

My Villainess Ex Won't Leave Me Alone

#Chapter 21 - 2.6 Binding - Read My Villainess Ex Won't Leave Me Alone Chapter 21 - 2.6 Binding

Chapter 21: 2.6 Binding

"Are you sure you will be able to handle them?" Savage asked as one of his men handed Lucian reins to his horse and wagon with the slaves inside.

The four slaves sat with their hands tied to a chain connected to the wall. Their upper bodies were bare, revealing the tattoos covering their chests and backs.

The first was a boy by the name of Leaf, his hair a dirty green color.

The tallest and oldest was called Fishbone, twenty years old, the faint tattoos on his chest resembled fish bones.

The small kid was called Goblin, his tattoo on his chest resembled an abstract face with a wide mouth and a long tongue.

Lucian took a good look at them before answering.

"I have a way to keep them in line," he said.

Savage's men helped Lucian tie the slave wagon to his wagon while he got on the driver's seat.

Lucian grabbed the reins, "Thank you for your assistance, gentlemen," he called out over the noise of the wagon, "I'll be back in a month with your goods."

He waved goodbye and marched off, leaving the two bosses to look at each other and then at the wagon.

"Think he can handle it?" Scythe asked, watching as the wagons rolled away.

"I've known him for three years," Savage said, "The kid can talk a wolf into letting a lamb sleep in its mouth. It's good that he is only interested in plants and traveling around."

"..." Scythe was silent for a moment, but then he smirked, "You're just jealous that he didn't pick you as his primary business partner. Aren't ya?"

"..." Savage's veins bulged out, "What did you say, you bastard!"

"What are you gonna do about it, you hairy gorilla!" Scythe taunted, and the two continued to fight, as if they hadn't been cooperating just moments ago.

After an hour of traveling, Lucian went to check on the slaves in the wagon.

"I'm going to need you to bind yourselves with each other now," he said while taking off his hood.

'...' Jax lifted his head, his mind went blank for a second when he saw him. "Y-you...No way..."

Lucian went to unlock Jax's cuff first, wondering when the other would finally recognize him. "How is my number one buddy doing?"

Jax stared at the blond boy, his eyes widening in disbelief, "It can't be...What are you doing here? How...?"

"Good to see that you still remember me," Lucian chuckled as he unlocked his cuffs.

Rubbing his wrist, tears began to pour like waterfall from the other boy's eyes, "H-how could I forget you..." he looked Lucian up and down to make sure he saw right, "I thought you died...you looked like a dead fish the last time I saw you..."

The others, who were still cuffed, looked at each other, wondering what the hell was going on.

Lucian handed Jax the keys, "Leave the sentimental talk for later. Do as I say first."

Jax quickly began to unlock the others, saying between his hiccups, "Do as...as...he says, guys...sniff... He's on our side...sniff...I know him."

They looked at each other again, and then at Lucian, who smiled at them.

With Jax's reassurance, they began to get ready for the binding process.

The binding worked through the tattoos on their skin. They would have to touch and activate the tattoos to connect them with another, usually by holding hands.

The mark would appear on the arms, for easy access later on. No bigger than a button, it would carry the symbol that represented the bound person.

They couldn't do more than one at a time, so it was slow going.

In the meantime, Lucian continued in their journey, stopping only when the horse needed a rest.

"Done," Jax said during one of the breaks, showing his left arm with three new markings on it. The rest followed his lead, showing off their own arms.

"Excellent work," Lucian nodded in approval. He passed them water skins and rations, "Return to the wagons and take as much rest as possible. Time is pressing and we will have to take turns pulling the wagons. The horse will be put on rotation. It will be hard, but we will make it."

They nodded in agreement and returned to their positions. Lucian could tell that their morale was higher than when they were in the mines.

But for how long?

Humans' stamina and endurance was stronger than a horse's, but in turn, the horses' speed was far superior.

Lucian had them switch roles to keep up a fast pace. His saplings were at stake.

"Uggghh," Goblin groaned as he pulled on the wagon shaft with the rest of the team.

Lucian ate a lot but had little to show for it; due to all the traveling. So when he joined the others to pull the wagons, they were surprised by how much strength he could put in.

"Why are you helping us?" Goblin asked.

"It's good for the muscles," Lucian explained while picking up speed, "I don't have much time to exercise, so it helps me keep in shape."

"I see...I'll do my best to pull harder!" Goblin said, putting his all into pulling the wagon forward.

