

## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 1.1 - All again**

Vol. 2 Chapter 1.1 - All again

### **Part 2. Into the Brilliant Garden**

Once he realized it, the dull tombstone had become surrounded by blooming and colorful flowers. The man would visit the grave from time to time, always wanting to say something, but in the end, he would leave without uttering a word.

This wasn't the ending that he had wanted. He wanted to hold onto the person who was becoming as light as a piece of paper and keep him by his side forever. Even if his end was inevitable, he wished to postpone it for as long as he could. But by the time he realized this, it was already too late. That pregnancy was supposed to be his last, but the person who couldn't bear it any longer without the white pills had already shattered off what little life he had left. Then, he had given those parts to his two children and left. If he hadn't had children, would he have lived longer? That probably wouldn't happen.

The two children, born after Aelock became addicted to drugs, were fragile and late in development. They cried incessantly and constantly sought attention. When he tried to soothe and hold them, they would hit and push him away. However, they would still cling to him with their small hands. As he held them, sobbing beyond belief, he knew he couldn't shorten their lives. It would take a long time for these children to stand on their own.

Because of the children, there was never a moment when he felt miserable or lonely. However, after each child grew older, they found their beloved person and left. The laughter and cries that once filled the grand estate disappeared. The man sat in his chair, his body aged and settled, only gazing out at the window. Beyond the glass of the large balcony that reached from the floor to the ceiling, he saw a glamorous rose garden, like colorful jewels sprinkling on the green lawn. And the cabin that was hidden between the walls of Cyprus trees. Along with his own sins.

The years passed uneventfully. The man always sat in that same place, gazing at the cabin. On a dark night with a raging snowstorm, the man, who

was staring out without any movement, stood up and rushed outside. He grabbed his coat and ran outside, not bothering to put it on. Despite nearly stumbling multiple times in the heavy snow, his gaze remained fixated on the desolate place hidden by darkness and the snowstorm.

The once dark brown hair was now covered with snow, making it impossible to discern its color. The man didn't even consider the fact that his expensive clothes and shoes were getting wet. He hastily reached the cabin, only to find dust and loneliness inside. He clearly saw a light. It was a faint but persistent light, never extinguishing even amidst the blizzard and darkness, just like his shine. However, the cabin remained engulfed in pitch-black darkness.

Unable to believe it, he called out the name he had repeated countless times in his mind again and again. However, even after shouting with all his might, nothing could push away the suffocating silence except for the deafening roar of the snowstorm.

Stepping out with heavy steps, the man buried himself in the snow and gazed at the cold stone visible only at the end of his sight.

Ah.

Realizing it belatedly, he brushed his cold, damp hair with his brash hands. He continued to stare at the tombstone until he lost all his senses up to the tips of his fingers, submerged in snow up to mid-calf.

That was the man's first delirium.

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When he opened his eyes, he felt tears streaming down his cheeks. It felt like he had a tremendously agonizing dream. He dreamt of an unimaginably hellish place where he couldn't even struggle and gradually succumbed to insanity—a miserable and agonizing dream that made no sense.

"Damn. What the hell is this suddenly..."

With his hands still tingling, he roughly wiped his tear-streaked face and stood up. His eyes caught sight of an unfamiliar luxurious interior. He was in the Count estate's guest room.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, he wiped his moist face again. Maybe it was because he had slept in an unfamiliar place. He was usually not particularly sensitive, but his mood felt strange. Though no one else was in the room, the fact that an adult alpha had cried over a mere nightmare made him feel embarrassed, so he quickly straightened the sheets and got out of bed. Taking a few deep breaths, he brushed his hair that fluttered in the early morning breeze and looked into the distance. From the second floor, he could see a rose garden not too far away.

The sun had yet to rise, so it still looked dark, but when he first entered this room, he couldn't help but be awestruck by how glamorous it was. It felt like he could already smell the roses all the way up here. He wasn't particularly interested in flowers, but he was slightly looking forward to this rose garden. This place would give him a new opportunity. Just as he gazed at it once again, he saw a shabby building far away through the rows of trees.

"Is it a barn? Or a gardener's cabin?"

Whatever it was, it didn't suit the extravagant rose garden at all. A count this wealthy would have had many employers, and it was natural to have accommodations and workplaces for them throughout the garden. But they weren't built in plain sight like that thing. Concealing for aesthetics is typical, but that was none of Klopp's business. This mansion belonged to Count Aelock Teiwind, so it was his problem to solve. Perhaps it was deliberately done like that due to the count's rumored peculiar taste.

A moment later, he could hear the sounds of servants waking up the dawn and bustling in the corridor outside the door. Klopp left the view of the rose garden and the particularly desolate-looking cabin behind and entered the room.

Count Tewind was a high-ranking aristocrat, famous for his long-standing tradition and immense wealth comparable to the royal family. Now that the world had changed, with the rise of the emerging affluent class and the slowly collapsing class system, even the advocates of egalitarianism, who shouted that there was no such thing as born-aristocrat people, kept their mouths shut in front of them.

The Tewind family was not simply a snobbish noble family, they were true "lords" in the sense of fulfilling their noble duties. Even now, when they had no direct obligations, they took the initiative in aiding the poor within their territory,

they wanted to give opportunities to many young people who could reach higher. That was precisely the reason why Klopp had come there.

The Count invited promising young individuals who were talented but lacked inherited titles or wealth, connecting them with sponsors. The sponsorship group, known as the “Tea Party in the Rose Garden,” was packed with aristocrats who enjoyed the noble hobby of nurturing talents and ambitious young people, who were determined to succeed through these aristocrats’ hobbies.

At the same time, it was also full of frightening parents, who came with the intention of disposing of their burdensome omega offspring. They pick out young alphas with their sharp gazes as if they were picking out horses in a stallion market.

Klopp, who majored in law and economics at the National Capital University and graduated with excellent grades, was of course invited. He was the second son of Baron Bandyke, but since his elder brother was an alpha, he wasn’t in line to inherit the family. Moreover, the family itself was located in a remote countryside that very few know of, and they were poor, so there was nothing remarkable about them.

The only thing his family could offer him was tuition fees. However, even with that, it was difficult to cover the expenses of studying abroad. Fortunately, Klopp was an exceptionally brilliant student. He was able to receive a state scholarship through a professor’s recommendation and also enjoyed a free dormitory in return for assisting the professor.

Although his school life wasn’t impoverished, he had no intention of continuing a difficult life. He aspired to become an economic lawyer or an expert in global investments, but at the moment, he had no reputation or connections, and he also had no immediate profits. That’s why today was very important for his future.

After washing himself with the water brought by the maid and putting on a new suit he had bought with his small savings, Klopp wore the cufflinks that his father had passed down to him. He had barely seen his father throughout his study abroad, but he was able to attend his graduation ceremony. They were plain and somewhat old-fashioned, but the aged shine added a little more sense of sophistication to the young man. Standing in front of the mirror, he adjusted his tie and brushed back a few stray strands of his hair.

“This should look fine.”

He had never thought of himself as handsome, but he didn't think he lacked charm either. After all, he had never lacked omega lovers since his university days, but he wasn't currently dating anyone. And he hadn't specifically come here to find himself an omega.

Some prideless aristocrats wanted to sell themselves as stallions to noble families that only had omegas, but Klopp wasn't such a lowly person. At the very least, he wanted to maintain his dignity as an individual and carve out his own life. Today, what he sought was not a decadent and low-minded relationship based on body and pheromones, but companionship with an individual who would recognize his expertise. And he was quite confident in it.

This is the start of Volume 2! Update will be every 3-4 days 😊

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 1.2 - All again**

Vol. 2 Chapter 1.2 - All again

The grand rose garden transformed into a sponsorship party that lasted for about three days. It was more like a grand banquet than a tea party. Since only tea and snacks were served without alcohol, it was just called a tea party in the name. The glamorous flower garden, which was said to have been built by a king who was so in love with his queen that he sold his country to build them, was adorned with young people in full dress even before the tea party officially began. Like mating peacocks, they fluttered their wings and showed off their elegance.

Although he had arrived a little early, Klopp couldn't help but be surprised by the number of people who had already gathered there. First, he was taken aback by the arrogance of the alphas who strutted around without any sense of shame. Second, he was astonished by the pheromones that the omegas emitted, who were far from shying away from those alphas, but instead casting flirtatious glances and smiling at them. Third, as soon as he stepped into the space that could be called the center of the rose garden, he was met with hostile gazes from the alphas and intense, curious looks from the omegas.

A shiver ran down his spine. He had been told that this was a social gathering, but this felt more like a marketplace for blind meetings! Damn it!

He didn't even have a chance to look around to see where the distinguished gentlemen and their wives, who could engage in discussions about investments and law, were located. Before he was even offered a cup of tea, a group of omegas, led by a dignified middle-aged omega, who had “Mother Representative” or “Matchmaker” written on her face, charged towards him.

He had no choice but to turn and run away. Otherwise, he feared he would be stripped naked on the spot and forced into mating with those many omegas, First and foremost, he needed to look ahead and get as far away as possible. He could hear the cries of omegas searching for him, like hounds chasing a fox. They were relentless and persistent too. He skillfully maneuvered through the tall, towering trees. It wasn't until he was a good distance away and the

sound of pursuit had completely died down that Klopp wiped the sweat on his forehead.

This was a complete mistake. The professor had said there would be plenty of opportunities, but he had mistaken it for diversity in conversational topics. He felt like a fool for dressing up and preparing himself. His expectations had already hit rock bottom, so he didn't want to go back to the rose garden. It would be better to return to his room and catch up on the sleep he hadn't gotten because of his restless dream. And he would have to leave this place immediately tomorrow and explore other options. Klopp clenched his teeth and headed towards the nearby estate that came into view.

He was sure that the estate was nearby. However, why was the garden so complicated that the closer he got, the farther he seemed to be?

On top of his surly mood, his irritation began to creep in. If the cool breeze hadn't blown in and cooled his temper, he would have snapped and broken every damn tree in that spot.

It was only detrimental to himself to let his temper flare up when he couldn't find his way. If only there was someone passing by, he could have asked for directions. But all people must be busy in the rose garden that wasn't too far from here, there wasn't a single ant in sight, let alone a human. At this point, it seemed better to take a stroll along the path lined with pine trees in the other direction and reflect on his current situation.

As he walked alongside the towering trees that soared into the sky, his irritation slowly began to dissipate. Perhaps he had grown tired of this complicated city. The massive trees reminded him of the dense forests in his hometown in the north. He hadn't seen much trees since he came to study here. He took a deep breath, shaking off all the remaining irritation. Since there wasn't really anything to smile about, he continued to walk with a serious expression, and someone appeared in the distance.

The person, slightly shorter than himself with delicate features, seemed to be an alpha male, but there was a strangely erotic aura about him. With a sophisticated and elegant gait that suited his refined appearance, he looked to this side and was extremely surprised to discover him. He abruptly came to a stop. Even from a considerable distance, Klopp could sense his blue eyes trembling.

*What's this? There's no one else around.*

He couldn't understand why the person looked so shocked as if he had seen a ghost upon seeing him. At that moment, a breeze brushed against his hair, poking his eyes, and he brushed his hair away, annoyed.

When he faced the person again, their expression had changed. Gone was the surprise of a moment ago, replaced by the thin smile of an aristocrat, making him look clearly of the upper class, born and raised in the city.

Gracefully and lightly, as if carried by the wind, he started to guide the way without even being asked, saying, "The rose garden is that way." Although it was somewhat arrogant and rude, it was so fitting that there was no room for him to complain.

It was usual to not have any conversation in unfamiliar encounters, but in their walk together, he felt a strange sensation. Clearly, this was the first time he saw this person. Even when he quickly looked back on his relatively short life, there was no occasion where he had become involved with such an elegant city aristocrat. But why did he feel a sense of familiarity?

"I am Klopp Bandyke."

Extending his hand for a handshake, the other person finally looked straight at Klopp. After making a slightly awkward and blank expression, he soon regained his smooth smile. Then, with a face as fair as his hand, he reached out and shook Klopp's hand.

"Aelock Teiwind."

Ah, somehow he had a feeling he would be him. It wasn't that he knew he was a count, but he did expect him to have a title of that reputation.

"Thank you for guiding me the way."

First of all, as Klopp was the guest here, he expressed his gratitude. The count, whom he thought would respond coldly to match his arrogance just now, surprisingly smiled genuinely.

Suddenly, the pit of his stomach tightened. Seeing his bright and sincere smile brought him an uncomfortable feeling. At the same time, the strange sensation he had right after his nightmare earlier enveloped his body again. Klopp frowned and stared intently at the count looking at him. Suddenly, he felt his anger rise at that smile and had the urge to strangle him.



*What's going on? Why am I feeling like this? Is it jealousy? No, it doesn't seem like it.* He felt like he was about to explode with a kind of dissatisfaction and irritation. He wanted to do something to the man standing in front of him, but he couldn't figure out exactly what or how. It was an inexplicable desire that he couldn't put into words.

The handshake became prolonged, and before an awkward silence could set in, the two of them released their hands with a small cough. Klopp took deliberate deep breaths and steadied his resolve. There was no running away from the stare of the Count who had led him the way.

Why did they come to the rose garden in the first place? He should have asked to be guided to the estate. Regret always came too late. Nevertheless, he felt slightly better than before. He had some time to prepare himself mentally. After brushing his hair back with his hand, Klopp took a step forward and entered the rose garden. He sensed someone following him from behind. Glancing back, he found Aelock, who he thought would guide him in, but instead, he was walking behind him.

