

Turning 93

Chapter 93

"I have a rough idea of whom my brother might have sided with. The Apeto Duchy has been trying to expand its power in the east these days."

Upon hearing this, Gakane glanced slightly towards Devran. He could see Devran nodding, signifying his agreement with Zachlis's assessment.

"I also heard that name when I was captured."

"I see. Apeto..."

'Could those that Yuder is currently facing also be of this family?' Gakane didn't know much about the Apeto Duchy, but he decided to include the name in the letter he would send to Kishiar.

"I am truly sorry for failing to resolve the troubles within our household in a timely manner, causing many people to commit irreversible sins. Especially you, Devran, I have nothing to say."

When Zachlis made an apologetic knightly salute, not just Devran, but all the commoner Awakeners were taken aback. They hadn't expected him to go so far.

"Well... Zachlis, you didn't sell me out."

"Still, your father and Dermilla could have died. Had I been here, such a thing wouldn't have happened...."

Seeing him apologize so formally left Devran no room to act coldly towards him. Devran sighed heavily, glanced at his younger sister standing behind him, and lowered his head.

"Hasn't Lord Zachlis also lost family members? It's alright. My family and I are all still alive."

From what Gakane could see, Zachlis seemed more upset about the injuries inflicted upon his lover and her family than the death of his own.

It wasn't surprising that familial love wasn't deep in most noble families, but it was clear that his feelings towards Dermilla were sincere.

"Lord Zachlis, may we borrow a messenger bird for a moment? I believe we need to write a report to our Commander immediately."

"Of course. I need to contact the knight's order as well. I suspect I'll be here for a while."

Zachlis declared that he would keep Zakail locked in his room until this matter was settled. At his command, servants entered the reception room with anxious expressions and escorted Zakail, who had been freed from the shadow clone, out of the room.

Zakail was led away, looking half dazed, as if he believed that his brother might actually accept the position of Lord of Hartan.

"Devran, let's go up and write a letter to the Commander. Jimmy, take good care of everyone here, make sure nothing happens."

"Will do."

Jimmy's face was full of resolve as he gripped the hilt of the sword on his waist. If it had been earlier, his stance would have been seen as cute, a spectacle for laughter, but no one laughed after seeing the sword aura Jimmy exuded.

Following Zachlis's guidance, Gakane borrowed a messenger bird that only those working at the Hartan lord's castle could use. He tried to write the letter as briefly as possible, combining what Devran said and what he had found out, but there was so much to cover that it took longer than expected.

"It's a bit of a waste. It would've been nice if Kanna was here."

"Huh? Kanna? Ah, the deputy commander of Jung Division?"

When Gakane murmured, stopping his letter-writing for a moment as a thought occurred to him, Devran looked at him with a puzzled expression.

"Ah, the ability to read the information contained in objects would have been a big help if I had it here. If Kanna had seen Lord Zachlis's letter, we would have immediately known who wrote it, and we would have known sooner where you were taken. It was a bit tricky to get information since the people of this village wouldn't speak."

At first, he thought it was just a small incident, but he didn't expect it to grow so unexpectedly. Who would have thought that the disappearance of Devran before coming here would involve a surprising group like the Apeto Duchy?

'This might become bigger than I thought.'

But, having accomplished the original objective of finding Devran and keeping him safe, their task here was done. If things escalated further, Gakane knew it was to be left to the Commander, Kishiar.

'I wonder if Yuder will be okay on his own against the people of the Apeto Duchy... especially when he's alone with the bandit leader. Even knowing he's strong, I'm suddenly worried.'

Gakane watched the flying messenger bird carrying the letter until it completely disappeared from sight, and then turned.

"Let's go, Devran."

"Are we leaving immediately as planned?"

"We have to."

"Hmm..."

Gakane tilted his head at the lukewarm low hum from Devran.

"What's the matter? Is there something bothering you?"

"Well... the reason we wanted to escape here was because we thought Zakail would be alone. But now that Lord Zachlis is here and the situation has changed... there's no need to immediately leave with the injured, is there?"

Devran suggested that it might be more comfortable for them to join Yuder here. Gakane couldn't help but consider this for a moment.

