

# **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 251**

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 251-260**

Chapter 251. The Princess's Tour (1)

"I'm here, Lady Marian!"

After meeting with Xian, Elis returned to the place she had promised to meet Marian.

Marian, who had been waiting, greeted her and asked,

"Did you have a good meeting with your brother?"

"Yes! I didn't even realize how the time flew by, I was so happy!"

Elis's face was even brighter than before after sharing pent-up emotions with Xian.

"I'm glad to hear you had a good meeting. So, what are you planning to do now?"

"We decided to each do our duties from our own positions. Having had a talk with Xian, it's time for me to go do my own work."

"Understood."

Understanding Elis's words, Marian nodded her head and turned around.

Then, a radiant display of multicolored light emanated from her, and she changed back into her original dragon form.

Elis naturally climbed onto the sharpened, sturdy body of Marian, who unfolded her pure white wings and soared high into the sky.

"Oh! By the way, I saw Hastia at the restaurant earlier today! Xian told me that they're together for various reasons now?"

"Indeed, I'm actually on my way back from meeting that child myself."

"Even though he's my brother, it's really strange. He's blunt and lacks the slightest bit of attention to detail, yet he's popular. That's why I felt even more relieved. It seems that there are more people than I thought who can protect Xian."

"That's true. He's even got a weird creature following him around."

“A creature?”

Elis asked, visibly surprised.

“Never mind. As long as it stays put, there shouldn’t be any issues. However...”

Marian narrowed her eyes, now shining with a cold light, as she recalled the appearance of Nana, which she had seen earlier with Hastia.

“Your brother, he needs to be looked after well.”

“...?”

“In a world where the controller has disappeared, there aren’t many who can stop that rampaging creature...”

With an ominous mutter, Marian fell silent.

Thus, the two women embarked on their flight to the front lines, flying amidst the blue veil of dawn.

\* \* \*

My sister promised we would soon meet again before she promptly left my side.

I hadn’t asked her about the nature of the power she possessed.

Since I was also in no position to question her, sometimes it’s better not to say anything and trust each other instead.

As the veil of dawn lifted and the round sun rose, I considered having breakfast alone to clear my muddled thoughts, but my appetite vanished at the sight of the knights lining up in front of the restaurant.

At the center was Princess Arin, looking somewhat haggard as if she had stayed up all night. She wordlessly handed me a letter as soon as she saw me.

It was a letter from the Bert Household, bearing their crest and coming from Veritas.

A request for reinforcements for the conquest of the demonic realm.

This was, in all but name, a declaration of war against the royal household.

It equated to a defiance of the Bert Duke’s campaign to protect the empire and continent under the Emperor’s direction, based on the noble idea of stopping the demon invasion.

In other words, the Duke did not have the authority to independently initiate a conquest of the demonic realm.

Yet the Duke, without consultation with the royal household and despite the still-unsettled internal turmoil within the Empire, intends to launch an invasion of the demonic realm on his own?

This was nothing short of an insult to the Empire and the royal household.

I made my conclusion.

This couldn't have been the Duke's will.

"Why are you showing this to me personally?"

I handed the letter back to the princess after reading it and asked her.

"I want to know your thoughts. Do you truly believe the letter was sent by your father?"

The look in the princess's eyes suggested that she, too, suspected that the letter was not genuinely reflective of the Duke's intentions.

"Father has said many times that Duke Bert wishes for the continent to remain at peace more than anyone else, you of all people should know, having grown up by his side..."

I silently agreed.

"You've heard that a man, presumably Eshel Betlru, has been spotted in Veritas, haven't you?"

"Yes."

"Then it will be easier to explain. I don't believe Duke Bert sent this letter."

"And why do you think that?"

"You and I both saw it with our own eyes that day. The kind of power he wielded..."

The princess continued ominously,

"The man who transferred the power of the holy sword to knights at will, the man who forced father out of bed to wield his sword. Violet also warned us to be wary of the charm that man possesses..."

Charm.

Looking back, that thought came to me.

In a past life, for what reasons did I give my all to him?

It wasn't just me.

All who came into contact with him, regardless of age or gender, either combatively engaged with him or unhesitatingly adored him.

Why? Why is that?

Simply because he was eloquent and capable?

No.

It's just that being near him made me feel absolutely uncomfortable if I didn't follow him.

As if he was the only truth in this world.

If the princess's words about some unknown force were true, then I could somewhat understand my father's advice to live for him.

Of course, understanding doesn't mean I can accept it.

"So, what do you intend to do, your highness?"

"Even if the Duke's intentions aren't in that letter, it doesn't make sense for me. Why all of the sudden talk of a demonic realm invasion? Our Usiph Empire has never once discussed invading the demonic realm since its founding. This is clearly an excuse to bring something else to light."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't know. That's why I plan to check for myself in the name of the royal household."

By checking for herself in the name of the royal household, she meant...

"Are you planning to go on a tour to the front?"

Instead of answering, the princess nodded her head.

"I've already chosen a suitable escort of knights. But it would be difficult to proceed with just knights, so I want to recruit some special companions."

Arianne motioned to Resimus, who handed me a small jewel case the size of a palm.

“Take a look inside.”

At the princess’s behest, I opened the case right away.

Inside was a familiar item.

A small brooch with the golden crest of the imperial household, flanked by crossed swords—a symbol of service to the royal bids.

“Are you asking me to become your companion?”

“This is not just about the royal household; it’s related to your family. I believe this is something we could join hands on. I’m not commanding or ordering, but rather, I want to ask you politely.”

The princess took the brooch out of the case and held it out to me.

Without any delay, I looked into her eyes and asked,

“May I ask just one thing?”

“Yes, anything.”

“Do you want a companion from the House of Bert... or do you want the assassin of Mist?”

The princess did not answer right away but paused for about five seconds.

“Will anything change based on my choice?”

“There’s not much difference. Just that depending on your decision, whether I protect you by your side or from some unseen place, my position varies.”

“I see.”

The princess slightly smiled, seemingly grasping the meaning of my words.

“I’d like you by my side, but I want to see the real you, so...”

“Do you prefer the latter?”

Once again, the princess answered by nodding her head.

So I too silently accepted the brooch she offered.

“When do we depart?”

“In two days. Do you need more time to prepare?”

“It’s fine.”

“Then, let’s meet in Veritas.”

Having achieved her purpose, the princess stood to leave.

However, before she did,

“Just so you know, you won’t be the only attendant on this tour.”

“Who else is going?”

“Yes. Lunav agreed to come along too.”

Hearing that, confusion naturally knit my brow.

“Why does a foreign individual need to get involved in the empire’s affairs?”

“I proposed it to him just as politely as I did to you. he said he would follow without hesitation since it’s related to you.”

The girl from a lineage so famous it wouldn’t be surprising to follow along.

“The other day, he also said he could bring one more person.”

“Who else are you talking about?”

“I’m not sure. You’ll know them when you see them. They said you wouldn’t know, but they would be very happy.”

A surge of anxiety briefly ran through me.

Someone I did not know, but would be very happy to see me?

Had I ever met such a person?

I racked my brain but couldn’t think of anyone who fit that description.

\* \* \*

“It may be late to ask, but are you really going?”

“Since I promised the princess, there’s no going back now.”

“But, the front line is...”

Shurtz’s words trailed off, swallowed with difficulty.

“I’ve been there before, and it is not a place without connections for me. In the past, I did research with the blood of demons secretly obtained through an informant stationed on the frontlines.”

Lunav’s eyes shone with anticipation rather than anxiety.

“It’s not really because of Sian. My personal curiosity is also a big part of this.”

Heiser Nivea spoke of Lunav’s researcher’s scent.

The smell of a seeker who yearns for knowledge and hungers for truth.

Lunav couldn’t deny it.

The desire and fun of exploring the unknown.

To her, the front line was a new frontier for pursuing something new that she hadn’t known before.

And beyond the front lines, there was the world inhabited by the so-called demon race, among other species.

“Of course, the fact that it carries substantial risks is true, so taking a strong fool, no, reinforcement, along would be great.”

Continuing their conversation, they finally arrived at the eastern boundary of Sebelinus.

“He should have arrived by now...”

Worried he might have come early and left, she was about to look around when suddenly,

“I keep telling you, I am not a suspicious person!”

An outrage filled a man’s voice, clearly innocent.

Realizing the person they were waiting for was here, Lunav sighed softly.

“He’s changed nothing, alas, that senior...”

Even from a distance, the robust and muscular figure was evident.

The man was shouting at the top of his lungs at the border guards as if the palace was collapsing.

“I am a prince, the first prince of Spania, Seth Shaharkhan!”

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 252**

Chapter 252: The Royal Princess's Goodwill Visit (2)

Two days later, the scheduled day of the goodwill visit arrived. Arin, having completed all preparations, reached the western boundary gate of Hwangsung with the goodwill delegation in tow. Clutched close to her heart was the writ of commission from the Emperor, vesting her with full responsibility for the visit.

Xian was nowhere to be seen.

Instead, there stood Lunab, another attendant who had promised to accompany them, along with her knight, Shuruts, and beside them...

“Uh, so, you mean?”

There was another attendant that Lunab had mentioned she would bring.

“Prince Set... right?”

“Long time no see, Arin! Or should I say, Princess Arin! This is our first reunion since graduation, isn't it?”

Arin was momentarily dazed, unable to grasp the situation.

Set Shaharkhan.

The first prince of Spania and a prominent successor to the throne. Although he was recognized as a problematic student by everyone at the academy, his martial and magical abilities were acknowledged as being among the top...

“Why, why are you here?”

Arin asked with genuine curiosity etched on her face.



“Huh? Why? Is there any reason I shouldn’t be here?”

Set looked equally perplexed, failing to comprehend the context.

“Is the person you were bringing Prince Set, Lunab?”

“Yes.”

Lunab indifferently nodded in confirmation to Arin’s question.

“I heard about it from this junior over here! You mentioned pummeling demon beasts on the front lines with Xian, right?”

Something significant seemed to have been omitted.

Lunab shook her head silently as if to say she had never mentioned such a thing.

Arin quickly composed herself and asked cautiously.

“I’m just checking, but you came here alone, right?”

Despite appearances, he was a prince of a foreign nation. The royal family had to show him the courtesy befitting a state guest. If any prior notice of his arrival had been given, or even if he had brought a small delegation, this sudden occurrence wouldn’t have happened, but...

“Of course! Came here all by myself! Frankly, if my kingdom finds out I’m here, there’d be an uproar.”

Everyone around Arin couldn’t hide their astonishment.

Arin deeply contemplated whether she should actually take this person with the delegation.

“Don’t feel too burdened, Princess Arin! I’ve come not as a prince, but as Set Shaharkhan to offer my help!”

Set reassured her with a booming voice despite her concerns.

After much deliberation, Arin sighed and said,

“Regarding this matter, we’ll send a formal delegation to the Kingdom of Spania later. Since you have come to assist our Empire’s mission, it is only proper that we offer you a reward.”

“There’s really no need for that, but do as you wish, Princess Arin!”

