



Arian Rose
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転生王女は 今日も旗叩き折る

3



隣国輿入れルート突入!?

そんなの
絶対阻止!

目指すは政略結婚回避!
功績を上げて隣国への嫁入りを回避せよ!

転生王女による物語更正ストーリー、大人気第3弾!

Tensei Oujo wa Kyou mo Hata o Tatakioru

by Bisu

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Chapter 55: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ①

The map crackled as it spread on the table. Sir Leonhard's white gloved hand pressed down the map, as if he was smoothing out a crease.

Sir Leonhard and I were the only ones in the rest area adjacent to the greenhouse right now.

The wizards were training, and I was asking Klaus to gather information for me. Lately, Sir Leonhard has been escorting me, but Klaus never once argued. The results of my persuasion. I wanted to believe I didn't get some sort of pleasure from neglecting him.

"Princess."

His gaze invited me to look, so I did. It was a map of Nebel, not the continent. Moreover, it was an enlargement of the eastern half of the kingdom. We were here to discuss the vicinity of the border between our kingdom and Laptah, so I focused on the northeastern portion which bordered it.

At that very moment, to my surprise, my view of the map darkened. The moment only lasted a second. As soon as I recognized the shadow that stood between me and the map, I sighed. I reached out to that black mass and felt its velvety fine fur.

I spoke to the shadow—er, my beloved cat—in a low voice.

"Nero."

He paid me no mind, mewling carefreely as he looked back at me. His sapphire blue eyes were shining with curiosity.

Ever since his wounds healed and he could freely move about, he's been following me around every day. That must have always been his true personality. New places caused no trepidation for him, and he explored happily. There was Japanese saying that went, "A dog follows its owner. A cat chooses the habitat rather than the owner," but it didn't seem like my baby fit into

either category. Maybe he saw the palace as a big house, which would be rather amazing.

“You can’t hop on the table.”

When I reached out to put him down, he smoothly avoided me. To my surprise, he ran to Sir Leonhard.

“Nero!”

Unaffected by his owner’s frustrations, he cuddled up to Sir Leonhard’s hand. Perhaps a little shocked, Sir Leonhard’s eyes widened a few degrees. With a soft look in his eyes, he scratched under Nero’s chin with a finger.

“He’s quite friendly.”

Nero purred happily as Sir Leonhard watched him tenderly. What a sight for sore eyes.

While I watched with rapt attention, Nero began to climb Sir Leonhard.

“Oomph.”

“Nero, what—?!”

Like a certain fox-squirrel, Nero easily gamboled his way up to Sir shoulders. I was shocked. No matter how friendly he was, wasn’t this a bit too much? Just how much did he take after his owner??

“I’m sorry, Sir Leon.”

“It’s fine. I often scare small animals, so this is a happy turn of events.”

Nero made himself completely at home as he wrapped himself around Sir Leonhard’s neck like a black scarf. Sir Leonhard smiled as he gently brushed the cat’s head, ready to let it stay where it was until it got tired of him. But I couldn’t imagine that happening so easily when I saw how attached Nero was. Don’t tell me my pet is my rival? He’s male though.

“Shall we continue?”

Cat on his shoulder, Sir Leonhard looked at the map. I followed suit.

The agenda for today was, naturally, the Dark Lord. Our desired goal was to locate the shrine where he was sealed.

“The story says that the temple we’re looking for should be in this area, correct?”

Sir Leonhard drew a big circle near the border with Laptah.

“Yes, it’s supposed to be near a village on the frontier.”

Even summing it up as somewhere near the border, the breadth was huge. Finding a village that meets the conditions *as well* as a shrine on its outskirts, forgotten by time, won’t be a walk in the park. No doubt a lot of time would need to be poured into investigating all of the villages scattered along the border, but I couldn’t afford to abandon my search for the medicine.

“To some extent, we have no choice but to ask for help even if we find some contenders.”

“Indeed.”

Despite being in agreement, I had no idea how to get it done. I was at an impasse. Unlike me, however, Sir Leonhard had come prepared with a solution.

“Actually, the commanding officer of the northeast fortress is an old friend of mine.” Around here, he gestured as he pointed to the upper right corner of the map. “I thought I’d ask him to take a look when they’re on a marching exercise. What do you think?”

“I...appreciate it, but is that acceptable? Won’t it be a hindrance to their job?”

“You need not worry. After all, they’re only checking as they practice and patrol. Also, there’s a small matter that has me concerned.”

Mm?

What did he mean by that? I looked at him full of questions, but he didn’t give me an answer. Well, it must be something he couldn’t tell me now. I trusted him, so I didn’t mention it. When it was necessary, and the time had come, I was sure he’d tell me.

“In that case, please take care of it.”

I lowered my head deeply and he nodded firmly.

“Next, about the medicine...”

He stopped himself and looked at me anxiously. He knew I was depressed after Georg told me not to get involved with the search. I had been quiet the entire carriage ride home, and probably caused him a lot of worry.

“It seems Lord Georg and Michael have departed.”

To search for the medicine, both of them have headed for the kingdom of Flamme.

As an apprentice wizard, I assumed Michael would be restricted in his movements, but unlike Theo and Lutz, he benefited from a modicum of freedom. Since he couldn't use attack magic, it seemed they didn't consider him a threat. The robes were color coded differently for that reason.

“I was left behind,” I jested with a smile, but his expression did not lighten.

“Princess...” he said pensively.

“Oh, I'm not pouting.” I hurried to shake my head. “It doesn't mean I've given up, either.”

He looked surprised. “Huh?”

“Of course I'm sad, but if I think about it, I've always been prepared for this.”

“Prepared, you say?” he asked, perplexed.

“Yes, that's right.” I nodded. “As long as I'm a princess, I'll naturally be kept out of harm's way. If I just give up, this is where it will end. I finally understand. If I believe that I can't give in, nothing will begin unless it starts with me.”

So what if I'm being left out, I'm not waiting for anyone to lead me by the hand. At the heart of it, if I want to get in, I should make the first steps.

I hoped to change the future.

I vowed not to give up on Sir Leonhard.

Therefore, I have to become strong.

Strong enough to keep going forward, no matter what happens.

“I don't want give up... Can you help me?”

Hand pressed to my heart, which was pounding from nerves, I looked at Sir Leonhard. He smiled gently in return, looking at me as if he was witness to the

growth of a child.

Though I'm not satisfied, how could I not be happy to receive such a warm smile from him?

“Of course,” he reassured me. “I'm collaborating with you for that very reason, so if you don't tell me anything, I'll be worried.”

I sighed in relief.

Chapter 56: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ②

Leave me behind, and I'll go by myself!

If it was that simple, I wouldn't suffer any hardships...

Even connected by land, it wasn't a distance you could walk. I don't know the exact distance, but there were thousands of kilometers from the capital of Nebel to the border of Flamme, and *that* was just the linear distance. If you calculated the ups and downs, the twists and turns, the distance would be even further.

Yeah, not happening. Too much of a stretch.

We didn't have a bunch of fantasy-like modes of transportation, like riding on dragons or teleporting through magic circles. Steadily making my way by carriage would be best, but the formalities would be a huge pain since going to Flamme by road would take me through two countries, Wind and Sckellz.

That's why I decided to travel by ship. If I left from one of Nebel's southwest ports and entered through one of Flamme's western ports, it would be a lot less of a hassle.

But, I had a problem.

The ships of this world were elementary: either for commercial use or the navy. Merchant ships sometimes carry passengers, but only when the cargo was low. Passenger ships operating on a regular basis simply did not exist.

In other words, if I planned to travel by sea, I needed to secure a ship first.

I sought out Master Julius again. There was no one else who might help me board the merchant ship, I thought. I hoped he wouldn't mock me for asking his assistance. I, a little girl with nothing to recommend herself but her status, could not possibly acquire a ship on my own. Unless I had black pepper to trade it with.*

Luckily, he didn't go with Georg so he was still in Nebel. If I wanted to ask for his help, now was my only chance.

However, catching Master Julius with his full schedule was a nigh impossible task. If I waited until he had the time to spare, who knew when that might be.

That's why.

I followed him.

To the port town of Tao, my kingdom's gateway to the southern seas.

A strong smell hit my nose the moment I got out of the carriage.

Below the hill covered with old paving, the blue horizon peaked through gaps in the buildings.

"It's the sea..."

It was my first time seeing the sea ever since I was born in this world. I've seen it several times when I was living in Japan, but it didn't have such a clear color. The waters before me weren't just blue, they were cerulean.

For a second, I'm spellbound by the beautiful, sparkling sea.

"Miss Marie."

I turned to find Sir Leonhard looking down at me.

He was out of uniform, looking very handsome in a different way with his grey shirt and bluish black long coat.

The new way he was addressing me also made my heart leap. Well, he was doing that because we're traveling incognito.

"Please don't wander away."

My eyes lit up as he offered me his hand.

Can I really hold hands with him?!

I reached for it, carried away, but then I hesitated.

In my simple dress, I didn't think anyone would recognize me as a princess, but the possibility was always there. And besides, it would be terrible if someone mistook Sir Leonhard for a child abductor? Wait. If I like him, that's not something I should say or think.

If I had thought about it in a logical manner, I would have realized that even if

we were holding hands hardly anyone would have jumped to the conclusion that Sir Leonhard was a lolicon. They might have assumed we were siblings separated by an age gap, or even a young father with his daughter, as much as I hated to admit it. Something reasonable like that.

But like I mentioned earlier, I was carried away, so high I couldn't think straight. I took no notice of my surroundings either.

"Excuse me."

"Wah!" I cried as I was suddenly lifted into his arms.

Soon after, a giant man with a basket on his shoulders raced through the spot I had just been standing.

He *protected* me.

"Th-thank you, Sir Leon..."

"My pleasure."

He smiled gently, his handsome face closer than it's ever been before.

T-too dazzling...!

I couldn't look at him directly.

Believing my heart might soon stop, I hoped he would put me down quickly, but he started to walk with me still in his arms. The sound of his boots as he descended a narrow staircase rose around us.

"Er, S-Sir Leon? Um, I'm fine now, so..."

Put me down, I finished, but the words were swallowed by the bustle of the port town.

But it seems like the he did hear me.

"Please hold on until we arrive," he said with a troubled expression, and I couldn't bring myself to argue. It was probably because of how I spaced out earlier. He probably worried such a slow child might stray out of sight if allowed to walk by herself.

If I obediently placed my hand on his shoulder to support myself, he might turn to me with a smile, as if to say, Very good.

A part of me wanted to be pampered, but I'd be completely treated like a child.

I'd be happy, but my feelings were mixed...

He held me not like a princess, but like a child.

I was almost thirteen, but when he treated me like this, I wondered when I might truly be seen as a woman.

"Is something wrong?"

He looked at me anxiously as my head hung in dejection.

"N-no!" I said. "I just had something on my mind."

His look turned thoughtful.

I'm begging you, please don't ask. I don't want to make a pathetic confession to the man I like that I'm worried over whether he'll ever see me as a woman.

"Milady..."

"Eh?"

My head came up. Sir Leonhard silently pointed at the sky, and I looked up like he wanted me to.

The radiant sunlight beating down made me squint, and a white shape flew overhead. Seagulls flew in file toward the ocean, the peculiar sound of their cries resounded through the air. They flew freely over the orange roofs that extended across the landscape. The scene seemed as if it had come straight out of a postcard.

"Wow!" I exclaimed in wonder.

Since I was higher than usual, it seemed like even the seagulls were within reach.

"Sir Leon, did you see? They were so close!"

"I did."

"Even the way they cried *mya mya* was cute!"

"They sound like cats, don't they?"

So black-tailed gulls were the same, even in this world.
I wonder if there were black-headed gulls as well?

“Though it seems like there are many of the real thing as well. Look, over there.”

“Huh? Where...oh!”

On the slanting downward roof of a home, three cats were enjoying their naps. There was a tabby, a white cat, and a light brown cat. It looked like they were using each other as pillows, and it was a very heartwarming scene. Three fluffy furballs. And the world was a better place because of it.

I couldn't help breaking into smiles, and said in a small voice, “They're so cute!”

Sir Leonhard froze, his eyes widening as he stared me.

Uh, uhm??

Did I say something to ruin the mood?

Or, uh, did I make a funny face?

In an instant, I became worried.

But in the next moment, my worries flew away.

“Yes... Very.”

Please don't say something like that with such a sweet smile.

As foolish, and therefore terrifying, as it was, I couldn't help thinking those words were meant for me.

Chapter 57: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ③

Embarrassed, I couldn't bear Sir Leonhard's gaze. I looked away, setting my sight on the scenery.