As the two entered, the gathered crowd all turned their attention to them. Specifically, they were probably looking at Aelock Teywind, the count. Just like a pack of starving wolves running on the meadow, they flocked towards Aelock Teywind, their tempting prey.

After a while, Klopp found himself standing alone in a far corner of the rose garden. As if they were starving for something to eat, people were trying to talk to Aelock, ignoring others.

It didn't seem like high status and wealth were the only things he possessed. Among the swarm of ants rushing towards the sweet jam, there were already some half-lidded omegas who were enchanted. Objectively speaking, Aelock was an attractive charming single alpha, so it was not surprising.

Occasionally, he could even see an alpha who looked at Aelock with sticky gazes. Was he himself like that earlier? Klopp quickly averted his gaze, but that alpha didn't. He couldn't understand why he felt irritated seeing that alpha casually approaching Aelock from behind.

The butlers and maids appeared, offering the guests a taste of luxurious black tea. It was the first time Klopp tasted such tea. The tea was a feast for his sense of smell and tastebuds. There were sweets to satisfy his eyes as well. Most of the city's upper classes drank their tea with cream. It was rare to drink it with just sugar. Unlike them, Klopp only needed a spoonful of sugar. He

didn't have much of a sweet tooth, and back in his hometown, this was how he drank black tea.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 1.3 - All again**

Vol. 2 Chapter 1.3 - All again

While Klopp was sipping two cups of black tea, Aelock continued to engage in conversations with people, wearing a faint smile. The cup of tea in his hand had barely been touched and was cooling down.

The people standing right in front of the young count may not have noticed, but as Klopp continued to watch him in this direction, he could clearly sense it. Every now and then, he met his blue eyes. Each time that happened, Aelock would give a charming smile. In contrast, Klopp's mood grew even more somber. He had been puzzled and unable to understand his feelings since earlier. At first, he wondered if he was jealous of the handsome aristocrat with his wealth and status.

Until now, Klopp had never shown much interest in others. He never felt inferior because he believed in his own abilities, regardless of his lack of wealth or status.

Just to test it out, he approached a relatively unremarkable-looking alpha who seemed wealthy and struck up a conversation. The person had shown an initial interest but quickly lost interest and threw a mocking smile at Klopp. However, Klopp didn't feel any jealousy nor inferiority. Instead, he found himself sneering at the person who had nothing to boast about except their own family. Of course, he didn't show it outwardly.

But it was different with the count. He was extremely displeased at the fact that Aelock was smiling amongst those people. An omega, who seemed like they could go into heat any moment, subtly stroked Aelock's arm.

The teacup in Klopp's hand trembled as he watched the Alpha who had been flirting with Aelock since earlier casually tap him on the shoulder. He gripped the handle tightly before the exquisitely patterned teacup could spill. Yet, he couldn't help but feel angry as he watched the count didn't immediately brush off their hands, only skillfully avoiding with his body. This feeling was certainly not something one should have for someone who they met for the first time. Something felt off.

His original plan to seize an opportunity here had disappeared somewhere. The whole time, Klopp wore a dissatisfied expression, full of unfulfilled frustration. It continued throughout the tea party. Restless, Klopp constantly followed Aelock with his eyes, while the easygoing count, whether aware of his feelings or not, smiled at him whenever their eyes met.

Finally, tired of dealing with people, Aelock gracefully parted the swarm of ants and sneaked his way toward Klopp. It seemed as if it happened unintentionally, but in the first place, there was no reason for him, who was the center of the social gathering, to come to this far corner. Only when Aelock was fairly close did he suddenly exchange glances with Klopp, as if he hadn't known he was here, and greeted him again.

"Everyone is desperate."

With a faint smile, the count approached him, while mocking the people who he had just been polite with. Although he had exchanged pleasantries with Klopp, they weren't close enough to exchange such remarks. It was such an arrogant act from Aelock. Already irritated, Klopp gave him a quick glance and then turned to the other side, responding coldly.

"You must smell delicious to them."

It was a grossly offensive remark, which even had Klopp surprised himself for saying that. Aelock seemed greatly shocked to be called a lecherous guy who exudes a strong scent.

Such a rude remark from a stranger would normally have made them flare up with anger. Of course, the count himself had uttered words that he shouldn't say to a stranger, but Klopp's remarks were on a completely different level. Especially if they were a noble and respected aristocrat like Aelock, who was the subject of people's adoration and flattery, the aristocrat would immediately kick the impudent speaker out of the estate. Or perhaps Aelock might slap him with that seemingly gentle hand. Klopp even wished for a fight and to be driven away. He didn't think there was much to be gained in this place, but he couldn't find the will to leave on his own.

However, Aelock only slightly furrowed his brow and raised the corner of his mouth a little. He must not know how to get angry as he was too much of an aristocrat, Klopp thought. But that thought was shattered immediately.

Handing the now-cooled teacup to a passing butler, Aelock spoke calmly but a little quickly.

“It’s better than not being able to catch a single bug when you’re chasing for food.”

His calm and measured voice trembled slightly, but that made it sound even more arrogant. This, too, was extremely insulting, no less than Klopp’s blunt words. It was as if Aelock was sneering at him. You’re such a pathetic little bastard, there’s nothing worthy to look at. Aelock even looked Klopp up and down.

The count had smiled at him earlier, but now he was visibly angry, glaring at Klopp. Klopp didn’t back down. Although he had initiated it himself, he couldn’t help feeling extremely uncomfortable being insulted. At the same time, he found it somewhat amusing that the count, who usually wore a mask-like smile to others, was glaring at him with such vivid eyes. *No, I should correct myself and say it was quite satisfying.*

The two began hurling insults at each other whenever they bumped into each other, whether in the garden or inside the estate. Of course, this only happened when they were alone. When other people were present in the vicinity, Klopp would keep his mouth shut, but he wouldn’t transform into a noble aristocrat like Aelock, donning a subtle smile. It bothered him terribly, and he wanted to rip that mask off somehow.

The sight of Aelock in the garden, laughing hysterically with all those bugs, made Klopp’s stomach turn, so he decided to take a look at the Count estate’s library. When he asked whether it was fine for him to explore the library, the silver-haired butler was happy to show him around.

As renowned as its reputation, the count’s study was filled with books of exquisite quality. Most of them were humanities and philosophy books, and each one was worth a fortune. There were several books that seemed tempting to pick up and read immediately, but knowing that he would be leaving soon and not wanting to leave any regrets, Klopp refrained. Instead, he enjoyed the artwork hanging in the study.

Honestly, when it came to art, Klopp’s knowledge was not deep. To be more precise, he was still inexperienced in the fields of expensive music, art, and the arts that required a substantial amount of money to acquire relevant

knowledge. These were essential to interact with the upper class, and his lack in that area even caused concern to his professors.

Yet, even in Klopp's unknowledgeable eyes, he could see that the paintings hanging in the study were of a high caliber. Among the towering bookshelves that reached the ceiling, numerous large and small paintings were displayed. Among them, there were quite a few famous works of famous masters that even untrained eyes would recognize.

However, what caught Klopp's eye as he explored the room was a landscape painting depicting a rural scene in early summer. With its intense color harmony, using white and bright yellow to represent dazzling light, the painting evoked a sense of tranquility as if he was looking at the scenery of his hometown.

Upon closer inspection, he noticed the artist's signature and the year written in the corner, and it seemed that it was painted less than a year ago. It obviously looked like the work of a rookie. It seemed somewhat lacking to be hung alongside other collections, but Klopp thought that it might be a part of the 'Tea Party in the Rose Garden'.

The quiet study's door was suddenly flung open.

"Aelock, think about it. It's going to be amazing."

When he turned around, he saw Aelock and an alpha standing at the door, engaged in an argument. The slightly larger Alpha, with grease running down his face, pushed his sticky gaze onto the count. He even ran a thick hand surreptitiously down the other man's arm. It was obvious that the other alpha had explicit sexual intentions, but Klopp was surprised at the fact that it was so openly displayed rather than concealed.

*Is he insane?* Despite having a somewhat fair and smooth face, there was no doubt that the count was an Alpha. But the other person continued to act obscenely and touch the count with his dirty hands.

The problem was Aelock. He merely twisted his body slightly to evade, without showing much resistance, as if he was acting naive or enjoying it. If it had been Klopp, he would have easily snapped the other's wrist. He would be shouting profanities and kicking. However, Aelock didn't do that. He even showed a subtle smile. Like he was enjoying it.

Klopp could only express his feelings as severely disgusted. He couldn't understand why he had to witness such a repulsive sight of Alphas engaging in something disgusting, not even a simple romantic relationship. But even if he tried not to, he couldn't help but see and hear everything with his own eyes and ears.

"I'm still not interested. If I ever change my mind, I'll be sure to let you know. Right now, there's a book I must find. If you'll excuse me."

After politely rejecting the other person, Aelock entered the study. The scowling Alpha gave him a wry smile that indicated he had little interest in the study and then left. Aelock closed the door, turned around, and with a rather displeased expression, then walked with a slightly forceful stride, before spotting Klopp. He seemed surprised and froze just like before. Make me feel happy and supported by leaving a comment!

## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 1.4 - All again**

Vol. 2 Chapter 1.4 - All again

"W-What are you doing here?"

Aelock displayed his obvious embarrassment, but Klopp had no reason to be considerate to the other person.

"I stopped by the study to cool my head and was admiring the decorated paintings. But I was dumbfounded when I saw some crazy Alphas engaging in such an embarrassing act in broad daylight."

"...Even if you say that, you're still talking fine. Keep looking at the paintings. You won't have a chance to see them again once you leave."

With a slightly flushed face, Aelock said that and turned his body, heading toward the other bookshelf. Klopp thought what he said earlier was just an excuse, but Aelock was genuinely searching for a book. He sneered at him, saying things about acting like an Omega for no reason, but Aelock didn't even flinch and shot back with a dignified tone. Then he picked up a difficult humanities book to read, called , and headed for the sofa. So, he was planning to read a book here. Klopp debated whether he should leave the space. Even as his mind wandered, his gaze was fixed on the painting.

"This is a painting by a rookie artist who debuted in their first exhibition. It corresponds to early summer in their four-season series."

"...I know."

He actually knew nothing about rookies or anything of the sort, but he replied anyway. It was clearly a lie that one could immediately realize, but Aelock, who had come closer, didn't show any signs of noticing. Instead, he continued talking while looking at the painting himself.

“I happened to visit the exhibition before, and while none of the other paintings caught my attention, I couldn’t take my eyes off this one from the moment I saw it. The bold use of colors is like...”

"It looks like it's bathed in light."

"...Yes."

"This artist loved this scenery very much."

"That's also right. This is a depiction of the countryside where the artist's grandparents lived, which they loved the most. Have you ever met the artist before?"

"...I haven't. I just saw the painting and it reminded me of the artist."

"I thought you were rude and uncultured, but surprisingly, you have a good eye. I'm impressed."

At the exaggerated remark, Klopp narrowed his eyes and glared at Aelock. Aelock openly stared back and laughed.

"Do you know that you were treated like an Omega by that bastard just now? And yet you're laughing. You must have a taste for smelly pigs."

"I know, that's why I was smiling. If I get serious, he'll think I'm interested. You should be watching your mouth. I don't know where you got an invitation from, but do you even have the time to meddle in trivial matters?"

"That's a concern that I can handle on my own. For you, Count, you can stick to acting like an omega."

"And that's also a concern that I can handle on my own, honors graduate."

Those blue eyes staring straight at him were annoyingly insolent. But seeing him effortlessly deflect every remark without uttering a single curse, Klopp thought maybe Aelock wasn't a dimwit.

In the Count's grand library, as vast as the rose garden, there were only Klopp and Aelock at the moment. That meant they wouldn't be disturbed by others. It also meant that they could openly engage in a verbal duel.

"I thought you were looking for a place to mate leisurely, but it's quite shocking to see you reading such a scholarly humanities book. It's a classic that's difficult to read without a considerable amount of patience."



“Mate!... A refined individual must cultivate various knowledge. Aren't you the one who should be finding a suitable partner for mating as soon as possible? Preferably, someone with a lot of money.”

Once again, sparks flew between the two. They looked at each other, putting on artificial smiles simultaneously, then bowed and turned away. Klopp moved towards another painting, while Aelock carried the book and headed to the sofa in the center of the study. Klopp found it difficult to concentrate on the painting, but Aelock seemed unaffected as the sound of pages turning continued constantly. He was reading faster than Klopp expected.

Is he really reading? Or is he just skimming at the text?

Klopp occasionally glanced back, and whenever he did, Aelock hurriedly lowered his head and flipped through the book again. After flipping through several pages, he went back a few pages. It seemed like he wanted to show off his knowledge for no reason. Klopp snickered and moved towards another painting.

After the tea party ended and he returned to his rent house, Klopp was invited to many gatherings through the professor's introductions. Most of them were older alphas, but occasionally, there were young aristocrats as well.

Surprisingly, they were just ordinary, educated people. At such times, Klopp found himself thinking of the incomprehensibly arrogant Aelock and felt himself getting worked up.

A few months passed, and another invitation from Count Teiwind arrived. Previously, he received it through the professor, but this time, a butler came directly to Klopp's house to politely deliver it.

“He wants me to know right away if I'm going to be attending?”

