

逆又練物

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イラスト・魔界の住民

illust・makai no jumin



悪魔のような公爵一家

DEMONIC FAMILY
THE DUKE OF RACTOS

Evil-like Duke Household

– Akuma no you na Koushaku Kazoku –

**- Volume 1 -
(Chapters 1-11)**

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– SYNOPSIS –

There was a kingdom in which [magic] and [monsters] existed. The Azolias Kingdom.

However, the administrator of the kingdom and his family were often gossiped about.

[The one who controls the kingdom behind the curtains]
[She acquired her beauty by making a contract with a demon]
[He is making a crime syndicate]
[Swinging a demon sword that will even cut the soul]
etc.

The citizens were ignorant and often uninvolved in politics. Therefore, such rumours scared them.

However, the rumours were not true at all. Even though their appearance was a bit suspicious, the Ractos Household was a heartwarming household.

CHAPTER 1

THE RUMOUR ABOUT THE RACTOS DUKE HOUSE

This is a world where magic and monsters exist.

One of the countries, known as the Azolias kingdom, was greatly admired due to its political and military power.

However, in that country, there was an administrator which was constantly gossiped about and was publicly thought to be dark and evil.

No, not only just the administrator, even his family was gossiped about.

-Ractos duke household-

As the administrator of the Azolias kingdom, the head of Ractos household, Grid Ractos had a broad frame for a man. However, he was quite fat and seemed very dislikeable; his eyes always appeared to be scorning you and his mouth always seemed to be provoking.

Every action and conduct, he took was oppressive; it gave the appearance of someone who stood at the top.

He had deep, blood-red hair and his eyes were darker than a shadow.

His voice was deep and heavy, almost like a devil who had come to contract your soul.

It was commonly thought that he was a corrupt administrator who controlled the dark side of the kingdom and moved behind the scenes.

His wife, Lilliana Ractos.

She was so beautiful, one would not even think she was older than 40.

Her jet black hair flowed to her waist, accentuating her sexiness, lithe body and her youthful vigour.

She always wore a jet-black dress that seemed to be connected to her hair and her eyes were a deep enchanting crimson.

She often spoke in a sweet tone, like a seductive succubus. However, off puttingly, she also had a large earth spider as her pet.

She was commonly known as the [Arachne Duchess] and it was rumoured that if you displeased her, you would end up as food for her spider.

Eldest son, Jake Ractos.

He appeared to be a young man with a tall and thin body, always looking like he was half asleep. His pale red eyes sleepily stared at you, while his mouth always appeared to be scoffing.

From his expression, you would think he was always plotting something.

It was rumoured that under the hair that covered one of his eyes, there existed an eye that resembled that of his pet snake's.

At just twenty years old, he had already perfected his control over sorcery and furthermore, he was able to utilize the extremely rare [Shadow Sorcery], or so it was rumoured.

Materialized from his own shadow, it's look as if there's a black serpent accompanied him in his surrounding.

Because of his appearance, he was known as the [Incarnation of the Devilish Snake]

Eldest daughter, Erza Ractos.

Her blazingly red hair was curled and seemed as if it was fire. Underneath that mane of hair, a reddish black eye always appeared to glare at you. It was often compared to polished obsidian.

Elza was a fighting prodigy, having graduated at the top of her class in Knight School at the mere age of 16.

She wasn't like other girls who were always interested in dresses or jewels, and rather disliked them. Instead, she usually wore jet-black full-plated armor with a reddish-black double-handed sword that seemed to radiate waves of heat, tied to her waist.

It was because of this that she was known as the [Black Swords(wo?)man from Hell]

She is said to be able to face down any opposition and cut them down mercilessly, along with their souls.

The bad rumours never seemed to dissipate. Yet, they were never validated either.

It was said that if there were eyewitnesses, they would be silenced.

That if there were mistakes, then they would be cleverly covered up.

It was said that the kingdom could not do anything to them because they held one of the country's closest, darkest secrets.

The negative rumours never died out.

And so, let's peek at the daily lives of the infamous Ractos household.

CHAPTER 2

GRID-SAN WHO LOVE TO WORK

My name is Grid – Ractos (*TL : he use wagahai – the ‘I’ that is usually used by a person with high position*)

I am the head of the duke household in the Azolias Kingdom.

I am also the administrator for the kingdom.

Well, although I am called the administrator of the kingdom, I actually have very little involvement in politics.

My actual job is to manage the resources of this kingdom.

So why am I called an administrator when I am in charge of resource management?

The reason is that except for me..no one else is able to handle the resources of this kingdom.

Actually, there are people who can, more or less, able to handle the work. However, the number of incompetents far outnumber those who aren't. If I weren't worked hard to handle it, the economy would have collapsed and the country in ruins.

..It is that dangerous.

Because of that, I was awarded the high rank of administrator to prevent me from leaving.

At least, that's what prime minister said. His majesty also said that, too.

Truthfully, even if I didn't have such a position, I would have done the work anyway..

After all, I love doing financial paperwork.

I couldn't use magic like my son.

I also couldn't learn swordsmanship like my daughter.

War, and conflict in general, frightens me.

I lose my breath even after a short jog, you know..

But..I, who works so hard, is hated by the citizens..

As expected it's because of 'that' right? Because I have a scary face, right?

Well, to be honest, once when I went to the toilet at night and upon looking into the mirror, even myself is frightened.

Ah, I felt rather down.

when I felt like this, it is 'that' right.

I have a favourite restaurant to go to; it is a place that serves foreign cuisine.

There's nothing better than to eat something at that place, you know.

Today's job is already finished too, so now is the perfect time to snack, right before dinner.

And thus, prime-minister-dono, this one will go to the castle town for a minute.

I am currently traveling incognito to the castle city.

I am both a duke and an administrator therefore I have to disguise myself.

However, it's quite prosperous, eh. This castle town, that is.

There were quite a lot of stores, with the aroma of various foods permeating through the air.