The strain on their bodies showed up after around six hours of continuous work with tiny breaks. Their legs shook, and their arms were sore and stiff. They could barely stand upright.

During one of their tiny breaks, Goblin ran to the side of the road to throw up, "Bleargh!!!"

Lucian stumbled over next to Goblin, retching pitifully himself. He wanted to see how long they could last, and maybe even show off his stamina he had been building for five years but ended up joining in their suffering, "Urghh."

'You idiot,' the voice said, 'Why are you trying to show off in front of them?'

'Because I want them to respect me more,' Lucian barfed out his soul and dignity, 'I have to look cool and powerful in front of my subordinates.'

The others didn't fare any better, feeling nauseous and dizzy. They were used to carrying heavy loads and working under extreme conditions, but not walking at the speed of a horse's trot!

"Bleargh!!!!" they all threw up on the side of the road.

"Our muscles better be ripped like a shredded potato after this," Jax said, spitting out the last of the bile.

"If we survive this trip, that is," Leaf said, "Wait, your tattoos have grown bigger..."

Jax looked behind himself at his tattoo. It resembled a spiky fruit pattern and was originally only covering his shoulders.

Now it was spreading down his shoulder blades. He tried to touch it, only to wince in pain from the cramps in his body, "Ow ow ow..."

Lucian turned to the group of onlookers, pulling up his waterskin and rinsing his mouth, "Ahhh...that hit the spot. Nothing like a good stomach cleansing to wake the body up."

"..." Four pairs of eyes were staring at the Lucian with a glint of admiration in them.

Chapter 22: 2.7 Unappreciated Hobby

The boys genuinely believed that throwing up after an intense workout would make them stronger, and Lucian didn't try to correct their way of thinking. He needed them to pull the wagons.

After ordering them to switch their roles with the sleeping horse inside their wagon, Lucian entered the wagon with his goodies.

Scanning the saplings and potted plants, he decided to show Leaf and the rest how to check on their health.

"Out-of-season flowers and fruit have a high demand among the nobles. They will pay any price to obtain them," Lucian said, "I'm hoping that we can breed even sweeter and more fragrant variations than the ones available in the market."

They had a long trip ahead of them, and Lucian needed to make the most out of their time.

"I don't understand...anything," Leaf said, scratching his head after Lucian explained to him the basics of cross-pollination and hybridizing.

"..." Lucian's mouth twitched.

Fishbone was the next to be taught.

"Pollination is a process that allows plants to reproduce..."

"..." Fishbone frowned, trying to concentrate on the potted flowers, "What part of a plant is male and which one is female again?"

Lucian's eye twitched.

The next one to try was Goblin, and it went even worse than he had anticipated. The kid was like a rock that couldn't absorb any water.

The last one was Jax, who didn't have the right attention span for the job.

'All the plants in the south are being wasted on these people.'

'...' Lucian wanted to smack his head against the wall of the wagon. He was a good negotiator, a good merchant, but teaching was not one of his strong points.

The boys didn't seem to be interested in the art of gardening and plant care. Manual work like pulling a wagon, yes, but not something that required care and patience.

'They can have fresh fruits all year round, but no, they would rather fight over a stupid golden rock that will make them rich.'

In the North, there were four seasons and a short summer. Winter lasted the longest. Spring and Autumn were only there in name. The plants that could grow in such harsh weather were limited.

'...' Lucian was getting more and more excited about his future greenhouses (trying to calm himself with the failed teaching season). He couldn't draw the designs, but he could clearly picture them in his head.

'Voice, imagine being able to have a cup of tea with a freshly picked mint leaf or a piece of fresh fruit in the middle of greenery... during winter.'

'Why should I?' Voice asked. It was as disinterested as the rest, giving Lucian no choice but to enjoy his hobby by himself.

While the four boys sat at the front of the wagon, already recovering their strength through the sun's light, Lucian hid in the shade of the wagon, cooling himself with a wet towel on his forehead.

'Voice. Warn me if I fall asleep, I want to see the sunrise,' Lucian said, closing his eyes.

If it weren't for the Voice's ability, he would have died a long time ago.

Especially the first time he ventured into the Southern Alliance on his own and got sucked into a sandstorm for almost two months.

Lucian never experienced that type of hunger before or after that.

Begging for scraps and digging in the trash bins for food in the foreign town afterward was an experience that would haunt Lucian for the rest of his life.

It made him wonder why he was so persistent in going south. The answer to that question was simple: Celine Rochefort.

Her presence was everywhere in his life, always showing up when he least expected it.