Tao was a rugged place. Houses dotted the steep slopes, and the winding roads and stairs made it complicated to navigate, not to mention all of the homes looked the same with their white walls and orange roofs made of unglazed bricks.

"It's like a maze," I said to myself.

"Indeed," he replied, clearly paying attention to me. "New visitors have a high chance of losing their way. If you enter without a guide and make a poor choice, it won't be easy to get out. Many who are unfamiliar with the town will choose to use these stairs instead, even if it means a detour."

The stair I was standing on had been built along the stone wall, so it was relatively easy to look over the city. It became a bypass to avoid the center of town, but you passed up opportunities to meet wonderful people. On the other hand, those who were familiar with its workings used the complicated roads in the center of town to go wherever they wanted. As long as the map has been beaten into your head, it seems like you can choose whichever road you liked.

This town had such an interesting makeup.

"It's rather thrilling."

"Thrilling?"

"Yes. Like I'm on an adven...ture..."

I thought nothing of my words until they came out of my mouth, then I realized how stupid I sounded. What part of walking on a stair made it an adventure? And I wasn't even walking by myself. How appalling.

I got carried away imagining it was like a dungeon. For someone who has seen

pretty much nothing except the inside of the palace like me, the complicated spread of the town looked like the stage of a fine adventure. Even if there weren't any monsters or treasures.

I thought he'd be scandalized, but Sir Leonhard smiled and gave a nod.

"I understand. I was lost here once when I was a kid, and it did seem a little like a grand adventure."

"Really? You did?"

"I was a profusely inquisitive brat who could not keep still. I got separated from my parents on purpose and got lost in the course of my explorations." His eyes became distant, as if he was seeing the past.

It came as a surprise that he was such an active child. I had always assumed, with no basis, that he had always been the calm person he was now.

"Did you get in trouble?"

"Of course. 'It's a different if it had only been you. Don't involve your two younger brothers as well!' my father said as he gave me a taste of his fist."

If I claimed they followed me on their own, I would get another serving, he added with a mischievous smile.

Was he like the leader of the group? I imagined him taking care of his little brothers even while he complained about them tagging along. I really wanted to see it: an overactive and smart-mouthed bratty Sir Leonhard who was nonetheless a caring older brother.

Nevertheless, it seemed like his family was rather forceful. I couldn't hide my surprise over that fact. After all, House Olsen was a distinguished family and held the rank of earl. I really wanted to meet his parents one day.

Oh. I wasn't wishfully thinking: as their daughter-in-law. Nope... Okay, maybe just a little.

"We've arrived at the bottom."

It happened while I was daydreaming.

"Thank you. If you will please set me down, I—"

“It’s easiest to lose sight of each other here, so please hold on a little more.”

“I understand...”

I was happy but also embarrassed, so I wanted him to put me down, but I lost to the pressure of his smile.

He may have been right, however. The moment we stepped onto a wider street, the foot traffic increased remarkably. Donkeys bearing luggage and carts wove their way through the crowd of people. Shops peddling a great number of rare goods were open for business on both sides of the road, all of them thriving. Getting lost while distracted by all there was seemed easy.

“Finding Master Julius will be...difficult.”

I looked at the crowd with trepidation.

“Truly. Ahh, well, someone taught me the landmarks, so we’ll manage somehow.”

Without hesitation, he joined the fray.

Down the line of shops with similar height we walked, until suddenly a single tall building popped out. There, we turned the corner until we came to the next landmark, a sign for restaurant and once again turned to the left. For a while, we were in a narrow alley.

“It should be around here...”

Sir Leonhard surveyed our surroundings as he walked. I imitated him, restlessly searching as well.

“Ah!”

“Did you find it?”

“There, in the store we just passed!”

He retraced himself a few steps, and we peered in. Inside, I could see the back of a tall, slender man. His light brown hair was combed back.

From behind I could see a resemblance, but I couldn’t see his face so I say it was for certain him.

He seemed to be in conversation with someone and probably wouldn’t turn

around for no reason.

We should just enter, but if we were wrong it'd be rather awkward. Wouldn't he at least give us a profile so that we could confirm his identity?

The heavens must have heard me. The man touched the back of his head with his left hand, and looked away from his partner. At the sight of his familiar face, I sighed in relief.

Great, we found him.

"It *is* Master Julius."

"He seems to be in the middle of a conversation. Let's wait a little."

"You're right," I nodded. We mustn't interfere with his work.

I was about to reply to Sir Leonhard when he suggested we go kill time somewhere, but I took another look at Master Julius. I could now see his conversation partner as well, probably due to his change in position.

It was a young woman.

I tilted my head to the side.

They must be talking about trade so it was a little unexpected since I was assumed his partner to be a portly gentleman or a burly sailor, but that wasn't why I was puzzled.

I had a feeling I'd seen her somewhere before, was it just my imagination...?

"Sir Leon."

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry, can we go back?"

He looked at me curiously, but he did as I asked.

If I saw her one more time, I might remember.

She didn't look low-born. I searched my memory.

Where? Where had I seen her before?

It wasn't recent, I thought.

The woman was stunning, but she had a fierce expression on her face for some reason. I've heard people say women, especially the beautiful ones, are

scary when they're angry.

Must be true, I thought, when images flashed through my mind like a bolt of lightning.

They were memories. Old memories, but not from my childhood. No, they came from even farther back, from my previous life.

"I remember..."

She was a character who appeared in the Dark Lord's route of the otome game.

Michael's full sister— —Bianka von Diebold.

Miss Bianka, why are you in a place like this...?

Chapter 58: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ④

No, no, no. I must have made a mistake, I thought to myself. All the while staring fixedly at the woman.

She had rich, wavy black hair. Almond-shaped amber eyes, strongly defined brows, and fine sculpted features. She had glossy red lips, and a beauty mark on the lower left side of her mouth. Her waistline was small, her bosom generous and her figure excellent. The high-collared dark blue dress she wore was simple, but it made her beauty stand out even more.

Make no mistake—it was Miss Bianka.

A little younger than when she appeared in the game, but definitely her in the flesh.

I can't possibly mistaken someone like her, but I didn't remember Master Julius and Miss Bianka ever being acquainted with each other in the game...

I dug through the faded memories from my past life.

Bianka von Diebold.

The eldest daughter of a viscount. I think she was 22 years old, a year older than Michael. She was a character who only appeared in Michael's route, and she was very popular among the players for her frank personality and caring nature, and they respectfully called her "Miss Bianka."

I loved her character as well. She was really cool.

In Michael's route, even though she was puzzled about Michael's transformation, she couldn't find anything wrong. The Priestess saw the darkness inside him, and together with Bianka, she tried to find the truth... Otherwise known as the True Route.

Throughout the route, the Priestess faced dangers and lost heart many times, but the one who protected and comforted her was always Miss Bianka.

Hey, whose route is this supposed to be? I remember thinking.

Well, I guess they didn't really have a choice since the purpose was to search

for Michael's true identity, but it was still pretty bad.

The one who protected the Priestess when Michael gradually began to show his yandere nature was Miss Bianka.

The one who scolded the Priestess for being scared of the truth, then held her close to comfort her was Miss Bianka.

In fact, after crying into Miss Bianka's chest for a while, the Priestess turned red and thanked her.

Seriously, whose route did this belong to? I wanted to ask the developing team.

To be honest, I couldn't accept the final CG for this route. After they were met with so many trials, why was it only Michael and the Priestess in the end? Forget Michael, what about Miss Bianka? Where was Miss Bianka?!

I wasn't the only one who grieved:

"I finished Bianka's route and I'm not sure why Michael is in the CG."

"You talkin' about Michael, the sister-in-law who intruded on the *Yuri End* with Miss Bianka?"

"Holy shit, that's scary."

"Was it a bug?"

"Sorry to disappoint, but don't hold out. The truth is... The hero of the True Route wasn't Miss Bianka, it was Michael!"

"(´ω´)(´ω´)(´ω´)w—WHAAAT?!"

A bunch of skits like that popped up all over the net.

They also had strange ways of praising the route. For example, "A character who stuck to not licking someone else's boot? Sold!" or "I have nothing against how messed up this scenario went."

I mean, yeah, it was an otome game you played to win the love of a bunch of hot guys, but it was different because none of the love interests were the high point of the game. It was so different, however, no one else could compare.

"Milady—"

Absentminded, I didn't hear him.

"Miss Marie."

Sir Leonhard's voice brought me back to my senses. I should have only been focusing on relevant information, but somewhere along the way I got sidetracked.

"Huh?! Yes?!" I raised my head and looked at him. He was smiling wryly, and he indicated with gaze to look at... I met eyes with a peerless beauty.

Inside, Miss Bianka was staring intently at me through the glass windows.

When...did she get so close?

And why was she looking at me with such sparkling eyes?

After that, we were also noticed by Master Julius and went inside.

This restaurant was run by an acquaintance of Master Julius. Since the hours of operation were at night, Master Julius borrowed it during the day for his discussions.

We seated ourselves inside at a table and briefly introduced ourselves...but since I was traveling in secret, I introduced myself as Marie. The story we gave was: I was the daughter of Sir Leonhard's friend. It wasn't exactly a lie. You'd only have to accept the king and his commander as friends.

"I'm sorry for calling uninvited."

"Not at all. Rather, I'm happy you came to see me," said Master Julius with a smile.

What a gentleman, I admired. He carefully looked away and muttered in a low voice that we had actually saved him.

I wondered if it had something to do with Miss Bianka, who had been staring at me this entire time?

Earlier she was so angry her brow arched, her anger plain to see; but now she was looking at me adoringly, her cheeks blushed prettily. She was so enticing I couldn't meet her eyes. To be honest, it was hard to keep my eyes off her.

"Say, Marie?"

"Marie?"

"Oops, I'm sorry. Was I too familiar?" she deflated sadly. I shook my head

quickly.

“N-not at all!”

I liked it. It was different. Other than family, almost no one ever spoke to me without some form of honorific.

“I was happy. Please, call me Marie.”

“Really?”

“Please.”

“Okay, then you should call me Bianka.”

“Bianka.”

When I said her name, she looked very happy.

In the game, she was so dashing and cool she put men to shame, but I don't think I've ever seen her smiling so charmed before.

Could it be... she liked children...?

“Marie, what is your favorite food?”

“Sweets, probably.”

“Your favorite animal?”

“Cats.”

“Oh really? Hehehe,” she laughed.

To be honest, I was a little scared. I'm not sure why, but I was filled with fear.

“What is the color of your favorite dress?”

“Blue.”

Wait. How long will this go on...?

Master Julius cleared his throat as if he sensed my weariness.

“Sorry for interrupting, but can we get back to the main topic?”

Miss Bianka shot him a cold glare. There was such a level of difference in the way she looked at him, I felt like I'd catch a terrible cold.

“You just reminded me,” she said. “I was asking you to explain why you can't

put the ships out to sea.”

“Eh?” I croaked. Instinctively, I exchanged glances with Sir Leonhard.

What did she mean by that?

Chapter 59: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ⑤

Author's note: Some descriptions are graphic, so be forewarned.

"There is that, but I still haven't asked the pri—Miss Marie why she called on me today."

Master Julius smiled with difficulty.

It was easy to tell from his slightly stiff expression that he'd brought this on himself. Since he was always so courtly and calm, it was actually refreshing to see him uncomposed—but now was not the time to sit back and enjoy the show.

Miss Bianka nodded seriously, as if to say, You're right, that's of utmost importance; but I eagerly cut her off and asked him, "What do you mean when you said the ships can't leave?"

"Huh?" he said, looking at me in confusion.

Which was only natural, since I haven't had the chance to tell him I wanted passage on his ship. I probably should have done it in the correct order, but it was a little too late now. What should I do, I wondered in a fluster. Seeing my confusion, Sir Leonhard came to my aid.

"Pardon me," he said. "We would like to hear what you have to say as well."

"I don't mind, but will it be of any service to you?"

"Please. Allow me to explain afterwards."

After a moment of thinking, Master Julius agreed. "Very well."

He began to tell us of a ominous rumor that originated from a single ship.

About a month ago, a ship from an island to the far southeast of the continent entered a small port town in the neighboring kingdom of Grund. Since it came from such a distant land, the journey must have been considerable, but there was actually little damage to the ship itself. However,

for some unfathomable reason, more than half of the crew were close to death. Three of them died at entry. Of the remaining 15 sick people, six more died without a cure. After a look at the ship's log, a rumor began to spread among the sailors: "Those who stay at sea at length will be haunted by the dead."

"It's not a disease?" asked Sir Leonhard.

"I wonder myself. So far, I'm not really sure." Master Julius neither confirmed nor negated his question. "But even if it was, it doesn't seem like it's directly transmitted from person to person. None of the symptoms have shown up in the people of Grund. That includes those who buried the bodies, the caregivers, as well as the physicians."