But I have never eaten anything from the street vendors before.

The salesperson-san will get scared, you know.

Being feared is sad, right? This one is sad.

That's why, that unknown meat that is pierced by the skewer will be consumed by me.

I never ate that dish before, you know. Even though it gave off such a nice fragrance.

These were my thoughts as I walked towards the shop, when I suddenly discovered a little girl crying.

Ah, what should I do. After all, my face is scary, right..?

If I carelessly try to approach that girl, perhaps she will cry even more..

But, I cannot leave someone like this alone you know..Yosh.

[Ojou-chan, are there any problems?] *(TL : with a really deep voice)*

Our gazes met, and then silence filled the air.

Ah, this is not going to end well.

[Hie~~~Nn!!]

Arara, she really cried even harder.

Even though I understand why that is so, this is still quite heartbreaking.

I can hear the clanking sound of armor from the distance, slowly getting louder.

[This is the kingdom's garrison! You over there! What are you trying to do!!]

Uwawa~ . The guard has come.

Furthermore when he shouted like this, it gives off the bad impression that I was about to do something to this girl.

I really wanted to cry at this point.

[Wha- You are Administrator Grid-Ractos!?!]

Oh? The guard actually realized my true identity?

[Why is Administrator-dono in this castle town..So the rumour of you being in touch with the crime syndicate is...?]

Eh? Somehow the situation suddenly became weird, you know?

Or rather, what do you mean by crime syndicate? I didn't know that we had a crime syndicate.

I only came to this place for a snack, you know?

[..Since it seems that I need to hear the detail of the circumstances, I need to have you follow me, Administrator-dono]

Wait, what? Somehow I am being dragged away because of some groundless suspicion?

Rather than that, ask about what happened to the girl that was crying over there, you.

Eh, that girl hid herself behind the guard.

This is..Doesn't it look like I am the bad guy here? I seems as if I am in trouble now~

[W-Wait!... Wait for a moment, the guard over there!!!]

And then, prime minister-dono who was breathing rather heavily after running toward me who was currently in a tight spot, came to the rescue.

For some reason, he started to have a conversation with the guard.

..Am I being ignored like an outsider, right now?

Ah, prime minister-dono finished his conversation and is coming over here.

[Administrator-dono. I cleared up the situation, everything is going to be all right.]

Oh, thank god..As expected from prime minister-dono, he seems to have responded quickly as soon as he heard the information from his spy that lurks around town.

I was about to get arrested from false charge, you know~

..Not to mention, the guard just leaves without even giving me an apology.

You do realize that I am the administrator, right? On top of that, I am also a duke..

...I am starting to feel melancholic.

[Prime minister-dono. I think I'm going to take a day off tomorrow..]

CHAPTER 3

PRIME MINISTER-DONO IS MACH

I am the current prime minister of this country.

The king of this country which I serve, restrain foreign country with country military might, sometime won war, and so it's a country which get supported by citizens due to the military.

However, there was one major flaw; the king was *ahem* very poor at resource management, finance, and politics.

Therefore, I, as the Prime Minister, and Grid Ractos-san, had to cover for his weaknesses.

I managed the politics while Grid-san managed the resources and finance.

As I was managing the politics, since the king also learned a little bit about it, it's not all that bad, but it was different from resource department.

Frankly speaking, it wouldn't have been an exaggeration to say that Grid-san manages all the resources of this country by himself.

It truly could not be counted as an exaggeration.

Even now, Grid-san was processing a staggering amounts of paperwork that would have been enough to make anyone feel a heart attack by looking at it.

His hands whisked away with signatures after signatures in terrifying speed.

while happily hums to himself

..... Even so.

(humming happily with that kind of face, is have it's own horror eh.)

Grid-san who always dealt with the paperwork in a happy fashion was followed by an endless amount of negative rumours.

As if, [The man who looks like The Devil]. [Corrupt Administrator] or such

The main cause of this was his face, which look like that of an evil overlord's or a tyrant's at a glance.

Most of the higher-ups of the country, like myself or the king, understood that these were just baseless rumours, but commoners and lower nobles all took these rumours to be the truth.

If this was the limit, it would have been all right.

Actually, no, it would not have been fine. But it's still better.

The problem is Administer-dono is a very sensitive man. I am not kidding.

Just last month, when he collided with a woman in the city, she wailed and prayed for forgiveness and her life to be spared. After the situation was defused, Grid-san refused to touch any documents for two days.

That day felt like hell..

[Imperial Minister-dono]

The administrator called out to me who is still in the middle of deep thought.

I thought he was still battling that mountain of documents, but it seems that he had already finished.

... He's definitely a monster, just not the way the rumors portray him to be.

[Then, I will go to the city to grab a snack.]

..Take care.

After a seemingly inexhaustible hour, the spy rushed in with a report. Furthermore, he seemed really flustered.

..I had a sense of foreboding at that moment.

[P-Prime minister-dono! Administrator-dono by the guard ! !]

I, while running at my maximum speed, breaking through the limits of my aged body.

[..Since it seems that I need to hear the detail of the circumstances, I need to have you follow me, Administrator-dono]

I dashed to the city, and becoming one with the wind, all to hear what the guard has just spoken.

[W-Wait! Wait for a moment the guard over there!!]

I hurriedly interrupted them and begun to talk to the guard.

Crime syndicate? What are you talking about, you?! Do you intend to made our financial affairs bankrupt by some kind of weird rumor!? Hah!

Like I said, I'll be the one to do something about Administrator-dono.

Slave trade?! I never received such information from the spy, you know!

Just quickly, go! Move on and do whatever you are supposed to be doing! P-Patrol or something!

After I successfully managed to release the administrator from the guard, I quickly go toward the administrator-dono to made a follow up.

Just as I looked over; ah. Seems like Administrator-dono received quite the shock.

[Prime minister-dono. I think I'm going to take the day off tomorrow..]

I heard nothing more after that, for I had immediately fainted upon hearing those words.