Despite his unchanged, easygoing manner, Arin couldn't help but crack a slight smile.

Then she officially presented Set with a brooch signifying his status as a member of the royal delegation.

Receiving the brooch, Set wore a joyous expression but began stretching his body almost immediately afterward.

Most knights speculated that by including Set as part of the delegation, they had acquired a sturdy ally, no—a monster.

Thus, the royal princess's goodwill delegation set out on their way to the front lines. At the front was the princess's carriage, responsible for overall command, followed by carriages carrying Lunab and Set in the retinue.

"Thank you for readily acceding to such a difficult request."

Lunab offered Set her belated gratitude.

"Don't mention it! Who else would I heed if not our junior?" Set dismissed her thanks with a nonchalant wave of his hand.

"Anyway, how shall I put it? You've become so much rougher and sturdier than before?"

"Eh? Well, I always kept up with physical training. If you let your guard down even for a moment..."

"No, I mean not your body, but rather your inner self."

Set's eyes sharpened momentarily at Lunab's comment.

"Do you still often have visits from the god of sands?"

Seven years ago, in an unnamed ruin within the Kingdom of Spania, Lunab and Xian had undoubtedly witnessed Set's uncontrollable outburst of divine power.

"Speaking of which, right before coming here I had quite the skirmish. I was being told repeatedly not to go. Something about the danger could spread to Spania itself? They were adamant, suggesting I avoid sticking close to that guy Xian."

Though Set casually dismissed it as nothing important, it was, in fact, a clear warning from a deity.

"So, you came here disregarding that warning?"

“Of course. I’m not to be mindful of a warning from someone whose face I don’t even know.”

Yet, such matters didn’t concern Set.

The only thing he needed to be cautious about in his life was...

“I just have to beware of colds!”

Set grinned, scratching his nose as though it itched.

\* \* \*

The princess’s carriage advanced smoothly without any major mishaps, and before long, they had reached a distance within a day’s journey to Beliastr.

If they continued at their current pace, they would arrive in Beliastr by tomorrow morning.

Having found a suitable spot in the forest to camp for the night, the delegation immediately commenced setting up the camp.

“This is quite the ordeal!”

Emerging from the carriage, Set stretched his cramped muscles from the long journey.

“Hey knights! With that pace, when will you complete the camp? No, that’s not the way to do it!”

He rushed over to the knights setting up the camp and helped them expedite their work.

“I will assist with the work as well.”

“Please do so.”

Shuruts also stepped out to help.

Descending from the carriage, Lunab naturally made her way to where Arin was. The princess was gazing at the fading sunset with a blank stare.

“Senior Xian is nowhere to be seen until the very end.”

Startled, Arin tensed up slightly.

“Hmm? Indeed, I wonder if he’s been able to keep up.”

“He will have. I caught whiffs of his scent along the way.”

“Scent?”

“There is such a thing. He’s probably somewhere nearby, watching over us with an indifferent eye.”

As she spoke, Lunab glanced around as if searching for traces of him.

“You seem to know a lot about Xian.”

“Not necessarily. He’s not one to reveal much about himself.”

“True. He’s truly an enigma.”

It was a sentiment shared by all who had any connection with him.

“That being the case, it’s possible now, isn’t it?”

“What is?”

“Clearing all accusations against Senior Xian. With that, the original promise can be renewed, right?”

“Promise?”

Arin looked puzzled, trying to fathom what Lunab referred to, but then her face started blushing as realization dawned upon her.

“Lu, Lunab, you don’t mean that the promise you’re talking about is...?”

“The engagement, right? You were once betrothed to the senior.”

With the utmost nonchalance, Lunab met Arin’s gaze and asked.

“What nonsense is that!”

Taken aback, Arin yelled so loudly that the knights setting up the camp turned to look.

Unable to comprehend Arin’s reaction, Lunab furrowed her brows, while the princess, in her flustered state, gasped for breath and clutched at her chest.

“That, that’s a thing of the past! A broken promise cannot simply be revived!”

“Is that so?”

Lunab voiced her confusion, seemingly surprised at the reaction.

“Then is it alright if I claim him first?”

“...!”

Arin’s response was even more intense.

“What do you mean ‘claim’?”

“Isn’t it obvious? Senior Xian. If you keep saying he’s off-limits, women will continue to flock to him. Better to stake a claim first, otherwise...”

“Enough with the absurd talk!”

In frustration, Arin blocked her ears.

Lunab looked at her, baffled by the outburst.

“Grrr...”

Suddenly, a strange howl echoed from ahead.

Instantly, those who heard it felt instinctive alarm, and they tensed up, ready for action.

“Step back, Princess!”

Following Lecimus, the knights came running to protect Arin, while Set and Shuruts joined them.

As darkness descended with the setting sun, everyone hushed and braced for whatever approached.

–Crack

Soon after, an unidentified footstep could be heard. It sounded like a four-legged beast, but what was troubling was that it wasn’t just one—there were at least three or more.

As the sound of footsteps grew, their number seemingly increased.

“Something smells foul, doesn’t it?”

Staring in the direction of the noise, Set started sniffing the air.

“I have never heard such a howl before.”

Shuruts, too, showed his unease as he brandished his sword forward.

“Could it be?”

While everyone else was perplexed, Arin tuned her ears to the ever-closer sounds, sifting through her memories.

A familiar sound, a familiar atmosphere, a familiar feeling.

Arin drew her sword and shouted to the knights.

“Demon beasts!”

Upon her call, four-legged creatures with flickering red eyes revealed themselves from the front.

Everyone thought the same:

These weren't creatures of this land.

Or more accurately, these creatures should not exist on this land.

Some knights with experience in the front lines shook their heads in disbelief.

“A... Hellhound?”

These were demonic Hellhounds, infamous predators of the demon world, known only for their madness and bloodlust, appearing not on the front lines, but within human territory.

\* \* \*

“Grrr...”

What could it be?

There was a sense of familiarity at the sight, mixed with the question of why they were here. It's tough to explain precisely this complex mix of feelings.

But one thing was for certain:

Meeting them here, in this place, was definitely not a good situation.

I glanced around suspiciously.

Nothing in particular stood out.

That meant, as far as I could see, these were the only demonic beasts—these Hellhounds.

In that case, the knights of the goodwill delegation should have no trouble dealing with them.

“Growl!”

The creatures charged without any regard for their own well-being.

–Slash!

Perhaps it was just me, but they felt much more vicious than the ones I’d encountered on the front lines. But regardless, with one swing, these low-tier beasts should easily be felled.

The Hellhounds collapsed to the ground with their limbs torn off no more than 3 seconds after they lunged.

I didn’t burn them immediately; instead, I sat down to check their condition.

[Did their dwellings get moved around or something?]

Keram also seemed perplexed, voicing his thoughts in a slightly disconcerted tone.

“No. That’s not it.”

Responding, I pointed at a few parts of their bodies with my finger.

“The fur around their necks and legs is unnaturally clumped together. As if they’d been restrained with chains or iron rings.”

Meaning, these creatures hadn’t crossed the chasm of their own volition; they were released here deliberately by someone.

Now, one could ask who in their right mind would capture demonic beasts and release them here, but the more pertinent question is not ‘why’ but ‘who’.

Considering immediate possibilities, the only folk capable of such actions would be knights from the front lines.

What exactly is happening back in Beliaast?

(To be continued in the next episode)

# The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 253

Episode 253: The Princess's Tour (3)

"These aren't wild beasts. They are magical creatures that were bound and restrained somewhere."

As the touring party consisted of the imperial army's elite knights and special attendants, the subjugation of the hellhounds was easily accomplished.

After the subjugation, Lunav, who had been examining the carcasses of the hellhounds, stood and spoke.

"There's no trace of magical energy. These creatures weren't summoned through magic."

"Then that means..."

"Someone had intentionally captured creatures from the ravine and then released them."

The whole touring party was taken aback by the situation.

Some knights gripped their noses against the stench emanating from the carcasses.

"We need to hasten our journey to Belias."

"When will we arrive if we depart now?"

"At the latest, we should reach the gates of Belias by dawn."

Having been attacked by the beasts, the trail and scent left behind might attract other creatures or beasts.

Setting up camp in such a dangerous place would be reckless.

"As the person in charge of the touring party, I order the immediate resumption of our journey to Belias!"

The touring party moved in an orderly fashion.



Thus, the tour's carriages were once again on the move, guided by the moonlight, and continued their journey without rest.

As the dark veil of night lifted and the first light of dawn began to rise in the eastern sky, the touring party arrived at the gates of Belias.

It was much earlier than the scheduled time, yet all preparations to welcome the touring party were already in place at the gates.

Arin stepped out of the coach and proudly walked towards the lined-up knights.

"Welcome to the protectorate territory of Belias!"

The knights of Belias bowed in unison, showing respect to the princess.

"You've traveled a long way. Why don't you rest and relieve the fatigue that has accumulated on your journey? We will escort you to the royal estate."

"I'm not here to rest. Lead me to Duke Bert immediately."

Arin rejected the knight's suggestion and requested an audience with the duke immediately.

The knights readily accepted her request and ushered the touring party into the territory.

Despite the early morning, the people of the territory were out on the streets welcoming the touring party.

The unchanged buildings and streets.

Far stricter defenses compared to other territories or cities.

There was even an eerie air about the place.

To an outsider, Belias looked no different from what Arin had seen 10 years ago.

Meanwhile, one of the attendants who was following Arin asked Lunav,

"It may be a strange question, but wasn't Belias relatively wealthy compared to other territories?"

Schultz, who had been observing the faces of the local people intently, asked.

"It's not necessarily so. Most of the territory's operating expenses go towards maintaining the front lines, so accumulating funds might not go as smoothly."

Nevertheless, it was by no means an impoverished city.

Although more than half of the territory's operations budget was spent on military expenses, Belias was known for transparent management of funds within the empire.

The local people generally did not suffer from starvation, and grain production was maintained at an adequate level.

"Do you notice anything odd?"

"It's unclear, but..."

Schultz narrowed his eyes and continued,

"A significant number of the locals look as if they haven't eaten in days."

While it was not apparent to royals or nobles born without want, it was clear to Schultz, who came from humble beginnings.

A week, perhaps, or maybe just a couple of days – the faces of the locals bore hard-to-describe signs of hunger.

However, without raising any objections, he continued to follow the touring party.

The princess's touring party soon arrived at the checkpoint gates.

The long stretch of stone walls on either side of the checkpoint retained their magnificent unaltered presence, just as they had been 10 years ago.

Protocol and courtesy dictated that Duke Bert should have welcomed the touring party at this location.

"Please, come inside, Your Highness."

The knight continued to lead the touring party past the checkpoint without stopping.

"What are you doing?"

Arin, infuriated, stopped in her tracks and berated the front-line knights.

"Where is Duke Bert?"

"The duke is waiting at a rear camp beyond the checkpoint."

The knight replied calmly, without any hint of agitation.

“As the leader of the touring party, I command you! Bring Duke Bert to me immediately!”

The atmosphere turned heavy as a razor-sharp tension sliced through the air.

