was extremely inconvenient to visit.

In his previous life, when Katchian La Orr was the Emperor, he barely used the Second Palace. Previous emperors only used it when they were old, tired, and wanted to cut off communication with the outside world.

The head attendant informed them that the current Emperor, Keilusa La Orr, was waiting for them there.