CHAPTER 4

LILIANA-SAN WHO LOVES TO COOK

I am Liliana Ractos, the wife of the administrator of this country, Grid Ractos.

When I was 16 years old, I married into the Ractos House.

It was a marriage based on love; something rare for nobles, you know.

It seemed that both of us had fallen in love at first sight.

Of course, even now, I still love my husband you know?

He is an honest and serious person; I always felt that the face he made while praising my cooking was very charming, you know?

My husband was a great, kind, person. However, all the citizens hate him. I was told that it was because his face was like an evil person's face. I wonder what they mean? After all, his face is very handsome.....

And when I said that, it seemed like people began to fear me too.

[Forming a contract with a demon to get her beauty] or [Everyone who pisses her off will become the feed for her big spider] or so they said.

I wasn't really offended when they said that about my beauty, but I was a bit offended when they said that about my spider.

Mary-chan has never eaten humans!

Ah, Mary-chan has been my friend since I was young.

It was a big, cute spider with bushy hair and bright red eyes.

Mary-chan was around 60 cm and had the same lifespan as humans. Her species were known as [Crimson Eyes].

It doesn't have any poison and also eats the pests. She is very useful, no?

We~ll, since she seems to be omnivorous, she also seems to like my cooking.

[Nee~, Mary-chan♪]

[Kisyaah —]

Although she cannot speak, she can understand our conversation to some extent you know? She is a smart kid.

But, is the fact that she is a spider a bad thing?

Especially since I was a girl.....

Was it a long time ago?

Uhm, it was at some kind of party, wasn't it?

I don't remember what happened very clearly, but just as we were talking very happily, my conversation partner fainted because she saw Mary-chan who had come up to me because she was hungry. I recall correctly, the party ended very quickly from there.

Well, I guess anyone who has never seen her before would be surprised when they suddenly see a big spider appear in front of them.

At that time, I did something a bit evil, hehe~

If i'm not mistaken, yes yes. Olivia-san, that lovely person with her red dress.

Even when we meet coincidentally after that, she would seem to be slightly afraid of me.....

Which reminds me, every time I meet her, she is always wearing a red dress.

Every time I see her, it makes me want to cook tomato-based cuisine.....

I wonder why? Is it because it was red?

.... Oh my? Just now, Prime Minister-sama dashed down the road in front of our house with amazing speed.

Even though he is already that old, he is always full of energy hmm~.

.... Maybe today I shall cook fish meunière. *(EN: A thick, flour-based sauce. Or so google sensei says.)*

When I see Prime Minister-sama it makes me want to cook fish-based cuisine. I wonder why?

Is it because he looks similar to ? *(TL : tired eyes - > dead fish eyes -> looked like fish, also maybe it's because he's so skinny from stress)*

Since I've decided that, I guess I should begin to look for ingredients?

CHAPTER 5

THE DUCHESS'S TRAUMA

I will never forget it; that national day 5 years ago.

It was a buffet party, only attended by the upper nobles of the castle.

I, the Duchess Olivia Koorfid, will never forget that day when this fear was planted in me by that girl, Liliana Ractos – I cannot forget it.

At that time, that girl was already known as the [Arachne Duchess] and was widely feared.

However, I was not afraid of her. I was envious, and jealous.

At her age – already past 30 years – she still had a youthful face without any wrinkles, and a body full of liveliness, from which came a bewitching aura.

I was jealous of that beauty; that beauty which even I could not imagine deteriorating even as she got older.

That's why, I had planned to harass her that time.

I had planned to humiliate her at that big gathering of nobles. However, I could never have imagined what would have happened instead.....

Liliana was standing by herself on the balcony.

The big spider that was always beside her was not present in the assembly hall. However, that was a matter of course. No matter how I thought about it, it would be strange to bring a big spider to this kind of gathering.

Well, even if she had brought the spider with her, I would not have been afraid.

Although it seemed like others would have been afraid, I was not scared.

In fact, I would not have been scared of that woman; although she was a duchess now, she had only been a count's daughter before.

I, who had been born into a duke's household was of higher birth than her.

What should I have been afraid of?

[My, Arachne Duchess. So, you are wearing that black dress like usual?.....Come to think of it, I heard that black western cloth is pretty convenient to conceal your body figure. Do you not have confidence in your body, perhaps?] *(TL : in a very elegant manner)*

As much as possible, I covered up my animosity of her and only showed a clean, serious face. Perhaps a little of my annoyance had shone through, but as I thought, she was not affected by something this trivial.

[Eh? Is it because I am tasting my cooking too much? I think I have become a little fatter.....]

Even though she says she got a little fatter, I'm sure she did not even once think so.

However, this attacking hand, no, mouth, will not falter.

[My ~. Even though you are a duchess, you are also able to cook? That is surprisingly plebeian like, eh?]

Well then. How will you respond?

[Ye~s . Grid-sama and Mary-chan also happily eat the food that I make, you know ~]

Liliana answered me while floating a smile on her face.

The name that that mouth mentioned, the name of the devil-like person; I faltered a bit after hearing the name Grid Ractos.

But ... Mary-chan.....?

[... If I'm not wrong, the name of your daughter is Erza, isn't it? And your son should be called Jake, right? Then, if I may ask, who is Mary-chan?]

[Ah, Mary-chan is the [Crimson Eye]..... It's the name of that big spider who is my friend ~]

..... That big spider was eating Liliana's cuisine? That monster?

I ended up imagining such a scene. It was better that I didn't.

I recalled one of the dark rumours about her.

『Anyone who displeases her, will become the prey of her big spider.』

[... kshyaa ~] (*ED: SFX*)

[Oh?]

A voice that didn't belong to a human could be heard from outside the balcony.

Liliana turned and looked at the one who made that sound. I subconsciously followed her and looked over.

Five red glinting eyeballs stared right back at me.

[Hii !?]

I reflexively shrieked a little.

Thinking back, when I saw the spider, it would have been normal to scream.

No, the one that was scary was not that big spider.