The front-line knights remained silent, offering no response.

Arin then boldly presented the emperor’s commission letter.

“I represent our venerable empire’s emperor, my father, as the commander of this tour. I’ve heard that whether it was my father coming or any of my other siblings on a tour, Duke Bert always received the touring party outside the checkpoint.”

This was also the case 10 years ago.

“If this is an exception because it’s me, tell Duke Bert to come to the checkpoint immediately and offer a formal apology. Until we receive an apology, our touring party will not move from this spot!”

Arin’s stance was unyielding.

She was an official delegate sent to perform the emperor’s duties.

Thus, it was only appropriate to be treated the same as the emperor.

Despite the unexpected reaction from the princess, the knights didn’t bat an eyelid.

“We will follow the princess’s command.”

With that, a few knights moved to bring the duke, seemingly resigned to accept her order.

Arin and the touring party did not budge from their spot as they had stated.

A moment later,

Duke Bert, along with several knights, emerged from beyond the checkpoint.

\* \* \*

With the imperial visit, all eyes in the territory are surely fixed on the touring party.

Thus, areas out of that focused attention would relatively have lighter security.

Of course, lighter security doesn’t mean none at all.

What could it be?

The security here is overwhelmingly,  
strict.

At least the size of a company's troops.

It's comparable to the force that would typically be stationed at the checkpoint where the princess's touring party is expected to be.

[This place is more like a fortress, not a house?]

Kairam even let out an exclamation, showing his amazement.

I found myself in none other than the Bert family estate.

I had come to what used to be my family home, where I grew up as a child.

Seizing the opportunity, while the guards at the estate were distracted by the touring party, I came to check on something.

However, this was not the situation I expected.

As far as I knew, the duchess Margaret and her son Crantz were supposedly living there.

But I couldn't fathom that they would have increased the guard so much just to protect those two.

In other words, besides those two, there must be something else within the estate that desperately needed guarding.

Having no reason to return just yet, I turned toward the rear gate of the estate.

Even though there was still a considerable number of knights patrolling the area, the security didn't seem as impenetrable as the front gate.

Observing the patrol patterns of the knights for about a minute, I took advantage of a brief five-second gap to swiftly infiltrate the estate.

The familiar scent of home is said to bring tears to one's eyes, but all I could smell was a musty stench.

The estate's interior, in stark contrast to its heavily guarded exterior, was eerily silent.

I moved stealthily into the hallways to assess my surroundings but everything remained unchanged.

Where had all the maids and servants gone?

It felt more like a ghost estate than a duke's residence, filled with an overwhelming sense of gloom.

I pressed on cautiously, prepared for any unexpected situation.

After a while, I arrived in front of a familiar door.

It was the room of Duchess Margaret Elzevert.

I pressed my ear lightly against it and could feel the presence of someone inside.

-Tap tap

I cautiously knocked on the door but received no response.

Just as I was about to reach for the doorknob,

"...!"

I sensed danger and immediately stepped back.

It was magic.

A magical aura seeped through the paper-thin gap beneath the door.

That meant that Duchess Margaret's room was currently protected by a restrictive barrier.

And a complex one at that.

This made it even more imperative for me to enter.

Someone had gone to the trouble of hiding something and made it blatantly obvious, how could I just pass by?

But due to the barrier's complexity, unwinding it purely with magic would take too much time.

The fastest and surest method would be to simply break the barrier,

but that would defeat the purpose of sneaking in.

-Footsteps

Then, around the corner of the hallway, I heard footsteps.

-Creak

Along with the sound of a door opening.

Another person had come to this storage room.

(Continued in the next installment)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 254**

Chapter 254: The Princess's Goodwill Visit (4)

\*Creak\*

The moment the door opened, the woman sitting on the bed lunged towards it.

Margaret Erzes, the legitimate wife of Duke Bertholdt and the mistress of this mansion.

Rage blazed in her eyes as she stared at the person standing before her.

Her fingernails looked ready to tear a throat, but—

\*Click\*

Margaret's body was soon intercepted by knights, and her now purposeless hands flailed pitifully in the air.

"I thought you'd be a little weaker, but it seems you still have some energy," said the blonde woman mockingly, laughing softly at Margaret.

"Where is my son! Where have you taken Krantz!" Margaret demanded, desperately inquiring after her son's whereabouts.

"If anything happens to Krantz, I'll make sure every one of you...!"

"Why are we doing this? Haven't I told you from the start? This is all for the family, for Duke Bertholdt, and..."

A composed, undisturbed smile formed on the blonde woman's lips.

“...for Eshel.”

At the mention of Eshel, Margaret’s pupils shook violently, but that was only momentary.

She immediately resumed her furious glare at the woman and screamed,

“Do you really think the Duke will let you get away with this? Once he’s back, it’s over for you!”

“The Duke is currently entertaining the imperial goodwill delegation. In other words, he’s exceedingly busy right now.”

The woman completely crushed even the sliver of hope Margaret held onto.

She then signaled the knights with a gesture.

Following her order, two knights stepped out and soon brought in a man whose face was covered with cloth.

“Krantz!”

Having identified the man, Margaret cried out desperately.

“Mother?!”

Krantz too, recognizing his mother’s voice, shrank and answered back.

The knights swiftly removed the cloth, allowing mother and son to face each other.

“A lonely ordeal can turn even the most firmly-held beliefs into weak, fleeting thoughts. I trust the two of you have learned enough at this point.”

The woman pushed forward two documents, each bearing the familiar seal of Margaret.

One, although sealed, was blank, with no writing on it.

“Just transcribe the contents of this document in your own handwriting and it will all be over.”

After reading its contents, Margaret let out a disbelieving chuckle.

“Where do you want to send this?”

“Obviously, to your family, the Count Erzes house. Then, the Erzes house and other allied families will band together and form a power bloc, opposing the current direction of the empire...”

Suddenly holding a pen in her hand, Margaret found a blank document placed before her, on which to scribble down the words.

Having built her pride and self-esteem over 20 years as the Duke's legitimate wife and mistress of this house, to feel them crumbling in an instant was beyond words.

With agitated eyes that shifted between Krantz and the woman, she began to fill in the blank document, her blood boiling with anger.

"Why have you returned, you wretch?"

"I didn't choose to return. But it was inevitable. To create a path for that child who lost his strength and was trampled underfoot, a return was necessary."

Margaret could not comprehend.

How could this woman, thought dead by many and declared deceased by the Duke himself, a face unseen by most, have returned to this house?

The woman, as if reading Margaret's thoughts, crossed her arms, lifted her chin, and said,

"Soon a black wind of blood will begin to howl across this continent starting with Belias. And the only one who can stop it is..."

\*Thud!\*

Suddenly, they heard the sound of something collapsing outside.

When one of the knights impulsively opened the door—

\*Whish!\*

With a deadly slice, the knight toppled forward, cut down.

"Step back."

The remaining knights quickly formed a protective ring around the woman and drew their swords.

Through the flung-open door appeared the rest of the knights collapsed outside, blood spewing from their throats.

Three knights were taken down in the blink of an eye, but the perpetrator was nowhere to be seen.



Behind the unopened door, however, an intense killing intent billowed like a heat haze.

The knights exchanged quick glances and one knight's blade sparked with a blue radiance, and without hesitation, he sent a slash towards the door.

\*Crash!\*

As the blade cut through the door, another knight quickly dashed out, swinging his sword as if slicing through the air itself.

"...?"

But there was nothing behind the door.

The knight who released the slash also followed suit, and while they stood back to back, cautiously scanning the surroundings, only the lifeless bodies lay in sight.

Despite their heightened vigilance as they checked every corner, suddenly—

\*Ssshhrrrk!\*

A strong wind whipped toward their faces.

In the brief moment they tried to look towards the origin of that gale—

\*Thump\*

The knights' heads tumbled to the floor powerlessly.

As their rolling heads displayed panic and confusion, someone's footsteps approached from the corridor beyond the open door.

"W-What is going on here?" Margaret exclaimed in terror as Krantz hurried to her side.

"We should be glad about this situation, but he's back!"

"Who? Who are you talking about?"

"That sinister monster! He's here in Belias again!"

Mother and son embraced, sharing their anxiety while the owner of the footsteps continued to approach the room.

Finally, the culprit appeared beyond the door.

"...!"

Face-to-face with a shockingly familiar visage, Margaret could not contain her horror.

It was their youngest, Sian.

“I don’t have the best memory, but this much I’m certain of—I’ve never seen you before.”

Sian approached step by step, seething with a menacing aura as though he was about to crush those before him.

“Yet your eyes suggest otherwise? You’re looking at me as if you know me.”

Unaffected by Sian’s query, the woman simply placed a hand over her heart and bowed respectfully.

“Pleased to meet you for the first time, Sian Bertholdt.”

\* \* \*

Humans cannot transcend the passage of time.

This is an unchangeable law of nature that cannot be defied.

But now, Arin was facing an almost aberrant being that seemed to defy this immutable law.

“Greetings to the esteemed Princess Arin from Willyus Bertholdt, the Lord of New Belias.”

Willyus Bertholdt.

The emperor and her father, Dionne Sebellus’ lifelong comrade and friend dating back to their days at the Royal Academy.

Yet, unlike the emperor, who had become frail and sickly after a long illness, Bertholdt displayed the same robust presence as he did a decade ago.

“It’s with heartfelt regret that we offer an apology for the rudeness we have displayed towards Your Highness, who has come to direct the goodwill visit in place of the Emperor.”

Without much excuse, the Duke bowed his head, offering his apologies for the earlier disrespect.

This too was not unlike the Duke Bertholdt Arin knew.

A symbol of uprightness and integrity.

Even if she, a mere figurehead of a princess from 10 years ago, had come to inspect, he would never have committed such impudence. So what could be the reason for his uncharacteristic conduct?

Arin, while keeping her inner thoughts hidden, replied calmly,

“Having acknowledged the error and personally offering an apology, I will not press on that matter further. However, before we commence the official tour, there are a few things I’d like to confirm.”

“As you wish. We will prepare a place for it.”

As if anticipating her request, the Duke promptly ordered his knights to action.

Soon, a provisional tent was erected in front of the border gate for discussion.

Arin entered the tent with the Duke, leaving behind Resimus and the special entourage.

“Please confirm this first.”

Immediately sitting down, Arin presented a message she had received from the Duke.

“Is this letter truly sent by Your Grace?”

“Yes.”

“Do you truly wish for our empire—not just our royal family—to fulfill the demands stated in this letter?”

“That is correct.”

The Duke continued to respond without hesitation.

“Is this solely your own conclusive decision, without any outside influence?”

“...”

To that question, the Duke did not continue.

Instead, he posed a significant question to Arin.

“Did Your Highness come here for an imperial goodwill visit, or are you interrogating me?”

“I’ve come to verify the truth.”

Arin maintained her firm stance.

“The Duke Bertholdt I know wouldn’t consider war or conquest; such foolish and reckless acts. Not only in my eyes but also in the eyes of everyone on this land familiar with Your Grace.”

“What do you intend to say?”