“Yes, my Count asked me to deliver this message, ‘I cannot make any special arrangements for your sake, so if you don't decide in advance, you'll end up standing at the banquet.’”

“Damned guy. Tell him I'll go, I am going there.”

“Yes, I understood. Then I shall take my leave.”

The well-dressed, stern-looking butler in a neat black suit, bowed politely to Klopp and left. Meanwhile, Klopp closed the front door with a bang and unfolded the fancy card in his hand once again.

The formal dinner invitation was not printed but handwritten. Judging by the elegant signature and the identical ink and handwriting, it seemed like Aelock had written it himself. It was a challenge letter announcing their second round. By seeing that fair face of his turning into a naked grimace this time, it felt like his anger would finally subside. Klopp furrowed his brow and raised the corner of his mouth. He placed the invitation in a prominent spot on a bookshelf filled with various documents and books.

He expected it to be a fairly large party, but this was something else entirely. It was like a New Year's banquet at a royal palace.

Not only were there dazzlingly dressed men and women omegas adorned with jewelry, but also alphas who looked as if they could cut stone with their hands, wearing finely tailored black suits and shining shoes. The party consisted of well over a hundred people. He was sure he wasn't late, but Klopp was guided to the farthest corner from the main seat. Of course, in this spot, he could just raise his head to watch and not miss the fun happening on the other side.

*'Why did I come here? It's obvious that I'm just stepping into the game that he's playing.'*

Sipping on fine wine, Klopp couldn't hide his wrinkled expression. He should have anticipated this, but his thoughts were short-sighted.

This time, Aelock, who sat at the far end of the table in the main seat, must have a change of strategy. He had a beautiful omega woman sitting right next to him. Even from a distance, she exuded a sensual and highly alluring charm. Clad in a deep green dress that accentuated her full red lips, she turned toward the blond alpha next to her, whispering something in a flirtatious manner and giving him a seductive smile. Aelock, impeccably dressed from head to toe, with not a hair out of place on his even fairer face than that woman's, occasionally glanced in this direction and made an eye smile. It seemed like Aelock was mocking him, but that didn't really matter.

Unlike the woman in the green dress, Aelock looked charming even without red lipstick. Aelock then gave his partner a short kiss on the cheek. And when

those confident blue eyes met Klopp's eyes, only then, Klopp realized what he wanted.

*Oh my goodness. What am I imagining right now? I'm getting insane.*

Klopp downed the remaining wine in one gulp. Immediately, a waiter nearby refilled his glass. The wine was of high quality and well-aged, it went down smoothly.

As the dinner progressed and Klopp's slight buzz intensified, he began engaging in conversations with the people around him without any hesitation. As someone who once dreamed of being a lawyer, his eloquence wasn't bad, and the people around him quickly joined in the conversation, distancing themselves from the guests in the center and focusing on Klopp. From lighthearted jokes to witty banter, everyone was laughing and enjoying the conversation. Later, the guests in the center were getting curious about this side and they exchanged glances.

However, even though he was leading the conversation, Klopp couldn't remember exactly what he had said. His mind was too busy fantasizing about the count with blue eyes that occasionally glanced in his direction. His fantasies were crude enough that he felt disgusted with himself. The continuous fantasies made him unable to remember the uninteresting conversation.

When the long dinner was finally nearing its end, Aelock, still lively, wrapped his arm around the waist of the omega woman and affectionately escorted her somewhere, disappearing. He didn't care about leaving early, despite being the host of the dinner and needing to lead the conversation. After the dinner, the guests split into Alpha and Omega groups and went to the lounges. In the Alpha lounge, everyone began openly expressing things they couldn't say in public.

"Lord Teiwind always has a few secretive aspects. He only provides the venue and food, but he doesn't engage much in socializing."

"Actually, recently, he's been showing his face more often. In the past, he invited us to tea parties but never showed up."

"From the way he cuts conversations off at an appropriate time, maybe that's just his personality."

“The counts from previous generations weren’t particularly sociable too.”

“It’s probably because he’s too high-class and doesn’t want to associate with ordinary people.”

“Perhaps, but it seems like the omegas find that aspect charming. They’re already clamoring to find out who was the beautiful woman that he brought today.”

“It’s not only the omegas. Recently, even alphas have set their sights on him.”

“Even if casual dating is trending recently, will Teiwind actually go along with it?”

“I don’t know. It’s possible he might easily go along with it. Doesn’t his body seem to fit well with getting embraced?”

The conversation among alphas began with that and eventually led to gossip and rumors. Klopp, who had only listened without actively participating, became uncomfortable and decided to leave. Everywhere he went, there were people who think using their dicks more than their heads. It wasn’t time to leave yet, but he didn’t feel the need to stay any longer, so Klopp asked a passing servant to fetch his carriage.

“Will you be leaving already? Shall I convey your message to the master?”

“It’s fine. The count seems busy at the moment, I don’t want to interrupt his leisure time.”

Klopp curtly replied to the butler’s greeting and boarded his carriage.

In reality, the reason why he felt it was difficult to hear the gossip among alphas was not simply because he felt uncomfortable about discussions regarding sexual activities between alphas. It was quite the opposite. For some reason, when Aelock appeared with the beautiful omega by his side, engaging in behaviors heavily laden with sexual overtones while looking at Klopp, he felt as if Aelock was tempting him, instead of making fun of him. At that moment, Klopp felt heat rushing to the center of his body. So, he deliberately distracted himself by focusing on alcohol and conversations in the other direction. Otherwise, he felt like he would immediately rush over and grab Aelock by the collar, before dragging him away to any room, locking him

in there, and giving in to his desires. He still felt he was crazy to fantasize about that.

In the rattling carriage, Klopp leaned back and crossed his legs with a troubled expression. He sighed, holding his forehead with his hand. He had definitely lost his mind. In front of countless people, he indulged in such fantasies without any sense of shame. That's why it was difficult to hear the gossip in the lounge. Every time he listened, he could fantasize about it.

He was clearly being abnormal. Aelock was a person he had only recently met, there were no attractive qualities in his personality, and moreover, he was an alpha. Klopp had always been attracted to people who were more pure and omega-like, so there was no reason for him to find Aelock charming. Yet, he couldn't understand why Aelock's disheveled appearance kept coming to his mind. Perhaps showing up with such a beautiful woman was an extension of how Aelock had always been sarcastic to him, calling him 'the poor honors graduate who has to work hard because he's poor'. It would be hard for Klopp to meet that kind of omega.

However, Aelock's teasing this time was of little use. Throughout the evening, it wasn't Aelock who made Klopp jealous, but that woman. Acknowledging it himself, Klopp rubbed his face with both hands.

*I'll have to do something about this. If there's no solution, let's at least avoid him. This can't be happening to me.*

When the next invitation arrived, Klopp quickly declined, tossing the invitation into the fireplace to burn. He considered it better not to get involved with him for the sake of his smooth future. He poured time and effort into expanding his network through professors and soon was introduced to another wealthy and influential aristocratic family and secured his employment.

Upon receiving his first fee, Klopp quickly proved his excellent skills in investment and negotiation, and soon earned the trust of the family, earning him a large sum of money. Through connections with his first client, it didn't take long for him to successfully secure more contracts, and he began to prosper. His workload had increased a lot.

Klopp moved out of his rented house and purchased a modest house in the suburbs and an office in the city. It wasn't long before he was able to hire a housekeeper to take care of his house. Devoting himself solely to his work, Klopp became a successful investor. He would sometimes get too busy with

his work, and the housekeeper, Martha, would scold him to have proper meals. In the meantime, he was able to forget about the count who had gotten on his nerves and annoyed him at every turn.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 2.1 - The fate flows**

Vol. 2 Chapter 2.1 - The fate flows

Viscount Derbyshire was a prominent figure among the nobility. He was a charismatic alpha aristocrat in his early 60s with a dignified appearance. He had a reputation among the aristocracy, much like Teiwind, and was known for his meddling nature and a keen eye for investment. He inherited a substantial fortune from his ancestors and multiplied that wealth on his own in this generation.

As Klopp's first employer, he was genuinely fond of the young investor whom he believed he had discovered. Knowing that Klopp was single, having a nosy nature, he tried to connect Klopp with a good omega by any means necessary. On several occasions, he invited Klopp to his house, under the guise of business proposals, and made him socialize with unfamiliar omegas over tea.

"Viscount, please, I beg you. Please stop forcing me into sudden blind dates. It's bad for my reputation to decline them. Besides, I'm not yet ready to settle down. My job is still my primary concern."

"You have to find someone first to settle down. Once the right person appears, you'll settle down quickly. Why else do you think we work? To establish a family. Trust me. You'll thank me later and express your gratitude."

No matter how one looked at it, Viscount Derbyshire was relentless. Watching him laugh heartily, Klopp sighed in secret.

Then, the viscount happened to attend a distant relative's wedding. Aristocrat weddings were like a grand matchmaking market. As soon as Klopp heard the news, he quickly tried to schedule appointments with other clients to act busy. But somehow, Derbyshire knew about this and kidnapped Klopp. The viscount took him in a carriage to the wedding of an aristocrat whose face and name he didn't even know.

"Even if you don't have any backing up, you're an excellent scion of an aristocratic family, so your spouse should also be an aristocrat. You have

outstanding talents and appearance. There's no doubt you'd fit perfectly into a household without an alpha child among the respectable families. I guarantee it. You'll definitely inherit a title too."

Even if Klopp said he wasn't interested in titles, Derbyshire confidently said, "Why aren't you interested in a title? It's not good to be too modest, Sir Klopp of Bandyke." It was as if he would sell Klopp immediately, bustling among the guests. When Viscount Derbyshire introduced the dashing bachelor alpha, who had lost some of his countryside nature, there was a flurry of interested omegas.

"Hello, Sir Bandyke."

"Call me Klopp."

Klopp had already gotten exhausted from the very first omega he was introduced to, but he politely smiled and greeted the omegas. As it was more important for him to meet and impress their influential parents than to get the omega themselves, Klopp had to keep his mouth shut and do his best.

Viscount Derbyshire, interpreting this as not being uninterested, dragged Klopp around and introduced him to countless omegas. Along the way, he made some good business contacts, including one who was interested in his abilities as an investor. The day's sacrifices were well worth it.

Before that day ended, Klopp was introduced to the omega son of someone far like the friend of a relative of a relative to Viscount Derbyshire.

He was called Rayfiel of Westport, and he bore a striking resemblance to someone Klopp knew. He had the same blond hair, blue eyes, and very similar features as the ill-tempered and arrogant count, but Rayfiel's personality was completely different. He was polite and careful in his choice of words. There was no arrogance in his eyes, just innocence and warmth.

Klopp instantly liked him. Rayfiel didn't give off the impression of disliking Klopp either. If they were quite similar, a kind and innocent omega was much better than an ill-tempered alpha. Moreover, despite being a male, like an omega, Rayfiel's petite frame was very endearing, combined with his neat, simple, but sincere attire. *Yes, if I were to date blond hair and blue-eyed omega, this kind of omega would be much better for my emotional stability and a healthy future.*

Unlike the other omegas he had coldly treated, Viscount Derbyshire somehow sensed that Klopp had shown some interest in Rayfiel, so he discreetly led people away to another area. Suddenly, they were left alone, and Klopp felt awkward.

*I knew you were rooting for me, but this is too much, Old Man!*

"The Viscount is always ahead of us. He's an impatient person. I apologize." Rayfiel simply gave a small laugh. It was a genuine, unaffected smile, unlike the condescending count's.

"I heard that the Viscount is very fond of Sir Bandyke."

"Call me Klopp."

"Then, please call me Rayfiel."

Taking advantage of the time they had alone, they strolled through the beautifully decorated wedding ceremony garden and started their conversation topic with the weather, then to other topics. Even without much conversation, Klopp could tell that Rayfiel was a nice omega. He had manners and, above all, lacked the typical arrogance of the aristocrats. Rayfiel laughed genuinely, without any pretense, and seeing that, Klopp felt his heart melting.

"Sir Klopp, you don't feel unfamiliar to me. I feel strangely close to you."

"I feel the same way. It's as if we've known each other for a long time."

"Is that so? Could it be that we've met each other in our previous life?"

Klopp smiled in response to Rayfiel's sweet and pretty smile. But inwardly, he felt bad. He knew that the familiarity he felt was not some romantic past-life connection but it was more akin to the arrogant count he'd met in the rose garden .

What Klopp and Rayfiel felt wasn't exactly a strong love, but there was definitely a mutual attraction between them. Klopp pursued his relationship with Rayfiel in earnest. It was a bit early, but for alpha and omega of marriageable age to be in a relationship for that long was a sure sign of marriage.



The people around them were pleased, saying that the two matched each other well. Viscount Derbyshire, in particular, was going crazy as if they were about to get married right away. However, Klopp didn't spread the news of their relationship with his own mouth. He felt burdened by the excessive attention. Even in the Westport family who didn't know Klopp was well yet, he wanted to keep their private lives quiet until they officially announced their engagement.

Nevertheless, their relationship grew steadily closer, and they began holding hands, sharing light embraces and kisses. When he was in university, Klopp had engaged in intimate encounters with many omegas at the drop of a hat, like unleashed ponies, hoping to enjoy the limited time away from parental scrutiny. But he didn't want to do that with Rayfiel. It wasn't because he didn't have any sexual desires, but rather because their relationship was genuine and serious, so he was more cautious.