"..." Lucian covered his eyes with the towel. It was too hot to think about her.

'She must have been promised to someone else by now.'

'Her father wouldn't let such an eligible bride sit around collecting dust, and she would have to accept. Especially if her partner has a high status.'

'What should I do?'

'I can't just barge into her wedding and kidnap her, can I?'

Lucian chuckled, imagining himself in a black suit, climbing the church walls, breaking through the glass to take Celine away before she could say "I do".

Lucian's laughter faded away when he realized that he would have to kill the groom, because the man would surely fight him for his bride.

The voice was silent, not bothering to comment. That boy loved to daydream to escape his reality, but it never went far enough for him to lose touch with it. A fantasy was not worth losing your life over. And yet, Lucian would still try to live in his fantasy world whenever he could.

'Can't I just poison him?'

The voice sighed, but Lucian didn't hear it. His mind was already thinking of ways to poison the poor groom.

"Boss?" Fishbone asked, pulling at the reins, "Which way?"

"Ah, right," Lucian used the Voice's eyes to point to the correct direction, "That way, past that hill."

'YOU BRAT,' the voice screeched at him, *'You are taking advantage of my kindness again.'*

'Please, teach me more, Voice,' Lucian asked politely, his eyes still covered by the towel. It was hard figuring out the extent of the power on his own.

He had been wondering how Voice watched over him during sleep when his eyes were closed.

'You can't expect me not to be curious about the power you possess, Voice. You can read my mind. You know I will not misuse it. You can trust me.'

'...' the Voice was silent for a long time. So long, in fact, that Lucian fell asleep from exhaustion.

His body couldn't contain the ability for long periods of time. Even after trying to raise his endurance through regular training, the ability would still drain him quickly.

If only Voice revealed to him how to strengthen his body, he would.

"Boss!" Goblin's voice startled Lucian, causing him to jolt awake. The young boy peeked his head from the back of the wagon to look at him, "It's our turn to pull the wagon."

"..." Traveling with companions was not something Lucian was used to, but they did help him with daily chores, so he couldn't complain. Could He?

The sun was already setting, casting a golden glow across the land. They came to a halt at a riverbank, where a small village could be seen in the distance.

Chapter 23: 2.8 Too Smooth

The small group resupplied their food and water in the towns and villages along the way, barely staying long enough to stretch their legs before setting off again.

They also paid road tolls without being overcharged, which would lead one to think that corruption in the south was low.

"It's going too smoothly," Leaf said, pushing the wagon. He was the first to notice the oddity in the situation, "Usually, someone would have tried to rob or attack us by now."

"It's different for non-losers," Jax said, motioning with his head toward the top of the wagon.

The rest followed his gaze.

Lucian, the boy in question, was drying some rare herbs on top of the wagon, munching on some nuts as he worked. To deal with the shaking of the wagon, he was using layers of nets to keep them in place.

He added cut fruits to the mix of herbs, the scent coming from the wagon turning sweet and refreshing.

"What did you say, Jax?" Lucian asked, looking down at the group pushing the wagon, "I couldn't hear you over the wind."

Jax laughed nervously, "N-nothing. I-I was just saying how lucky we are to travel safely, without any problems or encounters."

"That's right," Lucian said while continuing his work, "Aren't we lucky? It's almost as if we have someone up there watching over us."

The others laughed along with him, nodding their heads in agreement.

"Yep, we are blessed!" Goblin exclaimed.

"We are," Lucian agreed, then paused, "So blessed that I can't help but feel that our luck will run out soon."

They all looked at him with a confused expression on their faces. "Huh?"

"The borders are always chaotic," Lucian explained, "I've never crossed them without any problems."

The group was quiet for a moment before Jax spoke up, "For example?"

"For example..." Lucian paused, "...the guards could delay us, and the goods could get spoiled."

They looked at him, then back at their surroundings, and then back at him again, "That's all?" they asked in unison, "No fight against bandits? Or thugs? No blackmailing and threats?"

"I've been crossing borders for five years," Lucian said, "And I've never had any big problems with them."

"Five years...?" Leaf asked, "How old were you when you started?"

"Ten," Lucian said, his gaze distant and nostalgic, "A ripe age for an adventurer."

Most already knew Lucian as a seasoned traveler by now, so he was not bothered too often. He traveled mostly alone, occasionally joining a group of travelers if they had a common destination.

"..." The four boys were at a loss for words, imagining themselves in Lucian's shoes.