Thankfully, it didn't seem like the illness was spread through droplet transmission or contact, but if more than half of the people on the same ship were suffering from it, then there was cause to suspect other sources as well. For example, the water or food could have been contaminated.

As I silently listened to their conversation, I turned possibilities over in my head.

At first, I was preoccupied with getting a ship, but if this disease was infectious, then it must be top priority. A hypothesis inferred from the game was still just a hypothesis, after all. It didn't mean the time the disease emerged as an epidemic or the kingdom it spread in wouldn't change.

"If it was a disease of unknown cause then the fears of the sailors aren't unwarranted," said Sir Leonhard. "But it's becoming a bit farfetched."

Expression full of disgust, Miss Bianka chimed in. "*Exactly*. How did it become some ridiculous story about the 'dead'?"

"What was written in the ship's log?"

Master Julius pulled out a piece of paper with what seemed to be a summary of the contents and began to read it. "It was nothing out of the ordinary at first. Normal records of the weather, the sea state, the state of supplies, the conditions of the sailors, and the like. However, after a month or two of recordings, something unusual gradually began to appear."

"The worsened condition of the sailors?"

“Yes. About a month had passed when the sailors began to complain about languidness in the body and pains in their knees. ‘Probably a cold, sleep should cure it’ was written in the log. However, contrary to expectations, not only did their physical conditions not improve, the men’s spirits also became dejected.”

Fatigue and joint pains were indeed symptoms of the common cold. Unless it worsened, rest should be enough to recover from cases like the common cold or pneumonia. However, when there was still no improvement even after sleep, then there was a high chance it was something else.

“Next, it was written that large bruises appeared on their their thighs.”

“Bruises? They didn’t get those from crashing into something somewhere?” Miss Bianka asked suspiciously as she scrutinized Master Julius.

“Several people had the same symptom. I find it rather difficult to believe that they all hit their thighs at the same time,” he responded coolly. “Furthermore, after even more days had passed, their mouths and skin began to bleed. Eventually their teeth fell out, old sores opened up, and those bloodied sailors died.”

A silence fell over the group.

Sir Leonhard’s expression was grim, and Miss Bianka was slightly pale. Listening to these unimaginable symptoms, I also felt the blood drain from my face.

“It’s a bit late now, but I’m beginning to question your judgment for telling that story in front of Marie.” Miss Bianka glared at Master Julius coldly.

“N-no!” I shook my head quickly. “I wanted to be here, so please don’t worry about me.”

She didn’t look satisfied, so I put on a smile for her. It was probably strained and I’m sure my complexion was terrible, but I hoped she wouldn’t pay attention to it.

It may not have been a pleasant story, but I truly believed I needed to hear it.

“Is that how this story was tied to the dead, from these horrible deaths?”

“If only that was all. There are many among the sailors who have experienced

the initial stages of the symptoms. The longer a ship is out at sea, the higher the count. The sailors are afraid it will be their turn to die next if they're stuck on a lengthy voyage."

Since the appearance of the symptoms corresponded to the number of days on-board, the rumor must have manifested there.

"By initial stages, you mean the fatigue and joint pains?" Miss Bianka asked. "That's not unusual."

Master Julius sighed. "It may be nothing more than hysteria, but without a reason or a cure, persuading them is difficult."

"Nevertheless, you can't keep the ships docked forever. It will hurt your business as well as the livelihoods of your sailors."

"I am aware of that."

As Miss Bianka and Master Julius conversed, I sorted through the information I had at hand.

"Mm?" I made a small noise.

"Miss Marie?" Sir Leonhard queried in a low voice so that the other two wouldn't hear. He looked at me with concern, but I was desperately trying to put my thought together so I couldn't even manage a decent response.

Fatigue and joint pains in the initial stages. Their spirits became unstable... and after falling into depression, bruises appeared on their thighs.

Furthermore, after more days have passed, there was bleeding of the gums and skin.

Their teeth fell out, old sores opened, and eventually they died. A sailor's disease.

"I—"

Why was I being hit by déjà vu?

As soon as I asked myself, the answer came to me.

I've never actually met anyone who suffered those conditions. But I was certain I knew what it was.

It wasn't the vivid memory of firsthand experience, just plain knowledge.

Chapter 60: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ⑥

“Master Julius.”

“Yes?”

“What were the provisions like on that ship?”

He blinked a few times in surprise. I've been sitting with my head down this entire time, not taking part in the conversation. My sudden interest must have startled him, but he didn't try to ask funny questions and looked down at the document in his hands.

“Since it was for a long journey, it's hard to say they had an abundance, but they weren't left to starve. Their main diet comprised of salted meat and fish, hard biscuits, cheese, and beer.”

“In other words, only foods that preserve well over a long period. And they made no stops at ports along the way?”

“From what I can tell, that was indeed the case. Or perhaps there weren't any ports to stop by. There are some small islands from the southeast to the mainland, but they're either uninhabited or settled by minority groups with their own unique and longstanding cultures. Trespassing may bring unnecessary trouble.”

Did they decide there was nothing to gain by making a dangerous landing if the food situation was not desperate enough?

“I'm curious. Do the sailors from our kingdom eat and drink the same things?”

“Nebel's sailors? ... Much of it would be much the same, but a long journey the ships will enter port a few times to replenish food supplies. For a few days, there will also be fresh vegetables and meat.”

“I knew it...”

That was the big difference between the sailors from Nebel and the dead

sailors.

Master Julius picked up my words. "You knew?"

I noticed my blunder and shut up, but it was too late. Everyone's eyes were trained on me.

"Do you know something?"

Master Julius's characteristically sleepy green eyes were bright, and I had a nagging sensation he was expecting something from me... or was that just me?

I swallowed.

What should I tell them? How much should I reveal? How do I prove my claims? I haven't made up my mind on anything, but with the situation like this, there was no avoiding it.

A little desperately, I said, "I might know about that disease."

"Huh?!"

Only Miss Bianka expressed surprise. Sir Leonhard merely looked a little more alert. And Master Julius's eyes started to shine even more. I really wished he would stop pinning so much hope on me.

I discreetly rubbed my stomach, which had begun to ache with pain.

"Marie? What do you mean, you know what it is?" asked Miss Bianka asked, her confusion plain to see.

"I happen to have some knowledge of the symptoms Master Julius spoke of. But only from what I've read in a book..."

I could only think of two explanations on the spot: "I heard it from someone" or "It was written in a book."

If I heard it from someone, then I'd have to produce that person. With the sheltered life I've had, the people I've met have been quite restricted, so I only had one real choice.

Even with the book, if they ask for the origins of the source, I'm done for, but maybe I can deceive them by saying I forgot... Was that asking too much...?

"A book? Marie, you're reading something so difficult?"

Master Julius answered her: "I daresay Miss Marie is more of an avid reader

than any of us. She not only reads books from Nebel but from other kingdoms as well.”

Right? He sought my agreement, and I nodded faintly. Although it was mostly *him* who brought foreign books to me. Some of the books I haven't read yet, either. It was easier if they were written in the official language of a major nation, but books written in cognate languages were too hard. I'd spare no effort for research if there was a portion that interested me, though.

Miss Bianka looked amazed. “You know languages from other kingdoms? How amazing! Even though you're so small and cute I could just gobble you up!”

Please don't eat me.

“Miss Marie is very dedicated to her studies. Whenever I come across a rare book these days, I bring it back as a gift, with high expectations that if anyone can read them it be will her.”

Master Julius's eyes sparkled like a little boy's as he continued excitedly: I was afraid foreign books wouldn't make appropriate gifts for a child. Picture books, however, are either cookbooks or medicine books so I hoped she might enjoy just looking at the pictures, but I never expected she could read them.....

Sir Leonhard reined in their conversation. “You two, you're digressing.”

“Forgive me... Marie, will you tell us the rest?” Flushed, as if embarrassed he had to be reined in, Master Julius cleared his throat.

I nodded, “The main cause of this disease is in their diet.”

“Their diet?” Miss Bianka repeated and I turned to her.

“When a ship keeps sailing for a long time, like the one in Master Julius's story, the food inevitably starts to lack variety.”

“Right. Fresh meat and vegetables rot when not quickly consumed. There's no choice but to depend foods that will last for the rest of the journey, such as hard biscuit or wine.”

“Don't you think that can't be healthy for the body?”

Her expression became bewildered. “Well, I suppose...”

“Are you saying it’s malnutrition?” asked Master Julius.

I nodded firmly, “Yes. Such a lack of variety threatens their health.”

When I was a high schooler, I wrote a report on a world issue, one that began around the 15th century and lasted until the mid-17th century in what is now called the *Age of Exploration*, an era of European overseas exploration.

In those days, there was a disease sailors feared more than pirates. We now know what the cure for it is, but back in those days, because they didn’t even know what the cause was, 100 out of 180 men died on an expedition to India.

That disease was *scurvy*.

A terrible disease that develops with long-term vitamin C deficiency. Beginning with fatigue and joint pains, bruises form on the thighs, the skin and gums bleed, the teeth fall out, and then finally, death.

“I understand how important it is to eat well from my sister-in-law’s case.”

Lady Emma, Master Julius’s sister-in-law as well as Georg’s mother, returned to good health through a change in her eating habits and moderate exercise. He started off sounding like he was about to respond positively, but he immediately frowned.

“However,” he continuedly reluctantly. “It is difficult to believe that a healthy man will suddenly keel over a limited diet.”

Well, not an unexpected reaction...

It was obvious if you died because you couldn’t eat, but for the cause of death to be the diet even though you were still eating? Who could comprehend that. I didn’t know what to do. I had a headache.

“This is an example, but... What materials do you use when making brick?”

“B-brick?” Miss Bianka was stunned at the abrupt change of topic.

Head tilted to the side, Master Julius answered, “Clay and sand, as well as lime and water, I believe?”

“Then what happens it without one of those materials?”

This time, Sir Leonhard answered, “Having no clay is out of the question, and

without water you can't make a proper mixture. The brick will still harden without lime or sand, but it won't be a decent product."

"It becomes a problem of strength. Ahh, I see," Master Julius said understandingly. "So the human body is the same, is that right?"

"Yes. If it doesn't receive proper nutrition, the human body becomes fragile as well. At first it may be small... Nails become easily broken, hair becomes brittle, but if the malnutrition continued to that extent for a long time, won't health problems begin to appear everywhere?" I desperately appealed to him.

How difficult it was to explain without modern words. For example: a deficiency in vitamin C will cause fragility in your blood vessels, which may lead to bleeding easier. Or, vitamin C is necessary for the formation of collagen. There was no way I could explain all that with my own words. That's out of my domain. I was always in the humanities camp as well.

Master Julius seemed in thought. He was silent, but his extremely clear green eyes fixed on me. It seemed like he was looking straight into my soul, so I averted my eyes while I forced myself to endure.

"I understand."

"Huh?"

The solemn expression he'd been sporting this entire time disappeared as he smiled. "I'll believe you."

"Err, are you...sure?"

There was no confidence in my voice. I had nothing I could use as proof, and no books to support my claims. If I was going to bluff, I thought I might as well go big. The corners of Master Julius's eyes crinkled when he saw how exhausted I was.

"I don't know how I'll solve it, but I don't have time to be kicking around. My back was already against the wall, so the situation can't get any worse."

"Yes, but..."

"Besides, when it comes to you, there's a part of me that automatically believes there might be way."

Teasingly, Master Julius winked at me.

I told him he gave me too much credit, but he neither disagreed nor agreed.

“My apologies. On top of it all, I pretended like I was testing you.” Brows a little raised, he seemed unrepentant as he grinned. “Since I’m being so bold, dare I also hope you know how to solve this problem?”

That’s right. As long as Master Julius believed me, it wasn’t the end. It starts here.

Seriously, I nodded.

“I do.”

Chapter 61: The Reincarnated Princess's Request ⑦

To take preventative measures against scurvy, I introduced “sauerkraut.” It was fermented cabbage, frequently used as garnish in cuisine in Germany.

The way to make it was simple.

First, remove the core of the cabbage. Shred the rest and rub it well with salt. Transfer all of the juices into a container that has been disinfected with hot water, and place a weight on top. That was all.

“All that’s left is to place it in a cool area where the sun can’t reach for about a week so that it may ferment.”

Wiping my hands with a towel, I looked at Master Julius.

He held his chin with his hand and frequently glanced at the jar the incomplete product had gone into.

“It’s surprisingly simple.”

When I offered to make a sample, he immediately voiced his approval.