"I'm fine with these injuries, but there are others who need proper care..."

'He's got a point.'

If they left, Zachlis would have to monitor Zakail alone, and if anything happened to Yuder, they wouldn't be able to rush to his aid immediately. Gakane pondered for a moment before responding.

"Alright, we'll stay here just for tonight, have a proper meal, and..."

"Gakane, Devran!"

Just then, the door burst open with the sound of hurried footsteps from outside. An excited Jimmy rushed in and gestured at Gakane and Devran.

"Come out quickly. There's another huge fire in the mountains!"

"What?"

"It's a fire that broke out much further than before. I think Yuder might be..."

Before Jimmy could finish, Gakane rushed outside. The place they visited to send the messenger bird was located right under the highest roof of Hartan Castle, so as soon as they went out, the outside scenery was clearly visible.

And just as Jimmy said, in the distant mountains, an enormous pillar of fire was shooting up, as if it was trying to pierce the sky.

"With that size... everyone in this area must have seen it."

Devran, who had followed Gakane, murmured in astonishment at the sight of the fire.

"Devran, could you make a fire that big?"

"No. The biggest fire I can make is about the size of the one from earlier. That... to be honest, it's beyond imagination. Even if we gathered all the Awakeners with fire control ability from the Cavalry..."

It was Yuder. Yuder must have caused it. Gakane's intuition flared sharply.

"Yuder. What on earth is happening there...?"

When Yuder Aile stepped into the spacious chamber at the very back of the cave, the scene inside wasn't much different from what he had expected. The familiar Warden and a few of his cronies were seated in a circle, chatting idly.

"We should probably drain some energy out of that noble brat before questioning him at dawn. You handle it, No.3. And has there been any communication from headquarters yet?"

"Unless there are unforeseen issues, we should hear something by today..."

"Huh? Who's there?"

The man who had noticed Yuder and Nahan's entrance opened his mouth in surprise. Yuder raised his hand and gave a light swing before they could fully comprehend the situation.

"Argh!"

The cave was instantly thrown into disarray by a sudden whirlwind. All the people and items inside were swept into the air, frantically fluttering about. In the midst of this chaos, screams echoed throughout the cavern.

"Save me!"

"What's happening!"

Yuder watched those who were made a mess of, colliding with flying furniture within the whirlwind, for a while. Suddenly, he felt a tingling pain rising from one hand and lowered his head.

'What's this?'

But the situation was not relaxed enough to inspect it right away, so he quickly diverted his attention. When he thought he had sufficiently stirred things up, he quieted the wind. Amidst the shattered furniture and the jumbled mess of people, they dropped to the ground, groaning.

"Ahh... Ahh...!"

"My, my arm...!"

"Nahan. Gather them all together. I'll tie them up."

"Quick and simple. I suppose there might not be another in the world who could subdue this many people so easily, save for you brother."

Despite being told numerous times not to refer to him as brother, Nahan never seemed to get the hint and endlessly repeated the same thing. But there were more pressing matters than correcting him at the moment, so Yuder just scowled slightly and focused on the task at hand.

Once he had tied up all the fallen men and gathered them in one place, he counted seven in total. Among them, the Awakeners who had fought against Kiolle under the Warden's order were knocked unconscious by a blow to the back of the neck, and separately quarantined.

The Warden and his subordinates, who had watched the entire process unfold flawlessly, were petrified with fear, unable to fathom the identities of Yuder and Nahan.

"You... who the hell are you? Who sent you...!"

"That's not important."

Yuder walked towards the Warden, whose face was swollen from getting hit by the broken furniture.

"I'm short on time, so let's make this brief. Do you work for the Apeto Ducal Family?"

"...Kill us!"

Ignoring Yuder's question, the Warden shouted with his toothless mouth.

"Whoever you are, we will never talk. Just kill us!"

'So quick to ask for death.'

The sight of these men, who had not only captured innocent Awakeners to use as tools of power struggle but also attached low-quality bombs to their backs, puffing up their chests and squawking bravely after a minor beating, was absurdly amusing.