It was that woman, Liliana Ractos, when she said that she made the food for that spider.

Everybody who displeased her, would become food for her spider.

In other words, that woman, with humans.....?!

[Oh my~ ... Mary-chan . Did you get hungry? I guess it can't be helped ~]

[Come to think of it, Olivia-san. Your dress, it has a lovely red color eh. It looks delicious, like a tomato.]

(This woman, wants to make me into food for the spider !)

And so, I lost consciousness.

When I opened my eyes, I was back in the Koorfid house.

It seemed that my attendant had carried me back to the house when I fainted.

When I felt that I was alive, the fear constantly flowed in me.

For a while, the trembling of my body could not stop.

Never again do I want to have something to do with the woman, Liliana Ractos.

It seemed that she overlooked it this time, but next time, I would become food for the spider for sure.

— Her cuisine.

At present, I've already recovered a bit, but whenever I meet that woman, my body can't stop trembling.

She always says it when she sees me, and she always has that big spider on her hand.

[As I thought, it really does look deliciously red.]

CHAPTER 6

JAKE-SAN IS A HOME ECONOMICS GUY

My name is Jake. Jake – Ractos, the oldest son of the duke house of Ractos. My father is Grid – Ractos.

He is the administrator of this country.

Even so, what he does most, is manage the financial affairs of our country, and doesn't do much in politics. He is a delicate man who is quite timid.

But even so, it seems that every citizen in this country fears my father.

I think that, maybe, it is because of his face. To be honest, even I am scared.

There was a time that I woke up at night to go to the toilet and came across him. I almost wet myself.

Although, if I say that to him, he will probably go seclude himself in his room, so I will never say that to him.

None of our problems are better than our father's.

For some reason, Mother, my sister and I are feared by the people too.

For my mother, well, it's to be expected if they fear Mary-chan, no?

My sister....well, if someone brings a double handed sword that big, and wears a full plate that makes loud, clattering noises.....well of course, right?

As for me what is my problem, I wonder?

Ah ~ maybe.....it's really because of the sorcery, right?.....

I have a magical trait that I received from my grandfather.

Furthermore, it's the rare [shadow sorcery].

Just like the name says, it is sorcery that allows one to manifest and manipulate shadows.

It seems to be the same trait as the one my grandfather had.

My grandfather, Diebold – Ractos was, at his prime days, a famous sorcerer, and his nickname is [Sorcerer King of the Dusk]

Sorcerer King....twilight....aren't those all related to evilness?

..... Well, it's not like it's my place to say it.

[Incarnation of devil snake]

That's my nickname.

People say that the shape of the magic that manipulate makes it look like I am accompanied by a snake.

I don't want it! I want something like, [Lightning] or maybe [Whirlwind] or those kinds of heroic nicknames as my nicknames, you know?!

What do you mean, with that devil snake, with that incarnation?!

It means that I'm that devil snake ? Isn't that totally a monster?!

Well, I think the reason that they fear me is not only that though.

[As I thought, it's the face, right....?]

My face was reflected back at me in the spring in the middle of the castle town.

An eye that always looks like it is laughing, a mouth that always looks like I am scoffing.

Once a week, I get told something like [Bastard, what are you scheming?]

I don't think about anything except that I want a friend, I want a lover.....

Although I learn sorcery, since I am the eldest son, I will probably be taking over father's job and manage finances in the future.

I don't scheme to dominate the world using sorcery, you know?!

Uh, my face itself shouldn't be that bad.....how did it turn out like this?

[shaah]

Something peeked out from the pocket of my clothes and looked over my face; it was a black snake with red eyes.

[... Are you trying to comfort me ? Nako]

Her name is Nako.

Because of the dark rumours surrounding our house, I've never had any friends since childhood. She was my only friend.

Well, since I was able to make a friend, no matter how scarce, then she should be my best friend, right?

After I finished my sorcery training, I summoned her as my familiar. She is quite reliable.

[That's right. It can't be helped even if I feel down. At a time like this, it's best to eat delicious things. That's what father says after all maybe I should go looking around the stalls.]

[shaa — h!]

Entering the side road from the main road, I move into an alleyway which has fewer people.

.....after all, if I stay on the main road, then people will look at me hostilely.

Ah.....not good. I am turning negative again.

Just then, I heard the sound of a woman screaming from the alleyway.

When I take a peek how terrible! There's one girl who is about to be violated by two men.

Uwaah, their muscles are brawny it's scary~ . I have this very-meager body after all, so I am not quite fond of those types of people, you know.

No, it's not the time to think something like that. I am a sorcerer. I must have a confidence.

At this kind of time, it's better to use a strong remark to make oneself look haughty! is what grandfather said.

A-Alright, I'll do it !

— Several minutes later, I, who somehow able to punish the hoodlums and save the girl, felt this satisfied feeling or not.

Didn't she become more scared of me than the hoodlums? This girl

[Oi , Jake – Ractos ... !]

When I turn over and look at who has called me, there appeared the kingdom's first prince.

His name is Alto – Azolias.

Wait, why did is prince at this kind of place?! He also didn't bring any guards; it's dangerous, you know?!

[What are you planning to do with those men?]

Well, what should I do about them? Should I hand them to the guards?

[..... Bastard, what is it exactly that you are scheming?]

Haha, today, I got told that again.

Ah, somehow prime minister-san is running out to the main street with an amazing speed.

Such a lively person, that prime minister.

CHAPTER 7

THE PRINCE IS DOUBTFUL

I, the Azolias Kingdom's First Prince, Alto – Azolias, am vigilant.

Against whom, you ask? Well of course, it is against the [Ractos Household].

Everytime he exchanges words with my father, who is the King, with a haughty attitude – I am absolutely sure that Grid Ractos is trying to start something in our country.

However, the one whom I am most cautious against is that guy. Jake Ractos.

I always see him in a back alley where there aren't a lot of people. It seems he is always planning something.

Although I don't have any evidence – that expression.