We’re in a restaurant right now, feel free to use the kitchen. What ingredients do you need? he asked animatedly. The trader’s blood in him must have been pumping.

His expression said, However challenging, I’ll give it to you.

I felt a little sorry for him when all I needed was cabbage and salt.

“Was it disappointing?” I smiled wryly. As if compelled by mine, the same smile appeared on his lips.

“To tell the truth, just a little.”

Maybe I should have asked for caraway seeds or bay leaves as well.

If I was making it by preference, I would’ve added bell peppers as well.

But it was important I made it extremely simple this time.

It was so that anyone can make it anywhere.

“However, if we can make it with so few ingredients and time, producing it in

batch is quite feasible.”

“Yes.”

“What comes next is figuring out how to distribute it...”

At his words, I hesitated.

I wasn't worried about how to spread it. I knew how I was going to do it, which is why I had Sir Leonhard and Miss Bianca adjourn. However, at this moment, I found myself lacking enough courage to put my shameless request into words.

My hands were tightly grasped, my lips pursed.

I gulped.

“Master Julius.”

“What is it?”

Very humbly, I said, “I... have a request.”

His eyes opened wide, but narrowed quickly, carrying an edge of seriousness. Wordlessly, he urged me on.

“Can you handle this as one of your products?”

He looked like he'd swallowed something wrong.

“Well, it would be a very convenient for me, but are you sure? Depending on how it is handled, it's a product that can yield a fortune.”

“No matter how much value it has, I don't have the means to make it known. Let's say I taught others how to make it countless times, free of charge. The most I'll manage to do is have them walk away at the end thinking it's too good to be true.”

There was a saying that said: there's no such thing as a free meal. Many people would be suspicious if they were offered something for free. Even if the recipe was passed out, people would have their guards. What's the catch? they'd think. It'd be a practice in futility.

To get the job done right, go to the one who specialized in it. Even if I had to humble myself and ask for help, as an amateur, turning to one who knew the business inside out was more sure-fire.

“If the man to do the job was you, Master Julius, with your wide connections and many customers who place their trust in you, then I can safely entrust the matter to you.”

“You honor me with your words.”

He smiled at me kindly, and my heart started throbbing painfully. It was painful to say the next part... but I needed to get it out.

“It’s selfish, but I have two conditions I’d like to stipulate...”

“Conditions?” he asked.

My statement left him with some surprise, but it didn’t change the mood.

“The first condition is, I want you to set the price low. I’m won’t be so stupid to ask you that set it so low you’re making a loss. Of course, you must cover the cost of the materials, labor production, transportation and other sundry expenses. It would be wonderful if you managed to turn a profit, but...”

“You want me to minimize it as much as possible.”

“Yes,” I said in a small voice, sounding unlike myself.

I was aware of how unfair my suggestion was. This product, if sold well, could become a goldmine. I put it in front of him, and now I was telling him not capitalize on it. I can only imagine the fights he’d have with his business partners.

“And your other condition?” he asked as tranquilly as ever, no hint of a raise in his voice.

Was he angry or not? Even with my different life experiences, it seemed I couldn’t read him. Still not sure whether or not I was lighting the fuse to his anger, I tossed the other bomb at him.

“I want the recipe printed on paper and attached to the product, so that anyone can make it.”

The shock must be on a whole different level. His eyes opened wide.

Master Julius might be able to accept the first condition if he was realistic about the the small profit and quick return. Demand would be high, and on top of that, he’d have monopoly. Depending on his abilities, it was possible for him

to still turn a high profit. However, the second condition would overturn the everything.

I was literally asking him to let go his monopoly and throw away the worth of his commodity.

Afraid of his reaction, my gaze dropped lower and lower, but I immediately straightened myself, ashamed.

“So it’s like that?” Master Julius said. It was directed at himself more than me.

“What?”

“I thought it looked very easy, or should I say, simple? Whenever you prepared anything for my sister-in-law’s fancy, you were always absorbed in what you made and devoted much time and care to it. If you had been cooking according to personal taste this time as well, wouldn’t you have added a small touch to make it taste even better? But you didn’t do that, and there was a reason for it. You made the most basic version so that anyone can make it in their own home.”

Am I right? He smiled a little proudly.

Hesitantly, I nodded. In my previous life, I really did add all of the spices I mentioned before to my sauerkraut.

“You’re truly diligent. You don’t just absorb the information; you put them to use and make them even better.”

“It’s nothing like that... Rather, Master Julius?”

“Hmm?”

“You’re not refusing?”

“Whatever for? I’m no saint, and neither am I so old I have no interest in the gem placed before me.”

“But if the method is well-known, then its market value will reduce to nothing.”

“Not at all. There are many ways to go about it,” he said without hesitation and I froze, composure forgotten as my mouth hung open.

“Well, it’s possible *if* and *only if* you’re willing to collaborate.”

“Of course! I’ll give you all my support!”

You’re so reliable, he laughed. I could say the same for him.

Only two thoughts went through my mind the entire time: whether I had troubled or made him angry. I was disappointed in myself, deeply ashamed of how my thoughts had turned so negative when a brilliant man of such great generosity was going out of his way to assist me.

“To change the subject, may I ask something that’s been on my mind?”

“What is it?”

His head was tilted to the side, and I was mimicking him.

“Why did you teach me how to make sauerkraut before you gave me your conditions? It was the trump card you should’ve held on to until the very end if there was a condition you wanted to force on me no matter what. Let me guess. Demonstrating it first would be a show of your sincerity if you asked it of a friend, but the room would clear in an instant. That’s why you showed it to a merchant, me.”

“You’re... not wrong.”

That really hit where it hurts. A bit beyond my control, my eyes watered a little. Depressed, I didn’t want to say anything, but it was useless trying to evade him. Inarticulately, I said, “Master Julius, I had no one else to turn to if had you refused.”

“Really now?”

“Yes. By that point, I would have let you do as you please.”

“What?” He was dumbfounded.

My face felt like it was bursting into flames.

“I thought I’d present my conditions even though I knew you would have something to say. If the product was under your care, nothing could possibly go wrong and it would reach farther than I could ever imagine. However, if you had refused, I thought I’d merely behave as a friend might, presenting a dish to you.”

Roughly speaking, I was leaving it up to him.

If I left it all to him from the very beginning, there will definitely be positive results. I knew that, but there was a part of me that resisted simply handing over the recipe over without trying to think of something myself. There was a big difference between the act of trusting someone and pushing all responsibility on to them.

That's why I tentatively added some conditions, but the fact that he could brush them off meant that there were problems with those conditions, loopholes not apparent to an amateur in trade like myself.

If it's like, then I should leave the rest to him, I thought.

I was only acting as a friend, so there would be no transfer of money or rights. Even if Master Julius reproduced it as merchandise, I could have no complaints...

"I'm sorry for being so cunning," I said feebly, but he didn't respond to my apology. Feeling something was off, I raised my head and met his wide-opened green eyes.

"You keep surprising me."

Huh? What did he mean by that?

"It's good that you're showing an eye for detail at such a young age; you know when to give something up. Moreover, you're not arrogant because of all that knowledge, and you don't seem to understand your own importance at all," he continued as if he had heard my thoughts.

I didn't know if he was praising me or criticizing me.

Aren't people fussier the older they get?

I may be big-headed, but at least I can see my full body.

My contrary nature reared its head as I reinterpreted everything he said.

"Once again, I am filled with the highest regard. You are truly the most tremendous young lady." Master Julius abandoned the casual manner of speech he had been using. He faced me with a straight back. "I accept your suggestion. I will do my best to live up to your expectations."

“Tha-thank you!”

My entire body went limp with relief, and Master Julius seemed to be smiling as he looked at me. A thought flickered across his face.

“Along the same line, I have two requests.”

He looked like a mischievous child as he held up two fingers.

Chapter 62: The Reincarnated Princess's Interview ①

“At last,” said father with a glance at me as I dragged myself into his room late that evening. He didn’t bother to hide the disdain in his expression or his voice.

My expression twitched. What did he mean, *finally*? I swallowed the words at the tip of my tongue and sat down where he indicated on the other side of the sofa.

Even if you snap at him here, he’ll only look down on you, I told myself, but he had to open his mouth and ruin it.

“Please take all the time in the world while you talk yourself into action,” he said with great sarcasm.

My brows knitted fiercely. It was because I was self-conscious that I had a hard time taking it easy. The one who knew best how far she was behind schedule was me!

“Various things have happened...”

“So it seems.”

In the quiet room, there was only sound of the pages as he turned them.

“While you were taking a stroll through the port town, there was an intriguing turn of events,” he said without a glance my way.

“Is that so?” I chirped to show I was paying attention, my smile unnatural. I kept wondering if my terrible acting might be busted, but it seemed like the truth might leak out on its own more than anything else.

“I’m curious, have you read about the uproar over the dead spirits of the sea? The ones that originated from Grund, which spread to each kingdom and was making its way through across the entire land? It seems like a solution was promptly discovered.”

I couldn’t answer falsely. All I could do was freeze. Meanwhile, father kept turning the pages of his document.

It wasn't the dead, but a disease, *etc.* The cause was malnutrition, *etc.* The solution on a long sea trip was to serve food with preserved vegetables, *etc.* I felt like I couldn't do a decent job of explaining a single one of those points.

"Something like the long term preservation of vegetables? Highly fascinating."

My lips were zipped and I hadn't said anything in a while, but he did seem to notice as he continued.

"On a long trip by ship, food problems cannot be overlooked. The masses would have been suspicious if it had been marketed as a magical product, but a long lasting food product is a different story. Even if the tout that it was capable of curing illnesses was a lie, it would be no loss. More so if it was cheap. I wonder, who in the world came up with this idea?"

"I haven't the slightest clue," I smiled sweetly but my strained voice sounded harder than I expected.

"The distributor is Julius zu Eigel. He's the uncle of your former fiancé candidate. An acquaintance of yours, no?"

"Yes. A wonderful man."

"In what way?"

"He is honest, benevolent, and talented."

"Ahh, indeed. Paper instructions detailing how to make it was stuck on each and every product. Truly benevolent," he said lightly, and I didn't know what to say.

It's my fault Master Julius is being made a fool of, I thought. Guilt won over anger. My hands curled into fists, my nails biting into the skin.

"Are they not selling?"

"I hear it's delicious in its simplicity. They say the included instructions make the basic version, so it's possible to change the taste."

What he just mentioned was one of the "requests," or perhaps I should say "conditions," that Master Julius gave me.

The basic recipe was written on the paper and the final product sold would be

the same version.

But depending on the herbs or seasonings, the flavor profile can change. In order to market the different possibilities, it seemed like they were selling condiments and unconventional spices together with the sauerkraut.

And, there was one more thing...

“Furthermore, if it really came with the blessings of a goddess, those devout seamen will follow each other’s example and buy it.”

“A goddess, you say?”

“This knowledge was apparently granted to Julius zu Eigel by the same goddess who saved his sister-in-law from the grips of death. The trade name is ‘*Dew of the Sea.*’ Takings its name from a plant that represents unchanging love and fidelity—its other name is ‘*Rosemary.*’”

Fwoosh. Father threw down his documents and they spread over the table. I chewed on my lip, no reply coming to mind as I watched.

“Why didn’t you claim the credit for yourself?”

“Father, it seems like you already know, so... Is that truly necessary?”

“What backward logic. If you think modesty is a virtue, you are sorely mistaken.”

Do you think you have that sort of leeway in light of your position? he added. I was put to silence by his words.

If I didn’t prove myself within the set amount of time, I would be forced to marry to the next kingdom. In order to avoid a political marriage, I couldn’t be saying something so complacent.

I was fully aware of that.

Then why did I not claim the credit this time?

I wasn’t trying to be modest, insisting it wasn’t through my efforts alone. Neither was I being arrogant, expecting it to be obvious even without it being stated.

The truth is, I was *scared.*

Because the knowledge I have came from a previous life. It was exactly because scurvy was so unfamiliar that it created such a commotion. It was highly unlikely that a method would be found to deal with it. I told Master Julius I had gained the knowledge from a book, but a book like that didn't exist. There was no point of looking through the palace, even if you searched the whole world you wouldn't find it.

It was unlikely father had missed such a contradiction. I looked down.

"Keep your head high," he suddenly startled me by commanding, as if he had read my thoughts.

"Eh?" I couldn't hide my surprise.

"If you intend to overcome this with a smile, see it through to the end. Averting your gaze is the same as confessing you have something to be guilty of."

I felt like I'd just been hit by those words. He was right. I was feeling guilty. I was afraid I'd be exposed, like a cheater who only writing the solution to a math problem without knowing the formula.

"It's written on your face again. You're truly terrible at negotiations."