“Who is it? Who has made this absurd proposal of a demon realm conquest to you...?”

Duke Bertholdt remained silent in response to this question too.

“Do you mean to say that everyone thinks they know me?”

“Yes.”

“How can others be so sure of knowing me when even I am not certain of myself?”

The Duke fundamentally denied Arin’s perception.

“Your Highness may view my goal of demon realm conquest as incorrect, but I do not share that view.”

“Why is that?”

“I do not know.”

Arin’s eyes flashed wide.

“What?”

“I am unaware. I cannot explain why it’s wrong or why it’s right; I have no explanation for any of it.”

“Duke Bertholdt, what are you saying?”

Taken aback by his incomprehensible words, Arin sharply rebuked him.

However, the Duke unheedingly continued,

“If, then, Your Highness thinks my actions are incorrect...”

Arin glimpsed something in a moment.

Under his firm gaze, beneath his jaw, his hands clasped on his lap, trembled wildly.

“Please stop me. Your Highness.”

Without even realizing it, Arin stood up from her chair and yelled.

“Where is Eshel, Duke Bertholdt!”

“...!”

“I am aware that he is the culprit behind all this! So tell me where he’s hiding at once! If we’re too late, something terrible might...”

“He is not here.”

The Duke dismissed the matter in a single breath.

“Then where is he?”

“He’s not in Belias, not even in the Empire, nor anywhere in this continent.”

Arin hurriedly processed his words.

Not in this continent?

Does that mean he’s deceased?

No, that couldn’t be.

He must be hiding somewhere else.

Surely, not far from Belias...

“...!”

Then, Arin realized.

Her enlightened gaze fell behind Duke Bertholdt to beyond the border gate.

That place was the boundary of the empire and the realm of humans.

Once past that gate, one steps into the territory of unknown races, not of human dominion.

In other words, the whereabouts of Eshel they now sought was none other than...

“The demon realm?”

The Duke did not reply.

Just as silence seemed to envelop the room,

“Your Highness, please come out of the tent at once!”

Resimus’s urgent call echoed from behind Arin.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 255**

**\*\*Episode 255: Bewitchment (1)\*\***

With a whooshing sound, Resimus forcefully pulled Arin out of the tent in response to a call to come out.

Momentarily bewildered by her abrupt exit, Arin was soon speechless as she witnessed the unfolding chaos before her.

“What is this?”

Knights at the front line, who should have been fighting demonic beasts with their swords, were suddenly attacking members of the patrol group.

Caught off guard by the unexpected assault, the patrol team scrambled to defend themselves.

“Why are the knights attacking us all of a sudden?”

With a mighty roar, there was no time to simply stand agape in shock.

Under Resimus’s protection, Arin hurriedly retreated, and as they did, two knights wielding longswords charged toward her.

“Step back, Princess Arin!”

Seth, who had been waiting behind, leapt forward.

“Desert Blade!”

As soon as he uttered the incantation, khaki blades resembling those carved from sand emerged from his hands.

Despite his hefty build, Seth brandished the blades with surprising speed.

With a metallic clang, the knights faltered under the unexpectedly massive strength, barely managing to steady themselves before quickly retreating.

“God’s Strike!”

Unwilling to grant a reprieve, a magical knight overseeing the situation from the perimeter then shouted an incantation toward where the patrol team was positioned.

Dark clouds gathered overhead, followed by a brilliant flash of lightning.

“God’s Protection.”

Responding to the threat, Lunab from the patrol team raised a hand and recited her own spell.

With a crackling sound, the thunderbolt unleashed alongside the proclamation was blocked by a protective barrier, exploding harmlessly in the air.

As the remnants of the energy dispersed, both sides momentarily fell into a standoff.

“I don’t get it. Weren’t those knights on our side?”

Set, standing steadfastly at the front lines with his arms crossed, asked Lunab.

“It would be more accurate to say they were ‘on the same side,’ rather than ‘our side’.”

“We’re not supposed to attack each other, right?”

“Correct. That’s why I’m as bewildered as you are.”

Set thought to himself.

Was it possible the situation confounded even his junior, known for her extensive knowledge?

In other words, the current predicament bordered on the absurd, signifying incredibly dire circumstances.

– Swish –

Amid the tension that teetered on a knife's edge, Duke Bert finally emerged from the tent.

He offered no explanation or command to either the patrol team or the frontline knights.

Without a glance back at the patrol team, he indifferently walked towards the perimeter.

“Stop, Duke Bert!”

Arin implored, advancing forward and calling out.

“Can't you hear me, Duke Bert? Stop immediately and explain what's happening!”

The Duke did not spare her a glance.

Passing through the perimeter, he crossed completely into the frontline territory.

The knights strictly blocked the passage to prevent the patrol team from following.

“According to what I know, isn't such behavior considered treason?”

“It's for the princess to decide, not us.”

The attendants silently awaited Arin's response.

To defy the imperial authority vested in the princess and wield a sword against her constituted a clear act of treachery and rebellion.

Yet, Arin found herself at a loss.

“What is he thinking?”

Unable to discern whether her actions were right or wrong, she was on the verge of a breakdown.

How could she permit such irresponsible statements?

However, doubts surfaced regarding whether the man she had conversed with earlier in the tent was indeed Duke Bert.

“Knights are advancing from behind!”

The situation was swiftly devolving into a worst-case scenario.

Surely they weren't the imperial forces. The likelihood of them being allies of the patrol team was even less probable.



“We’re surrounded.”

As Lunab made the indifferent remark, cold sweat streamed down the patrol team’s bodies.

[To be continued in the next episode]

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 256**

Chapter 256: Enchantment (2)

Two weeks ago. The rear camp within the frontline.

“What, what did you just say?”

Yulken, who had received instructions from Duke Berth, doubted his ears for a moment.

“Proceed with preparations for war with the demon world,” is what I said.”

The directive was more like a unilateral notification than an actual order.

“May I ask why you are giving such a directive?”

“...”

The Duke remained silent in response to Yulken’s question.

Did he not want to explain, or was there no reason to explain?

Knights who had lived on the battlefield for decades usually trusted and relied more on comrades and superiors with whom they had shed blood rather than their families and children.

For Yulken, Duke Berth was exactly that person.

Even if it meant abandoning his family, Yulken had always followed and respected all decisions and directives, thinking he could lay down his life for him.

But not now.

War with the demon world?

This was definitely not a thought that should originate from the mind of a sovereign he would lay down his life for.

“Was it a suggestion from Lord Echel?”

As if not to worry about what came next, Yulken immediately pinpointed the suspect.

“...”

“Whatever conversation you had with the lord, this is wrong, Duke! War with the demon world? It’s an unacceptable act! Are you truly willing to turn this continent into an era of chaos?”

It was the first time.

For the first time since his appointment as a frontline knight, he rebelled against the Duke’s order.

Even if some kind of explanation came from the Duke’s mouth, he was determined not to yield.

Yulken inwardly made this resolution.

“It’s the first time you’ve gone against my order, isn’t it...”

The Duke looked at Yulken with a sort of interest.

“Do you think other knights also think the same way?”

“I dare say, I am confident that they do.”

Yulken clenched his fist and expressed his determination.

“Let me ask you something, Yulken.”

The Duke suddenly posed a question.

“Are you truly a knight who follows me?”

“I am.”

“Then will you follow me, even if I do something wrong?”

Yulken was unable to immediately continue his answer to that question.

“May I use the sentiment I just expressed as my answer?”

“You mean to say you won’t follow.”

Yulken did not deny it.

“Then go and tell them.”

“Excuse me?”

“Leave here and announce right now that I am wrong.”

Yulken was dumbstruck for a moment, not understanding the words.

“If you truly cannot follow the misguided me, then there is no reason for you to remain here. So leave and spread the word that I am in the wrong.”

“Who to, sir?”

The Duke paused for a while.

“To whoever you think is right...”

\* \* \*

“That was the last directive you received from your father?”

“That’s correct.”

“But why didn’t you leave immediately, and instead got caught?”

“I wanted to observe the situation a bit longer. Even without me, there are plenty of knights who would object to the Duke’s order. So I stayed behind just to see how the person who made this ludicrous suggestion would change our knights’ minds.”

“And did you manage to see how he changed their minds?”

Yulken bit his lip, unable to continue his sentence.

“Enchantment...”

The word naturally furrowed his brow.

“I think I have no other words to say except that we were simply enchanted. Lord Echel, who appeared with the Duke, gazed into our eyes one by one and that was the end of it. The knights’ hearts changed as if by a lie. And so, preparations for the war to subjugate the demon realm commenced.”

Merely looking him in the eyes changed their minds.

It was the same as the knights who had been toyed with by that woman, Haniel.

“The Remea Canyon is now not the canyon Lord Sian used to know. Thanks to pioneering and clearing efforts, all the demons living in the canyon have been pushed beyond its confines.”

To have driven out all the demons from the canyon within such a short time?

Truly troublesome.

“It seemed to me that if this continues, something truly disastrous could happen, so I decided to leave Belias. And so, I left the frontline alone and headed for the city gates, but...”

“You were caught along the way?”

Yulken nodded.

“But hearing this, something seems off? Eventually, you would have seen that guy’s eyes, right? How are you still fine?”

“That, I am not sure. Although I occasionally felt a headache like my head would split open, I have not wavered in my belief that subjugating the demon realm is wrong.”

Was it possible that this mysterious power of enchantment could not shatter the steadfast conviction of a knight?

Perhaps that’s why they confined him alone in a solitary cell, unable to take any steps.

That seemed like the right interpretation for now.

“I believe that even the Duke himself has fallen victim to Lord Echel’s unidentifiable power.”

“Why do you think so?”

“Don’t you know, my lord? The Duke is definitely not the kind of person to undertake conquests or warfare.”

I neither acknowledged nor refuted Yulken’s question.

“Lord Sian, will you stop Lord Echel, or should I say, the Duke?”

Instead of answering, I simply nodded my head.

“Then please tell me what I should do.”

Yulken immediately knelt on one knee and pledged his knightly oath.

“Didn’t you say you had received your father’s orders?”

“That’s... true, but...”

“Then you should follow your father’s orders, not mine. Why are you asking me what you should do?”

Speechless, Yulken became as mute as a fish out of water.

“You are not my knight. You are clearly my father’s knight. I have no authority to give you orders.”

After a moment of hesitation, Yulken rose again and bowed to me.

“Thank you for returning. My lord.”

I felt oddly emotional.

Was it because he was the first human to welcome me back since my return?

I didn’t think it was too bad of a feeling.

After entrusting Yulken’s care to the other knights and servants who had arrived, I left the room.

I had roughly sorted everything out, so now I was ready to go to my original destination.

My steps led me to the top floor of the mansion.

Directly to my father’s office.

Father rarely entered this room more than five times a year.

That’s understandable.

Most of his life was spent in the frontline area.

So this room, like mine, was a place seldom touched by human hands.

That’s why I came here.

\*Click\*

I twisted the dust-laden doorknob and entered, and an empty scent wafted through.

Inside, it was not much different from the office of any other noble head of the family.