"I heard from villagers that a small group has been robbing the passing caravans," Lucian said, climbing down from the wagon. "We must prepare."

"..."

Lucian's words proved to be true when they were surrounded by bandits on their way to the border. It was a valley, a good place for a quick ambush and escape.

The group of thugs had been lurking around the area for some time, but upon seeing the blonde boy's head peeking from the back of the wagon, they became even more cautious.

"Hey, Lucian!" a man called out from atop his horse, showing himself with a grin on his face, "I see that you've got yourself a new group of workers! That's nice! Very nice! I almost couldn't recognize you!"

He waved his hand, signaling for his group to come out of their hiding spots. The thugs emerged from behind the rocks, holding weapons and shields.

"And I see you are still alive and kicking!" Lucian called back enthusiastically, showing his upper body.

"What dangerous plants are you growing this time?" the man asked.

"Nothing much," Lucian said, waving his hand dismissively, "Just some poison evies and stink bombs, that's all."

"..." The man was silent for a moment as if considering whether he should attack him or not, "Well then," he said after a while, "Let's get down to business. Pay up, Lucian. Just 250 silvers, 50 for each person, and you can pass."

"I'm afraid I'm not willing to give up my hard-earned money. You know how hard it is to make a living these days," Lucian said, shaking his head in disapproval. "What about you? For how much longer do you plan to sustain this lifestyle?"

The man's face darkened at the insult, "Are you trying to piss me off?"

"No," Lucian said with a sigh, "I've made a pretty big deal recently, and I will definitely need more workers to help me out with the amount of work that's coming. I'm just offering you a job opportunity."

His gaze swept over the group of men.

The leader laughed loudly at Lucian's words and then wiped a tear from his eye, "That was a good one! But, I'm sorry, Lucian, I don't have the time or the money to invest in some crazy plant idea of yours. I'll pass," he said, pointing at the wagon, "Now, pay up."

"The rest of your people don't seem to agree with your decision," Lucian commented as he pointed at the doubtful expressions on some of their faces, "I'm doing better while you guys are stuck in this place, risking your lives and freedom for a few measly silvers."

The leader's face twisted into a scowl, "You are getting on my nerves, Lucian. Pay up or die."

"Just hear me out," Lucian said, resting his arms on the edge of the wagon, "You don't have the gift to make money grow. I do. If you had helped me back then, we would have made it further together. You made a hundred silver from me over the years when you could have gained thousands."

The leader was clearly pissed off at the jab, "Shut up! You're just a lucky bastard!"

Lucian threw a small bag of coins at him, "Three hundred coins, seeing you this desperate is making me feel bad. Take them," he said, "I'll be back in two weeks. Think of an answer by then."

The leader caught the bag and opened it; the regret of a missed opportunity was clear in his eyes. He wanted to say something, but Lucian didn't let him.

"Move, Roland, I have a business to run."

Chapter 24: 2.9 Mushed Banana Head

"..." A vein popped out on the leader's forehead as he gave a signal to his group to move.

Nobody would become a bandit of their own free will. They were unlucky guys, unlike Lucian.

They've known each other for a while, and the boy was a dreamer with a death wish.

They wanted to see him fail. What could a lone boy achieve anyway? They thought. He had no one to rely on, no family to support him.

The sight of him making actual money infuriated them, but also made them start dreaming too.

Maybe they should have listened to the boy back then and taken him seriously, but who would have expected him to succeed?

"Hey!" The leader shouted as he watched the boy drive away. He took half of the pouch's content and threw the bag with the remaining coins back at him, "Don't you dare hire other bandits! You will hire us first if you want to hire anyone!"

Lucian caught the bag and put it away, laughing, "I will hire you first, don't worry! We're friends, right? Friends help each other!"

"..." The leader's mouth twitched in annoyance, "Two weeks, you said?"

Lucian nodded, "Yes, I'll come back with a bigger cargo and the same route. We'll talk about the future then."

The leader didn't respond as he watched Lucian's wagons disappear behind the hill.

"Fuck him and his smug face!" he cursed under his breath, turning to his gang, "If he scams us, we'll beat him up until he begs for death and take all his stuff!"

"What if he gets rich enough to hire a mercenary group?" one of the members asked.

They weren't strong enough to take a proper mercenary group, especially one that specialized in escort missions. They were more than a match for their ragtag group.

The leader didn't answer immediately, his teeth grinding against one another, "How much richer can he get in two weeks?" He snapped, "Just how lucky can a single kid be?!"