With a glance at my frozen form, he gave a short sigh. In a relaxed manner he crossed his long legs.

I wasn't even provoked into responding when he said, Compared to you, your little brother still shows promise.

"Doing what your negotiating partner wants by showing your hand from start to finish is not negotiating. If there's something you don't want to answer, smile without saying anything. In order to make your partner comfortable, lead them to feel that way."

Your daughter doesn't even have decent poker face, what outrageous things are you saying!

But strangely, I felt no animosity.

It was true that I was no good at this, and if I could put his advice into practice

then it could only help.

Actually, judging from the flow of conversation, could I get out of this without having to reveal the source of my knowledge on scurvy?

I relaxed, letting my guard down.

As if he had been waiting for this very moment, he said, "So?"

"Yes, father?"

"Where did you come by information that neither the physicians, the chefs, nor the scholars of the palace had?"

Somehow, I could tell he was enjoying himself behind his expressionless mask. Like he instructed, I smiled and said nothing as I looked at him.

Chapter 63: The Reincarnated Princess's Interview ②

"No matter," father said after seeing my smile. Arrogantly, he asked, "What do you want? Spit it out."

Immediately, my face twitched.

Of course I wanted to say, Whose fault do you think it is, but I stopped myself. Now that it seemed like I didn't have to say anything about my knowledge on scurvy, I didn't want to go out of my way to seek trouble. The faster I ended this conversation, the faster I could run away.

I got straight to the point. "Preparations are complete, so I would like to leave the kingdom. I ask for your permission."

"Where are you going?"

He wasn't surprised. Not a single brow twitched. Even his frank question was probably a check of my answers. Where was I going? He must already know. If that was the case, I had to face him with equal candidness.

"To Flamme."

"You intend to chase the Eigel heir?"

"Yes, father."

In this less than one month's time, several letters had come from Georg. They took the overland route and had already entered Flamme a long time ago. Even now I'm sure they were desperately searching for a clue for the medicine. I couldn't allow myself to sit back and let them take care of any more than this.

With renewed determination, I glared at him.

"All right." He nodded easily, almost mockingly.

It was so unexpected, I was shocked.

"Why are you surprised? The one who made an agreement with me to move around freely was you, was it not?"

“Yes, but...”

Yes, I was the one who approached him.
But I never expected him to agree so readily.

I wasn't convinced and stared at him suspiciously.
Rather cynically, I was thinking that he must be scheming something.

“It seems like you've also arranged a ship by yourself. I have no reason to stop you.”

I said nothing.

“However.” He paused.

Here it came!
What unreasonable demand was he going to force on me?!

Staring straight at me as I put up my guard, he said, “Leave Leonhard.”

“What?” I said croaked. It sounded so faint I didn't even recognize it as my own.

There's been so many surprises, but this topped the cake.

What did he just say?

“I can turn a blind eye to a nearby stroll, but I cannot permit him to go with you to another kingdom. He is not your caretaker. He is the commander in control of the Order of the Royal Knights. If you want a means to defend yourself, take your own knight.”

Fair enough. His reasoning was sound, and I had no comeback for it.

If I thought about it normally, it was easy to understand. As the leader of the Royal Knights, it was unlikely that Sir Leonhard would ever be allowed to go with me to another kingdom at my convenience.

Yet that possibility never occurred to me.
What a dunce.

How many times has my father sighed as he gazed at me, frozen with my mouth gaping?

“Did you forget?”

“Yes, father...”

“It didn’t fit your ‘request’ and that’s why you didn’t reckon it. I’ve spoiled you too much.”

“Yes, father...”

Who have you spoiled too much?! I didn’t say it.

But even without voicing it, I knew I probably relied on Sir Leonhard too much.

Whenever he was next to me, I felt safe knowing I could talk to him anytime. Even though I shouldn’t have forgotten that as a man in a position with much responsibility he was under a lot of pressure.

Seized with panic, I tried to pretend I didn’t notice this embarrassing fault.

I was terrible. The very worst.

Even though I understood now, I still couldn’t bow my head sincerely and admit my mistake. Really, what was to be done with me?

Father broke the stretched silence.

“You do understand he is an extremely talented and renowned man?” he asked abruptly.

I raised my head. Hesitantly, I nodded. “Um, I do.”

Even without his title as the Commander of the Royal Knights, Sir Leonhard was already a man of note. The name of the Black Lion was well-known through the neighboring lands, and there were many young knights in other kingdoms who aspired to be like him.

“Think how it looks to the people around you when you have a man like that serving you.”

“How it looks to the surrounding people,” I repeated.

“That’s right. The moment you achieve something, do you believe those spectators will praise you?”

I covered my mouth with my hand and said nothing. I thought about it like he told me to.

If I asked Sir Leonhard to travel with me.

If everything went well, I obtained the medicine, and I succeeded in preventing the spread of the disease in the Kingdom of Wind, would the people around me praise me?

“I do not...”

The answer was no.

All would assume it was Sir Leonhard’s achievement.

In order to gain fame, the princess used him. There would also undoubtedly be those who assumed she stole the credit.

If the situation was the same as usual, I wouldn’t have even minded. It wasn’t like I particularly desired fame. Even if they suspected me of stealing credit, it was better than standing out for peculiar reasons. I was simply if happy I could live in peace. Marrying Sir Leonhard afterward would have been the icing on the cake.

But it was different now.

I wanted success. I had to prove it to everyone around me.

In order to stop my arranged marriage in another kingdom, I needed accomplishments.

“First, make a name for yourself. Polish yourself, not losing even to Leonhard when you stand next to him.”

Sir Leonhard was the strongest swordsman in the kingdom. A superior commanding officer. To top it off, his name as a great knight was known throughout the lands, and father wanted me to stand on the same level as him? What level was that supposed to be?

Impossible. Absurd. Even if I reloaded my life ten more times, it was near hopeless.

What nonsense was he saying to young girl in her early teens!

Even though I thought the words, my face disregarded my inner voice as the corners of my mouth lifted up.

No matter how hard this road may be, if it led to him—to Sir Leonhard—then I wanted to keep going.

I was aware I was being taken in, but there was no turning back.

“I will devote myself to it,” I smiled.

Wordlessly, he nodded at me.

Chapter 64: The Reincarnated Princess's Preparations

“How is this color?”

Slim fingers combed through my hair. I looked up and met the eyes of the beautiful woman standing behind me through the blur-free polished mirror. I could see myself reflected in the silver-rimmed monocle she wore on her right eye.

“I’ve made the color slightly darker than Mr. Belmar’s, but Your Highness’s hair is soft so under the sun it should look about the same.”

In the mirror, my hair had been dyed a little darker brown than Klaus’ own.

In an instant, the face I was so used to seemed like it now belonged to someone else.

Admiring how big my own impression had changed from the hair color alone, I nodded.

“Thank you, Lady Irene.”

“No, it is I who should give thanks. You have my gratitude for helping me with my experiment,” she said with a smile as she cleared away and folded the cloth she was using instead of a styling cape.

As her words might suggest, the dye used to turn my hair dark brown had been an invention of hers.

Of course, dyes similar to henna, indigo and the like existed in this world. However, it took as much as five hours for the color to take. What’s more, once you dyed with them the color doesn’t come off. They weren’t easy to experiment with. They also smelled terribly.

“To remove the color, please take a hot bath. Water won’t wash it off.”

“That’s a relief. I was wondering what I’d do if a wave hit us and I fell into the water,” I said while accepting a jar filled with the dye.

She smiled wryly. “Rather than the color of your hair, the bigger issue would be you falling in. Please stay indoors where you won’t be swept away.”

“I’ll act accordingly...”

I can’t say I was excited at the thought of cooping up inside. I’m sure my thoughts must have shown on my face, because her smile deepened.

When I stood up from the mirror and turned around, Lutz and Theo, who had been silently waiting until now, decided to speak up.

“Hey, *you*. What’s going on?”

“Huh?”

“We heard you were leaving the kingdom, so it’s true?”

Approximately ten minutes ago they barged in with enough force to break down a door, but before they could chew into me their master silenced them with a chilly look. They quietly waited in the corner of the room until we finished, suggesting how well they had been trained.

“It’s true,” I said.

They bombarded me with questions.

“Where? To do what? With who?”

“I have business in Flamme, and I’m going with Klaus.”

Lutz’s eyes opened wide in disbelief. With a fierce look on his face, he shouted as he held on to both of my shoulders. “Alone with *that* guy?! You’re joking!!”

At point-blank range, my eardrums seemed like they would burst from his loud voice.

“That ‘guy’? *Klaus*? What’s there to worry about?” I asked, baffled. I barely started before he cut me off.

“Or rather, I want you to tell me why anyone would be worried when that completely devoted to you mad dog is likely to bite anyone who approaches you to death.”

“Lutz, calm down. Sir Belmar won’t allow harm to come to the princess. On

that one point only you can rest assured.”

Theo lightly tapped a few times on Lutz’s hands and removed them from my shoulders. His words sounded supportive, but they were actually quite harsh. That one point only... Meaning nothing else was trustworthy?

“More concerning to me, princess, is that you will only have one escort.”

“It... can’t be helped.”

Theo’s eyes became sharp. “Because it’s too conspicuous?” His expression and voice was hard. Gone was his usual cheerful and pleasant personality.

“To go so far as to dye your hair, this is no official visit. On the other hand, Flamme is too far for a secret jaunt. Exactly what sort of danger are you trying to poke your nose into?”

How startling. Theo was sharp. Unintentionally, my shoulders trembled a little. The small motion didn’t escape his notice, and the dangerous look in his red eyes increased.

“Prin—”

“That’s far enough. Fool apprentices.” A pretty hand cut in between me and Theo. Silently supervising until now, Lady Irene stood protectively in front of me. “Only toddlers are allowed to ask every question that comes to mind. Use your head a little to think and speak for yourself.”

She sighed, looking at them with exasperation.

“The princess may call you friends, and while that may be true, it does not mean you are permitted to do whatever you desire. Her Highness has responsibilities and circumstances that comes with her position. Do you believe she can share everything with you? Cease exaggerating your own importance.”

Theo tried to object, but he swallowed his words. He chewed on his lip in frustration.

Lutz sulked and turned away.

I didn’t want to make them feel like this, but honestly, I was very grateful for Lady Irene’s support. There was no way I could explain everything to them, and

I didn't want to lie to them either.

"I'm sorry, you two."

"Princess..."

"It's all right. I'll make sure not to get in much trouble, so please don't worry."

"Your words are hardly assuring," Theo said bitterly.

It's hard to argue with that, I thought, smiling wryly. I knew how vague my words had been.

Lutz frowned, looking at the ground. "If only we could go also with you." He's grown taller and matured in his looks so much these past few years, yet here he was sulking like a child.

"As wizard apprentices, it won't be easy for you to leave the kingdom. I promise to come back safely, so please wait for me."

Standing on tiptoes, I reached out and patted his fine, silk thread-like silver hair.

Don't treat me like a child, he said. He puffed out his cheeks, but he didn't shake my hand off.

I feel like I have a tsundere little brother, I thought, but that was my little secret. He'd definitely be angry if he knew.

"Princess, I have an amulet to give you later. Will you take it with you?"

"An amulet?"

"Ah, me too! I'll give you one too!"

So ["traveling amulets"](#) existed in this world as well. Probably not like the rectangle ones made out of cloth I was imagining. Either way, I was happy to be in their thoughts, so I should accept them gratefully.

"Thank you," I said.

They smiled happily.

"By the by, princess... Where is your traveling companion?" Theo asked, as if it had just occurred to him.

"Now that you mention it," Lutz glanced at the door, "that's a different

guard.”

Like they said, today’s guard was not Klaus but someone else.

“Since we’ll be gone for a while, perhaps he’s taking care of his work. He seems busy.”

I looked away as I reflected on the day I spoke with Klaus.

I’m going on a journey, I want you to come with me, I suddenly said to him and he nodded without question.

Paperwork was piling up, and he also needed to hand his work to someone during his absence. Even though it was extremely inconvenient for him, he smiled widely, too self-satisfied for my liking.

I admit, I was a little afraid.

Going on a trip alone with Klaus, who was full of high spirits, I was nothing if not worried.

Won’t someone please make him calm down, I silently cried while remembering his cheerful face.

Chapter 65: The Royal Guard's Training

※ This chapter is in Klaus's POV.

“Ahh!”

A woman cried out at the same time the rattan basket fell. White sheets were strewn across the corridor.

Was she nervous? Embarrassed? The young maid's expression stiffened as she apologized in a thin voice.

“M-my deepest apologies.”

She tried to fold the sheets in a panic, but her hands were shaking and they fell again. I picked up the basket that had rolled to my feet, and placed it next to her. She looked up, and her hazel eyes widened when I held out a hand.