There was a desk for work, a bookshelf lined with books, and various weapons and armor ornaments.

Come to think of it, it was exactly ten years ago.

After sparring with Krantz, I was called into this room by my father and boldly stated my wish to go to the frontline.

My view of my father hasn't changed much since then.

A foolish person.

Someone who took on the duty of guardianship on his own, without anyone forcing him, hoping his children would fulfill that duty as well.

Yet, someone who never sought even the smallest power for himself.

Just a foolish person who wished for nothing but peace on the continent.

That person was my father, Willius Berth.

\*Swoosh\*

My hand naturally swept across my father's desk.

It wasn't dusty.

This means that, unlike my room, it was periodically cleaned.

Almost instinctively, my body moved toward the chair, and I pulled it out.

Then, quite naturally,

“ ... ”

I sat in my father's seat.

I hadn't come here for this purpose, but the moment I entered the room, my body moved without me knowing.

How does it feel?

Heavy.

It felt like I was being pressed down upon by an invisible weight from above.

A sort of destiny that someone who must protect something carries with them?

I felt for the first time the weight of the duty that my father, who had firmly held such foolish convictions, must have felt all this time.

Such a man was now caught under the power of an unknown enchantment, unable to make proper judgments.

Frankly, as his child, I didn't know how to judge the situation.

["You fit quite well there, huh?"]

Keram, who wouldn't just watch me, materialized again.

Sitting on the desk, she crossed her legs seductively.

["What's up? Do you now have a desire to take over that seat?"]

"There's no way."

A burdensome throne like this one is absolutely objectionable to me.

"So, are you going to tell me?"

[Tell you what?]

"What is a witch?"

Keram grinned as if she had been waiting for that question.

[You waited quite patiently, didn't you?]

"There was no need to ask first when I clearly knew it would be dragged out."

[Oh my? Our master has become quite adept at piercing through a woman's heart, huh?]

She seemed quite proud as she patted my head.

Unintentionally, my face twisted into a scowl.

[To tell you the truth, they're not that different from you guys. Same body structure, same lifespan, same emotions; you can say they are human too. But if there's one difference...]

I held my breath, waiting for her to continue.

[...they have the power to beguile people?]

“Are you referring to the power of enchantment?”

[Well, I wouldn't say it's a name that closely sticks, but yeah, it's similar. They were quite well-known in my era, albeit not in a good way.]

It didn't seem they were renowned for anything good.

[And honestly, it's hard to say, but, as that woman mentioned, if the owner of the holy sword truly comes from her bloodline, master, you're going to suffer quite a bit.]

“Hasn't everything I've done until now been suffering?”

[It might be much worse than that. Most men who fall for her...]

“Most of them?”

[End up turning someplace into a complete disaster!]

\*Thunder\*

In the middle of Keram's words, a loud and rumbling noise, like thunder, burst from outside.

I immediately headed for the window, interrupting the conversation.

The once-clear sky was abruptly overcast with dark clouds, and lightning that seemed to split the earth struck down from within them.

This was not a natural phenomenon.

It was clear that the thunder was crafted by magic.

And if I was to assess its direction, then surely...

“The border gate?”

The sole route leading into the frontline area, where the border gate was located.



Furthermore, the princess's delegation should be there now.

Whatever was happening there, I knew exactly what I needed to do.

I had to rush to that place right away.

(To be continued in the next chapter)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 257**

Chapter 257: Enchantment (3)

“Ugh, this is so irritating!”

Seth, clenching his fists, clicked his tongue in annoyance and shook his head in disbelief.

“Is this really the might of the knights of the frontline?”

Upper-tier knights possess physical abilities and mana control that are fundamentally superior to other knights.

With systematic formation building and organized tactical capacity, their practical experience on the battlefield was overwhelmingly vast.

They had mastered the art of winning battles more than any other unit.

“Unless we create complete chaos around us, it's going to be difficult to break through with conventional methods. What will you do, Princess?”

“Even if we manage to get out of this scene, there are no escape routes designed for us in Bellias! We have to subdue all of them here and now!”

However, contrary to Arin's wishes, signs of fatigue began to show on the faces of the ambassadorial entourage.

The battle situation was tilting against them, while the knights of the frontline were ablaze with fighting spirit.

Lunab glanced sideways at the surroundings for a moment.

“Seth senior. Please buy us some time.”

“Huh? What are you planning to do, junior?”

“It seems we need to divert the knights’ attention elsewhere.”

Lunab immediately unfolded a scroll in her hand.

“I’ll draw their attention with a spatial transfer magic. You find us the breakthrough in the meantime.”

“But Lunab, if you do that, you’ll be—!”

“The one Her Highness needs to worry about isn’t me right now.”

Arin, suddenly flustered, found herself at a loss for words.

“Sian senior would probably have said the same thing?”

Lunab looked at Arin and smiled serenely.

“A home base? Then I’ll start!”

Seth, taking the lead, ran ahead, clenched both fists, and assumed a stance to gather energy by slightly pushing back his hips.

Immediately, a sharp, cold wind swept through the calm surroundings.

Then coarse grains of sand started bursting from Seth’s entire body.

The knights who faced the sudden sandstorm instinctively stepped back.

Lunab was about to release mana and chant the spell, but—

—Thwack.

She suddenly closed the book mid-chant.

“What’s the matter? I thought you were buying us time?”

“While that’s true, it’s no longer necessary.”

The bystanders blinked in confusion, not understanding.

“It looks like our savior has arrived...”

At that moment, screams erupted from behind.

“Our ally has finally appeared!”

Seth also flashed a wide smile.

To an observer, it might seem like reinforcements had arrived to aid the ambassadorial entourage, but it wasn't exactly a group or assembly.

Just one person.

The continent's foremost assassin, capable of facing a hundred upper-tier frontline knights by himself—Sian Bert finally revealed himself.

—Swoosh.

With an intention to capture everyone's attention, Sian leapt into the air in one swift motion and immediately spread black mist like smoke everywhere.

“The radiant light of guidance shall illuminate the darkness...!”

One of the knights quickly cast a spell to prevent the loss of vision,

—Scratch.

but the sphere of light failed to rise into the air and crashed down to the ground helplessly.

The other knights also attempted to respond swiftly, but—

—Whoosh!

They couldn't cope with Sian's rapid movements.

The fortress-like ranks of the knights were collapsing helplessly.

“All members of the ambassadorial entourage, don't panic and move!”

Believing she had grasped the flow of battle, Arin quickly issued instructions, and the entourage began to move in an organized manner again.

“All knights, retreat inside the boundary marker!”

The knights from the frontline didn't resist any further and proceeded to retreat toward the boundary marker.

The action was in stark contrast to the refusal to give up they had shown just moments before.

“Where do you think you’re fleeing?”

Seth chased after them.

Regardless of Seth’s pursuit, the knights swiftly retreated, not once looking back, and headed into the boundary marker.

Once the retreat of all viable knights was complete, a few magical knights began to recite a spell.

“Let us draw the impenetrable boundary that none may cross....”

Sensing the strong flow of magic, Lunab urgently shouted at Seth.

“Step back, Senior Seth!”

But Seth, who had lunged ahead without hesitation, noticed the boundary of the gate approach; in that moment.

—Kraak!

Purple lightning surged before Seth.

“Whoa!”

He quickly drew back, but part of his elbow was seared black, unable to completely avoid the strike.

“What is this?”

“Don’t touch it!”

Bewildered by the sudden obstacle, Lunab pulled Seth back.

“It’s a restrictive barrier. And it’s entwined with a very complex and dangerous seal...”

It appeared that this scheme had been prepared well before the arrival of the ambassadorial entourage.

With the enemies that blocked their path now fled,

“Looks like it’s over.”

The scene behind them had already been resolved.

“...”

The one mainly responsible simply stood, oblivious to how the members of the ambassadorial entourage perceived him, silently monitoring the state of the knights he had taken down.

\* \* \*

“Food, it’s food!”

The granary had been opened, inciting a rush of people who had lost their reason.

“Please keep it in order!”

Dutifully, they raised both hands to calm the crowd.

But to those who had not had a proper meal in days, such words were of no consequence.

Schreutz’s judgment was correct.

For nearly two weeks, the villagers of Bellias hadn’t had a proper meal, and had things continued even slightly longer, there would have been casualties from starvation.

The reason was simple: Draconian taxes and conscription for war preparations.

On top of that, everything that could be used as military supplies had been removed from homes—a situation so dire that some people wished for Mist to appear and assassinate Duke Bert.

The monsters terrorizing the vicinity of Bellias had also been set loose by Duke Bert’s command.

Desiring to harness the fear in the people, Bert unleashed hellhounds captured on the frontline and hoped to imbue a fear of monsters roaming imperial land.

“Even the corrupt nobles steeped in years of exploitation weren’t this bad! This is a betrayal of human decency! Your Highness, they must be chastised by the imperial authority.”

Realizing the severity of the situation, Resimus appealed to Arin for a ruling on the chief wrongdoer.

“A ruling? Yes, that is necessary. But who should it be on?”

“Of course, it’s...!”

Challenged by Arin’s calm query, Resimus hesitated to continue.

“What’s the state of the knights?”

“We’ve been pressing the captured knights for information... but most repeat that they just can’t seem to remember.”

They claimed to have acted only on the Duke’s orders without any personal initiative.

Their actions were more like puppets, moving without memory of their deeds.

This was the refrain echoed by all the knights.

“I’m starting to feel frightened, to be honest. Who knows what more horrific events are being plotted somewhere we don’t know.”

Arin expressed her current sincere feelings with a deep sigh.

To end the situation, they, too, had to cross over to the frontline area as soon as possible.

“How’s Lunab doing?”

“She keeps examining the barrier of the boundary marker.”

“Then let’s head that way.”

Arin and Resimus moved toward the boundary marker where the incident had occurred.

The marker still bore the unwashed bloodstains and odors that pervaded in all directions.

Despite the unpleasant atmosphere,

Lunab eyed the transparently shimmering violet barrier with a sharp focus.

It was an atmosphere that seemed to suggest one should not interrupt.

“Have you arrived?”

Lunab greeted her first without faltering.

“Oh! Yeah, sure! Just ignore me and keep doing what you were doing!”

Though aware of decorum, Lunab detached her gaze from the barrier and carefully wiped her eyes before rising.

“Any progress? Did you find something?”

“I’ve grasped the flow of the seal on the barrier. But it’s so intricately intertwined that it might take a while to unravel.”

“How long do you think it will take?”

“If I start now, it might take around a day. I’ll try my best.”

“No, don’t push yourself.”

Lunab gave Arin a blank look for a moment then tilted her head slightly.

“What’s wrong? Is there a problem?”

“Shouldn’t you be with Sian?”

Hearing such an off-topic remark amidst the situation often leaves one unable to respond properly, which is exactly how Arin felt at that moment.

“No, that’s not it! You saw him come and go without a word...”

Arin hastily gestured a denial.

Sian had indeed come unannounced to rescue the surrounded ambassadorial entourage, and then, without any word, vanished.