"..." his gang was silent.

Their leader should just admit it; he was jealous. They were jealous. The four southerners who joined that punk were probably living better than they now. It was a painful realization.

At first it was just "borrowing", then it changed into "taking from the rich" and finally became "taking from the weaker".

They all started as normal villagers, until their livestock were lost to disease, crops were damaged by the weather, and taxes were paid to the officials. Fear of failure stopped them from trying again, and hunger drove them to the darker side of life. Greed and desperation kept them there.

There were eleven of them, which was enough to harass, but not enough to guard every crossing, bridge, or fork.

Travelers could take alternate paths. Lucian was an exception. He always chose the fastest route. They knew he was coming from their informant located in the town, which was why they chose this area to ambush him.

Thinking how smart they were, they were ready to rub it in Lucian's face, only to be pitied by him instead!

Lucian smiled at the admiring glances of the boys, the thumping of his heart slowing down to a steady rhythm when the danger passed.

The bandits were gone, and the journey was back to normal.

"You were awesome, boss!" Goblin said, jumping on his spot like a happy, green rabbit, "I can't believe we got past that without a scratch! I thought we were dead meat for sure."

"Bandits don't kill when they can extort," Lucian explained, "They just have to show their numbers and threaten a little."

The boys were looking at him with bright eyes, full of respect, as if he were a master sharing his wisdom with his disciples. It made the growing numbness in Lucian's chest slow down for a little bit.

'Why are you so silent, Voice? I might gain even more power after this this trip, and you have yet to give me a single compliment.'

'Getting involved with the wrong people is doing you no good,' the voice said, 'Your parents didn't raise you to be a criminal, did they?'

'You were the one who told me I was too emotional, and that I need to get rid of my attachments. Now you are complaining again. Make up your mind, Voice.' Lucian thought, his smile getting bigger, but his heart feeling colder.

He was repaying the Voice for the health. He thought the Voice wanted a rich and carefree life, so he had been trying to provide it (in exchange for health). With loyal managers and a comfortable villa to live in. What more could the Voice want?

This was the fastest route to success, so why was the voice so against it? Was it worried that if Lucian went down the wrong path, the Voice would also get in trouble?

'Nothing will happen to you, Voice. Don't worry, I'll make sure of it,' Lucian reassured the voice.

'...' The voice couldn't understand Lucian's provider mindset; it had never had anyone to care for before. It was used to being a parasite, but the boy was making it feel like a burden.

'Did you ever consider how your little wife might feel if she lost you?' it asked, unable to believe that it was going along with the boy's fantasy.

'I will take my little wife with me,' Lucian replied, *'We'll be together forever.'*

'...' When the voice thought that dealing with the kid Lucian was difficult, the teenager version turned out to be even worse. He was a hormonal mess of a person, and his brain was as mature as a banana. Rotten and mushy.

What now? At this speed, Lucian would accomplish his goal before he could reach adulthood.

'What about those four? I thought you wanted to go on adventures with a bunch of friends.'

'I was six, and besides, they can't even learn how to trim a plant properly,' Lucian grumbled, thinking about how his four new employees had disappointed him. Slow learners. Very slow.

Having a human-hating thing in his head did eventually make him look down on his own race, but not to the extent where he would be cruel. He was indifferent. There was nothing wrong with being indifferent. They were all strangers, after all.

'...' The voice would have been proud of Lucian in the past for his ambition, but as Lucian changed over the years, the voice began to change with him. *'Get yourself a real wife already. I'm getting sick of your fantasies.'*

Chapter 25: 2.10 River of Tears

Lucian shrugged off the voice's words, not giving them much thought. The voice was a good companion, but it didn't understand him.

"We are here," Fishbone moved his palm above his eyebrows to shield his eyes from the sun.

Not far off, a wide river separated the land between the two territories. It was called the "River of Tears", for it had been the witness of many battles.

The stone bridge that crossed it was one of the wonders of the world, wide enough to fit ten wagons side by side.

Garrisons were built on both sides of the river, heavily fortified with watchtowers.

Lucian rubbed his eyes and looked at one of the watchtowers. A cloaked person was standing on top of it, holding binoculars to their eyes. Their gaze was directed at Lucian.

Lucian waved his hand at the person, smiling. He couldn't recognize the person, but they seemed to recognize him because their reaction was immediate.

The figure raised their hand as if to wave back before quickly lowering it and disappearing from view.