I cannot say that that is the expression of someone who is sane.

Surely, he is biding his time, searching for an opportunity to begin his actions.

He is just like a poisonous serpent, hiding in the thicket.

Like every other day, I secretly followed after him today.

Today, for sure, will be the day when I will get the evidence. The decisive evidence that your family is plotting something!

Just as I thought. Jake entered the back alley.

In order to remain unseen, I followed him while raising my vigilance.

However, I soon lost sight of Jake.

Dammit! Where did he go? No way, did he realise I was tailing him? With his shadow magic he.....?

As I searched the surroundings for any signs of him, I heard a man bellowing from an alley.

I suppressed my presence as much as I could and took a peek – There was Jake Ractos who confronted two men, grinning boldly.

[Bastard ! What do you want, huuh !?]

[We~ll.... i'm quite troubled here, you know. If you do such a thing here]

The man shouted at Jake with a loud voice.

Deeper inside the alley, there was a girl whose clothing was tattered.

no way, did he intended to save that girl who is about to get raped ? That Jake is ?

No way. That....that Jake Ractos.....was he intending to save the girl from being raped?!

[Haaah ! ? What do you mean ?]

[You know.....that thing you are doing.....just do it in another place.....]

No, it seemed that Jake was only worried if they did something [in this area].

[Oi! There are two of us. You're just alone. On top of that, a weak looking person like you can only....]

[Wai-Wait. This guy, perhaps..... he is the incarnation of the devil snake....!?]

As soon as the men realised Jake's identity, their faces became visibly paler.

Of course they would be afraid. The grandson of that [Sorcerous King of the Dusk], was one of the few who could use [shadow sorcery].

He was not an opponent you could defeat by mere brute strength alone.

[He-heeh! Wait, this demon snake uses shadow magic, right? This is an alley with no light. He won't be able to use his prided shadow magic!]

As if to act strong, the man said that proudly.

That's wrong, that's totally wrong.....

[My grandfather is known as the 『 Sorcerous King of the Dusk 』 . Do you guys know why?]

That's right, the exemplary user of shadow sorcery, Diebold – Ractos.

[When the sun goes down.....at night, he is truly invincible. It is fitting, then, to call him the Sorcerous King....]

[You do realise, at night, everything is basically one, big and totally enormous 『 Shadow 』 ? By the way....in this dim place.....don't you think this place itself is one big shadow?]

And as he quietly spoke, from inside the darkness of the alley, just like dark serpents, countless shadows took form and gradually rose out.

[Hi, hiiih!?!]

I wondered where the haughtiness of those guys went. They kept making pathetic cries; it seems they can't move due to fear.

[Miss. I think it is better if you quickly leave here, you know? Inside this huge shadow, it'll become a problem if you get caught, you know. After all, this is the belly of a serpent.....]

As he said it jokingly, Jake made a “kishishishi” laugh, like a snake.

The strong people around me. The Knight Captain, Spy commander, and my father, who is the king.

A fear that was different from what I felt in-front of their overwhelming power ran around my body. A fear that made me feel as if there was a snake coiled around me, a fear that made my body temperature plummet.

Perhaps it was because of that fear, that the girl who couldn't say a word, frantically ran away from Jake, tripping as she went.

The matter was concluded in an instant.

Countless shadow serpents tightly constrained the men so that they could not run away, while blocking their mouths so they could not raise their voice.

Jake, ignoring those guys, took out a magic communication item from his pocket, and then made a call.

[..... that's correct, two men. Across the street from Crescent Moon Pavilion. Yes, I can't take them both over there, after all.]

It seemed like he had asked someone to do something about those men over the magic communication item.

I felt slightly restless. I was sure he was planning to do something to those men.

If I wanted to cut in, this would be the best time, right?

Jake continued to walk down the alley slowly.

Perhaps, this is the right time to catch him.

[Oi, Jake – Ractos! What are you trying to do to those men?]

My leg wasn't shaking, right?

As Jake slowly turned his face towards me, cold sweat poured down my back.

[Oh? So it was First Prince Alto. It's dangerous you know~ . Coming to this place without any guards.]

[Answer! Jake!!]

I erased my fear by shouting.

[... Of course, I want to give them to the guard. Properly and normally look?]

That's clearly a lie.

This guy, I wonder what in the world he was planning to do with those poor guys.

[.... Bastard, what are you scheming?]

Without answering my question, Jake silently gave a bow, then, without looking back at me, walked off deeper into the alley.

[Your scheming.....I'll surely expose it! I'll not let you do as you please in this country!]

CHAPTER 8

DISAPPOINTING, BEAUTIFUL (BABE) ERZA

My name, is Erza- Ractos ! *(TL : She use Jibun – which can be used by man and woman. used by warrior I think. Can also mean “myself” also she always shout!)*

I am, the oldest daughter of the Ractos household!

Dad, Grid Ractos, is the administrator of the country!

Although I am only a young person in my sixteens, His Majesty and the Knight Captain had their eyes on me. As a result of my diligent training, I was honored with the position of the Kingdom’s Chivalric Knights, Heavy Armour Knight, Vice Captain!

Thanks to that, no one will say anything even if I walk around while wearing this full plate heavy armour all day!

...Yes, I am often called [eccentric] by my honored brother and also my honored mother, but

Knight’s equipment. Especially the armour. I love it!!!!

I’m also quite interested in dresses or maybe jewels and the like, just like any other young woman at my age. But, what good are those thin fabrics, and those fragile stones?! I completely do not understand it!!

Compared to this thick, black, metal plate that I am wearing at the moment, the dress is only beautiful! It’s defensive power is more or less nonexistent!

It would be better if they had magic stones, but the jewel is only something shiny! If I poke it with this strong gauntlet that is also made from black metal, it will be smashed into bits!

Ah, it will trouble me if you misunderstand.

It is vexing if you think that this is just armour, or just something that is strong and solid.....

This armour's beauty.....I polish it to the extent that no one else can match it!