“Probably for the remainder of our travel routine, he won’t directly show himself. For both our sakes, that’d be better.”

“You were seeking the assassin rather than the scion of the ducal house, weren’t you?”

Arin responded with silence.

Lunab nodded as if to confirm her understanding.

“And where’s Prince Seth?”

“He said there isn’t anything for him to do right now, so he went off claiming he’d practice or something...”

Lunab suddenly turned her gaze toward the long stone wall following the boundary marker.

“They might be enjoying a conversation filled with the scent of sweaty men.”

\* \* \*

“You don’t have a single word to say after such a long time?”

Not a single word?

Why don’t you have a look at yourself before making such comments?

The only analogy I could think of was facing off a beast about to pounce on its prey.

Unable to stand it any longer, I felt compelled to speak up.

“Why did you come?”

“Why did I come? That’s how you speak to someone who came to help you?”

The guy was capable of bringing the mood down with his statements, as if saying, did you think I was just a violent thug...

“It was my goody-two-shoes junior who called me here, telling me to help you out!”

Was this Lunab’s doing?

I had suspected as much, so I wasn’t hugely surprised.

For a moment, I gave him an intent look from head to toe.

I knew he was always big and only knew about using brute force.

But during the time I didn’t see him, did he actually manage to grow twice his size?

It wasn’t just about the physique; something about the energy flowing from within him felt quite different and ominous.

“Anyway, whether you like it or not, you owe me one now, right? When this is over, you’ll have to accede to one of my requests.”

“Are you not tired of sparring yet?”

“Hey, do you only ever see me as some brawler...?”

Just as the sturdy brute was standing solidly, he suddenly knelt down on one knee and slumped.

“Damn it! This guy just goes crazy without any warning, doesn’t he?”

Then, he started to ramble on with incomprehensible mutterings to himself.



It was clear he wasn't in a normal state, so I decided to silently observe for now.

"Hey! It seems my beloved, who can't let go of me, wants to greet you. She's always so willful!"

"Could you explain that clearly?"

I frowned, asking for a clear explanation, but I soon realized that there was no need for one.

He straightened his knee that he had bent and rose again, facing me with a completely new aura.

"It's been a while. Heir of the Mist."

The Sand God, Sabulrom.

The guardian deity of the Spadian Kingdom showed himself to me again through Seth.

(To be continued)

## **The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 258**

Chapter 258: Contact (1)

It is said that there are only two times in life when a creature encounters the supreme being: at birth, and at death.

The moment life begins, God appears to bestow life; and when dying, God appears again to take that life away, doesn't it?

Having been born and died once, I know that's not how it works.

In other words, ordinary humans rarely meet a god.

But I seem to encounter them quite often.

Of course, this is by no means a good thing.

"The vessel for power has become much more vast than before."

I don't know what to do with such an illustrious praise bestowed upon such a wretched being. It truly overwhelms me with emotion.

I don't know if this could be considered repayment, but instinctively, I drew my weapon Keiram and aimed its blade at him.

"Do you see me as an enemy?"

"Definitely not as an ally."

Sabulrom, the god of sand.

Seven years ago, in the Nodeli ruins, he used Set, who had fallen into an 'Absolute Coma,' in an attempt to kill me.

It's impossible for me to see it in a positive light now.

"Your eyes still harbor murderous intent."

"Well, do I have any reason to view favorably a god who swung his fists at me without so much as an explanation the first time we met?"

Sabulrom tilted his chin up with a sly grin.

"Rest assured. I have no intention of leaving your body here to rot, not here in this courtyard."

"Didn't you consider that you might end up the one lying here instead?"

Provoked by my taunt, he clenched his fists, which had been casually crossed.

"I have taken over this mindless body for one reason only: to protect my territory. And you likewise seek to protect your beings from Rumen Del. Therefore, I have never been on anyone's side. Not before, and not in the future."

As Rumen Del was mentioned, my eyes narrowed involuntarily.

Why would such a neutral entity come here?

"I give you this warning, Heir. Do not make the boundaries of my neutrality unclear."

As he warned, a wind full of sand began to leak from his body.

"If you do not wish this sand to cloud your vision."

To me, it was nothing but a reason to scoff.

“However, depending on the situation, it could be different.”

“...?”

“Which side I choose will depend entirely on you.”

His last words oddly irked me.

Does that mean he could possibly assist me, depending on the situation?

Truly, the more I encounter them, the less I understand these beings.

With those final words, Sabulrom bowed deeply with a smile. Then a moment later,

The regressed son of the duke, who had returned to his foolish princely form, shouted with a blank expression, “Ugh! This damned god appears out of nowhere.”

He then sneakily asked me, “How about it, Sian? Shall we have a duel to soothe this morose mood...?”

Without looking back, I left the place.

\* \* \*

After a tumultuous day, morning came.

Lunab, who had been engrossed in lifting the barriers all night, succeeded only as dawn approached.

Immediately, the expedition reorganized a search party to track down Duke Bert and Eshel.

“Would it not be wise to take a moment to rest? Should you be pushing yourself so hard without a break...?”

“My body is my own concern. I can keep going, so don’t worry,” Lunab firmly refuted Schurz’s worried inquiry.

Despite working through the night, her eyelids showed no sign of drooping. Instead, excitement at entering an uncharted territory had ignited a fire in her eyes.

The expedition arrayed before the boundary stone.

During the final checks, Resimus whispered worriedly to Arin, “Your Highness, must you really go?”

“Of course. We can’t afford any more delays, not knowing when the reinforcements requested from the imperial capital will arrive.”

“But given the unknown dangers lurking within this unexplored area, our forces seem too meager.”

Even the knights who should have been protecting the expedition had turned against them.

“If it’s too risky, couldn’t you at least wait outside, Your Highness? We can go by ourselves.”

“I am the leader responsible for this expedition. It’s not you who should be protecting me; I have a duty to protect you. If you live, I live; if you die, I die.”

Arin’s resolve was unwavering; she would not back down.

Everyone here had risked their precious lives for her.

How could she stay safe and alone when that was the case?

She simply could not be that irresponsible as a princess.

Recognizing Arin’s firm decision, Resimus dropped the matter.

With the final checks complete, and only deployment awaiting, Arin stepped forward.

Naturally, Sian wasn’t in sight.

Thinking he would follow discreetly, she decided not to worry too much.

“Before us lies unknown dangers we’ve yet to face.”

Instead, she addressed the rest of the expedition.

“Therefore, I ask you one last time before we set out: anyone who does not wish to proceed, please, stop here. I won’t try to dissuade you.”

A tense silence fell over the group.

But it was brief; every member of the expedition responded with a resolute look in their eyes, signaling their unyielding intent to continue.

After witnessing their determination, Arin clenched her fist and vowed, “In the name of Arin Sebellus, Princess of the Ushirp Empire, I swear to protect each and every one of you!”

As the morale of the expedition soared, they boldly stepped into the frontline.

...

Could the mood change so dramatically just by stepping through a single door?

If one had to describe the atmosphere in a word, it would be "stark."

It felt even bleaker than when Arin first came here with Emperor Dione ten years ago.

There was neither a sign of life nor the smallest hint of any creatures.

The expedition proceeded along the trail toward the rear camp of the frontline knights.

"Not here!"

"Empty here too!"

"Same everywhere!"

All of the knights signaled that the camp was devoid of life.

The rear camp that should have been bustling with activity to prepare for monsthum attacks was now eerily abandoned.

They searched for any remaining traces or clues, but nothing significant turned up.

"It seems they intended to abandon this rear camp from the start."

"Forsaking even the fortifications..."

The actual encounter with this unexpected void was more shocking than anticipated.

"What should we do, Your Highness?"

If there were no troops left at the rear camp, only one location remained.

"We will move to the frontline encampment."

It was the camp at the very forefront of the frontline.

They moved swiftly without hesitation.

"This place is duller than I thought."

Set, who had expected a ferocious battle with monsthum, let out a disgruntled sigh.

“Don’t let your guard down yet. We never know what may be lurking around here.”

Lunab’s warning did little to curb Set’s disappointment.

“No, I’m certain of it. There’s no danger nearby, or else my body wouldn’t feel so relaxed.”

Lunab somewhat agreed with Set’s observation.

She had been on alert for any traps, constantly reading the surroundings, but until now, she had detected nothing out of the ordinary.

It was as if nothing had ever been there.

When the expedition finally reached the frontline encampment, Arin felt a surge of unease.

They immediately set out to search, but the situation was no different from the rear camp—it was completely deserted.

‘Did they abandon the encampment as well?’

At this point, it wasn’t just baffling—it was absurd.

Where had the Duke and the knights gone, after leaving behind the two fortifications that were crucial to defend?

‘Could it really be...?’

“Something’s here!”

Finally, a sign was found by one of the knights in the center of the camp, and the group hurried to the spot.

It was Duke Bert’s tent, the last location they searched.

Like the other tents, nothing was markedly different here.

No documents or records that could provide a lead were found, but something placed alone on an empty desk caught everyone’s attention.

“What’s this?”

It was an object that seemed out of place in this warzone.

“A pendant?”

It was a pendant that appeared to be a woman's accessory.

It wasn't old or unsightly; on the contrary, it was a charming piece that would attract anyone's attention.

"Why would this be here?"

"Don't touch it!"

Curiosity prompted Arin to reach for it, but Lunab stopped her right away.

Lunab had everyone take a few steps back before she faced the pendant alone.

"There's a strange energy in the pendant."

"M-magic? Is it enchanted?"

"No, I don't sense any magic power. But instead..."

Everyone held their breath, awaiting Lunab's verdict.

"There's a power that seems to stir one's inner emotions embedded within it."

"Inner emotions?"

"Yes. If you keep looking at it, you might get unwittingly beguiled by its influence."

At the mention of "beguilement," Arin's eyes lit up.

"Could this pendant have affected the Duke and the knights...?"

"We don't know for sure. But they wouldn't have left this pendant for us to find as a present if that weren't the case."

A lone pendant remaining in a camp where all traces of occupancy had disappeared.

Anyone with common sense would detect something amiss.

Lunab, her hands glowing with mana, carefully grasped the pendant.

"Can I keep this with me?"

Arin gave her consent.

As soon as she received permission, Lunab pocketed the pendant.

Though they had found the suspicious pendant, there were no other gains to be made.

Faced with an unexpected difficulty, the expedition convened an emergency meeting.

“Is there no other camp besides here, where not even a single insect can be seen?”

“This region has only these two officially reported fortifications.”

“Then couldn’t there be an unreported camp elsewhere?”

An entirely plausible suggestion.

“Of course, that’s possible. However, if there is another fortification beyond these two camps...”

Arin pondered.

That site would certainly not be within this frontline region.

“Duke Bert told me that Eshel, whom we seek, is not in Belias right now... nor in the empire, nor anywhere on this continent.”

Arin was confident that his words contained a clue.

“Expedition members, from now on we move to the Lemea Gorge.”

As soon as the gorge was mentioned, several knights’ eyes shook noticeably.