“Uh, umm.”

She hesitated.

“Please stand. You'll get dirty.”

A little forcefully, I took her hand and made her stand up. She froze, hardly daring to breathe. Letting go, I gathered the laundry and lightly dusted it before dropping it back into the basket.

“Here you are.”

Almost shoving, I handed it back to her.

“Th-thank y-you.”

Shaken as she was, she accepted it. I couldn't help smiling bitterly when she looked up at me with those eyes, like a frightened little creature's.

“You're welcome. Please take care not to injure yourself.”

Her face flushed. She nodded vigorously.

“P-Please excuse me—!”

She turned on her heels and hurried away with the speed unfitting of

someone raised in a decent family. As I watched her retreating figure, I touched my cheek.

What the hell was that? Was I some sort of monster?

I stood there feeling depressed when someone hailed me from behind.

“Heeey, ladies’ man!”

I turned around to find my fellow knight, Dennis, standing there.

“Even though it wasn’t your intention, don’t lead innocent girls astray. Don’t you pity them?”

“Don’t slander others. All I did was pick up the laundry.”

“‘All’ you say? I find it highly unusual that *you* would even do something like that,” he teased.

I frowned, but I couldn’t refute him. Normally, I would’ve given the basket a glance and walked by. Why, then, did I do that? The answer was simple.

“Why are you in such good spirits?” he asked.

As he pointed out, I was in an excellent mood. If I elaborate, I’m downright festive.

“No reason.”

“You shouldn’t lie. The young maids are in a tizzy because a curt guy like you is suddenly all sunshine and smiles. And then there was your superior officer, the one who dislikes you. He was trembling with fear, wondering if you had finally gone insane.”

He was making a lot of noise, but I found it hard to deny. I knew which incident he referred to.

Whenever my superior officer and I passed each other, he always made snide remarks. Usually, I stared at him coldly and kept my silence, but this time I slipped. I’d smiled at him brightly and said, “*I’ll work hard.*” I wouldn’t fault him for doubting my sanity.

“Honestly, what happened? Did your precious master praise you or something?”

“No. If that was the case, I wouldn’t be like this.”

“Oh really now? Spare me.”

Dennis shrugged, big and exaggerated. He seemed to be mocking me with his faint smile.

I was irritated. “If you have no business with me, then I’m leaving.”

I walked away and he didn’t stop me.

“You can celebrate, but you shouldn’t be a bother to your master,” he called out from behind with his relaxed, drawling voice. I didn’t look back.

He’s ridiculous, I thought.

Even if I was festive, I’d never relax my guard. I’d never allow myself to hinder Princess Rosemarie.

My resolution was solid but none of it appeared on my face as I completed my work dispassionately.

Before I knew it, it was already evening.

I’ve finished handing over the more urgent matters, but I didn’t return to my own room. Instead, I headed to a different location.

Lamps were lit in equal intervals, the palace shone even brighter in the night. I passed through, aiming for the training grounds at the far end. All signs of human activity gradually fell away, and a nocturnal bird cried in the distance. The fire for the watchmen crackled with the stirring of a semi-warm wind.

My soles crunched as I stepped on the pebbled ground. The training ground was still, the hustle and bustle of the day seemed unreal. In the pitch dark, the light from the fire behind me stretched my shadow.

“You’re here,” said a low voice. It went straight to the point.

A long shadow leaning against the wall shifted. At the same time, the surrounding area illuminated faintly; the clouds parted, and the moon seemed like it was showing its face.

To my eyes, which had begun adjusting to the darkness, this light was almost dazzling.

I promptly closed them, only to slowly open them again.

A dark figure stood in front of me, the pale moon behind him. The passing breeze blew at the hem of his uniform and his black hair. He was outlined by the moonlight, and his dark eyes were focused on me.

I couldn't see his expression, but this sensation, as if a sword was being held to my throat, instinctively had me holding my breath. I was overpowered by a single look.

"What is your order... commander?" I said to cover up my agitation. When I finished speaking, he—Leonhard von Olsen—silently tossed something at me. It flew in an arc and I caught it with my left hand. It was a training sword with a blunt edge.

"Don't tell me the reason I was called here was—"

"For training, as you can see. You'll practice every day until the day you depart."

"What?! I haven't heard of this!" I immediately balked, but he turned a deaf ear to my complaints and took off the coat of his uniform. "I may not look the part, but I *am* busy."

"What a coincidence. So am I," he remarked unsympathetically while rotating his shoulders.

Of course, there was no competition when it came to the difference in our workloads. Even though I had a pile of work I needed to complete in advance, it was nothing to write about considering the duties he had on top of his position. Tsk. I held my tongue.

"If that's all you want to say, then get ready."

There was much I wanted to say, but when the commander told you to do something, you did it. I realized it would do me no good to protest, and reluctantly tugged at the collar of my uniform.

I grumbled to myself. "Why all of a sudden—"

"I've been watching you recently, and today I had the idea."

My shoulders stiffened at his response. The words of my colleague flashed through my mind.

“Judging from your reaction, it seems like you’re already aware of it.”

I said nothing.

“Silence is considered the same as confirmation.”

“Hardly... It’s not like I’ve been a hindrance to anyone.”

“I’m saying it because you can’t bring yourself to admit it. Such a frivolous man can hardly be trusted with Her Highness.”

“Are you suggesting—?!”

A sharp sound whistled through the air.

With a speed my eyes couldn’t keep up with, he thrust his sword at my throat. His eyes glared at me with the same sharpness of the sword’s edge—no, even *sharper*.

Like the eyes of a beast in the dark, they reflected the moon’s light.

Cold sweat dripped down my back as I was directly assaulted by his bloodthirst.

Even though the sword stabbed at me was not intended for killing, I had a hard time breathing. A single movement and I’d be dead.

The “black lion” once feared on the battlefield had appeared before my eyes.

“Her Highness is the treasure of this kingdom. A jewel which should never be lost. Entrust her to a man who can’t even follow these slow sword movements? Not a chance,” he spat.

I was dumbfounded. Although I wasn’t aware when his sword moved, was there a need to mock me!

But when I looked closely, I noticed the hand he held the sword with was not his dominant one. I was stunned he could move so well even with his left hand.

“Show me if you can even stand against me with my dominant hand tied.”

He pulled back the sword’s point and brought it down in an arc. At the same time, the intimidating aura disappeared, and I breathed out with all the energy in my lungs. My heart hammered in my ears, disgustingly so.

“If you think it’s impossible, say it quick. I’ll choose someone else.”

“No!” I negated instantly, breathing ragged.

Hand over my duty as Princess Rosemarie’s protector to someone else? Not a chance here either!

“This is my sworn duty. I will not give it to anyone.”

I put my strength into my words, and glared at him almost challengingly, but his expression did not crack even a little.

“Don’t push yourself. There are others who are qualified,” he said smoothly.

Was I to let him get away with saying that?

“Allow me to make you swallow those words...”

I smiled dangerously. I knew I was rising to his clear provocation, but there was no way I’d back down after this. My sword readied.

The corners of his mouth lifted up as he watched me.

“Try me.”

He was full of calm and confidence. It irked me.

As a parting gift to myself, I vowed I’d make him fall to his knees at least once.

Chapter 66: The Reincarnated Princess's Departure ①

Time passed by in the blink of an eye while I was hard-pressed making preparations, gathering information, and studying. By the time I noticed, about half a month had passed since I asked my father for permission to leave, and today at last was the day we departed.

The time could still be called early morning, but the port town was crowded with people. I made my way through the thoroughfare even when it seemed like I'd be swept away by the human tide, but the harbor was no different. It was congested. I slipped by a traveler who was loathe to part with their escort, wove my way through the sailors who were hard at work getting ready for set off, and drew closer to the ship.

I sighed in admiration as I looked up at the ship, glorious against the clear blue sky.

“How magnificent.”

The exterior of the carvel-built ship was painted blue and the three masts were wooden. The first two were attached with squared sails, and the last was a triangular fore-and-aft sail. Its grand appearance had a strong resemblance to the first ship to make the trans-Atlantic crossing during the Age of Discovery — [“Santa María”](#).

My first sea. My first ship. My first foreign kingdom. Just imagining it brought a lump to my throat. Naturally, my worries and fear of a strange land haven't disappeared, but I was also filled with hope.

“Marie,” said a bright tenor voice.

From behind, someone took my hand and pulled me back. I turned around and found Klaus, my royal guard, peering at me. He wasn't in his familiar knight's uniform. Instead, he sported black trousers and boots, and a white shirt with a simple deep blue vest. The cloak he wore on top of that protected him from the sun and rain, and probably kept the long sword he wore at his hips

from standing out as well.

“Please don’t go ahead without me. I’ll lose you,” he said, looking slightly troubled.

When I saw this fine young man, the corners of my mouth started to twitch.

Stop, Rosemarie! You can’t suddenly ask him, *Who are you?*

I smiled. “I’m sorry, big brother.”

Warning myself sternly, I obediently stood in line with him.

Today, I was not Rosemarie von Wervard. I was simply Marie. The daughter of Master Julius’s acquaintance, and Klaus’s little sister. I was going to visit my older sister, who had married in Flamme.

In order to further change my image, I loosely braided my dark brown dyed hair over the shoulder. My attire was a dress made out of white linen with a bright blue overskirt. The clothes were lighter than usual, but I was wearing a cloak like Klaus so I was hot.

“Careful, watch your step,” he prompted with a gentle expression as he guided me to the wharf.

I couldn’t get over how well he was playing the role of an older brother, much better than I ever expected. *Especially* after he was so disgustingly giddy for several days after I asked him to go with me. When I tested the waters and called him “big brother,” he grinned foolishly, so good looking it couldn’t possibly be legal. To get used to it, I made him practice speaking casually with me behind closed doors, but it came unnaturally and he kept being polite. It was terrible.

The lines that had relaxed ever since that certain day disappeared, and each time he got a new bruise or graze he became more dashing.

What in the world was happening to Klaus?

Well, whatever it was, the good news was he calmed down.

While I was walking and worrying endlessly, a burly sailor in front of me looked down at me.

“Ohh, what a cute guest. On a trip with big brother?”

“Yes. I’ll have to trouble you for a short while. Pleased to meet you.”

“Oohh, what a polite young lady. Nice to meet you as well.”

There were laugh lines carved into his masculine suntanned face. The sailor grunted and patted my head with a giant hand.

“Big brother, you have a great little sister. She’s adorable.”

“Indeed. She’s my pride.” Klaus smiled sweetly.

From his easygoing air to his calm expression and his excellent posture, right now he was very attractive no matter which angle you observed him from. Even though he was a little quiet, you could tell he was a good guy who doted on his little sister.

Strangely, I wasn’t taken in by the act. In fact, I was getting goosebumps. I wondered why. On a looks alone basis, Klaus should be harmless enough, so why did I feel like I was seeing something I shouldn’t?

I rubbed my arms and looked away from him, but I kept an ear on their conversation.

“This time we have so many beautiful ladies. Really brightens up the place, ahh.”

“Are there other female passengers?” I raised my head.

“Yeah. Over there.”

When I turned to where to where the sailor pointed, I found a group who stood out from the rest.

There was girl a few years older than me, accompanied by a woman who looked like a maid and a guard in armor. A pretty girl with wavy reddish blonde hair and blue eyes. She had a light dusting of charming freckles across her fair skin. Judging by her pink dress with its abundance of lace and frills, and the white parasol she carried, she came from a good family.

However... Even though I thought she looked refined, was I the only one who found it unsuitable for sea travel?

“Is she also boarding the ship?” Klaus asked the question on my mind. He was probably thinking the same way, there were wrinkles around his brows.

“Ahh. According to the rumors, she’s the daughter of a good family and related to House Eigel. And, just between the two of us...” For no reason, the sailor lowered his voice. He leaned toward Klaus and brought a hand up to cover his mouth, as if they were having a private conversation, but he naturally had a loud voice so I heard everything anyway. “Apparently, she’s the rumored goddess.”

“Goddess?” I said in surprise.

What goddess? Where was this rumored goddess from?

“What?” Dubiously, Klaus responded a beat slower than me.

Surprised by his low rumbling of his voice, I looked at him. For some reason, the look in his eyes had become strangely sharp.

Uh, hey, wait... When did your mask start slipping, Klaus? I mean, why are you angry?

“Oh? You two don’t know? Right now there’s this food called ‘Dew of the Sea’ that’s making explosive sales. It’s the story of that product’s inventor.”

I paled and my original worry faded away. The sailor didn’t notice the change in Klaus at all and continued chattering.

Hold on, what?