The design of every part is to deflect sword strikes, a streamlined shape.

Furthermore, it is ornamented with reddish metal, allowing it to have a fiery glow.

Semi-polished with heat resistance treatment on the surface.

The inner-plate which I wear inside is furnished with a cold-resistant soft silver metal. It's all perfect, even the places where no one can see.

.....Ah. You realised it? Did you realise it?

That's right! Let me tell you the truth! This armour was fully custom made!

Exclusively for me, mine only, only one! Only one just for me!

Oops, what a blunder I just made. I only focused on the armour and forgot about the main explanation.

Yes! This double handed sword!!

Of course, it is also made out of black metal! Fully Custom!

Fufu, furthermore it's not just black metal.

With the assistance of a high grade sorcerer who possesses metal-forging traits – Wow! – it was attached with a magic stone of fire and earth!

And the result of that is – surprisingly – that the edge of the blade will become red hot and vibrates at high speed!!

There is nothing it cannot cut!!

Furthermore, until some time ago, I was actually allowed to go subjugate the monsters around here because of my job as a knight. During that time, I was allowed to swing this armour and sword as much I wanted.

Perhaps it was because of that, that it seemed my tension got higher.

Ah, the sensation of easily slicing through the monsters.

The pleasant impact when my armour completely protects me from the monster's fang is really....really.....!

『Wooooooooooooohh!!!』

[Oi , Erza! We are inside the castle walls now!]

...I became too excited and ended up roaring. I was scolded by Captain-dono.

I became downhearted.

Ah, all of the newcomer knights got scared.

I am sorry.

Yes.....judging by the reaction of the new knights.....yes, I seem to be feared for some reason?

If I'm not mistaken.....the hell darkness...? black? Uuum, i think it's because of that somewhat annoying nickname that I am feared.....

By the way, honored father and honored mother, and also honored brother is for some reason also feared.

I completely did not understand the reason for this matter!

Ah, the one we just gossiped about, it's honored father.

What is he doing in the middle of the main street ... eh ?

Why did the prime minister-dono sleep at this kind of place?

It's better if he sleeps inside since he will catch a cold if he sleeps at this place, you know!

(TL : She uses dearimasu at the end of her sentence. Dearimasu !)

CHAPTER 9

COMMANDER'S TSUKKOMI IS MACH

I am the commander of this kingdom's Heavy Armour Unit of the Chivalric Knights.

The Heavy Armour Unit was just like the name implied; we wore a full plate armour, held warhammers, double handed axes, double handed swords or other such kind of weapons that had great destructive power. We were a unit that used these kinds of weapons.

Since everyone always had their face covered, it was said that our intimidating air was really extraordinary.

Although there were no beauties in this unit unlike the Light Armour Unit, in battle, there was no other unit as reliable as ours.

..Furthermore, our vice commander was that [Jet Black Dark Knight from Hell].

Just like everyone already knows, she is the oldest daughter of the [Ractos Household].

It's Erza Ractos.

Well, regarding the rumours of the Ractos Household, I had already been told from the start by the Knight Captain that it was just a baseless rumour, and I too understood that she was not a bad person at all.

However, I always wondered whether the rumours about Erza were actually true.

Of course, not the ones regarding her terrifying character.

After all, after having talked to her several times, I already knew she was just a muscle head.

The rumour I was talking about was that of her frightening power.

..The first time I saw her, her image was full of was laden with things to be criticized about.

Full plate made of black metal..

Red metal for an ornament that resembled fire..

The thing in her hand was a double handed sword that was also made from black metal.

Furthermore, it was furnished with a magical stone.

Isn't that what she looks like?

She really looked like a knight that came from hell, you know. She really was a dark knight that came from hell, you know.

Or rather, what were those things that protruded from your face?

Hah? Hair? Your own? Are you serious? I thought that was fire that came from hell.
(TN:he use "wa" to end his sentence here.... which is feminine way to speak, just for this line btw, not like he always speak with feminine way)

..Seriously, I don't understand how that had happened.

How was a 16 years old woman able to move while wear that thing?

This kind of thing was impossible, even for me.

Although the black metal had the word 'Metal' in it's name, it's hardness and weight were not something comparable to normal metal.

Honestly speaking, it was not a material usually used to make full armour.

You would lose your mobility, after all.

Normally, people just applied it at the important places like the breastplate or joints.

Furthermore, it was just a thin coat on the surface.

Yours was not just plating, right?

How thick is that armour of yours?

Aren't you just a fool?

Speaking of which, with the red metal, well, using it for an ornament was not something that was rare.

It's cheaper than gold after all, and the level of hardness was also at an extreme degree.

In exchange, since it is quite heavy, excessive use of red metal was also not advised, especially in armour..

However, why did she add it all over her armour?

You didn't even forget to add the ornament on the back, damn it.

I didn't praise you, don't look embarrassed!

Aren't you just a fool?

On the top of that, you have a double handed sword made of black metal?

While wearing full plate made of black metal?

Are you even able to swing that thing?

Really, aren't you just a fool?

Haah? The inner plate is made from soft silver metal?

Noisy. You're noisy. Just shut up.

And so, that's it.

Even when wearing an armour that weight is cannot be imagined under usual circumstances, that girl, Erza, is still able to fight.

Even though she shouldn't be able to move at all, she still had a polished swordsmanship.

Presently, due to the Chivalric Knights' work, we were coming out from the kingdom to subjugate the monsters that plague the land,

She plunged into the enemy with the same speed as the Light Armour knights, then proceeds to bisect the monsters one by one.

.... Wait a moment, you, just now, didn't you just cut the crystal turtle's shell right into two?

That's a thing that you usually just smash with war hammer, you know.

..And you just cut it like it's butter?

Aahh, the Heavy Armour Unit. At this point, isn't it just fine for her to be the sole unit of this unit, damn it.

Aahh, look at what you did.. the newcomer got all scared now..

That's true ! It's all 'cause of you, damn it!