Rayfiel also shared the same serious attitude. Considering Klopp's circumstances, where he couldn't afford to hire many servants, Rayfiel practiced taking care of household chores himself. From Klopp's perspective, he didn't think Rayfiel needed to do household chores, but as an omega raised in an aristocratic family, Rayfiel seemed to consider household management as his duty. He even insisted that he was not bad at it. Sometimes, Klopp would laugh when he saw Rayfiel coming out with a bandage on his finger.

"Don't laugh. Dealing with such a big fish is so difficult."

"Do you really need to practice cooking fish?"

"In the Bandyke family, they cook salmon during special holidays, so I should learn it too."

Rayfiel averted his gaze and covered the bandaged finger with his other hand. His round ears were irresistibly cute when they turned red. On one hand, he felt so sorry for him that he'd injured his finger like that when all he'd ever had to do in his life was probably just washing a handkerchief. Klopp resolved to quickly earn money and establish a prosperous household, dreaming of a larger house and hiring a cook. He decided that once he achieved that, he would propose to Rayfiel.

As Klopp worked hard and imagine a harmonious family, Rayfiel was always present in it. He felt that if he married Rayfiel, they could live happily together

for a lifetime. It might be somewhat dull and tranquil, but that was exactly what the peaceful home that Klopp desired. The last thing he wanted was for there to be cold eyes and accusations between family members.

Although he had never witnessed or experienced such things, ever since he started dreaming of a family, he'd been worried that something would happen to his family. He worried that he might make a mistake or that a sudden misfortune might strike them. Captured by such strange fears, there were times when he would wake up in the middle of the night with nightmares he couldn't remember.

It was probably because he was overwhelmed by something that he hadn't fully settled in yet. This uncharacteristic anxiety in himself must have come from him growing up in a boring, quiet family in the countryside.

To get himself settled, he threw himself into work, sacrificing sleep and taking advantage of the aristocrat's assets to make a profit. The more he worked, the more his skills became renowned, and more aristocrats sought him out. With that, his wealth steadily increased, and if this continued to pass smoothly without major issues, he felt that he could propose to Rayfiel by early next year.

As he became busier with work, he had less time to spend on dating Rayfiel, but fortunately, Rayfiel understood him and didn't get upset. He understood why Klopp was so devoted to his work even without Klopp telling him. Even if they couldn't meet, Rayfiel still diligently prepared for their marriage. He would occasionally gift Klopp homemade snacks.

"This is very delicious."

"Really? I'll bring you more next time."

"Thank you. I should give you a present as well."

"It's okay. I baked a lot just for practice, so I'm sharing it with you."

The practice was for Klopp and the future Bandykes, so he couldn't pretend to be oblivious. However, at this point, Klopp knew giving small gifts to Rayfiel wouldn't hold much significance. His wealth had accumulated to some extent, and it was about time for them to get engaged. But he didn't want Rayfiel to get the slightest hint of his engagement plan.

Without Rayfiel knowing, Klopp secretly went to a jeweler to purchase the engagement ring. Honestly, since way before, he had already looked through various different gemstones and designs, so he had ordered an elegant and sophisticated ring, making sure it wasn't too flashy. He received a message that the ring was completed and went to pick it up. If it weren't for the introduction from Viscount Derbyshire, he wouldn't have been able to enter the exclusive members-only jewelry store that aristocrats frequented, let alone buy it at a much affordable price.

"Platinum with sapphire. Here is the ring."

The polite attendant brought the ring to Klopp, who was sitting on a waiting sofa. The ring was more magnificent than he had imagined. He went to the manager's desk to sign a check to pay the remaining amount. As the manager searched through the ledger and looked for Klopp's name, Klopp overheard a conversation between the omega aristocrats who were browsing the various jewels on display in glass cases.

"Did you hear? Recently, Count Teiwind made a bad investment and suffered a huge loss. That's why he didn't attend the jewelry auction this time."

"Well, he's so wealthy that it shouldn't be a big blow to him."

"I heard he invested in a gem mine in the east. If that goes well, he'll recover several times the loss from this time."

"Oh, really? Then, should we also invest in that?"

When Klopp heard that conversation, his face turned sullen. There was only one gem mine in the east that he knew of, and it had already been completely depleted. Occasionally, a couple of gems were found there, but they were of low value. It was no longer worth investing a large sum of money into that gem mine. There were occasionally people who didn't know it was a depleted mine and invested due to its past reputation, but it was the first time Klopp heard that the aristocrats who were knowledgeable in investment information had touched that mine. While they would still get a cut loss, they should take their hands off it immediately.

The conversation among the omegas quickly moved on to another topic. Klopp thought about joining the conversation to know more about it, but the manager had just found the ledger and handed him the receipt for the remaining balance. Klopp wrote the exact amount in the checkbook and

signed it, but the omegas had already followed another staff member's guidance and went into the inner room. Putting the ring, which was wrapped in a small silk box, into his pocket, Klopp left the jewelry store.

*'Count Teiwind is from a distinguished family, so he should be able to manage his investments on his own. He's not a nouveau riche who has only touched money for 10-20 years. He probably has steady investment options and has hired capable managers. Besides, it has nothing to do with me.'*

Klopp quickly put aside his thoughts and touched the ring box in his pocket.

He caught a passing carriage and headed towards the office.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 2.2 - The fate flows**

Vol. 2 Chapter 2.2 - The fate flows

He worked in the office until late. Recently, there was urgent paperwork that needed to be done due to an increase in new clients. He also had a backlog of investment proposals to review. He was planning to finish just a few more things and go home, but he got a visitor this late at night.

"Who is it at this late hour?"

Klopp had just finished one document and was placing another stack of papers on the desk, he brushed aside his hair with an irritated voice. He wanted to pretend that he wasn't available, but the visitor should have already noticed the presence of a person through the reflection in the glass window. The knocking sound grew louder. Frustrated, Klopp loosened his tie and unbuttoned his shirt slightly before standing up from his seat. He didn't even bother fixing his folded shirt.

He was not dressed appropriately to meet a client, but it wasn't particularly courteous for the visitor to visit the office at this late hour either. In fact, that person should be relieved that they didn't get yelled at and shooed right away. His secretary had already left, so Klopp had to personally open the office door, which had a nameplate with 'Badnyke' on it. It wouldn't take him long to open the door, but before it was even halfway open, the visitor banged on it with a force like they were about to break it down.

"Are you out of your mind at this hour?"

"Ah, so you're here after all."

Standing in the dark corridor and dressed in a dark suit, the visitor surprisingly turned out to be the blond young count.

Startled by his unexpected appearance, Klopp leaned on the door frame with his arms and stared at him blankly. With a slightly stiff and awkward smile, the count asked.

“Can you spare me a moment?”

“I may or may not have time.”

It wasn't meant to be sarcastic; his situation was just exactly like that. If he really insisted on taking up his time, he could spare some, but even if the visitor wasn't Aelock, Klopp wanted to ignore it if it was an insignificant issue. However, both Klopp and Aelock knew that his intentions didn't come across that way. Aelock frowned slightly, seemingly displeased, but soon displayed his characteristic thin smile.

“Since I've come all this way at this late night, I would appreciate it if you could spare some time.”

“Didn't you think that it would be rude and that I would have difficulty sparing time for someone who visits without an appointment so late at night??”

Even if he said that, Klopp still opened the door and let Aelock in. Although they weren't particularly close and didn't have any special relationship, Klopp suspected that there must be an important reason for him to come at this late hour.

With a nod, Aelock briefly glanced at Klopp as if he had a pressing matter and entered the office. Without words, Aelock passed through the secretary's office and crossed the open inner door to enter the actual workspace used by Klopp.

Closing the sturdy door and securing the latch, Klopp, with his hands in his trouser pockets, assumed a nonchalant posture and tilted his chin towards the chair, gesturing Aelock to take a seat. Glancing at the stiff wooden chair behind him, he seemed to have made up his mind to ignore the courtesy from Klopp and instead wandered around the office.

Unlike the small but neatly organized secretary's office outside, the office was quite large, with a large desk, a couple of chairs, and walls filled with bookshelves and filing cabinets, except for the large window behind the desk. Frankly speaking, it wasn't tidy, to say the least. Klopp argued that it was organized according to his rules, but there was no one who really believed him.

After all, he rarely had any guests here. Most of the clients were aristocrats, and they preferred to call Klopp to come over to their own lounge or study. As

a result, it felt awkward to have an aristocrat standing in this messy space filled with dry paper and the smell of ink, especially when he used exquisite luxury perfumes.

“So that’s why you always smelled musty.”

Klopp wanted to tell him to leave if he had any complaints, but it was really late and he didn’t have the energy to waste on trivial arguments. So Klopp went to his desk and opened the file he had just been looking at.

The Count was wandering around the office, taking his time. Having experienced socializing with many aristocratic clients, Klopp somewhat understood the behavior of the city aristocrats who liked to act aloof, so he just let it be. Aelock was intentionally taking his time, to avoid the unnecessary rush of getting straight to the point, considering his current unfamiliarity with the space.

Usually, when he was with other clients, Klopp would spend time together, engaging in small talk related to light topics. In culinary terms, it would be equivalent to an appetizer. However, since Aelock didn’t have an appointment and appeared suddenly at night, Klopp had no intention of serving a full-course meal or showing any courtesy. He would simply do his job, regardless of whether Aelock took his time or not.

*But he’s taking far too much time even considering that.*

Klopp pushed the document he had just finished reading aside and pulled out another file. He looked up and saw the man still lingering in the office. Aelock, with sparkling eyes like a child who had discovered a treasure ship, was looking around with curiosity.

Just like in the study before, Aelock seemed to have an interest in books as he carefully examined the worn book spines of dusty law books Klopp had used since his university days, tracing them one by one with his finger. He was even engrossed in observing the dust rolling around in the corners. If Klopp left him on his own, he would be spending the whole night in the office.

“What brings you here?”

At the blunt question, Aelock looked up, slightly surprised, as if he’d just realized that Klopp was present in this office. Then he turned to face him, approaching with a faint smile. Although there was a client chair right in front

of him, he didn't sit down and instead looked down at Klopp, who was sitting on the other chair. Klopp still disliked the guy.

Aelock revealed the purpose of his visit without hesitation.

"I made an investment recently and incurred losses. It wasn't a significant loss, but because everyone kept telling me to meet you, I reluctantly came here."

"To think that you could lose enough money to buy ten ordinary houses in the Eastern Gem Mine and still call it not a significant loss. Truly, Teiwind is remarkable."

"...Did you already know?"

The count's smile became a little awkward. Leaning his upper body back and resting it against the backrest, Klopp spoke.

"News spreads quickly in this industry."

"Then our talk would be fast too. Regarding the investment agent."

"I'm not taking any more clients. I'm already overwhelmed with my current clients, and I don't want to deal with annoying clients who easily fall for shoddy investment schemes that are nothing more than scams."

Klopp rested his chin on his hand while leaning his elbow on the armrest and smirked. Aelock's pride seemed to be wounded by that and he tightly pursed his lips. He then pulled out a neatly folded letter from inside his well-tailored jacket, which accentuated his physique.

"What's this?"

"A recommendation letter."

Klopp received it and opened it. The content wasn't long.

*It's me.*

*No need for small talk, make a contract with him. This is all for your good. Derbyshire.*

That damned old man. Klopp gritted his teeth. As he exerted a little force with his fingertips, the high-quality handmade paper got creased. Seeing him, Aelock grimaced a little, as if in disapproval, but then smiled again.

"I have no intention to make a contract with a barbarian like you. However, it would be impolite to reject a recommendation from Viscount Derbyshire."

Watching those dizzyingly seductive lips that formed a soft arc, Klopp muttered curses inwardly. He was really busy, but since it was a request from someone he was indebted to, he couldn't refuse. If Viscount Derbyshire hadn't written him an introduction letter to the jeweler, he would have refused Aelock.

"If it weren't for Viscount Derbyshire's recommendation, I would never have gotten involved with you. I'm already busy enough, and yet you, an ignorant person who came here late at night rudely and can't even recognize a scammer, treat me, someone who can save you, like a barbarian, and try to provoke me. I'm forced to enter into a contract with someone who always does pathetic things! It's an act of suicide that I would never ever take! But I'm only accepting it at the request of Viscount Derbyshire. It would be best to for you express your deepest gratitude to him."

Klopp said that with all his might. Hearing that, Aelock's lips dropped, as if his pride was wounded.

"I understand."

Klopp had thought that if Aelock had complained back, he could use that as an excuse to Viscount Derbyshire for not signing the contract. But he was surprised himself that Aelock agreed easily. Outwardly, Aelock was acting cool, but Klopp couldn't help but suspect that the proud Count, who came to find him secretly at this hour, had something other than the gem mine to deal with. He might be in quite the predicament..

As Klopp pondered various thoughts and glanced up and down at him, Aelock glared at him with a displeased expression, before smiling again. That damned smile of his.

"Since it's already late, let's talk about it again next time. For now, I need to find out about your financial situation first."

"When should I come again?"



"I'll come to your place. Probably in a couple of days?"

"I'll be waiting. Well then, I shall take my leave. I apologize for coming so late." He must be satisfied with the outcome, Aelock left the office with a casual farewell.

As Klopp watched the carriage leaving in the distance, he caught a faint trace of the refreshing scent that Aelock had left behind. And he let out a sigh.

Looking down, he noticed that his thing had become hard some time ago. It must be because he had been sitting for a long time. Sitting back down in his chair, he gripped the pen and was about to look at the documents when he suddenly stood up, opened the window, and let in some fresh air.