Right now he mentioned “Dew of the Sea” right? It can’t be...

“To hear it from Master Julius, she seems like an unearthly beauty. What’s more, she’s a lady with a pure heart like a goddess’s.”

Ahh, I got it wrong. It wasn’t about me.

Yes, yes, I misunderstood, I misunderstood—

“Why do you say this girl is her? You only said she was a beauty, aren’t you being hasty in jumping to conclusions?”

“Er, well. Look at her. She’s related to the Eigels, and whoever’s listened to Master Julius’s story knows that she has blonde hair like the sun, and eyes like the sky reflected in the sea. Don’t you think she’s a perfect match?”

Klaus glanced at her with cold eyes. “Like the sun? If it’s a very dull one.”

“B-big brother! I, I want to go on the ship soon!” I forcibly grabbed his hand.

Tugging continuously, I walked toward the ship.

The sailor smiled affably, waving at us as he said, “Sorry for keeping ya.”

He didn’t seem to suspect a thing, but I was sweating disagreeably.

“Now see here, big brother. Can you *not* show your true character?” I casually released his hand and slightly glared at him.

Klaus looked like he’d swallowed a frog as he turned his face away. “I could not reconcile that fraud with the goddess who created ‘Dew of the Sea.’”

Before we left, I had explained the situation to him to some extent. Of course, I didn’t touch on the areas about the likely spread of the disease or my foreknowledge of the future, but I did tell him that I was going to Flamme in search of the medicine, and that Georg and the others were helping me. Afterward, I also told him that the one who created “Dew of the Sea” was me, and that I had asked Master Julius to distribute it.

And that must be why he couldn’t accept it.

Honestly, I would’ve perfectly preferred that we finish our business without standing out. If people noticed us it would make it hard to move around, so it was much better, but whether I could convince him to see it my way or not was questionable.

“You know, big brother...”

A charming female voice drowned out my voice.

“Marie!”

My eyes widened in surprise. All escorts should have been turned down. Furthermore, there weren’t a lot of people who knew my assumed name. Nonchalantly, Klaus protectively positioned me behind him, and I peeked at my surroundings from his shadow. The voice revealed itself from above.

“Over here. On the ship!”

I was stunned to find a beautiful woman leaning from the ship’s deck, waving her hand at me. “Miss Bianka!”

“I’m so happy to see you again! So we *are* on the same ship.”

The one lavishing me with friendly smiles was the beautiful lady I had just met for the first time the other day. It was Michael's older sister, Bianka von Diebold.

Chapter 67: The Reincarnated Princess's Departure ②

What was Miss Bianka doing here?! I recovered from my daze at once. I quickly finished the boarding protocols and crossed over with the plank they used for a ramp as I ran up to her. The moment I moved on to the ship, her waiting arms wrapped around me and I found my face unexpectedly buried in her ample chest. “Ur, mph!” “It’s been so long! I missed you, Marie!” “M-Miss Bianka, can’t breathe!” Suffocating, I lightly pushed against her arms. “Oh, sorry! I was just too happy.” She hurriedly let go. She was smiling with her entire face as she stared at me. “You’re so cute, and... Hmm?” Her words cut off, as if she had noticed something. “Marie, you seem a bit different from the other day?” “Err, well.” So my disguise was only this good?

I had only counted on keeping it up, so this came as quite a big shock. Even though I changed my clothes, hair style, and hair color. That was it. That was how it went. Whatever she thought of me as I hemmed and hawed, for a while she appeared to be in thought before she got close to my face and whispered in my ear, “Are you perhaps in disguise?” “Huh?!” I looked up with great force. Oh no, did she find out I was a princess? I sweated. “How...” “I’m right? You seemed well-bred. I imagined you were the daughter of a respectable family, and I’m correct,” she said in a low voice, smiling like a child whose prank had pulled off successfully. It seemed like my identity hadn’t been blown.

Surreptitiously, I breathed a sigh of relief. “Ah. I’m sorry, if that’s the case,” she drooped sadly. “I said your name in such a loud voice and made you stand out.” “It’s fine.” I shook my head. “It’s unlikely there will be someone who knows me around here, and even my disguise is just in case there is someone who might. Actually, you found me out immediately.” I smiled wryly and touched my cheek. Her eyes rounded. “The atmosphere around you *has* largely changed, though? At first, even I didn’t think it was you.” “Huh? Truly?” “Yes. It’s ridiculously to my taste... I mean, I saw you walking around and thought, *Wow, what a cute girl*. And then I realized it was you.” I feel like I just heard something inappropriate, but I must’ve heard wrong. I wonder why I’m getting chills? My

instincts commanded me to retreat from Miss Bianka's seductive smile, so I took a step away. Arms came up from behind and pulled me back. It threw me off balance and I fell, only to be stopped by a strong chest. "Marie, our luggage are coming soon." My offender was Klaus. His lips were in the shape of a smile, but his green eyes were bearing down on me sullenly. "Big brother..." Eek. I forgot about him. "Brother? Yours, Marie?" "Oh. Yes. His name is—" "Klaus." He cut me off, perfect smile on his face. "I thank you kindly for looking after my sister." What a shady smile, but those who didn't know him well would probably only see pleasantness. Miss Bianka must have been tricked as well, there mixed feelings were showing on her face. But against my expectations, she wasn't being charmed by him. On the contrary, her beautiful eyebrows seemed slightly puckered, or was that just my imagination? Still looking conflicted, she introduced herself tersely. "Bianka." She probably omitted her family name so that people won't find out she's an aristocrat, but even if I make an allowance for that, that was pretty short, I thought. With folded arms, she kept looking at him with a critical eye. "Your brother doesn't bear much of a resemblance to you." "No. I resemble our mother, and he resembles our father." I gave her the answer we'd prepared ahead of time. We figured people might point it out. *Hmm*. She nodded, but she didn't look like she bought it. "Marie, we should get going." "Oh, yes. Goodbye, Miss Bianka..." "Sorry I kept you. Bye for now." I returned her wave while Klaus urged me to keep moving. As we walked side to side on our way to the cabin, he murmured, "Who does she think she is, acting so familiar." Easily, I punched him in the chest and ordered him to keep up his facade. "Brother, your tone."

There might not be anyone around, but I didn't want him to lose focus. "The way she looks at you is peculiar. Those are the eyes of a deviant." I don't want to hear that from *you*. No matter how I looked at it, it was the pot calling the kettle black, and yet the pot wasn't even aware of it. I ignored him as he tediously kept going. Suddenly, the structure beneath my foot shook and I immediately stuck both hands to the nearest wall. Klaus casually supported me. "It seems like we are departing." So I hadn't been hit with a bout of dizziness. I turned my eyes toward the harbor. As he said, the ship was starting to move. I separated myself from him and grabbed onto the handrail. When I looked down, I saw that the ship was pulling away from the harbor, little by little. The

figures of the people who came to see the ship off were steadily growing smaller.

As I leaned forward, the sea breeze blew strongly and small sprays hit my cheek. “The time has come,” I said to myself. My first journey started from here.

As I thought of that, my fingers automatically squeezed harder on the handrail. When will I next see this scenery?

Will I be able to fulfill my objective properly? Can I return triumphant? I shook my head to clear my worries, and concentrated on the scene in front of me. I tried to burn the sweeping view of the port town into my memory as I looked from one end to the other. Suddenly, I stopped. There, on top of the elevated ground to the left of the town, was the figure of a person. Just one.

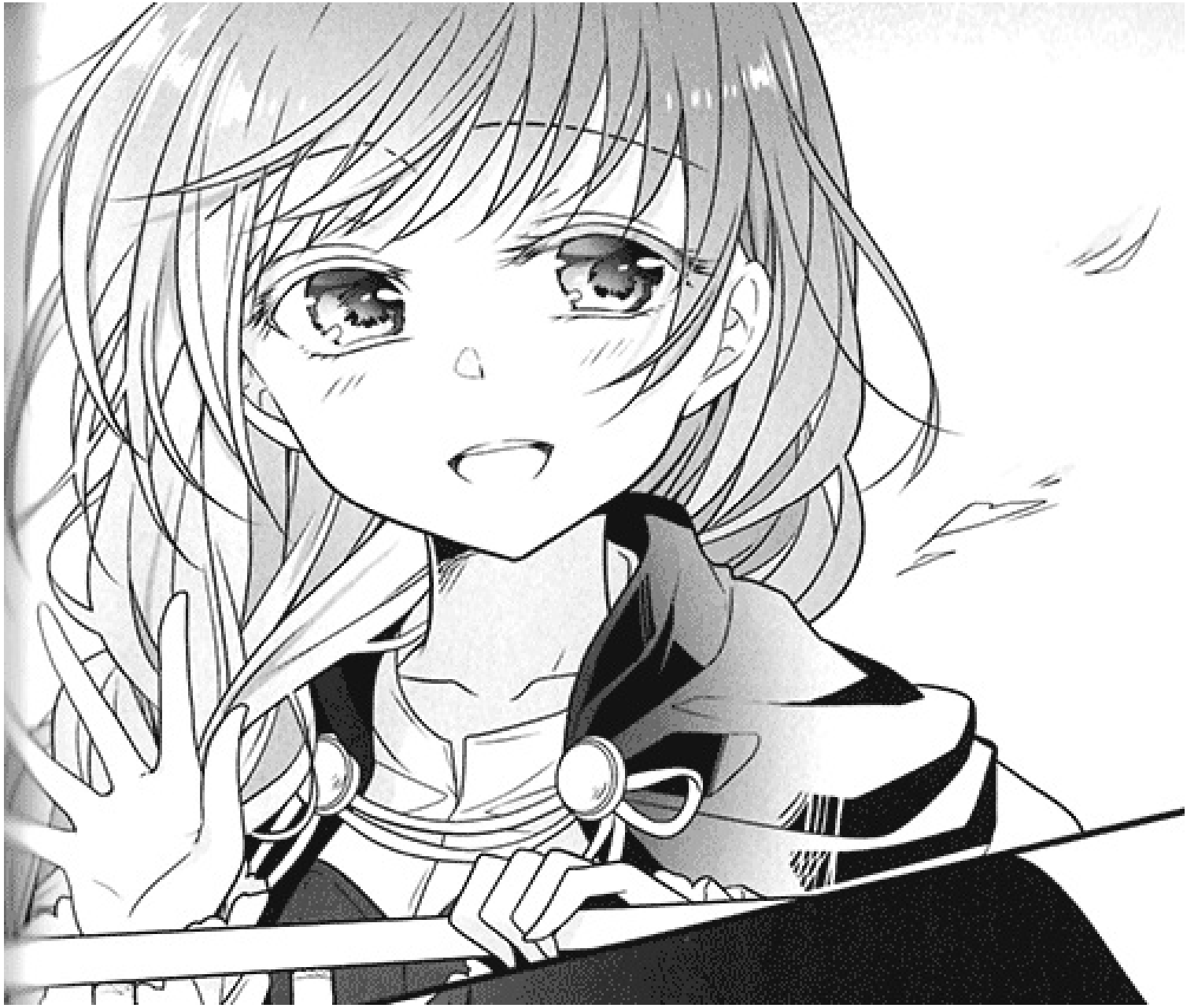
Were they here to send someone off? That person held onto the bridles of their black horse, but they were cloaked, so I couldn’t tell if it was a woman or a man. I couldn’t help following them with my eyes.

The ship was heading west and it would pass right by those elevated heights. Will I get a glimpse of their face? As if they could see what I was thinking, they threw off the hood of their cloak. The black hair that spilled out fluttered in the wind. Dark penetrating eyes stared straight at me. When I saw that figure, my breath hitched. I couldn’t believe what I was seeing, and I wondered if I hadn’t made a mistake. No, absolutely not. There was no point in deluding myself.

Or so I tried to calm myself down, but my heart—the traitor—was screaming for joy. Sir Leon, I whispered, a drop of tear sliding out the corner of my eye. I was happy, so incredibly happy it could not be put into words. I chewed on my lip and sounds suspiciously close to sobs leaked out. He came to see me off. I told him he didn’t have to, but the fact that he was here made me so happy I couldn’t hold it in. I liked him so much my chest hurted. I dashed away the tear that fell and forced myself to smile. Even though I might not be able to see him for a while, I didn’t want to part with a tearful face. “I’ll do my best and come back...” Lightly, I gave him a single wave.

Sir Leonhard knelt on the spot and bowed his head. “*I await your return.*” Of course, at this distance his voice wouldn’t reach.

I fancied I heard him all the same.



Chapter 68: The Reincarnated Princess's Ship Travels ①

"You're in a good mood."