Don't shout because you got excited!

You wear a full plate armour, you know. The sound reverberates because of your armour. Yes, it's you, you know. It can only heard as something like some monster roaring, you know!!

Why are you getting embarrassed!? I didn't praise you at all, damn it!!

Aah, enough! Retreat ! Retreaat ! !

We who were returned to the rampart, although there were no heavy injuries nor any casualties. However, everyone was exhausted.

..Excluding one person.

That's right. It's you. You're noisy, you know! Stop roaring!

I'll make you write another report, damn it!

.... Hmm? What? The surrounding is noisy, eh. Oi! There's a person who fainted at the main street!

Oi, you, what in the world is happeni- .. Eh, woahh!? Isn't it Administrator Ractos?

Woah, that's a surprise to me.. As always his face is scary, eh..

Aah, the newcomer just lost his legs.

(EN: Basically means his legs gave out, we had to keep the direct translation due to the involvement of that phrase in the story itself)

Haah.. Today is really terrible.. I just want to quickly go home and sleep..

Aah!?! The one who fainted is the prime minister as well, isn't it?

Oi, we will carry him to the royal castle.. Eh, Erza!

You, what are you doing just casually trying to go home with the Administrator. Oi!

You mean I have to carry him alone!?

Aah, I want to stop being the commander..

CHAPTER 10

HIS MAJESTY AZOLIAS, THE CHILDISH 40 YEAR OLD

I'm the famous king of the Azolias kingdom, Leon Azolias. *(TL : he use "yo" that usually used by people in high standing, watch hxx the ant arc, the way the king of the ant speak, that's how it sound)*

Currently, I had my legs sprawled as I sat upon my throne, however it did feel slightly uncomfortable. *(TL: stretched my leg – sitting arrogantly)*

Even though the prime minister and the administrator were working hard, I didn't really have anything to do.

My kingdom was built through military might. Of course, I have the confidence to use my own strength if the situation calls for it. However, regarding political and financial affairs, the burden was too heavy for just one person alone. So, in order to keep this kingdom standing, government related jobs like those were entrusted to people like the prime minister and the administrator. And since the kingdom's military power was not needed for now, I had nothing to do.

Ah... By the way, didn't I just say some pun that sounded really amusing?

The part where I talked about [myself] and [self-confidence]. *(TL : i'll put the punme here instead, it's 「自身」と「自信」, both can be read as Jishin, but have different meaning)*

Right, prime minister. Isn't my pun is interesting?

[Your Majesty, administrator-dono and I are busy at the moment, please be quiet for a moment.]

Heh. What a boring person.

Right, administrator?

[.....]

Though he didn't said anything, I got thumbs up from the administrator.

What a nice fellow. His face was super scary though.

Duke Grid Ractos... he's the current administrator.

Because of his scary face, baseless rumors about him started appearing, I pity him

Well, his face was scary after all, I guess it couldn't be helped.

His face scares me as well. If I saw that face on the battlefield, I think I would flee.

[Wait, Your Majesty! You said that out loud! Oh...Look, Administrator-dono already stopped working! Administrator-dono is a sensitive person, please be careful! Are you trying to destroy Azolias kingdom? We already have economic difficulties as it is!]

I got scolded. Even though I'm the king...

Well, I guess it was slightly my fault.

I repent.

However, the administrator was really diligent and honest, those traits didn't match his face.

In some meaning, he is the kingdom's cornerstone, he is one of the most important people in the entire kingdom, but even though he had a salary that was lower than a normal administrator, he would still work just as hard.

That said, he didn't do anything other than looking over the financial affairs of this kingdom.

No matter what people said, it would be better to give him some kind of reward for his work...

If the administrator wasn't here, the kingdom would fall to pieces.

[That's right, maybe I should give a one week vacation to the administrator!]

[Oi, your Majesty! Like I said, if you do that we would go bankrupt! Cut it out!]

I got scolded again. Rather than that, his language... *(TL : prime minister is using informal language)*

[I enjoy doing this kind of work. That's why it's not needed for his majesty to give me a vacation... If his majesty wants to give me some kind of reward, then I want to get something for my family]

Oooh, the administrator really loves his family eh. Even though his face is scary...

His family... the Ractos household...

Even though he said that, the administrator's family was already a duke house which is the highest rank for a noble.

I couldn't raise their status more than that.

Madam Liliana is also selfless, just like her husband.

However, if the king gave a present to the wife of some noble it would cause a lot of problems...

There are various reasons why this would cause problems...

If that's so, then how about Jake-kun?

I cannot think of any other reward besides searching for a fiancée for him.

That's right, let's just engage our childre- ah..., I only have sons.

Then how about Erza-chan ?

Armor! I'm sure she will give that as an immediate answer.

However, I already cooperated with her to help make her armour.

The ordering, also introducing her to the craftsman...

When I placed the order for that armor, the craftsman questioned my sanity...

Something like full plate black metal, even I would never think about wearing such a thing.

That's right! Isn't it fine just to marry Erza-chan with my son Alto!?

Yep, that's great. That child, If I got careless, he would become stronger than me.

Isn't it just perfect for the Azolias royal family who gained respect through military power!?

How is it? What do you think, administrator ?

[If it was me, I wouldn't want the queen to be someone who wears full plate armor on daily basis.]

That's true. I didn't want that either.

Or rather, I imagine that having the administrator as a father in law would be really scary.

Especially the face.

[Like I said don't say it out loud dammit! Look, administrator-dono now has teary eyes! If you don't have anything to do just go away to sleep or something!]

I got scolded again.

With that tone, prime minister was scary.

Though it is not as scary as the administrator's face.

[Bastard!!!] – Prime minister

CHAPTER 11

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE RACTOS HOUSEHOLD (AS SEEN BY THE BUTLER)

Good morning.

I am the butler who serves the Ractos household, my name is Welt.

When I started to serve the Ractos household, the previous head of the household, Diebold-sama was still alive.