*Like hell it was because I had been sitting for a long time. Damn it.*

He realized that his desire hadn't disappeared. And of all people, why towards an alpha? If he were an omega, he could drug him and make him his. Of course, if he actually did it, he would ruin his life, but he couldn't understand why he was interested in an alpha like this. Was it just simply because of his sexual frustration? It seemed like it was really time for him to get married and settle down.

Klopp took out the engagement ring he had stored in the drawer. Seeing the sapphire gleaming blue in the lamplight made him feel slightly better. He neatly put the ring back in the drawer and started looking at the documents he hadn't been able to handle due to the sudden uninvited visitor.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 3.1 - Can't escape**

Vol. 2 Chapter 3.1 - Can't escape

"But still, he was our mother! Even if he may have been an enemy to you, Father, he was the only mother I had!"

With blue eyes resembling the man's, he glared at him with anger and resentment. The man couldn't understand why his beloved son was furious with him. He had only tried his best for their mother's sake.

"I loved your mother. I couldn't forgive the person who made him die so tragically."

"Our mother! Mother was the person who died at Father's hands! Please stop your lies full of deceit!"

"Your mother is not that person, but Rayfiel Westport! You were named after him because you resemble him!"

"...I don't need that name. I'm no longer Rayfiel. You should have named me ... If you wanted to name me after Mother."

The old man raised his fist in anger, while his grown son stared back at him without backing down. The raised hand couldn't come down. Tears streamed down the eyes of his resentful son.

“I will never return to this estate again.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“I can’t live in the place where my mother died so tragically.”

With those words, his son left. The man immediately chased after his back.

“Rayfiel!”

Before opening the front door, the son stood in the middle of the stairs and looked at his father. In between them, an old housekeeper stood with a pale

face, constantly shedding tears and pleading, "Young master, please." His son gave her a cold glare and then turned back to face the man.

"Goodbye, Viscount Klopp Bandyke."

"Rayfiel!"

The son left. And he never ever returned again.

The man who lost his eldest son ran toward that person's tombstone and cursed him. Even after he died, he was still tormenting him to tears. Soon, he came carrying a hammer to smash that tombstone. His second son rushed in to stop his madness and was hit by the swinging hammer, causing a severe injury.

That was the man's second madness.

\*\*\*

"... Why is Rayfiel my son? And what's with me going mad and smashing the tombstone? What absurd dream ...."

Because of the wild dream, he woke up with annoyance surging through him. He got out of bed, massaged his dizzy head, and rubbed his eyes with his palm. Barefoot, he went down from his bed and headed to the nearest large window to draw back the heavy curtains.

"What incredibly amazing weather. Just perfect."

The gloomy sky seemed as if it could bring a gust of wind accompanied by hail at any moment, letting out a distant roar. Perhaps it was a sign of something. His dream was bad too. It's all because of that damn count. Today was the day he would be visiting the count's estate. Could there be a more fitting beginning than this?

Klopp dismissed the lingering dream with irritation and swiftly discarded the pajamas he was wearing. After a reluctant and meager breakfast, amidst the murmurs of the dream that still lingered, he barely caught the waiting carriage with his footsteps before a hailstorm poured down. The road quickly turned into a sheet of ice. While worrying needlessly about the carriage wheels on the road, the hail transformed into a hazy drizzle, making the mood gloomy.

“Just my luck.”

Sighing, he looked outside the carriage window and saw the magnificent estate under the gray sky.

A butler, dignified and pretentious like his master, welcomed him. Having seen Klopp before, the butler greeted him with “Welcome, Sir Bandyke.” However, the butler’s demeanor, to put it nicely, was impeccably polite, but to put it honestly, he had a kind of cold aura that was impossible to describe.

*It’s not like I came to this shitty house because I want to, Butler.*

Without saying a word, Klopp handed over his slightly dampened coat to the faultless butler. He took it with his fingertips as if it were a dirty rag and handed it to the footman standing next to him without a word. The butler turned around without saying anything and led the way. He walked with his shoulders proudly squared, his head held high as if he had a steel brace around his neck. Is he the master or the servant? Perhaps there was some special drug mixed into the air of this estate that stiffened one’s joints.

It was hard to imagine that someone actually lived in this house, given the unusually long hallway they passed through. Guided by the butler, they arrived at the study that he had come before. Upon entering the open door, the count, who was sitting on the sofa while sipping on tea, looked up and smiled.

“You came earlier than I expected.”

“...After sending that carriage, you still say ‘earlier than expected’?”

Even before exchanging greetings, Klopp already showed signs of displeasure, so Aelock didn’t retort back, simply smiling and gesturing for him to take a seat.

“Tea?”

While Klopp was taking his seat, without instructing the butler, Aelock poured black tea into an extra cup from the prepared tea set and added a spoonful of sugar with a silver spoon. At first, Klopp thought that, just like himself, Aelock had a somewhat rare preference to add only sugar instead of cream, but the teacup was pushed to him. Then he noticed that there was already a cup of tea with cream in front of the Count.

“How did you know?”

“What do you mean?”

“My tea preference. I think this is not something common in the city.”

“...I think I remember seeing you drink it before. Just as you said, it wasn't a common preference, so I remembered.”

Was it during a tea party before? As aristocrats were limitlessly mindful of others, they even loved remembering useless details. The count, who could be considered at the pinnacle of aristocracy, seemed to be the same. The deep-flavored tea had a slightly bitter aftertaste, awakening his still somewhat sluggish mind. It suited his taste perfectly.

“How is the tea?”

“Not bad.”

The count smiled satisfactorily as he sipped on his smooth, milky tea. The tea was more akin to a golden hue than black tea, and it made one wonder if his skin was so pale because of drinking such tea. Hair as blond as milk tea, and skin as smooth as milk. Lips with a subtle red hue, like the rose pattern engraved on the teacup. And rather than a deep scent, the count always wore a refreshing scent of high-quality perfume.

Judging by his appearance and demeanor, he looked as if he preferred to be enveloped in an expensive fragrance, but he wore perfume like a weak flirtatious alpha. Alpha perfume was something you use when you want to cover up the scent of an omega you'd slept with the night before.

While someone was having nightmares, it seems that someone else had spent a truly fantastic night.

Annoyance surged through him once again. As the cup clinked, his lush eyelashes, which were elegantly facing downwards, soon rose upwards, and his blue eyes stared in this direction. And again, he smiled. Just why on earth does he keep smiling like that? Klopp placed the half-finished tea on the table and spoke in a slightly stiff voice.

“Ledgers. Investment contracts. Real estate-related documents. All supporting documents regarding liquid assets.”

“...What?”

“Bring them immediately. We have work to do.”

“Already? We haven’t even finished our tea.”

Aelock, slightly taken aback, set the teacup down. Klopp had already stood up, and was approaching the desk where the documents were. He pulled out the chair, took off his jacket, and hung it over the back of the chair.

“I didn’t come here just to leisurely drink tea. I’m busy. I had to carve out time for this.”

“Are you not going to spare the whole day for this? Viscount Derbyshire told me that you would have a full day of conversation with the other contractors...”

“I have an appointment in the afternoon. Don’t forget that you came to find me unexpectedly.”

When Klopp drew a firm line, Aelock silently accepted it. Then he stood up and gracefully shook the bell that was placed nearby. The butler appeared right away into the study, carrying even more than the anticipated towering stacks of documents. It vividly showed the ancient lineage and immense wealth of the aristocratic family, along with their reckless management. Klopp was astounded as he looked at the disorganized pile of documents.

“Damn it. If it was this much, you should have organized this beforehand.”

“I’ve heard that it’s better to show it as it is, without any tampering.”

“That’s referring to organized ledgers! Where are the receipts for this?”

Putting on a stern expression, the confused count’s words made him feel absurd.

“Do I have to gather receipts too?”

“...”

Klopp looked at him in silence, and the count glanced elsewhere for a moment before their gazes met again, and he smiled. *Yes, go ahead and smile. At least if you smile, I won’t swear at you. No, I might even want to swear at you*

*more. I don't know anymore.* Klopp looked at the dusty ledgers, let out a deep sigh, and unbuttoned his sleeves, rolling up his shirt.

"I guess it would be hard for me to meet Rayfiel today."

"Ah."

He looked through the pile of documents, picked up what appeared to be a book, and said it to himself, but the count suddenly looked at this side with a nervous and serious face.

"I apologize. I really failed to consider your circumstances at all. You can come next time. Or perhaps I'll organize these documents myself first and send them to you."

"Nevermind it. I'm already here. Besides, I don't think you've ever done it before, if you mess with it now, it'll only be more of a hindrance."

"I'm truly sorry. To have interrupted your time with your loved one..."

The count's words seemed a bit strange, Klopp frowned and stared at Aelock intently. He must really be sorry, even in his smile, Aelock had a slightly pained expression with his face down.

"If you have time to worry about other people's personal life, why don't you lift that file rack over there onto the desk?"

"Ah."

Aelock quickly grabbed the documents Klopp was pointing at and lifted them up. Meanwhile, Klopp sat on the luxurious leather chair with a scowl on his face. He was slightly surprised at how perfectly comfortable it fit him as if he had been using it for twenty years. However, he showed no expression and opened the ledger, tightening the muscles on his face.

As expected, it was taking him a very long time. The third cup of cold tea had already gone cold. Aelock, who had been sitting on the sofa, kept flipping through the books gathered around, observing Klopp. Suddenly, he got up from his seat and headed outside.

*Did he get bored of waiting and leave to do something else? I'm still left with his work.*

Klopp had been thinking that he couldn't concentrate well because Aelock was in his mind. It was probably a good thing that he left since he was in the way. However, after a while, the study door opened again, and Aelock came in carrying something on a tray. He continued reviewing the ledger and making notes, but when he took a short glance, he saw that Aelock had brought a small silver tray with snacks. It seemed like he brought snacks, including sandwiches and cookies.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 3.2 - Can't escape**

Vol. 2 Chapter 3.2 - Can't escape

"Since you're here, I wanted to offer you a meal."

"I'll decline."

"I thought you might, so I prepared some snacks."

"Just leave them there."

Without even looking, Klopp gestured with his hand towards above the file rack. After placing the tray down, Aelock needlessly walked around. The scent of the perfume was quite unpleasant. Klopp frowned, glancing at the person, who was pacing beside him with hands on the back.

"Ah, I apologize if I'm disturbing you."

"Just sit over there. You can either read a book or leave."

"I shall do that then."

In response to Aelock's obedient reply, Klopp couldn't hide his curiosity and glanced at the person's back as he walked towards the seat. *Did that Count eat something wrong? Why was he suddenly being so obedient to his words? It couldn't be that he wants to act nice towards me, right? Is he in pain somewhere?* Then Klopp noticed the tray. There was a very appetizing-looking ham sandwich with black dried fruits placed on them. It must be because he's hungry. After all, aristocrats wouldn't eat alone in front of others.

"If you're hungry, go ahead and eat first. Don't mind me."

"No, it's alright. Those are for you. I don't eat anything with raisins."

"To be so picky about food at your age. That wouldn't happen in our house."

When Klopp playfully teased him like a child, the count suddenly shot him a sharp look, and as their eyes met, he quickly turned away with an unpleasant expression. Then, with a pretentious smile, he retorted, "Do you have time to



worry about other people's private life? Besides, I'm not someone from your household."

Right, that's how the count would respond.

"I really appreciate your concern. If you keep your mouth shut so as not to disturb me, I'll finish the work faster."

In response to Klopp's audacious smile, the count shot another glance at me.

They both glared at each other for a moment before turning away.

In the study, there were only the sounds of a pen nervously scratching and the fierce flipping of books.

"This is a mess."

By late afternoon, Klopp was finally able to organize the main ledgers and big investment in order. The conclusion drawn by Klopp from a professional standpoint was just that one sentence. A perplexed Aelock, who was sipping his tea, asked with a puzzled look, "How bad is it?"

"If you continue with this kind of mismanagement, you'll face a financial crisis within a few years. Assuming you don't end up drowning in debt."

"Is it that serious?"

Seeing his slightly annoyed expression and stiffened complexion, it was evident that he was indeed an aristocrat. Not just Aelock, most of the customers who had suffered significant losses due to investment failures reacted in a similar manner. Some weak omega aristocrats even burst into tears. For aristocrats, getting employed somewhere to earn money was akin to selling their bodies from a commoner's perspective. It was such a shocking revelation.

Every time he saw that expression, Klopp felt offended, as they might look at him like he was a high-class butler or a host to them. Even though they maintained an indifferent and composed demeanor. Among the countless reactions Klopp had encountered so far, Aelock's response was relatively calm and limited. He smiled with a slightly concerned expression.

*Even in this kind of situation, he's still smiling. Should I be more forceful?*

“Since you have a lot of assets, you won’t go bankrupt immediately. However, if you continue to fail in your investments and insist on maintaining such extravagant spending, like tea parties, you will completely ruin yourself if someone deliberately tries to take advantage of you.”

Wrinkles formed on the count’s twitching brow, and the corners of his upturned lips subtly drooped.

“If this kind of reckless and haphazard investment continues, it wouldn’t take a large organization. If just a few intelligent individual investors get together and try to scam you, Teiwind could be left as a mere relic in the history books.”

Suddenly, the count stared directly at me. And in a slightly angry tone, he asked.

“Like you, for example?”