I was arranging my luggage in our assigned cabin when Klaus spoke to me from behind. I only realized I'd been humming when he pointed it out. Yeah, it would've looked pretty darn chipper.

"Because something good happened," I answered without any embarrassment.

"Hmmm..." His voice dropped a level.

I put the items in my hand down and looked over my shoulder. Klaus leaned against the wall, a frown on his face. Moodiness fell off him in waves as he grumbled to himself. He was saying something like, Next time for sure I'll make him fall to his knees. I had no idea what he was going on about, but it gave me goosebumps so I hoped he wouldn't come into contact with me.

"By the way, *brother*, how many times have I reminded you to mind your tone?"

"Will you not permit me the freedom of our room?" he asked, at a loss for words. His brows lowered like a scolded child. It seemed like making him speak to me casually was quite stressful for him. "It is my duty, but be that as it may, what sort of heavenly tribulation is this, that I must speak rudely to one I love and respect? I feel as if my loyalty to you is being tested," he said with heartfelt emotions.

"It's all in your head," I dismissed. Even if he begged so seriously, it was nothing but trouble. However, despite being pushed away, he wasn't deterred.

"Please... I beseech you," he begged, brows knit sadly.

The silence stretched on for several seconds, but the first to throw in the towel was me.

"Well... If you can promise me you won't reveal yourself outside."

It can't be helped, I thought.

Even though it was small, in the privacy of the room there won't be other passengers around. The thin walls were a concern, but the room next to ours was the cargo hold. As long as he paid attention to the switch between inside and out, there shouldn't be a problem.

If I were to be honest, there was a part of me that wanted him to get to a level where he could speak with me unreservedly, but if I caused him too much stress and he exploded, that would be a problem too.

"I thank you!"

He lit up with smiles, and when he smiled without any guile like a child, I couldn't bring myself to treat him with my usual coldness. I smiled resignedly and sighed once before returning to sorting my belongings, careful with every item I took out.

"Oh, that's right."

I stopped and handed a piece of paper that had been rolled up to Klaus.

"What is this?" he asked as he accepted it. All I said was, "From Flamme." He was quick, so that was all I needed to tell him for his expression to turn serious. He began to read it silently. It was a letter from Georg, the latest report to arrive before our departure.

Georg and Michael had continued to look for a steady stream of information from port town and mountain villages, and they had acquired important info.

There seemed to be a village with a certain family living in the mountain ranges to the southwest of Flamme. They lived deep in the mountains, growing herbs and and making high quality medicine. Their name was "Kur."

"A clan of medicine experts. It's a very promising lead," he said as he read the letter.

There was a high possibility that this clan called Kur had the information for the medicine I've been searching for.

Georg felt the same and had narrowed the object of his investigation down to their clan. However, he seemed to be have difficulties ever since then.

The Kur clan had almost no involvement with the outside world.

They made periodic trips down the mountain in order to sell medicine, but it seemed like they concealed their faces and spoke at a bare minimum. They were recognized for their medicinal knowledge and high quality medicine, but apparently, even the rich merchants and nobles who had come forward desiring to form a contract with them had been given the cold shoulder.

The closed off Kur clan hated intervention from strangers, therefore there was barely anyone who knew the location of their village.

“Until we catch up with them, it would have been nice if they had made some progress, but... it sounds like they are having a hard time.” Klaus furrowed his brows.

I nodded. “Well, either way, there’s nothing we can do from a ship. Let’s focus on what’s in front of us right now.” I stood up. I was done sorting.

“Where to?”

“I want to see the deck and below. I want to know what is where, and of course, I wish to know the positions of the sailors as well.”

“As you wish.”

My hands were on the door knob. I stopped and looked over my shoulder.

“Get yourself together, brother.”

Switch into your role, I sent the message with my eyes.

With a blink, my loyal knight had transformed into my kind older brother.

“Okay. Let’s go,” he urged me on gently.

I opened the door and walked out.

“It’s quite clean, isn’t it?” Klaus said as we were on the way to the deck.

In general, the areas we can freely traverse ended with the circumference of the ship, but as he said, the inside of the ship was cleanly maintained. It wouldn’t be polite to say it wasn’t what I expected, but I had honestly imagined more of a mess.

“Even though it’s not new, it looks like they’re taking good care of it.”

Every step I heard the firm clack of my soles on the floor. The floorboards

were seasoned, but still gleamed due to careful polishing.

There was much in front of the galley, but I didn't notice any traceable dirt or odor. My impression of this ship with its scrupulous cleaning was great.

The cargo were piled up in a mannerly order, and fixed so neatly it didn't seem like they'd ever collapse.

The passages were narrow, but nowhere was it obstructed by luggage or any number of tools. Even in an emergency, as long as the embarking passengers did not become confused, escape shouldn't be delayed.

"The sailors are also friendly and kind. It's a wonderful ship."

Nothing less than what I expect from a ship recommended by Master Julius, I thought to myself as I went up the stairs. I had just stepped onto the deck when an angry voice leapt at me.

"It's hot!"

Eyes rounded, I looked around but found no one looking in my direction. It didn't seem like that voice had been aimed at me.

I followed the gazes of the sailors and passengers on deck and finally landed on a certain group.

"Hurry and bring me a cold one!"

It was the pretty girl the sailors had called a "goddess." She made no effort to hide her irritation as she shouted her orders. She sat on a deck chair under the shade of a parasol cast by a male servant, glaring at a young woman who looked like a maid.

"B-but Miss Flora, th-there is no ice house on this sh-ship. W-what should I do...?"

"Don't ask me, figure it out yourself!"

The pretty girl—Miss Flora—yelled at the maid.

"Y-yes." The maid nodded, looking ready to cry. She turned on her heels and ran.

"What a useless girl. Nothing more than a halfwit," Miss Flora said maliciously as she fanned herself with a gaudy fan made of lace, while her male servant

soothed her ruffles.

“Whoa...”

This scene had shocked me so much as I watched, I couldn't control myself.

“Ridiculous... What part of her screams goddess?” Klaus didn't even hide the disgust in his voice. The second half of his statement was said in a low voice, and only I could hear standing next to him. I probably should have told him not to say something so rude, or to be careful with his words, but a small part of me find myself in agreement.

“Make it quick!” demanded the girl with the same name of the goddess of Spring and flowers.

Chapter 69: The Reincarnated Princess's Ship Travels ②

A walking cliché. She was the stereotypical self-centered rich girl. While I stood there in shock, the maid had returned, breathless. She passed by me, a pitcher and a glass in her hands.

“Miss Flora, I have lemon water!”

Round slices of lemon floated in the pitcher full of water. The sailor near me frowned when he saw it.

It goes without saying that fresh water is very valuable on a sea voyage. Naturally, fruits are also important. That isn't to say the water shouldn't be drunk, but it might be desirable to ration it. This time, it might not be a large-scale voyage, but that didn't mean resources could be wasted. You can never be too prepared—anything can happen at anytime.

However, even though the sailor looked disgruntled, he didn't say anything to her directly. “If she wasn't the Goddess,” he muttered under his breath. His words made me sweat uncomfortably.

W-What should I do?

Even though I was fretting, there was nothing I *could* do. It was impossible for me to suddenly come forth and claim, *I'm the goddess (LOL) who created it*. Perish the thought! I'm no glutton for punishment!

“That took rather long, and all for lemon water? I am *not* amused.”

“I-I beg your pardon, milady.”

“Very well, then. Get on with it,” Miss Flora said imperiously. She closed the fan with a snap.

Flustered, the maid handed over the glass and poured. Without a word of thanks, Miss Flora brought it to her lips, when her brows scrunched up.

“What is this? It’s *tepid!*”

Well, duh, I retorted silently as I observed, on pins and needles. *She already said there’s no ice house.*

Miss Flora shoved her glass at the maid.

“I don’t need something like this!”

Hold on. Just, wait a moment.

How can you act as if you don’t sense everyone looking at you? If it was me, I’d be *drenched* in sweat by now.

“Huh? T-Then, what shall I do with this?”

“Throw it away!”

Her words caused the area to seethe with anger.

The sailors clicked their tongues, their eyes cold. Klaus, who was next to me, dropped his mask. Even the man who stood apart and looked like a passenger had a serious expression on his face.

“But...”

“I’m telling you to throw it away! Are you deaf?!”

Stoop! I’m begging you, just shut up already!

I couldn’t take it anymore.

“Please wait!”

Miss Flora’s attention turned to me as I rushed up. Her blue-grey eyes were filled with displeasure.

“And *you* are?”

I had acted on impulse, but then realized it was a mistake: all eyes were on me.

“Um, I am...”

Miss Flora scrutinized me as I stammered.

“A *commoner*, from the looks of you. Don’t you think it’s rude to address me?”

“My apologies... However, water is valuable. If you’re going to throw it away, may I please have it instead?”

“My! How *vulgar*. You want another’s discards? Have some shame.”

She opened the fan and covered her mouth, and looked at me as if at something filthy.

Every word out of her mouth was foul...

Even though my mouth seemed like it was cramping up, I tried to keep smiling.

Someone pulled my hand from behind, and the back of my head lightly bumped into something solid.

“Enough. We’re leaving, Marie,” Klaus said, his low voice full of suppressed feelings.

Filled with misgivings, I looked up at his smiling face and met his eyes. Even though his lips were curved, his eyes were as cold as ice.

Ouhh. I want to run away.

“Don’t be so reckless. My heart can’t take it.”

“S-Sorry...?”

He patted my head, still holding me.

Wasn’t this too close?!

Very casually, I elbowed him in the stomach so that the people around us couldn’t see, and gave him a look that told him to *move*. Klaus, smiling the entire time, continued to hold onto my shoulders firmly.

So, he was doing this to harass me for running out by myself? Was that what this was about?

While we were stealthily duking it out, she called out to him.

“Um... And *you* are?”

I looked in her direction and saw Miss Flora getting up from her deck chair. Her nasty glare from earlier was gone, and there was a faint layer of blush on her cheeks.

This sudden change threw me for a loop, but no, she wasn't looking at *me*. She only had eyes for Klaus.

Why is she looking at him so eagerly?

I pondered the matter, head tilted. After a while, I finally remembered. If we're going by appearances only, Klaus had top-notch looks. He was the maiden's ideal of a handsome, fine young man.

But even his good looks could not remedy the disappointing guy inside, so I'd almost forgotten about it.

"Pay me no heed. After all, I am only a *commoner*," he said, smiling.

I was surprised by the poison in his words.

His sarcasm was blunt as a hammer, and she stiffened instantly, flushing once more at his words. This time, it was with shame and anger.

"Are you now! You seemed a man of good breeding, so I spoke to you, but I misjudged."

"Yes, so it seems. I apologize for wasting your time."

Why is he fanning the flames?!

He must have noticed how pale I turned, but Klaus had no intention of letting his attitude soften. It seems like he was very pissed off.

"Quickly, begone from my sight!"

"Of course, you needn't tell us. Oh, yes. Before we do, may I have that water? You don't want it, do you?"

With fair brows arched, she said in irritation, "Do as you please!"

The maid, who had been confused by the turn of events, looked from Miss Flora to us before she handed the pitcher and glass to me.

"Thank you. Well then, let's go."

As soon as he confirmed I had received them, Klaus forced me to turn around. I could tell from the strength of the hand he used on my back that he didn't want to let me stay there any longer.

"What's wrong with him! Just because he's *slightly* good-looking. In the end,

Sir Georg is *much* better!”

I heard what seemed like the mutterings of a sore loser from behind and instinctively turned my head, but Klaus wouldn't let me stop walking. I couldn't shake off the hand gripping my shoulder, so I was semi-forced to move.

“Wait, Klaus! The name she just mentioned...”

“Never mind. It has nothing to do with you.”

“Er, well, um. True, it might not be *directly* related to me, but...”

“It has nothing to do with you.”

“Why'd you say that twice?”

I glanced at Klaus, who was stubbornly trying to prevent me from turning around, and sighed. Pushed from behind, I fell into my habit of thinking while walking.

Was Miss Flora perhaps aiming for Georg?

Holy shit. It's been this many months since an update. I'm sorry, everyone. To be honest, I really have no excuse. This release may not have even been possible if not for the help of a mysterious Miss Anon, who likes to style herself the Representative of Readers' Union (self-proclaimed). She's been encouraging me to work on TO for a long time, and she even helped me to translate and edit this chapter. I hope that she'll continue to work with me in the future, and maybe with the two of us here I'll be more motivated.

Thanks everyone. I'm sorry I haven't been responsive to your comments, but thank you for your support and continued love for Rose (best girl).

P.S. Arian Rose (the imprint for TO) has started their own web comic section and TO is supposed to have its own series, so we'll be getting a manga version soon!