Since I had known Grid-sama since he was an infant, I don't have the slightest doubt towards the Ractos household due to the prejudices everyone has towards him.

I had already gotten use to the face of the current master, Grid-sama. Even though everyone else who saw it would be scared.

Well then, let's just quickly move on.

So, as the title of this chapter implies, I will present how my master starts his day. Just one common day in the Ractos household.

For the Ractos household, there were several servants, but compared to other dukes households, it was a small number. In fact there were so little that you could count the number of servants using both hands.

Of course, there was a reason for this...

The number of people who were not scared of master's face were few inside this country.

Several years ago, there was a servant which disrupted the work routine by getting knocked out. It was an employee that was hired from outside for a one day job, but after they saw the master's face, they cried and fainted. After that incident, master secluded himself to his room for three days. It became a big accident.

The damage goes without saying.

The kingdom's financial state became messed up and went into disarray.

In order to prevent the same mistake twice, the Ractos household servers were now being managed by the kingdom (Mainly by the prime minister).

Oops, I went a bit off topic.

For the several servants we have, in the morning, after they confirm their work for the day, they get straight to work preparing breakfast. Liliana-sama then wakes up from her sleep.

Ractos' wife, who's hobby is cooking, wakes up early by herself and can be found in the kitchen cooking.

And about that, I had already said to her many times that she should let the servants do that job.

[Its no good you know ~. The only one who may have the privilege to cook food for my dear husband is me. I will not hand the task to anyone else. Okay~.]

Because of that, all the servants instead supported her when cooking meals.

It has already been years since they married, I really think that it is charming that they still love each other as much as a pair of lovers. The scene right now, perhaps in others eye's it would look as if a witch tried to give a love potion to a master.

[...Good morning]

The next one to come out from their bed is the master of the house, Grid-sama.

Since Grid-sama is not a morning person, it seems that he is still not completely awake yet.

[Oh my, my husband, you still have that sleepy look in your face, you know.]

Said Liliana-sama, turning her head to face Ractos-sama with a smile.

She comments about Ractos-sama still having a sleepy looking face, but at a glance, his face actually looks as if he is about to murder someone.

Of course, I would never say this aloud.

[... Good morning]

The next one to come out from their bed is the young master, Jake-sama.

He is also like master, weak in the morning. He still looks like he is dazing off.

[Oh my, even Jake has that sleepy face... fufu, like father like son~ ♪]

Eh, That is true, Liliana-sama

Especially the fact that both of them have eyes which look like they were about to kill a person. They were like two peas in a pod.

Nako-sama who coiled herself around Jake-sama's neck also made a face as if trying to search for her prey.

They would then take a seat at the dining table and wait until Liliana-sama finished preparing her meal. In the meantime, Ractos-sama and the young master would wait there until they woke up completely. All the while making vague conversation.

Well, judging from their facial expressions, it looked as if they were planning to kill someone. Even though they were not.

And as soon as breakfast is ready, Erza-sama is getting up from her bed.

[Good morning]

Erza-sama , I am sure that there would be someone who would think that Erza-sama is a weak person due to waking late, but she is different from the males of the family.

Erza-sama is almost always relaxed anytime she isn't wearing her armour.

Everyone took a seat on the table arranged by the servants. They begun serving the food which was made by Liliana-sama. Breakfast with the whole family had already become a tradition within the Ractos household for generations.

It was a tradition encompassed by the whole family.

Even though the scene before my eyes would be called family love, it would be more correct to describe it as bloodthirsty – full of schemes.

Inside my head, I like to play a game where I change their conversations into something sinister.

Once they are finished with breakfast, Ractos-sama goes towards the royal castle to do his work, managing the financial affairs of the country.

[Grid-sama. Take care] – Liliana.

[Aah, I'm off]

It was like a conversation between some newlyweds

Both of them had a wide smile.

But master... that face... It's better for you to not show it outside, you know...

Additionally, it was a smile which spread fear. If someone with a weak heart looked at it, they would surely collapse.

As soon as the servants are done with cleaning up from breakfast, Jake-sama would take himself to the magic guild.

Since I don't know much about magic, I didn't know what kind of things the young master would do inside the magic guild. But I've been told that it is just an extension of what is being done at magic school.

There were many times where he came back late, I wonder what he really does there.

[Jake. Will you come home late again tonight?]

[I don't think I will come home late. Well, after I finish I will take a stroll and look around. I don't know what might happen after that ~ *hehehe*]

I also think that because of the way he laughs, people also fear the young master.

Also, his wording seems to hide a lot of things too.

... I wonder if it is the influence of Diebold-sama. Diebold-sama's style of speech is very similar after all.

After a short time passed, there was a rattling sound of metal clanking against metal.

『 x d k f じ ϕ j z ■ り j g d ◇ f z !! 』

After a bit of waiting, the Miss turned up as usual.

While she is wearing her armour, her mood returns. She is usually talkative, but because she wore full plate armour, her face is fully covered. It made her voice reverberate inside the helmet, making it impossible for normal people to understand what she is trying to say.

If someone was this for the first time, it would only look like someone was howling in rage since they wouldn't be able to understand anything Erza-sama said. This is most likely the reason people fear Erza-sama.

[My~ , Erza, today is a good morning eh?]

『g Uふおが j d な おをいあ ; d ん c ! あ s ■ l ぢあ f l えあ !! 』 (ED: Basically a line that means you can't hear what she is saying. AKA muffled jap)

[My ~ , Is that so. please be careful to not hurt yourself, okay~]

『■ l k つ ぜおいあ◆い!!』

[Yes ~. Take care ♪]

It seems that only Liliana-sama is able to decipher what Erza-sama says.

For me, I cannot understand anything other than [meal], [subjugation], [chop] and [I'm off].

Well then, other than Liliana-sama, everyone in the house is going out. And it's about time for us to prepare lunch.

As for lunch, we servants are the ones who prepare it.

After lunch, I will narrate how the Ractos household operates in the noon.