Klopp snorted. He then pulled out something he’d been meaning to ask from the file cabinet he had been sorting.

“Of course. I’m currently the best in this industry. What on earth is this ‘National Hunger Association’? And you built a house for ‘Angels Who Lost Their Mothers’? You’ve been making huge donations on a regular basis.”

“Of course, it’s clearly charity! As an aristocrat, it’s my moral obligation to help those in need by giving what we naturally possess.”

“Of course, donating to charity is something the upper class should and can do as a form of social contribution. But these two organizations, they don’t have valid addresses or proper administrators. The donation receipts they provided are poorly written, and full of spelling and grammatical errors. Most importantly, I’ve never heard of these organizations. And I’m familiar with all municipal, royal, or internationally recognized ones. Where did you find out about them?”

“At a charity party.”

When Klopp pressed him with an intense gaze, the count avoided the gaze he had just been shooting from earlier and replied. Klopp raised his eyebrows while waving the shoddy receipts written by scammers.

“Stop lying and tell me the truth. Where?”

“...On the streets.”

What the hell? How can someone trust a complete stranger they meet on the streets and hand over a large sum of money? If he's treating his money like that, it would be better to give it to the poor top-ranking graduate. So he could move out already. Klopp was silent for a moment, at a loss for words, before he spoke again.

“Transferring funds to these two organizations is prohibited from now on. It's obvious that they are scammers.”

“You're a scammer yourself.”

“What did you say just now?”

“I didn't say anything.”

*I heard everything. Who was a scammer? Let's move on for now; I need to scold him a bit more.*

Glancing at him briefly, who was still unaware of his true situation, Klopp pulled out the next argument.

“Who authorized such a foolish investment? A gem mine? Most people already know that the veins there have dried up for a long time. You have so many tea parties and social gatherings, but did you not have a single contact who could provide accurate information?”

At that, the count stared at Klopp intently, then smiled a little strangely.

“...Now I know. That it was a scam. It's just that... my father's long-time friend recommended that I invest in it. I was just trusting him.”

“Maybe he wasn't really a friend.”

The count's blue eyes seemed slightly shaken by the blunt retort. But soon, the movement ceased, making Klopp wonder if it was just his imagination.

As Klopp continued to point out each mistake, the count, perhaps hurt in his pride, furrowed his brows and crossed his arms. For an aristocrat to fold his arms to the point of wrinkling his clothes, he must feel very uneasy. Instead of calling it anger, it was more appropriate to describe him as sulking. Klopp had to suppress a chuckle that almost burst out at the sight.

After spending a long time there, Klopp realized that he should never entrust Aelock Teiwind with a checkbook. Originally, he had planned to put up a pretense since he was asked by Viscount Derbyshire, who he couldn't refuse because he was very indebted to him. He was going to avoid a contract if he could. He had come with the intention of introducing him to another wealth manager or investment agent, but now, looking at this aristocrat who seemed to have no concept of asset management and didn't even seem to know the value of the currency, Klopp had to hold back his laughter.

He was a classic example of someone who forgot how to walk while living above the clouds and was now glaring at him with a face full of dissatisfaction. If anyone should be angry, it should be Klopp who realized the troubles of the person he didn't want to get involved with.

"So, after this, what are you planning to do about it?"

"That's the question I should be asking you, Count Teiwind."

"You're my investment agent, so you should explain it to me."

Klopp was taken aback.

"Who said I was your investment agent? I've never signed any contract."

"That... well..."

Under Klopp's cold criticism, Aelock acted as if he had been betrayed. His expression clearly showed that he couldn't believe it. His trembling lips parted, and he fidgeted with his fingers. The blond count, who was too dignified to even point fingers, eventually bit his lip tightly.

It was a contract that didn't need to be done, but in fact, it was a contract that didn't need to be rejected either. It was true that Klopp was somewhat pressed for time, but considering Teiwind's reputation and vast wealth, if it had been someone else, he might not have been able to refuse the contract.

The words of the persuasive Viscount Derbyshire were not entirely wrong, this could really be a good help to Klopp.

But personally, Klopp found the count uncomfortable, so he tried to avoid him. However, seeing Aelock whimpering like a drenched puppy, not able to say a single unpleasant word, it bothered Klopp even more. Eventually, Klopp let out a heavy sigh.

“Let’s draw up a contract, and then we can discuss our plans afterward.”

“...That means...”

“Listen to my conditions first. Of course, I have no intention of conceding, and if any of them are not honored, there will be no contract.”

At those words, the count stood up from his seat with his best attempt at making a poker face. Then he examined the documents on the desk where Klopp was sitting. Aelock looked down at Klopp with a smile, like he wasn’t being gloomy just now.

“Where do I sign?”

“Have you been listening to anything I said so far?”

Once the contract was decided, all the remaining documents had to be thoroughly reviewed. It would be one thing if he had a good wealth manager, but his current one wasn’t good enough, so he’d be fired immediately and the position would be vacant. Other than tied-up assets like real estate and long-term investments, Klopp decided to invest a significant portion of his other liquid and cash assets in a trust fund.

In other words, he took control of the count’s finances.

Typically, aristocrats wouldn’t trust people to such an extent. Even if they followed the advice of a financial advisor like Viscount Derbyshire, they usually managed their own assets. However, Aelock Teiwind showed absolutely no interest in wealth.

During the few days of reviewing his documents, Klopp could vaguely guess the reason behind it. Aelock seemed to believe that openly discussing money and expressing significant interest in it was an uncultured act. Klopp couldn’t believe that a person with such cultured manners existed. Even the royal family wouldn’t be like him.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 3.3 - Can't escape**

Vol. 2 Chapter 3.3 - Can't escape

It was no wonder that the Count was so eager to sign the thick contract that Klopp had presented to him after only a few days of absence. Klopp quickly grasped the hand holding the luxurious handmade fountain pen. The count looked at Klopp in surprise.

“How the hell are you so sure of me that you would blindly sign without even reading it?”

“I’m sure you wrote it well. After all, you’ve boasted several times that you’re the best in the industry.”

“That’s just my words. But you should verify it yourself. Read it!”

“Alright then, so let go of my hand. It hurts.”

Apparently, he was so agitated that he had put too much strength into his grip. The count's hand was slightly smaller and a lot smoother than Klopp's hand. When he released it, the count murmured in a low voice, "Your brute force is unnecessarily strong." Klopp glared at him until his eyes hurt, but the count bowed his head and didn't see it as he was busy examining the contract. The delicate papers were quickly turned over. Is he really reading it properly? "Read it aloud. So I can confirm that you really read it all."

"I'm past the age of having a tutor."

"So prove to me that you're really reading it."

Klopp was close to shouting at him, so Aelock began reading the contract out loud with annoyance. He wasn't reading in a loud voice, but in the study where there were only the two of them, it was clear and sound. Maybe it was because he had sung cultured songs before, Aelock elegantly recited the contract, filled with rigid vocabulary, as if it were a romantic poem.

While reciting the lengthy content, Klopp unknowingly got absorbed in it, as if he were listening to a beautiful aria. Even though he had written it himself, he couldn't grasp the content at all. His cup of tea was untouched, and he gazed intently at the count, who had his beautiful golden eyelashes slightly lowered as he continued reading the contract.

"Is this fee sufficient? I think it's lower than the previous agent."

*Oh, damn it.* In the midst of experiencing a rare personal moment of being immersed in the world of artistic sensibility, with those words, Klopp was forcefully pulled back into reality, almost swearing. Half of it was directed at that pathetic Count and the other half at the previous agent who had been dismissed by the Count. As repeatedly mentioned, Klopp, who was recognized as the best in the industry, naturally demanded a fee that matched his reputation, which was three times higher than usual for this contract that required him to handle various troublesome tasks. And yet, it was lower than that of his previous agent.

*That cunning little swindler. What was his name again? I think I wrote it down somewhere. If I see him again, I'll get rid of him and make sure he never scams anyone again.*

Klopp imagined how he would deal with that rotten scoundrel. While he was having wicked thoughts, Aelock, with a faint smile that involuntarily appeared on his face, signed with his graceful handwriting. Before he closed his fountain pen, Klopp handed him another copy and pointed to the places where he needed to sign again.

"There are two copies, so sign both."

"Contracts can be quite bothersome."

Complaining about how bothersome it was to sign just three times, the Count completed his signature and without even considering taking the copy of the documents, he abruptly got up and made an excuse about having 'urgent matters' to attend before leaving.

Not having enough energy to be surprised or angry anymore, Klopp personally took the copy and put it in the desk drawer in Aelock's study. He put the key on a silver tray carried by the waiting butler.

"Where is Aelock?"

“Count Teiwind is at the Music Hall. Shall I guide you there?”

Klopp looked at the butler who put an exaggerated staccato intonation when mentioning ‘Count Teiwind’.

“Nevermind.”

That damned aristocrat with his leisure time.

He had a strong premonition that this would become very troublesome in the future. In just a short time, the intuitive expertise he had as an investor had not proven to be off the mark.

A week hadn’t even passed, and Klopp was already cursing himself for entering into this day’s contract.

What Klopp asked of Aelock was not a difficult task. It was something that even a young child could do. It was simply a matter of consulting him whenever he wanted to spend exceeding a certain amount. He thought he had given generous guidelines. Yet, he was bothered by numerous calls from the office throughout the day.

“The Count wanted to inquire if he could purchase a series of paintings by a talented young artist.”

“The Count expressed his desire to make a donation at this charity party. The amount is approximately this much.”

“The Count wants to know if he can purchase a rare first edition that will be auctioned. He also asked if you could attend the auction instead.”

“The Count wishes to participate in this pottery exhibition...”

“The Count wants to celebrate the Duke’s birthday...”

“The Count...”

Just a week had passed, and the Count’s footman had visited his office for the 53rd time. He was still processing the receipt for the substantial amount of money Aelock had used in his previous visit, now, even just hearing those footsteps alone, it made Klopp’s temples throb. The moment that person entered, Klopp almost snapped his pen holder in half.



“What is it this time? What is the Count up to now?”

“Please read this.”

The well-mannered Foothman handed Klopp a high-quality handmade envelope and performed a bow before quickly leaving. Klopp couldn’t even react.

Until now, there had been brief notes and messages, but it was the first time he received an official letter. The envelope, made of luxurious paper, had a handwriting as distinctive as the owner’s face, and it read <To Sir Bandyke>. He wondered if there was something important written inside. As he nervously opened the letter, his pen holder almost slipped from his hand.

*Dear Sir Bandyke,*

*I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your tireless efforts in serving this Count, especially during this vibrant season of lush greenery. While I, who am enjoying comfort thanks to your sacrifices, feel profound sadness for not even being able to offer you a fragrant cup of tea. Yet, in seeking support from your esteemed presence, how can I raise my head? However, I hope you understand my position, as I cannot disregard the enduring tradition of our esteemed Count’s lineage.*

*With the approaching early summer, in the rose garden which the Count is proud of, I’m organizing a soirée. This soirée presents a precious opportunity to carry on the artistic heritage inscribed in our aristocratic lineage and provide beautiful memories to countless individuals. Therefore, I firmly believe that you will consent.*

*I commend your passion, which knows no bounds even on busy holidays.*

*May you always be filled with harmony.*

*Count Teiwind, Aelock*

Putting aside the sentences that seemed to be written intentionally to provoke anger, the words that caught his attention in his burning, intense gaze were undoubtedly “countless individuals.” What exactly does the Count mean by “countless individuals” according to his standards? He can’t be planning to build opera seats in his house. Klopp’s hands trembled with cold suspicion.

Just then, a folded page slipped and fell beneath. It listed Aelock's rough estimate of the expenses of the event. Glancing at it quickly, Klopp wordlessly stood up and put on his coat. Crumpling the letter and stuffing it into his pocket, he left the office with a look that left the secretary speechless. Inside the carriage racing toward the Count's estate, Klopp took out the crumpled paper once again. The immense cost was such that one might think the Count had invited a royal orchestra and a world-renowned maestro to play at once. Currently, the Count had declared austerity measures and strictly prohibited any overspending until his investment returns entered a stable phase. He had definitely reminded him of that several times. However, this wasn't just excessive spending; it was lunatic consumption.

Klopp urged the rushing carriage to go even faster, even if the wheels were already about to come off. He pressed for more speed than usual. As the carriage arrived at the Count's driveway sooner than expected, Klopp leaped out as soon as it entered the drive. And upon seeing the butler rushing out in response to the sound of the carriage, Klopp immediately shouted.

"Where is he?!"

"What is the matter, sir?"

The butler raised his one-eye glasses and asked in a stern tone. After a pause, Klopp dangled a piece of paper with the estimated expenses in front of him.

"So it's related to the expenses for the soirée. Hmm, it's relatively more modest than usual."

"Were these expenses reduced? That's impressive. Anyway, it exceeds the amount that I laid out by more than five times. I need to meet the Count immediately. Otherwise, your salary will be reduced starting from next month."

"My salary is determined by the Count, hence it doesn't concern Sir Bandyke. However, allow me to guide you. The Count has given those instructions."

Facing a rampagous alpha who seemed about to explode at any moment, the butler calmly presented his composed response without batting an eye. He turned his head and led the guest with an upright posture. Klopp felt suspicious of the place that they were heading as it was in a different direction from the study or the meeting room.

“Where are we going?”

“To the music hall. The Maestro and renowned musicians are selecting the repertoire for the soirée. With all due respect, please be mindful that the Maestro and renowned musicians are there.”