“It’s our last border where we might find traces of those who have vanished. If we can’t find anything there either, then Duke Bert, the knights, and Eshel, whom we have been searching for since the beginning...”

Arin hesitated slightly before finishing her thought.

“Will all be considered deceased.”

None opposed her firm decision.

As they prepared to leave the frontline for the new destination, Lemea Gorge,

“...!”

Everyone in the expedition suddenly halted as if on cue.

The mere act of standing there seemed to overflow their bodies with negative and despairing emotions.



Was this a feeling they had experienced before?

Never.

It is certain no one had felt something like this before.

Just by standing still, an indescribable sensation full of negativity and despair wrapped around them.

Some managed to compose themselves and turned their heads in one direction.

“Toward the camp entrance...”

It was the first sign of life sensed since crossing the boundary stone.

But from that life form emanated an inexplicable negative and desperate energy.

The knights unsheathed their swords, focusing in that direction.

-Trudge, trudge-

Footsteps resonated on the chilling wind, indicating that something was approaching the expedition.

They neither advanced nor retreated, just tensely awaited the imminent appearance of this unknown being.

Eventually, when the enigmatic entity revealed itself and was faced by the entire expedition,

“...!”

An incomprehensible fear and terror wrapped around the whole group.

It wasn't human.

Not even a monstrum.

Though it had a human shape, it bore unfamiliar body parts, characteristics not found in humans.

An old tale from the continent referred to such beings with these features.

“Demonic beings?”

(To be continued in the next episode)

# The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter 259

Chapter 259. Contact (2)

The Demon King's Castle in the Demon Realm.

The owner of the castle, who had been leaning against the window, lifted his somber eyes slowly and stood up.

'The peace of the Demon Realm that you are maintaining now... will be shattered.'

A week had passed since the reckless reunion with that human.

In the course of life, one truly encounters all sorts of events.

To discuss peace with him, the strongest being and ruler of this continent.

Had it been his old self, he would have twisted the limbs on the spot, separating bone and flesh, and devoured it all right there.

But he had simply sent them away.

The current Demon King was not a fool who committed acts out of uncontrolled emotions.

"...", his heart raced.

Why?

Out of anxiety?

Nervousness?

For the almighty ruler of the Demon Realm to feel uneasy over just one incomprehensible human was absurd, wasn't it?

Yet, unquestionably, this trembling was born of anxiety.

Strange discomfort over the possibility of losing something due to his own mistakes and ignorance.

It was necessary to set things right before it was too late.

Belcarion headed directly to Vesti's room.

-Knock knock

No response came despite the loud knocking.

"Vesti, may I enter?"

Although he definitely felt someone moving inside, for some reason, Vesti's reply did not reach him.

Belcarion cautiously twisted the doorknob.

Upon opening the door, Vesti's figure, sitting with her back turned, was revealed.

Belcarion approached her with a sigh of relief.

"What's this? Why didn't you respond when you're inside?"

"....."

"What could you be focusing on so intensely that you didn't notice me coming in..."

It was then.

His steps suddenly halted.

The smile on his face stopped moving.

Even his right hand, naturally extended.

Everything stopped in its tracks.

The only thing moving in the moment of complete stillness was the shock in his violently trembling eyes.

"Oh? When did you arrive, Belcarion?"

Vesti turned her head hurriedly upon finally realizing his presence.

"I'm sorry. I was so engrossed with the pendant that I didn't notice you were here."

Belcarion looked at her face, unable to continue speaking, his eyes trembling.

"The pendant you gave me, the more I look at it, the more enchanting it feels. I never want to be apart from it. It truly is the best gift for me..."

She fondly caressed the pendant she held in her hand, showing it off to Belcarion.

“Vesti.”

“Yes?”

“Why do you look so pale?”

Belcarion’s question made Vesti touch her face.

His words were not carelessly thrown.

He had heard from the castle’s servants in the past few days that Vesti greatly cherished the pendant he gave her, but it wasn’t just about liking it.

Her complexion looked sickly and devoid of life, as if she were afflicted with illness.

“Well, yes? I have been feeling a bit dizzy for the past few days...”

“Dizzy?”

“Don’t worry too much. More than that, look at this pendant! Isn’t it beautiful? Where on earth did you...”

-Snatch!

Intent on seizing the pendant, fury and contempt momentarily filled Vesti’s eyes, previously lost in ecstasy.

“What are you doing?”

“Give me that pendant back, Vesti.”

Belcarion extended his hand with a serious, no-nonsense expression.

“Why? You gave it to me as a gift, right?”

“I’ll get you a better one. So just give that pendant back for now.”

“I won’t!”

Vesti sprang up from the chair, her refusal firm.

She even ran to the corner of the room, put on the pendant, and clutched it tightly as if she would never let go, even if it was him.

“This pendant is mine! I won’t give it to anyone, not even if that person is you!”

“Give it back!!”

Finally exploding, Belcarion lost control and shouted.

Hearing the commotion, Rogers and the servants hurriedly blocked Belcarion.

“Please calm down, Your Majesty!”

Regaining some composure after a deep breath, Belcarion tempered his emotions.

“Let’s go out and talk.”

Rogers left Vesti to the servants and immediately escorted the Demon King outside.

Belcarion, who had finally calmed down, leaned on the wall and dropped his head.

“Didn’t I tell you? We need to retrieve the pendant from Vesti!”

Rogers reproached the Demon King for not heeding his words.

“Did you anticipate this would happen?”

“I had more than a suspicion. Goodwill without intent doesn’t exist in the world.”

“That’s right. Your words were true. That pendant. There’s definitely something wrong with it...”

He had definitely seen it.

Vesti’s eyes, filled with madness that had never been there before, as she clutched the pendant, refusing to let go.

“It’s the first time Vesti looked at me with those eyes. The fragile and gentle Vesti looked at me with contempt!”

A sight that was impossible to see from the original her.

“Don’t try to stop me, Rogers! Even if I have to forcibly take it back, I’m going to get it!”

“Wait, Your Majesty!”

Belcarion was about to head back to Vesti’s room for a moment,

“Vesti!!”

A desperate shout from the servants inside Vesti's room reached them.

Startled, both men immediately rushed back into the room.

"Vesti!!"

In front of the eyes of the hurriedly arriving Belcarion and Rogers,

lay the figure of Vesti, having lost consciousness while clutching the pendant that was emitting a red glow.

\* \* \*

"What's the cause?"

"The pendant."

"Who wouldn't know that it's the pendant? What about it is the problem?!"

"It's infused with a strange and unidentified power. It incites the owner's mind to evoke a feeling of not wanting to let it go at all costs..."

"Inciting the mind? So, is it magic?"

"It's not magic. It does not contain any magical power."

"Then what on earth...!"

Unable to hide his frustration, Belcarion swallowed his shout.

"What should we do? Shouldn't we at least try to remove that pendant quickly?"

"We've tried already, but forcibly removing it seems to be quite risky."

"Why?"

"The pendant resisted. The moment I reached for it, a spark flew out with light from the gem. If we recklessly try to remove it, Vesti could be seriously injured."

So they should just watch as she wastes away like this?

-Bang!

Finally unable to control his emotions, Belcarion pounded the wall with his fist.

"So you're saying you don't have a solution either?"

“I do not. However, I have a guess.”

At that word, Belcarion turned his head back to face Rogers.

“Your Majesty, have you heard of a witch?”

“Witch?”

“Yes. A term referring to some women in the human world who possess the power of seduction, causing confusion in the minds of certain targets.”

It was naturally the first time the Demon King had heard such a thing.

“I’ve heard that due to the dangerous nature of their powers, they’ve been involved in several major incidents in the human world in the past. Considering the condition of the pendant Vesti has, I dare to guess that it might share some similarities with the powers those witches had.”

“So what should I do?”

“Bring the human who gave you that pendant.”

Rogers replied with conviction.

“Just bring them, and with all my might and knowledge, I will find a way to save Vesti.”

“So you’re telling me to go to the human world?”

Rogers fell silent in response.

Belcarion closed his eyes and immersed himself in thought for about ten minutes.

Rogers silently stood beside the Demon King, waiting for him to speak again.

“Hey Rogers.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“You said it before, didn’t you? The current peaceful Demon Realm was not created by me but thanks to Vesti...”

“Yes.”

“I agree. Without her, not only this Demon Realm but even the current me would not exist. The old foolish self would’ve continued.”

Rogers did not deny it.

“Vesti was the first demon who pointed out my mistakes, except for you. Who could have imagined it? A woman with no power to speak of dared to tell me that I should not exist as the Demon King of this realm...”

“.....”

“It wasn’t just that, was it? Despite my threats that I could tear you apart at any moment, she unwaveringly retorted about what I should do for a proper Demon Realm.”

Reminiscing about Vesti, a natural smile formed on Belcarion’s face.

“What will become of me if she disappears before my eyes now, and what will become of this Demon Realm?”

“It’s a question I’d rather not answer.”

It wasn’t that he didn’t know the answer, but the answer was so terrible that he didn’t want to put it into words.

If Vesti truly leaves the Demon King’s side as things are,

‘It’s over.’

Regardless of whether it’s the Demon Realm or the human world, the world will face its end.

Rogers was certain of that.

“Take care of Vesti. I’ll be back.”

As the Demon King walked away, Rogers closed his eyes and simply nodded.

“Please return safely, Your Majesty.”

As Belcarion spread his wings and took off from the castle, he headed straight for the flight path toward Lemaea Gorge.

He would no longer negotiate or speak with humans.

Their words were now less to him than the howling of beasts; he would crush them with sheer power and make them submit.

For the crime of mocking the ruler of the Demon Realm and his woman, they would pay a price beyond death.



Arriving at Lemaea Gorge, near Blood River.

Contrary to his expectation of being greeted with a wry smile as before, there was no one to be seen.

Even as he surveyed the surroundings, it was the same.

“Ha!”

Were they now trying to avoid him?

With a resolve to see it through to the end, Belcarion moved forward along Blood River.

Eventually reaching the remote end of the gorge.

In view of the Demon King, who reached the boundary of the Demon Realm, were rare thickets and a high cliffside.

Belcarion stood there, tilted his head, and looked up the cliff intensely.

Carried by a cool breeze came the scent of living beings.

Sensing their presence, Belcarion took off and soared onto the cliff.

-Thunk.

The moment he landed, he felt a distinct difference in the air.

Is this what the air of the human world feels like?

Certainly, it felt cleaner than the murky atmosphere of the Demon Realm, but such concerns were inconsequential to Belcarion now.

He quickly walked toward where the aura felt strongest.

And eventually, Belcarion came to a stop.

Before his sharp gaze was an unfamiliar living space.

From the heart of that spacious area, he could sense a firm presence.

Not a demon's, not a demon beast's,

but a human's.

Without hesitation, Belcarion entered.

“.....!”

Could it be about fifty steps in?

Just before his combined anger and hatred burst forth, he finally encountered a group.

Humans.

Humans indeed.

The humans he had been searching for.

However, the one he was actually in search of, the human named Eshi, was nowhere to be seen.

Were they not here?

“Demon?”