Why did their reaction felt so familiar? Lucian's heart fluttered in his chest, and he almost fell from the wagon. *'There's no way she would be here.'*

He stabilized himself and pumped his chest to calm down his nerves. There was only one person who could make him react this strongly. *'I didn't even see their face, and I already got worked up.'*

'Voice, what should I do?' Lucian asked, panicking, *'What if she's here?'*

'It might really be her,' the voice said.

"WHAT?!" Lucian yelled, startling the rest of the wagon. *'You...you can't just joke about something like that, Voice!'*

Lucian's hands were shaking, and his throat felt tight as they neared the Southern Alliance's border garrison. There were at least eight of them in front of the bridge, while around a hundred of them paced around the perimeter.

His reaction affected the rest of the boys, who were now sweating buckets as they pushed the wagon.

"R-relax," Lucian stuttered, trying to calm everyone down, including himself, "Just a-act natural."

"Y-you are t-the one who is not relaxed," Jax commented, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand.

"I am," Lucian scoffed weakly, "I'm p-perfectly fine."

Tears began to accumulate in Goblin's eyes as he saw the big and scary soldiers, "Are we gonna die?"

"Of course not," Lucian said, taking the slave contract out of his bag and walking up ahead to meet the soldiers *'Help me, Voice. I think my heart wants to jump out of my chest and commit suicide.'*

'Idiot. Who was the one who wanted to see her so badly he probably manifested her?' The Voice was unmerciful in its facts.

'THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO PLAY WITH ME, VOICE! I AM GOING TO DIE IF SHE IS HERE!'

Lucian gave the guards a crooked smile.

"Greetings, honorable gentlemen. I would like to pass through," he said, handing the guard the documents, "Commandant Grim from the slave camp approved my request for the purchase of these slaves, and told me to send his regards to you."

Without a noble house to tie Lucian down and free of expectations (his weak constitution), Lucian exploited his position to the maximum by becoming a neutral party that could trade in both countries.

The guard took the papers and looked over them carefully. They couldn't ignore the seal of their superior. Knowing that Commander Grim might have something to do with Lucian's trade made them hesitate to postpone it like before.

The change in attitude in the soldiers was obvious as they checked the identity of the four boys and Lucian's wagon.

"Everything seems to be in order. Five hundred silver for the toll," one of the southerners said.

"Thank you for your service," Lucian said, bowing slightly before handing over the coins.

As Lucian's group passed through the bridge, the soldiers guarding the borders to the Diamante kingdom didn't hide their surprise.

"Hey there. How are you doing?" one of them asked, greeting Lucian, "You managed to pass faster than usual."

"Good, good," Lucian replied. The guards here knew him well, "No trouble, I hope."

"No, not at all," the guard assured him, "Just doing our job, checking the papers and such. You know how it is."

"Of course," Lucian nodded, paying the toll and a bit extra, "Here. Take this as a token of my appreciation for your service."

The soldier grinned, pocketing the coin, "Thank you kindly, young man."

"There are more soldiers than usual," Lucian commented as they checked his wagon. "Is something wrong?"

"Young master Edmund has joined the supply division of the Rochefort military," the soldier said, "He is going to do an inspection on our post and then continue to the army camp."

"..." Lucian froze upon hearing the name. He knew the person, albeit having never met him before.

Edmund Rochefort was the eldest son of the duke and the heir to the dukedom. He was also Celine's twin brother, from what he knew.

Unlike his sister, Edmund was considered a genius. He was blessed with high intelligence, and even the gods seemed to favor him.

"Um, is her ladyship Celine with him?" Lucian asked, his heart pounding in his chest.

The guards laughed, "What would a Lady be doing in a military camp? She is probably enjoying tea and pastries in the castle with other ladies."

Lucian laughed nervously, "Yes, of course. What else could she be doing? Haha."

After checking his wagons, they let him through.

'Curiosity killed the cat,' the voice said.

'...' Lucian tried to shake away his ideas.

'Don't do it.'

'I won't,' Lucian quickly denied the temptation.

He quickly ordered his team to get the horse ready and leave the place. The faster they left, the better.

But it was too late. The cloaked person from the watchtower appeared on their horse.

"Young Master Edmund!" The captain said, saluting with a fist over his heart as the young master rode past.

The young man in question didn't dismount his horse, only raising a hand in acknowledgment, "At ease, Captain. I'm just here to inspect the border before moving to the camp."

He turned to Lucian's wagons parked by the side of the road. The cloak covering the head slipped a bit, revealing a familiar face.