Klopp understood the meaning the butler emphasized, but he merely furrowed his brow at the mention of the ‘Maestro’.

As they approached the doors, loud dissonant sounds resonated from the Count estate’s music hall which was the size of a small theater, as if many people were playing instruments and trying to synchronize their performances. Without paying attention, one wouldn’t even be able to tell if there were people entering or leaving the place. The butler only guided Klopp to the music hall, he didn’t announce Klopp’s presence to the people in the room. It seemed like retaliation for disregarding his previous question. That rude oldie.

No one paid attention to Klopp in the music hall full of musicians and instruments. No, to put it more precisely, there were two clarinet players, who looked like Omegas, glimpsed this way but soon ignored him. It seemed because there was no instrument in his hand.

Amidst the chaotic music hall adorned with murals from indeterminable time periods, Aelock stood in the center. Unaware of Klopp’s presence, he was in conversation with a middle-aged alpha holding a violin.

Usually, when Klopp saw him, he would only put on a smile full of pretense, but now, Aelock was laughing so brightly and making sounds as if he was truly enjoying his time with the other person. The view made Klopp’s insides churn. A person couldn’t even meet his lover on holidays and came here running while at work.

“Aelock, you’re truly a genius. This musical soirée will be incredibly beautiful.”

“It’s all thanks to the Maestro’s participation.”

“You’ve invited me, so of course I should participate.”

The alpha even lightly tapped Aelock’s shoulder with his hand.

Aelock, who usually would meticulously brush away even a fallen leaf from the sky.

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## **Into The Rose Garden - Vol. 2 Chapter 3.4 - Can't escape**

Vol. 2 Chapter 3.4 - Can't escape

Klopp grumbled inwardly, but strangely, he couldn’t approach Aelock. The Count, who was smiling so brightly, felt unfamiliar. And, at the same, Klopp felt that he shouldn’t get close to him. As someone who only knew that symphony meant simultaneous playing of instruments, he would undoubtedly be on their way. He hesitated for a moment and decided to wait outside the

music hall. However, the clarinet player who had noticed him earlier unnecessarily butted in.

“Who are you?”

The omega’s voice was loud enough for Aelock, who had been chatting over there, to turn around. Since the attention of the music hall suddenly shifted in this direction, Klopp had no choice but to turn around and give his greeting with his eyes.

The laughter disappeared from the Count’s face, which had just been laughing moments ago, and a polite yet fake smile appeared. It didn’t feel good to be treated like an unwelcome guest when he didn’t particularly want to disturb them. On top of that, he was already irritated by the expense issue, so his expression became even more rigid. The middle-aged alpha who was also looking at this side took a step back, startled.

With a faint smile, Aelock excused himself to the other person and walked over this way. Perhaps he was a little annoyed by the interruption, as his smile seemed deeper than usual.

The gazes of the people inside the quiet music hall moved lightly, like clouds, following the blond alpha. When Klopp noticed that many people were looking in this direction, his skin felt tingling for no reason. However, Aelock, who stood at the center of the hall, seemed completely unfazed.

Since they couldn’t argue here, Klopp left the music hall without saying a word, and Aelock followed behind him. As soon as they reached a small terrace not far from the music hall, the Count’s stern voice came from behind.

“Did you see what I sent you?”

“I am here because I saw that.”

A snarky response came out of his mouth, a little too much even to himself. When Klopp turned around, the blue eyes, which had gotten deeper, stared at him. It was a gaze that always felt piercing, but today it was particularly more intense. His summer-sky eyes shimmered as if they were soaked in water. With the breeze, Klopp could smell a stronger perfume than usual.

His already unpleasant mood plummeted in an instant. It wouldn't be strange for Aelock to have a lover, but that fact kept bothering Klopp. The image of the omega woman in the green dress from the previous time came to his mind, and his grip tightened for no reason. Trying to hide it, he clenched his hand behind his back and glared down at Aelock.

“Do you remember what it says at the end of the contract?”

“Any breach of the above will result in immediate termination of the contract.”

It wasn't a genuine question about whether he remembered or not; he was just testing his luck. but the immediate answer left him speechless for a moment, but he quickly recovered.

“I'm surprised you remember that.”

“Most people would memorize such a short document like that after reading it once. I hope you don't treat people as fools just because you were a top graduate at the capital university.”

A short document, he said. It was an absurd statement to claim that he had memorized the seven densely packed pages of the contract, printed in standard font on standard paper, after reading it just once.

“What's the first sentence of page two?”

“Investment Agent's Duties. Clause one, the contractor's. Wait. Are you testing me right now?”

“Exactly.”

Watching the Count make a rare show of displeasure, Klopp nodded his head like a private tutor inspecting homework. In honesty, he couldn't precisely

remember what the first sentence of the second page was. However, the other party wouldn't know that fact. Klopp was actually quite surprised to see Aelock so angry at him for doubting himself.

*He can't be a genius. He seemed like he was just watching the texts in the book before. There was no way he could read that fast...*

Even when he was in doubt, Klopp belatedly realized that Aelock had indeed read the book back then. He hadn't been pretending to be knowledgeable because he was self-conscious of Klopp, but he read fast because he was really smart. Just what on earth is this man?

By now, since he had already invited the maestro and the musicians, canceling the soirée now wouldn't prevent financial losses. He was usually a laid-back guy, but when situations like this arose, he was a quick thinker.

"You do realize you exceeded the amount that I laid out, right?"

"I contacted you. I politely sent a formal letter."

"I told you to discuss with me, not notify me!"

The frustration that had been bubbling up earlier had finally boiled over. It was irritating to act this way all week, and on top of that, he didn't like how Aelock would throw bombs like this and not even care when he came all the way here. Klopp really hated how he was delightfully interacting with another alpha male. And if he was so intelligent, why hadn't he realized that the letter would make him jump up and down with rage. Growling, he approached closer, and Aelock took two steps back in panic. Aelock ended up trapped between the closed glass door of the terrace and Klopp. As Klopp got closer, he could smell something slightly sweet within the refreshing perfume scent.

"Alright, I understand, so back off a bit."

Aelock put on his trademark thin smile and tried to move to the side, and seeing that, without realizing it, Klopp grabbed his arm. His blue eyes widened unlike ever before. Confusion, embarrassment, and fear seeped into them. The corners of Aelock's lips, forced into a smile, trembled slightly. At that moment, Klopp felt a sting in his chest. He was well aware that he could be quite intimidating when he was angry. However, he hadn't thought that this domineering count would be afraid of him. The arm held in his hand was trembling ever so slightly.

“Let go.”

“Oh, I’m sorry.”

Hearing the trembling voice, Klopp snapped out of his daze and released his grip, stepping back. “I’ll make sure to discuss in advance next time,” Aelock said softly as he enveloped the arm that was held by Klopp, then took a few steps to the side. Klopp could see Aelock’s intention to avoid him. Somehow, it made his heart sink even more. Klopp didn’t like the way Aelock was acting like he’d been assaulted when all he’d done was grab his arm. However, the other party seemed too serious to bring it up here and retort back.

“I’m sorry, but I’m going to have to ask you to leave for today. I’m not feeling well.”

“I understand.”

Aelock didn’t seem to have any signs of illness, but he looked a little pale and was avoiding him, so Klopp reluctantly agreed. As he tried to open the glass door to the terrace and go inside, Aelock softly muttered, as if wanting him to hear it, “You’re an ignorant fool with no musical taste. You just use violence.”

Klopp felt unjust after hearing such words and was about to say something back, but Aelock slipped through the door before he could stop him. He walked hastily, resembling a herbivorous animal desperately fleeing from a predator. Seeing that, Klopp couldn’t grab him.

After returning from the Count’s estate, Klopp felt like crap throughout the afternoon. He kept getting irritated and felt something weighing heavily on him, making it hard to concentrate. He made several unusual grammatical errors and absentmindedly tapped the tip of the pen on the paper until the ink spread, ruining several important documents. Only then did Klopp inform his secretary that he would be leaving the office early.

Although it was quite far to walk to his house in the suburbs, he decided to take a stroll for a change of pace. When taking the carriage, he would follow the main road, passing through common residential and commercial areas along the river. However, on foot, he couldn’t afford to take such a detour. He had to go through a dimly lit slum area through an alley between the shops. Anyone who learned that he frequented that path advised against it, furrowing their brows and advising him to take a carriage. But he didn’t mind it.

Having grown up in the quiet and secluded forested area of the rugged northern mountains, he often took long walks on any path when city life sometimes became too suffocating. The narrow back alley he entered now was just the right distance for walking. The problem was that occasionally some people would unnecessarily instigate fights, but on a day like today, he actually wished someone would start a dispute.

Holding the sturdy cane that he often used when walking home, he soon vanished into the darkness of the descending alley.

By the time he reached his home, he was physically fatigued, but at least some of his mental exhaustion had been alleviated. The moment he opened the door, he was greeted by his recently hired maid, Martha, who looked a little surprised.

"You're back early."

She received the coat, hat, and cane that Klopp handed over.

"Did you encounter another rabid dog? Why is there blood on the cane?"

"Yeah, you're right."

"We should report it to the town hall."

"I've already reported it. I'll go to bed early today, so Martha, you can get some rest. I don't need dinner either."

Klopp said that to the worrying middle-aged Omega woman and went up to the second floor. At the top of the stairs, he pulled off his tie and removed his vest. Once in his room, he undid a few buttons on the neck of his shirt, kicked off his shoes, and then collapsed onto his bed.

He had a rough idea of why he wasn't feeling well. Firstly, he was physically dissatisfied, and secondly, he felt guilty for not being able to give his lover his mental loyalty. He couldn't fathom why on earth that Alpha guy was causing him so much distress. When they hadn't been meeting, and he had forgotten about him, everything was peaceful. But as soon as he intervened again, everything went into chaos.

*It's all unfulfilled desires. That perfume, it must be because the scent was similar to what playboys wear. His looks were similar to Rayfiel, yet he looked*



*more mature than him, so I must be confusing them. It's all because their marriage is a bit late. Yeah. So let's stop overthinking it and just propose to Rayfiel.*

Klopp suddenly got up from the bed and rummaged through the jacket pocket that he threw to the other side, taking out a ring box. Lying back on the bed, he looked at the platinum and sapphire ring, eventually falling asleep without even undressing properly.

\*\*\*

In his dream, he held a very fragile Omega with blonde hair and blue eyes. He had a slightly swollen belly, as if pregnant. Every time the angry Alpha's penis thrust against his inner walls, the Omega cried out in a thin, high-pitched voice, further encouraging the act. When he reached climax, thrusting fiercely from behind, he poured his seed into the already impregnated body, and that omega collapsed, gasping for breath. For some reason, his own very angry self grabbed those skinny arms roughly, as if they would break with the slightest effort, and forced him to lie down properly. He probably thought the child was being crushed.

As if watching that scene in third person, Klopp was curious about Omega's face, so he shifted his gaze in that direction. The Omega, with his body turned over, was severely bruised, making it difficult to recognize his face. The bruises covering his body, visible through the open clothes, were evidence of violence, not evidence of a passionate love.

Between the tousled blonde hair, a pair of striking blue eyes looked at his direction.

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## Vol. 2 Chapter 4,1 - I should

"You look very tired today. Aren't you overexerting yourself?"

"I just had a restless night's sleep yesterday, that's all."

Klopp replied nonchalantly to his lover's concern. It wasn't a lie. It's not a big deal to lose a night's sleep during this busy period. However, the sensitive Omega didn't seem to feel that way.

Rayfiel continued to observe his complexion, so Klopp emphasized once again, "I'm really okay." Then Rayfiel turned his gaze forward. Without saying a word, he lightly grasped the cuff of Klopp's sleeve with his hand. Finding the gesture adorable, Klopp smirked and pretended to look elsewhere, turning his wrist backward and firmly clasping Rayfiel's soft hand.

"Um, if other people see us..."

His startled voice came from behind, but he acted as if he didn't hear it.

"That way."

They headed towards a high-end restaurant across the street. It wasn't crowded with people, but there were still quite a few glances mixed with smiles directed at the passionate lovers walking hand in hand in broad daylight.

Times were slowly changing, but publicly holding hands in places like this was frowned upon by many adults, especially among the aristocracy. However, increasingly rebellious young people were delighted in displaying public affection. Today, Klopp was putting that into practice. Without even looking, he knew Rayfiel's face must be flushed. He was definitely feeling unsure about the prying eyes around them, but Klopp didn't let go of his hand.

“We’re walking too fast. Let’s slow down a bit.”

“I have something to talk about once we get there.”

As they walked a little faster, Klopp tightened his grip on that warm hand. He wasn’t just feeling excited or thrilled. Lately, he had been plagued by guilt for not being faithful to Rayfiel, and he didn’t like that he let his mind wander when he had such a wonderful person by his side. After the nightmare he had last night, Klopp came to the conclusion that marrying Rayfiel quickly and satisfying his desires was the best path to take. The steps of the Alpha holding the hand of a beautiful Omega and rushing into a high-end restaurant were determined and resolute.

They entered the restaurant, gave his name to the manager, and reached their reserved table. As requested, the table was slightly secluded, positioned in a corner. Adorned with partitions and indoor plants, it exuded a cozy atmosphere, separated from the surroundings. It was perfect for carrying out his plans.

“It’s a quiet and beautiful place.”

“The food is good too.”