The humans faced with the Demon King displayed their extreme caution and immediately went on the defensive.

Those who had no skill to even trim their fingernails dared to aim their blades at him, it was so pitifully audacious that it wasn't even laughable.

However, something was amiss.

From among the crowd, a strange feeling emanated from a blue-haired female human, unfamiliar but oddly reminiscent.

How so?

For reasons unknown, but reminiscent of Vesti's aura when she refused to let go of the pendant.

Upon this realization, Belcarion flicked his finger at her.

“Come here.”

(To be continued)

**The Regressed Son of a Duke is an Assassin chapter  
260**

## Chapter 260: Contact (3)

“Isn’t that right, Eshel?”

Haniel, sitting quietly stroking her lips, looked up at the red sky and asked.

“A person’s life only becomes valuable when there is someone to remember them. Without someone to remember you, you’re no different than a moving corpse.”

“I think I understand what you mean,” Eshel nodded, understanding her words.

“You must have felt it too while using that power. People who smile at the mask you wear rather than your true self are only a source of loneliness. It feels like you’re not truly living.”

“Was it the same for you, mother?” Haniel responded with a seductive smile instead of an answer.

“Human beings are fragile. Because we are fragile, we constantly crave love and care. Our extremely instinctual nature was just something we followed, but the world insulted and despised us, even giving us the name... witches.”

In an instant, a red gleam flashed in one of Haniel’s eyes.

“I thought there was no one left to remember us, but ironically someone remained. That person clearly called me a witch.”

“How did you feel? Did you feel the value of life again?”

“No.” Haniel answered firmly.

She then rose from her seat, approached Eshel with her golden hair fluttering, and asked, “She’s the same, treating me like a villain who shouldn’t belong in this world, without truly knowing about me or us! Do you think the same, Eshel?”

“I do not.”

Satisfied with her son’s firm answer, she smiled broadly.

“If you also carry my blood, it couldn’t be any other way. When necessary, they suck you dry until the last drop of blood, and then discard you without mercy. But, Eshel, that’s the best way to live. It’s an honest life that doesn’t deny human nature!”

Haniel caressed Eshel’s face with her pale delicate hands.

“I gave birth to you in this world, even having you chosen by the gods! You must reign supreme in this world! You must prove that you are right! That there is no other truth like it in this world! Only then will my life’s value finally be realized!”

Overcome with emotion, her grip on Eshel’s face turned tight. Eshel did not resist or push her away, simply maintaining a soft smile.

“Please, make sure I don’t regret coming back. My son...”

“Yes, mother.” Eshel grasped Haniel’s trembling hands.

“.....”

Duke Vert watched the deep connection between mother and son from behind, indifferently.

\* \* \*

At the military camp in the front lines.

The delegation set to follow Duke Vert’s trail to Remea Gorge encountered an unexpected being.

Demons.

It was a demon.

Any onlooker could tell that it was, without a doubt, a demon.

The delegation, engulfed in confusion, could not respond, repeatedly saying the same thing in their minds.

Everyone, except for one person, Lunabre.

‘Why is a demon here?’

Everyone knew it was a demon.

But why was this demon in front of them, they had to find out.

What was its identity, and what purpose did it have in appearing before them? Though nothing was clear yet,

There was one thing that was certain.

“Come here.”

'Is it possible to communicate?'

The demon specifically named Lunabre and spoke clearly, indicating that communication was possible.

Lunabre swallowed her rising tension with saliva and cautiously started speaking.

"What brings you here?"

The delegation couldn't hide their shock at her audacious question.

"Do you have business with us humans?"

Was she really attempting to converse with this unknown, chilling presence?

"Lunab, Lady Lunab! What are you thinking?"

"Hey, junior! Are you out of your mind?"

Despite the intense objections of those around her, Lunabre remained undeterred.

She looked straight at Belcarion with half-lowered eyes and said, "Hey."

Belcarion opened his mouth in response.

"I told you to come, didn't I tell you to open your mouth?"

A significant degree of displeasure could be felt in his tone.

Realizing she didn't have control over the conversation, Lunabre stepped forward without hesitation.

"Where are you going, Lunab?!"

Startled, Arin tried to stop her by grasping her arm.

"The situation isn't good, you know that. For now, it seems he wants something, so if we go along with it, it should be fine."

"What will he do with you? Who knows what harm he could do!"

"Then we'll just run away."

Arin was at a loss for words against such a resolute answer.

"I'll be back."

With those words, Lunabre left the group and approached Belcarion.

“Don’t worry. If anything happens, I’ll rush at that guy.”

Set, seeming ready for any emergency, clenched his fists tightly.

The distance was short, maybe about twenty steps, but every step Lunabre took felt incredibly unstable, as if walking on thin ice.

She clutched the grimoire she carried and whispered softly, “Are you there, Remi Halam?”

“Of course, lady.”

Remi Halam kept his ethereal form and continued resonating with Lunabre.

“Do you know anything about this demon?”

“I’m not certain, but I have one suspicion.”

There was a slight tremble in Remi Halam’s voice as he spoke.

“Then please calculate quickly. What must I do to defeat this demon?”

“You want to harm that demon?”

Instead of answering, Remi Halam only laughed awkwardly.

“Just one piece of advice, lady.”

“.....?”

“If you see an opening, just run. That demon is not an entity we can contend with.”

Lunabre, undeterred, continued forward and soon stood face to face with Belcarion, just two steps away.

“Do you have business with me?”

She initiated the conversation with a nonflinching question.

However, Belcarion simply glanced over Lunabre’s entire figure without giving a response.

Instead,

“What’s your name?”

He unexpectedly asked for her name first.

“Lunabre Riverine.”

“Are you perhaps a witch?”

Confused by the unfamiliar address, Lunabre frowned slightly.

“I shouldn’t be. At least, I’ve never been called a witch in my life.”

Belcarion frowned at her sincere response.

“Take off what you’re wearing.”

Shocked by the sudden, ridiculous demand, not only Lunabre but also the entire watching delegation was startled.

“That crazy bastard...!”

Set couldn’t contain his excitement and was about to charge forward, but Lunabre raised her hand to stop him.

“May I ask why?”

“.....”

“It doesn’t seem like you really want to take off my clothes?”

“I need to check something.”

Belcarion reluctantly answered.

Thus, Lunabre began undressing without much resistance.

-Swish

“Should I take off more?”

Belcarion pointed to the coat she had removed and asked, “What’s in there?”

Lunabre, intending to show directly, took out the tome she had been carrying.

“It’s not that interesting of a book.”

“Keep undressing.”

Belcarion commanded her to continue undressing as the item was not what he was looking for.

So, Lunabre calmly proceeded to take off more garments.

Just as she removed her shirt and was about to take off her undershirt,

“Wait.”

He suddenly stopped her.

He then picked up her outer garments without asking and carefully examined the bulging pocket area.

As he reached towards the pocket,

“You might not want to touch that?”

Lunabre discouraged him.

“There’s something unpleasant inside.”

Belcarion paused and then asked, “What’s in it?”

Lunabre answered casually, thinking there was no need to hide it.

“A pendant.”

“.....!”

When Lunabre began taking off her clothes, a temporary lull occurred, but Belcarion’s eyes filled with rage and negative energy in an instant.

Unable to control the emotion welling up inside him, Belcarion reached out to Lunabre roughly.

Feeling the killing intent, Lunabre instinctively stepped back when,

“Step back, junior!”

With a desperate shout, Set’s heavy body plummeted from the sky like lightning.

-Thud!



Belcarion leaned back slightly to dodge.

Set didn't stop there; as soon as he landed, he threw his sandy fist.

-Thump!

Unable to dodge, Belcarion lost balance and fell backward.

-Swoosh!

However, he quickly regained his balance by spreading his wings.

He then flew back towards Set and swung his fist in retaliation.

Set detected the trajectory of the punch and took a defensive position, but,

“.....!”

He realized something was wrong the moment the punch connected.

When would a person ever experience such an outrageous power in their life?

Unable to withstand the recoil, Set's body was quickly pushed back to where the delegation was.

“Wow! That's a seriously strong power!”

A situation where an ordinary person would be dumbfounded, if not collapse.

However, Set did not falter.

Instead, with a face full of exhilaration, he charged at Belcarion again.

-Thud!

“Is the demon world filled with beings like you?”

Belcarion did not answer.

His gaze, full of killing intent, continued to be fixed on Lunabre.

“If you don't want to die, get out of the way, human.”

“I can't do that! I've been holding back for a while now, you know?”

As if preparing for a showdown, a sandstorm began to form around Set's feet.

Belcarion, unwilling to wait, started emanating an indeterminable black aura from his body.

An imminent crisis, with no telling when it would erupt.

In the midst of chaos, Lunabre quickly unfolded Remi Halam's tome and chanted.

"Against the order of space, escape the impending danger!"

A giant magic circle formed at Lunabre's feet, extending to where the delegation stood.

"Spatial Transition!"

Blue light erupted from the magic circle, enveloping everyone it touched.

".....!"

Realizing something was wrong, Belcarion hastily acted.

-Whoosh

But it was too late.

Lunabre and the rest of the delegation, including Set, completely disappeared from Belcarion's view.

-Thump!

Transported elsewhere.

The delegation looked around with dazed expressions.

"Is this the rear camp?"

"When did we...?"

Through the Spatial Transition magic, the entire delegation was moved to the rear camp.

The person who cast the complex and profound magic stood up, dusting herself off nonchalantly.

"We don't know when that demon will come back. Let's evacuate outside the protective barriers!"

With a consensus to her suggestion, Arin issued an immediate command.

“All members of the delegation! We will evacuate beyond the protective barriers at once!”

The delegation moved swiftly.

“But what was that demon? Why did he attack you, junior?”

“I have a suspicion, but let’s talk about it later!”

Lunabre dismissed the question, insisting that evacuation was the priority.

“There’s the barrier!”

Soon, the protective barrier came into view.

Arin led the way as the delegation quickly crossed it without delay.

“But running away won’t solve everything, will it?”

“Everyone, stand back. I will set up a barrier immediately!”

Lunabre separated from the group and prepared to cast a restrictive barrier using her tome again.

However,

“.....!”

She froze, unable to speak the spell.

“Since when?”

Beyond the barrier they just crossed, a familiar demon appeared, facing the delegation.

Belcarion had reappeared.

His killing intent and anger seemed even more intense than before.

Yet, Belcarion remained still, as if hesitant to cross.

“Is it just me, or does he not seem to want to cross?”

He appeared hesitant, as if reluctant to pass through something.

No magic or barriers had been cast on the barrier yet, so he could cross whenever if he wished.

-Step, step

Amidst the silence, unfamiliar footsteps resounded.

Simultaneously, smelling a familiar scent, Lunabre's eyes snapped open.

“.....!”

Soon, across the barrier, between the delegation and Belcarion, someone familiar appeared.

Belcarion, upon encountering this being, experienced violent tremors.

“At last, you've shown yourself!”

Then, with a weird face that was hard to tell if he was smiling or angry, he shouted towards him.

“Sian Vert!”

(To be continued)