

Turning 634

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Chapter 634

"We are currently touring the country for the second recruitment of the Cavalry members. If you think our goals align in the future, would you consider applying?"

This proposal, unbeknownst to Marin, was exactly what Yuder had intended to offer. He had planned to approach her later, believing that enlisting Marin would be beneficial for the future of the Cavalry. However, Kishiar's initiative rendered Yuder's plan unnecessary.

It was clear that Kishiar had already completed his assessment and recognized her potential based on Yuder's reaction, who already knew of Marin's abilities.

'Everything becomes simpler once it's out in the open,' Yuder thought to himself.

As he was thinking that, Kishiar, who caught his eye, grinned quietly. It was a look of satisfaction, aware that this was what Yuder had desired.

Unnoticed by himself, Yuder's eyes softened slightly.

"Joining the Cavalry, you say... Well," Marin pondered. Contrary to expectations of immediate refusal or anger, Marin did not dismiss the offer outright. She regained her composure quickly after the initial shock and studied Kishiar's face thoughtfully before letting out a deep sigh.

"I've heard about the Cavalry's remarkable feats in the west. Even in this remote area, those tales were the talk of the town."

"Is that so?"

"But isn't the Cavalry filled with exceptional warriors capable of defeating monsters as large as houses alone? I doubt I'd pass the test even if our goals align. I've never... done anything like that in my life."

Marin couldn't have imagined that one of those 'exceptional warriors' was present among them. While Yuder remained silent, Kishiar let out a light-hearted laugh.

"Why are you laughing?" Marin asked, puzzled.

"No reason. I'm just glad you're not completely opposed to joining. My proposal wasn't based solely on shared goals. I believe you have the qualities befitting the Cavalry," Kishiar explained.

"Me?" Marin was understandably surprised, not grasping the reason behind Kishiar's confidence.

"I won't say I'm helpless in a fight. I help out the mercenaries in the neighboring village occasionally. But as for my awakened abilities... they're just enough to sprout a blade of grass. Hardly useful against even the smallest monster."

"Do you really think so?"

"Are you suggesting otherwise? You haven't even seen my abilities."

Kishiar's lips curved into a meaningful smile.

"Not having seen doesn't mean I don't know. If you doubt my judgment, the very person who recently defeated a monster alone in the west is here. Why not discuss your potential and possibilities with him?"

"Really?"

"The ability to discern an Awakener's potential and the skill to teach are, frankly, even greater in this person than in me as the Commander."

With these grand words, Kishiar's face broke into a wide grin as he gestured towards his associate.

"Allow me to introduce my assistant, Sir Yuder Aile. A leading figure in the Cavalry, recently praised for single-handedly defeating a giant monster and granted the title of Baron."

Marin's eyes widened with a different kind of surprise from when she first saw Kishiar's true form.

'...That person?'

Beside the strikingly handsome man, a pale and somber-looking man had been sitting quietly, who didn't resemble the incredible Awakener of the rumors. People often speculated that to defeat a giant monster alone, one must possess immense size and strength, but Yuder Aile was a stark contrast to such vague imaginations.

Though tall, he was not a man of bursting muscles. His expressionless face radiated not the arrogance of the strong, but a tranquility akin to the chill of dawn. It was almost doubtful whether he was capable of real emotion.

That this man, of commoner origins and now adorned with a last name, had made his name known across the continent was remarkable.

'But it was he who recognized my abilities without even seeing them. What kind of power does he possess?'

Marin looked at Yuder with a mix of curiosity and caution, to which Yuder responded quietly.

"There's no need to overthink. Probably, you're the only one who underestimates your abilities."

What? As Marin questioned her ears, his toneless voice continued.

"If you're refusing because you don't want to join the Cavalry, that's one thing. But there's no need to be scared thinking you lack the ability. With your power, you wouldn't easily lose, be it in the Cavalry or elsewhere."

"Didn't you hear what I said? I can only sprout a blade of grass."

"Even grass has its own worth."

His slightly slower speech somehow made his words more impactful, as if they were etching into her mind.

"There are many plants in the world. Some are tough and hard to cut, others are so poisonous that a mere touch can be lethal. Your brother knew well that plants are not always fragile."

Marin's fingers twitched on the table.

"But I've never grown anything that remarkable."

"Never having tried and being unable to are different things."

His eyes, dark as the night, seemed to peer into Marin's soul. She found herself drawn into his words.

"Your power depends on how well you know plants. And you had a brother who knew them well. That's an ideal condition to develop your ability. I assure you, if you join the Cavalry and endure a year, you could win against most of the members in a duel."

It sounded unbelievable, but part of her wanted to believe.

Until now, she had considered her power useless, especially since her awakening followed her brother's death. Marin had never revealed her awakening to anyone in the village. She considered it an unlucky ability she wished to hide forever.

But if what he said was true...

"Really? You're not just saying this to persuade me?"

"Why would I lie in this situation?"

True. To Marin, this opportunity was significant, but to him, she was just one of many ordinary Awakeners, not worth the effort of deceit.

Yet, Marin felt that he genuinely wanted to convince her. It was hard to believe, but it seemed true.

Her eyes, sharpened by years of catering to various guests, flickered in confusion.

"Alright, I understand. But may I take some more time to think about it? It feels too hasty to decide right now," Marin said with hesitation.

"There's no rush," Kishiar replied with a gentle smile, watching her thoughtfully.

He reassured Marin that she could take her time to think, and then, on the spot, he wrote a note bearing his signature. It was a token that any member of the Cavalry would recognize as Kishiar's.

"If you make up your mind, take this to the Cavalry's Western Branch in Tainu. Show it to Branch Head Emun Philang, and he will assist you with whatever you need."

Marin slowly nodded and accepted the note.

Yuder, observing Marin as she carefully examined the note, presented her with one last item.

"Oh, this is..."

"This helped us on our journey here. I believe it belongs to Mikey," Yuder explained, handing her a blood-stained mushroom sack.

Marin closed her eyes tightly as she recognized the old, discolored blood on the otherwise worn and ordinary sack. It was a family's intuition to recognize a belonging. For her, it was no different.

"Yes, it's Mikey's. I thought it had been discarded somewhere in the mountains since I couldn't find it when I arrived... Where did you find this?"

"We found it at a herbalist's rest stop."

The realization that her brother's last traces were so close twisted Marin's brow, but instead of succumbing to anger like before, she gripped the sack tightly, holding back the surge of emotions.

Yuder sensed that this composed demeanor was more akin to her true self, a reflection of her life here.

"This sack could serve as evidence of the Crown Prince's deeds, so we need to take it with us. But we thought it right to show it to you first."

"If you hadn't planned to take it, I would have insisted you do," Marin said firmly, handing the sack back to Yuder.

"I'll visit the place you mentioned when I can. I have things to settle and finish up here, so I can't leave right away."

Yuder, along with Kishiar and Nathan Zuckerman, then left Marin's house. Marin had informed them of the location where little Kitchi had lived, but they found it had long since become a ruined, empty house.

Like their arrival, they departed the village quietly.