Soon, the appetizers and wine were served. As they leisurely enjoyed their course, they asked about each other’s well-being during the time they had been apart. Rayfiel, who couldn’t handle alcohol well, had a flushed peach-colored face after a single glass of wine and continued to smile until his eyes. The adorableness of it all was alleviating Klopp’s fatigue.

The relaxed Omega also emitted a sweet scent. It seemed like he was nearing his heat. Unlike the cold but burning resistance of someone's rebellious wall, Rayfiel's slightly trembling, azure eyes appeared incredibly affectionate.

Warm breath escaped through lips that had turned red from the matured fruit juice, stimulating the instincts of the Alpha in him. Klopp wanted to taste those lips right away, but unfortunately, he didn't have the courage to publicly engage in a kiss. Not because his Alpha instincts weren't enough, but because he didn't want to be scorned by Rayfiel's father. He could still hold himself back for now. Klopp crossed his legs and covered his thigh with a napkin. Then he gently touched Rayfiel's hand, resting on the table. The blond Omega's eyes smiled once again.

At this rate, he might die here.

Klopp crossed his other leg and began diverting the topic.

"Has anything special happened lately?"

"As you know, I've been practicing cooking. And recently, while ironing, I accidentally burned and ruined some clothes. I'm still having a bit of trouble with controlling its temperature."

Rayfiel started speaking in a somewhat fussing manner, and Klopp listened to his story. Soon the main course arrived and they debated about its reputation

and value for the price. Being with Rayfiel put his mind at ease. There wasn't much excitement as he was at ease, but after all, marriage was surely about stability.

After taking a bite of the tender meat, rich with succulent juices, Rayfiel spoke.

"Did I talk too much about myself? How about you, Sir Klopp?"

"It's always the same for me. I meet clients, dismantle their nonsensical delusions one by one, kick them in the butt, and guide them onto the right path. Plus, I have to deal with endless paperwork."

"That sounds very interesting. So, is that why you haven't been sleeping?"

"No, that's completely unrelated to work."

Honestly, he could only remember the dream right after waking up, so he didn't feel like bringing up a dream that he couldn't remember properly afterward. Even if he was going to be his future wife, there were things that didn't need to be disclosed, no matter how honest one had to be. Dreams will end as dreams, and he had no intention to let them interfere with reality.

Honestly, he didn't even remember the dream he had earlier this morning. The only things he could recall were blonde hair, blue eyes, and the fact that the other person was an extremely stubborn Omega.

It was probably Rayfiel. Compared to his appearance in the dream, Rayfiel seemed slightly less mature in reality, but he was still growing and would undoubtedly become a mature beauty within a year. It was proven enough with how his center had been causing him problems from earlier. Klopp casually smiled and sipped his wine.

“I want to know about Sir Klopp’s daily life too. We’ll have many things to discuss in the future, and while I diligently explain my work, Sir Klopp doesn’t explain anything. It’s not fair.”

It seemed like Rayfiel noticed Klopp’s attempt to change the topic and made a disappointed murmuring sound, which was incredibly cute. Eventually, Klopp surrendered.

“It would be boring to you.”

“If it’s about Sir Klopp’s work, anything would be interesting to me.”

“If you insist.”

Looking into those sparkling, gem-like blue eyes, Klopp began to recount his experiences with his clients, dealing with nobles, and anything else he thought might be interesting. Rayfiel was enthralled. Nodding his head, occasionally looking surprised, and even applauding, Klopp started to share more and more. His latest headache, the Count, inevitably became the topic of conversation.

With the Count's brilliant mind in boundless artistic and humanities knowledge, despite being completely clueless when it came to financial sense, he made foolish choices and crossed the line. Klopp complained that the Count was tormenting him to death. At this, Rayfiel widened his eyes in disbelief.

"The Count Teiwind did that?"

"Yeah, that Count. He really gives me a headache. There's not a single thing that goes smoothly. As his financial manager, I try to give him polite advice, but he doesn't listen and just arrogantly argues about every little thing."

"I can't believe it, I thought he was very polite and considerate."

"If he's polite and considerate, then I'm the epitome of etiquette."

When Klopp grumbled irritably, Rayfiel laughed and said, "You sounded like a young child picking your friend's faults." Rayfiel chuckled.

"Let's stop talking about that annoying guy."

"Annoying guy? I've never seen anyone refer to the Count in such a way."

"You'll be hearing it often from now on."

Klopp said it with a grimace, and Rayfiel responded with a bigger laugh. He seemed to think that it was a joke. If Klopp took that seriously, it would have made him look narrow-minded, and he didn't want that.

"Well, if he's such an annoying person, there's nothing I can do. I received an invitation from the Count, so I'll either go alone or go with my younger sibling."

"An invitation? Could it be a soirée?"

"Oh, I suppose you know about it. Yes, he's having a concert in the Rose Garden this time. I heard that a maestro I admire is coming, so I really want to go. I was originally planning to ask Sir Klopp to go with me, but..."

Even without hearing where he cut off, Klopp could tell. But that wasn't the issue. Klopp was curious about how Rayfiel received an invitation from the Count. After Klopp went to warn Aelock, the guest list had been cut in half. In response to Klopp's question, Rayfiel gave an unexpected answer.

"I'm his relative. You could say we're distant cousins. We're not that close, so we didn't interact much, but recently the Count has been sending me invitations regularly."

"A relative?"



Klopp asked in disbelief, and the blonde Omega nodded with a selfless smile.

“Yes, don’t you think I resemble the Count?”

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## Vol. 2 Chapter 4.2 - I should

Klopp couldn’t believe it. No, he didn’t want to believe it. Sometimes they might look similar, but he thought it was only natural since they have the same hair color and eye color. In fact, no matter how you looked at Rayfiel, he seemed like an omega, while the Count didn’t look like an omega at all. Aelock wasn’t overflowing with alpha traits, but he could never confuse him as not being an Alpha. It was only after hearing those words that he mentally pictured that irritating face and carefully examined Rayfiel, finding some resemblance.

But Aelock Teiwind and Rayfiel Westport were completely different people. Putting aside the difference between alpha and omega, there was nothing alike in their way of speaking, attitude, and even their scent. Klopp twisted his lips in a grimace and rested his back against the backrest.

“You don’t look alike at all.”

“Sir Klopp, you’re really strange today. Many people think that the Count and I look very similar. In fact, there have been many cases where people who don’t know us well confuse and mistake us. They either call me the Count or follow me, thinking that the Count is an omega.”

“People must be blind. You are completely different in my eyes. Even if you bring hundreds of similar people, I can tell them apart.”

Upon hearing that, Rayfiel blinked his eyes, then smiled shyly and took a sip of water. Klopp looked at him, still leaning back against the backrest, his posture a little off.

*Right. I can distinguish them no matter where they are. Rayfiel and Aelock are truly worlds apart. And who the hell was that asshole who mistakenly thought the Count was an omega? Was it that guy from before? It seems like he’s been flirting with Aelock for more than just a day or two. Does he think he’s doing good when the other person is making a serious face? How ridiculous.*

Klopp suddenly felt thirsty and quickly downed the remaining wine.

” Earlier, you said you had something to say.”

Rayfiel, who had been glancing at this side intently with his head raised, cautiously spoke, a little nervously. Klopp, who was just setting down the empty wine glass, instantly regained his senses.

*Ah, I had a plan for today. That unhelpful Count, huh. Whether he's present or not, he always interferes.*

He rummaged inside his jacket and took out what he had carefully kept since leaving the office. It was an invitation made of high-quality handmade white paper. As Rayfiel, who had been gazing at the fingertips of the other person with sparkling eyes, seemed somewhat disappointed, he let out an "Ah" and muttered in admiration. Klopp quickly straightened his posture and handed the invitation to Rayfiel.

"Actually, I also received this invitation. I was planning to ask you to go together, but since you also received it, it takes away some of the excitement."

"Ah, no. The evening soirée at the Rose Garden is a very romantic event. Since I wanted us to go together, it's nice that our hearts connected. I'm glad."

The voice of Rayfiel saying that was a little weak. His smile wasn't as bright as he expected. Klopp knew well that he had expected something else. A platinum ring adorned with a magnificent sapphire, or an alpha to his knees holding the ring out to him.

However, Klopp had a different idea. He wasn't in a desperate enough situation to stage such a fancy scenario in this complicated restaurant. A once-in-a-lifetime proposal needed to be romantic. Although it was a Count's event, he had played a significant role in it, so he had enough qualifications to use it privately.

"I may not know much about aristocratic events. But I heard that the soirée held in Teiwind's Rose Garden has a special meaning."

“Ah.”

With that, Rayfiel’s gloomy face turned into one filled with surprise and anticipation. Seeing the completely different expression from a moment ago, Klopp couldn’t help but chuckle.

“Do you know about it?”

“Traditionally, it was the center of social gatherings, so it has many legends. One tradition that has been revived through the efforts of a previous countess is the evening soirée. There is a fairytale-like story that the love sworn in the mansion’s Rose Garden on the night of the full moon lasts forever. So, many people, especially on that day...”

Rayfiel’s ears were already completely red as he spoke. Klopp had to force himself to hold back his laughter. If he laughed now, Rayfiel’s face would turn completely red, and he might even faint.

“The soirée is happening this full moon. Would you like to go together with me?”

“Yes.”

Rayfiel nodded with a soft, crawling voice in response. He looked incredibly cute and lovely. Considering the expenses demanded by the Count, the concert that day would be incredibly luxurious and undoubtedly memorable. It would also be the perfect day to propose to his future wife who he would spend the rest of his life with.

The meal at the restaurant went smoothly. They finished a bottle of wine before dessert arrived. While Klopp mostly drank it, Rayfiel also drank more than usual. Today, Rayfiel seemed exceptionally happy, which made Klopp happy as well, so they both drank a little too much. So when they left the evening restaurant, instead of immediately taking a carriage, they decided to walk to sober up.

It was actually time to send Rayfiel home, but if he sent Rayfiel home at this moment, his potential father-in-law would grab him by the neck and label him as a 'heinous criminal who touched an Omega before marriage'. Klopp didn't want that to happen.

Some might wonder what was the connection between overdrinking and speeding, but those who have met Viscount Westport, who played a significant role in shaping Rayfiel's pure and delicate nature, wouldn't think so. He thought that it was better to clear one's mind before an important event. After walking a bit and letting the smell of wine dissipate, Klopp planned to send Rayfiel off in the racing carriage he favored. The experienced coachman would deliver Rayfiel to Westport Estate precisely at the time given by Klopp.

"It's the first time I've walked around so late at night. My father is very strict, so..."

"I know very well. You'll fall if you walk backwards like that."

Worried, Klopp reached out his hand, and Rayfiel, feeling extremely embarrassed, held onto it. He wasn't reaching out to hold him, but rather gesturing for him to keep walking, but it didn't matter. Klopp firmly held his hand and walked. Rayfiel leaned his head on Klopp's arm, feeling a little dizzy. It seemed like he had drunk too much.

The streets were quite crowded with people taking late-night walks. There were couples like Klopp and Rayfiel, as well as couples with children. There were a few Alphas who seemed to be friends and a few Omegas with their chaperones. Klopp enjoyed the tranquil atmosphere as they walked. Yes, this was what a stable life felt like.

It was then. Rayfiel, who was half-hanging on Klopp with his head tilted, suddenly straightened his body and pointed in a certain direction.

"Isn't that person over there Count Teiwind?"

"What?"

*Why did that name come up again all of a sudden?* Klopp looked puzzled and gazed in the direction Rayfiel pointed. The person wearing dark-colored clothes, unlike his usual light suits, and with a hooded cloak, was walking quickly towards somewhere alone. He kept turning his head around and covered the edge of the hood slightly, as if trying to hide himself. As Rayfiel had mentioned, he had a physique that seemed like Aelock.

But there was no reason for the distinguished Count to enter a dirty, dark alley at this late hour, unaccompanied and dressed in such a suspicious manner. Moreover, Aelock always carried himself with confidence, holding his head high, and not walking around in a crouched and guarded manner like someone who had committed a crime.

“Where could he be going?”

“I don’t know. Was he really the Count? He’s not the sort of man to be wandering about alone at this late hour, without a carriage or servants.”

“You’re right. Maybe I was mistaken.”

“Yeah. That road leads to a very bad place, and there’s no reason for the Count to go there.”

The place Klopp mentioned was a path leading to the notorious slums in the capital, commonly known as the ‘bottom place’. Klopp was familiar with it as he sometimes used it as a shortcut on his way home, and he had dealt with a few rabid dogs there. Hearing his words, Rayfiel tilted his head in confusion.

“I suppose so. The Count would usually be playing a musical instrument or reading at this time, if he doesn’t have a partner.”

“That’s true. Or maybe he’s thinking of ways to spend his money.”

Klopp nodded lightly in agreement.

“I wasn’t feeling well that day, so I went to bed early. Why?”

“No, I was just curious.”

“I didn’t know I had to tell you every detail of my private life. Or are you also suggesting some sort of limit when it comes to sleep?”

When he visited to discuss the arrangements for the soirée expenses a few days later, Aelock responded very irritably to his casual question. Klopp was offended that Aelock responded annoyedly over the casual question, so he didn’t say anything more. That day, Aelock’s strong perfume scent gave him a headache, so Klopp only said the bare minimum and left. Aelock didn’t even bid him a formal farewell.

Thank you to everyone for the unconditional support in the comments in every chapter! We’re now halfway through Volume 2~

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